

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Baton Rouge
Chapter

MARCH 2025



Welcome to the AGA Baton Rouge Newsletter, your premier source for staying connected and informed in the dynamic realm of government financial management!

AGA is the association that connects and empowers professionals who support government, from financial management to IT, human resources, cybersecurity and more, to advance good government initiatives, grow their expertise and accelerate their careers!



Meet Our 2025 Chapter President Elect! (PG. 3)



**Live CGFM Courses:
Check These Out!
(PG. 11)**



A Message from Our Chapter President!

Dear AGA Members and Friends,

As we begin a new chapter in our journey together, I want to take a moment to sincerely thank each and every one of you for your continued support, engagement, and commitment to the mission and values of AGA. Whether you're a long-time member or recently joined our community, your participation has made a meaningful difference in the success and growth of our chapter.

I've been inspired by the energy, talent, and dedication within our membership. It's your passion that keeps our chapter vibrant and relevant, and I am deeply honored to serve as your Chapter President. Looking ahead, I'm filled with excitement and optimism for what this new year will bring. Together, we will continue to build on our strong foundation and find new ways to support one another, grow professionally, and serve the greater good through good government financial management.

I am also thrilled to announce that we have welcomed our **new 2025 President-Elect for the AGA Baton Rouge Chapter!** Leadership transitions are an important and exciting time, and we are confident that the future of our chapter is in great hands. I encourage you to turn to the next page to learn more about our President-Elect and the vision they bring for the future.

Thank you again for your ongoing involvement in AGA Baton Rouge. I look forward to all we will accomplish together in the coming year. Let's continue to learn, grow, and elevate one another as we fulfill our shared mission.

**Warm regards,
Miranda Maten, Chapter President
AGA Baton Rouge**

02/19

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Meet Our



FUTURE 2025

PRESIDENT!



Ramona Harris
AGA Baton Rouge Chapter
2025 President Elect

We are excited to announce that **Ramona Harris** has **accepted the position of AGA Baton Rouge's President for the 2025 program year**. Ramona currently serves as our President-Elect and will officially step into the President role next year.

Ramona brings a wealth of experience, leadership, and dedication to our chapter. A State of Louisiana employee for over 20 years, she has spent the majority of her career working in finance across various state agencies. She currently serves as the **Manager of Business Operations** at the **Louisiana Department of Health – Office of Public Health Laboratory**.

Ramona holds a Bachelor's degree in Management from Upper Iowa University and an MBA from LSU-Shreveport. Her professional development includes being a Certified Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, a graduate of the Leadership Development Institute, a graduate of the Visionary Leadership Academy, and a two-year mentor for the OPH Mentorship Academy. Beyond her professional work, Ramona is a passionate community leader. She serves on the **Financial Council of the Junior League of Baton Rouge**, where she has been an active member since 2018.

We are confident that Ramona's leadership, vision, and commitment to excellence will continue to move our chapter forward. Please join us in congratulating her on this exciting new chapter!

03/19

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AGA Baton Rouge Chapter: 2025 Board Members



Ramona Harris ***Chapter President-Elect***

State Employee for 22 years where she has worked in finance the majority of the time for various State Agencies. She is currently employed at the Louisiana Department of Health-Office of Public Health Laboratory serving as the Manager over Business Operations. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Management from *Upper Iowa University* and a MBA from *Louisiana State University-Shreveport*. In addition to her degrees, she also is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, Graduate of the *Leadership Development Institute*, Graduate of the *Visionary Leadership Academy*, and served the past 2 years as a Mentor for the *OPH Mentorship Academy*. Outside of work she serves on the Financial Council for Junior League of Baton Rouge, for which she has been a member since 2018.



Tiffani Dorsa, CPA ***Immediate Past Chapter President***

Tiffani Dorsa, CPA, is the Immediate Past Chapter President for AGA Baton Rouge, bringing over 18 years of experience to her role. She specializes in working with not-for-profit and governmental industries, particularly entities receiving federal and state assistance. Tiffani is highly familiar with governmental auditing standards, OMB Circular A-133 (Single Audit requirements), and state regulations pertaining to quasi-public entities.

