



Charleston
Chapter



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Hello! I am honored to be serving as the AGA Charleston Chapter President for a second term. I look forward to this exciting adventure and encourage each of you to get involved with our AGA Charleston Chapter! We have some exciting training and social events planned in the upcoming year. It has been

over 15 years now since I first joined AGA hoping to network and earn CPE. I am happy to say that I have been able to do both of those things more than I had imagined possible back then. I have met some wonderful people and look forward to meeting each of you in the upcoming year. If you have any suggestions on events or training or would like to volunteer to be a speaker please reach out to me. I hope you can all attend our fall conference that is scheduled for September 22 & 23 at the Holiday Inn in South Charleston. We have some excellent speakers coming and have been approved for 16 hours CPE with 3 CPE in Ethics.

[AGA – helping people when they need it most!](#)

Submitted by: Heather N. Gillenwater, CGFM, CFE – NCC Rep 2025-2026

August 11, 2025

When AGA rebranded in 2022—transitioning from the *Association of Government Accountants* to *Advance Grow Accelerate*—I must admit I was not a fan. Most of our members are government accountants and auditors, and I had always seen AGA as a unique space where professionals in our field could gather, learn, and “geek out” together. To me, changing the name felt like taking away the very reason I joined. Public accountants have the Society of CPAs, I thought—so why shouldn’t government accountants have AGA?

But earlier this year, at my first LEAD conference in April 2025, I came to understand why the rebranding matters. The atmosphere was unlike anything I expected. With federal layoffs driving up unemployment, there was a real sense of uncertainty in the air. Yet at the same time, there was excitement and hope. For decades, many of us believed government jobs—especially at the federal level—were the most stable and secure careers. Now, that confidence had been shaken. Some board members had already lost their positions and were facing their own struggles. And yet, what I witnessed was remarkable: people joining together, lifting one another up, and serving through AGA.

Members who were unemployed or unsure about their future still gave their time to educate others—helping chapters stay strong, maintaining memberships, sharing job leads, even covering dues for those in need. They offered training, networking opportunities, and guidance on best practices—all to help their peers advance their careers and continue to serve with excellence.

That’s when it clicked for me: *Advance Grow Accelerate* is more than a name. It’s a mindset.

- **Advance** even in uncertain times.
- **Grow** in your career and as a person, finding the right fit for you.
- **Accelerate** by moving forward, even when the path seems blocked.

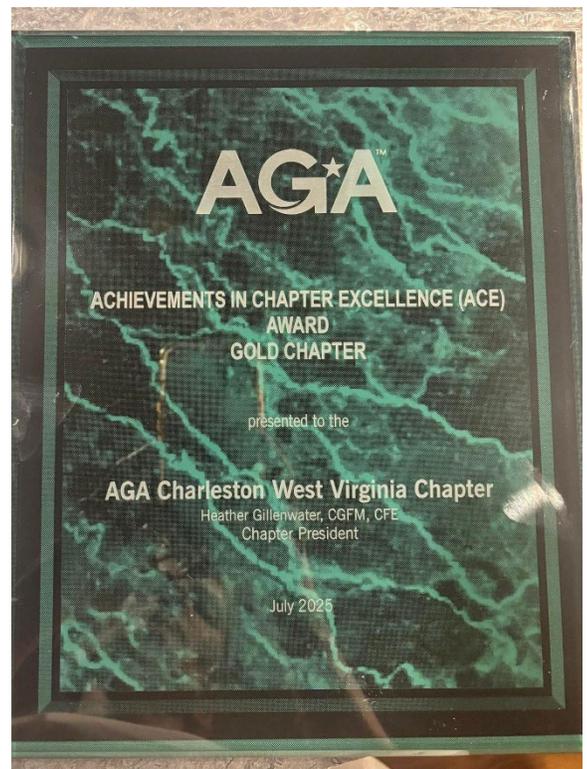
At LEAD 2025, I finally saw what the rebranding is truly about. AGA is not just an association—it is a community that helps people when they need it most. And I am proud to be part of it.

Awards

Congratulations Charleston AGA for receiving the “Gold Chapter Award” in chapter excellence!

Heather Gillenwater received the Gold Chapter ACE Award for the Charleston WV AGA Chapter.

Heather stated, “I know my name is on the plaque as chapter president, but honestly it’s a reflection of the entire board. Thank you CEC members for your hard work & dedication in receiving this outstanding achievement, I was honored to serve as chapter president!”



