

# The Washington Connection

ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTANTS  
WASHINGTON D.C. CHAPTER



Issue 2 • October 2008

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## Snapshots

[View Photos](#)



## LUNCHEON SERIES

Members \$25  
Non-Members \$30



[Read Bio](#)

### Douglas Webster, CFO, US Dept. of Labor October 14th, 2008

We're honored to have Douglas Webster, CFO, US Department of Labor as our luncheon speaker on October 14th. Among his many talents, Doug has a great vision for transforming the federal government's view of risk management. His presentation, "The Finance Role in Managing Enterprise Risk", is sure to get our members thinking!

The luncheon will be held on October 14th, 2008, 11:30-1:30 at the Army Navy Club.

## Announcements

### Audio Conference - Free for AGA-DC Members!

#### "Results of AGA's Research on Performance-Based Management Reporting"

Wednesday, October 15 • 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
2 hours of CPE issued by the AGA National Office

See our website for information on how to register.

HURRY! Space is limited.  
Registration ends on October 10.

## Save The Date

The Association of Government Accountants Washington, DC Chapter will be hosting its annual Spring Conference on May 12 and 13, 2009. This 2-day conference will address emerging issues related to federal financial management and systems.

Dates: Tuesday, May 12 and Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Time: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Location: Ronald Reagan Building

[Click here to sign up to get newsletter and meeting notices automatically e-mailed <http://agadc.org/mlistsubscribe.php>](#)

## Note From the Editor

by *Leon Fleischer, Editor*

I hope everyone enjoyed our first issue of the year last month. This October edition is now our 2nd issue and it promises to contain much information of events for the year including the monthly luncheons, education events, member services, early careers, etc.



October is a time of transition ushering in the Fall season along with the beautiful colors of the leaves. It is also a busy time of year for many government accountants reflecting the year-end reporting cycle. I hope all our readers have a chance to take a deep breath and enjoy the Fall colors in the midst of this busy work schedule (and a chance to read this month's newsletter).

This newsletter is only made possible because of the contribution of articles from the chapter's members. Thank you for all who submitted articles-these articles reflected the depth of knowledge and experience in this group, and the newsletter team is fortunate enough to review and publish these articles. We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and find it helpful for keeping up to date on events in the chapter and in AGA. Our team strives to produce a high quality newsletter notifying AGA D.C. members of Chapter and National events and services. And, if you are not already a member, we encourage you to join the AGA D.C. Chapter and enjoy the many benefits it offer, in particular the high quality luncheon series, learning opportunities, and conferences.

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter? Do you have an article you would like to see printed? Have you developed a time-saving process or procedure on the job? Have you traveled to any interesting locations? The Washington Connection requests that you submit any and all items of interest to our federal, state, and local members including: reviews of recently published books related to financial management; unique travel experiences or assignments; lessons learned on roll-outs of new systems; appointments or promotions; employment opportunities; and noteworthy accomplishments by our members. We also welcome digital photos that accompany your submission. Your articles, comments, and ideas are what make this newsletter go and we welcome all input!

The deadline for submitting articles to appear in the November 2008 issue is October 17, 2008. Please send your comments and contributions to Leon Fleischer, the newsletter editor at [leon.fleischer@sba.gov](mailto:leon.fleischer@sba.gov), or to Eric Irizarry, the newsletter assistant at [eric.irizarry@faa.gov](mailto:eric.irizarry@faa.gov).

Sincerely,

*Leon Fleischer*

**Leon Fleischer,  
AGA D.C. Chapter Newsletter Editor**



### *Newsletter Team*

Leon Fleischer, Editor

Eric Irizarry, Assistant Editor

Erwin Solbach, Graphics

# President's Message



by **Ann Davis**

## CHAPTER LUNCHEONS - 1 CPE per luncheon meeting

All luncheons are from 11:45 AM to 1:45 PM. Speakers and locations are published in our newsletters and on the website. Seating is limited, so register in advance

10/14/2008	12/10/2008	1/22/2009	2/18/2009
3/19/2009	4/21/2009	5/20/2009	

## TRAINING

Free Audio Conferences - 2 CPE per session

Each audio conference includes discussion by subject matter experts and a question-and-answer session. All audio conferences are from 2 to 4 PM.

- **October 15** - Results of AGA's Research on Performance-Based Management Reporting
- **December 10** - 21st Century Financial Managers: New Mix of Skills and Education Levels
- **January 21** - How XBRL Can Enable Improved Financial and Performance Reporting
- **April 8** - Auditing

## Spring Conference - May 2009 - 15 CPE

Our 2-day conference addresses emerging issues related to federal financial management and systems. See the website for increasing detail as the date approaches.

## One-Day Training - January 15, 2009 - 8 CPE

Internal Controls in the Federal Government—Understanding A-123

## EARLY CAREERS

- **October, 2008**- Luncheon Speaker Series - GAO Building
- **November 18** - Happy Hour Kickoff - ESPN Zone - 6:30 PM
- **January 20, 2009** - Happy Hour - Buffalo Billiards - 6:30 PM
- **February** - Lucky Strikes and Explore DC Series
- **March 10** - Luncheon Speaker Series - GAO Building
- **March 18** - Happy Hour - Chef Geoff's, Metro Center
- **April 10 & 17** - White House Tour
- **May 10** - US Capitol Tour
- **May 19** - Happy Hour - Bar Louie - Chinatown
- **June 4** - Explore DC - Kennedy Center Millenium Stage

## MEMBERSHIP/MEMBER SERVICES

- **October 4, 2008** - C&O Canal Tour and Lunch
- **October 22** - Fall Membership Liaison Lunch
- **October 23** - Haunted Tour of DC
- **November** - Opera Night at Café Mozart
- **December** - Holiday Get Together
- **February 2009** - Wizards Game

Greetings Everyone,

The AGA Washington DC Chapter is excited to bring you some of the best events the city has to offer. As we are finalizing the dates for the majority of our events, we want to provide you with an update. Mark your calendars and join us for an impressive lineup of distinguished speakers at our monthly luncheons and Spring Conference, entertaining and educational Early Career networking events, community events to tap into your spirit of giving, FREE audio conferences and CGFM training, and adventure-filled Member Services activities. See our website for details and registration.

I look forward to seeing you!

