



Calendar of Events

Boston Chapter

February 17, 2005

Winter Workshop at Deloitte & Touche, Boston, MA

Check 21 and E-Pay (4 CPE)

March 15, 2005

Regional Professional Development Conference at Bentley College, Waltham, MA (8 CPE)

April 21, 2005

Chapter Lunch Meeting

Security Briefing Update for the Airport and Seaport presented by Massport (1 CPE)

May 12, 2005

Annual Awards Dinner at Maggiano's Little Italy, Boston, MA

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Check 21 and E-Pay

Winter Workshop on February 17, 2005

The **Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act**, popularly known as Check 21, was enacted in October of 2003, with an effective date of October 28, 2004. The Act allows banks to dispense with original paper checks and instead transmit electronic images of the check through the check clearing process. If a consumer or bank anywhere along the chain insists on receiving the original paper check, the Act allows use instead of a substitute check. Substitute checks are special paper copies of the front and back of your original checks that are created to replace the original checks.

Based on an October 2004 study conducted by the Association of Financial Executives, business use of the U.S. payments systems is at a crossroads. Although the volume of **Electronic Payments** by consumers is growing rapidly nationwide, more than 80 percent of business-to-business payments continue to be made by paper check.

Our presenters for Check 21 are **Timothy Brooks, Carol Lewis** and **Michael Stewart**. At press time the presenters for E-Pay have not been confirmed.

Timothy Brooks is an Assistant Treasurer in the Massachusetts State Treasury, where he manages the Cash Management Department. In this role, he has responsibility for banking relations and short-term investments for the

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Winter Workshop

Date	Thursday, February 17, 2005	Place	Deloitte & Touche LLP, 8th Floor Training Room, 200 Berkeley St. (the old John Hancock Building), Boston, MA
Time	8:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. Registration 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Program	Note: The office is a five minute walk from the Back Bay Station (Orange Line) or the Arlington Station (Green Line).	
Price*	Members: \$60 and Non-members: \$75	Registration You can register by contacting Howard Olsher, CGFM at 617-727-6200 or online at www.aga-boston-chapter.org .	
CPE	4.0 CPE hours	Registration Deadline February 14, 2005	

President's Message

Hello!

Do you feel as though you're living in a snow globe? After more than 30 inches of snow in three days, I certainly do! I'm sure we'll be talking about the winter of 2005 for years to come. — We'll be commenting on all the snow we had to shovel ... the fact that school systems were closed for an entire week ... all the snow we had to shovel ... how sidewalks became mazes bordered by mounds of snow ... and did I mention all the snow we had to shovel?

Luckily, our New England weather cooperated for the Chapter's Winter Seminar on January 20th. The seminar, a joint training session with the Greater Boston Chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, attracted more than 70 attendees. John McKeever of Contemporary Business Concepts presented a very dynamic session on COSO: A Tool for Fraud Identification and Prevention. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the seminar a success.

On the morning of February 17th, we'll be hosting a Winter Workshop on Check 21 and E-Pay. Deloitte & Touche is graciously allowing us to use their training room again. I hope you can join us.

And, don't forget our Regional Professional Development Conference. It's on March 15th this year and offers a number of exciting breakout sessions. Bobby Derrick, AGA National President, is our keynote speaker and will also present at one of the breakout sessions. And, we plan to elect our 2005-2006 Chapter Officers during the chapter meeting. Details will be available in next month's newsletter. Please mark your calendar and join us for this annual conference.

We are seeking nominations for our chapter awards and applicants for chapter scholarships. Check our website at www.aga-boston-chapter.org for nomination and application information. And, don't forget that our new scholarship, the George E. Brady Memorial Scholarship, is for a current member of the Chapter or his/her immediate family member. (Please see the related article on this page.)

The awards and scholarships will be presented at our annual Awards Dinner on May 12th at Maggiano's Little Italy.

Until next month...



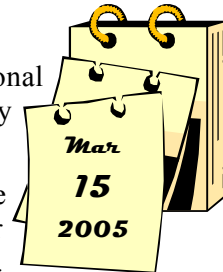
Julie

Save the Date!

