

**THE COMMUNIQUE NEWSLETTER**

*Thursday, December 10, 2009*

**Winter Workshop**

The workshop will cover the following topics:

**"Ethics; Changes in Treasury; Accounting Standards Update"**

**Panel Discussion: "Preventing Fraud, Waste and Abuse - Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina and Louisiana Road Home"**

Time: 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Cost: AGA Members - \$75; Non-members - \$100; Federal & Faculty - \$75; Students - \$25

Location: University of Maryland  
University College  
Shady Grove Campus

For more details about this workshop, visit our website. To register, email [education@marylandaga.com](mailto:education@marylandaga.com).

**CHAPTER PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**



Dear Fellow Chapter Members:

The month of December gives us a chance to look over the past year: 2009 was an exciting year of changes and growth for government. One of the key leadership positions was filled by the election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States on January 20, 2009. Then, on February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 into law, a \$787 billion economic stimulus package aimed at helping the American economy recover from the deepening worldwide recession. The Act included increased federal spending for health care, infrastructure, education, tax breaks and incentives, and direct assistance to individuals. These funds are being distributed over the next several years. In March 2009, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner took further steps to manage the financial crisis by introducing the Public-Private Investment Program, which contains provisions for buying up to \$2 trillion in depreciated real estate assets deemed to be weighing down on stock valuations, freezing the credit market, and delaying the economic recovery. Along with spending and loan guarantees from the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department, about \$11.5 trillion had been authorized by both the Bush and Obama administrations, with \$2.7 trillion actually spent by the end of June 2009.

President Obama intervened in the troubled automotive industry in March 2009, renewing loans for General Motors (GM) and Chrysler Corporation to continue operations while reorganizing. Over the following months, the White House set terms for both firms' bankruptcies, including the sale of Chrysler to Italian automaker, Fiat, and a reorganization of GM giving the U.S. government a temporary 60 percent equity stake in the company, with the Canadian government shouldering a 12 percent stake in the automaker. He also signed into law the Car Allowance Rebate System, known colloquially as "Cash for Clunkers" bill, on August 7, 2009.

In the third quarter of 2009, the U.S. economy expanded at a 2.8 percent annual pace. President Obama has claimed that the stimulus package helped stop the economic downturn. Various economists have credited the stimulus package with helping to create economic growth. However, unemployment has continued to rise to 10.2 percent (the highest in 26 years), and the "underemployment" rate rose to 17.5 percent.

President Obama has called for Congress to pass health care reform, a key campaign promise and a top legislative goal. On July 14, 2009, House Democratic leaders introduced a 1,017 page plan for overhauling the U.S. health care system, which President Obama wants Congress to approve by the end of the year. On November 7, 2009, the bill was passed in the House after much debate over whether or not to include abortion under the proposed government health care plan.

These are just some of the big moments from 2009 that undoubtedly will impact each and every one of us in the AGA who are in some way associated with the complex record-keeping associated with such huge dollar amounts. The year 2010 will likely bring us many more such events and I hope you can join us as we try to keep up with the ever changing accounting environment.

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A feature of this month's newsletter is a continuation of our series on compliance management. I believe this is an important area and is only made more important as we enter into more accountability and transparency as indicated by President Obama's frequent media statements on the economy. Please take a minute to read the article as I think it is relevant.

The Chapter continues to look for ways to enrich our education and outreach programs. Please see Upcoming Chapter Events below or visit our Web site at <http://www.marylandaga.com/meetings.cfm> for more details.

I would also like to thank our corporate sponsors. We appreciate your continued support of and commitment to our Chapter and its members!

I encourage everyone with questions, suggestions, or ideas to make our Chapter the best it can be, to let me know. The Chapter serves you and we are always looking for ways to improve our services to you. So please, keep the feedback coming. I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events! As this year draws to a close, the board and I wish you and yours the happiest of holidays.

Sincerely,

Angela Walter, CPA  
President, AGA Montgomery/Prince George's County Chapter

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## AGA EVENTS



February 18-19  
Washington, D.C.

