



New Mexico and
Albuquerque Chapters

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2-1, NUMBER 3 JANUARY, 2010

ABOUT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

Januray 13th
Audio Conference In Santa Fe

TOPIC:
Internal Controls

Sponsor: New Mexico Corrections
Department

12:00pm -2:00pm

Regulation & Licensing Department
Tony Anaya Building, 2550 Cerrillos
Rd

January 20th
Luncheon ([Santa Fe](#))

TOPIC:
PERA Updates

Speaker:
Mr. Oscar J. Arévalo

Place:
Cowgirl Hall of Fame

Time:
11:45am-1:15pm

Price:
\$15 for Members
\$18 for Others

January 20th
Luncheon ([Albuquerque](#))

TOPIC:
Creating a Motivating Work
Environment

Speaker:
Wendy Shannon

Place:
Albuquerque Marriot
2101 Louisiana Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
505-881-6800

Time:
11:30am-1:30pm

Price:
\$15 for Members and non-members

President's Message



Greetings fellow AGAers,

Greetings fellow AGAers and Happy New Year !!!

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season and I am looking forward to a great 2010. I hope everyone was given the opportunity to spend much time with family and friends during this holiday season.

Well with the cold spell we have been experiencing lately, I should say **Hau'oli Makahiki Hou**. It means Happy New Year in Hawaiian and it is pronounced "how-oh-lay ma-ka-hee-key ho". Then we all can wish we were on a warm beach in Hawaii.

The Chapter held its December monthly luncheon at the Bishop's Lodge on December 15th. The luncheon was part of the Chapter's Annual Holiday Gift Drive. We partnered for the second time with Lifelink de Santa Fe. A huge thank you to all who contributed gift cards that Lifelink will distribute to assist several of Lifelink's clients. The Chapter, as well, contributed \$250.00 to Lifelink to assist in the various programs it oversees.

December's guest speaker was Lifelink de Santa Fe Director, Dr. Carol Luna-Anderson, who spoke about this worthwhile charitable organization and gave the audience many examples where Lifelink helps within the Santa Fe community.

Lifelink de Santa Fe has been serving clients throughout Santa Fe and northern New Mexico for 23 years, which originally opened as a homeless shelter; however, Lifelink has now grown to assist in various other ways since its inception. One example, is to help families with temporary housing that lost their homes. Dr. Luna spoke of one family, where Lifelink helped a single father of three children for six months until he could find work and housing. Currently Lifelink has 136 units within the Santa Fe area to help in this manner. Dr. Luna reminded the audience that the agency's support staff is the "backbone" of the agency and without them much can not be archived. The organization also provides a day shelter for single mothers with children. The day shelter is in its 3rd year of existence.

Lifelink de Santa Fe also works in tandem with other local organizations, such as, St. Elizabeth's Shelter to assist clients. Monthly meetings are scheduled to brainstorm on ideas regarding how each respective entity can assist every client. It is important that charity organizations work together since each are desiring the same dollar. The "best practices" method seems to archive the most.

Dr. Luna proudly expressed, though, how Lifelink is the lead agency of nine northern counties in New Mexico in serving clients and is anticipating approximately \$800,000 in assistance for Santa Fe County alone over the next three years.

Presidents Letter Continued---

A question from the audience was asked, “how can people or in what ways can people assist Lifelink?” Here are some examples Dr. Luna shared: gift cards to purchase from local merchants, monetary means are always good, furniture of any sort (from utensils to beds), clothing, and contributing to the Food Depot.

I would like to thank Dr. Luna-Anderson for taking time out of her busy schedule to speak to our AGA group. And again, thank you fellow members for assisting the Chapter in this year’s holiday community service efforts. Let’s not forget to share our talent, time, and treasure with others throughout the year.

Hope to see all of you at our next luncheon, which will be at the Cowgirl Hall of Fame.

I wish everyone an remarkable 2010 and good luck with your New Year’s Resolutions!!!

Bryan M. Maestas, CCFM

WM Chapter President

Southwest Regional Coordinator for Education

Membership



Share the Magic!

The 2009–2010 “***Share the Magic***” of Membership Member-Get-A-Member Campaign offers you the opportunity to win great prizes just for sharing the value of your AGA membership with your friends and colleagues and persuading them to join.

The campaign runs from May 1, 2009–April 30, 2010 and encourages current members to recruit new members. Because we are a membership-driven organization, an effective membership program must be an on-going, year-round process. The power of your organization is directly related to the commitment and active participation of your membership. It is essential that your Association aggressively recruit, retain and engage membership in the organization.

