

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Philadelphia Chapter



SEPTEMBER 2024

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Thriving Together: Your Vibrant Gateway to Government Financial Management Excellence with AGA Philadelphia!

Welcome esteemed AGA members! As leaders in shaping financial strategies and upholding fiscal integrity in government agencies, you are the cornerstone of AGA Philadelphia. Thank you for being essential to our community, where excellence in government financial management begins and thrives!



AGA Trenton Fall PDT: Learn More and Register Now for 7 CPE Credits! (PG. 12)



View Our Upcoming Virtual General Membership Meetings! (PG. 13)

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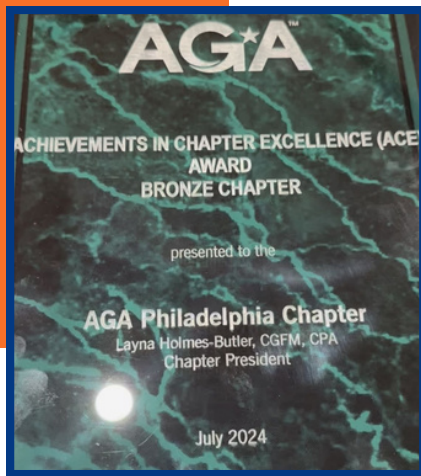
AGA PDT



Denver



RECAP



AGA Philly VP Kyle Smith in full swing at our sponsor, Premier Group's booth!



Spotted Chewbacca at AGA PDT! Guess he's crunching numbers now!

We did it! Our Chapter President, Layna Holmes-Butler, was recently awarded the Bronze Ace Award for our Chapter! This recognition reflects all the hard work and participation we implement into this chapter. Way to go!



Can't visit Denver without a Red Rocks stop with the Premier Group Team!

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AGA PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER PRESIDENT:

LAYNA HOLMES-BUTLER
CGFM, CPA

Layna Holmes-Butler is an accomplished accounting and audit professional with a strong focus on delivering comprehensive solutions to individuals and businesses.

Her expertise encompasses a wide range of services, including agreed-upon procedures, financial statement preparation following GAAP standards, general ledger management, accounts receivable and payable, and fixed asset accounting. Layna also specializes in conducting compliance audits in alignment with Government Auditing Standards (the Yellow Book) and relevant laws and regulations.

Throughout her career, Layna has worked with major clients such as The Mercadien Group, J. Miller & Associates, and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Her dedication to excellence and adherence to industry standards make her a valuable asset to the accounting and auditing community.



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**AGA Philadelphia
Chapter: 2024
Chapter
Leadership**

Chapter President: Layna Holmes-Butler

First Vice President: Kyle Smith

Chapter Treasurer: Layna Holmes-Butler

National Council of Chapters Representative: Kyle Smith

ACE Reporting: Teri Lewis

Membership: Clarence Johnson

Programs, Meeting, & Events Chair: Stephanie Sowalsky

Social Media/Webmaster: Erin McAlinney



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HIGHLIGHTING

OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



Stephanie Sowalsky - Programs, Meetings, & Events Chair

Stephanie Sowalsky is Certified Public Accountant whose role is currently Program Manager supporting the Grants Closeout Initiative at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Her expertise is in grant financial expertise and program integrity oversight. Stephanie spent 11 years in HHS' Operating Division, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in several program integrity, fiscal and grants technical assistance and auditing roles and most recently served as the Director of the Division of Program Integrity in the Provider Relief Bureau which was tasked as managing over \$200B in COVID-19 funds. Stephanie has a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and a Master of Science in Accounting both from the University of Connecticut (Go HUSKIES!). In her free time, she embraces motherhood with high-energy always taking her boys Lincoln (5) and Wesley (2) on adventures. Stephanie is a foodie and coffee lover who lives to travel and enjoys fitness and golf. She lives in Cherry Hill, NJ with her two kids and her husband Rich.

Anni Simonait - Chapter Treasurer

Anni Simonait has over 15 years of auditing experience with the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Office of Audit Services (OAS). Anni brings a wealth of knowledge in internal quality control reviews, audit resolution, data analysis, and regulatory compliance. Anni began her OIG career journey in 2009 as an auditor tasked with auditing Medicare's Part D. Throughout her tenure, Anni has actively participated in numerous complex audits and worked in various OIG cross-component workgroups dedicated to advancing the organization's mission and fulfilling organizational needs. Anni's adeptness extends to audit resolution through implementation, analyzing agency-wide programs, and evaluating OAS management systems. As a result, she has been selected to complete numerous high-profile audits and provide audit assistance for OIG investigators many of which were requested by Congress. Additionally, she has served as a mentor, Statistical Specialist for her region, OAS Audit Policy Committee member, and a member of the 2024 Yellow Book Implementation Working Group. Anni has received several awards, including a CIGIE Award for Excellence, Audit - Price Travel Audit, the Inspector General's Cooperative Achievement Award and OIG Exceptional Achievement Awards. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and a Minor in Business Law from Penn State University in State College, PA when she returned to school following her retirement from the U.S. Air Force as a Combat Arms Training and Maintenance Instructor.



