



# Focus

NEWS FROM ACCA US



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### **A message from the President:**

The last six months has been very encouraging in terms of the continued development of ACCA in the US. Each of the 10 chapters organized at least one meeting during this period. Helen Perkins made the rounds of many of them to explain and discuss CPD requirements and representatives from the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) have also been guest speakers at several chapters as well as other industry leaders. This is very heartening as member and student engagement is essential to the success of ACCA in the US and your professionalism at the individual level is crucial in promoting and strengthening the reputation of ACCA in this country.

In September both John Lane, as International Assembly member, and myself as well as Patricia Limoges and Helen Perkins attended the ACCA North America & Caribbean Marketing Conference in Toronto. This was the first conference of its kind and was organized by ACCA headquarters marketing staff to –

- review global marketing strategies
- discuss key developments and challenges in North America and the Caribbean
- determine where the US and Canada can share marketing initiatives

Also attending the meeting were Raphael Joseph, North American ACCA Council representative, Hin Leong,

## A Message from the President (*cont'd*)

President, ACCA Canada, as well as representatives from the administrative staffs of both Canada and the Caribbean, and the ACCA UK marketing staff, about 15 in total.

The meeting was significant in that, for the first time, it enabled the participants to understand the goals and issues of each region and identify possible strategies to achieve those goals. A great deal of time was also spent reviewing the various impediments to growth and it was agreed, that in North America, the main issue is statutory recognition. ACCA-US is continuing to work toward this goal. However, it has effectively been put on hold pending a decision by the UK regulatory body, the Professional Oversight Board of Accountancy (POBA). It should also be noted that even if ACCA gained statutory recognition, it would still be up to the individual states to grant reciprocity within their state. This may be a situation that we will just have to live with for the foreseeable future.

Many other initiatives were discussed to increase awareness of ACCA in the business community and will continue to be explored and acted upon where feasible. As the first of its kind, I found meeting with North American and Caribbean representatives and members of the marketing team in the UK, as well as Muir Brown, Head of International Business Management, most productive and informative. Of all the statistics I noted, one of the most significant was the fact that, among the top ACCA markets in terms of total members, ACCA-US ranks 9th. A complete list is included in this newsletter on page 12.

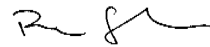
This year ACCA-US has instituted a Student-Study-Partner Program whereby students are joined with others who are studying the same papers to compare notes, and provide inspiration and support for each other. This program is in addition to the member mentorship program which is also on-going. Both programs have been enthusiastically received.

At a ceremony in September I presented a certificate to the Los Angeles based accounting firm, Singer Lewak Greenbaum & Goldstein, confirming that the organization is an accredited "ACCA Approved CPD Employer." SLGG is the first accounting firm in the US to achieve such accreditation. This means that ACCA members at the firm will be able to complete their CPD requirements through the approved employer route.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome a new chapter, the MD/VA/DC chapter, headed by Ali Eltibi and a new chapter head for the Northern California chapter, Kathy Yu-Liu.

In the months ahead, we can look forward to continued improvement in reputation and influence for ACCA through our attendance at chapter meetings and other events and through our individual performance on the job and elsewhere. I look forward to meeting with you at one of these events in the not-to-distant future.

Best regards to all,



Prem Goyal  
President, ACCA-US



# Profile of ACCA Achievement Award Winner: Stephen Taylor, FCCA

When Steve Taylor relocated to the US with Paramount Pictures in 1980, he quickly realized that there was no formal organization that connected ACCA members and students throughout the US and that ACCA needed to be organized, if it wanted to achieve market and statutory recognition in the US. However, the demands of his burgeoning career initially distracted him from making an organized effort to join with other members to improve this situation.

Several years later, in 1985, he was contacted by a fellow expatriate, George Thomas, CPA, FCCA, to inquire whether he would be interested in helping establish an American branch of ACCA. According to George, "of the first 15 people approached to serve on the ACCA US committee, Steve was the first to accept and actively participate in helping to shape the first articles of the constitution. He has been one of the most active members ever since, starting the newsletter, writing articles, stuffing envelopes, arranging networking events and driving initial efforts to gain recognition in the US. He even opened up Paramount events and tours to move the branch forward. Thanks to Steve, we pulled together a strong NY/NJ/CT Tri-State branch and later the Southern California Branch."

