



**ACFE**<sup>®</sup>

Association of Certified Fraud Examiners

**ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED FRAUD EXAMINERS**

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## Chapter of the Year Houston Area Chapter

### **What qualifies the nominee for the Chapter of the Year award?**

The Houston Chapter has continued to be a high-performing and high-contributing chapter of the ACFE. In 2018, we looked at making what was great even better. From new membership initiatives to greater support of our future fraud fighters, we stepped up and showed our members and the community how impactful the Houston Chapter is. Our support of our members and community is not only shown in our monetary contributions, but also in the countless hours of volunteering and promotion of the ACFE, Houston ACFE and the CFE credential throughout the Houston and surrounding areas, as well as collaboration with chapters nationwide.

### **How many educational/training events did the nominee hold in 2018?**

The Houston Chapter held 19 educational/training events in 2018 for 66 CPE hours offered. In addition to nine regular monthly luncheons totaling nine CPE hours, we also partnered with local universities to provide continuing education to professionals in the outer areas of the city totaling five CPE hours. We also offered three longer seminars totaling 36 CPE hours and a two-day conference totaling 16 hours. Within these events were two opportunities to obtain the required 2 hours of ethics credits for CFE maintenance. Note: our two-day conference was sold-out 6 weeks in advance at which time we reconfigured the seating arrangements allowing additional seats to be available. Because of our successful conferences, we have seen speakers from all over the country reaching out to us to be a part of our Annual Houston Fraud Conference.

### **Does the nominee have a website or newsletter to share chapter information with members?**

Yes, the Houston Chapter website ([www.houstonacfe.org](http://www.houstonacfe.org)) won Website of the Year in 2017 and gives our members access to information about the ACFE and the Houston Chapter. On the website, a visitor can find information on upcoming ACFE and Houston Chapter events, news articles from the Board and other members, benefits of joining the Houston Chapter membership, and fraud and investigative resources. They can also find opportunities for contributing money to the ACFE's Richie-Jennings Memorial Scholarship Fund or the Houston Chapter's Scholarship Fund. Visitors can also search for local fraud examiners by various categories, locate contact information for the chapter's board or mail for questions or further assistance. Members also have the ability to indicate in their online profile whether they wanted to identify themselves as volunteers for future community service events or to be on the speaker bureau for future CPE events.

**Briefly describe the outreach/community service projects in which the nominee has been involved that have resulted in a recognized improvement in the community. What were the results?**

Promotion of Fraud Awareness Week – In the lead-up to Fraud Awareness Week, we notified chapter members and local radio and TV stations about Fraud Awareness Week, providing instructions on how to find more information. Additionally, we hosted a Fraud Awareness Week networking event where Houston ACFE members and fraud professionals had the opportunity to network with small business owners and discuss fraud risks. This resulted in greater awareness of fraud potential for owners of small businesses who may feel that they are too small of a target or do not feel that anti-fraud controls are valuable.

Recognition of Fraud Fighting Leadership in the Local Community - The Chapter recognizes members of the community that have made notable contributions to the global fight against fraud with its Fraud Fighter of the Year Award (given to an individual that was instrumental in the identification, investigation and prosecution of a significant fraud); CFE of the Year (given to an individual that made significant contributions to the fraud fighting profession); and Educator of the Year (given to a Houston Area educator working to cultivate the next generation of fraud fighters). The Awards have publically highlighted and promoted the continuing efforts made in the fraud fight and have helped get much more interaction with local universities and students.

Networking with Organizations Holding Mutual Interests – In 2018, the Houston Chapter held a luncheon with the American Society for Industrial Security, exposing its members to the CFE credential. The Chapter also held a networking evening with the Houston Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) to coincide with the Chapter’s Annual Conference. The networking event attracted over 50 Houston IIA members that were not members of the ACFE resulting in exposure and increased interest of the ACFE mission and goals to individuals previously unaware of our organization and chapter.

**What has the nominee done to promote the CFE credential to ACFE members in the chapter's geographic area?**

On November 12, 2018, the Chapter’s President and Vice President participated in a radio interview on Houston’s The Eagle (106.9 and 107.5 FM) titled, “For Your Information” and highlighted the ACFE, the Houston ACFE Chapter as well as the CFE credential. The interview was aired the following Sunday morning on all their sister radio stations. The interview was also posted online on all station websites for streaming and downloading. This resulted in potentially hundreds-of-thousands of people (ACFE members and nonmembers) listening to our interview and learning about the ACFE and CFE credential.

The Houston Chapter continues to entice pursuit of the CFE credential through a \$500 award to members that recently achieved the CFE designation. In 2018, the Chapter Board granted 12 awards for a total of \$6,000, which were presented at various chapter meetings and highlighted on our website.

