



# Education, Friendship, Networking

**BY** MARC P. PALKER, CMA

**N**EXT MONTH, IMA® will host its most popular educational and networking event of the year—the Annual Conference & Expo. Already boasting great registration numbers, ACE2017 in Denver, Colo., June 17–21, offers something new: eight specialty tracks that map directly to the daily job responsibilities of a management accountant. That means attendees will learn skills to help them deliver more value to their employers and, at the same time, increase their

own value as an accounting professional or as a CMA® (Certified Management Accountant).

I've attended IMA Annual Conferences as a member for the past 30 years, and, during that time, I've come away with incredible rewards. If you plan to attend ACE2017, you can expect to gain:

**1. EDUCATION.** This year's Conference promises an exciting lineup of speakers with a broad depth of knowledge. The keynote sessions will feature motivational speakers who will share their life experiences and accomplishments, while concurrent sessions will focus on more narrow skill sets that track directly to the CMA body of knowledge. Both types of sessions will give you the ability to perform at a higher level on the job, as well as inspiration that can shape your perspective on life.

**2. FRIENDSHIP.** I've met incredibly dynamic IMA members and other accounting professionals

during my Conference experiences over the years. I've developed relationships with colleagues who have provided me support to solve professional dilemmas and address tough challenges. I count IMA members among some of my closest friends, and every ACE is a chance to both reconnect with them and forge new relationships that could turn into lifelong bonds.

**3. NETWORKING.** During the four-day event, you're invited to extend beyond your comfort zone and reach out to individuals you might never meet otherwise. The fact is, you never

know where your next opportunity will come from. I've heard stories of people meeting the person who eventually serves as the next president of their company, as well as stories of people who have gotten married after meeting at the Conference. ACE can be life changing.

«ACE is a  
**CHANCE TO**  
forge new  
**RELATIONSHIPS.**»



I'm excited by the high number of IMA members who have already committed to attending ACE2017, which indicates an endorsement of the specialty track redesign and an appreciation for the continuing

quality of the Conference offerings. If you haven't registered yet, I encourage you to do so at [www.imaconference.org](http://www.imaconference.org) before onsite registration takes effect. And if you've already registered, thank you. Now consider inviting a colleague or friend to attend along with you. You won't regret it. Hope to see you in Denver!

You can reach out to me at [mpalker@imanet.org](mailto:mpalker@imanet.org). **SF**

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