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# **NEWSLETTER**

**SPRING 2024** 

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



### Happy Spring, NOVAGA Friends!

I was pleased to kick off this Spring by representing our chapter at the LEAD!24 Conference of AGA chapter leaders in Baltimore on April 11-13. It's always invigorating to meet and share ideas with professional colleagues, as we learned new ways to engage chapter membership and administer the chapter's business more effectively. We also had the Early Career Happy Hour at WHINO on April 25. Kudos to the Early Careers team

that planned this event. We had a great turnout and I hope to see some of the attendees at future chapter meetings, workshops, and events.

I want to extend a special invitation to our members to attend a chapter meeting and training event. We hold these events at least ten times a year (approximately once per month) at the Washington Golf and Country Club in Arlington, a beautiful venue. Recent speakers include Ann Tipton, the Budget Director for Department of Homeland Security. Our next chapter meetings will be on May 16 and June 13 at 6:30 PM, and free valet parking is provided.

As we move into the summer months, I'm pleased that we will once again host a gala reception for the Northern Virginia chapter. The gala will occur on Friday, June 14 at the Washington Golf and Country Club. Please contact me or Cherry Ung for more details on registration.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

While registration is limited this year, we have sought to keep the cost low at \$30/person. I look forward to seeing many of you at the gala in June.

Finally, as we approach the end of our program year, my term as the chapter president is drawing to a close. I'm pleased that our incoming president, Jacob McDonald, is ready to start working to help create more connections among our chapter's membership.

I has been a pleasure serving as your president this year and I look forward to seeing you at chapter events and AGA conferences in the future.

Chris Horton President, 2023-2024, Northern Virginia Chapter

### MEET OUR MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

### Kevin Shers, CGFM Chair



Q1: Tell us a little bit about yourself and your career.

A: I majored in economics and mathematical sciences at Colby College and enjoy using the tools taught in those subjects to solve problems. I have three kids under 5 and love spending time with family. I'm also thankful for the support my family provides me in making our schedules work. I've held different consulting positions which have allowed me to work with many federal agencies to advance their missions and I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn about how each of these agencies helps serve so many people, both locally and on a large scale. I'm currently a Manager at BDO Public Sector.

**Q2:** What was one of your first jobs and how did it shape your

#### career?

A: I had some interesting jobs in high school and college but started in consulting when I graduated from college. This job shaped my career in a multifaceted way as I was introduced to the many components of providing services such as financial management and business analytics to the government. I found that I liked working with government agencies because of the people willing to show me the ropes and the visibility of the impacts of funds I worked with in a financial management capacity. In my current role, our mission is to help people thrive every day and my first job helped me build up a better understanding of how to do that.

Q3: How did you learn about AGA and what made you get involved with the NOVAGA chapter?

A: I learned about AGA through coworkers who were discussing the value of the Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) certification. As I was preparing for the CGFM exams, I got involved in the Northern Virginia AGA Chapter to serve on the CGFM committee, which promotes the CGFM certification and helps people attain and maintain it through continuing education.

**Q4:** What's been the best aspect with AGA with respect to your career development? Are there any membership benefits you have particularly enjoyed?

A: AGA has provided me with so many ways to develop professionally that I cannot pick just one but holding a leadership position in the Northern Virginia Chapter, connecting with others on the Northern Virginia AGA

board and at conferences and keeping up to date in the field through the many learning opportunities are some of the main benefits.

Q5: Why would you recommend AGA to someone with a career in government accountability?

A: I'd recommend AGA for the many professional development events that help make both helpful and critical

information relatable and available in many formats, accommodating different learning styles and schedules. The team of people involved in AGA planning is impressive.

Q6: Do you have any advice for professionals in government who are considering joining AGA or are not active members? How can AGA play a role in their career?

A: The AGA tagline – Advance. Grow. Accelerate. – is great because it is true. If you join AGA, you'll have all the pieces to move forward at a speed you might not have thought was possible.

**Q7:** What is something most people do not know about you?

A: With most meetings happening virtually, many people are surprised when they find out that I'm 6' 4".



# Congratulations to Kevin and his family - this month they welcomed baby #3!

Manna manna





### **NOVAGA Chapter Meetings**

NOVAGA Chapter meetings have concluded for this program year. Check your email, the chapter website, and LinkedIn for additional information, how to register and associated costs.