Since you already know the benefits of being an AGA member and have contacts in the financial management profession, this is a great way to increase AGA's membership, which in turn expands your own professional network and allows AGA to better meet your needs.

How to participate:

It’s easy! Request membership applications by e-mailing one of the Executive Committee members.

What you can win:

You only need to recruit 1 new member to win a prize! Better yet, recruit the most new members and win the grand prize of a complimentary registration to AGA’s **2010 Professional Development Conference & Exposition** in Orlando, FL, and **two one-day passes to an Orlando theme park**. There are many opportunities to win prizes for you and your chapter. Please visit www.agacgfm.org for a complete list of prizes.

Members sharing their experience.

AGA expanding its network of professionals.

Generating more leadership opportunities.

Improving accountability in financial management.

Commitment to the future

Best of luck!

And may the best recruiter win—for themselves and for AGA!



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



**AGA's 2010 National Leadership Conference
Feb. 18-19, 2010
Ronald Reagan Building, Washington, D.C.**

Make Plans Now to Attend AGA's National Leadership Conference

Government financial managers are deeply committed to producing timely, reliable and useful financial information, with the goal of running government programs more efficiently. At AGA's National Leadership Conference (NLC), those sentiments are more than just words.

The NLC brings together government financial management and accountability leaders to share leadership secrets, provide "how-to" lessons, discuss the newest management techniques, and the most recent information on always-changing standards and regulations.

Sessions will cover hot topics, current issues relating to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the effects of political transitions and look at the first year of Obama's Presidency, and what the future holds. This event also features the newest tools to help agencies do their jobs more easily and more effectively.

Don't miss this opportunity to earn 14 CPE hours, share best practices, network with your peers and learn from the top financial management leaders and industry experts.

Join us February 18-19, 2010 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. and show your commitment to a more accountable future. Please visit AGA's National Website at www.agacgfm.org for more details and special room rates.



It's not early to plan!!!

Mark your calendar and make plans to join us in sunny Orlando, Florida for AGA's 59th Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition—the premier education and networking event for government financial managers and accountability professionals.

Worth 24 CPE hours, the conference covers the latest research and information about the American Recovery Act, the constantly changing rules and standards, new management techniques, technological advances and practical tips for bringing greater efficiency to government operations. The PDC offers a comprehensive program, captivating speakers, lively discussions, top-quality education sessions, and equips you with knowledge and skills you need to be more effective leader

Registration & Housing Now Open for PDC - It's time to start planning for next year's PDC. Join us July 11-14, 2010 in Orlando, FL to share best practices, gain useful information, see the latest technologies and get technical training from the top government financial management and accountability leaders and industry experts. The PDC offers unparalleled opportunities for networking, exchanging ideas, connecting with colleagues and meeting new friends.

Register today!!!

IRS to regulate paid tax preparation

By David S. Hilzenrath

Washington Post Staff Writer

Tuesday, January 5, 2010; A01

The Internal Revenue Service plans to test, register and screen people who get paid to prepare tax returns, stepping into a virtually unregulated business on which millions of Americans depend for crucial financial services. The agency wants to crack down on preparers who do shoddy or fraudulent work and create a way for consumers to make more informed choices -- though the moves could increase the cost of having tax returns prepared. "In most states you need a license to cut someone's hair," but today "most tax-return preparers don't have to meet any standards when they sit down and prepare a federal tax return for an American taxpayer," IRS Commissioner Douglas Shulman said in an interview Monday.

The agency said it will phase in the changes with the 2011 tax season. The announcement underscores the fact that helping Americans comply with the federal tax code has become a big business. The industry is a sprawling one, taking in brand-name national players such as H&R Block and Jackson Hewitt, mom-and-pop practitioners who hang out their shingles each tax season, and fly-by-night operators who can leave taxpayers on their own when the IRS finds fault with their returns. The IRS estimates that 900,000 to 1.2 million people prepare tax returns for a fee, and many do so without ever being officially tested. "Right now, the IRS doesn't know who unregulated preparers are and can't track them when there's a problem. This ultimately hurts the taxpayers who end up having to pay more taxes, fines and penalties," Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa), who presided over a hearing on the issue years ago, said in a statement. Starting with the 2011 tax season, the IRS plans to require paid preparers to register with the agency.