*Ann Davis*

Ann Davis



(President's Message Cont'd)

- **March** - Post Financial Management Conference Happy Hour and Smithsonian Jazz Café
- **April** - Virginia Vineyards Tour
- **May** - Botanical Gardens
- **June** - National Game and Tailgate

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES

- **October 12, 2008** - Walk to D'Feet ALS®- supports the Cure for Lou Gehrig's Disease
- **November** - TBD
- **December 10** - Toys for Tots - Please bring new toys to our December luncheon.
- **January 21, 2009** - Make-A-Wish Foundation - Please contribute spare change, cash and checks in a fishbowl that will be at the January luncheon community service table
- **February** - Volunteer Tax Assistance - Members will participate in the VITA program.
- **March 18** - Dress for Success Suit Drive - provides women's clothes for low income women who are trying to make the transition to work.
- **April** - DC Habitat for Humanity – Members of the AGA team in partnership with Montgomery County/ Prince George's will work with DC Habitat on the construction of a new home.
- **May** - Cell Phones/ Eyeglasses Donation – bring in used Cell Phones and eyeglasses to support victims of domestic violence
- **June** - SOME (So Others Might Eat) - provides the poor and homeless of our nation's capital with food, clothing, and health care.

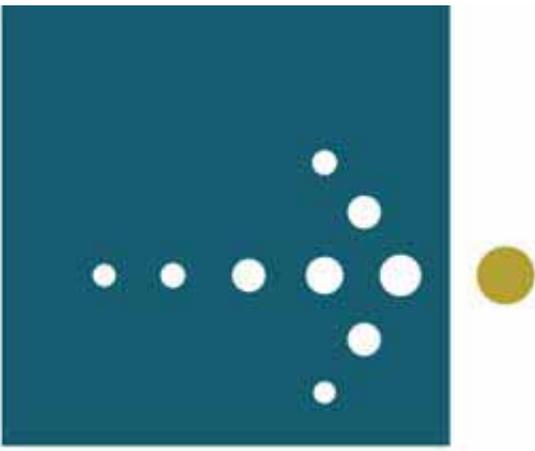
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## Request for Newsletter Submissions, Comments, or Suggestions

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter? Do you have an article you would like to see in print? Have you developed a time-saving process or procedure on the job? Have you traveled to any interesting locations? The Washington Connection requests that you submit any and all items of interest to our federal, state, and local members including: reviews of recently published books related to financial management; unique travel experiences or assignments; lessons learned on roll-outs of new systems; appointments or promotions; employment opportunities; and noteworthy accomplishments by our members. We also welcome digital photos that accompany your submission.

The Washington Connection will not be issued in July or August. The deadline for submitting articles to appear in the **November 2008** issue is **October 17, 2008**. Please send you comments and contributions to **Leon Fleischer**, the newsletter editor for the 2008-2009 program year, at [leon.fleischer@sba.gov](mailto:leon.fleischer@sba.gov), or to **Eric Irizarry**, the newsletter assistant for the 2008-2009 program year, at [eric.irizarry@faa.gov](mailto:eric.irizarry@faa.gov).



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## WANT TO HELP?

If you're interested in being a liaison or joining the mentor program, as either a mentor or mentee, please contact Ruthie Apelt: [ruth.apelt@thomson.com](mailto:ruth.apelt@thomson.com)

### *Connect to the World of Government*

#### Join AGA

Connect to  
 the World of  
 Government  
 Accountability

AGA serves government accountability professionals by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification, and supporting standards and research to advance government accountability.

Click on the link below to view a short AGA video:  
<http://www.agacgfm.org/downloads/agaweb.wmv>

## Douglas W. Webster



Douglas W. Webster was sworn in as the Chief Financial Officer on January 7, 2008. A Presidential appointee confirmed by the Senate, he is responsible for the financial leadership of DOL. The Chief Financial Officer has responsibility for upholding strong financial management and accountability while providing timely, accurate, and reliable financial information and enhancing internal control.

Dr. Webster earlier served in government as the Principal Finance Advisor to the Iraq Ministry of Transportation under the Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq from January to September, 2004. In that capacity he served as the Department of Defense representative with oversight responsibility of a ministry budget approaching \$1B, provided financial advice to the Iraqi Minister of Transportation, and oversaw the creation of a 4,000 member ministry security force.

Dr. Webster began his service to the nation in 1972 when he was commissioned in the US Air Force. During his 21 year military career he served as a C-130 navigator,

including seeing combat in Vietnam, as an air operations officer, and as a senior acquisition and engineering management officer. His final military assignment was in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where he coordinated systems engineering policy across the Department of Defense.

Prior to joining the Department of Labor, Dr. Webster served as a senior manager at Grant Thornton LLP, where he led consulting engagement in cost management, performance management, strategic planning, and organizational change on behalf of federal agency clients.

Dr. Webster received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering from the University of California-Los Angeles in 1972, a Master of Science in Systems Management from the University of Southern California in 1983, and a Doctorate in Business Administration from US International University in 1991. He served as an examiner in the United States Senate Productivity and Quality Award for Virginia - the Virginia equivalent of the Malcolm Baldrige. He is a Certified Government Financial Manager, a Project Management Professional, is certified in Information Technology Infrastructure Library, and co-author of the book *Activity-Based Costing and Performance*.

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## Want to Make a Difference?

### *Consider a Career in Government Financial Management*

Are you, or someone from your chapter planning to attend a career fair, or an event for college students? AGA now has an eye-catching brochure that offers information about government financial management careers and answers questions for aspiring government financial managers regarding the qualifications and skills needed to get started. It also includes a bookmark for students that directs them to the Tomorrow's Professionals website for more information. To order free copies of the brochure, please submit the collateral order form found in the Members Only section or contact Jessica Jones.

