



ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER

Albuquerque AGA Monthly Newsletter

August 2015

In This Issue Page

| | |
|--|----|
| • President's Message | 1 |
| • Welcome New Members | 1 |
| • This Accounting Specialty's In High Demand In NM 2-3 | |
| • Save The Date | 3 |
| • Data Analytics Intensive Agenda | 4 |
| • Education Plan For The 2015-16 Program Year | 5 |
| • AGA Appreciation Picnic & School Supply Drive | 6 |
| • AGA National PDT Recap | 7 |
| • Congratulations AGA Albuquerque Chapter | 8 |
| • Member Appreciation Event & Reception | 9 |
| • AGA Chapter CEC | 10 |
| • AGA's Internal Control & Fraud Prevention Training | 10 |

President's Message

Greetings,
I hope all of you are enjoying summertime in the beautiful State of New Mexico. The higher than usual levels of rain we have been experiencing this year has changed the landscape around us. Trees and fields are greener, rivers and lakes are fuller, and everything around us is full of life. It often takes something outside of the ordinary to produce a positive change around us. With this philosophy in mind, the Albuquerque Chapter Executive Committee (CEC) has developed new and exciting plans for this program year. In response to feedback we have received from our members, we will be conducting training events offering larger blocks of available CPE credits, and featuring industry-leading training topics not previously offered in our local area. We will also be providing other new services to our membership, including mentorship opportunities and developmental programs for our student and early career members.

We are confident these seeds we are planting now will lead to a stronger and more vibrant organization, and offer new and exciting opportunities to our members. The CEC and I look forward to working with you, and growing our organization together.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Brown, CPA, CGFM
AGA Albuquerque Chapter President

Welcome New Members!

Ms. Anna Casaus - NM Metropolitan Court
Ms. Candy Gallegos - NM Metropolitan Court
Ms. Etta Jane Linton - CNM Student
Ms. Cynthia McCormick - New Mexico Board of Pharmacy
Ms. Rachael I. Monarch - Metropolitan Court
Mr. Joshua L. Munoz - City of Las Cruces
Ms. Lily Rosas - Metropolitan Court
Ms. Tanya Torres - Metropolitan Court
Ms. Krista Ganes-Chavez - State of New Mexico
Ms. Julia M. Gil - Children, Youth & Families Department
Mr. Jason S. Sanchez - NM Aging & Long-Term Services Dept.



Speaker Call

Are you interested in sharing your knowledge and providing CPE to our attendees? We are looking for luncheon and seminar speakers for the upcoming program year. Please contact any member of the CEC to express interest in timing, topics, etc.



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Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/AGAABQ/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/AGAABQ/)



This Accounting Specialty's In High Demand In New Mexico

Source: Albuquerque Business First, July 25, 2015

According to [Heather Prudhomme](#), audit manager at Atkinson and Co. and president of the Albuquerque chapter of the Association of Government Accountants (AGA), roughly 80 percent of accounting graduates in the state will eventually work on government accounts in some fashion. Prudhomme, who was recently awarded the AGA's 2015 Chapter Service Award for her efforts in advancing awareness of the government accounting sector among students and professionals, says the vast amount of government money "flowing into New Mexico," as well as a lack of awareness among accounting students, has contributed to the state's need for more qualified professionals. We recently asked her about the differences between traditional CPA work and government accounting, the challenges facing the industry and why government accountants are important in the scope of "public money."

First off, what is the difference between a general certified public accountant and someone qualified to work as a government accountant?

Government accounting is quite different than regular accounting. Differences in compliance, for example; they structure their statements a little differently such as tracking everything by fund — on a state level. At the federal level, everything is kept track of by budget [allocation]. It's very critical to keep track of spending in line with what you're budgeted. There are three exams you can take to get certified — federal, state and either local or municipality.

Certification for government accounting also differs from traditional CPA licensure. A number of different certifications such as certified government financial manager exist.

Why is there such a need in New Mexico for government accountants?

There's a need because New Mexico gets so much government money flowing through it — for example, from Native American initiatives, low-income and so on. We have a lot of different government agencies at federal levels. Schools, too. The money that they're getting needs to be tracked and monitored. Government accounting is so different that you have different requirements that you have to stay within. There's the issue of small budgets, too. Resources are slim. But we still need the quality people in those positions.

Most government agencies are required to be audited. I've done federal auditing of government cabinets and I do state and local government auditing, too. There's government funding coming from so many different sources that need to be monitored ... There's a huge need for government accountants here. We've grown our student AGA chapter so much this year ... So many of our graduates here are coming out of college and thinking they're going to go to big firms auditing Fortune 500 companies, but we want to keep them here. Almost everyone needs to learn how to do government accounting. No matter where you think you might be working, you'll probably be doing some government accounting.

Where does higher education fit with regard to filling the need?

It's not very well communicated by schools as an employment option. Government accounting is part of the CPA exam, but I don't think students understand their potential for working on government accounts is very big — there's an 80 percent chance that they will work on government accounts at some point. There's not many Fortune 500 companies here ... Some not-for-profit organizations also get government money, so they're required to have government audits, as well.