### ***NLC Registration and Hotel Reservations Now Available***

Make plans now to attend AGA's National Leadership Conference (NLC), to be held **Feb. 18–19, 2010** in Washington, DC. Hear from a stellar lineup of speakers, participate in informative sessions, share best practices, discover innovative management techniques, and see the technological tools that can aid efficiency and improve effectiveness.

In addition to an outstanding technical education program, and the ability to earn 14 CPE hours, AGA's NLC is packed with opportunities to network, make professional connections, and meet new friends. Show your commitment to a more accountable future—**register by fax** or **online** today!

We reserved a block of rooms at the JW Marriott to accommodate NLC attendees. The rate is \$207 per night (plus tax) until January 29, 2010. Reservations received after January 29, or after the room block has been filled, will be made on a space-available basis, and may be subject to higher rates.

Please call the JW Marriott at 800.393.2503 and mention you are attending the "AGA NLC" to receive the discounted rate. You can also reserve a room online.

### ***Hotel Reservations Now Being Accepted For 2010 PDC in Orlando***

**Make plans now to attend AGA's 59th Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition (PDC)—the premier education and networking event of the year!**

Dream. Learn. Achieve. The PDC has it all! Join us **July 11–14, 2010**, in Orlando, Florida, to hear dynamic speakers, participate in informative sessions, learn about the latest research, share best practices, discover innovative management techniques, and see the technological tools that can aid efficiency and improve effectiveness.

In addition to an outstanding technical education program, and the ability to earn 24 CPE hours, AGA's PDC is packed with opportunities to network with colleagues from around the country and make new friends. While you're here, be sure to experience all the attractions, shopping, fine dining, and recreational activities Orlando has to offer.

Information about the agenda, speakers, travel discounts, and registration is coming soon. In the meantime, you can reserve your spot at the official conference hotel.

We have reserved a block of rooms at the Orlando World Center Marriott to accommodate PDC attendees. The rate is \$108 per night (plus tax) for single and double occupancy. However, **rates are only guaranteed until June 18, 2010, or until the room block is sold out.**

Reservations received after June 18, or after the room block has been filled, will be made on a space-available basis, and may be subject to significantly higher rates. Rooms sell quickly...we encourage you to make your hotel reservations early, for the best price and availability.

To make a reservation, please call the Orlando World Center Marriott at 800.621.0638 and mention you are attending the "AGA PDC" to receive the discounted rate.

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## MONTGOMERY/PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY CHAPTER EVENTS

### *Accounting Professional Night and Job Fair*

The University of Maryland University College (UMUC) Office of Career Services, in partnership with AGA, invited accounting students to an Accounting Professional Night and Job Fair on November 17, 2009 at the UMUC Inn and Conference Center in Adelphi, Maryland. There was a great turnout of UMUC students at the event. There were between 90–100 students who attended the event. There were students who were just entering the accounting field (i.e., early careers) and those who were making a change in their career from a nonaccounting to an accounting field.

There was a fair amount of networking with UMUC students, alumni, and AGA members. Flora Milans, Regional Vice President-Elect, Doreen Shute, past Regional Vice President and past chapter President, Tolu Shoyemi, Early Careers Director, Christine Tritsch, Early Careers Director, Angela Walter, President, Yehuda Schmidt, Past President, Alex Dickey, Treasurer, Scott Turnbull, Membership Director, and Rodneikka Scott, National AGA Membership Manager were all on hand to provide information on what opportunities AGA offers for career development and networking.

There were 10 employers who participated in the Job Fair. Two of the chapter's corporate sponsors, IBM and Clifton Gunderson LLP, were among the participants. After the Job Fair and networking event, there was a job search techniques panel discussion. The panel was comprised of fellow UMUC alumni accounting professionals who talked about their career path and development in accounting. In addition, the panel responded to questions from the attendees. The panel was comprised of Flora Milans, RoundUp Accounting, Shondraya Levy from IRS, Carol Clark from the Association of Public Health Laboratories, and Rekha Chatterjee from National Public Radio. The panel discussion was mediated by Lisa Andrews from UMUC. The event was coordinated by Katie Nailler, Assistant Director of Career Services, UMUC. Kathleen Sobieralski, CPA, Assistant Academic Director, Collegiate Accounting Faculty, UMUC and an active member of our chapter, and Seth Katz, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, UMUC also attended and supported the event.

