It all started at a dinner in 1981 when CFMA’s founder, David Casey, volunteered to lead an Organizational Committee to revitalize the unsuccessful and inactive NJ Construction Accounting Association. The initial goal was simple: Provide a local resource for construction financial professionals to obtain education and network with their peers.

Then, in January 1982, ENR published an article on the efforts of David and the Organizational Committee, leading to inquiries from financial executives across the country and making it clear that CFMA had a national appeal.

In 35 years, CFMA has grown from a handful of construction financial professionals around a dinner table in New Jersey to more than 7,500 members and 94 chapters across the U.S. and Canada.

In a recent interview, David spoke about the group’s initial expectations and how CFMA came to be. “Our expectations changed and evolved over time. Initially, we set out to see what we could accomplish locally, but after the ENR article and our first annual meeting, it became apparent that not only was there a need for a national organization, but that we had the people with the enthusiasm to make it happen.”

According to David, that same energy has carried the Association through the years. “The passion and enthusiasm of CFMA’s members and leaders is unlike any I’ve seen elsewhere. Because of such drive and determination, I’m not surprised by the Association’s growth. After serving as CFMA’s Chairman, I purposely limited my involvement so that others could use that passion to set and achieve goals that continue to shape and grow the organization.”

Still an active CFMA member, David regularly attends CFMA’s Annual Conference & Exhibition as well as the Mid-Atlantic Regional Construction Financial Management Conference. “It is still extremely rewarding and thrilling that, even after all of these years, complete strangers still come up to me at CFMA conferences to tell me how CFMA has helped them.”

“And, CFMA has had a tremendous impact on my life as well – personally and professionally,” David said. “I don’t know how my career would have been different, but I am certain it could not have been better.”

Editor’s Note: This interview was inspired by and adapted from research conducted and compiled by South Jersey Chapter President Kimberly A. Hullfish, CCIFP, Controller at C. Abbonizio Contractors Inc. in Swedesboro, NJ.