# AGADC Member Happenings: AGADC Awards Dinner

# Snapshots

# AGADC Awards Dinner



# AGADC Member Happenings: AGADC Luncheon

# Snapshots

# AGADC Luncheon



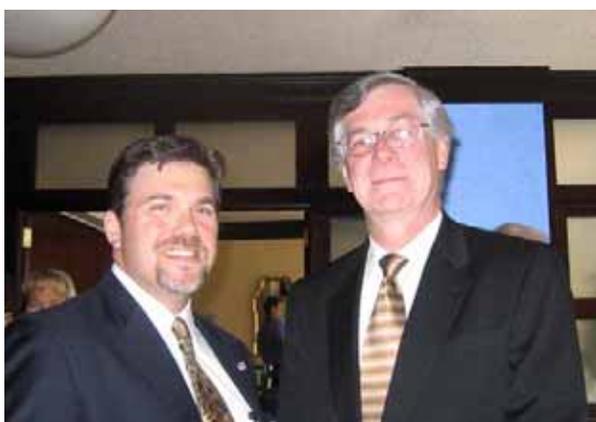
*Former AGADC President Dan Christovich, post retirement from the U.S. Coast Guard.*



*Nancy Fleetwood and Allan Lund.*



*Pat Wensel and Andy Kilgore.*



*Former AGADC President Scott Bell with Ken Breshnahan.*



*Members of Watkins Meegan Government Services.*

# Performance Conference

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## Highlights

### *AGA PMC Early Registration Deadline: September 29*

If you've already registered for AGA's PMC, we look forward to seeing you! You've made a smart investment in yourself and your organization. But if you have not yet registered, don't worry... there's still time!

Save time and money by registering in advance. Advance registration discounts (\$395 for AGA members and \$450 for nonmembers) apply to all registrations received before September 29, 2008. After this date, fees will increase to \$445 for AGA members and \$495 for nonmembers. Act now to secure your place at this important event!

- [Register online](#) and save
- [Print registration form](#) (PDF)

### *Just Added! A New Service Model: Auditor Roles in Government Performance Measurement*

Sleepless in Seattle? Why not stay an extra day and earn an additional 4 CPE Hours? Government auditors can increase their value by taking on new roles and practices aimed at improving performance measurement and management. Join us at the Renaissance Seattle from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Oct. 29 for this new educational opportunity.

Learn how to apply an organized framework to determine which specific practices provide the best opportunities for adding new value to the entity they serve. The framework will be presented in the context of models of effective governance, service delivery, managing for results and organizational learning. Through situational examples, case histories, self-assessment exercises and presentation materials you will learn:

- Where to obtain tools used by innovative auditors for implementing these practices.
- Which practices are best to apply in your organization now, and what skills you may need to develop.
- How to change roles and practices used over time to keep adding more value as performance management in their government evolves.

**CPE Hours: 4**

**Field of Study: AUD**

**Cost: \$50**

**Instructor: Richard C. Tracy,**

Former Director of Audit Services, City of Portland, OR, and a current GASB Board Member

### *Join us in October 27–28, 2008 in Seattle, WA, for AGA's Performance Management Conference (PMC)—a one-of-a-kind event focusing on government performance reporting*

The PMC will bring together federal, state and local government leaders to share in educational sessions, networking and to recognize government entities that have been honored with AGA's Certificate of Achievement in Service Efforts and Accomplishments (SEA) Reporting. Don't miss this opportunity to share successful practices with industry leaders and peers, and to bring invaluable performance management strategies back to your agency.

Earn 14 CPE hours at informative, timely sessions designed to give you the knowledge you need to be more effective. Create your own curriculum from a fantastic offering of educational sessions including:

- Activity Based Costing and Performance Management
- Auditors Working with Management to Advance Performance Management
- Citizen Engagement from Community to State: Issues, Challenges and Lessons Learned from Vancouver, WA, King County, and Washington State
- Essential Ingredients for Successful Performance Management
- Federal Government Performance Update
- GASB Update
- Improving Government Transparency Through Citizen-Centric Reporting

## Performance Conference (Continued)

- Lessons Learned for the Next Administration
- National Opportunities in Benchmarking
- Performance Based Management Reporting—Integrating Financial and Performance Information
- Rev Up Your Work Force: The Value of Employee Engagement
- Sustaining a Performance Measurement System
- Transforming Budgeting Process to Deliver Citizen Value
- We've Come a Long Way Baby! Thirty Years of Performance Management and Reporting

Hear from industry experts and leaders in federal, state and local government, the private sector and academia who are on the forefront of performance management and government financial management, including:

- **Robert Attmore, CGFM**, Chair, Governmental Accounting Standards Board
- **Scott B. Bassett, MBA**, Performance Measurement Program Manager, Audit Services, Department of Transportation, State of Oregon
- **Sharon Daboin**, Deputy Secretary for Performance Improvement, Governor's Budget Office, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- **H. Stuart Elway, Ph.D.**, President, Elway Research, Inc.
- **Harry P. Hatry**, Principal Research Associate, Urban Institute
- **Paul Posner**, Professor and Director, Master's in Public Administration Program, George Mason University; Former Director of Federal Budget & Intergovernmental Relations, U.S. Government Accountability Office
- **John J. Radford, CGFM, CIA, CFE**, State Comptroller, State of Oregon; Member, AGA National Executive Committee
- **Kenneth A. Smith, BA, MBA, Ph.D., CPA**, Assistant Professor of Accounting, Willamette University
- **Robert Shea**, Associate Director for Administration and Government Performance, U.S. Office of Management and Budget
- **Brian Sonntag**, State Auditor, State of Washington
- **Rebekah Stephens**, Planning and Performance Coordinator, Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, TN
- **Craig W. Thomas, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington
- **Tom Nosack**, Performance Analyst, Financial and Management Services, City of Vancouver, WA

**And many more...**

AGA's Performance Management Conference offers more than just great educational sessions. In addition to an outstanding technical program, the conference provides unparalleled opportunities to network, exchange ideas, share best practices with colleagues and friends.

Don't miss this opportunity to recharge professionally, gain useful information and expand your network of colleagues

- [register today.](#)

### ***Discount Hotel Reservation Deadline: Oct. 3***

AGA has reserved a block of rooms at the Renaissance Seattle for conference attendees. The Renaissance is centrally located in downtown Seattle, just steps from Safeco Fields, Pike Place Market, fine dining, nightlife and great shopping, including the original Nordstrom's.

The room rate is \$152 (plus tax) for single and double occupancy. This rate is only guaranteed until Friday, October 3, 2008, or until the room block sells out. Reservations received after this date (or after the block sells out) may be subject to higher rates. We encourage you to make your hotel reservations today, for the best price and availability.

To make reservations, please call the Renaissance Seattle Hotel at 800.546.9184 or and mention you are attending the "AGA PMC" to receive the discounted rate.

