

The CPAmerica Advantage

Contryman Associates, P.C. - 75 years in the Cornhusker State

We recently spoke to **Jeff Anderson**, Leading Partner, President and CEO of CONTRYMAN ASSOCIATES, P.C. (CA), of Grand Island, Nebraska. His firm, which was founded in 1939, is celebrating its 75th anniversary.



Anderson comprehensively spoke about CA, starting with its locations. He said, "We currently occupy the office that the firm has used for the vast majority of our time in Grand Island, Nebraska. Grand Island was the original location for Contryman's headquarters." The firm has expanded to seven locations throughout the state since its start.

Over the years, Anderson said the focus of the firm has transitioned from a single-office (or practitioner) environment to its current firm-wide environment. He explained, "This means that we function as a firm regardless of the number of locations and business centers we have. We very much function as a unified firm at this stage of the ballgame."

His firm has also seen the addition of various entities and profit centers.

Anderson spoke about how some of these entities came about. "Initially, the value proposition of the firm was income tax preparation and in preparing financial statements for clients. Then around 40 years ago, we started a computer service; we did a lot of computing and storage of data for our clients." The firm evolved from data entry to developing software (now known as CA's Advanced Livestock Tracker). Their wealth advisors services started in 1997 because of the feedback from their client advisory board. CA's clients weren't getting the financial

service expertise that they needed from their brokers and were asking CA for investment advice (which the

clients would then take and use at retail brokers). This led the firm to work with the state of Nebraska in order to allow CPAs to be able to provide investment services and charge commissions. "This marked the beginning of our investment services. That business has evolved into 10 different locations with 13 licensed individuals in the investment service area," said Anderson about their expansion.

By the 1990s, Contryman took on relationships with other CPA firms. They helped to support those firms in various ways as a sponsor firm. This was in conjunction with CPACONnect, an affiliate association to CPAmerica. "We were a very early member to both associations. We currently sponsor nine CPACONnect firms located across Nebraska," said Anderson. He went on to say "Much of our success has been derived from what we have learned through the CPAmerica association of firms and people."

Part of what sets Contryman apart from other firms are their core values. Anderson said, "These values are divided into four pillars - We care about our clients, we care about our team members, we care about our community, and we care about our profession and our peer groups. Because we care about these relationships, we are motivated to do the right thing for each of the four pillars."

Anderson said that one of the firm's biggest accomplishments has been their ability to consistently meet the changing needs of their clients. "Our combined entities have around 70 employees and we have grown as a result of listening to the needs of our clients and trying to be there for them when they need something," he said.

When asked what his firm's formula for success was, Anderson replied, "Functioning as one firm, not as individual silos and recognizing the value of non-billable time from our profit center leaders so they can work on the business, not just in the business."

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Reach Your Expert Services Team



For tax questions, you can contact **Linda Harding**, Director of Tax

at: **352-727-4141** or email: lharding@cpamerica.org

Harding directed a member with a client conducting business in Japan who posted a question about withholdings to our International Priority Request list.

The member said after, "I just wanted to thank you for helping me out with this. I got a clear response from the International Group and it worked out very well for me."



For A&A questions, you can contact **Art Winstead**, Director of A&A at: **336-553-2304** or

email: awinstead@cpamerica.org

During the last month, Winstead has been putting together the final pieces of the 2014 A&A Conference to be held in New Orleans, La. on June 18-20, 2014. It is going to be a great conference, please register while space is still available.