The annual Regional Professional Development Conference at Bentley College, Waltham is March 15, 2005.

To register please contact Dave LeBlanc, CGFM at 781-338-6485 or online at www.aga-boston-chapter.org.

Mark your calendar and join us for this great event!



Chapter Awards and Scholarships

The AGA - Boston Chapter is seeking nominations for our chapter awards. Please take a moment to recognize a deserving fellow financial professional.

Mel Partol Memorial Award—To recognize an individual for superior dedicated service that has enhanced the Boston Chapter of the AGA.

Agency Recognition Award—To recognize an agency that has made significant contributions the Boston Chapter of the AGA.

Achievement Award—To accord recognition for leadership or outstanding achievement in developing, implementing and improving financial management in government service.

Community Service Award—To recognize a Chapter member for their volunteer and community service work outside of their work environment.

We are also seeking applicants for our chapter scholarships. Please help to spread the word.

Walter Frese Memorial Scholarship—Applicant must be accepted into or must be currently enrolled as an undergraduate / graduate student in a program related to Financial Management.

George E. Brady Memorial Scholarship—Applicant must be a current member of the AGA-Boston Chapter or their immediate family member (spouse or dependent child) who is accepted and enrolled in an institution of higher education with no limitation as to the educational major.

For information about the Chapter Awards and Scholarships, please contact Bill Muench, Director of Scholarships and Awards, at 508-490-4019 or visit our website at www.aga-boston-chapter.org.



CEC Highlights

The Chapter Executive Committee (CEC) held a meeting on January 11, 2005 to review the progress of the Boston Chapter.

On January 27, 2005, the CEC held a virtual meeting to vote on the name for our new membership scholarship. The CEC voted to name the new scholarship *The George E. Brady Memorial Scholarship*. (Please see the related article on this page.)

The next CEC meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2005.

George E. Brady Memorial Scholarship

The Chapter Executive Committee voted to name the Chapter's new membership scholarship *The George E. Brady Memorial Scholarship*.

George E. Brady joined the Boston Chapter in 1957 and served as Chapter President during the 1965-1966.

George graduated from Bentley College in 1933 and went to work for United Fruit as an accountant and 8 years later became an accountant at a federal agency. In 1954, he applied for his CPA license. After passing the exam, he still had to demonstrate that he had the requisite two years of public accounting experience. (At that time, government service as not automatically accepted as public accounting experience.) George met with the licensing board and successfully demonstrated that his 13 years of government service had exposed him to the same experiences encountered by public accountants. The board granted him his CPA license and he became the first person to have government service recognized as a public accounting experience by the licensing board.

George retired in June 1973 as Chief of the Boston Branch Office, Contract Audit Division, Auditor General, USAF after 31 years of government experience. George was awarded the Chapter Lifetime Service Award in 1996.

Coming Soon!
Regional Professional Development Conference
 The Boston Chapter's annual Regional Professional Development Conference is on Tuesday, March 15, 2005 at Bentley College in Waltham, MA. The conference offers attendees 8 CPE credits.

(Continued from page 1)

Commonwealth. Tim joined the Treasury in April 2003. In addition to his Cash Management responsibilities, Tim served from August to November 2004 as the Interim Executive Director of the new Massachusetts School Building Authority. Prior to coming to the Treasury, Tim served as the Chairman of the Indiana Board of Tax Commissioners, and was an attorney in private practice in Indianapolis.

Tim has a Bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, a law degree from USCLA and a Master's degree from Indiana University.

Carol Lewis recently transferred to the Public & Community Affairs department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston to lead a new unit dedicated to consumer outreach. Carol spent 9 years as a bank examiner and compliance specialist with the Reserve Bank. She examined state member banks of the Federal Reserve System for compliance with consumer laws and regulations. She also participated in various forms of banking industry and community outreach regarding Federal Reserve regulations.

Carol taught criminal law for several years at the Massachusetts School of Law in Andover. Prior to joining the Reserve Bank, she worked as a public defender at the Legal Aid Society in Brooklyn, New York.