04/19

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AGA Baton Rouge Chapter: 2025 Board Members



Barbara Aguilar **Secretary**

Serving as the Budget Director for the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) for the past eight years, Barbara has garnered extensive experience in navigating the intricate landscape of governmental budgets. At the heart of Barbara's professional philosophy is a commitment to innovation and continuous improvement. She is driven by a desire to create easier, more effective ways of accomplishing tasks and overcoming challenges. By fostering a culture of innovation and embracing technology, she strives to empower her team and enhance organizational effectiveness. Currently serving as the Interim Deputy Undersecretary, Barbara remains steadfast in her dedication to driving positive change and optimizing performance within the department.



Jordan Sandwisch **Treasurer**

Jordan Sandwisch is a seasoned professional in the world of finance and auditing, currently serving as the Manager of Audit Assurance at EisnerAmper. With a strong background in accounting and a sharp eye for detail, Jordan brings extensive expertise to his role. Holding a CPA credential, he demonstrates a commitment to excellence in his field. Jordan is known for his meticulous approach to financial analysis and his ability to provide valuable insights to clients. His dedication to ensuring accuracy and compliance makes him a trusted advisor in the realm of audit assurance. Outside of his professional endeavors, Jordan enjoys staying active in his community and pursuing personal interests.

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AGA Baton Rouge Chapter: 2025 Board Members



Sarah Wade

Awards & Scholarship Chair

Sarah Wade is a dynamic and driven budget analyst with 5 years of state government experience in accounting and budgeting. Her expertise is in budget analysis from departments such as education and transportation. Sarah received her accounting degree from *Southern University* in 2018 and her MBA from *Grand Canyon University* in 2021. Outside of her professional endeavors, Sarah enjoys volunteering. She volunteers with Advance. Grow. Accelerate (AGA) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). She started volunteering with AGA in 2016 and Vita in 2020. Helping people achieve their goals and grow is what she loves to do.

Erin McAlinney

Webmaster/Social Media Manager

Erin McAlinney is a dedicated Social Media Coordinator at Premier Group, where she skillfully manages and enhances the company's online presence. She graduated from the University of South Florida in 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in Integrated Public Relations & Advertising, and from St. Petersburg College in 2020 with an Associate's in Arts in Mass Communications Journalism. Erin has crafted advertising campaigns for small, local businesses and is passionate about staying ahead of emerging marketing and social media trends. She excels at designing graphics, crafting newsletters, and creating engaging content that resonates with audiences. In her spare time, Erin enjoys exploring new food spots and staying connected with family and friends.

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Don't Forget: Renew Your AGA Membership!

Benefits:



- **Connect, Collaborate, & Network:**
 - Expand your network, participate in our online mentoring program!
 - Volunteer to serve on AGA committees and boards.
 - Find a position or look for qualified candidates on AGA's Job Board
 - Join the conversation on LinkedIn, Twitter & Facebook.
- **Continuous Learning:**
 - Participate in educational events — learn from and meet the experts.
 - Save money with registration discounts on national and chapter training events.
 - Sign up for four (4) complimentary members-only webinars.
 - Attend the Transformation & Technology Summit for FREE!
 - Attend the Women's Forum for FREE!
 - Leverage discounts on CGFM renewal and application fees.
- **Stay Informed & Find Solutions:**
 - Access online tools, developed by government experts to prevent fraud, reduce improper payments, improve outcomes, mitigate risk, and enhance collaboration.
 - Stay up to date through the quarterly Journal of Government Financial Management.
 - Learn about and share best practices described in AGA research and executive reports.
 - Get the latest innovations in government by tuning into AGA's Accountability Talks podcasts.

**JOIN
NOW**



Don't Hesitate!
Register Now!

SPONSOR



07/19

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WELCOMING OUR NEWEST AGA MEMBERS!

Angel W. Williams



08/19

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JOIN THE BATON ROUGE AGA CHAPTER LEADERSHIP BOARD!

Are you an AGA Member eager to make a difference in your community? Here's your chance! The Baton Rouge Chapter is seeking dedicated individuals to join our Leadership Board. Whether you're a seasoned professional or a college student seeking valuable internship experience, we welcome you to be part of our dynamic team.