Erin McAlinney - Social Media/Webmaster

Erin McAlinney is a dedicated Social Media Coordinator at Premier Group, where she skillfully manages and enhances the company's online presence. She graduated from the University of South Florida in 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in Integrated Public Relations & Advertising, and from St. Petersburg College in 2020 with an Associate's in Arts in Mass Communications Journalism. Erin has crafted advertising campaigns for small, local businesses and is passionate about staying ahead of emerging marketing and social media trends. She excels at designing graphics, crafting newsletters, and creating engaging content that resonates with audiences. In her spare time, Erin enjoys exploring new food spots, learning about beauty products, watching anime, and staying connected with family, friends, and her cat.



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Join the AGA Philadelphia Chapter Leadership Board!

Are you an AGA Member eager to make a difference in your community? Here's your chance! The Philadelphia Chapter is seeking dedicated individuals to join our Leadership Board. Whether you're a seasoned professional or a college student seeking valuable internship experience, we welcome you to be part of our dynamic team.



JOIN US



Why Join Us?

- **Community Involvement:** Make a meaningful impact in Baton Rouge and beyond.
- **Professional Development:** Enhance your skills and network with industry professionals.
- **Retired Members:** Stay active, share your expertise, and continue making a difference.



www.agacgfm.org

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CGFM®

Certification



What is a CGFM?

The CGFM (Certified Government Financial Manager) credential, awarded by AGA, showcases expertise in governmental accounting, auditing, financial reporting, internal controls, and budgeting across different government levels. It's a respected certification that highlights specialized knowledge and experience essential for effective government financial management. CGFM opens doors to new career prospects and sets you apart as a distinguished professional in the field.

CGFM Certification Benefits:

1. Enhanced marketability across government sectors.
2. Networking opportunities with fellow government financial managers.
3. Boosted confidence in your role.
4. Potential for employer incentives like raises, promotions, and bonuses.
5. Increased value as an employee, both in reality and perception.
6. Support for ongoing education to stay updated with the latest developments and technologies.

Use this link to learn more about CGFM memberships!

www.agacgfm.org

How Do I Become a CGFM?

1. Fill out an online application and agree to AGA's Code of Ethics.
2. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. college or university.
3. Pass three CGFM examinations.
4. Gain at least two years of professional-level experience in government financial management.



For any additional questions, please contact the Office of Professional Certification: 800.AGA.7211 (703.684.6931) or cgfm@agacgfm.org

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Don't Forget: Join or Renew Your AGA Membership!



Benefits:

- **Connect, Collaborate, & Network:**
 - Expand your network, participate in our online mentoring program!
 - Volunteer to serve on AGA committees and boards,
 - Find a position or look for qualified candidates on AGA's Job Board
 - Join the conversation on LinkedIn, Twitter & Facebook.
- **Continuous Learning:**
 - Participate in educational events — learn from and meet the experts.
 - Save money with registration discounts on national and chapter training events.
 - Sign up for four (4) complimentary members-only webinars.
 - Attend the Transformation & Technology Summit for FREE!
 - Attend the Women's Forum for FREE!
 - Leverage discounts on CGFM renewal and application fees.
- **Stay Informed & Find Solutions:**
 - Access online tools, developed by government experts to prevent fraud, reduce improper payments, improve outcomes, mitigate risk, and enhance collaboration.
 - Stay up to date through the quarterly Journal of Government Financial Management.
 - Learn about and share best practices described in AGA research and executive reports.
 - Get the latest innovations in government by tuning into AGA's Accountability Talks podcasts.

**JOIN
NOW**



Don't Hesitate!
Register Now!

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Student Membership Opportunities

Why AGA?

Considering a career in government financial management? Want to meet government professionals in the federal, state, or local government levels?

Join AGA for FREE! Student membership in AGA provides you access to resources to develop your skills and expand your knowledge. Become a part of AGA to build professional connections and discover your future career while positively impacting your community and country.

**APPLY
NOW**



Scholarships

Academic scholarships, National Collegiate Leadership Scholarship, Government Finance Case Challenge, Datathon



Career Coaching & Professional Community

Mentoring Programs & Local Chapters



Tools & Resources

'Accountability Talks' Podcast & Guest Speakers



Visit Our Website to Learn More!
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ACCOUNTABILITY TALKS



PODCAST
Show



Discover '**Accountability Talks**,' a podcast delving into the government accountability community. Hear from thought leaders, gain career insights, and join our vibrant community!

[Click here to listen!](#)

About the Host



Meet **Paul Marshall, CPA, CGFM, CIA, CICA, PMP, VP at MIL Corporation and dedicated AGA member with 20+ years in government accountability.** He champions best practices in audits, financial reporting, and more, serving on AGA boards at local and national levels.

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Upcoming Webinars & Events

You Do Not Want to Miss Out!



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Chapter Events



To View the
Day at a Glance!

