

ABOUT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 28, 2007

AUDIO CONFERENCE - PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR AUDITORS AND MANAGERS IN EFFECTIVELY ASSESSING RISKS AND CONTROLS AT THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, ALBANY, NY (NYSICA MEMBERS SHOULD REGISTER AT THE NYSICA WEBSITE)

MARCH 12-14, 2007

THE CONFERENCE THAT COUNTS 2007 (TCTC XII) AT THE HOLIDAY INN, 205 WOLF ROAD, ALBANY, NY

MARCH 28, 2007

AUDIO CONFERENCE - PROCUREMENT FRAUD AT KPMG, LLP OFFICES, 515 BROADWAY, ALBANY, NY

APRIL 24, 2007

MODEL GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AT THE NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM THEATER, EMPIRE STATE PLAZA, ALBANY, NY

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NO-SHOWS WILL BE BILLED THE FULL COST OF THE EVENT.



Accountants Form New Group to Improve Audit Quality

by Judith Burns (Dow Jones Newswires)

U.S. accounting firms have formed a new private-sector group to improve audit quality and restore confidence in a profession tarnished by massive corporate accounting scandals.

The nonprofit organization is affiliated with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and backed by the Big Four accounting firms - Deloitte & Touche LLP, Ernst & Young LLP, KPMG LLP and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP - plus the five next largest audit firms.

Improving the quality of public company audits and increasing investor confidence will be a top priority for the Washington, D.C.-based group, known as the Center for Audit Quality, according to Executive Director Cynthia Fornelli.

Accounting firms recognize that "people lost confidence in our public marketplace" in the wake of corporate accounting scandals starting in the late 1990s, Fornelli said in an interview Tuesday. She said those firms want to tackle the problem head-on by improving audit quality and working with regulators and investors to consider ways to improve corporate financial reports.

Fornelli likens public company auditors to umpires, saying when they do their job right, everyone can focus on the game and have confidence that it will

be played fairly. In auditing public companies, she said: "we're really trying to be a fair and impartial umpire."

Shielding auditors from damaging lawsuits will be another issue for the new organization, along with controversial audits of internal financial-reporting controls at public companies, which Congress mandated in 2002 as part of a sweeping package of corporate accounting reforms.

"We have a whole host of issues that we're going to focus on," said Fornelli, a former regulatory executive at Bank of America, and former deputy director of the SEC's investment management division, which oversees the \$10 trillion mutual fund industry.

"Auditor liability has certainly been in the news and something we'll look at and have a dialogue about," she added.

Accounting professionals will dominate the new organization's 12-member board. Seven seats will be held by the head of the AICPA and the chief executives of the six largest audit firms, with two seats rotating among smaller and midtier audit firms. Three public board members will be named shortly.

Fornelli said the new group will bring a single-minded focus to public company audits, in contrast to the AICPA, the professional trade group for

Continued on page 7.

CAPITAL IDEAS

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President's Message

from
Marcella Junco



Happy New Year! We are half way through our AGA year and have been very successful thus far. During the mad rush of the holidays, AGA members and non-members took time out of their busy schedules to participate in some great events.

In November, we held our annual Fraud Seminar co-sponsored by the ACFE and the IIA with over 200 attendees. During the event, we held a raffle to benefit the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York. We raised \$502 to benefit this great cause.

In December, our annual Holiday Lunch featuring Judi Clements, was attended by 115 people. Judi offered some great advise on how to achieve happiness. She says "If You Want to Forget All Your Troubles, Wear Tight Shoes." We held another community service raffle, this time to benefit Unity House, raising \$200 for the charity.

Several people turned out to celebrate the holidays by volunteering at the Lights in the Park in Washington Park in Albany. They shared their holiday spirit and helped a great cause, the Police Athletic League, which provides activities and programs to children.

Our annual certification panel presentation was very well attended also. We had approximately 35 individuals learning about the various certifications available to government, finance, accounting, auditing, IT and fraud professions. Thank you to our wonderful panel. Congratulations to **Mary Mellyn** of DASNY who won a CGFM Study Guide.

The AGA held our first social event of the year at Capital Repertory Theater. Seven members and their guests attended the play Triple Espresso in December. The attendees included our November raffle winner—Congratulations **Jen Stickles**. The play was fabulous and the event a great success. Look for more social events to come this spring.

Thank you to all our volunteers who help make our programs and events a success. I also would like to thank everyone who has attended our events—without you they would not be successes. We hope that you have enjoyed the first half of our program year and will continue to benefit from the rest of the events we have planned.

