

Meet AGA's 2002-2003 National President— William J. Anderson Jr., CGFM

By: Marie Sullivan Force

When Bill Anderson considers his upcoming term as AGA National President, he thinks more about where he wants to end than where he wants to begin.

"When my term is up, I want to make sure I have left AGA in a better position financially and programmatically than it was when I started," he said.

William J. Anderson Jr., CGFM, will inherit a very different AGA than he imagined when he was elected to be the organization's 53rd National President more than 18 months ago. The Association has felt the pinch of the post-September 11 economy and represents a profession defending its principles in the wake of the Enron collapse.

"Everybody was cruising along, conference attendance had been going up and everyone was optimistic," Anderson said of the period before the terrorist attacks changed the nation's priorities. Now, he said, AGA's leadership is being much more conservative in its financial projections and is seeking new revenue streams while taking a close look at expenses. "We have got to look at everything under a whole new light," he said.

As a longtime, active AGA member, Anderson is used to looking at things in a new light. He is known for his ability to plow through huge projects that require a cooperative effort among large groups of members. He spearheaded the overhaul of AGA's Bylaws, which was completed last year, and this year took the lead in finalizing an updated Chapter Recognition Program and revamping the National Awards Committee structure and procedures.

Anderson plans to focus greater attention on serving a wide range of disciplines making up the "accountability profession." He sees broadening AGA's reach as a major opportunity to expand AGA's membership by reaching out to communities within government who may not have considered AGA

the organization for them. "I want them to say, 'Wow, if I am involved in the accountability profession in government, AGA is the professional organization I should belong to.'"

Expanding the Association's member and revenue bases are major priorities for Anderson. He plans to focus AGA's attention on a few basic programs that work well and see them prosper. "Membership grows through satisfied members who bring in new members," he said, noting that the membership revenue (dues) structure needs to be re-examined. "When compared to other similar organizations, our dues are very low. For the services we are providing, our costs are just not covered by the current dues structure."

Anderson first played a role on the AGA national level in 1994 when his then-boss, National President Jeffrey C. Steinhoff, CGFM, began the Association's Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) Program and served as the first chairman of the Professional Certification Board. Anderson was Steinhoff's "right-hand man" during Steinhoff's presidency and the early years of the CGFM Program, an initiative still very near and dear to Anderson's heart.

"Those in the government accountability profession did not have a professional designation of their own that highlighted their special skills and experience," he said. "And the CGFM Program does just that."

While he is pleased with the progress AGA is making in achieving recognition for the CGFM designation, he acknowledges there is still much to be done. "I think we need not only to continue our aggressive implementation strategies but to greatly intensify our grassroots efforts until the program has been recognized by everyone as the mark of excellence in the profession," he said, adding the CGFM will reach its pinnacle when job announcements say, "We prefer the CGFM."



After a stint in the U.S. Army, Anderson completed his bachelor's degree in accounting at Widener University. He then joined the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) where he has spent the last 28 years working in the financial management area. He is currently assigned to the Office of External Liaison, where he is the manager for professional programs.

His AGA resume includes terms as Washington, D.C. Chapter President, Capital Region Vice President and Senior Vice President At-Large on the National Executive Committee; chairman of the National Bylaws & Procedures Committee; chairman of the 50th Anniversary Grand Finale Gala Committee; and chairman of the 1998 Professional Development Conference Host Committee. He is the recipient of numerous professional awards including the Washington, D.C. Chapter's Einhorn/Gary Award.

Anderson is the proud father of two daughters—Heather and Kelly. He is also a doting grandfather to Heather's 5-year-old son Jacob. Anderson and Eva Williams, CGFM, live in Laurel, MD. Williams is AGA's 2001-2002 National Treasurer.

Anderson feels ready to hit the ground running when he accepts the gavel at the PDC in Atlanta. "At the end of my term, I'd like to see that we are looked at and considered as the organization for government accountability professionals and have set a sound financial foundation for AGA's future," he said.