



Final Entry

Meet AGA's Next National President— Richard O. Bunce Jr., CGFM, CPA



When Richard O. Bunce Jr., CGFM, CPA, accepts the gavel from outgoing AGA National President Lisa Casias, CPA, in July, he will cap an AGA career that has taken him from chapter leadership to the national stage. As a Past National Treasurer and former chairman of the Professional Certification Board, “Dick” Bunce has seen the organization from every angle and is well-positioned to be AGA’s 62nd National President. Bunce, 55, oversees Virginia Commonwealth University’s audit and compliance arm as executive director of Assurance Services. For the final four months before his June 30 retirement, he is serving as special assistant to the university’s president. We asked him to tell us what his AGA membership and volunteer leadership has meant to his career as well as his plans for his year as National President.

Please tell AGA members how your membership has affected your professional life.

Joining AGA in November 1996 was a key moment in my professional development that I honestly didn’t recognize at the time. Previously, I had dedicated my interests and efforts to other professional organizations, and I was looking for a new challenge. Upon joining AGA, I was welcomed by the Richmond Chapter’s leaders, who mentored me and encouraged me to get involved in various aspects of the chapter activities, including a year as chapter president. Eventually that led to opportunities at the national level.

The primary benefit of my AGA membership has been the opportunity to serve in leadership positions at both the chapter and national levels. Working with diverse groups on complex issues and participating in both strategic and operational policy issues has bolstered my ability to work more effectively with all levels of the university and its health system.

What do you see as AGA’s greatest challenge and where do you think AGA can and should have the greatest impact?

AGA’s greatest challenge is one faced by all professional associations—developing and supporting future leaders. So many of our chapter and national positions are filled by a core group of dedicated members, but we need to expand those numbers. To develop tomorrow’s leaders, we need to provide the environment, direction and support to make our members feel comfortable stepping forward into our leadership positions and then help them succeed in those positions.

I think the area where we have the potential to have the greatest impact is increased government accountability and transparency. Obviously the financial challenges facing the public and private sectors are daunting and most days seem overwhelming. AGA is uniquely positioned to marshal the resources and attention to enable governments and citizens to address those challenges.

Where do you plan to put the most emphasis in the coming year?

In the statement that accompanied my nomination for National President I said my two priorities for the coming year will be strengthening services to our members, which I hope will attract new members, and obtaining recognition of the CGFM as the government sector’s preferred professional designation. We need to continue our work to make sure the CGFM is recognized, valued and rewarded. In addition, we will proceed with our efforts on the Association’s strategic plan by targeting programs and resources to the priorities identified in the plan.

What are you most looking forward to as National President?

The two things that come immediately to mind are meeting the AGA members and keeping the momentum going.

As I’ve traveled to some of our chapters this year, I’ve been impressed with member dedication to government

service and the diversity of ways in which that is accomplished. From large chapters to smaller ones, the ways we serve our governments and advance accountability is impressive.

Sometimes in working hard to move AGA forward, we focus on the items that still need to be done, so we tend to see the glass as “half empty.” But when we step back and pause for a moment, it’s incredible to see the progress AGA has made in recent years. We spent a lot of energy over the past year renewing our strategic plan, updating it for the changes that have occurred since the plan was developed in 2003 and refocusing our efforts on the new opportunities that lie ahead. I want to honor the efforts and legacy of those who have worked tirelessly for AGA by keeping that progress rocketing forward.

Tell us about your professional career and your AGA career.

For the first part of my career I worked with the Virginia State Auditor’s office and the public accounting firm of Price Waterhouse (back in the stone ages when it was still one of the Big 8). I started an internal audit program for one of the largest state agencies, and then I went to Virginia Commonwealth University for three to five years—almost 21 years ago! All these careers were great learning experiences and have helped prepare me for my roles at AGA.

Within AGA, I’ve been fortunate to have great mentors who gave me tremendous opportunities. I answered a call for volunteers in the *TOPICS* newsletter about 15 years ago, which resulted in an appointment to the Finance & Budget Committee. From there, I was elected National Treasurer, which also made me a member of the National Executive Committee. And just when I thought I was done, Past

National President Bobby Derrick, CGFM, appointed me to chair the Professional Certification Board. So I’ve been lucky to be involved in so many different aspects of AGA and to see things from a variety of perspectives.

I will retire from state service on June 30, so I’m just starting the next phase of my professional career, whatever that may be.

Tell us about your personal background and include any information you wish to share about your family.

I think I’m about the only person left in Richmond who was born in Richmond. I just never found a compelling reason to move elsewhere. I love traveling, but Richmond is home.

My wife Linda deserves a medal. Between my professional responsibilities and my personal quirks, she’s been a saint and has supported me all the way. Our sons, Scott and Russ, have successful careers, and we have a granddaughter and a grandson on the way who will have arrived by the time you read this.

I’ve been blessed, both personally and professionally. On days when the challenges start to get the best of me, I remind myself that even on my worst day, 95 percent of the people in the world would trade places with me. That’s when I hear Jimmy Buffett singing “... some of it’s magic, some of it’s tragic but I’ve had a good life all the way.” Who could ask for more than that? 🍹

AGA Calendar

July 9, 2011

AGA’s National Executive Committee Meeting
Atlanta, GA

July 10, 2011

AGA’s National Board of Directors Meeting
Atlanta, GA

July 10 – 13, 2011

AGA’s 60th Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition
Atlanta Marriott Marquis
Atlanta, GA

September 19 – 20, 2011

AGA’s Sixth Annual Internal Control & Fraud Conference
Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center
Washington, D.C.

November 3–4, 2011

AGA’s Seventh Annual Performance Management Conference
W Hotel
Seattle, WA

February 16 – 17, 2012

AGA’s 10th Annual National Leadership Conference
Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center
Washington, D.C.

July 28 – Aug. 1, 2012

AGA’s 61st Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition
San Diego, CA