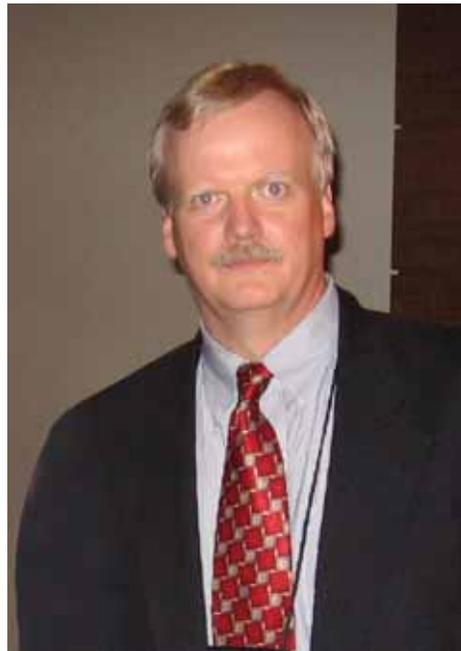
[Visit our website](#) for information about air travel, ground transportation and local attractions.

*We look forward to seeing you in the Emerald City!*

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## Who is Robert “Rob” Smith?

*Name:* Robert Smith

*AGA Position:* Member of the AGA DC Programs Committee

*Company:* Savantage Solutions

*Title:* Vice President

*Background:* Smith graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1984. For the first half of his career, he provided direct service to Americans first as a deck watch officer on a ship in Alaska, then as skipper of a patrol boat in New York, later as an assets dispatcher for all Coast Guard forces in New England (Boston), and finally as captain of an icebreaking tugboat in the Great Lakes (Sturgeon Bay, WI). Smith then attended Columbia University's Graduate School of Business and following that was the financial controller for the Coast Guard's largest base, Governors Island, New York, NY, eventually helping to close that facility when the USCG was in a cost-cutting mode during 1995-97. He was stationed to USCG Headquarters in 1997 and has remained a D.C. metro resident since. While at headquarters, Smith was involved with preparing for audits of the Coast Guard's personal property holdings, its electronics inventory, and its operating materials and spare parts assets. Later he was in charge of programming, budgeting, allocating, and overall accounting of the Coast Guard's operations and maintenance accounts, managing over one billion dollars. These accounts paid for such things as energy, travel, service contracts, utilities, small acquisitions, and so on. His last assignment was in the Coast Guard's Congressional Affairs office. After retirement, Smith accepted a position as Associate with Booz Allen Hamilton, consulting in support of legislative affairs and strategic communications with a client agency within the Department of Homeland Security. Smith joined Savantage Solutions this past April.

*How long have you been a member of AGA?*

I joined AGA this past April, 2008.

*How has AGA helped you with your career?*

AGA has helped me quickly learn about many of the firms and industry leaders in the marketplace in which Savantage operates.

*What advice do you have for someone thinking of joining the AGA?*

AGA provides excellent training, a great network, and fun!

*What is the best thing about working in government service?*

When I worked in government service as an officer in the Coast Guard, I was always gratified to know that I was contributing to the nation's national security and that I helped provide the resources needed for members of the Coast Guard to succeed in their missions.

*What has been the biggest obstacle in getting where you are today?*

I've found the largest obstacle is my own inertia to be comfortable with the status quo. When I've finally decided it's time for me to grow, and I've taken some of the action necessary to learn something, achieve something, or master something, I've found that I've been able to achieve more than I thought possible.

*What is your favorite hobby or outside activity?*

I am a voracious reader, primarily of non-fiction, mostly about history. I also read several newspapers each day, several magazines (politics, current events), and check out online versions of other newspapers.

*What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?*

Yes (I like any flavor of ice cream). If I had to choose, it would be pralines and cream, although I also very much like Ben & Jerry's "Chubby Hubby", too.

*Anything else that you would like to highlight?*

Becoming a father and raising kids with my spouse has been the most rewarding gift of my life.

*Robert Smith*

**Robert Smith**

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- [AGA D.C. Home Page \(Washington D.C.\)](#)
- [AGA Northern Virginia Home Page \(Virginia\)](#)
- [AGA Montgomery/PG Home Page \(Maryland\)](#)
- [MACPA Home Page \(Maryland\)](#)
- [VSCPA Home Page \(Virginia\)](#)
- [GWSCPA Home Page \(D.C.\)](#)
- [AICPA Home Page](#)

# AGADC Awards Dinner

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## Awards Gala Honors its Members and Celebrates the Chapter Year

On Saturday, May 31, more than 200 Washington, DC chapter members and their guests packed the Grand Hyatt Washington for the chapter's annual awards dinner. We were privileged to welcome many honored guests, including AGA's 59th National President-Elect, Sam Mok, Executive Director Relmond Van Daniker, several past chapter and national presidents, regional AGA leadership, and members who have been a part of AGA for 25 years or more. This year, we were also thrilled to host nearly a dozen Early Career members at the dinner, giving them a unique opportunity to meet and network with many leaders in the government financial management community.

Chapter President, Dan Christovich presented a sizable donation from the chapter to the National Raymond Einhorn Memorial Research Fund, established by AGA's Academy for Government Accountability, and then the focus of the evening turned to honoring individuals and organizations as part of the chapter's annual awards ceremony, including:

- Evelyn Brown (Einhorn Gary Award for her dedication and outstanding service at the chapter and national levels that have significantly enhanced AGA's prestige and stature in the financial management community)
- Bob Reid (Distinguished Leadership Award for his sustained distinguished leadership and dedication to excellence in government, extraordinary personal integrity and professionalism, and exceptional commitment to public service);
- Jonathan Breul (Distinguished Service to the Financial Management Community Award for his sustained outstanding contributions to advancing government accountability);
- Julia Ranagan (Emerging Leader Award for demonstrating excellence and the potential for future leadership in the federal financial management and accountability community);
- Marianne Condon (James W. Saylor Award for her outstanding service to the Washington, DC Chapter).
- Malena Brookshire (Ronald J. Lynch Scholarship to further his professional education).
- The Department of the Treasury and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), respectively, in cooperation with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) for the production and release of the first ever Executive Branch Citizens' Guide to the Financial Report of the U.S. Government.

President Dan Christovich honored the past year's board members, and President-Elect Ann Davis stated her vision for the coming chapter year, thanking Dan for his leadership during the past year, Scott Bell, Immediate Past President and Chair of the event planning committee; Gene Hunt and the staff from the Grand Hyatt Washington; the evening's entertainer, Jimmy Nalley; Rebecca Roth, photographer, Ellen Goldberg, graphics, Megan Renner, awards coordinator, and the many board members and other volunteers who committed their time and energy to this special event.