### **NOVAGA Gala**

We hope to see you at the annual NOVAGA Gala on June 14th. Register by May 31st!



# **Upcoming AGA Meetings & Events**

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### **UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS AND TRAININGS**

27 28

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#### July 14 - 17

### Professional Development Training (PDT) | In-Person (Denver, CO) or Virtual | 24 CPEs

PDT offers three and a half days of educational sessions designed to equip federal, state and local government, and private sector financial professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to enhance leadership, improve performance in cost-constrained environments, and address shared challenges using best practices. This year's featured speakers include Aron Ralston, Adventurer and Subject of the file, 127 hours; Victoria Labalme, Internationally Acclaimed Inspirational performing Artist; It. Col. Jason harris, U.S. Air Force Office, Combat Pilot, and Academy Instructor; and Patrick Leddin, Author of the Wall Street Journal Bestseller, he 5 Week Leadership Challenge, Entrepreneur, Professor.

Early bird registration ends June 14th. Click here to learn more / register.

#### September 19 - 20

### AGA's 2024 Internal Control &Fraud Prevention Training | In-Person (Washington, DC) | 14 CPEs

This event focuses on management's responsibility for ensuring good systems of internal control, and the role of accountability professionals to minimize the risk of fraud, waste and abuse. Leaders in government and private industry discuss the latest discovery techniques, lessons learned and how governments are cooperating to improve services to citizens.

Early bird registration ends August 23. Click here to learn more / register.

See AGA's website at https://www.agacgfm.org/Events.aspx for additional trainings and events.

### **AGA WEBINARS**

Check out AGA's Training & Events page for upcoming Webinars on AGA's website here. Webinars marked with an asterisk (\*) are free members-only events; all others include a registration fee.

- ♦ June 12 | key Steps in the Road to An Audit Opinion wake Up Wednesday Coffee Chat) | Virtual | 1 CPE
- ♦ June 20 | CEAR Preparer Training (FY2024 CEAR Preparer Training) | Virtual | 2 CPEs
- **♦ September 25 | Communications | Virtual | 2 CPEs**
- **◊October 16 | Uniform Gidance & GA | Virtual | 1.5 CPEs**
- **♦ November 13 | Ethics | Virtual | 2 CPEs**

### **AGA'S NEW CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Check out AGA's new professional development sessions in June 2024. Each session is a one-hour virtual presentation delivered by Kimberly Jones. Each session is virtual, costs \$30, provides one hour of CPE in the Personal Development field of study. For more information, visit AGA's website **here**.

♦ June 24 | How to Find 'Happy' | 2 PM | Deadline to register is June 22

### **AGA ONLINE TRAINING PORTAL**

Check out AGA's Online Training Portal page for its Federal Financial Management Course Library contents (<a href="https://aga.learnupon.com/store">https://aga.learnupon.com/store</a>). AGA's Federal Financial management Course Library was developed and presented by Wendy Payne, former Executive Director of FASAB, and provides online, on-demand courses. For a nominal charge, AGA members can purchase any of the five courses currently available online.



# **New NOVAGA Members**

We are excited to welcome new members to the Northern Virginia Chapter; these new members joined our chapter since the last newsletter (Winter 2023-2024).

January 2024  Jeremy Astri  David Haney	Matthew Barrett	Catherine Couturiaux	Randi Eckard
	Melissa Jenner	Adam Kerr	Marianne Meagher
February 2024  Neil Burke  William Morris	Rachel Hooley Oscar Quiroz	Dana James Renea Ramos	JoLynn Kemp
March 2024  Nicole Bailin  Angel Contreras  Judy Phruksaraj	Bruce Brooke, III	Coral Brun	Jasmine Coleman
	Jason Denny	Jonathan Fjare	Aissa Hennouni

### **Lifetime Members**

Lifetime membership is bestowed upon individuals who have maintained active members status for at least 40 consecutive years, to recognize their distinguished service to AGA. This means that as of today, NOVAGA's lifetime members have been active since at least 1981; in fact, NOVAGA has 36 lifetime members, with two that have been active since joining in 1965 – 58 years ago! Our lifetime members have a combined **1,759** years of membership in AGA!



Lifetime memberships are awarded each January, with the next slate of lifetime members to be awarded in early 2025. In January 2022, NOVAGA had 3 members attain lifetime status, bringing our total lifetime members to 36.