In 1986, after months of planning, Steve mailed the first newsletter announcing the formation of the American Branch of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, the original name of ACCA-US, to 265 members and 15 graduates in the US. At this point a committee of nine members was assembled from across the country and a constitution was drafted. The main objectives of the branch were, as they are today:

- to provide a local organization for members and students to advance their collective and individual interests and,
- to begin addressing the issues of reciprocity with AICPA and setting educational equivalencies.

The branch was officially inaugurated at the first Annual General Meeting on September 22, 1986. Throughout the next 18 years, Steve served as President for two four-year terms and has also been active on behalf of ACCA-US as a committee member and International Assembly representative.

Over the years Steve has helped many members in a very personal way. When Claude Birch, an ACCA-US committee member and current IA representative, first visited Los Angeles in the late 80s, he had taken Steve's telephone number from an A&B magazine and decided to make a "cold call" to Steve. He was greeted very warmly and invited to lunch, which regrettably he had to decline. When Claude next arrived in LA as a "permanent resident" Steve was not only responsible for helping Claude become acquainted with other ACCA members in the area, but also offered him assistance in obtaining employment at Paramount where Claude has worked ever since. "Steve helped many new arrivals modify their approach to job hunting and resume writing to comply with US practices, and I can vouch for that," explained Claude. "Even though his time was limited, he would take the time to help any member who needed it."

According to Roy Castleton, former ACCA-US president, IA representative and currently honorary committee member, "Steve was and is a 'take-charge' person. It was clear that we needed not only his enthusiasm, but also his resources in forming the US branch, appointing officers, establishing a constitution, bank account and attending to a myriad of other details. Steve was the engine room, he allocated tasks, schmoozed and cajoled, and things went forward." "He has been a friend and motivator to all of us who served on that first committee 20 years ago, and subsequently," he continued.

"Steve inspires everyone he has contact with. His energy, wit and guidance has had an impact on me personally and my career," said Henry Segal, former ACCA-US president and current honorary committee member. "Steve is passionate about ACCA and always took the time to foster relationships between members in the US and ACCA in London. His dedication to the US chapter has assured that it will continue to be strong for many years to come."

It was recognized early on that there were serious roadblocks to achieving statutory recognition with AICPA in the US. Steve noted in an early newsletter that full reciprocity would take years to accomplish due to the lack of recognition by the UK regulatory bodies as well as the absence of full reciprocity of CPA qualifications even among the US State Boards. Despite these obstacles Steve and the committee availed themselves of every opportunity to explore a solution to this ongoing dilemma.

## Profile: Steven Taylor (cont'd)

## Foreign Credential Evaluators in the US

During the course of his busy career Steve also found the time to serve as guest lecturer at the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business-Laventhal School of Accounting for over 10 years. He established and ran an annual case study for the honors program students and participated in the summer leadership program and business school for the Hispanic Student Association. He also served as guest lecturer at the University of California, Anderson School of Business where he established a 30-hour course entitled "The Business of Entertainment" and ran it for eight years.

He was also a guest lecturer at the following business and management schools: Claremont Graduate University, Peter Druker Graduate School of Management, Southern Methodist University, Cox School of Business, and Monash University, Syme School of Accounting in Australia as well as the Macquarie Business School in Sydney.

In addition, Steve and his counterpart at Fox Studios devised an accounting policy in 1997 to record the revenues and costs associated with the blockbuster *Titanic*. This was the first co-financed movie for Paramount and set a precedent for forming production partnerships with other studios which is still followed today.

During the course of his busy and demanding career, he has always found the time to help others toward achieving their goals. Steve is noted for giving back to the community, whether it be to ACCA members, to students, or to the business community at large and has contributed significantly to enhancing the reputation and influence of ACCA throughout the US and abroad.