We thank everyone for their support in making the event a success!



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### **Community Service – Christmas Party for Kids**

Our annual holiday party will be held on Monday evening, December 14 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Georgia Avenue Baptist Church on Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring, next to the Glenmont Metro Station.

The Montgomery/PG County AGA Chapter supports the National Center for Children and Families (NCCF), whose mission is to create total, healthy living environments for vulnerable children, youth, and families, and the quality of life, which empowers their ability to thrive and demonstrate responsibility.

There will be 30 children, for whom we will be buying gifts. In addition, working with the church, we will furnish various foods, including desserts, salads, cold cuts, bread and rolls, etc. The church will furnish turkey and ham, potato salad, macaroni salad, soft drinks, etc.

As in the past we will have various board members volunteering their time, energy, and their own money to help us put on this event, which we have done for the past 11 years. Personal donations from chapter members are greatly appreciated. Please mail your AGA Montgomery/PG County contribution to:

Andrew Lewis – Treasurer  
C/O AGA Montgomery/PG County  
15736 Ambiance Drive  
North Potomac, MD 20878

AGA National will match dollar for dollar any and all cash contributions realized or raised for this event.

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

On behalf of our chapter, we would like to welcome our new members! We are excited that you made the decision to join our chapter. In this chapter, we put our members first. There are a lot of great events planned and many opportunities to earn free CPEs! Hope to see you at our next dinner meeting on Wednesday, January 20.

Fellow members, please join us and welcome the following new members:

<b>Harrison Woods</b>	October 2009	Allmond Company LLC
<b>Raymond Yeh</b>	October 2009	NASA
<b>Li Qi</b>	November 2009	Montgomery County Schools
<b>Michael Ralph</b>	November 2009	Kforce Government Solutions

Thanks from your Membership Co-Directors! Please contact us at [membership@marylandaga.com](mailto:membership@marylandaga.com) with any questions or comments.

## **TAKE YOUR CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL – VOLUNTEER TODAY!**

At the Montgomery/Prince George's AGA Chapter, we are actively seeking volunteers. Volunteering is a great opportunity to meet new people and network with others. If you are interested in serving on a particular committee, please contact the individual board members directly for additional information. A full listing of board members can be found on our Web page at <http://www.marylandaga.com>. Please click on "about" then "leadership", and then "board members". To learn more about volunteer opportunities, please ask any Montgomery/Prince George's AGA Chapter board member.

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## CHAPTER NEWSLETTER RESEARCH, ARTICLES, AND BOOK REVIEWS

The chapter encourages volunteers to provide newsletter articles on relevant subjects. We encourage all members to consider providing information that can enhance our knowledge base.

### **Compliance Management – Second in a Series**

By : Jim Merrill, CPA

**Introduction** – This is the next chapter of an ongoing series of brief essays on the concept of compliance management in the government sector. As we are increasingly more aware of the need for an understanding of the complex web of compliance requirements, it is important that good management practices be implemented. In the initial chapter, we discussed the need to identify the requirements. To effectively analyze the variety of compliance requirements, it is important to apply tried-and-true management techniques to the project.

#### ***Management Considerations***

First, a compliance officer has to be designated. Such an officer should be empowered and have sufficient authority to perform their job effectively. Second, the officer needs to be knowledgeable in the concept of compliance management. Frequently, such persons have prior experience in performance compliance activities for a particular department or agency. However, the role of a compliance officer is much broader and will require good skills in “negotiating” between process owners and the responsibility to comply with certain requirements. Also frequently, specific compliance requirements may be so general, such that multiple departments or work groups may have collectively the responsibility for compliance with those requirements. This is common in compliance requirements for record-keeping, for example. In this case, the records may be maintained both in paper and electronic form on the computer or on the Internet; responsibility for compliance may be assigned to both the office staff as well as the information technology (IT) function. This can easily be more complicated by the use of an outsourced function, such that the records may be stored on a commercial company’s system or at a federal or state shared services center. These examples help illustrate the need for a compliance officer with enough authority and understanding of the overall operations to which the compliance requirements apply.