What we're trying to do with the student [chapter](#) is to help them understand the prevalence [of the chance] that they will be in contact with this information. There's a need to put this [employment] need at the forefront of our universities. It's a needed skill that's not widely had. I think requiring that kind of class [in government accounting] is a great step in closing that gap.

This Accounting Specialty's In High Demand In New Mexico - *Continued*

What other challenges is the industry facing right now besides the employment need?

There's always changes. There are probably three to four new standards every year that we have to be on top of. By the same token, clients also need to know how to implement those changes ... A change of government leadership, too, is a challenge. You're constantly trying to adapt to the new mission or agenda and regulations. The financial aspects and IT, too, are challenging. We need to adapt to use technology to our advantage ... I think it's just really important for government accountants to be knowledgeable because there's so much information we have to be aware of. We're really dealing with the public's money and we're trying to make things very transparent.



2 Day Intensive on Data Analytics

October 22 & 23, 2015 - 16 hours of Technical CPE
Location TBD

\$200 for members | \$250 for non-members
registration link posted next week

Speakers : Suzanne Bump - Massachusetts State Auditor
Hudson Hollister - founder & Executive Director of the
Data Transparency Coalition
Matthew D. Pickard - Assistant Professor of Accounting at
the University of New Mexico



Data Analytics Intensive Agenda

Thursday October 22 | 8:00am - 12:00 noon

Massachusetts State Auditor Suzanne Bump was featured in the Summer Edition of the Journal of Government Financial Management for her success in transforming the Office of the Massachusetts State Auditor to use data analytics to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the agency. This initiative, which she undertook upon her appointment to office, was developed and executed as a long-term project plan, and implemented in three separate phases. Auditor Bump will be presenting on how to successfully implement the use of data analytics in organizations, and what she found to be the keys to her success.

Networking Lunch Break (lunch is included)

Thursday October 22 | 1:00pm - 5:00pm

Hudson Hollister is the founder and Executive Director of the Data Transparency Coalition. The Data Transparency Coalition pursues the publication of government information as standardized, machine-readable data. It advocates for specific policy changes; educates policymakers, industry, and the public on the benefits of data transparency; and brings government and industry together to collaborate on policy and technology solutions. Prior to founding the Data Transparency Coalition, Mr. Hollister served as counsel to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the U.S. House of Representatives, and as an attorney fellow in the Office of Interactive Disclosure at the Securities and Exchange Commission. Mr. Hollister's presentation will focus on upcoming legislation related to data transparency, how it will affect Government and private industry, and ways we can use the increased amount of data that will be available.

Friday October 23 | 8:00am - 5:00pm | Includes 1 hour networking lunch

Matthew D. Pickard is an Assistant Professor of Accounting at the University of New Mexico. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Arizona in Management Information Systems. He also holds an MBA in Management Information Systems and a BS in Computer Engineering from Brigham Young University. He has conducted numerous presentations on how to apply data analytics to the contexts of auditing and fraud investigations. His presentation will focus on practical applications of data analytics in auditing, using commonly available software such as Microsoft Excel.





Contact Marla Gorena at mgorena@acgsw.com to purchase

Education Plan for the 2015-2016 Program Year

Bonus **FREE**
Membership
when you
sign-up!

2 options to choose from

\$540 for 34 hours of Continuing Professional Education

- (1) 2-day Data Analytics Intensive - 16 hours technical CPE
- (2) half day seminars - 4 hours technical CPE
- (1) full day seminar - 8 hours technical CPE
- (2) luncheons - 1 hour of CPE

\$800 for 50 hours of Continuing Professional Education

- (1) 2-day Data Analytics Intensive - 16 hours technical CPE
- (2) half day seminars - 4 hours technical CPE
- (1) full day seminar - 8 hours technical CPE
- (1) 2-day Professional Development Conference
- (2) luncheons - 1 hour of CPE



**Please join the
Association of Government Accountants
Annual Member Appreciation Picnic**

Friday, August 14, 2015

11:45 – 1:00

Frenchy's Park

2001 Agua Fria, Santa Fe

Burgers, Hot Dogs, Chips,

Sweets and Soft Drinks

**The picnic will benefit the
Adelante Program
School Supply Drive**

Supplies needed:

Pencils

Pencil Boxes

Spiral Notebooks

Loose Paper (College and Wide Rule)

Dividers

Glue Sticks

Pocket Folders

AGA National PDT Recap

by Heather Prudhomme, CPA, CGFM

During the week of July 12th, I had the pleasure of attending the AGA National PDT in Nashville, Tennessee. For those who haven't been to this conference, I highly recommend attending if you get the opportunity! Along with feeling camaraderie with your fellow AGA members, they bring in some of the highest financial officials and motivating keynote speakers I have had the fortune to see and hear.

The four days of training started with the National Business Meeting. A delegate or proxy from each chapter was invited to vote, and information about the business matters of AGA was presented. The new CEO, Ann Ebberts, presented the year's main order of business, which was a motion to increase the overall dues for private, government and retired members by a maximum of \$10. The research into this presentation was staggering to see that AGA has not raised their dues in over 12 years, and the next closest professional organization's dues was more than \$100 dollars greater than ours! The results of the vote were 95-1 in favor of the increase, which will take effect for program year 2016-2017, and will allow AGA National to reduce its reliance on corporate partners and continue to increase how National can serve each chapter and the greater government finance practice.

