

Meet AGA's Next National President— Samuel T. Mok, CGFM, CIA

When Sam Mok, CGFM, CIA, becomes AGA's 59th National President on July 1, he brings with him the experiences gained during an eclectic and varied career. A member and former president of AGA's Washington, D.C. Chapter, Mok currently heads his own consulting firm, Condor International Advisors, LLC. We asked him recently about his plans for his term as AGA National President.

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

Being a member of AGA has provided me with an instrumental support network of leaders and competent professional peers. Together, the AGA members comprise an invaluable source of knowledge and capability. I have benefited, as I hope all members have, from the mutual exchange of experience and knowledge in times of need. AGA provides financial management professionals and leaders in the government a platform to promote and advocate new ideas and concepts, while humbly learning from one another.

Another prime advantage of membership is the opportunity for cost-effective continuing professional education. AGA offers conferences, workshops and seminars throughout the country to learn about the latest best practices and pioneering developments in the financial management arena, among others. These opportunities are beneficial to anyone in financial management, regardless if they work in public, private, state, local or federal sectors. My professional life has been greatly enhanced by these opportunities.

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

AGA has two main challenges at this time. The first is to continuously keep a sharp focus during changing times. So far, the Association has taken no active legislative advocacy positions on policy and issue matters affecting governmental financial management. Should AGA be an advocacy group, think tank, service organization, social club or all of the above? I believe as an Association, AGA can enhance its value proposition by expanding and synchronizing its offerings as financial management paradigms shift.

Second, AGA faces multiple stakeholder interests, such as those of corporate sponsors, elected leaders, members, potential members and employees. Added to this complex web of stakeholder needs and values is the leadership structure, with high rates of turnover of elected leaders. Presidents, for example, only serve one-year terms. With such recurrent change of leadership, and in an era of rapid paradigm transformation, taking a definitive stance or advocacy position becomes difficult. It would benefit the Association to sharply define its long-term committed interests as an entity, enable



elected leaders to support and uphold those positions, and focus on making them work in tandem with the interests of other relevant stakeholders.

Additionally, AGA can have the greatest near-term impact by providing intellectual property to assist all incoming administrations, whether federal, state or local, with financial management agenda selection; appointment of top-notch career and political financial management executives, and measurement of governance and fiscal integrity practices.

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

I would like to help provide a sharper focus for and assist AGA in deciding what it should be doing efficiently and effectively in the 21st century. This will both benefit current members and enable us to better promote ourselves to potential members and sponsors. Current members stand to see the value of their membership increase, and potential members will perceive greater value in joining the organization. However, the benefits of membership cannot be communicated or perceived until AGA has a sharp brand focus and value message that aligns with, or furthers, members' own personal goals and interests. I plan to emphasize this as a first step. Additionally, I would like

to enlist everybody's help to elevate the status and influence of agency CFOs and their financial management staff. I would like to see the agency CFO occupy the same authority and influence as most corporate CFOs in the agency decision-making process.

Tell about your professional career and your AGA career.

My professional career spans both the private and public sectors. In the private sector, I began my career as an auditor with Main & Hurdman (now KPMG Peat Marwick) and later as senior auditor with Parnell, Kerr & Forster. In 1971, I was called to active military duty, and sent to Tokyo and then later to Okinawa, Japan, where I worked as a strategic intelligence officer. In 1976, I re-entered the private sector as director of Accounting at Time-Life Books. Six years later I joined *U.S. News & World Report*, where I served as controller and later, corporate treasurer. In 1986, I returned to public service as a Foreign Service Officer of the U.S. Department of State (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs). Following that, I joined the U.S. Department of the Treasury as comptroller, and later chief financial officer. When I left the Treasury, I established Condor Consulting in collaboration with retired U.S. Senator Birch Bayh. There, I was consultant to U.S.-based multinational companies on China market entrance strategies and Asia-based clients on U.S. market entrance and business partnership strategies. My most recent public service was as chief financial officer of the U.S. Department of Labor from January 2001 to May 2007. I was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in January 2002 after being appointed to the position by President George W. Bush. After leaving that position last year, I established Condor International Advisors, LLC, a Washington, D.C.-based management consulting firm providing innovative business relationship management and business advisory services, where I am currently managing member.

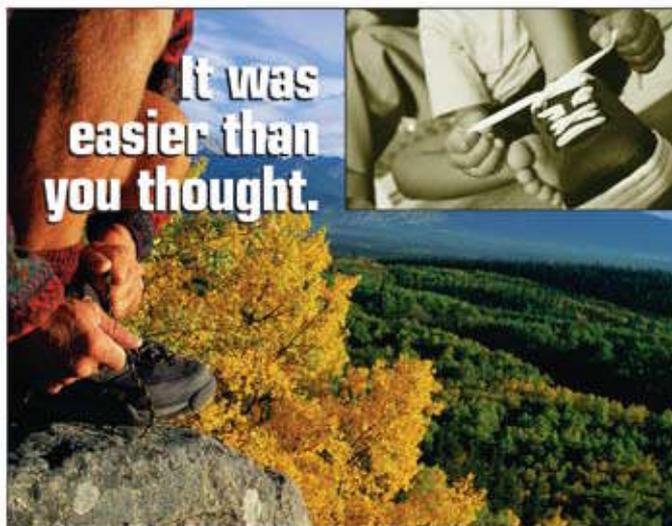
I had the good fortune to become an AGA member 20 years ago, and I am grateful to AGA for the professional support and opportunities that membership has afforded me as my career traversed the financial management sector in the public and private realms.

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

I am an American by choice, born in Shanghai, China, raised in Hong Kong and educated in the Bronx, New York. I came to this country as a teenager with a high school diploma from Hong Kong and began working in a Chinese restaurant in my quest for the American dream.

Eventually, I received a B.S. degree in accounting from Fordham University and an M.A. degree in accounting from Catholic University. I would go on to serve as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam conflict, be commissioned in the U.S. Foreign Service and hold several senior executive positions in major American corporations. Most recently, I had the honor to serve as a senior political appointee in the current Bush Administration. I am now a happy entrepreneur again.

I currently reside in the suburbs outside of Washington, D.C. with my wife, Nancy. We are the proud parents of two grown children, both attorneys, and five grandchildren. ▮



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