Subsequently -- the timeline is not yet firm -- they will be required to pass competency tests and receive continuing professional education. The IRS said it will screen preparers to make sure they have paid their own taxes. In a report issued Monday, the agency also raised concerns about the quality of tax-preparation software and about the marketing of loans backed by expected returns. Last year, almost 94 million returns were completed using tax software. Both taxpayers and professional preparers relied on the programs, though "quality control over these products rests exclusively with the software publishers," the IRS said. Meanwhile, some preparers encourage consumers to take out loans against anticipated refunds, without fully explaining the costs, the agency said. The IRS said it plans to study the two issues further. The new testing and education standards will exempt certified public accountants, lawyers, and tax practitioners known as "enrolled agents," who are cleared to represent taxpayers in dealing with the IRS and are already subject to professional or government requirements. The IRS said that it will take a closer look at the performance of those groups, and that it has not ruled out testing them in the future. Tax prep giants H&R Block and Jackson Hewitt expressed support for the requirements announced Monday. Under the new rules, H&R Block "won't be competing against people who aren't regulated and don't have the same standards as we do," said Kathryn Fulton, senior vice president for government relations. Most of the company's preparers will be required to take the new test, but the company's continuing education requirements exceed those announced those by the IRS, she said. Citing a gap in the agency's plan, Fulton said the IRS should impose the same rules on unpaid preparers of tax returns. Jackson Hewitt said in a statement that all of its tax preparers must pass a company test. In field tests, the IRS noted Monday, tax-return preparers often gave bad advice.

In a 2006 study in which employees of the Government Accountability Office posed as taxpayers and visited outlets of tax prep chains, all 19 preparers made mistakes, the IRS reported. Only two of the 19 arrived at the correct bottom line. Several did not ask about income from sources other than wages, and 10 of the 19 did not report such income even when they were told about it, the IRS said.

In a 2008 study, 17 of 28 preparers got the bottom line wrong.

It is unclear how much of the blame rests with the tax code's confusing nature, a perennial target of politicians' criticism. Do regulated professionals such as CPAs perform better than their unregulated counterparts?

The IRS commissioner said the agency does not have the data to answer that question.

REMINDERS:

Renewal Dates

AGA Member renewal Year:

April - March 31. Members renewal season is right around the corner !!

CGFM Renewal Year:

January - December 31

IMPORTANT

When renewing as a New Mexico Chapter member within SHARE, please use SHARE vendor ID 0000050344, remit address # 3 and location # 3. This will ensure the Chapter will receive credit for your renewal.

When renewing as a Albuquerque Chapter member within SHARE, please use SHARE vendor ID 0000027356, remit address # 2 and location # 2. This will ensure the Chapter will receive credit for your renewal.

CGFM NEWS



Q: What are the benefits of having the CGFM certification?

A: CGFM highlights your achievements, serves as a tangible indicator of your experience and knowledge and stays with you throughout your career. In addition, the CGFM may:

- enhance your marketability throughout all levels of government.
- provide networking opportunities with other government financial managers.
- support continued education to keep you informed of the latest developments and cutting edge technologies.
- provide increased employee value, both real and perceived.
- increase confidence on the job.
- encourage employer incentives - raises, promotions and bonuses.

Here are a few tips toward the CGFM Exam

- * Assess your situation by deciding what your primary motivator is for achieving the CGFM designation. Your motivator may be monetary, notoriety, or the possibility of a promotion.
- * Monitor yourself. Most of us are limited in the amount of time we can spend each day on extracurricular activities. Therefore, you will need to analyze your calendar to decide what times and dates will work the best for you. It will be hard at first to fit in this extra activity but don't stop. Create a schedule/time frame. Make studying a routine. It is critical to establish a deadline in order to make yourself accountable. Set small goals and most importantly, visualize yourself passing the exam.

LOCAL NEWS

Albuquerque AGA New Member Recruiting Mixer

Hello Everyone! The New Year is right around the corner, so let's get some new faces for the AGA!!! We are having a mixer on Tuesday, January 19 from 5:30 to 7:30. We are still in the process of getting a venue, so we will send more details in the coming weeks. Here's the deal, if you are member, and you bring a guest who is not a member, you do not have to pay the entrance fee. However, if you are member, and you do not bring a guest, the entrance fee is \$40! I know this is being read by a bunch of accountants who are known for performing a cost-benefit analysis, but let me save you the trouble: bring a guest!!!

This mixer will be a great opportunity to meet new members, catch up with other members, enjoy some cocktails, and share our crazy holiday family stories....come on, we all know we will come back from the holidays with at least one story about a crazy family member; and if you don't have a story, more than likely, you are that crazy family member!

