



“Advancing Government Accountability”

NEW YORK CITY CHAPTER

NYC - The Capital Of The World



# Newsletter

[www.nycaga.com](http://www.nycaga.com)

## AGA NYC Chapter: Letter from the President

By Camille O’Brady (HHS/OIG/OAS)

Dear Fellow Chapter Members:

As the newly appointed President of the AGA’s New York Chapter, I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Camille O’Brady, Senior Auditor with the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General, Office of Audit Services (DHHS/OIG/OAS). My responsibilities with OAS include planning and conducting comprehensive audits for a wide range of health and human services programs, grantees and contractors, and others receiving funds from programs administered by the Department.

Prior to being elected Chapter President, I served as the Chairperson for the Chapter Recognition Program , a noncompetitive program recognizing a chapter’s performance in relation to a standard or benchmark linked to AGAs mission to serve the government financial management community by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification, and supporting standards and research to advance government accountability. Over the past 4+ years in this role, I’ve become familiar with the established guidelines and chapter activities that constitute the characteristics of a well-rounded chapter. In my new position as Chapter President, I intend on applying this knowledge and experience to support, encourage, and promote future chapter activities and events that are consistent with AGA’s mission and of interest and benefit to chapter members.

Our chapter is only as strong as our volunteer and member support. Currently, we have 195 members in our chapter who are employed by various City, State, Federal, and Private agencies as well as retired members and members employed by or students of various Community Colleges. I sincerely thank all members who continue to volunteer and support our chapter. I look forward to working with you all as AGA’s New York Chapter continues to grow in the future.



**Camille O’Brady, AGA NYC Chapter President**

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## It's Never Too Late to Use Templates

By Marc Geller

Several years ago, a boss came to me with a suggestion about how day care center audits should be formatted. He wanted to associate claimed reimbursable expenses, which we disallowed for a number of reasons and articulated in the State's Reimbursable Cost Manual, to the actual line item that related to the expenditure. I told him that may be hard to do, since several expenditure items may roll into one claimed expense category. I also told him I'd try.

After literally figuring out the agency's accounting system, since the CPA partner who prepared the cost report had passed away, I was able to comply with the request. This led to a more focused and readable report. Utilizing the draft report, as well as work papers as templates, we were able to produce subsequent future reports more expeditiously.

Remembering this, while engaged in the seemingly endless plethora of Charter School audits, I was able to start writing the draft report from day one, not having to reinvent the wheel. In fact, in consultation with management, I was able to put together a Charter School Audit Manual, to further homogenize the process. Taking a page from the Charter School Manual, we were able to utilize techniques relating to templates to expedite our audit of Downstate Medical Center's payroll overpayments. We had reviewed and assimilated previous drafts, as well as related work papers, from two other audits as templates, upon which our audit work was generally based.

The time we saved, by writing the draft, as soon as field work commenced, allowed us to greatly expedite the audit, which afforded us the opportunity to better develop our findings. Remember, it's never too soon to use a template.

## TAX CORNER-

Submitted by Stephen L. Liebman, CPA

### IRS PTIN REGISTRATION SYSTEM GOES LIVE

The new online Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) registration system is now available on <https://rpr.irs.gov>. All paid preparers should register on the system by January 1, 2011. If you already have a PTIN number, you must reregister. You will receive a PTIN (or confirmation of a renewed PTIN) immediately after a suc-



cessful online registration. The IRS has set up a special toll-free number, 1-877-613-PTIN (7846), that you can call for technical support related to the new online registration system.

PTIN applicants can also submit a paper application on the new Form W-12, "IRS Paid Preparer Tax ID Number Application," which replaces the Form W-7. However, the IRS response time for paper registration will be four to six weeks.

**Note: The date your PTIN is assigned will be your annual renewal date.**

I applied in November and it took me less than 10 minutes to register online. It was quite easy and efficient.

### LATEST TESTING NEWS-

Testing will begin in mid-2011. If you get your PTIN registered under the new system BEFORE TESTING BECOMES AVAILABLE, you will have until December 31, 2013 to pass the competency tests. After testing becomes available, those without a PTIN will have to pass the competency tests **before** they can obtain a PTIN. The testing requirement is waived for CPAs, attorneys, and enrolled agents.