To all of our Lifetime Members, thank you for your continued support, and your service to our chapter, and to AGA.

thank you!

# **NOVAGA Membership Anniversaries**

The NOVAGA Chapter recognizes and congratulates our chapter members on their milestone anniversaries from January 2024 through April 2024.

# Thank you for your continued support!

<u>Lifetime Members</u> (40+ Years)			
Rex A. Baggett	David W. Bieritz	Dennis K. Black	Charles L. Cipolla
Patrick J. Fitzgerald	Geoffrey B. Frank	Harold R. Gill	Edward C. Gillen
Frederic A. Heim, Jr.	Charles M. Hicks	Ronald H. Johnson	N. Carl Jordahl
Thomas J. Muldoon	Robert B. Peterson	Harold L. Stugart	Richard W. Sucher
Shelton R. Young			
30 Years			
Robert F. Dacey	Linda L. Hoogeveen-App	Denise H. Lippuner	Linda S. Moratis
25 Years			
Erin L. Beckles	Andreia Bodale	Robert B. France	Kathy Kittrell Hammer
Darrell L. Heim	Ronald A. Larosa	Vicki D. Mcadams	Valerie C. Neal
Bonnie N. Randolph	Damon T. Sutton	Leo M. Tayamen	
20 Years			
Francisca Agboli Chukwura	Noah A. Kaufman	William Kubistal	Gary S. Ling
15 Years			
Andrew Bortei Alabi	Kevin Michael Alsop	William L. Arritt	Robyn S. Berkenbilt
William J. Hill	Jeffrey Hubler	Richard L. Jung	Edwin B. Keene
David F. La Mar	John Mensah	Beau N. Newsome	Curt Nusbaum
Eric F. Peters	Roma J. Sexson	Stephen Alexander Smith	Claudia M. Vaquerano
Lorin T. Venable	John E. Wishon Siegwarth		
10 Years			
Jacob A. Anning	Bill Bruns	Carita L. Colding	Desean E. Davis
Matthew A. Gorman	Aubrey P. Harris, Jr.	Allan J. Kim	Devin Rodell Magee
Naomi Martinez	Laura Null	Ohjin Pak	Harry J. Pelto, Jr.
Richard Stephen Quinones	Vincent Paul Sacco	Kevin J. Shers	Erika Wright
Paul Burke			
<u>5 Years</u>			
Dickson K. Annor	William H. Berry, Sr.	Paul J. Carstensen	Tom Davis, Jr.
Lance R. Fisher	Robert E. Garcia	Alison Y. Graham	Lovelyn Marie Halstead
Alina P. Horvath	Jeffrey D. Johnson	Phung Tu Lam	Daniel M. Milos
Kenneth C. Musial	Stephanie A. Nunn	Alexander M. Plott	Eric J. Przybylski
John Moris Sadik	Nirtika Prasad Sharma	Rhoda G. Williams	Chris E. Zimmerman
James A. Wood			
1 Year			
Daniel Black	Kimsue Grant	Precious M. Harrison	Edward H. Kim
Nikki G. Stevenson	Carolyse Andrews	Kenneth R. Augst, Iv	Emily T. Bianco
Nadine Souheil Bou Debs	Sireesha Deena	Richard A. Hanslovan	Gabrielle Hanson
Rebecca G. Kinzinger	Jessica L. Kuykendall	Nitin Mahabal	Tyeshia Mcintyre-Bray
Maria Adelaida Ott	Alexandra H. Shrader	Helen-Audrey Adom	Jeffrey Ahn
Nandini Bhaskara Rao	Gary Dee Brooks	Mohamed Ginawi	Brandon Gray
Aaron Haile	Andy Ip	Ben Marglin	Brandi Renee Morgan
Craig Pearson	Melissa Jessica Roth	Samir Said	Tam Hoang Tran
Luis E. Molina Cisneros	Vladyslav D. Kruk	Jamii Jaiu	Taill Hoalig Hall
Luis L. Molilia disticios	Viadyslav D. Muk		



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# WE HELP MAKE GOVERNMENT BETTER

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The Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM®) certification demonstrates competency in governmental accounting, auditing, financial reporting, internal controls and budgeting at the federal, state, and local levels. The CGFM® is unique because it not only encompasses a specialized focus on government financial management, but it also has broad coverage of various aspects of financial management at all levels of government.