In 2018, we held 5 training events at local university campuses located in the outskirts of the Houston Metro geographical area in order to allow ACFE members who are not able to attend regular chapter meetings and events the ability to network and receive continuing education towards maintaining their certifications. We also invited students to attend for free so they could network with professionals in attendance and to gain insight into the topics being presented.

The Chapter also participated in the SecureWorld Cybersecurity Conference in May 2018 to stay visible in the fast-evolving world of cyber-crimes. At this conference, we staffed an exhibitor booth and met with many attendees stopping by to discuss the ACFE and the Houston Chapter. We also networked with other exhibitor organizations to discuss alignment in our missions and the opportunity to hold joint events.

Houston Chapter board members discussed with ACFE members in Bryan/College Station, TX (a small city about an hour drive outside of Houston) about the benefits of bringing the ACFE to their area. That discussion led to the formation of a short-term plan to hold Houston Chapter events in the BCS area to foster interest and engagement, and a long-term plan to support the establishment of a BCS chapter.

**What has the nominee done to promote the CFE credential to the next generation of fraud fighters?**

In 2018 alone, the Houston Chapter gave a total of \$47,000 to scholarships benefitting the next generation of fraud fighters. We created an endowed scholarship of \$25,000 at the University of Houston (UH) for students in select majors leading to anti-fraud professions. We donated \$12,000 to the Richie-Jennings Memorial Scholarship Fund to support the education of students who have an interest in pursuing a career in fraud examination; and we gave \$5,000 toward scholarships to both Sam Houston State University (SHSU) and University of Houston – Clear Lake (UHCL) to provide financial assistance to students with anti-fraud majors.

We also helped to re-establish the UH Student Chapter in 2018. The chapter had dwindled then ceased to exist in previous years, but through dedicated communications and focused efforts of our Board and UH faculty advisors, the UH Student Chapter has been reinvigorated with new energy and vision for the future.

In the 2018 Spring and Fall semesters combined, members of the Board and Chapter participated in 18 UH, UHCL, and SHSU ACFE Student Chapters' meetings to continue communication to new and prospective student chapter members about the ACFE and various fraud topics. Also in 2018, the Houston Board approved the membership policy to allow students who obtain ACFE membership at their university to be given free membership to the Houston ACFE professional chapter.

Students at local colleges and universities are provided reduced luncheon and Annual Chapter Conference fees, resume reviews, mock interviews, resume blasts, and scholarships. Additionally, we often invite and offer complimentary registration to a select number of students at each chapter event. We also allow the student chapters to put their events on our website so other chapters can learn from each other and our membership can see the wonderful events they are holding at their own universities.

**What has the nominee done to promote the CFE credential to non-ACFE members?**

The Houston Chapter provided a speaker for the Council of Petroleum Accountants Societies (COPAS) Fall 2018 National Meeting in Corpus Christi, TX. In this conference breakout session, a summary of the ACFE was given and the 2018 *Report to the Nations* was presented and discussed with their members in attendance who work in academia, governmental agencies, consulting companies, oil and gas exploration and production companies ranging from sole

proprietorships to larger international corporations. This not only introduced the audience to the ACFE and CFE credential, but also provided valuable information about occupational fraud.

The Houston Chapter has also been sought out as a source and has provided anti-fraud speakers several times throughout 2018 at various companies and organizations' events. A Houston Chapter Board member has also been involved in assisting the Houston IIA in developing the fraud (concurrent) track for the Houston IIA Annual Conference in 2018. By identifying and selecting speakers (some who are CFEs) on anti-fraud topics, exposure to the ACFE/CFE credential was given to almost 1,000 people in attendance.

**What has the chapter done to give back to chapter members?**

The Houston Chapter's primary strategy for achieving our mission is giving back to our members and community. In 2018, the Houston Board of Directors approved a \$40,000 budget for subsidizing or potentially supporting full registration for 40-80 members of the chapter to attend the *30th Annual ACFE Global Conference* in Austin, TX. We also subsidized expenses for 4 people in the amount of \$3,000 to attend the *29th Annual ACFE Global Conference* in Las Vegas, NV.

The Houston Chapter raffled off four *CFE Prep Courses* to members of the Chapter interested in obtaining their CFE certification. We also gave away one *CFE Exam Prep Course* in a membership drive to one lucky non-CFE joining our membership during that time. In that same membership drive, we gave away a free Houston Fraud Conference registration to one lucky CFE joining our chapter. As mentioned in other responses, the Houston Chapter offered three free networking events and always offers reduced event registration for members – including registration to our two-day conference.

**Has the nominee been of any help to other chapters?**

The Houston Chapter is recognized by chapters world-wide as a leader in chapter practices and management. We have collaborated with several chapters in 2018, both in state and out of state, to offer advice, examples, tools and techniques for other chapters to utilize for improved performance. Most notably, we are recognized as a subject matter expert on the utilization of the Wild Apricot website platform.