Our upcoming events include Valentines and Cookies for Veterans on February 11th and 14th and an audio conference called Practical Guidance for Auditors and Management in Effectively Assessing Risk and Controls on February 28th at the Department of Labor.

Continued on page 7.

Strong, But Wrong, Controls

by David R. Hancox, CIA, CGFM

Director of State Audits, New York State Comptroller's Office

Understanding, identifying, and implementing the right internal controls is critical in determining an organization's success or failure.

Guidance on internal controls is important and the seminal document Internal Control — Integrated Framework issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) provides an excellent framework for organizations to follow. Unfortunately, auditors and regulators often place too much emphasis on the wrong control components under the misguided premise that control activities (i.e., policies and procedures) are the most critical elements of an organization's success. This misplaced focus can cause managers to respond with strong — but wrong — preventive controls over day-to-day activities, which ultimately frustrates efforts to correct an organization's real problems.

It's time for auditors and regulators to identify and implement the right controls to prevent the past practices, which have harmed major organizations involved in fraud and scandals over the years, from reoccurring.

COSO and Internal Control

COSO's Internal Control — Integrated Framework broadly defines internal control “as a process effected by an organization's board of directors, management, and their personnel, designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives in effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.” The document identifies five components of a good control system:

1. Control environment.
2. Risk assessment.
3. Control activities.
4. Information and communication.
5. Monitoring.

Working together, these components provide the framework for an effective system to help assure an organization complies with laws, rules, and regulations, produces reliable financial data, and operates effectively.

COSO identifies the control environment as the most critical of the five components. According to COSO, the control

environment is “the foundation for all other components of internal control, providing discipline and structure.” Control environment factors include:

- The integrity, ethical values, and competence of the organization's people.
- Management's philosophy and operating style.
- The way management assigns authority and responsibility and organizes its people.
- The attention and direction provided by the board of directors.

Autopsies of major scandals have consistently identified the control environment as the primary cause of the scandal — not the control activities or even the lack thereof. So why are auditors and regulators putting so much focus on control activities?

Too Much Focus on Control Activities

Two issues in particular drive auditors to focus on control activities. The first is because it's easy. Control activities are much more objective to assess than control environment issues. It is easy to read existing policies and procedures and to spot situations where duties should be segregated. It also is easy to review documents to determine whether policies and procedures were followed (e.g., Was an approval obtained when needed? Were bids sought when required?).

However, it is much more difficult to assess management's philosophy and operating style. It is also difficult to review and estimate the integrity, ethical values, and competence of employees.

The second issue driving auditors to focus on control activities rests with the professional guidance and requirements auditors follow. Both the Securities and Exchange Commission and its sister organization, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, have issued standards and related rules that define internal controls over financial reporting in the same way.

It's important to be clear on this issue because control activities — and the corresponding policies and procedures — are essential components of a good control system.

Unfortunately, the focus on control activities is often for the wrong reason. Auditors routinely recommend that management segregate duties with the explanation that it is necessary to provide a check and balance on employees' duties, but the message this sends to employees is that they are not trusted.

Conversely, when an organization segregates duties, shouldn't it be to help assure efficiencies in the process and allow employees to monitor their own work as a team, correcting any errors before the transactions are complete? Employees can accept this reason much more easily than a message that says, "We don't trust you." You also accomplish several objectives, increase efficiency of operations, monitor operations, and help prevent improper activities, all while creating the right control environment.

Too Little Focus on the Control Environment

NASA and WorldCom are examples of the many organizations that have confronted disasters and scandals throughout the years. By examining NASA's Columbia disaster and the WorldCom scandal, it's easy to see the drastic effect a lack of focus on the control environment can have on an organization.

Seven astronauts died when NASA's space shuttle Columbia disintegrated on its descent to Earth in February 2003. In assessing the cause of the accident, the Columbia Accident Investigation Board concluded: "Cultural traits and organizational practices detrimental to safety were allowed to develop, including

- Reliance on past success as a substitute for sound engineering practices, such as testing, to understand why systems were not performing in accordance with requirements.
- Organizational barriers that prevented effective communication of critical safety information and stifled professional differences of opinion.
- Lack of integrated management across program elements.
- The evolution of an informal chain of command and decision-making processes that operated outside the organization's rules."