Awards

Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Year!

Corey Wade received the AGA Volunteer of the year award for his hard work and dedication to the CGFM program.

Corey stated, "I am so honored to have received the Volunteer of The Year Award for the AGA Charleston WV Chapter. AGA and the CGFM program have helped me grow a lot in my career. I have been given so many great opportunities to learn and grow into a successful



and professional government accountant. Now I want to do everything I can to help spread the awareness of this organization to others that may be interested in government financial management or governmental accountability in general. I want to thank everyone from AGA National for the great leadership but also my amazing co-chairs of the Charleston WV AGA."

Thank you Corey for all your hard work and dedication, from all of us at the Charleston WV AGA!

EDUCATION

Chapter Education Plan & Meetings for 2025 - 2026

Chair: Emily Fleck & Betsy Chapman

- Fall Conference 2024 – 2 days – 16 CPE
 - September 22 – 23, 2025
- Spring Conference 2025 – 1 Day – 8 CPE
 - April/May 2026
- (6) CPE Lunches or webinars – Every other month – 1 CPE - January, March, May, July, October, November
- (12) Monthly Board Meetings

The Fall Conference is coming in September!



Please join the Charleston Chapter AGA for two days full of useful training including 16 hours of CPE (3 in Ethics)!

Date:	September 22 & 23, 2025
Place:	Holiday Inn, South Charleston 400 2nd Avenue, South Charleston, WV
Cost:	\$300.00
Discounts:	\$25 - AGA Member \$25 - Certification - CGFM/CPA/CFE/CIA (limit to one \$25 certification discount)
CPE:	16 Total (3 in Ethics)

Registration Link: <https://www.agacgfm.org/Chapters/Charleston-WV-Chapter/TrainingEvents/AGA-Fall-Conference-2025.aspx>

Chapter CGFM Plan for 2025 - 2026

Chair: Corey Wade

The Charleston WV Chapter plans to promote the CGFM certification by building awareness of the CGFM, encouraging members to obtain the CGFM designation and supporting current CGFM members.

CGFM Candidate Support

- Host CGFM study groups both in person as well as virtual.
- Provide CGFM candidates with mentors that have been through the program.
- Provide CGFM candidates with the most up to date study guides through the chapter's lending library.
- Build the number of CGFMs in the Charleston Chapter by 10 members passing all parts of the exam.
- Reimburse members who meet the following criteria:
 - Pass any part of the CGFM exam
 - Employer did not pay for the exam
 - Has not already been reimbursed by the AGA for the exam cost for that part
 - Apply within 90 days of passing the exam
- Provide an additional discount at Charleston AGA Conferences for those with the CGFM designation.

CGFM Support

- Provide CPE opportunities to CGFMs by utilizing the luncheons.
- Retain at least 80% of current CGFMs.
- Promote CPE and other training opportunities utilizing the newsletters/website.
- Provide CGFMs with an opportunity to submit training ideas for future CPE.
- Provide current CGFMs with an opportunity to mentor CGFM candidates.

CGFM Awareness

- Promote CGFM month on the Charleston Chapter's Linked-in page and newsletter.
- Provide a CGFM awareness presentation at AGA Charleston conferences and luncheons.
- Have current CGFMs write articles for the newsletter about their CGFM experience.
- Promote CGFM awareness through emails to all Chapter Members.
- Provide an informational packet all about the CGFM to anyone interested.
- Promote the benefits of holding the CGFM designation.
- Encourage the Governor to make a declaration for March to be CGFM month.
- Encourage the Mayor to make a declaration for March to be CGFM month.

Why become a Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)?

By: Corey Wade, CGFM – AGA Charleston WV
Chapter CGFM Chair



Since 1994, the CGFM program has helped many become proficient in all skills necessary to become an expert government financial manager. When it comes to the government environment, the financial process differs significantly from what you would see in the private sector. Unlike businesses that focus on profits to gauge success, government entities focus on accountability, transparency, and the efficient and effective use of tax dollars, grants, and other government resources. The CGFM program provides an overall view of how federal, state, and local governments operate starting from the basics of formation and financing to performance measurement, auditing, and the development of reports to communicate the status of the government to law makers, investors, creditors, and most importantly, its citizens.

