



Past National President Jullin Renthrope to Receive 2007 Robert W. King Memorial Award

When AGA Past National President Jullin Renthrope, CGFM, CPA, CFE, CGFO, heard he had been selected to receive AGA's highest honor, the Robert W. King Memorial Award, the feeling was indescribable.

"It was quite a joy," he said. "I just felt so good because this is such an honor to receive this type of recognition, especially from this Association that I so truly believe in."

Established in honor of the Association's founding president, the award is conferred in the form of a gold medal to an Association member for distinguished service of such significance that it has greatly enhanced the Association's national prestige and stature. It's an appropriate award for a National President who picked the theme, "AGA—Taking Accountability to the Next Level," and who succeeded in expanding AGA's influence in all levels of government during the 2003–2004 program year.

"Certainly one of the most important things a leader can do is to provide a vision—something that makes people think, perhaps in a way they hadn't before, and inspires them to do something different and better," said National President Jeffrey S. Hart, CGFM, CFE. "Jullin's theme of 'Taking Accountability to the Next Level' did that for our AGA staff and members throughout the country and is certainly one of the reasons AGA has been thinking outside the box, stretching the envelope and has become such as respected institution throughout government."

Immediate Past National President Sam M. McCall, MPA, CGFM, CPA, CIA, CGAP, said he is so pleased that Jullin is being honored with AGA's top award. "His openness, honesty, integrity, dedication to the government financial management profession and contributions to AGA are both admired and appreciated."

Past National President Bobby Derrick, MBA, CGFM, who served immediately after Renthrope, recalled speaking at a joint meeting of the Baton Rouge and New Orleans Chapters where he said Jullin was the personification of integrity, professionalism and ethical behavior. "I made the comment to the effect that he embodied all of the positive characteristics that we could ever want in a man, a professional and a public servant. It was at that point when the entire audience gave Jullin a standing ovation. I had never seen an audience react so spontaneously," Derrick recalled. "I don't think I could have been more proud of anyone than I was of Jullin, for I knew that everyone felt the same."

Derrick called it a "wow moment" he will never forget, "and what a statement it made about the Jullin that I know and love."

Jullin's commitment to the organization started in the 1970s, when Eugene Martin, senior auditor in Louisiana's Office of the Legislative Auditor, encouraged him to join AGA, "and it seems like I've been an officer ever since," Jullin said, laughing. He is now the New Orleans Office Manager and an audit manager in the Office of the Legislative Auditor. Jullin said Joseph H. Burris, Louisiana's Legislative Auditor and a member of AGA's National Executive Committee (NEC) at the time, served as his mentor and supported him in all his AGA activities.

"I was impressed with the quality of the programs and activities, the professionals involved with AGA at all levels of government, and since government auditing is my major focus, the Association was the premier organization for my interest," Jullin said.

In Jullin's very first year as a member of AGA's New Orleans Chapter, he made his mark, receiving a national award as a top recruiter at his first Professional Development Conference & Exposition. He has served as the New Orleans Chapter President and in other chapter offices, holding some of the positions more than once. He moved on to regional and national leadership positions, as South Central Regional Vice President 1998–1999, and as chair of AGA's National Public Service Committee. As Immediate Past National President, he chaired the National Nominating Committee.

He made it his goal years ago to become AGA's National President, even writing it into his professional improvement plans. He began serving on the NEC in 2002 and became AGA's 2003–2004 National President. "You set your goals, write it down, and follow through and it will happen," he said. "But it doesn't just come to you, you've got to put the effort in."

During his tenure, AGA launched the Certificate of Excellence in Service Efforts and Accomplishments (SEA) Reporting Program, which encourages state and local governments to provide meaningful and comprehensive reports on government performance. Continued funding of the program was contingent upon a successful pilot phase, and AGA exceeded the targets for the number of reports evaluated and the number of reviewers who were recruited and trained.

He is also a tireless supporter of AGA membership and the CGFM designation, promoting both to candidates and employers at all levels of government. Total AGA membership began an upward trend during Jullin's presidency, and the CGFM Program reached many more candidates when testing was offered for the first time during the PDC. The number of Corporate Partners, now at more than 60, increased at that time as well, and AGA's research program got started. The Corporate Partner Advisory Group has issued a dozen research reports since then.

One of Jullin's biggest challenges—and the accomplishment he is most proud of—was leading the process to hire a new executive director. A search committee had been formed prior to his term, but it was under his leadership that Relmond P. Van Daniker, DBA, CPA, was chosen to replace the retiring Charles W. Culkin Jr., CGFM.

"During that time I was traveling, some nights I was in a hotel on the phone discussing the selection," he said. "It was quite challenging. There were a lot of considerations to be made, but the committee worked hard and we made an excellent choice."

Van Daniker said, "Jullin went the extra mile to make sure the transition was smooth and successful. He made my first few months a positive experience for all, and I have always valued his dedication, energy and support."

Jullin and the entire New Orleans Chapter are still in the midst of their biggest transition ever—recovering from Hurricane Katrina. The 2005 hurricane season damaged homes and scattered members in so many different states that the chapter could not hold meetings for many months. Jullin noted that many members worked at the National Finance Center in New Orleans, but the employees continued to process paychecks and maintained operations in the aftermath of the storm. Jullin's own family had only been back in their home for six weeks as of the beginning of June. The flooding severely damaged the first floor of his home, which needed to be gutted. His family divided its time between a FEMA trailer in his backyard and a rented home in Baton Rouge, working solidly for two years to get their home back in shape.

"Things are looking brighter every day, and New Orleans is going to be all right," he said.

Jullin also sees a bright future for AGA, as citizens continue to demand transparency in how their taxpayer dollars are spent. "The Association of Government Accountants is a major player in advancing accountability at all levels of government," he said.

AGA will bring the PDC to New Orleans in 2009, and Jullin is sure to play a big part in hosting the event.

"My heart is with AGA."

By: Christina M. Camara