NOVAGA recognizes and applauds our chapter members who have obtained their CGFM® certification since the last publication of the chapter's newsletter.

For more information on the CGFM°, check out the CGFM° page on our Chapter's website <u>here</u>.



Mr. Jordan Larkin Wilcher – March 2024 Ms. Nirtika Prasad Sharma – March 2024

### **CGFM Events:**

March was CGFM Month; we hope you took advantage of all the great promotions!

We held CGFM Study groups on **January 22nd** and **March 26th** with more than 10
people attended. These study groups
covered the last two parts of Exam 2 material.

A futures session is planned to cover Exam 3 material next. Check the NOVAGA Chapter's website and LinkedIn for information and registration details.

Note that some CGFM study events are eligible for CPE credits. Check the website and registration details for additional information.



# Tips of the Month:

#### Tip #1

Try learning the topics in a way that you would explain it to someone else.

#### Tip #2

You can schedule the exams in any order in case you want to start with the topic most comfortable to you (keep in mind the timeline to complete all three exams once you start).

# **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**



### **Attention Chapter Members!**

If you have any pictures taken at any NOVAGA events (virtual or in-person events) or have information that should be included in the newsletter, please email the Newsletter Editor (Sonia Kessler at <a href="mailto:sonia.kessler@sikich.com">sonia.kessler@sikich.com</a>).

# **Is Your AGA Membership Current?**

AGA's program year ends June 30th. Check your membership card or log into your AGA profile today to confirm your renewal date. If you haven't already renewed, consider doing so today!



Your AGA membership gives you many benefits, including education and networking opportunities, discounts on chapter and national events, and access to many resources. In fact, each year, AGA members receive at least 14 hours of complementary training / CPE credit on a variety of topics – FOR FREE!



Membership in the NOVAGA chapter only increases this benefit! NOVAGA is one of 90+ AGA chapters nationwide and supports AGA's core values of service, accountability, integrity, and leadership. The NOVAGA chapter provides networking opportunities within and with other local chapters, CPE credit through chapter meetings and special events, and assists members in obtaining their CGFM® certification by offering study groups to its membership.

To check your membership status, sign into your AGA account at <u>agacgfm.org</u> and renew today!

# **Update Your Email**

Each year, NOVAGA's Membership Committee plans the various chapter-level events that occur alongside the educational and award events, and the many happy hours, skiing, snowboarding, and other sporting events, and fundraisers. While the events were far fewer in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID restrictions and safety

concerns, the Committee began hosting some in-person events in late 2021 and even more in 2022. 2023 and 2024 included more in-person and hybrid options with 2024 proving that more of us are choosing to attend in-person events.

In this upcoming year, our social, educational, and other events will continue to take place in-person and virtually whenever possible.

To make sure you receive all updates on future educational and social events from AGA and NOVAGA, check your profile and make sure your email is up to date! And don't forget to check your spam folder – you may need to add NOVAGA as a safe address to receive updates.



# **Past Chapter Events**

# **NOVAGA Chapter Meetings**

Our chapter meetings have been held in-person at the Washington Golf and Country Club, located at 3017 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA. Members may also attend virtually. Parking is free, and attendees receive 1 CPE credit. For additional details and to register, check your email and the chapter's website at <a href="https://www.agacgfm.org/Chapters/Northern-Virginia-Chapter/TrainingEvents/Event-Calendar.aspx">https://www.agacgfm.org/Chapters/Northern-Virginia-Chapter/TrainingEvents/Event-Calendar.aspx</a>. Also check the Chapter's LinkedIn page for details on chapter meeting events.

NOVAGA has several chapter meetings scheduled for this program year, with great speakers. To our speakers, we thank you so much for giving us your time, energy, and providing us with insight into some great topics.

- How HUD is embracing artificial intelligence (AI)
- An overview of the Institute and its interactions with Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC)
- The challenges and opportunities that exist for today's Federal agency leadership

#### Thank you!

- Mr. Vinay Singh, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Ms. Rae Oliver Davis, Inspector General, HUD
- Mr. Tom Wojtecki, Research Staff Member, Institute for Defense Analytics
- Ms. Sheila Conley, CPA, DCFO at Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Ms. Ann Ebberts, MS, PMP, CEO, AGA
- Ms. Teresa Hunter, CFO, Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- Mr. Chris Kraft, CGFM, PMP, Assistant Administrator, Financial Systems, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

### **NOVAGA Spring Workshop**

This year's NOVAGA Spring Workshop was another success! Held April 16<sup>th</sup>, this year's workshop had 63 participants attending both in-person and virtually. Speakers from Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB), Government Accountability Office (GAO), and other entities provided a multitude of information and updates to all those in attendance. In addition to hearing updates from FASAB and GAO and about the new leases standard, attendees were treated to two perspectives of how AI is being used in the federal government.