The CGFM program breaks down all this information into three different areas, the general government environment, governmental accounting, financial reporting, and budgeting, and general governmental financial management and controls. This material may only be partially covered or sometimes not covered at all in a standard four-year accounting program. The CGFM program bridges all the gaps you may have in your knowledge of government financial management. The AGA provides many resources to help you throughout the process with many opportunities to save money. Whether you work in an area of government finance at a government agency or are a CPA that provides services to government agencies, becoming a CGFM is great for anyone involved in any area or level of government.

Visit www.agacgfm.org to learn more about the CGFM program and the 10 steps it takes to become a Certified Government Financial Manager.

CGFM Study Group

HELLO, AGA Members!

I am happy to announce that the AGA Charleston WV Chapter will be starting their virtual study group for Book 3 (Governmental Financial Management and Control) as early as next month! Jamie Chambers, internal auditor for the WV Board of Treasury Investments, will be leading this study group.

If you are interested in the CGFM, I highly encourage you to take advantage of the resources the AGA Charleston Chapter offers. Please take a look at the information flyer to see information about the CGFM, the steps to earn the CGFM, and how our chapter can help!

If you are interested in the study group, please see the link below to sign up! If you have any questions at all, you can email me or give me a call at (304) 414-9067.

LINK TO SIGN UP FOR THE STUDY GROUP:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLRvaQ6Kkd-I4CXKIMLI5UaS5czdISBtAJgGZAcQNzMxgFSg/viewform?usp=header>

Thank you,

Corey



Interested in earning your CGFM? The AGA Charleston Chapter is here to help!

- What is the CGFM?

- o The CGFM or Certified Government Financial Manager is a professional certification awarded by AGA, demonstrating competency in governmental accounting, auditing, financial reporting, internal controls and budgeting at the federal, state and local levels.

- Why earn the CGFM?

- o Going through the CGFM program gives you the knowledge and experience needed to be an effective government financial manager.
- o Most four year accounting programs just have one governmental accounting class and it may not even be required to graduate. The CGFM program focuses solely on government financial management. This helps government accountants and auditors fill in the knowledge gaps to see the big picture of government.
- o The CPA exams focuses mainly on accounting for businesses with a small part relating to government. The CGFM will fill in any gaps in government that are not covered on the CPA exams.
- o Earning the CGFM gives you an advantage in government financial management and opens many doors to higher level positions.
- o Earning the CGFM increases your professional confidence.
- o The WV Division of Personnel (DOP) and many other state agencies not under DOP offer up to a 5% raise for earning the CGFM.

- How can the AGA Charleston Chapter help you earn your CGFM?

- o FREE study groups / virtual CGFM classes are offered to candidates with busy work schedules.
- o FREE access to our study guide lending library. Study guides range from \$95 to \$120. Our chapter will let you borrow a study guide for free while you study for the exams.

- o **Exam Reimbursement**
 - The AGA Charleston Chapter will reimburse candidates for their exam fees if the following is met:
 - Candidate is a member of the AGA Charleston Chapter
 - The Candidate passed the exam.
 - The Candidate's employer did not pay for the exam.

- o **FREE** access to other study materials such as:
 - Notes written by other CGFMs
 - Flash Cards
 - Power Point Slides
 - Practice MCQs
 - Practice Problems

- o **Networking Opportunities**
 - Have the opportunity to network with other CGFMs

- o **CPE Opportunities**
 - The AGA Charleston Chapter offers many CPE opportunities to current CGFMs to ensure they meet the CGFM CPE requirements.

- o **The Charleston AGA Chapter will help every step of the way! See the steps of the CGFM program below.**

- **CGFM Process: Earn the CGFM in 10 Steps!**

- o Step 1: Read the AGA Code of Ethics
- o Step 2: Apply to the CGFM Program
- o Step 3: Submit Required Degree Documentation
- o Step 4: Receive an Eligibility Letter
- o Step 5: Prepare for the CGFM Exams
- o Step 6: Schedule the CGFM Exams
- o Step 7: Take the CGFM Exams
- o Step 8: Submit a Work Verification Form
- o Step 9: Receive Award Letter
- o Step 10: Receive CGFM Certificate

Questions?

For any questions related to the CGFM Program, please contact Corey Wade, CGFM Chair at corey.d.wade@wv.gov or (304) 414-9057.



Chapter Community Service Plan for 2025 - 2026

Chair: Beth Farley

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Support the local community through community service events. Work to help our Chapter grow through recruitment of individuals to volunteer to assist us with these noteworthy events, and by showing them how we help and support the local area.