In recognition for his outstanding contribution to the development of the accounting and finance profession and especially in helping ACCA members and students progress in their careers and in establishing ACCA in the United States, Steve was selected to receive an ACCA Achievement Award which was announced at the World Congress of Accountants in Istanbul on November 14.

The National Association of Credential Evaluating Services (NACES®) lists 17 credential evaluators on their website [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org). Of these, five organizations are most frequently noted by ACCA members and students as being employed by them to obtain evaluations for State Boards or educational facilities. Hopefully the following information will help you make an informed choice.

### **Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE)**

260 E. Highland Ave. Suite 300  
Milwaukee WI 53202  
414-289-3400  
Contact: [eval@ece.org](mailto:eval@ece.org)  
Website: <http://www.ece.org>

ECE is a non-profit public service organization that identifies the U.S. equivalence of foreign educational credentials. It has been in business over 20 years and more than 1,000 educational institutions, employers, and professional licensing boards employ ECE to evaluate foreign credentials.

An ACCA member is considered to have the equivalent to a US Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in accounting. To determine equivalency they look at the following factors: recognition status of the institution in the country of origin, admission requirements (A-Levels in this case), length of program, level of program (undergraduate, graduate, PhD), and how the credential is viewed in the country of origin.

### **Foreign Academic Credentials Service (FACS)**

P.O. Box 400  
Glen Carbon, IL 62034  
618-307-6036 MF 9:30 – 12:00 CST  
618-656-5291 MF 1:00 – 5:00 CST  
Contact: [admin@facsusa.com](mailto:admin@facsusa.com)  
Website: [www.facsusa.com](http://www.facsusa.com)

FACS assists persons educated abroad in determining the equivalency of their foreign credentials in terms of an education in the United States. FACS was established to replace the former AICPA Foreign Academic Credentials Service in 1982. The FACS staff specializes in accountancy and business and prepares advisory evaluations for over 40 state boards of accountancy in the US. FACS is a charter member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services.



## Foreign Credential Evaluators (cont'd)

The senior evaluator at this organization has been conducting evaluations since 1972. He stated that FACS generally equates ACCA to a three year university degree. Each subject is worth 6 hours; 14 subjects would equal 84 semester hours versus the general requirement for 150 hours in the US for an undergraduate degree for most state boards. According to FACS many State Boards will not recognize a professional designation unless actual lecture hours are attended.

### **International Education Research Foundation (IERF)**

P.O.Box 3665  
Culver City, CA 91231  
310-258-9451  
Contact: [www.info@ierf.org](mailto:www.info@ierf.org)  
Website: <http://www.ierf.org>

Since 1969 IERF's credentials evaluation service has worked very closely with many schools and universities throughout the U.S., focusing on assessing the educational backgrounds of students with non-U.S. academic credentials and providing statements of U.S. educational equivalency. IERF is a not-for-profit organization registered in the State of California. They work with about a dozen State Boards primarily on the west coast including Oregon, California, and Washington as well as South and North Carolina on the east coast.

This credential evaluator specializes in the UK and commonwealth countries, and stated that certified accountants in the UK were normally rated as having the equivalent of a BS in accounting. The rating depends on the entrance requirements: A levels will provide more semester units; humanities courses will equate to 6 credits; sciences, 8 credits. The ACCA qualification will normally equate to 120 credits depending on the individual's transcripts. They also attempt to examine the content of the courses.

### **Josef Silny & Associates**

7101 SW 102 Avenue  
Miami, FL 33176  
305-273-1616  
Contact: [info@jsilny.com](mailto:info@jsilny.com)  
Website: [www.jsilny.com](http://www.jsilny.com)

Josef Silny evaluates and translates foreign educational credentials and issues a report of equivalency in terms of the educational system in the United States. Their foreign credential evaluations and translations are used for high school, undergraduate, and graduate admission, immigration,

employment, professional licensure, and other purposes.

The UK specialist at this organization claims that they work with at least half the state boards in the US. He pointed out that many states will have the evaluations sent to a centralized CPA examination service in Nashville, TN which coordinates all the paperwork, completes the follow-up and sends the results to the individual State Boards. ACCA is rated by this organization as equivalent to a US bachelors degree. Membership in ACCA would be equated to a BA for the purpose of entering a graduate program in the US. The evaluator noted that ACCA is extremely cooperative and helpful to work with. Members in the US have found them very responsive.

