

## My experience attending the 29<sup>th</sup> ACFE Global Fraud Conference

It was a warm Friday evening of April in Houston, Texas. I was sitting on the patio of my favorite Starbucks coffee bar completing a 10-page ethics report, when I heard my phone buzzing; from the subject of the email, I knew I was about to receive exciting news. Scanning through the email, a wide smile appeared on my face. Surely the person across my table could hear me reading out loud “I am very pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive a scholarship to the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual ACFE Fraud Global Fraud Conference.” I gasped and started jumping up and down in excitement and, as I sat back down, I took a screen shot of the email and sent it to everyone who had listened to my unending talks about attending the conference.



### “Power Up at the ACFE Global Fraud Conference”

I could not believe my eyes; I was walking towards the Mandalay Bay Convention Center and I could feel the conference spirit. Large poster signs on many of the hallways and on the walls welcomed attendees. I felt from the very beginning this was going to be a great learning experience that would bring lasting memories.

## Day 1 ⚡

There was no better way to start my conference experience than at the Women’s Networking Reception where I was inspired and motivated by strong, exemplary and beautiful women in the industry. The room was divided into groups by topic. I decided to join the group where the main topic was about starting a career in the profession. The group was very dynamic and it was beautiful to experience how we answered each other’s questions and genuinely motivated one another. At this event, I met the talented Alexis Bell who not only inspired and encouraged the group, but also shared her career experience and knowledge in the field. I learned from her about the importance of performing a self-assessment to identify weaknesses and strengths, to being able to see where you stand in your career and what it takes to get to where you want to be.



## Day 2 ⚡

The first day of the conference was a lot of fun, full of perfect learning and networking opportunities. The day began with a remarkable opening ceremony by the President and CEO Bruce Dorris followed by sessions led by knowledgeable professionals in the industry.

I had the privilege of attending three sessions and doing volunteering tasks, all in the same day. During my volunteering assignments, I bonded with extraordinary students who had the same interest in the profession as me, and I met enthusiastic ACFE members from across the world. It was great to have been a part of a committed and energetic volunteering team, all working together for such an amazing conference.



All the sessions I attended were great because of the outstanding and very knowledgeable speakers and interesting PowerPoint presentations. One of my favorite sessions was “Using Data to Make Your Case: Advance Formula for Analysis.” It was, in part, a refresher of a class I took in the Spring semester “Financial Statement Analysis” and an excellent resource for an upcoming work assignment. One of my favorite parts of that session was the demonstration of Kutools on Excel, and how the instructor, Tiffany Couch, quickly transformed raw data into readable data!

### Day 3 ⚡

I thought the conference could not get any better but it certainly did! I had the privilege of witnessing the moment when Professor Dan Ramey received an Educator of the Year Award. It was truly a joy to see him accept his award. #GoCoogs! Soon after, all student scholarship recipients were introduced and recognized for winning the scholarship and for our volunteering work at the conference.



The general session continued with two extraordinary individuals, Bryan Fogel and Clare Rewcastle Brown, who shared their unique stories, challenges and outstanding contributions in uncovering fraud.

At the end of the general session I had the opportunity to network and take lots of pictures with leaders in the industry.

As the day continued, I continued to network with other students and attendees during our volunteer assignments. One of my favorite assignments of the day was at the professional development booth – first, because it was the perfect time to make more connections while volunteering, and second, because I learned about the “turtle pose,” which consists of sticking out the head while standing straight and smiling like a champion. It turns out that this pose makes a great professional headshot.



My day ended with a great session, “The New Revenue Recognition Standards: How Might Fraud be Hidden Now?” I learned about possible fraud risks, and additional opportunities for fraud that may be present under ASC 606, as well as some potential fraud risks and red flags that may arise during or after its implementation.

### Day 4 ⚡



The last day at the 29<sup>th</sup> ACFE Global Fraud Conference was full of joy, laughs and even emotional goodbyes. It was time to say goodbye but not first without a handful of great memories and business cards! I not only obtained insights from leaders in the anti-fraud profession but I made lifetime friends.

A special thank you to the Global ACFE, the ACFE Houston Chapter, and my mentors for their support. It was indeed a great conference, and especially so for a college student pursuing a career in anti-fraud. Attending this conference was not only a privilege but also an extraordinary learning experience.