We will be sending more details as they come available, but please mark this on your calendars and pass this along to people who are not already members. Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to seeing everyone at the mixer!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Laura Beltran-Schmitz
Early Career/Social Networking Chair
lbeltran@meyners.com



SFCC
SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO REGISTER

ACCT 202 GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING – Offered at the Santa Fe Community College

Description: This course offers a comprehensive study of the theory and practice of governmental accounting and reporting. Topics include fund accounting (general fund; special revenue funds; capital and debt-service funds; enterprise and internal service funds; budgetary accounting & reporting; accounting for capital assets & general long-term liabilities; and, financial reporting (at the fund and government-wide level). This is a 4 credit hour course.

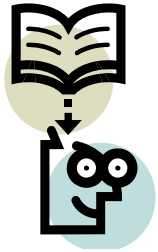
Instructor: Ricky. A. Bejarano, MBA, CPA – Ricky has been in the audit & accounting profession for over 31 years and has taught governmental accounting at SFCC since Spring 2003. He has been the Audit & Accounting Manager for the Public Education Department since June 2008.

Course Dates: January 23, 2010 through May 20, 2010

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Location: Santa Fe Community College (Main Campus); LL319

Local Chapter Training



January 13, 2010
Internal Controls
Sponsor: New Mexico
Corrections Department

Must e-mail Phillip Gonzales at
phillip.gonzales@state.nm.us

February 10, 2010
*Understanding IT Audits for Program Managers
and Auditors*
Sponsor: SPONSOR NEEDED

March 3, 2010
Fraud
Sponsor: SPONSOR NEEDED

March 24, 2010
*Suggested Guidelines to Voluntary Reporting:
Sharing the Government's Story Using Non-
Financial Resources*
Sponsor: SPONSOR NEEDED

April 21, 2010
The Latest Tools and Techniques for Auditors
Sponsor: SPONSOR NEEDED

May 19, 2010
Ethics
Sponsor: New Mexico Corrections Department

All audio conferences are scheduled 12:00 pm to
2:00 pm. Please arrive by 11:45. They will be held
at the Toney Anaya building located at 2550
Cerrillos
Road, Rio Grande room on the second floor.



We are looking for agencies that would like to sponsor one of the audio conferences listed above. The audio conferences have been a very successful educational tool in the past; in addition, provides free training to members and non-members at a very low cost to the agency as well as provides attendees 2 hours of continuing professional education. To reserve a sponsor slot, please contact, Phillip Gonzales at phillip.gonzales@state.nm.us or Bryan Maestas at bryan.maestas@state.nm.us.

NEW on the Web!!!

Peter Pacheco, our Chapter's Webmaster and Newsletter Editor, has been doing some remodeling to our New Mexico Chapter's webpage. Please visit it at www.agasantafe.org and let us know what you think and please share your ideas.

GET READY!!!!
2010 PDC CONFERENCE
SANDIA CASINO
April 13 & 14
KEY NOTE SPEAKER:
AGA NATIONAL
PRESIDENT
BILLY MOOREHEAD

MORE NEWS TO COME!

JANUARY LUNCHEONS

SANTA FE JANUARY LUNCHEON

Cowgirl Hall of Fame
319 S. Guadalupe Street
Santa Fe, NM

January 20, 2010, Wednesday
11:45am – 1:15pm

Speaker: Mr. Oscar J. Arévalo, Director/Chief
Financial Officer Administrative Office of the
Courts

Topic: PERA Updates

Cost: \$15 Members & \$18 non-members

MENU

Menu Selections

Texas BBQ Buffet
Mesquite-smoked BBQ brisket
Mesquite-smoked BBO chicken
Butternut squash casserole
Mixed spring greens salad with dressing
BBQ beans
Cole slaw
Cornbread, tortillas, and extra BBQ sauce

Assorted dessert
Coffee, Iced tea, and soda

R.S.V.P. Wanda Gonzales by 12:00 by January
15th at 827-4865 or by email

supwmg@nmcourts.gov

Cancellations after the deadline and “no shows
will be charged the full price of the meal payable
to the Chapter. We must guarantee the number of
attendees to the restaurant in advance.

