UPJ Accounting Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2003

Board Members: Janice Rummell, Maryann White, Nikki Yost, Rachel Loya, Karen Varga, George Letcher, Peggy Tanney, Dan King, David Braden, Debra Smiach Zakrzewski

Guests: Ron Saul

I. Call to order

- Karen Varga called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

- Attendees introduced themselves. Ron Saul was a new attendee.

II. Approval of Minutes and Revision of Charter/Appointment of Board Secretary

- The May 3, 2003 minutes were submitted by Rachel Loya and approved by the board (motion by Nikki Yost, second by David Braden).

- As discussed in the May 2003 meeting a new secretary was to be appointed in September 2003. Ron Saul was nominated to fill the position of secretary. The motion to appoint Ron Saul was passed unanimously by the board. The charter will be amended accordingly to allow a board member to serve in this position rather than a IMA student member.

III. Report of the President

- Karen noted that UPJ has some of the best functional accounting students because they could join a work force and have the skills necessary to contribute immediately.

- Karen noted that today’s new work environment stresses more teamwork and management issues as well as good communication skills.
IV. Report on Placement – Faculty

- George Letcher noted that three accounting firms are presently coming up to UPJ to interview students including Watkins, Meegan, Drury, & Co., LLC.
- George noted that the number of accounting majors nationwide has dropped by 50% and the amount of professionals taking the CPA exam has also dropped.
- Debra Smiach Zakrzewski noted that to encourage her accounting students she had brought in four accounting professionals to discuss the different aspects of their jobs.
- George noted that while taking an informal poll of his students only 3 out of 21 of his students are interested in public accounting.
- Janice and George noted they were showing a video on the many different job opportunities that a CPA could do.
- George noted that Tierny and Company and Watkins, Meegan, Drury, & Co., LLC were on campus interviewing students. Watkins Meegan was worried about the retention rate of students they hired as five out of ten of the students hired had left the firm. Tierny and Co. had interviewed eleven students where each student was individually interviewed by three different people.
- George noted that Sisterson Co. and the Naval Department are coming to interview possible job candidates.
- It was suggested to focus more on obtaining student internships with the Big Four accounting firms because most firms give full time job offers to their interns.
- It was also noted that Pricewaterhouse Coopers has been aggressively seeking candidates to fill positions, even going so far as to e-mail professionals at their current place of employment.

IV. Report on Curriculum - Faculty

- George noted that recently a comparison was done between UPJ and other peer groups and the results were favorable with the exception of the lack of a Business Law class.

- It was also noted that more students are going with the managerial accounting track than had in the past.

- There was a discussion about writing a letter from the AAAB to Dr. Alexander about adding a Business Law class. This class would also focus on the new Law/Economics format of the CPA exam.

- It was noted that there were 200 students in the business program, and Accounting Principles was the one chance that was available to entice students to major in accounting.

- Karen Varga suggested that professionals come in and talk to the students in Accounting Principles to tell them what working in a CPA firm is like.

- It was noted that there was discussion about taking the class The College and making it a five-credit course spread over the duration of the student’s education.

V. Report on IMA Student Chapter

- Debra noted that the IMA student chapter currently had a candidate for homecoming queen.
- Debra noted the two big events upcoming for the IMA Student Chapter were the Accounting and Finance Forum and the Interviewing Skills Workshop. The Etiquette Dinner was moved to the Spring semester.

- Debra noted that the Johnstown Day Care sent a thank you note to the IMA in response to their fundraiser, which raised eighty-eight dollars.

- The professional IMA chapter is giving away a 250-dollar scholarship to any UPJ student that submits a resume and attends three professional chapter events. A 150-dollar scholarship is being given to a CCACC student.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Membership – Maryann

- It was noted that Mary Krestar is interested in joining the Board and will be added to the distribution list.

B. Public Relations – Rachel/Gina

- Rachel noted that it was necessary to send out letters to the December 2002 graduates and the April 2003 graduates to see if any of them had interest in joining the AAAB.

- Rachel noted that some small article should be sent to the Tribune to announce the Accounting Forum.

- It was noted that AAAB should be listed as a sponsor of the Accounting Forum with a handout provided to the students from the AAAB.

- It was noted that at the Accounting Forum it might be better to not have dinner but have smaller breakout sessions so students could ask the professionals more questions.
- Maryann noted that an e-mail should be sent out to get volunteers to hand out folders at the Accounting Forums.

C. Placement – Peggy/Denise

- It was noted that the spreadsheet is currently being updated.
- It was noted that to push internships it was necessary to obtain resume packets from the Juniors.
- It was noted she believed that more influence is given to what type of activities students were involved in rather than the courses they had took.
  This was in reference to a question she was asked about resumes.
- Karen Varga noted it was critical to teach the students the accounting buzzwords to use in interviews.

D. Student Alumni Resources – Debbie/Kim

- It was noted that UPJ is undergoing a major renovation of their website.
  UPJ has placed a contract to make the website linked to every organization and department in which every organization and department will have its own website. The AAAB’s website will be part of that site and Debbie is working on it. It is likely that the existing website will be disabled and a new, similar one will takes its place.

E. Homecoming Committee - Members

- It was noted that the Pitt Barbeque idea was discussed with Dr. Alexander and he was open to the possibility of doing it in the future.

F. Awards – George/Martin
- George noted that if AAAB would like to give an award it must be funded which would require raising $10,000 within a three-year period to endow and name an award. The University will handle a mailing to all accounting alumni seeking donations. If the goal is not met the money will go into the general fund. George agreed to call and get information about the current account balance.

- Janice moves to give the award for 2005 and commit to the $10,000 within 3 years, Peggy seconds. The motion carries unanimously.

G. Board Membership

- Ron Saul was voted secretary earlier in the meeting.

- Janice nominated Gina Brawley for President Elect and Dan King for President, Peggy seconds. Motion carries by a unanimous vote for the slated offices. The charter will be amended accordingly.

VIII. New Business

- George noted that he would be retiring at the end of this year and could no longer be the treasurer/attend meetings but he would still help with the scholarship award.

- It was noted that we should review the charter every two years

- President wanted to thank George Letcher for his concept of the AAAB and the leadership he provided over the years.

- The tentative date for the next board meeting is May 1, 2004.

IX. Adjournment