Carol holds a BA from Hamilton College, a JD from Suffolk University Law School, and an LL.M in American Banking and Finance Law from the Morin Center for Banking Law Studies at Boston University Law School. She is a member of the Massachusetts, New York and Washington D.C. Bars.

Michael Stewart is a Senior Account Executive and Check 21 Product Specialist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Over the course of the past five years he has held various positions in the Bank's Public and Community Affairs Department, the Federal Reserve Banks' Retail Payments Office and Business Development and Customer Services. Currently, he works with First District Reserve Bank customers providing technical sales support and services as a consultant on Check 21 product strategy and implementation. Mike is a graduate of Providence College and is in the process of finishing his MBA at Clark University.



Member News

Congratulations to two of our Chapter members who recently received promotions!

Kimberly Rapoza, Chapter Treasurer, was recently promoted to Senior Auditor by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General, Office of Audit Services.

Susan Tefft, CPA, Chapter Director of Membership, has been promoted to manager within Deloitte & Touche. As part of that role she will work with multiple clients, have the ability to manage and staff her engagement teams and simultaneously serve her clients' needs.

Sue will continue to serve her largest client, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in a managerial role and experience an increased involvement with the various departments of the Commonwealth where Deloitte has an audit presence.

Membership Update

The Boston Chapter membership includes:

- 231 Active Members
- 12 New Members
- 2 Members Transferred In
- 0 Members Transferred Out
- 35 Suspended Members

The Boston Chapter recognizes and thanks the following new member sponsors since May 2004:

- Nicholas Dahl, CGFM..... 1
- Mary E. Kelley 3
- Kathleen A. Still, CGFM 1
- Susan Tefft 1



Please join the Membership Committee in welcoming **William Kilmartin** and **David Irwin** to the Boston Chapter.

Electronic Notification



To add your name to the *Boston's Beacon* electronic distribution / chapter update list, please send an e-mail to editor@aga-boston-chapter.org. Thanks!

From the Editor...

Do you know someone in the Boston Chapter who has recently received promotion, accepted a new position, retired or won an award? Would you like to share your good news with fellow AGA members?

Or maybe you're interested in writing a technical article for an upcoming issue of *Boston's Beacon*.

Please forward submissions for the next issue of *Boston's Beacon* to editor@aga-boston-chapter.org.



Thanks!

Chapter Recognition Program

The Chapter Recognition Program is designed to support, encourage, and promote the accomplishment of AGA's mission and to provide flexible noncompetitive guidelines for a well-rounded chapter. The Chapter Recognition Program year begins on May 1st and concludes on April 30th.

Boston Chapter credits as of January 31, 2005 are:

Categories	Maximum Credits	Credits Earned	Credits Allowed	
Leadership, Planning & Participation	3,000	3,000	3,300	100%
Education & Professional Development	4,000	3,375	3,375	84%
Certification	4,000	2,175	2,175	54%
Communications	3,000	5,507	3,000	100%
Membership	3,000	1,050	1,050	35%
Community Service	2,000	2,500	2,000	125%
Awards	1,000	1,600	1,000	160%
Total	20,000	19,207	15,600	

**Boston Chapter Balance Sheet
November 30, 2004**

Assets

Cash	
Checking Account	\$ 5,852
Savings Account	12,570
Certificates of Deposit	<u>12,498</u>
Total Cash	\$30,920

Accounts Receivable

Identity Fraud 11/18/04	\$ 1,053
Lombardo's 10/21/04	<u>650</u>
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>\$ 1,703</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$32,623</u>

Liabilities and Fund Balance

Accounts Payable	\$ 0
Current Fund Balance	<u>32,623</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u>\$32,623</u>

AGA-Boston Chapter Celebrates 50 Years!

Member Profile

In 1995, **Ernest A. Almonte**, CPA, CGFM, CFE joined the Association of Government Accountants and has been a supportive of the organization for almost 10 years. He has been a presenter for both AGA and the Boston Chapter.



Ernest Almonte
CPA, CGFM, CFE

Mr. Almonte was appointed Auditor General of the State of Rhode Island in 1994. He directs a professional staff of 43 and is responsible for audits of the state's financial statements, federal audits of grants and appropriations, and oversight of quasi-public agencies and municipalities. Prior to his appointment, he was the chief executive officer and owner of a public accounting firm with clients throughout New England, New York, Nevada and the East Coast.

