

Student Profile

Michael (Mike) Mowrey – Master of Professional Accountancy Program



Your Time at UCI

What made you decide to pursue a graduate degree?

I was working with an electronic integrator here in Orange County with a role in sales. The company was relatively small and in addition to sales, I was helping compose estimates, budgets, invoices, and other miscellaneous financial documents. As I continued to gain experience in the accounting and financial side of the business I determined I enjoyed it much more than my current position. I started looking into career opportunities and talking with professionals in the accounting field and determined obtaining a master's degree would provide me with the best long-term career opportunities.

As an individual with a business background, I was familiar with accounting but after speaking with professionals, I received multiple recommendations to return to school. While it was possible to enter into the accounting field, I realized the positions I was interested in preferred a master's degree and ultimately a CPA license. I found the MPAc program would provide me with the knowledge firms were looking for as well as the necessary education to sit for the CPA.

Why did you choose to come to UCI?

While I was looking to make the change from sales to accounting, I spoke to multiple professionals in the field who were located in the Orange County area. Each professional had something positive to say about UCI's MPAc program, some of whom brought up the program without being prompted. It became clear individuals in the field who worked in the Orange County area are well aware, and have high regards for the MPAc program. When I visited campus, I learned of all the career services available to the MPAc students as well as the success of previous graduates. I came to the conclusion, if I wanted to work in the accounting field in Orange County, UCI's MPAc program would provide me with the best opportunities.

What are your hobbies/passions outside of research?

Outside of the program, I enjoy playing sports, hiking, or going to the gym. I play in a recreational ice hockey league as well as an indoor soccer league here in Irvine. In addition to physical activities, I enjoy camping along the southern California coast with my friends and family.

Reflections

What are you most proud of accomplishing (so far) in your graduate program?

I have been able to build an amazing network here at UCI's MPAC program. I have been able to network with individuals who are currently in the field, firm partners and firm principles. I have become friends with my classmates and regularly get together outside of school. I can say that I now know individuals at most of the firms in the Orange County area. I have been able to make connections through networking events and I will have friends starting careers at numerous firms. The connections you make here are invaluable. Moving forward after graduation, I know I will be able to reach out to any of my MPAC classmates. This provides graduates with an instant network in the accounting field directly out of school.

What advice do you have for a new graduate student in your program?

I would advise any student who is considering the MPAC program to do your homework in order to determine what program is the best fit for you. When I was considering programs, I visited other MBA and Masters of Accountancy programs, and reviewed the programs and metrics before choosing UCI's MPAC program. I highly recommend speaking with the amazing staff, if you haven't done so already. For those students who are able to visit campus I would highly recommend visiting the Merage School and arranging a tour. Additionally, the MPAC program has student ambassadors, students who are currently in the program or alumni of the program. If you have any questions regarding the program these students, or alumni, are a great resource.