Several positions available (with more not listed):

- **ACE Reporting:** Ensure accurate financial reporting and transparency.
- **Membership Committee:** Engage with our members, build connections, and enhance our community.
- **President-Elect:** Take a leading role in shaping the future of our chapter.
- **Event Coordinator:** Plan and execute exciting events that bring our community together.

Why Join Us?

- **Community Involvement:** Make a meaningful impact in Baton Rouge and beyond.
- **Professional Development:** Enhance your skills and network with industry professionals.
- **Internship Opportunities:** College students, gain practical experience and boost your resume.
- **Retired Members:** Stay active, share your expertise, and continue making a difference.



www.agacgfm.org



JOIN US



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO APPLY, EMAIL US AT BATONROUGEAGA@GMAIL.COM

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CGFM®

Certification



What is a CGFM?

The CGFM (Certified Government Financial Manager) credential, awarded by AGA, showcases expertise in governmental accounting, auditing, financial reporting, internal controls, and budgeting across different government levels.

It's a respected certification that highlights specialized knowledge and experience essential for effective government financial management. CGFM opens doors to new career prospects and sets you apart as a distinguished professional in the field.

CGFM Certification Benefits:

1. Enhanced marketability across government sectors.
2. Networking opportunities with fellow government financial managers.
3. Boosted confidence in your role.
4. Potential for employer incentives like raises, promotions, and bonuses.
5. Increased value as an employee, both in reality and perception.
6. Support for ongoing education to stay updated with the latest developments and technologies.

Use this link to learn more about CGFM memberships!

www.agacgfm.org

How Do I Become a CGFM?

1. Fill out an online application and agree to AGA's Code of Ethics.
2. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. college or university.
3. Pass three CGFM examinations.
4. Gain at least two years of professional-level experience in government financial management.



For any additional questions, please contact the Office of Professional Certification:
800.AGA.7211 (703.684.6931) or cgfm@agacgfm.org

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CGFM LIVE COURSES



AGA is pleased to offer TWO options for CGFM live (real-time) courses for individuals:

- **virtual courses** – live instruction via Zoom.
- **in-person courses** – live class with students and instructor onsite in Alexandria, VA.

Looking for other CGFM course options? AGA also offers [self-paced CGFM courses](#) and [CGFM training for groups](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE & REGISTRATION

Virtual Courses

Course 1: Governmental Environment

April 3-4, 2025, 10:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.

[Register here](#)

Registration or cancellation deadline – March 27

Course 2: Governmental Accounting, Financial Reporting and Budgeting

June 3-6, 2025, 10:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

[Register here](#)

Registration or cancellation deadline – May 27

Course 3: Governmental Financial Management and Control

July 15-17, 2025, 10:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

[Register here](#)

Registration or cancellation deadline – July 8

Live Courses

In-person course:

Course 3: Governmental Financial Management and Control

May 6-7, 2025, 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., Alexandria VA

[Register here](#)

Registration or cancellation deadline – April 22

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11/19

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Baton Rouge
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Student Membership Opportunities



Why AGA?

Considering a career in government financial management? Want to meet government professionals in the federal, state, or local government levels?

Join AGA for FREE! Student membership in AGA provides you access to resources to develop your skills and expand your knowledge. Become a part of AGA to build professional connections and discover your future career while positively impacting your community and country.

**APPLY
NOW**



Scholarships

Academic
scholarships, National
Collegiate Leadership
Scholarship,
Government Finance
Case Challenge,
Datathon



Career Coaching & Professional Community

Mentoring Programs
& Local Chapters



Tools & Resources

'Accountability Talks'
Podcast & Guest
Speakers



Visit Our Website to Learn More!

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ACCOUNTABILITY TALKS



Discover '**Accountability Talks**,' a podcast delving into the government accountability community. Hear from thought leaders, gain career insights, and join our vibrant community!

[Click here to listen!](#)

About the Host



Meet **Paul Marshall, CPA, CGFM, CIA, CICA, PMP, VP at MIL Corporation and dedicated AGA member with 20+ years in government accountability.** He champions best practices in audits, financial reporting, and more, serving on AGA boards at local and national levels.