This analysis focused on the real cause of the Columbia failure — issues that are not typical of the areas on which auditors focus when conducting internal control reviews in an organization. The Columbia Accident Investigation Board concluded that regarding the space shuttle disaster, the control environment at NASA was flawed.

At WorldCom, the accounting problems that occurred resulted in the largest bankruptcy proceeding in United States

history. In any large organization, senior management must work through others to get things done. In WorldCom's case, senior management had to work with the accountants in the accounting department to make the fictitious entries that would result in the appearance of improved financial performance. Toward that end, accounting records were adjusted by making general journal entries that moved line cost expenses to capital accounts.

If an item is to be capitalized, it has to have a useful life beyond a year, the organization must have ownership, and someone should be able to verify its existence. The accountants knew line costs at WorldCom did not have a useful life beyond a year because they really represented lease costs for lines owned by other telecommunication companies. These were simply day-to-day operating expenses.

Several accountants expressed concern to their boss about this transfer, and WorldCom even had an internal accounting policy that prohibited it. The accountants in the accounting department at WorldCom were not the only ones who knew something was wrong. After the general journal was adjusted, it became necessary for the Property Accounting and Capital Reporting Group to adjust its records to reflect the increase in capital assets. Many people in this group knew there was no supporting documentation for these entries and expressed concern but did not go outside their group with questions.

Although the nature of NASA's Columbia disaster and the WorldCom scandal were quite different, the root cause of each — the control environment — was remarkably similar. These events weren't entirely caused by the lack of policies, procedures, or segregation of duties. The failures resulted from a flawed control environment where management chose a certain course of action, including overriding otherwise effective policies and procedures.

Find the Right Controls

If auditors are to be successful in finding the real cause of the problems uncovered in an organization, it's imperative to address all of the control components identified in COSO's Internal Control — Integrated Framework. Auditors must understand the control environment and the information and communication systems that exist in an organization. These systems are much harder to assess than the other three components, but are just as critical in determining the success or failure of an organization. How can auditors help foster communications, encourage ethical conduct, and allow people to work together to prevent or detect errors during the process without onerous control activities that frustrate or discourage people? After all, most people want to do the right thing — auditors need to help them do it.

Former President Ronald Reagan, in his farewell address to the nation in 1989, spoke about the need to develop a more positive relationship with the Soviet Union. He said, “We must keep up our guard, but we also must continue to work together to lessen and eliminate tension and mistrust. ... And we’ll continue to work to make sure that the Soviet Union that eventually emerges from this process is a less threatening one. What it all boils down to is this. I want the new closeness to continue. And it will, as long as we make it clear that we

will continue to act in a certain way as long as they continue to act in a helpful manner. If and when they don’t, at first pull your punches. If they persist, pull the plug. It’s still trust, but verify. It’s still play, but cut the cards. It’s still watch closely. And don’t be afraid to see what you see.”

The same ideas apply to how auditors, regulators, and managers should approach internal controls — create the right environment, create the right controls, and watch organizations flourish.

Definitions Related to Internal Control Over Financial Reporting **Excerpt from the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board’s Auditing Standard No. 2.**

A process designed by, or under the supervision of, the company’s principal executive and principal financial officers, or persons performing similar functions, and effected by the company’s board of directors, management, and other personnel, to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and includes those policies and procedures that:

1. Pertain to the maintenance of records that, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflect the transactions and dispositions of the assets of the company.
2. Provide reasonable assurance that transactions are recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and that receipts and expenditures of the company are being made only in accordance with authorizations of management and directors of the company.
3. Provide reasonable assurance regarding prevention or timely detection of unauthorized acquisition, use, or disposition of the company’s assets that could have a material effect on the financial statements.

For more information on standards and related rules, visit the

Tips for Finding the Right Controls

One effective way to assess the control environment in an organization is to embrace the concepts behind Control Self-assessment (CSA), which is a structured method for evaluating the effectiveness of internal controls. Its goal is to examine and assess whether existing controls provide reasonable assurance that all business objectives will be met. CSA techniques allow management and work teams directly responsible for business objectives to manage risks more effectively.

The CSA questionnaire approach calls for the auditor to serve as a facilitator and administer a questionnaire to the employees involved in the program, function, or activity being audited. The questionnaire asks a series of probing questions about the control environment and the other control components. The responses are summarized and serve as a basis for decisions about future audit tests.