Finally, the chapter thanks our sponsors whose immense generosity made this and many other chapter events possible throughout the year.

Photos from the event will soon be available on the Chapter website.

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# Awards Committee Update

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## *TIME IS RUNNING OUT AND AGA/DC NEEDS YOUR HELP!*

The National Leadership Awards are just around the corner. Each year, AGA recognizes professionals of Visionary Leadership, Innovative Management, and Educational Commitment to our profession and AGA! We need your assistance in identifying outstanding individuals who exemplify the characteristics described below:

### Federal

- ***Distinguished Federal Leadership Award*** - An elected or presidential-appointed federal official in either the legislative or executive branch who has made outstanding contributions to enhancing government financial management.
- ***Elmer Staats Award*** - A federal professional who throughout their career served as a role model for others and consistently exhibited the highest personal and professional standards.
- ***Andy Barr Award*** - A private sector individual who throughout their career served as role model for others and consistently exhibited the highest personal and professional standards.

### State and Local

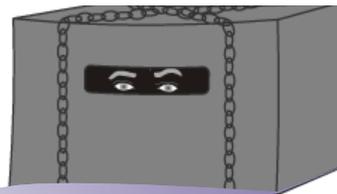
- ***Excellence in Government Leadership Award*** - Professionals who exemplifies and promotes excellence in government, outstanding leadership, high ethical standards and innovative management procedures.
- ***William R. Snodgrass Distinguished Leadership Award*** - Professionals who exemplify and promote excellence in government financial management and who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in enhancing sound financial management legislation, regulations, practices, policies and systems.
- ***Distinguished Local Government Leadership Award*** - Professionals who exemplify and promote excellence in government financial management and who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in enhancing sound financial management legislation, regulations, practices, policies and systems.
- ***Private Sector Financial Excellence Award*** - Executives in the private sector who exemplify and promote excellence in state or local government financial management, outstanding leadership, high ethical standards and innovative management techniques.

Please send the names and nomination information of outstanding professionals to Eleanor Crawford at [Eleanor.long@EY.com](mailto:Eleanor.long@EY.com) no later than October 10, 2008. If you need assistance or have questions, feel free to contact Eleanor at 202-327-5903.

For more information on each of these awards and their nomination forms, visit AGA's National website: [www.agacgfm.org/membership/awards](http://www.agacgfm.org/membership/awards).

# Inside the Black Box

by Simcha Kuritzky, CGFM CPA



## Reporting Cancellations

### Background

Congress passed the "M Account" legislation (Public Law 101-510) in 1991, ending the practice of moving unspent funds to a merged fund or "M" account after they were expired for two years. The new law required that the funds stay in place as expired for five years, then be permanently cancelled. The U.S. Standard General Ledger (SGL) Board created account 4350 Canceled Authority to show the cancellation. In 2006, the SGL Board added memorandum accounts 8101 Partial Authority Cancellation and 8102 Offset for Partial Authority Cancellation for the same purpose. In June of 2008, the SGL Board added 4351 Partial or Early Cancellation of Authority with a U.S. Treasury Warrant and 4208 Adjustment to Total Resources - Disposition of Canceled Payables to handle cancellations not performed on the FMS-2108 Year-End Closing Statement.

### Single- or Multi-Year Fund Logic

When an agency sells property after the replacement has been ordered or purchased, only one entry is required. The basic entry is to clear out the asset and associated accumulated depreciation accounts, debit Fund Balance for the cash deposited, and record any difference as a gain or loss. Also the budget is augmented with a reimbursement entry, which would normally debit Other Actual Collections (account 4266 from non-federal sources and 4277 from federal) and credit funding status (4450 if not yet apportioned, 4620 if not subject to apportionment, or 4060 or 4070 if the anticipated sale had been included as a budgetary resource). In addition, if the fund is appropriated, then it will be necessary to back out the use of appropriations to buy the replacement. The USSGL guidance pairs this last entry with the purchase transaction, but it is easiest to record it simultaneously with the sale. As an example, if an agency sells office equipment to a local government for \$50,000 that had been purchased in an appropriated fund for \$250,000 with \$180,000 depreciated, and the sale proceeds were not yet apportioned, the entry would be:

### No-Year Fund Logic

The recent change specifically addresses the partial cancellation of no-year funds. While no-year funds do not expire and are not cancelled automatically, they can be

partially cancelled by legislation or administrative action (transaction F122). The posting is virtually the same as for cancelling single- or multi-year funds. However, the entry is not posted until the cash has been withdrawn by Treasury, and account 4351 is used instead of 4350. The entry must be entered in a timely manner, because a no-year fund will continue to be reported on the SBR and other financial statements, not only this year, but in subsequent years. Previously, the balance in 4350 would remain in perpetuity as there was no means to reduce it (except when paying a bill using transaction D145, which is an unusual occurrence). Since line 6 of the SBR uses the ending 4350 balance and line 1 uses the beginning 4201 balance, the cancelled portion would show up in next year's unobligated balance brought forward as well as in cancellations. To avoid this problem, Treasury came up with transaction F390, which closes both the balances in 4201 and 4350 after the financial statements have been prepared. However, if one does that then there is no record of the cancellation. So Treasury added transaction F301, which debits 8102 and credits 8101 for the partial cancellation. These are memorandum accounts that never close.

### Inconsistencies

There are a number of problems with the new SGL transactions.

- (1) For 2009, closing entry F390 was changed to post to 4208 Adjustment to Total Resources - Disposition of Canceled Payables even though this entry has nothing to do with payables and closing entry F302 closes 4208 into 4201. So entry F390 effectively closes to 4201 anyway and should not show 4208.
- (2) If there was a payable in the cancelled no-year fund that is disbursed, entry D145 posts debit 4350 credit 4208. Since the early cancellation left no balance in 4201 or 4350, after annual close these accounts will have abnormal balances.
- (3) The memorandum accounts 8101 and 8102 seem to serve the same purpose for no-year funds as 4201 and 4350 do for single- and multi-year. Why does one type of fund use memoranda accounts and the other use budgetary?

