



Dear ACUA Friends and Colleagues,

We are well into February and the Midyear Conference is fast approaching. The conference is looking to be very well attended and will be another great networking and educational event. If you haven't registered for the conference, you should register soon as time is running out. The conference is being held March 26-29, 2017 in Austin, Texas with a choice of seven different tracks, offering 21 CPEs. Looking forward to seeing all of you there.

ACUA's implementation of **Connect ACUA**, the new and upcoming online community, is coming along well. The implementation is currently in the beta testing phase. ACUA members that are the "beta testers" seem pleased with the new product, specifically praising the ease of replying to community posts directly from their email. The Communications Committee is very excited about the product and its implementation and is looking forward to rolling it out soon to ACUA members. I want to send a special "thanks" to the Communications Committee for all their hard work in identifying this product and working towards a timely implementation. Lots of coordination, time and attention to detail goes into an implementation such as this, which is particularly challenging when it is not your full-time job. Hats off to the Communications Committee!

This month's **Best Practice** is data analytics. Essentially data analytics are useful in identifying anomalies in data, which could be indicative of a number of things including, but not limited to:

1. an internal control weakness;
2. a change in a particular trend in revenues or expenses;
3. fraudulent transactions; or
4. could just be explainable outliers.

Whatever the data pattern ends up being, data analytics are helpful in determining risk areas, scope of audits, sampling, trending, and detecting and investigating fraud. Also, many auditors for federal research sponsors are using data analytics to perform their audits of research compliance. There are many different tools available to perform these analytics, but the objectives are the same. If you aren't using data analytics in your internal audit function, I would recommend you learn more about it. Start with a small project and assess the results. You may already be using data analytics without even realizing it!

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 Will Hancock from Auburn University. Will is currently the Midyear Conference Director and has put together an awesome conference this year with lots of great sessions! Please take an opportunity at the Midyear Conference to convey to Will your appreciation for his efforts and what you are enjoying about the conference.

Until next month.....

All the Best,

Pam

Pamela Doran CIA, CISA, CPA

ACUA President

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

Committee Spotlight: Professional Education Committee

The Professional Education Committee (PEC) provides coordination and oversight activities for ACUA educational activities. Activities include the Annual Conference, Midyear Conference, Distance Learning (Webinars) and the ACUA Faculty Program.

Annual Conference – 2017 in Phoenix, Arizona! Held in September each year, the Annual Conference provides 20+ CPE for attendees. The Conference provides an excellent venue for learning about new and emerging higher education risks as well as brushing up on the basics of risk assessments and auditing business processes. It also provides numerous opportunities for networking and getting to know your fellow higher education auditors! http://acua.org/CPE_Events/Annual_Conference.asp

Midyear Conference – 2017 in Austin, Texas! Held in March each year, the Midyear Conference provides 20+ CPE for attendees. One differentiating factor from Annual Conference is that attendees of the Midyear Conference sign up for a specific track which presents sessions related to the track for 2-1/2 days. This allows for a deeper dive into specific topics. For more information and to register: http://acua.org/CPE_Events/Midyear_Conference.asp

Distance Learning (Webinars) - ACUA offers 8-12 webinars per year. The webinars are live, online presentations focused on topics concerning internal auditing in the higher education industry. They are 50-100 minutes in duration, and most are CPE eligible. http://acua.org/CPE_Events/Webinars.asp

ACUA Faculty Program - One of ACUA's greatest assets is the number of talented speakers among its membership. ACUA's faculty list is a terrific resource if your association or university is looking for talented speakers on topics such as risk, internal controls, auditing, compliance and fraud. For more information and to view a list of Faculty members: http://acua.org/ACUA_Resources/ACUA_Faculty.asp

Volunteer Spotlight: Will Hancock

Will Hancock, Audit Manager at Auburn University, has been a member of ACUA since 2005. He is the Midyear Conference Chair for 2017-2019 and a member of the Fraud Investigations Best Practices sub-committee.



ACUA: Why did you become an ACUA volunteer?

Will: ACUA provides so much value to its members through professional education, networking, and resources. I've been to most of the ACUA conferences since I started at Auburn in 2005, and I've had so many great experiences. I wanted to give back to ACUA and help it continue to be successful (also because Jana Briley convinced me to be the Midyear Chair).

ACUA: What is your favorite ACUA memory?

Will: I loved going through ACUA Leads! as part of Cohort III. It was a great journey, and I really appreciated the encouragement and coaching I received. I also really enjoyed the dinner/dances we had during the Annual Conferences (those of us from Auburn were always a little...creative).

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

Will: Network. ACUA has so many amazing members, and they can be great resources and great friends.

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

Will: Make time for what's really important.

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

Will: I'm a pretty good cook (or so I've been told), and I love exploring new restaurants and new recipes (my waistline can attest to that). When I go to conferences with folks from my office, they usually ask me for restaurant suggestions, since they know I've usually already scoped the place out. I also love baseball (I'm a San Diego Padres and Oakland Athletics fan), English Premier League Football (I'm a Chelsea fan) and I like to read (my favorites are Mark Twain, Neil Gaiman, Douglas Adams, and Christopher Moore).

Please contact Toni Stephens (tmesser@utdallas.edu) or Terri Tarbett-Wallace (Frances.Tarbett@usm.edu) if you would like to nominate a current volunteer for the next ACUA Volunteer Spotlight.