### Title of "Registered Tax Return Preparer"

The IRS has adopted the title of "registered tax return preparer" as its official designation of those persons who maintain a PTIN and are authorized to prepare returns.

### Registration Fees-

Although the final regulations establish a \$50 fee, applicants will actually pay \$64.25 to obtain a PTIN, which will be valid for one year. As part of that fee, the IRS will receive \$50 per user to pay for technology, compliance and outreach efforts associated with the new program. A third-party vendor will receive \$14.25 per user to operate the online system and provide customer support.

(Extracted from the NSTP *Federal Tax Alert*, October 2010 issue)

**THE  
NEW YORK CHAPTER  
of the  
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTANTS**

**proudly presents**

**AGA Audio Conference  
On**

**Planning, Conducting and Reporting Performance Audit Work Even More  
Efficiently: Additional Tools to Improve Your Office's Performance Audit**

**FREE FOR AGA MEMBERS!!!!**

**\$10 for Non-members**

**March 9, 2011  
2:00 PM to 3:50 PM  
2 CPEs**

**6th Floor Conference Room TBA,  
26 Federal Plaza New York, NY 10278**

*(Subway: Take the A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, to Chambers Street or 4, 5, 6 Train to Brooklyn Bridge City)*

**Registration by email/phone, contact:**

Christine Duncan at [Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov](mailto:Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov)

AGA, in conjunction with the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers (NASACT) and the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA), is pleased to announce a new topic to our audio conference schedule—performance audit efficiency.

In the “new normal,” government performance auditors need to “walk the walk” in operating audit functions that are as efficient as possible, issuing audit reports and inspiring improvement with the lowest amount of resources necessary. Audit offices can more efficiently use their limited resources to produce timely and high-quality performance audit reports. You'll learn the latest tools and techniques, including how to create a framework for audit efficiency in your organization through the use of technology and telecommuting. Innovations in performance auditing are helping auditors find efficiencies in unexpected places, from audit planning and fieldwork through the reporting process.

From leveraging staff resources to actively writing reports, and from condensing background to amplifying audit results, you'll be presented with a collection of tools to enhance audit planning, fieldwork and reporting to boost your office's performance audit yield. We'll explore answers to questions including: How early can fieldwork be planned? How soon can you start drafting reports? How many reviews and drafts should occur in the reporting process? How can management's lack of data be converted into a powerful audit finding? How can report titles and tables of contents be used to convey the message of an audit report? How can government obtain action and change as the result of audit reports?

If your organization is interested in "pumping up" the audit function within its existing resources, you won't want to miss this exciting audio conference. By popular demand, this session will revisit and expand on tools discussed in a 2007 AGA audio conference and this fall's NSAA webinar.

To share his expertise in performance auditing is **Drummond Kahn, CGFM, CIA, CGAP**, director of audit services for Portland, OR.

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**proudly presents**

**AGA Audio Conference  
On**

**Tools to Assist in Establishing a Performance Management System for Your  
Government—What You Need to Know**

**FREE FOR AGA MEMBERS!!!!**  
**\$10 for Non-members**

**March 23, 2011  
2:00 PM to 3:50 PM  
2 CPEs**

**6th Floor Conference Room TBA,  
26 Federal Plaza New York, NY 10278**

(Subway: Take the A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, to Chambers Street or 4, 5, 6 Train to Brooklyn Bridge City)

**Registration by email/phone, contact:**  
Christine Duncan at [Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov](mailto:Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov)

AGA is pleased to announce a new and increasingly important topic to our audio conference schedule—establishing a performance management system.

Governments have used a variety of methods to implement performance management and measurement systems. Government leaders must provide the direction for initiating and sustaining performance management, but what do all these approaches mean and will any one approach be appropriate? How do governments determine the best approach? Is a hybrid model best? Presenters share their insights on the different approaches and describe the strengths and weaknesses of each. The topics to be covered are:

Managing for Results, Balanced Scorecard, Baldrige, Six Sigma, Budgeting for Outcomes, STAT Systems, Dashboards, Benchmarking, Activity-Based Costing, Logic Models, and Combinations of All

To share his practical experiences and expertise in performance management systems is **Mark Abrahams**, MBA, CGFM, CPA, President, The Abrahams Group. Also hear from **Michael Jacobson**, Manager, Performance Management Section, King County Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget; and **Rich Siegel**, Performance Coordinator, Bellevue, WA as they share their hands-on experiences using a different approach to performance management in local government.