## Inside the Black Box (Cont'd.)

### *Proposal*

I think cancellation reporting could be simplified with a few minor adjustments. First, do not close 4351 (just as we do not close 4350). Second, in order to prevent the 4351 and 4201 balances from showing up on subsequent-year SBRs, include the beginning balance of accounts 4350 and 4351 in the calculation of lines 1A Unobligated balance start of year and 6A Cancellations of expired and no-year accounts. That way, only new cancellation activity will be reported on 6A and a fully-cancelled fund will have a zero balance on 1A. Third, do not use 4208, 8101 or 8102 when closing entries against a cancelled no-year fund. Fourth, have D145 post to account 4351 when payments are made against cancelled no-year funds.

### *Conclusion*

The current solution takes care of the SBR problem, but produces two new wrinkles: the treatment for cancellation of single- and multi-year funds are substantively different from that of no-years even though the legal implications are the same, and if a cancelled payable is subsequently paid, entry D145 will create unnatural balances in 4350 and 4201 for a no-year fund. A solution that would handle the SBR without adding new memorandum accounts and changing how closing entries and cancelled payables are posted would be to adjust the definition of the SBR. Unobligated Balance Brought Forward (currently line 1, originally line 2A) could go back to its original definition, which is the opposite of the balances of accounts 4450, 4620, and 4650 (credits are reported as a

positive). Cancellations (line 6) could use the current activity for account 4350 (ending minus beginning balance), rather than just the ending balance. So balances that begin in 4201 and 4350 and remain unchanged throughout the year would not create a balance in line 1 or 6 (or any other line, for that matter).

*Simcha Kuritzky*

*Simcha Kuritzky, CGFM CPA*

Comments and critiques, as well as specific questions or suggestions for future topics, are always welcome. Send them to [Simcha.Kuritzky@CGIFederal.com](mailto:Simcha.Kuritzky@CGIFederal.com), and not to the AGA.

This column is provided as part of a free exchange of ideas in federal accounting, and is not reviewed substantively before publication.

## Federal News Article

### *Where to turn when the TSP tanks*

By Alyssa Rosenberg [arosenberg@govexec.com](mailto:arosenberg@govexec.com) September 18, 2008

Prevailing wisdom dictates that even when Wall Street is in an uproar, investors -- especially those with an eye on long-term gains -- should keep their cool. And that's the point the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board wants to drill home as Thrift Savings Plan funds continue to take hits.

In a steady stream of messages, the board reminds TSP participants that it's impossible to predict what the stock market will do next, so day-trading is unlikely to produce positive results. And since markets generally grow gradually, there's no reason to panic.

But if you have a hard time sitting still and watching your retirement savings dip, there are some outlets that offer a different perspective. We've highlighted a few below. Please note that this list is not comprehensive and Government Executive does not endorse any of these resources. We also suggest you visit the TSP's official Web site if you haven't already done so.

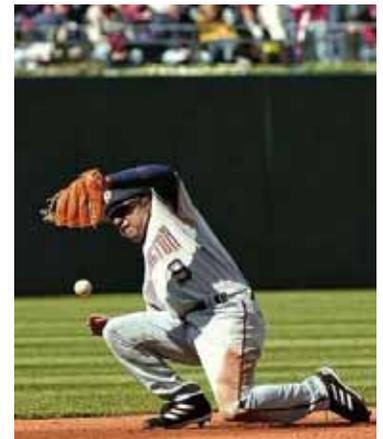
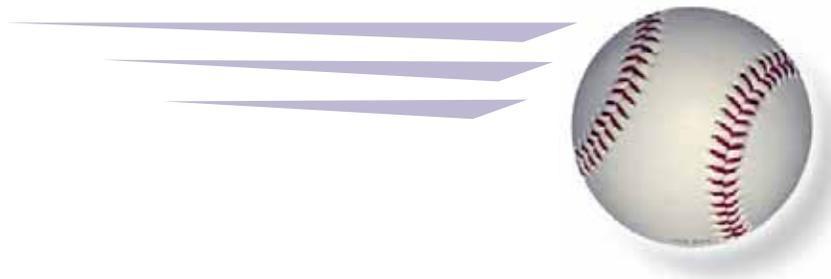
1. TSP Talk is a message board and resource aggregator run by a federal employee who has invested in the TSP since 1984. The site focuses on beating the market, and awards monthly prizes to members whose TSP accounts perform the best. When the TSP board instituted interfund transfer restrictions earlier in the year, it cited TSP Talk as evidence that some plan participants were making frequent trades to the detriment of other investors. More than 4,000 participants signed a TSP Talk petition opposing the restrictions. No matter what your approach is to investing, TSP Talk provides a lively conversation.
2. TSP Center was created by a TSP investor, and has a message board, investment calculator and -- like TSP Talk -- a leader board highlighting the site members whose investments have done well. It also features FantasyTSP, a tool that lets investors track their own performance and model different strategies.
3. TSPGO tracks the performance of Thrift Savings funds against the Standard & Poor 500 Index, and makes buy, hold or sell recommendations.
4. TSPMoney features an earnings calculator and a free desktop application to help you track your account's performance.
5. Thrift Trading, TSP Pilot and TSP Key are paid services that provide investment allocation advice.
6. The TSP Report and the The TSP Advisory are subscription-only publications that offer market analysis and investment models.

*From The Government Executive.com.*

(<http://www.governmentexecutive.com/>), September 18, 2008. Reprinted with permission

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Mr. Andre Small from Jefferson Wells on being this month's winner at the AGA DC luncheon of free tickets to a Washington National's game! There will be a drawing at every monthly luncheon for 2 free tickets to a Washington National's game. Another great incentive to attend the monthly meetings!



## Community Service

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Thanks again to everyone who helped make our raffle for the American Cancer Society a success! We collected \$210 from the raffle that will be donated to the American Cancer Society. The lucky winner was Ruthie Apelt who won two tickets (a \$500 value) to the American Cancer Society Gala on October 25, 2008 at Fed-Ex field

In October we will participate in the ALS walk. The ALS Association DC/MD/VA Chapter's walk is part of a national effort in support of local patient services and nationally directed research to find a cure for Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), often referred to as "Lou Gehrig's disease." <http://www.alsinfo.org>

This year's walk will be on October 12, 2008 starting at Constitution Gardens, Washington, DC. Registration starts at 9:00. The Walk begins at 10:00 AM. We walk approximately 3 miles (You do not need to walk all or any of the route to participate.) We will walk as members of "Joan's Wayward Walker's" led by our captain, Andy Kilgore. Tee Shirts will be provided so please let us now if you are interested in participating.