Fall PDT (Virtual)



Date: October 24, 2024

Time: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

Pricing:

AGA Members: \$70

Non-Members: \$125

Full-Time Students: Free

REGISTER HERE

After registering from the link above, you will then be asked to register through AGA Trenton's virtual platform. Information on how to register through our virtual platform will be emailed to attendees at a date closer to the PDT.

The AGA Trenton Chapter is excited to invite you to their annual Virtual Fall PDT! This year's event promises 7 CPEs that includes a great lineup of speakers in areas of auditing, cybersecurity, and accounting, as well as a New Jersey Olympian!

AGA Philly Members: We will be raffling off 3 of the 4 free spots for attendance at the AGA Trenton Fall PDT webinar in the coming weeks.

Featured Speakers:

- Lisa Plaggemier
- Executive Director, National Cybersecurity Alliance
- Insights on Behavior Science & Cybersecurity
- Mark Mitchell
- AGA National President-Elect
- Focused Area: Internal Controls
- Curtis Thompson
- US Javelin Thrower (Tokyo & Paris)
- Join us for an engaging talk about leadership, perseverance, and teamwork.

Why Attend?

- Gain valuable knowledge from industry leaders
- Enhance your skills and stay updated on the latest practices
- Be inspired by the journey of an Olympic athlete

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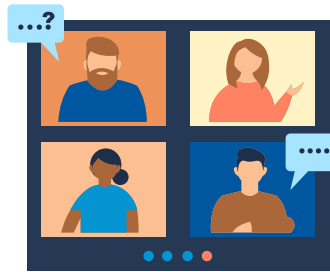
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VIRTUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS



Join us on Zoom for our virtual membership meetings to discuss the future of financial management and beyond! Let's connect, collaborate, and propel our profession forward together. Don't miss out! Mark your calendars and join the Zoom meeting for insightful discussions and networking opportunities. Links to meetings will be shared as the dates approach. See you there!

Wednesday, January 22, 2025
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Wednesday, March 19, 2025
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

If you have any questions, please contact our Chapter President, Layna Holmes-Butler at hlayna@hotmail.com

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National Events

JOIN US



Free For Members!

Technology Transformation Summit

- **Date:** Wednesday, November 6, 2024
- **Place:** 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington DC, 20004
- **CPEs Earned:** 5

TTS 2024 will bring together more than 1,000 government leaders and industry experts to discuss the transformation of mission delivery through IT innovation, personnel, security and cloud technology. Digital transformation is now, more than ever, a critical aspect of efficient, effective mission performance in government.

Registration & Fees

In Person

Government Member	Free!
Government Non-member	\$140

Virtual

Government Member	Free!
Private Member	Free!
Government Non-member	\$140
Private Non-member	\$270

[Click Here to Learn More!](#)

[Click Here to Register Now!](#)

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National Events



FREE Members Only Webinar

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

2:00–3:15 PM ET | 1.5 CPEs | FOS: PD

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Personal Development (PD)

[Click Here to Register Now!](#)



Webinar: Uniform Guidance & GA

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs | FOS: AUDG

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Auditing – Governmental (AUDG)

[Click Here to Register Now!](#)

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National Events



Webinar: Ethics

Friday, November 13, 2024

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs | FOS: BETH

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Behavioral Ethics (BETH)

[Click Here to Register Now!](#)



Webinar: Internal Control

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs | FOS: AUDG

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Auditing – Governmental (AUDG)

[Click Here to Register Now!](#)



FREE Members Only Webinar

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

2:00–3:15 PM ET | 1.5 CPEs | FOS: PD

Program Level: Overview

Prerequisite: None

Advance Preparation: None required

Field of Study: Personal Development (PD)

[Click Here to Register Now!](#)

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Future Professional Development Trainings (PDT)

Save the Date for AGA's future Professional Development Training (PDT) events!



Nashville, Tennessee

July 27-30, 2025

Gaylord Opryland Hotel



Dallas, Texas

July 26-29, 2026

Gaylord Texan Hotel



Chicago, Illinois

July 18-21, 2027

Hyatt Regency Chicago

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Premier Group is a Proud Sponsor of the AGA Philadelphia Chapter!

Premier Group is a full-service CPA firm founded by Joye Sistrunk in 2005, embodying a passion for numbers, community purpose, integrity, and a mission of trust.

At Premier Group, we are dedicated to serving a diverse range of clients, including government agencies, federal contractors, nonprofits, and mid-sized businesses. Our commitment to excellence, teamwork, and collaboration ensures that every client receives personalized attention and the highest quality of service. Partner with us to experience the difference that passion, purpose, and integrity can make in achieving your financial goals.

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Our Services Include:

Audit and Assurance Services: Thorough examination and verification of financial records, assuring stakeholders.

Financial Budgeting and Forecasting: Expert analysis and planning to help clients make informed financial decisions for the future.

Risk Management: Identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks to safeguard financial assets and operations.

Litigation Support: Professional assistance in legal matters involving financial disputes, providing expert testimony and analysis.

Tax Advice and Preparation: Strategic tax planning, compliance, and preparation services to minimize tax burdens and optimize financial outcomes.