

# Adding it all up

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CPA Australia, one of the world's largest accounting bodies, provides a range of useful services to its members. Education, training and networking support are available, along with some more subtle, equally useful services provided for new generations of graduating accountants. These include giving members the inspiration to succeed, sharing knowledge, and forging leadership skills.

Nelson Hon CPA (Aust.), a Trust Relationship Manager at HSBC Trustee (Hong Kong) Limited, is Chairperson of CPA Australia's Young Achievers Committee (YAC). The networking platform offers activities for young professional accountants, the aim of which, Hon says, is to create a relaxed atmosphere in which they can get to know each other and share their knowledge.

The YAC organises an annual CPA Australia Christmas Charity Santa Race to raise money for children in need, and YAC has been recognised for their work with a Volunteer of the Year award from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong in 2015.

Events like this have made Hon feel thankful, he says. "When I attended an event for underprivileged children, I realised how lucky I was as a child," Hon explains. "I was able to focus on what I wanted, and I didn't have to worry about the cost," he says. "Nowadays, I want to help those in need. Christmas is a special time for everyone, and a good opportunity to serve the community and bring joy and happiness to the underprivileged."



*Nelson Hon CPA (Aust.)*

Hon's sense of social responsibility encompasses the whole community. "Everyone should serve the community they live in. A donation is one way to give, but serving in a more hands-on way also means a lot," he explains.

Hon's community spirit demonstrates that he leads by example. He feels the networking and social elements are a bonus, as he enjoys meeting professionals from different areas of accounting through the activities at CPA Australia.

Like Hon, Chris Pang CPA (Aust.), enjoys connecting with members and involving himself in charitable community work. Pang has served in the YAC for the past three years and is currently its Deputy Chairperson. Pang

has experience in different types of accounting, and is known as much for his sociable nature as his business insights.

Pang's friendship with Hon illustrates the benefits of the social aspects of YAC. Although they work in different companies, Pang and Hon spend time together on YAC activities, and this has enabled them to share their work knowledge and their life experiences. "The experience I gain from organising events in CPA Australia is enormous," says Pang. "I have expanded my network to more than 100 professionals, and built real friendships. We have bonded over diverse issues like career, health and sports, and charity work. It guides my work and life, and I see a benefit too."

Hosting events for CPA Australia has enabled Pang to meet various delegations and representatives from governments, organisations, and businesses. As communication and interpersonal skills are vital to his work, Pang says he benefits from meeting CEOs in listed companies, and those in different business sectors. CPA Australia has improved his communication skills, he says: "Its status gives me an intangible confidence when I meet important people."

It's also useful for young accountants to meet entrepreneurs, as it gives them a greater understanding of business, Pang says. "Our business knowledge comes from very different perspectives, but the synergy is still there and it's important. It's good to exchange what we know."

Pang is the Assurance Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), he has been involved in the start-up ecosystem in the Science Park and Cyberport, where he helps to identify potential companies and entrepreneurs.



*Chris Pang CPA (Aust.)*

Pang has two roles. He coordinates post-deal transactions for portfolio companies in private equity firms or venture capital funds, and also advises the start-ups. "I help them tackle difficult tasks like accounting and fundraising when they are looking for investment from venture capital funds and angel investors," he explains. Trust, he notes, is imperative for such tasks.

Meeting Raymond Tam and Ronald Tam at a CPA Australia event may entail a double take – they're twins. Raymond Tam FCPA (Aust.), studied engineering, and worked briefly as a civil and structural engineer, then went on to work for 11 years in investment and corporate banking. After this, he worked at the Australian mining conglomerate, Mineralogy Group, as a CFO and Project Director. He now serves as CFO of a Hong Kong listed biotech company and Vice President (Asia Convention) of the World Leadership Alliance – World Economic Council.



*Raymond Tam FCPA (Aust.) and Ronald Tam FCPA (Aust.)*

Ronald Tam FCPA (Aust.), studied commerce, before working in mergers and acquisitions (M&A), corporate finance, and working on IPOs for Chinese companies at Barings, BOC, UBS and Jefferies. Ronald is now pursuing an interest in entrepreneurial ventures in biotech/tech and education, industries which he thinks will profoundly impact global societies in the future.

Facing adversity early in his career made Ronald adaptable – he graduated in 1997, when the Asian financial crisis was prompting large-scale layoffs. “I couldn’t get into investment banking immediately, so I got a job at Ernst & Young as an auditor, before moving to a management trainee program at HSBC,” he explains. This was the quickest and most secure path to his goal, he notes. Ronald waited three years, and then moved into investment banking.

Ronald says the practical skills he learned from CPA Australia have proved the most beneficial: “As an investment banker, my

chief financial officer clients want me to speak the same financial language as them. CPA Australia has equipped me with these vital ‘hard’ skills.” But he is also quick to mention the leadership and teamwork training, meetings with professionals, and his exposure to committee level meetings and activities in CPA Australia as positives.

Raymond says being a CPA Australia member is exciting because it exposes him to people from different business and cultural backgrounds. He loves learning, he says, “It motivates me to move forward and address challenges.” He also says he enjoys giving to charity.

Above all else, Raymond values the soft skills he’s learned from CPA Australia, like leadership, decision-making, and innovative thinking. “It has helped me learn the core competencies that are essential in today’s ever-changing world, where change is the only constant,” he says, noting that flexibility and adaptability are important.