A native of Rhode Island, Mr. Almonte received his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a major in Accounting and a Master's Degree in Taxation from Bryant College in Smithfield, Rhode Island.

Mr. Almonte serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and has been appointed by the Comptroller General of the United States to the Advisory Council on Government Auditing Standards, and the Domestic Working Group of the Federal GAO. He is the Chairman of the Audit Committee for the AICPA and served as the Chairman of the Members in Government Committee of the AICPA, past chairman of the New England Audit Forum, and the Electronic Government Committee of the National State Auditors Association. He also was the Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Bryant University and served on their Board for 10 years.

Mr. Almonte has received the Public Service Award from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Rhode Island Society of CPAs. Additionally, he completed the program for Senior Executives in State and Local Governments at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Congratulations the Boston Chapter members who are celebrating their 20th to 25th anniversaries during this Program Year!

1980

Thomas Kaminskas, CGFM
Richard L. Pemberton
Mary T. Leyden, CGFM
Richard J. Mooney
John J. Cintolo, CGFM
Jane Gustowski
Kathleen M. Cushing, CGFM

1982

Raymond G. Fitzgerald, CGFM
Elaine M. Boudreau, CGFM

1983

John W. Beveridge, CGFM
Howard Olsher, CGFM, CFE

1985

Susan Perna-Damon, CPA, CGFM
John P. Majenski
Mark D. Abrahams, CGFM
Anthony B. D'Onofrio, CGFM

From Our Scrapbook



(l to r) Steve Cohen, Howard Olsher, "Arthur", Dave LeBlanc and Bob Melo



December 30, 2004

Ms. Kimberly Rapoza
Association of Government Accountants

Dear Ms. Rapoza:

On behalf of all the children who benefit from *Christmas in the City* programs, we thank you for your generous and thoughtful donation of \$500. Committed to servicing Boston's homeless, *Christmas in the City* was established in 1989 as a non-profit organization that prides itself in keeping operational costs at a minimum. This ensures that money raised goes directly to establishing quality programs for homeless children all year long. We are a 100% volunteer effort!

In addition to running a yearly Christmas celebration for over 2400 children from 46 shelters in and around Boston, we have also introduced programs to work directly with the families. By soliciting donations we are succeeding in helping families move from shelters into independent living.

Thanks to your support, *Christmas in the City* will continue to find new ways to make a difference in the day-to-day lives of homeless families and provide holiday dreams.

Thank you for caring.

Fondly,

Sparky and Jake
Sparky and Jake Kennedy
Founders, Christmas in the City

**** No goods or services were received for this donation (ST2 Tax ID Number 043-188-900) ****

Christmas in the City • P.O. Box 125 • Hingham, MA 02043 • 781.740.2574
www.christmasinthecity.org

Spring Cleaning

- by Peggy Carr, CPA, CGFM
Chapter Director of Community Service

Often we have goods that no longer meet our needs but could be of use to others.

In the past, AGA - Boston Chapter has collected eyeglasses and books for distribution to those in need. While these efforts have been successful...they have also been limited by the need to physically bring the goods to a meeting and then for them to be delivered to the organizations. This year we would like to consider a new approach to helping match things that AGA members, family and friends might like to donate and those groups that could benefit from the donation. We plan to make a list of organizations that accept goods as donations. Current thinking includes those who have taken the eyeglasses and books in the past along with some new ideas like cell phones, bedding, furniture, computers, etc.

Please contact me at meccpa@aol.com or 617-723-5059 if you are aware of an organization that accepts goods that you would like included in the listing.

We are also looking for some creative ideas on how to accomplish the donation. For example, the ability to mail rather than drop off, hats and mittens at homeless shelters or the Beacon Hill group that picks up clothes donations for the homeless one day each month.

The list will be available at Bentley...just in time for your spring cleaning!