RVSP's are needed

**Have Lunch on us!!! Bring a prospective
member to the January 20th Santa
Fe luncheon and we will pick up
their lunch. Please see one of the Executive
Committee members during the luncheon so
we can meet the prospective member and
gather their contact information. See you on
the 20th.**

ALBUQUERQUE JANUARY LUNCHEON

Albuquerque Marriot
2101 Louisiana Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
505-881-6800

January 20, 2010
Wednesday 11:30am – 1:30pm

Cost: \$15, includes lunch

Speaker: Wendy Shannon, SPHR

Topic: Creating a Motivating Work
Environment

Learn what creates motivated, contributing
employees. Learn what a “motivating
environment” looks like. Learn how you can
motivate without giving raises. This
interactive session will provide you with tips
and techniques to help motivate yourself and
your employees during these challenging
economic times. Learn objectives include:

1. Understand what motivates you and
your employees.
2. Recognize the effective use of rewards
and reinforcement in the work
environment.
3. Explore how to improve motivation.

Register by 3:30 pm on 1/15/10 by calling
Marla Gorena at 505.222.3510 or e-mail
mgorena@meyners.com.

Lunch
&
Learn

A glimpse of what Mr. Arévalo will be speaking about.

The Executive Summary of PERAs June 30, 2009 Actuarial Valuation (please see AGA website at www.agasantafe.org). There is a lot of information in this summary and I would like to highlight some of this for you.

- PERA Fund Balance was \$8,795,819,080 on 6/30/09 compared to \$11,960,186,623 on 6/30/08 (26.5% decline).

- However, preliminary amount for PERA Total Market Value Plan Assets as of Nov. 30, 2009 were at \$10,328,960,235.

- PERAs Summary of All coverage plans funded percent was at 84.21% on 6/30/09 compared to 93.27% on 6/30/08.

- Specific Division and Coverage Plans funded percent can be found on page 2 of the Executive Summary

Divisions worth highlighting as they pertain to state members:

- State General: 77.02% on 6/30/09 vs. 85.47% on 6/30/08
- Police/Haz. Duty: 119.67% on 6/30/09 vs. 124.13% on 6/30/08
- JRA: 60.5% on 6/30/09 vs. 78.3% on 6/30/08
- MRA: 66.27% on 6/30/09 vs. 93.2% on 6/30/08

As you can see there were significant declines in funded percent for PERA coverage plans, in summary as well as individual, from June 30, 2008. I will note that since June 30, 2009, the PERA fund has gained back a significant amount of the investment losses experienced over the last year due to the economic decline.

The PERA Executive Director and myself represent the PERA Board on the Retirement System Solvency Task Force. The PERA Board has been hard at work to come up with solutions to maintain the sustainability of the PERA funds and have presented some recommendations to the Task Force. This Legislative Session in January, the PERA Board will support proposed legislation to take the necessary steps needed to maintain the sustainability of the JRA, MRA and Municipal Fire coverage plans. PERA has not made any recommendations for benefit reductions to any plans. However, PERA's Actuary is currently conducting a study to come up with a model retirement plan using data from other State retirement plans similar in size and complexity with PERA for the Task Force. As I noted in previous emails, any benefit reductions to plans will be prospective. Meaning, any benefit reductions passed by the Legislature and Governor will apply only to new employees and not currently enrolled employees.

In addition, there have been questions from PERA members regarding the impact of furloughs in relation to retirement benefits. In general, if a state member is within the last 36 months of employment prior to reaching retirement eligibility, chooses to retire at the completion of eligibility, and these 36 months represent the highest paid monthly service credit, furloughs will have a small effect on the calculation of benefit. Each state member's situation is unique and please do not interpret this generalization as fully applying to your situation.

Please visit our web page for more information regarding the above.

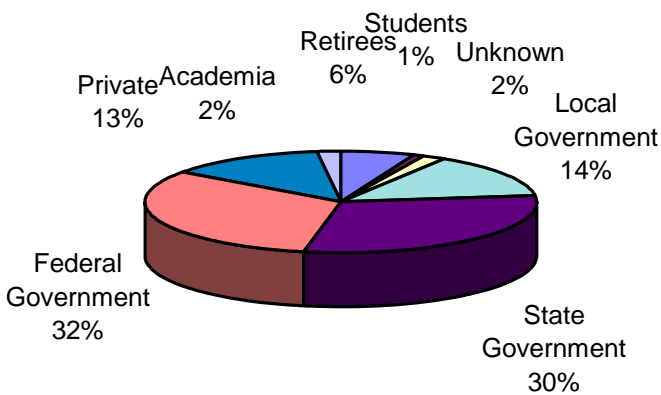
AGA Membership

Who Are Our Members?

