

## **PDT Speaker Bios:**

### **Ernest A. Almonte, CGFM, CPA, CFF, CFE**

AGA National President Ernie is a partner at RSM and is a firm-designated government, not-forprofit, litigation support, and higher education specialist with more than 37 years of experience. He works in the Boston Not-For Profit/Public Sector Industry team. He has managed the audits of numerous public sector and not-for profit organizations and has provided technical assistance on accounting and financial reporting issues to these organizations. Ernie is a frequent speaker on industry related topics. Prior to joining RSM, Ernie spent 16 years as the R.I. Auditor General where he was responsible for the State of Rhode Island financial, performance and fraud audits. In that role, Ernie was responsible for the \$8 billion-dollar CAFR and overseeing the audits of the quasi-public agencies and municipalities. Ernie provided training nationally on topics such as the Yellow Book, GASB and FASAB accounting standards, and fraud risks for federal, state and local professionals serving government, not-for-profit and higher education clients. He has served in numerous positions as Chairman of audit committees including universities and the Department of Defense Audit Advisory Committee at the Pentagon. Other roles and honors include:

- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants – Former Chairman of the Board
- Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accountants – Former Chairman of the Board
- Former Rhode Island Auditor General
- Former Chairman Department of Defense Audit Advisory Committee
- AICPA Distinguished Service Gold Medal and AGA Distinguished Leadership Award
- Senior Executives in State and Local Government and Innovations in Governance, Harvard Kennedy School of Government

### **TaMiya Dickerson, CPA**

TaMiya has more than 15 years of experience overseeing corporate governance consulting projects, where she delivers accounting, business process and technology services to publically traded and regulated companies. Specifically, her work experience has included identification and testing of internal controls, risk assessments, internal and external auditing for operations, and optimization of financial and information technology business functions.

TaMiya is highly familiar with complex infrastructure and organization designs. As it pertains to technology security consulting, TaMiya's expertise includes SSAE 16 audits and Service Organization Control (SOC) Reports 1, 2 and 3; Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) IT compliance services; systems selection and configuration across the life cycle; and data security standards reviews. TaMiya's international and global businesses experience extends to Europe and Asia. It also extends to process improvement consulting and change management.

TaMiya began her career with the Los Angeles office of a Big-4 accounting firm. She also served for many years as a consultant to Fortune 100 companies and also start-up organizations.

Based on her experience serving both local and regional companies, as well as global Fortune 100 entities, TaMiya is adept at creating a realistic scope and carrying out risk-based approaches for engagements.

Over the years, TaMiya has worked closely with dynamic organizations and she has developed a reputation for excellence and as a trusted advisor. She is a strong project manager who excels at planning, execution and closing large projects for national and international assignments.

TaMiya leads core service delivery across the California Market Territory including: Governance Risk and Compliance, Information Technology, Special Attestation and Project Management services. She has worked across industries in delivery excellent client service including: Manufacturing, Technology, Aerospace and Defense, Financial Services, and Not For Profit.

She is a CPA in the State of California and holds a Masters of Accountancy from the University of Southern California and a BBA from the University of Southern California.

**Brian J. Hemmerle, CPA, CFE, Partner**

Brian is known for his extensive government audit knowledge. His professional career has been spent providing audit and Single Audit services for governmental and not-for-profit entities including school districts and charter schools, municipalities, counties, state agencies and court audits for various municipalities. Brian is also a Certified Fraud Examiner. He is frequently invited to speak at the many governmental accounting conferences across the State of Arizona. Before joining Henry+Horne in 2009, Brian worked as an auditor for firms in Phoenix and Los Angeles performing government and not-for-profit audits. He received his Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Arizona. When he's not working, Brian enjoys spending time with his family, hiking, watching college football and going to the movies. Affiliations

- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- Arizona Association of School Business Officials
- Arizona Society of Certified Public Accountants
- Association of Governmental Accountants
- Girl Scouts of Arizona Cactus Pine Council, Board of Directors and Finance Committee
- Government Finance Officers Association, CAFR Award Reviewer

### **Owen Zorge**

Owen is an experienced Director of Information Technology with a demonstrated history of working in the government administration industry. Strong information technology professional skilled in Government, Emergency Management, Strategic Planning, Business Process Improvement, and Business Continuity.

Owen has a BS in Justice Studies and a BS in Business Information Systems. He is currently the State Compliance and Privacy Officer at the State of Arizona, but has also held other roles as the acting State Chief Information Security Officer and the IT Director & CIO for the Department of Emergency & Military Affairs.

### **Mark Swenson**

Mr. Swenson is Deputy Treasurer for the State of Arizona and first joined the Treasurer's Office in January 2007. Mark has held senior executive advisory positions for elected officials in State Government for 25 years, including five State Treasurers, three Senate Presidents, and five Senate Majority Leaders. Under Treasurer Kimberly Yee, Mark oversees the Investment Management Team, Investment Accounting division, Legislative and External Affairs and Communications. Prior to his current position as Deputy Treasurer, Mark was employed at the Arizona State Senate for more than 12 years on Majority Staff as a Senior Policy Advisor. From 2002 through 2006, Mark was the senior policy advisor for budget and tax policy. Previously, he served as Policy Director and also advised the Majority Leadership on education, natural resources, and economic development policy and media relations. Prior to his service in the Senate, Mark was a reporter for the Tucson Citizen, covering state and local politics for nine years.

A graduate from the University of Arizona, Mark enjoys spending time with his children and grandchildren.

### **Michael Stelpstra, CPA**

Michael Stelpstra, CPA, is a financial audit technical manager with the Arizona Auditor General's Office. His responsibilities include providing technical research and assistance, assisting with accounting and auditing standards implementation, and performing quality assurance reviews of financial audit reports and other publications.

### **Lauren Cochran**

I moved to Arizona in 2003 for Graduate School. Earned my Master of Public Administration degree at ASU. Following school I worked for the Town Manager in Gilbert. Moved on to work for the Fire Chief in Buckeye before being hired at Maricopa County in the Budget Office. While working there I went to law school at night. Graduated and passed the bar exam in 2014. I stayed at the Budget Office for ten years. I would have probably stayed forever, but my current position opened up. I am the Administrator for Public Defense Services. This position allows me to continue working on budgets as well as be involved in the legal community. I provide budget, finance and human resource support to all five of our defense

agencies. I also research higher court opinions and legislation for possible financial impacts to the County.

**Jeffrey Nichols, CPA**

Jeffery M. Nichols was appointed City Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer of the City of Scottsdale in 2013. He oversees the Accounting, Budget, Business Services, Finance, and Purchasing Departments. Jeff has worked in governmental accounting and budgeting for over 33 years. He graduated with a BSBA in Accounting from Central Michigan University in 1984, and received his Certified Public Accountant certification in 1989.

**Tanya Wright**

Tanya Wright is the Accounting Manager/Controller, Town of Gilbert, and is an experienced leader in the public sector, overseeing the accounting function for the Town of Gilbert, a municipality with an annual budget of \$1.1B, serving 260,000 residents and over 1,600 employees. She specializes in building and leading high performing teams that deliver exceptional results utilizing a collaborative, team-based approach. Tanya has a successful track record in leadership, finance, and project management across public, private, government, and non-profit organizations.

Tanya led Gilbert's ERP implementation that included a complete revamp of the chart of accounts, core financial modules, CAFR reporter and HR/Payroll, as well as involvement in change management and training of all end users.