- July 2025 – PDT Donation - AGA
- September 2025-October 2025 – Fundraiser to support the Charleston YWCA programs – in coordination with Fall Conference
- November 2025 – Bingo at Nursing Homes – TBD
- February 2026 – Food drive for local food bank – TBD
- March/April 2026 – TBD – in coordination with Spring Conference



The Charleston, WV AGA Chapter is preparing a fundraiser to support the Charleston YWCA's Shanklin Center for Senior Enrichment and Empowerment Homes for Women and the Charleston YWCA Sojourner's Shelter. We are reaching out to local members and vendors asking for donations.

The Shanklin Center for Senior Enrichment and Empowerment Homes for Women provides permanent, affordable housing and comprehensive support services. Case management and support programs are available to help seniors address their physical, emotional, and financial challenges. By offering a combination of affordable housing and essential support services, the Shanklin Center provides a vital lifeline for elderly individuals who have been victimized.

The YWCA Sojourner's Shelter provides emergency shelter, comprehensive services (crisis intervention, case management, counseling, and children's programs that empower individuals toward self-sufficiency), low recidivism rate, job readiness training through the Margaret Taylor Job & Readiness Center, and nourishing meals. YWCA Sojourner's Shelter stands with families on their journey towards a brighter future.

Needed items:

- Washcloths
- Towels
- Laundry detergent
- Dish cloths
- Dish soap



Bring your supplies and monetary donations to our Fall Conference September 22nd and 23rd and get a chance to win a prize!!



Any assistance is greatly appreciated! You can learn more about AGA by visiting <https://www.agacefm.org/home.aspx>. If you have any questions or to arrange for donation pick up or drop off, please feel free to reach out to me at (304) 720-3143 or bfarley@antilecpas.com.

Thank you!
Beth Farley, Director of Community Service

Chapter Education Plan & Meetings for 2025 - 2026

Chair: Kelli Herr

For membership growth of young professionals in the local AGA Charleston Chapter, proposed activities:

- During the upcoming collegiate year, contact the Business Departments of local colleges/universities for opportunities to present the benefits of the AGA and obtain certification as a Governmental Finance Manager with the possibility of inviting students to an AGA Luncheon/Meeting. Some potential schools are Marshall University, West Virginia State University, and the University of Charleston.
- Seek opportunities to attend Career Days for the above listed universities doing meet-n-greets with students to answer questions about the AGA and CGFM and have handouts available listing contact information for the AGA and CGFM. If possible, invite interested students to an AGA Luncheon/Meeting.
- Promote AGA scholarship opportunities.

EARLY CAREERS

Win a \$1,500 Scholarship in AGA's Government Finance Case Challenge

AGA invites currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students to compete in a virtual two-and-a-half-week Government Finance Case Challenge. Student teams will analyze data from an AGA-specified U.S. state, city or county government and develop a Citizen-Centric Report. Winning team members and their advisors each receive a \$1,500 scholarship! Registration closes on Sept. 14 at 11 p.m. ET. For questions, email ccr@agacgfm.org.

<https://www.agacgfm.org/Standards/CCR/CaseChallenge.aspx?viewmode=0>

Chapter Membership Plan for 2025 - 2026

Chair: Nancy Gray

The Charleston WV Chapter plans to promote membership by:

- Inviting potential members to chapter events for free.
- Playing the AGA video at chapter meetings.
- Providing information to non-members about the AGA (Brochures).
- Sending a personalized welcome email to new members to let them know of upcoming events.
- Reach out to local governments to promote AGA and the benefits of membership to increase number of members.

Member satisfaction

- Recognizing membership milestones in Chapter's newsletter.
- Provide CPE and Networking opportunities

Member satisfaction

- Promoting the benefits of becoming a member such as networking and professional development at lower member rates.
- Adding required email addresses to event sign-in sheets to enable communication to non-members attending events.

MEMBERSHIP



We would like to thank our 83 amazing members for your continued support. Please let us know what we can do for you.

Not a member? Join now and take advantage of membership discounts!