In other business presented, outgoing National President Bill Miller gave his remarks on his year. Highlights included his trips to chapters in Guam, and the opportunity to help with the creation of the first international chapter in Mexico City. Incoming National President John Homan took a few minutes to address the meeting and discussed his theme and plans for the upcoming year. "Celebrating the Government Workforce" is the theme of this 2015-2016 year to facilitate AGA and government finance community's focus on the positive work we do and help others understand how important our function is to the mission of the country's functionality. Mr. Homan specifically noted that he had a wonderful time during his trip to Albuquerque during the year and looked forward to meeting more chapters during his official presidency.

During the conference, certain themes of focus emerged and it is clear where our knowledge will need to be honed to support the bigger initiatives and needs being identified at a National level. The major themes of data analytics, enterprise risk management, communication and leadership, and changes in standards were emphasized throughout the training sessions as the paths that will be significant for further evaluation and success. The Albuquerque Chapter is well on its way to adopting these themes into our educational focus for the year, and look forward to sharing these themes with you!

Lastly, and as you will see in the newsletter, there were several awards sessions held during lunches and breakfasts, and the Albuquerque Chapter was recognized SIX times for the work accomplished during the 2014-2015 program year! Please see the next page for information on the awards received. Congratulations for your recognition on all the hard work, AGA ABQ!

AGA PDT 2015 National Awards

Chapter Recognition Award - Platinum – Albuquerque
Heather Prudhomme, CPA, CGFM, CGMA – President

Chapter Service Award - Heather Prudhomme, CPA, CGFM, CGMA

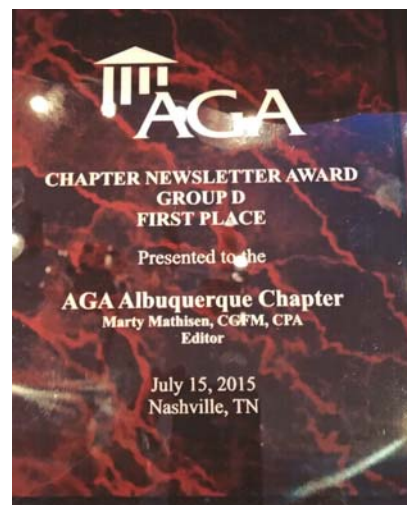
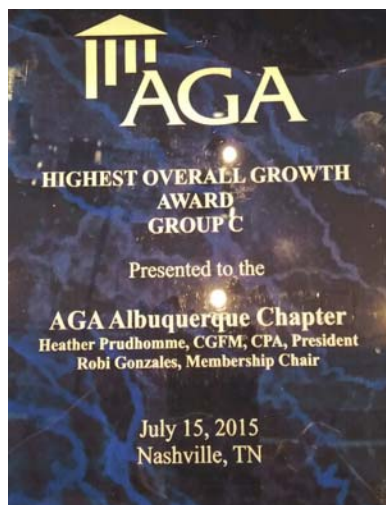
Education Award – Albuquerque
Marla Gorena, Education Chair

Chapter Newsletter Award, First Place – Albuquerque
Marty Mathisen, CPA, CGFM – Editor

Chapter Website Award, Honorable Mention – Albuquerque
Peter Pacheco, CFE, CIGI – Webmaster

Highest Overall Growth – Albuquerque Chapter
Heather Prudhomme, CPA, CGFM, CGMA – President
Robi Gonzales, Membership Chair

Congratulations AGA Albuquerque Chapter!



Member Appreciation Event Recap

On July 30, 2015, AGA members and sponsored guests were treated to a special CPE training and reception event to show our appreciation for our valued members! Beth Mohr, CFE, CAMS, MPA, PI, Managing Partner of McHard Accounting Consulting LLC provided 3 hours of instruction about interviewing skills. She shared insights and best practices about types of questions to ask for the most return of information, subjects to watch for in responses, and where to steer the direction of questioning. Although each interview must be tailored to the subject and person, there were several themes that emerged as effective ways to obtain answers and keep people feeling open and able to share.

Wally Drangmeister, Director of Communications for the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association, also presented to the group about networking skills. In an interactive exercise, he showed us how to approach 'wallflowers' to help them be more comfortable in group settings, as well as continue to meet people and grow our network of contacts. This section of the afternoon, and its built-in activity, was a great way to keep us awake and laughing!

The event closed with a networking reception in which we could utilize our new networking skills. Members were able to bring 5 sponsored guests to see the benefits and fun that AGA can provide. With our membership drive season coming up, we hope that we gain more new members to add to our appreciation events in the future!



MISSION STATEMENT

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

www.agaabq.org

AGA CORE VALUES

Service, Accountability, Integrity, Leadership



ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER

2015-2016 AGA Albuquerque Chapter Executive Committee

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AGA's Internal Control & Fraud Prevention Training

September 15 - 16, 2015 | Washington, DC
Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center