When I was a Schreiner student, Advanced Composition was a required course. I kept protesting to Professor Glen Lich (now deceased) that I was an accounting major and would never need to know how to write. After graduation, when I was a public accountant, I thought about Dr. Lich a lot because I wrote audit report after audit report! And written communication continues to be a major part of my responsibilities today.

Accounting instructor Mary Harston also comes often to mind. She used to tell us that she was setting high expectations and that we better rise to them. So we did! I look forward to visiting with some current students to share these observations and to tell them that accounting is a wonderful field—packed with variety and opportunity!

— Beth Ann Rafferty, ’87

Ms. Rafferty began at Southwest Research Institute in 1991 and became assistant treasurer and assistant secretary in 1997. Appointed Chief Financial Officer and Vice President, Finance, in 2011, Beth Ann is responsible for Accounting, Central Proposal Office, Credit and Collections, Contracts, Employee Benefits, Government Property Administration, Information Technology Center, Retirement Program and Risk Management. Headquartered in San Antonio, Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) is one of the oldest and largest independent, nonprofit, applied engineering and physical sciences research and development organizations in the U.S. In 2010, its total revenue was $548 million.