### **World Education Services (WES)**

80 Broad Street, 5th Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
212-966-6311  
Contact: [info@wes.org](mailto:info@wes.org)  
Website: <http://www.wes.org>

With more than 100 full-time employees, WES is the largest international credential evaluation service in the United States and Canada, processing applications from virtually every country in the world. WES was established in 1974 and maintains its headquarters in New York City. Additional WES offices are located in Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, and Washington, DC.

Thirty State Accountancy (CPA) Boards accept WES evaluations. For a complete list, please visit their website.

According to the Manager, Academic Services, the ACCA designation is the UK equivalent to a US CPA. According to the Area Specialist, WES equates the completion of the professional examination scheme to a bachelor's degree. However, because of the professionally-based nature of the program, they don't recommend the full 120 undergraduate credits when they do a course-by-course evaluation. They recommend around half that number of credits for the completed course of examinations. They arrive at the credit allocation because they consider the program as being comparable to the completion a major in accounting at a U.S. institution, without the general education component that's traditionally part of a U.S. bachelor's degree.

According to the Assistant Director of Academic Services Specialists, the ACCA qualification would be assessed by WES according to the assessment of the host country; i.e. if it is equivalent to a degree in the UK, then it will be recognized as such by WES.

# In Brief . . .

## **The New ACCA Qualification**

As part of the introduction and implementation of the new ACCA Qualification, the last sitting of the current scheme exams will be in June 2007 and the first sitting of the new exams will be in December 2007. In August 2007 all current students will be converted to the new ACCA Qualification and advised of the papers they will need to complete the new syllabus.

When calculating the paper equivalents for the new qualification, ACCA has ensured that the total number of exam papers required of students transferring to the new syllabus will be no greater than under the current scheme. Please visit [www.accaglobal.com/horizon](http://www.accaglobal.com/horizon) for full details about conversion arrangements.

## **Student Study Partners**

ACCA-US has recently launched a study partner, or "study buddy" program whereby students will be matched according to the papers they are currently studying and, where possible, in the same city. The program has been met with great enthusiasm. Its objective is to help provide encouragement, support and productive dialogue among students in the US. Please contact Patricia Limoges at [patricia.limoges@us.accaglobal.com](mailto:patricia.limoges@us.accaglobal.com) for further information.

## **Coach/mentoring Program**

The coach/mentoring program introduced last year is on-going. If students in the US would like a coach/mentor to assist them with effective study and exam techniques, career advice or help new arrivals acclimatize themselves to the US culture and mores, please contact Patricia at the above email address.

## **Helpful hints to pass exams - contributed by ACCA student Paul Kudoto**

### **Studying**

- Read through your study manual to gain a good understanding of what the examiner requires.
- Download and review the last 10 past questions and answers.
- Learn the examiners approach to answering the questions paying particular attention to presentation
- Note the areas you have problems with and after you have gone through the last 10 questions, if the problem persists, read the manual about it and seek help from other reliable sources.

- Read every article in *Student Accountant* and the ACCA website concerning the paper(s) you are attempting especially those within six months of your exam. It will provide the 6 points that will take you from 45 to 51.

### **The Examination**

- Remember there is one mark for each point so your points should be equal to the marks allocated.
- When you are asked to list, list!
- When you are asked to explain, describe, examine; define, give examples and state the outcomes
- Aim for at least 60 percent of the marks in any section you attempt
- If you find a section difficult, do your best and leave it after you have spent 1.5 minutes x marks allocated to it.
- Split questions into parts with the word "and". You will notice that in the model answers. Give headings for each part and bullets for each point.