The Role of the Internal Auditor

- ☺ As auditors and auditees, we are all aware of the role of the external auditor; how does that fit with the role of the internal auditor? A panel of internal auditors will discuss their role within their organization and their coordination with external auditors. Coming in March at the Regional PDC.

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National

February 7-8, 2005

National Leadership Conference at Ronald Regan Building/International Trade Center, Washington, DC

July 10-13, 2005

National Professional Development Conference at Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, FL



Go
Patriots!

**Congratulations to
the AFC Champs!**

Winter Seminar

-by David A. LeBlanc, CGFM

On January 20th, over seventy members and guests attended a presentation that was jointly hosted by the Boston Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants and the Greater Boston Chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners. The subject of COSO: A Tool for Fraud Identification and Prevention was the topic for the full day of training.

John McKeever of Contemporary Business Concepts was the presenter for this session. John is able to take his fifteen years of service in AT&T audit department and his other experience to keep a full day of training entertaining while relating a wide degree of knowledge to an audience.

We heard how a number of fraud and lack of control instances happen. We learned some key educational points and some of the things that we can do to try to prevent these instances.

John was very gracious and awarded an upcoming two-day session to any Institute of Internal Auditors training conference to an attendee picked at random. Richard Libertore of the Massachusetts Highway Department's Audit Unit was the recipient of this free training course.

We are grateful to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Volpe Center for allowing us to use their facility and hosting this session.



Do you audit sub-recipients?

☺ At the spring Regional PDC we will have a panel, led by Susan Perna-Damon, CPA, CGFM, that will discuss all the aspects of managing, monitoring, and auditing sub-recipients. Compile a list of questions/issues for this one; the panelists are experts in this area.

A Chance to Win a Registration to the 2005 PDC in Orlando, FL!

The AGA-Boston Chapter will award one paid registration fee to the Association of Government Accountants 2005 Annual Professional Development Conference. The PDC will be held in Orlando, FL on July 10 to 12, 2005.

To be eligible for this award an individual must:

- (1) be a member of the AGA-Boston Chapter prior to the drawing to be held in April 2005 and
- (2) attend at least five of the seven AGA-Boston Chapter educational sessions offering CPEs from September 2004 to April 2005.

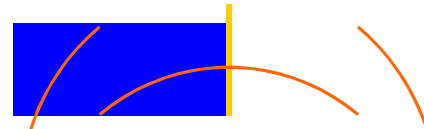
The award will be drawn at random after the last training session in April 2005. This award is not transferable by the recipient. However, alternate(s) will be drawn in the event that the primary recipient cannot or chooses not to attend.

CGFM Renewal Reminder

If you were awarded your CGFM in the years 1996, 1998, 2000 or 2002, your renewal cycle ended December 31, 2004. Please note that you have until March 31, 2005 to earn the required number of CPE hours.

Speaker Database

The AGA-Boston Chapter is building a speaker database. Do you know a dynamic speaker who you would like to see at an upcoming educational event? Are you a speaker who would like to be included in the database? Please send the speaker's name, address, phone number, e-mail address and potential topics to Howard Olsher, CGFM at Howard.Olsher@SAO.state.ma.us. Thank you, in advance, for your assistance.



Boston's Beacon is published by the Association of Government Accountants—Boston Chapter.

Comments should be forwarded to editor@aga-boston-chapter.org.



Professional Development Opportunity

The Rhode Island Chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners is sponsoring a quarterly seminar entitled "Healthcare Fraud" on March 7, 2005.

For more information visit their website at www.ricfe.org.

Chapter Survey

Don't forget to complete a Chapter Survey! It is located on the home page of our website at www.aga-boston-chapter.org. Please take a moment or two to give us some feedback. Thank you to everyone who has already completed the survey.

Chapter History

In recognition of our 50th anniversary, we plan to document our chapter's history. Any assistance you can offer is greatly appreciated. If you have information such as past newsletters, photos, names of chapter award winners and scholarship recipients, please contact Julia Burns, CGFM at JuliaB@osc.state.ma.us.