Last year we raised \$1,600 ALS as 10 members of the AGA DC Chapter participated in the walk. We are hoping to double our participation and contribution for this year. Even if you can't walk you can still donate!

Please contact Lloyd A. Farmer 703-516-9134 ext 11, Tonya Allen Shaw 202-720-5026 or AnnMarie Walker 202 273-5549 if you are interested in these programs.

## Member Services

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Member services has two exciting events coming up in the month of October!

First, on October 4th, AGA DC will enjoy lunch at Chadwick's in Georgetown at 12pm and then learn about the history of the C&O Canal on a boat ride at 1:30. This is sure to be a popular event and we can only accommodate 25 people so please RSVP quickly! The cost is free for AGA Members and \$15 for non-members and family. Please bring cash (exact change) or check to the event. Please RSVP to Crystal Heitman at [Crystal.L.Heitman@us.pwc.com](mailto:Crystal.L.Heitman@us.pwc.com) to secure your spot today! Please note that AGA will be responsible for the cost of the ticket even if you do not attend so please only RSVP if you are certain you can attend.

Later in the month, AGA DC will kick off the Halloween season with a Haunted Tour of DC. This will be a walking tour so please wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather! The tentative date for the event is Thursday, October 23 and it will be free of charge. Time and meeting location to be announced at a later date. To reserve your spot please send your RSVP to Caitlin Holmes at [Caitlin.B.Holmes@us.pwc.com](mailto:Caitlin.B.Holmes@us.pwc.com) by Friday, October 10. More details will be announced as we get closer to the dates of the events.

In November, we are excited to bring back the popular Opera Night event at Cafe Mozart. We are waiting for Cafe Mozart to set the date and will let you know as soon as they do. Finally, we would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support of AGA as their sponsorship enables us to bring you these events.



## Montgomery County AGA Events

10/22/08 - 10/22/08

### October Dinner Meeting

#### Event Description:

**Presentation:** "Transforming Spreadsheets to an Enterprise Budgeting and Strategy Management Solution: NIH's Experience" by John J. McGowan, Ph.D., Deputy Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health.

**Speaker's Bio:** Dr. John J. McGowan received his Ph.D. degree in microbiology in 1980 from the University of Mississippi Medical Center and went on to graduate from the University of Virginia School of Medicine as a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Postdoctoral Fellow in 1982. Since that time, Dr. McGowan has been selected to serve multiple roles within the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and NIH, including Program Officer for a Pre-clinical Drug Development and AIDS program, Chief of the Developmental Therapeutics Branch and AIDS Program, and Associate Director of Basic Research and Development Program. He currently serves as the Deputy Director for Science Management, a position that entails directing all Institute business and administrative activities as well as science planning, policy and integration, and he serves as the Director of DEA. Dr. McGowan continues to provide leadership for scientific and extramural policy issues and senior level interactions with other NIH components and the NIH Office of the Director.

Before beginning his work at the NIH, Dr. McGowan was successful in obtaining several grants and contracts through NIH and the Department of Defense. When he began his career at the NIAID in 1986, the Division of AIDS (DAIDS) was just being organized. As one of the first DAIDS staff, Dr. McGowan pioneered many groundbreaking initiatives - some of which continue today.

**CPEs:** You will receive 1 CPE for attending this dinner meeting.

**Community Service Activity:** Please bring new or used toys to be provided to the Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program.

**Reception:** 6:00 - 6:30 p.m.

**Dinner and Speaker:** 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (approximate ending time)

**Location:** Hilton Hotel (formerly the Double Tree Inn) at 1750 Rockville Pike

**Cost:** \$30 per person - Checks made payable to "AGA".

**Metro and Parking:** The Doubletree Hotel is located across the street from the Twinbrook Metro Station (Red Line). Self-Parking is complimentary in the hotel garage. Metered parking is available behind and on either side of the hotel.

#### Contact:

Scott Turnbull

Phone:

301-931-2050

## Liaisons/Members Committee

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### AGA D.C. LIAISONS/MEMBERS: ARE CERTIFICATIONS RELEVANT?

*The Topic of October 22, 2008 Brown Bag Luncheon*

*By: Jim Brett and Carolyn Hicks on Behalf of the Membership/Liaison Committee*

A certification demonstrates commitment to one's chosen profession and technical knowledge to progress in that field, especially for an early career professional. The benefits of certification extend to the organization of the certified professional. Certifications represent an understanding of higher expectations for quality work, adherence to ethical and professional standards, laws and regulations.

Come hear what Federal Government and private sector professionals have to say about the following certifications:

- Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM),
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA),
- Certified Internal Auditor (CIA),
- Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE),
- Other certifications available to those in the accounting, auditing, information technology, contracting fields.

Where: Veterans Affairs, Street location, McPherson Square Metro Stop (Blue/Orange Lines)

When: Wed., Oct. 22, 2008, Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Panelists will include:

- Mia Leswing (CPA, CISA, CGFM) is a Partner with Clifton Gunderson LLP.
- Bill Hughes (CPA, CGFM) is a Managing Director with Morgan Franklin.
- Stephen Wills (CPA, CGFM, CIA, CFE, CMA, CFM and MPA) is a Staff Accountant with the Department of Transportation.

Topics for Discussion:

- How certification(s) assists in professional endeavors.
- Perceived relevance of certifications in the Federal Government versus the private sector, which may include contracting with Federal Government.
- Recommendations for those interested in pursuing certifications.

*Please confirm your attendance with  
Ruthie Apelt, Membership/Liaison Committee Co-Director, e-mail: [ruth.apelt@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:ruth.apelt@thomsonreuters.com),  
or Marguerite Nealon, Membership/Liaison Committee Co-Director, e-mail: [wnealon01@aol.com](mailto:wnealon01@aol.com).*

## Education Events

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### *New Brochure on AGA-DC Training Opportunities*

The Washington, DC Chapter is pleased to announce our lineup of educational events for the 2008-2009 program year.