Thank you to Kevin Love, NOVAGA's Education Chair, for planning a great event!!

# **NOVAGA Early Careers Happy Hour**



# Thought Leadership

### **Financial Management News Express**

### Joint Financial Management Improvement Program's Payment Integrity Initiative

by JFMIP Payment Integrity Initiative Working Group

The <u>Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP)</u>, a cooperative venture between the Government Accountability Office, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Department of the Treasury, recently released a plan that establishes a "whole of government" approach to promote fraud prevention and payment integrity in federally funded programs and increase accountability and transparency across all levels of government operations.

While we observed the positive effects of federal spending in supporting COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery, the pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in federal and state government payment systems and processes, leading to increased improper payments – including fraud – in federal programs.

The Payment Integrity Initiative, launched in FY 2023, aims to reinforce and amplify each JFMIP organizations' respective efforts to promote payment integrity, build off past success, and apply lessons learned, especially from experiences borne from the pandemic. Our vision is to strengthen trust in government by promoting fraud prevention and payment integrity in federally funded programs.



Payment integrity – paying the right person, in the right amount, at the right time – is one of the most important functions that government performs. This plan focuses on three key pillars—Prevention, Best Practices, and Partnerships—to equip programs with the information, tools, and resources needed to make the shift from compliance-driven to data-driven.



- Focus on prevention by promoting greater access and use of data and analytics. Getting money out the door
  quickly to respond to an emergency does not mean we need to weaken controls and safeguards. Innovative
  tools can help agencies spot fraud and improper payments in seconds, preserving the user experience while
  preventing and detecting fraud and improper payments.
- Promote best practices to equip agencies and states with information, tools, and resources to prevent fraud and improper payments. Leveraging the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and other large-scale

government spending initiatives, we can apply best practices and embrace a continuous improvement approach to payment integrity.

Strengthen partnerships between key stakeholders throughout the payment lifecycle. Payment integrity relies
on a network of stakeholders, systems, processes, and controls throughout the payment lifecycle. Strengthening
partnerships through collaboration and proactive engagement is critical to defending against current and future
payment integrity challenges.

The JFMIP Principal organizations envision the nexus of these three pillars as the nucleus of the critical effort to enhance payment integrity across government. An effort that will showcase the power of collaboration across federal agencies and beyond.

Stay engaged and learn more about these efforts at JFMIP Payment Integrity Initiative.

Right Person. Right Amount. Right Time.

# NOVAGA Hopes You Enjoy Your Summer!



# **NOVAGA Corporate Sponsors**

Thank you to our corporate sponsors for supporting our Chapter and our members during this program year. Through your continued support, we can continue to offer the Becker CPE program at a discounted rate, hold chapter meetings and CGFM study groups, and other networking and membership events.

For information on becoming a corporate sponsor for this program year (2023 – 2024) or the next program year (2024 – 2025), please contact our President and Corporate Sponsor Chair (Chris Horton at **c.horton@rmafed.com**) or Cherry Ung (**c.ung@rmafed.com**).

**PLATINUM** 



**SILVER** 



**BRONZE** 



**STAR** 



# **NOVAGA Chapter Board Members**

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President	Chris Horton	c.horton@rmafed.com
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Immediate Past President	Joseph Hungate	j.hungate@rmafed.com
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Community Services	VACANT	
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### **Contact Us**

The Northern Virginia Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants (NOVAGA) is an association with almost 1,100 members from the federal, state, local, public and private practices, with a mission statement to serve professionals in the government financial management community by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification and supporting standards and research to advance government accountability.



We would love to hear from you! Feel free to email one of our board members directly, connect with us on LinkedIn, or check out our home page at <a href="https://www.agacgfm.org/Chapters/NOVAGA">www.agacgfm.org/Chapters/NOVAGA</a>.