

## Evelyn Brown

AGA D.C. Chapter President 1995-1996

AGA National President 2012-2013



- **Can you tell us about how you got started in your government career?**

I started my government career working part-time at the U.S. Postal Service while in college. I worked the night shift, 10:30pm to 7:00am due to the varying class schedules in my senior year at Howard University. After graduating, there was a hiring freeze so I continued to work there until the freeze lifted. My first financial position was with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Maritime Administration, as a GS-5 Operating Accountant. That was in 1972 and thus my full time career began.

- **How has the financial management profession changed since you first joined the government?**

The profession itself has become more diversified. Very specific studies of finance were in place at the beginning of my career but have expanded to include more varied disciplines and the technology has certainly expanded the scope and disciplines of the financial management (FM) profession.

- **Would you describe your first involvement with the AGA?**

My first experience with AGA was filling out the application to join. Then I attended my first Professional Development Training (then, the Professional Development Conference) in Miami Beach, Florida. I began attending their monthly luncheon meeting at George Washington University where monthly attendance ran about 250. I began introducing myself to other attendees and the opportunities and programs offered by AGA.

- **What were some of the biggest changes that happened at the AGA during your career? (OK to mention more than one.)**

I would have to say overall governance and the involvement of the chapters with decisions on behalf of the association's membership. Initially the chapters had a large voice in the AGA's priorities, including education and training events and, more specifically, the annual professional development training activity. Ownership of the process and activities is very important to the membership and, I believe, has a direct impact on the level of membership and member participation. One specific area is the annual conference activities such as the gala or last evening events. The chapters had ownership and took responsibility for working with the National Office to plan and execute outstanding activities that appealed to membership. We worked, planned and coordinated these activities and executed dynamic, sophisticated and fun-filled events. Folks looked forward to the event themes and this stimulated interest, participation and

pride. Being involved this aspect of the annual event inspired the membership and gave them ownership that still lives in us today.

- **Who at AGA inspired you the most over the years? (Ok to mention more than one.) How did this person influence you?**

I was first inspired by Virginia Robinson, who encouraged and recommended that I join AGA, which is the premier professional association dedicated to improving financial management at all levels of government. Their inclusivity is what captured my interest. Other people who inspired me were folks like Raymond Einhorn and T. Jack Gary. I enjoyed reading and learning about Robert W. King, how the organization was formed, and the mission, vision and core values instilled in us as members of the Association. Their influence brought home the importance of the role AGA played in financial management and the significance of the oath we took when we joined public service. Of course, my fellow members have truly influenced and inspired me over the years. Other influences include past National Presidents that carried us through some tough financial times and program initiatives (e.g., the CGFM, CEAR and SEA) that inspired me to continue my relationship with the Association. The people mentioned instilled the desire to always do my best, respect one another and bring credibility, competence and dedication to the profession.

- **Can you describe the significant financial management milestones you achieved at the federal agencies you worked at?**

Financial milestones included the completion of the career ladder positions at the start of my career, supervisory advancement, leadership positions such as Chief of Financial Systems, Chief of Financial Reporting, Secretary and CEO of the National Archives Trust Fund and the achievement of Senior Executive Status as Deputy CFO at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. In the final analysis, it was working with the federal workforce and working for the American people at each level of advancement that expanded my knowledge, skills and abilities to effectively accomplish agency, department and federal government missions, goals, objectives and advance government accountability at all levels. Being able to work in the private sector as subject matter expert was the culmination of what I learned and gained in the Federal workforce.

- **You served as the D.C. Chapter President and as AGA National President. What can you tell me about the priorities that you addressed during these periods? What are your proudest accomplishments?**

As D.C. Chapter President, we focused on and accomplished a number of objectives. These included increasing and sustaining membership, quality training and program activities that benefitted members and FM community. We executed quality programs and invited speakers to enhance and support continuing professional education and development for members for both the D.C. chapter and our fellow chapter members throughout the Association. As National Treasurer, with the cooperation of the National Executive Committee and Finance and Budget Committee, we strengthened AGA's financial management and financial position through the promotion of strong education and training programs, fiscal responsibility and effective stewardship. As National President, the local, chapter, regional and national levels worked to strengthen the

organization as the premier professional Association advancing government accountability — including fiscal standards, ethics and governance.