A sample question that could be used in the questionnaire approach is: “Is your manager ethical?” Obviously, this is a sensitive question and auditors provide instruction to the organization’s staff that if they respond in the negative, specific examples must be provided so the information can be verified. Using this approach, the staff has an opportunity to speak out on issues of concern and auditors have an opportunity to verify the information provided.

Figure 1 reflects one of the more effective tools the author has used to summarize the overall responses to the individual questionnaires. Responses above the horizontal line are positive and responses below the line are negative.

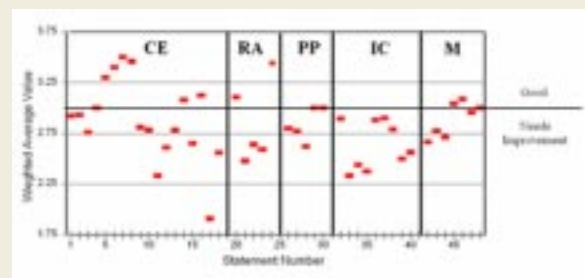


Figure 1: Weighted average distribution

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It's That Time of the Year Again -- Make Sure You Have Your CPEs

by Katya Silver



Are you one of the CGFMs who received their designation in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 or 2004? Then you need to have at least 80 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours earned within the two-year period of January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006.

If short, you can take advantage of the grace period of January 1 - March 31, 2007 to catch up on your CPEs (these hours then cannot be counted towards your next cycle of 2007-2008).

If you have not yet reached your mark, you still have time. What you have to do is remind yourself that every activity might serve a dual purpose. If you are earning a graduate degree, if you are teaching or writing, or if you are earning CPEs for another certification, you might be able to count these CPEs towards your CGFM certification requirement. Review the opportunities available to you for earning CPE hours, and you will realize that there are many ways in which you can maintain your CGFM certification without undue cost or time demands.

Consider:

- Online CPE opportunities, including AGA's "Journal CPE Online" that offers CPE hours for reading *The Journal of Government Financial Management* and taking the relevant quizzes and online courses offered through Micromash and SmartPros, two educational

organizations in partnership with AGA (www.agacgfm.org/education/educationdefault.aspx).

- CPE offered by AGA chapters and state CPA or other government finance officer societies and other organizations.
- Opportunities to earn CPE hours for teaching a relevant course (not to exceed 40 CPE hours in any two-year period), publishing an article or book that contribute directly to CGFM's professional proficiency (up to 20 CPE hours) or taking applicable college courses.

Not all CPEs can count towards the CGFM designation. The hours earned must be in government financial management topics or related technical subjects applicable to government financial management areas. Applicable CPEs would need to maintain or enhance your professional proficiency in government financial management, and you have to keep back-up documentation of the completed CPE for at least three years. This documentation may be requested by AGA if you are selected to be audited; however, CGFMs should not automatically send information on their CPE hours to AGA at the time of renewal.

For more detailed information about earning CPE hours, what topics and subjects can qualify for CPEs and answers to commonly asked CPE questions, please visit www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/maintain/cpe_requirements.aspx. If you have any additional questions, contact AGA's Office of Professional Certification at 800.AGA.7211, ext. 305.

January Charity Fund Raising Event



The "Flowers in January" fundraiser benefiting the Liberty Partnership Program at SUNY Albany was great success thanks to the efforts of Nicole VanHoesen who coordinated and organized the event and all those that accepted orders and purchased flowers. The Chapter raised \$390 to assist Liberty in nurturing and mentoring students academically, personally and socially. If you would like to find out more about the Liberty Partnership Program, please contact Candi Griffin at 442-3885. Thanks again to everyone who contributed!

SPECIAL NOTICE: For much BONUS newsletter content, get the digital version of *Capital Ideas* at the Chapter's Internet website: <http://www.aganycap.org>

Advancing Government Accountability

Surf over to the New York

Capital Chapter's Website

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President's Message

Continued from page 2.

Of course, don't forget about TCTC! The home run of our training events. The line up is set and tickets for opening day are on sale. Sign up early and save! Early bird registration ends on February 16th.

I'd also like to let you know about some membership items. As of December 31, 2006 we have 390 members, including 30 new members. In addition, our membership committee has been busy reaching out to college students to provide them with information regarding the government finance profession—hoping to spark their interest and find the future of our organization. And speaking of members.....

Diana Jones Ritter, CGFM, member of AGA's New York Capital Chapter, has been appointed Commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities by Governor Eliot Spitzer. Congratulations Diana!!!

