

J. Sam Johnson Receives Meritorious Service Award

The Meritorious Service Award, the highest award presented by the Georgia Society of CPAs, is presented in recognition of outstanding service to the profession. The award was presented in June at the annual convention in Grand Bahama Island.



J. Sam Johnson has been influenced by accounting his entire life. Growing up with a father who was an accountant and a member of the Georgia Society of CPAs (GSCPA), he and his sisters were frequent guests at the annual conventions. In fact, Sam spent his college graduation day at the GSCPA convention in Florida. Although it may seem natural that he chose accounting for his profession, that was not always the case. It was a day spent at his father's office that truly opened his eyes as to what was involved in the accounting profession. To this day he believes the essence of what accountants do is help people.

On June 26, Sam's dedication to the profession and the Georgia Society of CPAs was recognized as he was named the recipient of the 2007 Meritorious Service Award. His family and friends joined him in the Bahamas as he was recognized for his contributions to the Society.

Sam received his Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from the University of Georgia in 1975, and was a member a Beta Alpha Psi and Beta Gamma Sigma. He received his CPA certificate in 1977. Upon graduation in 1975, he joined the firm of Julius M. Johnson, CPA, PC, and in 1983 acquired the firm and changed the name to J. Sam Johnson, CPA, PC.

During his professional career, Sam has been active on multiple levels. He has been a member of the Georgia Society of CPAs since 1975. His involvement with the Society, which began on the leadership teams of chapters, includes a wide range of accomplishments. Over the years, he has served on various committees including Budget, Continuing Professional Education, Meritorious Service, Professional Ethics, and Strategic Planning. In 1982-83, Sam was president of the Northeast Georgia Chapter. Over the years he has chaired the Bylaws, Personnel, and Nominating committees, and is a two-time recipient of the Distinguished Member Award. Sam served as president of the Educational Foundation in 1992; president-elect of the Society from 1996-1997; and president of the Society from 1997-1998.

During his term as president, Sam created and obtained budgeted funding for a new staff position, the Chapter Relations Coordinator, because he felt that there needed to be someone at the state level specifically dedicated to the needs of the chapters. He also created the Metro-Atlanta Council, which consisted of the presidents of the chapters in the Metro-Atlanta area. The first function of this group was a dinner with a nationally noted speaker. Today that event is known as the Distinguished Speakers Dinner, held each fall.

The Educational Foundation of the Georgia Society of CPAs has benefited from Sam's devotion to the profession and his desire to help students complete their accounting education. He created the first named scholarship in honor of his father in 2002, which followed through on his idea to make a large annual contribution to the Foundation and have that matched from the annual giving campaign to provide a more substantial scholarship to one student.

Sam served on the American Institute of Certified Public Accounts' Council for one year and the AICPA/SEA State Society Task Force for three years. He was appointed to the Georgia State Board of Accountancy by Governor Sonny Perdue in 2005, and is now serving as chair of the Georgia State Board of Accountancy.

Sam's dedication to service and involvement extends to his community. He is a member of the Toccoa Stephens County Chamber of Commerce, and has served on the board of directors for the Toccoa Stephens County United Way, Toccoa Stephens County Community Theatre, Toccoa Golf and Country Club, and the Northeast Georgia Bulldog Club. Sam is also a trustee of the Fred M. Huff Scholarship Trust and the Elton L. Copelan Scholarship Trust.