

"The CGFM stamp has shown that I am qualified..."

Combining public accounting and state government financial management, Gerry Boaz and John Compton say their CGFM success stories involve reaching their government financial management goals.

"The CGFM stamp has shown that I am qualified for the job at hand and that the services being rendered are professional," said Boaz, legislative auditor IV for the state of Tennessee.

Compton, audit manager for the PA-based CPA firm Parente, Randolph, Orlando, Carey & Associates, said, "I'm definitely encouraging the individuals involved in the government services division of our firm to take the CGFM exams because it will further assure our governmental clients of our expertise in this specialized field."

Boaz, who has been working in government financial management for the past five years, learned of the CGFM exams through articles in Government Financial Management TOPICS and The Government Accountants Journal.

Recognizing that the Tennessee state government system emphasizes advanced professional accreditation programs, he took steps toward the CGFM. "Luckily, I worked with an individual who had successfully passed the exams, and that person helped to give me the in-depth realities that I was going to face taking the exams," he said.

When Boaz was in the early stages of preparing for the exam, the CGFM courses weren't available, so he relied on self-study and experience. He said, "I obtained an outline of the exam which displayed the various topics in each exam, and then progressed to use my experience in the field and other resources."

Now that several individuals in Boaz's office have passed the CGFM exams, it has added professionalism and credibility to their work.

Predictions for the future of the CGFM professional accreditation program were easy for Boaz. "I believe that professional accreditation, namely the CGFM, will weigh heavily on promotions because the state government system is moving in that direction."

Compton's work with a large CPA firm in Pennsylvania offered a variant to the CGFM experience. Compton, who has been with his firm for more than 11 years, learned about the CGFM Program in 1997 through a variety of AGA publications.

Because his work is heavily concentrated in the area of state and local government audits, he became interested in taking the exams.

"I mentioned the CGFM accreditation program to a partner in the firm, explained what it was, and we both agreed that it made sense to pursue," he said.

He found the AGA website to be a tremendous help because it pointed out some valuable documents that he could use. "I was lucky because the firm has a great library, so these sources were a quick find," Compton said. He was willing to admit that he did not have much experience with federal government issues, so he signed up to take a CGFM course. "I really enjoyed the course that Management Concepts offered because it did an excellent job to help me prepare," Compton said.

Compton's career benefited from earning the CGFM designation. His work centers on county, city and school district auditing and he recognized the value in showing his credibility in federal, state and local government financial management. "The CGFM tells my clients that I understand their business."

After 10 years had passed in Compton's career, he felt that studying for and earning the CGFM designation helped him to refocus on the financial issues critical to government, and it gave him the edge he desired.

Boaz and Compton, two financial managers with far different experiences, both share the CGFM mark of excellence that distinguishes them as leaders in government financial management.