News from National

2004-2005 Recruitment Campaign — Leadership for the Future

AGA's National President, Bobby A. Derrick, CGFM, is challenging every member to recruit at least 1 new member into AGA before the close of the membership year, April 30, 2005. And, he is challenging AGA leaders to do even more—to recruit five new members each before the close of the membership year, *5 by 5*. This group includes the National Executive Committee, Regional Vice Presidents and Elects, Regional Coordinators, national board and committee members, chapter presidents and chapter membership chairs. *Are you up to the challenge?*

We need your help to ensure that the AGA network remains strong and continue to grow to reach all accountability professionals! Do you realize how unique a network AGA is? AGA is the ONLY professional association that boasts a membership across ALL levels of government—local, state and federal. Plus, AGA also has members who work for tribal governments, academic institutions and private sector organizations. This means that there are thousands of thoughts, ideas and solutions right here within the AGA network—as a member you have number one access! And as our Association strengthens and grows, so do the thoughts, ideas and solutions.

AGA Dollars Will Be Awarded!

Back by popular demand are AGA Dollars! Once you have recruited two new members, earn \$5 AGA dollars for each new member that joins. AGA dollars can be used for a variety of AGA activities—even towards your membership dues! All AGA members who recruit new members are eligible for AGA Dollars (Dollars will be awarded at the close of each month and listed on the Members Only site on the "Recruitment" page.)

Sponsor Level Achievement Awards!

Recruiter of the Year (1 winner) — The member who recruits the most new members from May 1, 2004 through April 30, 2005 will receive a plaque and complimentary AGA meeting registration.

Top Sponsor (2 winners) — The next two members who recruit the highest amount of new members from May 1, 2004 through April 30, 2005 will each receive a plaque and a complimentary AGA meeting registration.

Chapter Overall Growth (6 winning chapters) — Those six chapters achieving the highest overall growth percentage for the membership year each wins a plaque and a complimentary AGA meeting registration. Chapters can designate who to award the registration to.

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New Director of Professional Certification

- by Christina Camara

AGA welcomes **Peter V. Aliferis, CGFM**, as its new director of Professional Certification.

An AGA member for more than 20 years and one of the earliest supporters of the CGFM credential, Aliferis is looking forward to spreading the word to professionals and their employers about the benefits of certification.

"I've been a proponent of a specialized certification for government financial managers from the get-go and now I'm getting to walk the walk since I've been talking the talk."

Aliferis joins the AGA National Office after a long career at the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), holding several management positions, including directing the Special Projects Office and director of Operations at the Accounting and Information Management Division. While he served as director of the Office of International Audit Organization Liaison, GAO colleague Jeffrey C. Steinhoff, CGFM, who was then AGA's National President, introduced the CGFM Program. "I was one of those people that went to Jeff behind the scenes all the time and said it was a wonderful thing." In fact, Aliferis was one of AGA's first CGFMs, with Certificate No. 151.

As the CGFM Program starts its second decade, Aliferis would like to see the CGFM held in as high regard in the government sector as the CPA is in the public sector.

"What I would like to do is shine more light, make it more visible so that people will truly understand its value." Professionals who pass the three examinations feel a tremendous sense of accomplishment, he said, adding that the "CGFM" acronym identifies financial managers as having a broad base of knowledge in local, state and federal financial management. The credential also gives financial managers a leg up when it comes time for promotions. "A supervisor would be hard-pressed to choose a non-CGFM over a CGFM all other things being equal," he said.

Aliferis most recently worked at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School as dean of curriculum for government auditing, accounting, budgeting and financial management. Aliferis was responsible for developing and evaluating the training program that covers everything from entry-level skills to a master's degree in public sector auditing for local, state and federal managers.

He is a member of several professional organizations and is the former chairman and a member of the board of directors of Browne Academy, a not-for-profit elementary school in Alexandria, VA. He is also vice president and member of the board of the Independent School Chairpersons Association.

Join us in welcoming Pete to the AGA staff.



Getting Ready to Take the Exams? New CGFM Offers Tips for Success

- by Christina M. Camara

John Savash, CGFM, sounds a bit like a professor before a roomful of students when he talks about how he passed the three rigorous CGFM Examinations.