**THE  
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ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTANTS**

**proudly presents**

**AGA Audio Conference  
On**

**Program Integrity—Innovation and Approaches for the 21st Century  
Oversight and Accountability**

**FREE FOR AGA MEMBERS!!!!  
\$10 for Non-members**

**March 30, 2011  
2:00 PM to 3:50 PM  
2 CPEs**

**6th Floor Conference Room TBA,  
26 Federal Plaza New York, NY 10278**

(Subway: Take the A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, to Chambers Street or 4, 5, 6 Train to Brooklyn Bridge City)

**Registration by email/phone, contact:**  
Christine Duncan at [Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov](mailto:Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov)

AGA is pleased to announce a new and increasingly important topic to our audio conference schedule—program integrity in the digital age.

How does an enterprise achieve oversight and accountability in the digital age? Seasoned federal and state oversight experts provide an overview and training on establishing effective program integrity in an enterprise today, whether it is a government agency or private firm. Speakers present program integrity solutions that work, and analyze those that do not. They demonstrate how and why effective oversight is essential in the lightning-speed context of information transactions today.

To share their practical experience in program integrity are **James G. Huse Jr.**, senior adviser, Grant Thornton Public Sector, with more than 45 years experience in the federal government and private sector, including inspector general of the U.S. Social Security Administration and assistant director of the U.S. Secret Service, responsible for program integrity and internal security; and **Gary Heuer, CFE**, chief of investigations, Department of Banking and Insurance, Bureau of Fraud Deterrence, state of New Jersey, and former special agent in charge, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where he was responsible for leading the investigative program integrity efforts for Medicare and Medicaid within New York and New Jersey.

## What is the best way to study for the CGFM Examinations?

The best way to study depends on your knowledge, experience, time and location constraints, and individual preferences. Start by reviewing the contents of each CGFM Examination in the “What Do Exams Cover?” section of the AGA website - [www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/exams/default.aspx](http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/exams/default.aspx).

The “How Do I Prepare?” section of AGA website ([www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare](http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare)) offers a few ways to prepare for the CGFM Examinations, including:

— **Instructor-Led Courses:** six days of comprehensive courses in government financial management offered in conjunction with Management Concepts. (<http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare/instructorcourses.aspx>.)

— **Self-Study Guides:** the guides used in the instructor-led courses can also be used for individual self-study. (<http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare/studyguide.aspx>.)

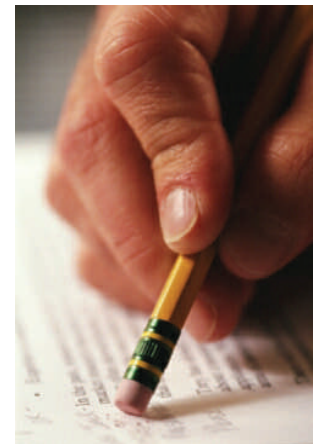
— **Resource Materials:** resources which can help you find information on specific topics. (<http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare/studymaterials.aspx>)

Review each choice to determine what might work best for you. Your local AGA chapter may provide additional support (study groups, etc.) to help you prepare for the examinations. In addition, AGA is once again offering an Intensive Review Course and an opportunity to take CGFM Examinations at its Professional Development Conference in Nashville in June. To learn more, visit: [www.agacgfm.org/pdc2007/cgfm\\_exam.htm](http://www.agacgfm.org/pdc2007/cgfm_exam.htm).

If you have any questions, call the AGA Office of Professional Certification at 800.AGA.7211, ext. 306.

### Study using:

- Instructor led courses
- Self study guides
- Study resources
- Intensive Review Courses



## Summary of Tax Law Changes for 2010

**Affordable Care Act Tax Provisions:** Health coverage legislation enacted this year includes a small business health care tax credit to help them and small tax-exempt organizations afford the cost of covering their workers.

**Child-Related Tax Changes:** Information on adoption benefits, child's investment income, the definition of a qualifying child, and additional child tax credit.

**COBRA Premium Assistance:** IR 2010-52 and Continuation Extension Act of 1020 (HR 4851) made changes to the COBRA premium assistance provisions.