## **ACCARealise Deadline**

Members included in Phase 1 (members admitted since 1/1/01) and Phase 2 (admitted between 1/1/95-1/1/00) of ACCARealise who have received their subscription notification for 2007 must complete and return the section dedicated to the annual CPD return, together with the annual subscription payment, by January 1, 2007. To check which CPD phase you are in, or if personal circumstances mean you may wish to find out about a CPD waiver, email [members@accaglobal.com](mailto:members@accaglobal.com)

The returns process is very straightforward. Tick a box to indicate your chosen CPD route: the unit route, the ACCA Approved Employer route, or the IFAC body route. You will also need to indicate, if you are involved in the preparation or presentation of accounts which investors may rely on. Finally, sign a declaration that you have completed your CPD requirement and that your professional ethics are up to date.

Don't submit anything with your CPD return, but keep evidence for three years in the event that you are selected for a CPD activity review. For further information please go to [www.accaglobal.com/cpdrealise/](http://www.accaglobal.com/cpdrealise/)

# ACCA-US CHAPTER EVENTS

## Dallas Chapter Meeting, June 17

Members, affiliates, students and friends gathered at a local restaurant to hear the guest speaker Lori Cannon, audit partner of Adami, Lindsey & Company discuss "How to catch crooks that cook the books." The meeting went into overtime due to an enthusiastic Q&A session that followed.

Luba Brewster, Dallas chapter head, chaired the meeting.



## Chicago Chapter Meeting July 28

A near record number of ACCA members, affiliates, students and their guests attended a reception at the Westin-North Hotel in downtown Chicago to meet Dennis Yeates, global president of ACCA, and Andrew Silverman, Director of Communications from ACCA headquarters. The meeting also featured a senior representative from the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA-Chicago) who discussed the benefits of membership, activities and CPD events sponsored by IIA in the Chicago area.

Ian Betts, the Chicago chapter head, presided over the meeting.



## Atlanta Chapter Meeting September 7

ACCA members, affiliates, student and their guests attended the second Atlanta chapter meeting/dinner on September 7 at a Chinese restaurant in Buckhead, an Atlanta suburb.

Jeff Bowman, the Atlanta chapter head, gave a presentation on the economic and financial effects of catastrophes in the USA, with specific emphasis on Katrina last year, and cyclones and typhoons. The meeting attracted a substantial turnout.

# ACCA-US CHAPTER EVENTS

## South Florida Chapter Meeting, September 16

Pursuant to the global partnership agreement signed between ACCA and the Institute of Internal Auditors in 2005, Michele Drolette, who has been a member of the IIA since 1998, met with the members of the South Florida chapter to discuss IIA's local activities, the benefits of membership and the requirements to write the qualifying exam, among other topics.

The meeting was held at a famous seafood restaurant, Charlie's Crab, in Fort Lauderdale. Kirsty Taylor, the South Florida chapter head, presided.



## Boston Chapter Meeting, September 29

The Boston chapter meeting drew a record crowd to hear Helen Perkins discuss CPD requirements, options and resources, followed by Joe O'Regan, operations manager of the Waldorf School, who provided a profile of his organization and its operations. Due to time constraints, the presentation by Connifer Campbell on the ramifications of Sarbanes-Oxley was rescheduled for the December meeting. Each presentation was followed by a lively Q & A session. The dinner meeting was held at the Art Gallery of Bunker Hill Community College, Charlestown Campus where members and students also enjoyed viewing the art exhibit - *Faith in Art* - by well-known artists.

Weusi Tafawa, Boston chapter head, arranged and presided at meeting





# ACCA-US CHAPTER EVENTS

## Southern California Chapter Meeting, October 7

ACCA members, students and their guests enjoyed the opportunity to network, renew old acquaintances, make new friends and discuss issues of concern to ACCAs in the US at a lunch meeting in Van Nuys, California. Both Prem Goyal, president of ACCA-US and Claude Birch, International Assembly representative, were present to discuss recent developments with ACCA in the US and globally.

Paul Acheampong, the Southern CA chapter head, presided at the meeting.



## Houston Chapter Meeting, October 26

As guest speaker, Christie Erickson, President of the Houston chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors noted that sharing a common language is critical for the efficient coordination of governance efforts and the exchange of information between accounting professionals both within and outside of the organization. She highly recommended that the appropriate professional qualification be obtained whether an accountant performed audit assignments on a limited basis or as a full-time internal auditor. The speaker also noted that membership in IIA will help ACCA members maintain auditing expertise through appropriate exposure to relevant professional guidance, educational material and networking opportunities.

