

Wendy Morton-Huddleston

AGA D.C. Chapter President 2016-2017

AGA National President 2020-2021



- **What or who inspired you to become a member of AGA?** Mentors, clients, and colleagues encouraged me to join and take advantage of the AGA’s networking, training, and leadership opportunities and to garner insights about their Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) certification, which I obtained in 2006.
- **Discuss your inspiration to volunteer and AGA milestones.** John Lynskey (Past National President 2018-2019) and Scott Bell (D.C. Chapter Past President 2006-2007) met with me in 2012 to discuss the opportunities and impact potential of serving on the Accountability and Outreach committee. Thus, I was inspired to elevate my participation and make a difference. AGA roles and recognition include:
 - National President 2020-2021 and National President-Elect 2019-2020
 - Inaugural Chair of the National Council of Chapters (NCC) 2019-2020
 - Senior Vice President Appointed 2018-2019
 - Professional Certification Board (PCB) and Higher Education Committee 2017-2019
 - Washington D.C. Chapter President 2016-2017
 - Accountability and Outreach Director D.C. Chapter 2012-2015
 - Andy Barr Award Recipient 2017
- **What advice can you share with non-members to provide a compelling reason to join AGA?** A professional association can serve as a catalyst to connect you with members across the association and profession. This leads to relationship currency, a broadened perspective across industries (public sector federal, state and local levels and not-for-profit). Ignite your purpose and pursue the infinite possibilities. Service is our signature.
- **Discuss your passion for philanthropy, board service and contributions to the community.** I’m proud to serve on the United Way (National Capital Area) Board and as a Tocqueville Society Member — providing business insights, volunteer time and resources on health, education, and financial stability. As an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., I contribute to initiatives related to literacy, scholarships, women’s wellness, and fundraisers to support historically black colleges and universities, and the provision of COVID-19 personal protective equipment and supplies to minority communities.
- **Can you share insights regarding your National President platform?** My platform theme is “Legacy, Leadership and Transformation.”

Legacy — I'm excited to pay tribute to the pioneers and charter members who have made lasting contributions to AGA and the financial profession. Through the decades, AGA has evolved to endorse key legislation, such as the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, the *Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990* and the pending *CFO Vision Act of 2020*, and advocate for modernized financial management, information technology, data accountability, and transparency.

Leadership — Over the years, servant leaders have dedicated significant volunteer hours to recruit new members, serve on technical committees, and promote the CGFM certification. In the era of COVID-19, fiscal austerity, calls to action on diversity, equity and inclusion -- resilient leadership will serve us well as we navigate uncertainties, chose positivity, reject passivity, embrace remote training and inspire the next generation to lead with purpose, courage, and inclusiveness.

Transformation — Digital transformation, intelligent automation, COVID-19 contact tracing, and the intersectionality of our profession are key to the future and will quantum leap us forward. Today's AGA members include data scientists, fraud examiners, and cyber security engineers and our membership continues to evolve across industries such as healthcare, energy and transportation. Workplaces are being fundamentally redefined and transformed by shifts in technology, digital literacy, and historic legislation such as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. In the COVID-19 era, public sector professionals are leveraging technology, data, and evidence to achieve their mission and program objectives. In addition, digital interfaces and infrastructure innovation are imperatives that we are using to engage in meetings, podcasts, telehealth medical appointments, and virtual entertainment. We are transforming the way agencies and our home offices use data to improve engagement, operations, and the delivery of services. Let's think about how the business demand and AGA's strategic goal to "serve as a catalyst for innovation and thought leadership in government financial management" can withstand the passage of time.