**Decrease in Personal Casualty and Theft Loss Limit:** General rule for personal casualty or theft loss for 2010.

**Deduction for New Motor Vehicle Taxes:** You can deduct state or local sales or excise taxes (or certain other taxes or fees in a state without a sales tax) in 2010 for the purchase of any new motor vehicle(s) after February 16, 2009, and before January 1, 2010.

**Earned Income Credit (EIC):** The earned income credit amounts have increased for 2010.

**Economic Recovery Payment:** Information on economic recovery payments.

**Education-Related Tax Changes:** Information on education savings bond exclusion; Hope, American opportunity, and lifetime learning credits; and qualified tuition programs.

**Health/Medical-Related Tax Changes:** Information on Archer Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs), Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), and long-term care premiums.

**Income Averaging for Farmers and Fisherman:** Averaging farming and fishing income. Information on settlements from Exxon Valdez litigation.

**Increase in Limit on Long-Term Care and Accelerated Death Benefits Exclusion:** New limits on exclusion payments made under a long-term care insurance contract.

**Increased Standard Deduction:** The increased standard deduction for certain filers.

**Information on Home/Residence-Related Tax Changes:** Information on home/residence-related tax changes

**Itemized Deductions:** The limit on itemized deductions expired in 2010.

**Personal Exemption Amount:** The amount you can deduct for each personal exemption for 2010 is the same as the amount you could deduct for 2009.

**Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits:** Changes to the monthly exclusion for commuter highway vehicle transportation and transit passes and reimbursement for reasonable expenses of qualified bicycle commuting.

**Residential Energy Credits:** Information on residential energy credits.

**Social Security and Medicare Taxes:** The maximum amount of wages subject to the social security tax and Medicare tax remains unchanged from 2010.

**Special Limitation Period for Retroactively Excluding Military Retirement Pay:** If you retire from the armed services based on years of service and are later given a retroactive service-connected disability rating by the VA, your retirement pay for the retroactive period is excluded from income up to the amount of VA disability benefits you would have been entitled to receive.

**Standard Mileage Rate:** The standard mileage rates for business use and medical- or move-related use of your vehicle have decreased for 2010. The standard rate for charitable use remains the same.

**Wage Threshold for Household Employees:** The social security and Medicare wage threshold for household employees is...

## Announcements



NYCFE Appreciation Award for two decades of service was given to Myrna Fishman (center) Chairperson of Accounting, Business Administration & Law Dept, Long Island University, presented by Ernesto Castillo, President NYCFE 2011 (right). Myrna is a long-time member of the AGA New York Chapter and past-president.



If you have any announcements including awards, achievements, retirements, job opening, please let us know and we will include them in the newsletter and website

### **AGA MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Submitted by Stephen L. Liebman, Membership Chair

Beginning Balance  
(as of 10/12/2010)- 222;  
New - 5  
Reinstates - 12  
Suspends - 42  
Ending Balance - 195

Base Goal- 233.1 (84%)  
New Member Acquisition Goal  
(10%)-22.2 (23%)  
Retention Goal (90%)- 199.6 (96%  
of goal)



If you are interested in volunteering as an officer or assistant for the New York Chapter AGA please contact a member of the Board.

## Upcoming Events

**March 9, 2011** — Audio Conference  
*“Planning, Conducting and Reporting Performance Audit Work Even More Efficiently: Additional Tools to Improve Your Office’s Performance Audit Productivity”*

**March 23, 2011** — Audio Conference  
*“Tools to Assist in Establishing a Performance Management System in Your Government—What You Need to Know”*

**March 30, 2011** — Audio Conference  
*“Program Integrity—Innovation and Approaches for 21st Century Oversight and Accountability”*

## Upcoming Events

**April 20, 2011** — Audio Conference  
*“Mortgage Fraud and Beyond—Looking Towards the Future”*

**May 11, 2011** — Audio Conference  
*“The Apprehension of Being Ethical”*

**June 8, 2011** — Audio Conference  
*“Internal Controls”*

*All conferences held at 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY 10278 on the 6th Floor conference rooms. For more info, please contact: Christine Duncan (Christine.Duncan@oig.hhs.gov)*



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## Chapter Executive Committee

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