Irina Leontieva, Houston chapter head, chaired the meeting.



## MORE CHAPTER EVENTS

### Northern CA Chapter Meeting, October 26

Princy Jain, CIA, CCSA, Chapter President of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) San Jose Chapter was the guest speaker at the event. He spoke on the topic of Internal Audit and discussed IIA's activities in the area, the benefits of membership and upcoming CPD events.

IIA and ACCA have signed a global partnership agreement whereby the two organizations plan to co-operate, collaborate and share resources across their global networks of offices and affiliate bodies. Under this agreement, ACCA strongly advises its members that any internal audit work they conduct should be performed in accordance with the IIA's International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and the IIA's Professional Practices Framework.

Kathy Yu-Liu, the new Northern California chapter head, chaired the meeting.



### VA/MD/DC Inaugural Chapter Meeting, November 9

Members, affiliates, students and guests from China, Ghana, Sudan, Barbados, Jamaica, Russia, the UK and other countries turned out in record numbers to launch the VA/MD/DC chapter with over 40 in attendance. This meeting provided the first opportunity for ACCAs in the area to meet each other to discuss issues of mutual interest and plan venues and speakers for upcoming quarterly meetings. Members and students expressed keen interest in meeting on a regular basis to network and learn from industry leaders in the area.

Ali Eltilib, manager, financial services, PricewaterhouseCoopers, has agreed to become the chapter head and organize venues and speakers for future meetings.



## OTHER EVENTS

### Singer, Lewak, Greenbaum & Goldstein - First US Accounting Firm to Achieve ACCA Approved CPD Employer Accreditation

Employers whose training programs meet ACCA's rigorous criteria can become "approved CPD employers", and are rewarded with a broad range of helpful tools to implement their staff development programs. These include e-learning resources such as on line courses, a CPD planning tool known as the professional development matrix and an internet-based knowledge library.

At a ceremony marking the occasion, Karyn Gallen, Director of Professional Development at SLGG, said, "The recent challenges faced by the accounting industry over the last several years have made investment in the professional development of our workforce more important than ever. In presenting the award, Prem Goyal, President, ACCA-US noted, "Approved employer" status provides a benchmark of good practice to employers around the world and gives SLGG public recognition for the quality of support and training they invest in their employees."



### North American & Caribbean Marketing Conference, September 25–27

The event was part of a global roll-out of the ACCA marketing strategy in 2006 with similar events being held in Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, South Asia and Europe.

The three-day conference consisted of a combination of presentations and discussions of ACCA's growth trends, retention, satisfaction measurements among students and members, market share data and ideas regarding the launch of the new ACCA Qualification.

Discussions were aimed at identifying issues and aligning marketing priorities at the global and regional level. Participants also focused on sharing insights to support ACCA's overall development and build on existing plans for development in their respective regions.





## Top 10 ACCA Markets

You may find it of noteworthy that the US is among the 10 top ACCA markets in the world, in terms of total members, as of the end of 2005.

Market	Rank	Total Members
UK	1st	53086
Hong Kong	2nd	16609
Malaysia	3rd	7417
Ireland	4th	5973
Singapore	5th	5161
Australia	6th	1451
Cyprus	7th	1414
Mauritius	8th	1372
<b>USA</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>1315</b>
Trinidad	10th	1285

**NOTICE:** ACCA members, affiliates and students - would you please log onto myACCA on the ACCA website at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) and make sure your e-mail address is correct. ACCA would also greatly appreciate it, if you would include your current employer and your title at your place of employment. It is very important that we have all the data possible on members and students so that ACCA can develop the most appropriate services and support possible. Your comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter would also be greatly appreciated. We want to make it as interesting and relevant to your needs as possible. Please direct your comments to [patricia.limoges@us.accaglobal.com](mailto:patricia.limoges@us.accaglobal.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

Patricia Limoges  
Senior Advisor, ACCA-US

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