Jill Flinton, CGFM, Board member and chair of the audit committee of AGA's New York Capital Chapter, gave birth her son, Daniel Jonathon, on December 7. Best wishes Jill.

Congratulations to **Dwight Hadley** who recently received a certificate of achievement for excellence in financial reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. & Canada for his work preparing the annual financial report for the Albany County Airport Authority.

Lastly, I'd like to let you know about a new award that we have established. The Outstanding Achievements in Government Accountability Award recognizes government employees who have demonstrated sustained outstanding leadership and notable contributions to financial management, and to encourage increased interest, growth, development and distinctive leadership in the field of financial management. Please look to your colleagues within your organization or elsewhere and consider nominating someone for this prestigious award. Visit our website for more information.

We hope to see you at an event soon. Please check your inbox for our email announcements and check our web page (www.aganycap.org) often for updated information.



Daniel Jonathon Flinton

Audit Quality

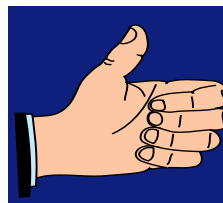
Continued from page 1.

more than 300,000 CPAs, many of whom do not audit public companies. The new organization replaces the AICPA's center for public company audit firms, with 787 member firms, and is open to auditors who handle public company audits, as well as those that don't.

AICPA leaders pushed for the organization, voting in 2005 to create the Public Company Auditors' Forum, comprised of the AICPA, large audit firms and public members. Early plans called for the forum to be independent and autonomous while being affiliated with and funded by the AICPA.

Supporters of the concept figured a new group would be free from past history - and bad blood - with lawmakers and regulators at the Securities and Exchange Commission. Massive corporate accounting scandals ended the AICPA's self-regulatory role and led Congress to create the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board in 2002, charging it with inspecting and disciplining public company accountants.

Looking ahead, Fornelli said the new organization expects to work closely with the SEC and the oversight board, saying: "A lot of their interests and our interests are the same."



Member items

Diana Jones Ritter, CGFM, member of AGA's New York Capital Chapter, has been appointed Commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities by Governor Eliot Spitzer. Congratulations Diana!!!

Congratulations to the Albany County Airport Authority for receiving a certificate of achievement for excellence in financial reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. and Canada for its annual financial report. In addition, **Dwight Hadley**, CFO, also received an award of financial reporting achievement for preparing the report.

Jill Flinton, CGFM, Chapter Board member and chair of the audit committee of AGA's New York Capital Chapter, gave birth to her son, Daniel Jonathon, on December 7, 2006. Best wishes, Jill.

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AGA New York Capital Chapter 2006-2007 Program Events Summary

September 14, 2006	CPE: 2	<i>AGA Audio Conference - Risk Assessments for Performance Auditing</i> KPMG LLP Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
September 19, 2006	CPE: 0	<i>Kick-Off Breakfast - What's Happening in 2006-07?</i> Wolfert's Roost Country Club 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM (full hot breakfast) \$5 for AGA; Free for New Members
September 26, 2006	CPE: 2	<i>Transforming State Government</i> State Museum Theater 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM Free but must pre-register; Registration through ASPA Required
October 11, 2006	CPE: 3	<i>Panel Discussion - NY State Strategic Budget Initiative</i> Empire State Plaza Meeting Room 5 1:30 PM – 4:30 PM \$25 for AGA; \$40 for Others (\$25 for others if agency registers five or more people)
October 19, 2006	CPE: 2	<i>NASACT Audio Conference - SAS 112: Impact on Auditors</i> KPMG LLP Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
November 8, 2006	CPE: 2	<i>AGA Audio Conference - The New Yellow Book</i> KPMG LLP Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
November 21, 2006	CPE: 8	<i>Annual Fraud Seminar</i> Holiday Inn Turf 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM (includes lunch) \$125 for AGA, ACFE, and IIA; \$225 for Others (Save \$25 for prepayment)
December 6, 2006	CPE: 2	<i>AGA Audio Conference - Procurement Cards</i> KPMG LLP Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
December 13, 2006	CPE: 0	<i>Holiday Luncheon</i> Wolfert's Roost Country Club 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM \$10 for AGA, ACFE, IIA and ISACA; \$20 for Others
January 9, 2007	CPE: 0	<i>Spring Certification Panel</i> Wolfert's Roost Country Club 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM Free but must pre-register.
January 24, 2007	CPE: 8	<i>7th Annual Technology Seminar</i> Century House 8:15 AM – 4:15 PM \$75 for AGA, IIA and ISACA; \$125 for Others (Save \$25 for prepayment)
January 30, 2007	CPE: 8	<i>Government Financial Management Course 1</i> Wolfert's Roost Country Club 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM \$195 for AGA; \$225 for Others
February 28, 2007	CPE: 2	<i>AGA Audio Conference - Internal Controls</i> NY State Department of Labor Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
March 12 - 14, 2007	CPE: 21	<i>The Conference That Counts 2007</i> Holiday Inn Turf (Separate Brochure and Registration)
March 28, 2007	CPE: 2	<i>AGA Audio Conference - Procurement Fraud</i> KPMG LLP Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
April 24, 2007	CPE: 3	<i>Model Governance Practices</i> State Museum Theater 1:30 PM – 4:30 PM \$40 for AGA; \$50 for Others (Save \$15 for prepayment)
May 9, 2007	CPE: 2	<i>AGA Audio Conference - Ethics</i> KPMG LLP Offices 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others
June 6, 2007	CPE: 0	<i>Annual Awards Celebration Luncheon</i> Wolfert's Roost Country Club 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM \$10 for AGA; \$20 for Others