- Annual Conference - AGA-DC hosts a 2-day conference each spring. The conference offers 15 hours of CPE on a variety of federal financial management topics.
- Monthly Luncheons - AGA-DC hosts an outstanding lineup of speakers at our luncheons, which are held at locations in downtown DC, convenient to Metro.
- EXPANDED! Free Audio Conferences - AGA-DC participates in several of the audio conferences offered by AGA National. We offer the training free to our chapter members, on a space-available basis. AGA National issues 2 hours of CPE for each session.
- NEW! AGA-Sponsored Courses - AGA-DC is pleased to provide a new educational opportunity for our members. Our chapter is hosting a 1-day training course in January, sponsored by AGA National.
- Free CGFM Training - AGA-DC offers a free 6-day training seminar for individuals getting ready to take the CGFM exam.

[Read more about these events in our training brochure.](#)

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## Calendar of Events — 2008/2009 Program Year

Month	Luncheons	Community Service	Member Service	Education	Early Careers	Membership	Awards	CEC Meetings
August			17-Aug-2008	20-Aug-2008				6-Aug-2008
			Washington Nationals Game: Pre-game Tailgate: 11:30 AM at RFK Stadium 1st Pitch: 1:35 PM	Audio Conference: Everything You Wanted to Know About Performance Management and Reporting But Were Afraid to Ask Time: 2-4 PM CPEs: 2				Veterans Administration Teleconference #: 1-800-767-1750 Access code: 71805 12:00 - 1:00 PM
September	17-Sep-2008			3-5 Sept-2008 10-12 Sept 2008	19 Sep 2008			3 Sep 2008
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker: Danny Werfel, OMB Location: D'Acqua Restaurant CPE: 1				"Explore DC Series" Jazz Location: Sculpture Garden Time: 5:30pm			Veterans Administration Teleconference #: 1-800-767-1750 Access code: 71805 12:00 - 1:00 PM
				10-Sep-2008				
				Audio Conference: Fraud Prevention and Detection Time: 2-4 PM CPEs: 2				
October	14-Oct-2008	12-Oct-2008	4-Oct-2008	15-Oct-2008	Date: TBD	22-Oct-2008		8-Oct-2008
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker: Doug Webster Location: Army Navy Club CPE: 1	Walk to D'Feet ALS® Constitution Gardens	C&O Canal Tour and Lunch	Audio Conference: Results of AGA's Research on Performance Based Management Reporting Time: 2-4 PM CPEs: 2	Luncheon Speaker Series Location: GAO Building	Fall Membership Liaison Luncheon: The Value of Certifications Location: Veterans Administration		Veterans Administration Teleconference #: 1-800-767-1750 Access code: 71805 12:00 - 1:00 PM
			23-Oct-2008					
				Haunted Tour of DC				
November			Date: TBD		18-Nov-2008			5-Nov-2008
			Opera Night at Café Mozart		Happy Hour Kickoff Location: ESPN Zone Time: 6:30pm			Veterans Administration Teleconference #: 1-800-767-1750 Access code: 71805 12:00 - 1:00 PM
December	10-Dec-2008	Date: TBD	Date: TBD	10-Dec-2008				
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: Army Navy Club CPE: 1	Toys for Tots	Holiday Get Together Location: TBD	Audio Conference: 21st Century Managers: New Mix of Skills and Education Levels Time: 2-4 PM CPEs: 2				

## Calendar of Events — 2008/2009 Program Year

January	22-Jan-2008	Date: TBD	Date: TBD	15-Jan-2009	20-Jan-2009			
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: Army Navy Club CPE: 1	Make-a-Wish Foundation	Chinese New Year	Training: Internal Controls in the Federal Government-- Understanding A-123 Location: Washington DC Time: 8AM - 4:30PM CPEs: 8	Happy Hour Location: Buffalo Billiards Dupont Time: 6:30 PM			
				21-Jan-2009				
				Audio Conference: How XBRL Can Enable Improved Financial and Performance Reporting Time: 2-4 PM CPEs: 2				
February	18-Feb-2009	Date: TBD	Date: TBD		Date: TBD			
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: Army Navy Club CPE: 1	Volunteer Tax Assistance	Wizards Game		Lucky Strikes Event ***** Explore DC Series			
March	19-Mar-2009	Date: TBD	Dates: TBD		10-Mar-2009			
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: Army Navy Club CPE: 1	Dress for Success Suit Drive	Post Financial Management Conference Happy Hour		Luncheon Speaker Series Location: GAO Building			
					18-Mar-2009			
					Happy Hour Location: Chef Geoff's, Metro Center			
April	21-Apr-2009	Date: TBD	Date: TBD	8-Apr-2009	10-April-2008 17-April-2008			
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: Clydes CPE: 1	DC Habitat for Humanity	Virginia Vineyards Tour (new vineyards)	Audio Conference: Auditing Time: 2-4 PM CPEs: 2	White House Tour			
May	20-May-2009	Date: TBD	Date: TBD	Date: TBD	10-May-2009			
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: Army Navy Club CPE: 1	Cell Phones/ Eyeglass Donation	Botanical Gardens	Training: Annual Spring Conference Time: 8-4:30 PM CPEs: 15	US Capital Tour			
					19-May-2009			
					Happy Hour Location: Bar Louie, Chinatown			
June	16-Jun-2009	Date: TBD	Date: TBD		4-Jun-2009		6-Jun-2009	
	Luncheon Time: 11:45 - 1:45 pm Speaker and Location: TBD CPE: 1	So Others Might Eat	Nationals Game and Tailgate		Explore DC Location: Kennedy Center Millenium Stage		Awards Dinner Location: Hyatt Hotel, WDC Time: TBD	



## Government Finance Case Challenge

2008–2009

### Welcome

The best undergraduate accounting/financial management/business students in the country are invited to compete in the second annual Government Finance Case Challenge, sponsored by the Association of Government Accountants (AGA).

Student teams will collaboratively analyze and offer a written response to a case centered on how a U.S. city government implements a performance management system. The registration deadline is Friday, Oct. 17, 2008. All members of the two highest-scoring teams will receive a scholarship to attend AGA's National Leadership Conference, set for Feb. 19-20, 2009 in Washington, D.C.

Teams will present their finalized solutions before a panel of federal/state/local government leaders, corporate partners and CFOs on Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009. The winning teams will be announced at the awards luncheon on Friday, Feb. 20.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the winning team. Each student participant will receive a free one-year membership to AGA.

Students will compete with teams from various colleges around the country. The experience promises to challenge students' moral reasoning, raise their awareness of the importance of government accountability and open doors to a future career in government.

**\*This competition is only open to currently enrolled undergraduate college students.**

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