“My advice would be, ‘You’ve got to put the time in to these exams if you want to pass them,’” he said. “On-the-job experience won’t get it done.”

Savash, who is an assistant professor of Accounting at Elmira College in Elmira, NY, knows something about studying and taking exams. As a CPA with a master’s degree in finance and four years of local government experience, Savash turned to the CGFM as a way to learn more in-depth information to share with his governmental accounting students.

Because the CGFM preparatory classes were offered far from his home base, Savash decided to study on his own using the two CGFM study guides for Exams 2 and 3. (www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare/studyguide.aspx)

He took AGA’s online Governmental Environment course to prepare for Exam 1. (www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare/onlinecourses.aspx) Along the way, he developed some strategies that worked well for him, helping him to pass the three examinations on the first try and earn his credential in September.

He said he put in about 80 hours of study time for each exam. He highly recommends purchasing the study guides, which he said were extremely helpful, not to mention a bargain. He methodically went through the study guides once, completing the end-of-chapter quizzes along the way. On his second reading, he finished the end-of-course self-assessment questions, which are offered as a way to reinforce the material. For Savash, taking these practice

exams a couple of times gave him the confidence to tackle the real thing.

He approached Exam 1 a little differently, taking the online course. He said the instructors were excellent, and he was able to freeze the slides and take notes.

When he got to the testing center to take the computerized exams, he had another strategy. “You have plenty of time, so I went through the first go-round and did everything I was 90 percent sure on.” Then he took a break and came back to re-examine the questions that he was less sure about. Test-takers know immediately if they’ve passed or failed, but the raw score is not known. “I’m guessing that I did pretty well,” he said.

Savash is teaching governmental accounting again in the spring. “I think I’ll be able to bring an added dimension into the classroom,” he said, adding that the CGFM credential will give him added credibility as an expert in the field. If he ever decides to leave academia for government, he believes the CGFM can only help.

The Elmira College administration has been supportive of the certification process. Savash said he didn’t ask for reimbursement for the study guides or exam fees, as they were inexpensive, and the college had just provided tuition-reimbursement for him to attend a graduate-level class in public administration. He studied for the CGFM, took the public administration class and got married, all around the same time. “I like pressure sometimes,” he said.

Good preparation for the CGFM Exams can lower the pressure. “If anyone does not take the studying seriously, they’re going to spend a lot of money and fail,” he said. “I don’t think you can blow this off and walk in and take a 110-question, multiple-choice test and not prepare.”

(Continued from page 8)

Leadership Level Achievement Prizes!

Those AGA Leaders identified above that recruit one new member will be entered into a drawing to win dinner for two at an ultra exclusive restaurant in Orlando during the 2005 PDC. We are giving three dinners away! If for some reason you cannot make it to the 2005 PDC, and you win this prize, we’ll send you to dinner at an exclusive restaurant in your hometown.

And, those AGA Leaders identified above that recruit 5 or more new members, will be entered into a drawing for the Grand Prize. A 4-day/3-night Napa Valley retreat! This

package includes roundtrip airline tickets for two, accommodations at the Silverado Resort in Napa Valley, CA, VIP wine tasting at William Hill Winery, and more!

Top Recruiters — For the Period of May 1, 2004 to October 31, 2004

AGA thanks these members for their efforts in recruiting new members into AGA. These members are already earning AGA Dollars!

(AGA-Boston Chapter Note: Mary Ellen Kelley has recruited 3 new members!)

2004 - 2005 Officers, Directors and Chairs**Julia P. Burns, CGFM**

President
Office: 617-973-2452
E-mail: JuliaB@osc.state.ma.us

David A. LeBlanc, CGFM

President Elect
Office: 781-338-6485
E-mail: dleblanc@doe.mass.edu

William Yazbek, CGFM

Secretary
Office: 617-437-2386
E-mail: wyazbek@deloitte.com

Kimberly Rapoza

Treasurer
Office: 617-565-2019
E-mail: krapoza@oig.hhs.gov

Kathleen A. Still, CGFM

Vice President for Education and Programs
Director of Professional Certification
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E-mail: Kathie.Still@osc.state.ma.us

Christine Donohoe

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