



ISCPA

LEAP spotlight

Rick Kievits
Waukee

January 2019

Hometown: Heemstede, the Netherlands

Alma Mater/Degree: Masters of Accounting, Drake University

Where do you work and what's your role? I am a proud member of the team at Heartland Co-op in West Des Moines. I am the accounting manager and lead a team with three direct reports who have responsibilities for A/P, A/R, administration and executive administration, among others. Other responsibilities include fixed assets, equipment analysis, membership administration and I am a trainer on leadership/culture-related material.

What can we find you doing when you're not a work? I spend most of my time with my wife and kids. On the rare occasion I have time left, I enjoy spending it with friends or hiding in the basement in search of silence and reading a book.

What's one thing you can't make it through the day without? Oxygen

Where do you see yourself in 10 years? Good question. I've very much enjoyed the journey I have been on, learned a lot and intend to keep that going. I try to stay open-minded and let that, together with what I learn, direct me to where I need to go. Vague answer. One of my strengths.

What (or who) motivates you the most? Doing the right thing and aligning that with helping others. Who motivates me? My two kids.

What ways have you been involved in ISCPA and how have they benefited you? I have gone to several seminars/conferences. Recently, I joined the LEAP Committee that is responsible for putting the Emerging Leaders Conference together. From sitting in a room with other accounting professionals to small table discussions to being involved in the committee, I have not only met a lot of great people, but I have learned a lot from the discussions we have. The safe environment makes it easy to bring challenges I am facing to the table, so we can talk about it and learn from it. Continuous learning through real-life examples has been one of the great benefits for me.

What led you to the accounting field? Honestly, when I started going to school numbers seemed to be something that came easy to me. Other majors - biology, science, etc., definitely did not. Numbers appeared logically, black and white, right or wrong, which was a comforting thing to walk into. That's why I chose accounting. Not very romantic or inspiring.

What's your best piece of advice for a college student thinking about pursuing a future in accounting? Don't go into accounting because it comes easy to you. It's nice when it does, because it makes the classes easier, but that doesn't have correlation with long-term career fulfillment. I'd say go into accounting if it is your goal to help companies/individuals have a better understanding of numbers and bring more transparency and accuracy to accounting practices, financial statements, etc. This benefits everyone. Use your remaining time in college to learn as much as you can by participating in class, reading the books you need to read and take advantage of all the resources at your disposal.