My proudest accomplishment was collaborating with AGA's membership and staff to support and sustain the organization and achieve a level of excellence in meeting the mission, vision, and objectives set forth in the strategic plan. The interaction with members throughout the organization is the lifeblood of the Association. Without its members, the AGA could not and cannot be sustained. I'm proud to have been selected to each office that I held and am appreciative to have served with my fellow members on a number of committees. It was an honor to serve the Association which was so important in my life and my professional development.

- **Would you describe some of the challenges you faced during your terms as D.C. Chapter President and/or as the AGA National President?**

Some of the challenges I faced as D.C. Chapter President and as AGA National President, as well as in my professional life, related to effective communications, collaboration, and listening and balancing priorities among varying points of view. I enjoy listening to multiple perspectives and channeling enthusiasm into positive actions and results.

- **Can you describe an AGA project or effort that was the most fun for you to work on? What made it memorable?**

The AGA D.C. Chapter Gala progressed from luncheon meeting transition to evening event to recognize and acknowledge the outstanding work of our members and was the most fun. It gave all of us the opportunity to recognize our peers, learn and understand about the works of others, congratulate folks for a job well done and show them how much they are appreciated. We, in the FM community, do not often toot our horns or talk about the good works done. These events bring back memories of the "unsung heroes" that work so diligently because it is the job and take pride in what they do with integrity and dignity. To see the look on the faces of the awardees just fills me (us) with pride and I am always appreciative of the opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of our peers. That is the hallmark of AGA and the fellowship we share.

- **What advice would you offer to early-career AGA members?**

Remember the four Es: education, experience, examination and ethics. And always keep your skillset and resume current because opportunity may only knock once and you need to always make sure that you are prepared. Your attitude determines your aptitude and understand that you are not alone in this world. AGA is always by your side and is here to help when needed.

- **What is your favorite AGA event to attend? (Ok to mention more than one.) Why?**

The AGA D.C. Chapter Awards Gala and AGA Annual PDT, specifically in the past the awards events. The networking is so important and useful especially to not just early careers but the seasoned members as well. It gives all the opportunity to meet, greet, and make those important contacts that you would otherwise not meet. I much preferred having the awards in the evening so all can share and attend, with sit down dinner and we

were able to dress formally. It was a time to relax and was a fitting conclusion to an outstanding year.

- **What is your favorite memory of a particular AGA event?**

The PDT Awards event at the hotel in Nashville. We wore formal dress, had wonderful dinner and lots of foreign visitors whom we escorted around Nashville. Also the PDT at the Lowes Anatole in Dallas. The National President rode in on a "steer" (our theme was western that year). Everyone wore jeans, cowboy boots and hats and took pictures on the cow. We all laughed and had a great time.



- **What are your expectations for the future of government financial management? What do you think will remain the same in the next 10 or 20 years? What will be different?**

The expectations that I have for the future of government financial management is that it continues to maintain the government accountability and integrity that is so ingrained in all of us. (I hope) that we do not succumb to the fads that will evolve over time, but continue to improve the effectiveness of communication and collaboration that has been instilled in the various disciplines. Be true to the professions, maintain your integrity and be flexible to adjust to changes in the work environment without compromising your ethics and integrity. Continue to foster

government accountability at all levels and walk the walk and talk the talk. What will remain the same will be the cadre of dedicated folks who will continue to adhere to the principles and standards of effective and efficient government accountability with technology making ways for the future FM to take advantage of the analytical capabilities and parlay the opportunities into positive outcomes for the profession.

- **Is there anything else that you would like to share your fellow AGA members?**

Value your AGA membership and colleagues and appreciate the benefits of belonging to the premier professional association dedicated to advancing government accountability at all levels of government.



African-American DC Chapter Presidents at the March 20017 Luncheon:  
Virginia Robinson, Evelyn Brown, Terry Bowie, Ross Simms, Wendy Morton-Huddleston



Double Chapter Presidents - DC Chapter and National – at the March 2017 Luncheon:  
Doug Glenn, Virginia Robinson, Evelyn Brown, Lisa Casias, and Samuel T. Mok