

ACUA Awards Presented at the 2016 Annual Conference

By Betsy Bowers

The Awards Committee announced the winners of the Outstanding Professional Contributions, Member Excellence in Service and the new Rising Star Awards at the 2016 Annual Conference in Miami, Florida.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTION AWARD

The **Outstanding Professional Contribution Award** was presented to Tom Dwyer from Syracuse University. This award recognizes a member who has made outstanding and noteworthy contributions to the profession by creating wider recognition of internal auditing in higher education, promoting cooperative relationships with other governance-related organizations, and promoting high professional standards and sustained service to higher education and internal auditing professional organizations.

The Awards Committee members had the privilege of reviewing many outstanding nominations this year and the difficult job of selecting those to be honored this year.



Tom Dwyer (center) receives the Outstanding Professional Contribution Award with ACUA President, Pam Doran (left) and ACUA Immediate Past President, Vijay Patel (right) at the Annual Conference in Miami, Florida.

Dwyer's notable contribution to the profession is his assistance in the creation, ongoing updating and parenting of the ACUA NCAA Compliance Audit Guide. Dwyer contributed 60–75% of the content for the original guide, using the NCAA Operating Manual and NCAA-based control literature to guide content development. The guide came at a time when auditors in higher education recognized that athletic compliance should be elevated on risk profiles. Auditors throughout ACUA now consider the NCAA Compliance Audit Guide to be one of the most valuable resources provided by ACUA. This topic and the audit guide would not have reached its current level of maturity without the commitment of Dwyer. His dedication to making ACUA a first-choice resource on athletic auditing exemplifies the spirit of service and sets the standard to which other ACUA members can aspire.

Dwyer is the assistant director of Audit & Management Advisory Services at Syracuse University. His responsibilities at Syracuse include performance and oversight of operational, compliance, financial, and fraud related services. He serves as the editor of "Audit Insights" a periodic newsletter issued by Syracuse's Audit & Management Advisory Services. As an ACUA colleague noted, "In short, Tom's contributions to ACUA are far-reaching, long-lived and deserving of the Outstanding Professional Contribution Award."

Dwyer has been an active member of ACUA since 1994 and has contributed to higher education internal auditing in a number of other capacities including: proctor, speaker, author, webinar presenter, task force member, ACUA Ambassador, ACUA Faculty, ACUA Board member and ACUA Treasurer. Dwyer has demonstrated his commitment to the professional competency by earning and maintaining the CIA, CFE, and CBA credentials.

MEMBER EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE AWARD

The Member Excellence in Service Award was presented to Laura Buchhorn from The University of Texas–San Antonio. This Award recognizes a member who has made outstanding contributions to the mission of ACUA through exceptional service.



Laura Buchhorn (center) receives the Member Excellence in Service Award with ACUA President, Pam Doran (left) and ACUA Immediate Past President, Vijay Patel (right) at the Annual Conference in Miami, Florida.

Buchhorn has been active with ACUA since 2005 and knows the ins and outs of ACUA operations. She has served ACUA as a proctor, track coordinator, speaker, author, webinar panelist, committee member, host committee member, contributor to the ACUA Risk Dictionary, Midyear Conference Director (a three-year commitment), and a graduate of the ACUA *Leads!* Inaugural class. In her role as Midyear Conference Director, she identified and recruited presenters based upon ACUA membership needs, coordinated with ACUA's management company, and engaged host committee members. Always enthusiastic and energetic, Buchhorn's efforts support ACUA's track record of offering the highest quality services to its members at an affordable price. She has the uncanny ability to inspire ACUA colleagues to volunteer and make ACUA stronger.

The consummate professional, Buchhorn holds the CIA, CFE, CGFM, CCSA and CRMA certifications. She is the audit manager at UT–San Antonio, is the liaison for the annual financial audit with external auditors and is the liaison for the NCAA Agreed Upon Procedures led by the UT System Office. An ACUA colleague noted, "Buchhorn is an ACUA rising star that has arrived."

The committee would like to thank all of the ACUA members who took time to recognize the contributions and service of their colleagues.

RISING STAR AWARD

The inaugural **Rising Star Award** recipient is **Meaghan Smith** from Oregon Health and Science University. This award recognizes an ‘up and coming’ member who has made significant individual contributions in the areas of internal audit, compliance, or risk management, furthering the mission of ACUA. This award is intended to spotlight, cultivate and recognize those developing the personal initiative and commitment to positively impact higher education auditing that is essential to ACUA’s continued success.



Meaghan Smith (center) receives the Rising Star Award with ACUA President, Pam Doran (left) and ACUA Immediate Past President, Vijay Patel (right) at the Annual Conference in Miami, Florida.

Smith has been an ACUA volunteer since 2012 and currently serves as the Web Services Director for ACUA. Smith contributes 6–10 hours per month to ensure ACUA’s web presence is up to date, hip, and relevant. Our web presence is the lifeline for many ACUA members. She takes a lead role in seeking articles and posts to help members stay informed of current events, trends and risks in higher education. To date, she has posted more than 700 articles. Smith also implemented Google Analytics to make adjustments to content based upon member’s interests.

Smith, a CPA and a CIA, is a senior auditor for Audit & Advisory Services and Office of Integrity at Oregon Health and Science University. She uses data analytics in key risk areas and is known among ACUA as a go-to person for data analytics. Through her efforts, Smith helps ACUA meet its strategic goal of being an indispensable professional resource for higher education internal auditors.

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The 2016 Awards Committee consisted of Betsy Bowers, University of West Florida (chair); Chris Cavanaugh, Wichita State University; Mark Eisenman, Boise State University; John Fuchko, University System of Georgia; Whit Madere, Virginia Community College System, and Gail Nishida, Chapman University.