- **Discuss a key achievement as President-Elect 2019-2020.** As the inaugural chair of the National Council of Chapters (NCC) along with the 70+ council members we provided valued input to the National Governing Board (NGB) as they developed several new initiatives for AGA. This includes the feedback provided on AGA's Diversity and Inclusion Statement¹ and the recent establishment of the Council for the Advancement of Women, as well as support of the two working groups proposed by the NGB: one for updating the Chapter Recognition Program, the other for updating the criteria for opening and closing chapters.
- **What advice would you offer to early-career AGA members?** Stay involved throughout your career, maximize networking, and pursue thought leadership and certification opportunities. Envision yourself in chapter and national level leadership roles and seek out mentors to provide counsel as you navigate the journey.
- **Discuss the genesis and vision for the Council for the Advancement of Women.** I'm honored to serve as the 71st AGA National President, effective July 1, 2020. In 70 years,

only eight women, including myself, will have served as AGA National President. The Council for the Advancement of Women will facilitate a gender equality commitment to cultivate a pipeline to achieve gender diversity in leadership roles such as the National Governing Board (NGB) and amplify the achievements of women. The vision consists of a gender equality commitment to diversify the AGA pipeline of volunteer leaders by collaborating with the NGB, NCC, and the Leadership Development Committee to promote gender diversity in national and chapter level roles, training programs, and professional development. The composition will include male members, as they are a critical ally to promote the vision of gender equality and unite as one team to advance the association's objectives. This model will help ensure that we thrive and cultivate inclusive representation in leadership together.

As Melinda Gates stated: "Empower women, it is the most comprehensive, pervasive and high-leverage investment you can make." I would like to salute the seven past National Women Presidents: Eleanor Clark 1981-82, June Gibbs Brown 1985-86, Virginia Robinson 1989-90, Virginia Brizendine 1995-96, Lisa Casias 2010-11, Evelyn Brown 2012-13, and Mary Peterman 2013-14.

- **Is there anything else that you would like to share your fellow AGA members?** Yes, I would like to express my gratitude to the amazing members for their years of support,



friendship, mentoring, and volunteer service. In the words of Maya Angelou, "Your legacy is every life you have touched." Thank you to those who have had this impact on me such as Carlos Otal, John Cherbini, Hank Steininger, Jullin Renthrope, Jim Arnette, John Lynskey, Mary Peterman, Doug Glenn, Terry Bowie, Ross Simms, and Ernie Almonte. They encouraged me to envision my AGA legacy and formulate a playbook to achieve this milestone. Thank you to Ann Ebberts, Susan Fritzlen, the AGA National team, and my Grant Thornton colleagues, clients, and corporate partners. My thoughts remain with our members and communities during this time of global health emergency, economic recession, and imperative for justice, equality and inclusion. Wishing

everyone wellness, resiliency, and optimism.

ⁱ Diversity and Inclusion at AGA

AGA commits to reflecting the diversity of the broad government financial management community in its leadership, membership, committees, and task forces as well as with its hiring

and contracting practices.

Diversity enriches our organization and we embrace an environment that respects, celebrates, and encourages open communication and differences of opinion as well as a diverse membership representing all levels of government, industry, academia, numerous financial management related disciplines, educational backgrounds, genders, ethnicities, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, and cultures. AGA is committed to creating and sustaining an environment that values everyone in every stage of education, career and beyond.

AGA is also an inclusive organization that leverages the strength of diversity and fosters equity in all aspects of how it functions, engages and delivers valued services and opportunities to its members, customers and stakeholders.

The more diverse the views and backgrounds are within AGA, the better foundation there will be for making sound decisions. A culture of openness and candor defines and influences our communication. Diversity is a way of life, not just a one-time initiative. It is an ongoing responsibility with the highest priority. To that end, AGA strives to attract, hire, develop, and retain employees and volunteers who support AGA's commitment to diversity and inclusion.



*African-American Chapter Presidents at the March 2017 AGA D.C. Chapter Luncheon:
Virginia Robinson, Evelyn Brown, Terry Bowie, Ross Simms, and Wendy Morton-Huddleston*



*Private-Sector Chapter Presidents at the March 2017 AGA D.C. Chapter Luncheon:
Jorge Asef-Sargent, Christina Beck, and Wendy Morton-Huddleston*