



Dear ACUA Friends and Colleagues,

It's January already, hard to believe that we are coming up on the Midyear Conference already! Don't forget to register for the conference, you will not want to miss this one! The conference is being held March 26-29, 2017 in Austin, Texas, and there are 7 exciting tracks to choose from including topics on higher education compliance, IT, fraud, audit essentials, audit software, risk management and NCAA compliance.

I mentioned last month that ACUA has contracted with Higher Logic to provide the new online community that we are calling **Connect ACUA**. Higher Logic is used by many associations such as AHIA, ACFE, NACUBO, and URMIA. The Communications Committee team is continuing their work on this implementation. The project is on schedule and testing will begin soon. While we are planning for this transition, you can assist by taking a look at your member data in ACUA's membership directory to verify your data is correct.

Any updates to your individual profile can be made by logging in to the website with your personal user ID and password and then clicking on your name on the left side of the screen. From there edits can be made by clicking on the pencil icon. If you need a field updated that cannot be edited using the pencil icon, updates can be provided to ACUA-Info@kellencompany.com.

You will be hearing more about Connect ACUA in the near future and all its possibilities.

Each month I am including a **BEST PRACTICE** in my message as a reminder of the importance of the support we provide our institutions. This month's **Best Practice** is Quality Assurance Reviews (QAR). The IIA Standards (Red Book) requires a QAR be performed every five years, while the Governmental Standards (Yellow Book) requirement is every three years. We are all so busy that it is tempting to postpone a QAR, but there are so many benefits to having one done. Here are some examples of the benefits (not meant to be all-inclusive):

-) Timely feedback, so you can focus on what is important to your stakeholders.
-) Validation that the internal audit function is value-adding and well run.
-) Educational opportunity for board members and management to hear from another source what is required and expected of internal audit.
-) An opportunity to garner best practice advice from your colleagues.
-) Possible support for initiatives, which have not received the priority they should.

Consider planning for your QAR soon! When you do, make sure that you reference ACUA's QAR webpage under Resources/Audit Tools. Here you will find links to resources and a listing of ACUA Volunteers to perform an external assessment. When you have had your assessment completed, please consider adding to the QAR Report Comments Repository to assist other members in preparing for their QAR.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I include a highlighted volunteer each month to recognize all the work and contributions from the many ACUA volunteers. This month's **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT** provided by the Volunteer Appreciation sub-committee highlights Tom Dwyer from Syracuse University and the many years of service he has provided to ACUA! Thank you Tom for all your advice, work and assistance over the years!

All the Best,

Pam

Pamela Doran CIA, CISA, CPA

ACUA President

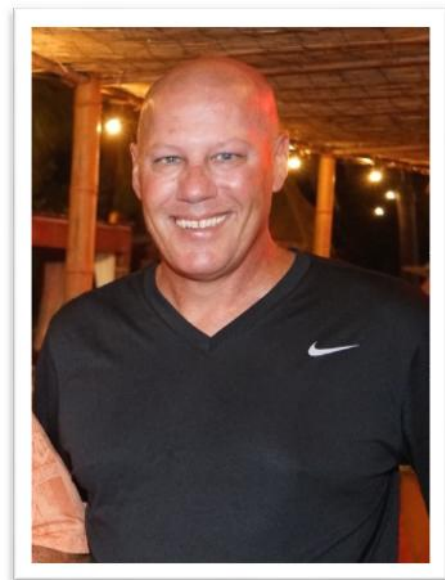
Executive Director, Audit & Advisory Services, University of South Carolina

Committee Spotlight: Nominating Committee

The ACUA Nominating Committee is tasked with conducting the nominations process for the annual election of officers and at-large board members. This involves asking the ACUA community to nominate eligible members, interviewing nominees, presenting a list of nominees to the Board for approval, and notifying candidates and the ACUA community of the election results. The current committee is chaired by Vijay Patel, Immediate Past President of ACUA and Director of Internal Audit at The University of Southern Mississippi. There are three additional members of the committee: Tom Dwyer – Syracuse University, Sandy Jansen – The University of Tennessee, and Toni Stephens – The University of Texas at Dallas.

Volunteer Spotlight: Tom Dwyer

Tom Dwyer, Assistant Director of Audit & Management Advisory Services at Syracuse University, has been a member of ACUA for 23 years. He started attending annual conferences in 1996 and at the 2016 Annual Conference, was honored with the Outstanding Professional Contribution Award (read more about this in the Fall 2016 edition of the *College & University Auditor Journal*). Tom is currently a member of the ACUA Nominating Committee as well as a NCAA Task Force focused on improving the resources available for NCAA Compliance/Athletics audits. Previously, he has served as an ACUA presenter, Board Member, and Treasurer.



ACUA: Why did you become an ACUA volunteer?

Tom: I feel that ACUA is a great organization for addressing a lot of our professional education and higher education-focused needs. I started presenting at ACUA conferences in the early 2000's. Board member, Treasurer, and Committee service just ended up being a progression from there. I never said no.

ACUA: What is your favorite ACUA memory?

Tom: No one specific memory. Just great memories of ACUA conferences; hanging with friends I have made, some of the really nice cities we have visited, and the sporting events I have attended over the years.....if there is a major league sport in town during an ACUA conference, I usually try to get there.

ACUA: What have you learned as an ACUA volunteer/member?

Tom: As a volunteer your time and resources often seem short. So it's critical to get effective volunteers. Also....volunteers don't get paid enough.....lol.

ACUA: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Tom: Just be yourself

ACUA: What are your hobbies/interests outside of audit?

Tom: I love sports. Watching and attending now. I played league basketball into my late 40's. I spent a lot of time coaching baseball and basketball when my kids were younger. I also like to read a lot.....mystery suspense novels.