Diversity continues to be AGA's greatest strength. AGA's 15,000 plus members work for state and local governments, federal agencies, academic institutions, private firms and tribal organizations. The Association's membership crosses all fields and disciplines, including accounting, auditing, budgeting, contract management, finance, grants management and systems. AGA members are students and entry-level employees and mid-level professionals and senior executives and elected officials. No other professional association boasts such a diverse membership.

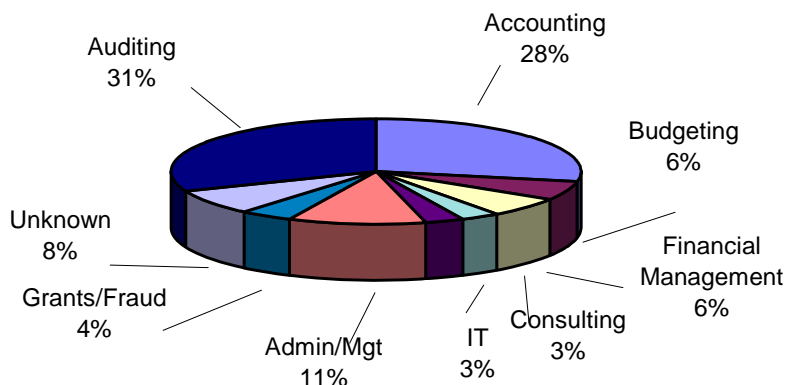
Regarding age, 65% of AGA members fall into the 41- 60 age range, 22% in the 31-40 age range, 8% in the 21-30 age range and 5% in the 61-70 age range.

Employers



AGA members are employed by state and local governments (44%), the federal government (32%) and the private sector (13%). The remainder is made up of students, retirees and academicians. These individuals hold middle (73%) to senior level (20%) positions in their respective workplaces. AGA members also represent a wide spectrum of ethnic backgrounds – African American, Asian, Chicano/Mexican American, Latino, Native American, Puerto Rican and Caucasian. The majority of members, eighty-four percent (84%) hold an associate's degree or higher. Fifty-eight percent (58%) hold a bachelor's degree, twenty-three percent (23%) a master's degree, two percent (2%) an Associate's degree, one percent (1%) a Ph.D., one percent (1%) a law degree and fifteen percent (15%) is unknown.

Areas of Responsibility



An interesting statistic is that twenty-four percent (24%) hold multiple designations while more than half (60%) hold one designation. A whopping 31% hold the designation of Certified Government Financial Manager!!!



Member News:

Welcome New Member to the New Mexico Chapter:

- Christina Keyes – PERA.
- Michael Romero - EMNRD
- Gilbert Gurule -EMNRD

Welcome and thank you for your membership

HAVE A GREAT 2010!!!!

AGA New Mexico Chapter 2009-2010 Officers and Directors

Chapter President

Bryan Maestas
NM Corrections Department
827-8603
bryan.Maestas@state.nm.us

Chapter Past President

Linda Medina
Retired,
lm6medina@yahoo.com

Chapter President Elect

James Chadburn
State Auditor's Office
476-3800
james.chadburn@osa.state.nm.us

Chapter Vice President

Wanda Gonzales
Supreme Court
827-4865
supwmq@nmcourts.com

Chapter Treasurer

Blanca Trujillo
State Auditor's Office
476-3834
blanecat@osa.state.nm.us

Chapter Webmaster/News Letter Editor

Peter Pacheco
City Of Albuquerque
768-3190
ppacheco@cabq.gov

Chapter Community Service

Sylvia Barela
Legislative Finance Committee
986-4577
sylvia.barela@nmlegis.gov

Chapter CGFM Coordinator

Vince Lithgow
CYFD
827-8004
vince.lithgow1@state.nm.us

Chapter Historian

John Block
Governor's Committee on
Disability
476-0418
john.block@state.nm.us

Chapter Education

Phillip Gonzales
DFA
476-4515
phillip.gonzales@state.nm.us

Chapter Early Career

Daniel Martinez
DFA
827-5074
danielb.martinez@state.nm.us

Chapter Membership

Elena Tercero
DFA
827-3882
elena.tercero@state.nm.us

Chapter Chair Person

Dina Advani
NM Higher Education Department
476-6509
dina.advani@state.nm.us



Association
of Government
Accountants

P.O. 22936
Santa Fe, New Mexico
87502

agasantafe@aol.com
www.agasantafe.org