Second, a mechanism to centrally document the various compliance requirements is essential. This becomes especially important later on when efforts are expended to centralize and/or remove redundant compliance activities in the interest of efficiency and cost savings. Various methods could be used, ranging from simple spreadsheets to complex databases linked to external federal sources such as OMB and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs). Whatever data collection method is used, timely and complete collection of the various requirements is necessary. Also, a mechanism needs to be implemented to identify changes to the requirements. As was noted previously, the laws and related compliance requirements could be modified by new legislation, sunseting of existing laws, votes by the people, etc. This activity is generally labeled as a change management function, where changes are identified, assessed, and added to the list of requirements and acted upon accordingly.

By appointing the right person to the role of compliance officer, with appropriately trained and dedicated staff, the organization can proceed to analyze the myriad of compliance requirements. The role of a compliance officer includes the processes in place to manage the “list” of requirements and at the same time be flexible to incorporate ongoing and inevitable changes to the laws and related rules.

***To be continued – analyzing the compliance requirements.***

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## CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS CORNER

The following are the Chapter's upcoming monthly program highlights. Please visit our Web site at <http://www.marylandaga.com> and click the **Chapter News and Events** for more details.

### December 2009

#### December 10

##### Winter Workshop

**Location:** University of Maryland, University College, Shady Grove Campus

**Date and Time:** Thursday, December 10, 2009, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The workshop will cover the following topics:

Ethics; Changes in Treasury; Accounting Standards Update

Panel Discussion: Preventing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse – Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina and Louisiana Road Home

**Cost:** AGA Members – \$75; Nonmembers – \$100; Federal and Faculty – \$75; Students – \$25

Breakfast, lunch, and refreshments will be provided.

Parking is free!

CPEs: 8

For more details about this workshop, visit our Web site. To register, e-mail [education@marylandaga.com](mailto:education@marylandaga.com).

#### December 14

##### Community Service – Christmas Party for Kids Event

**Description:** Our chapter, in conjunction with the National Center for Children and Families (NCCF), is pleased to announce a community service event to sponsor a holiday party for families and children currently residing in homeless shelters in the area.

**Volunteers Needed:** *We are seeking volunteers to help donate items and food, and to participate on the day of the event.* If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Troy Hailey using the below contact information.

**Location:** Georgia Ave Baptist Church 12525 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring, Md.

**Event Time:** 6:30 p.m. – approximately 8:30 p.m. on December 14, 2009

**Contact:** Troy Hailey at 202-905-6871

For More Information: Community Service – Christmas Party for Kids

#### December 16

##### \*FREE\* AGA Audio Conference: Latest Trends in Occupational Fraud

AGA is pleased to announce its latest audio conference on Latest Trends in Occupational Fraud.

**Date and Time:** This conference is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16, 2009 from 2:00 p.m.–3:50 p.m. EST.

**Location and Cost:** KPMG's has agreed to sponsor this event **\*free of charge\*** for our chapter members.

Earn 2 Free CPEs.

The conference will take place at KPMG LLP's Washington, DC office (2001 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036).

Contact Maria Rossel to RSVP for this event, 202-533-6396 or [mrossel@kpmg.com](mailto:mrossel@kpmg.com).

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## CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS CORNER

January 2010

January 13

**\*FREE\* AGA Audio Conference: Internal Controls Event**

**Description:** AGA is pleased to announce its latest audio conference on Internal Controls.

**Date and Time:** This conference is scheduled on Wednesday, January 13, 2010 from 2:00 p.m.–3:50 p.m. EST

**Location and Cost:** Clifton Gunderson, one of our chapter's corporate partners, has agreed to sponsor this event **\*free of charge\*** for our chapter members.

The conference will take place at Clifton Gunderson's corporate offices (1710 Beltsville Drive, Suite 300, Calverton, MD 20705)

Contact: Elizabeth Robinson at 301-943-3371

For More Information: **\*FREE\*** AGA Audio Conference: Internal Controls

January 20

**Monthly Dinner Meeting**

Al Runnels, deputy chief financial officer of the Department of the Treasury, will discuss the "Results of the 2009 Audit, TARP, and Recovery Act."

*For additional information and to register for any of the above Chapter events, please go to our Web site at [www.marylandaga.com](http://www.marylandaga.com).*

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*Our Chapter wishes to thank the following corporate sponsors:*

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