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GAO Highlights 2025 High Risk List to Improve Government Efficiency



The **U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)** has released its **2025 High Risk List**, identifying 38 areas vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. The biennial report highlights progress in 10 areas, resulting in \$84 billion in financial benefits, while also adding a new area—Improving the Delivery of Federal Disaster Assistance. Three areas, including DOD Weapon Systems Acquisition and IT Acquisitions, regressed.

GAO's list underscores opportunities for cost savings, with improper payments in high-risk programs totaling \$2.8 trillion since 2003. Key focus areas include **modernizing IT, strengthening cybersecurity, addressing public health risks, and tackling human capital challenges**. Congressional and executive action remains critical to resolving these long-standing issues.

Read the full report here: [GAO 2025 High Risk List](#)

AGA Announces New National Governing Board Officers



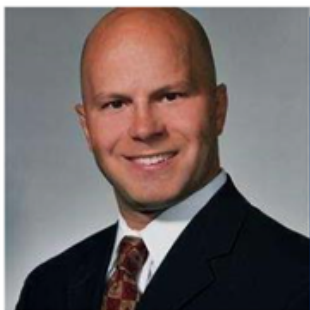
AGA is pleased to announce the election of new National Governing Board (NGB) officers. The NGB confirmed **Melinda DeCorte, CGFM, CPA, as national president-elect; Atisha Burks, as national treasurer-elect; and Bill Colbert, CPA, as director (at-large)**. The three leaders will serve two-year terms beginning July 1, 2025.



DeCorte is a Principal at Sikich and has over 25 years of expertise in auditing, accounting and government financial management. She has played key leadership roles in groundbreaking financial statement audits for the Department of Defense and has extensive experience advising government agencies on risk, internal controls, and audit readiness. In addition to her client work, DeCorte serves on the Sikich Board of Managers and leads the firm's federal government industry vertical and audit practice. She is a member of AGA's Dallas chapter.



Burks is the Deputy Director (CFO), Financial and Program Management Directorate, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and oversees financial operations, budgeting and risk management for the Federal Protective Service (FPS). She directs procurement, resource management, and internal controls while ensuring fiscal accountability and supporting congressional inquiries on financial matters. She is a member of AGA's Washington, D.C. chapter.



Colbert is a Senior Partner, Client Account Leader, Finance & ERP at EY. He has over 35 years of experience driving organizational transformation and improvement. After nearly three decades in the commercial sector, he transitioned to EY's Government and Public Sector practice, applying private-sector insights to help government leaders tackle complex challenges. His work has earned industry recognition, including the Association of Management Consulting Firms' Spotlight Award and a featured case study on his transformation efforts at HUD. A dedicated mentor, Bill actively supports Black and Latino entrepreneurs and has held multiple leadership roles at EY, guiding finance, technology and public sector practices. He is a member of AGA's Northern Virginia chapter.

Upcoming Webinars & Events

You Do Not Want to Miss Out!

SAVE THE DATE



16/19

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National Events



Webinar: Ethics

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Behavioral Ethics (BETH)

**[Click Here to
Register Now!](#)**



Webinar: Fraud/Data Analytics

Wednesday, April 23, 2025

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Auditing - Governmental (AUDG)

**[Click Here to
Register Now!](#)**



Webinar: Risk Management

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Business Management and Organization (BMO)

**[Click Here to
Register Now!](#)**

National Events



Webinar: FREE-Members Only

Wednesday, May 14 , 2025

2:00–3:15 PM ET | 1.5 CPEs

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Personal Development (PD)

[Click Here to
Register Now!](#)



Webinar: Leadership

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Personal Development (PD)

[Click Here to
Register Now!](#)

Future Professional Development Trainings (PDT)

Save the Date for AGA's future Professional Development Training (PDT) events!



Nashville, Tennessee

July 27–30, 2025

Gaylord Opryland Hotel



Dallas, Texas

July 26–29, 2026

Gaylord Texan Hotel



Chicago, Illinois

July 18–21, 2027

Hyatt Regency Chicago