<https://www.agacgfm.org/Membership/JoinOrRenew.aspx>

Upcoming Events

- ☺ September 22-23, 2025 - AGA Charleston Chapter Fall Conference – 16 Hours CPE - at the Holiday Inn in South Charleston
- ☺ September 22-23, 2025 – AGA Fund raiser and supply drive
- ☺ October 3, 2025 (tentative) – CGFM Study group for exam 3 – online at noon (contingent on study guide availability)
- ☺ October 15, 2025 - CPE Luncheon – 1 Hour CPE - TBD
- ☺ November 19, 2025 - CPE Luncheon – 1 Hour CPE - TBD

[Get Involved: Exciting Opportunities Await You!](#)

Are you looking to make a greater impact and connect with fellow professionals? We have a variety of opportunities for you to get involved and contribute to our community.

Join Our Team!

We currently have an opening for a Newsletter Editor on our Board. This is a fantastic opportunity to help shape the content and direction of our publication. If you have a passion for communication and a knack for organization, we would love to hear from you!

Share Your Expertise

Do you have a subject matter that you're passionate about? Consider submitting an article for our newsletter or becoming a speaker at our events. Your insights and expertise can provide valuable learning opportunities for our members and enhance our collective knowledge.

Get Involved in Community Service

Our community service events are a great way to give back and make a difference. Participating in these events not only benefits those we serve but also strengthens our bonds as a professional community.

Getting involved is a rewarding way to contribute to our organization and grow both personally and professionally. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities and help us continue to build a strong, engaged community.

If you're interested in any of these opportunities or have questions, please reach out to us. We look forward to your participation!

Member Spotlight

Going the Extra Mile

Congratulations to our Membership Chair, Nancy Gray, and her husband John Gray for completing the 2025 Big Timber Trot 10K at Kanawha State Forest on June 28, 2025!

Nancy took home First Place Female Senior Grandmasters—and she did it on a truly challenging course!

The Big Timber Trot is part of the Kanawha State Forest Race Series, held right here in the beautiful Kanawha State Forest in Kanawha County, WV. The 10K course (that's 6.2 miles!) winds through rugged forest trails where runners and walkers must navigate roots, rocks, narrow paths, and steep drop-offs. The terrain is tough, but the views are absolutely breathtaking.

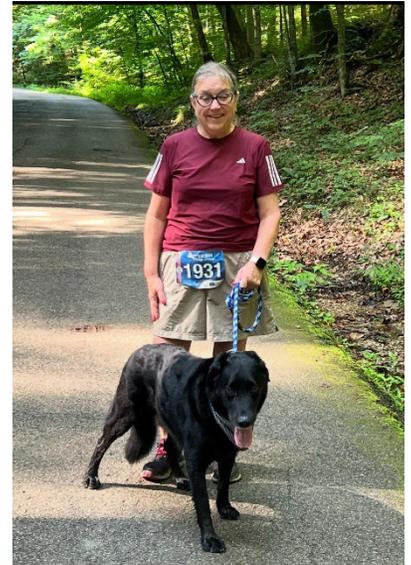
Nancy's dedication and endurance shine both on the trails and in our profession. Let's give her a big virtual high five for this amazing accomplishment!

There's something truly special about combining movement, fresh air, and the healing power of nature. Being outside—especially in a place as scenic as Kanawha State Forest—can refresh your mind, restore your energy, and help you reconnect with yourself and others.

Interested in joining the fun? The second and final race of the series will be a Half-Marathon or 7K on October 19, 2025. Participants can choose to run or walk the course. Learn more and register here:

<https://runsignup.com/ksfhalfmarthon>

Just a little heads-up—the Half-Marathon course is very challenging, but the sense of accomplishment is worth every step!



AGA Board

Position	Name
Chapter President	Emily Fleck, CPA, CGFM, NIGP-CPP
Chapter President-Elect	Lisa A. Rutherford, CIA, ISA, CRCM
Secretary	Jamie Lenore Chambers, MS, CGFM, CPA, CIA, CGAP
National Council of Chapters Representative	Heather N. Gillenwater, CGFM, CFE
Chapter Treasurer	Lisa A. Rutherford, CIA, ISA, CRCM
Accountability	Marie Long, CPA
ACE Reporting	Brandy Whittington, CPA, CGFM
CGFM/Professional Certification	Corey Wade, CGFM
Community Service	Elizabeth A. Farley, CPA, CGFM
Communications	Taylor S. Cole
Education	Emily Fleck, CPA, CGFM & Betsy Chapman, CGFM
Membership	Nancy Gray
Early Careers	Kelli Herr
Webmaster	Kelli Herr
Newsletter	Jamie Lenore Chambers, MS, CGFM, CPA, CIA, CGAP (acting until filled)