Registration: Online or Karen Lydon 286-2622 x100 or registrar@aganycap.org

Identity Fraud Has Dropped Since 2003, Survey Shows

by John Leland, New York Times

The number of Americans who are victims of identity fraud has declined steadily since 2003, according to a new survey sponsored by credit-card and financial services companies. Last year, 3.7 percent of people surveyed said someone had stolen their identity in the previous 12 months, down from 4.7 percent in 2003, according to the report.

Identity Theft Victims

The number of Americans who are victims of identity fraud has dropped since 2003.

Year	Percentage of adults who were victims of identity fraud	Fraud amount in billions
2003	4.7%	\$54
2004	4.3	56
2005	4.0	56
2006	3.7	49

Source: Javelin Strategy & Research

The New York Times

Identity Theft

The study found that the total losses from the crime fell last year to \$49 billion from the 2005 level of \$56 billion. The thieves either used the victims' existing bank or credit card accounts or opened new ones.

The survey, based on telephone interviews with 5,000 adults, was conducted by Javelin Strategy & Research, a data research firm, and was sponsored by Visa, Wells Fargo and CheckFree. The margin of sampling error is below plus or minus one percentage point for the crimes' prevalence.

The findings contradict public perceptions that identity fraud is proliferating out of control, said James Van Dyke, president and founder of

Javelin. "For years identity fraud has been reported as the nation's fastest growing crime, with the assumption that the numbers would keep going up," Mr. Van Dyke said. "We find it's not the case. The trend is going down."

Because the survey relied on people's accounts of whether they had been victims, it does not measure "synthetic identity theft," in which criminals fabricate identities using names, addresses, Social Security numbers and other information that may or may not correspond to real people. A 2005 analysis by ID Analytics, a financial industry security firm, found that synthetic identity theft was more common than "true-name" identity theft.

As in past years, the Javelin survey found that individuals whose identities were stolen bore less than 10 percent of the loss from the crimes.

Young adults, ages 18 to 24, were the most likely to say they were victims, and the least likely to take precautions to prevent identity fraud like shredding documents and using computer firewall protections, the study found. People with high incomes were more likely to say they

had been victims than were people with low incomes.

The survey did not study why the numbers were dropping, but Mr. Van Dyke attributed the declines to both greater consumer awareness and better prevention efforts by banks and credit card companies.

Edmund Mierzewski, consumer program director at the United States Public Interest Research Group, a nonprofit group, said the report underplayed the effects of recent state legislation, which the financial services industry has largely resisted. The protections include requirements that companies notify people whose personal information has been compromised, and laws enabling people to freeze their credit reports.

"Financial companies don't want new regulations," Mr. Mierzewski said. "We think we need new regulations. The reason consumers are paying more attention to identity theft is that many are getting breach notices."

He added, "From our perspective the decline is a good thing, but it's still affecting many millions of Americans. The cost to victims remains very high in terms of lost time and frustration."

Important Announcement

As you may know, the Chapter has been sending email announcements to keep our members informed. It has come to our attention that some email servers are blocking our emails. If you haven't received our emails, please send an email to president@aganycap.org. Also, put the following email address on your safe list: aga_ny@verizon.net.

Please keep us informed of any address or employment changes so we may always keep in touch with you.

Early Careers Center



Do You Know the ABCs of Career Change?

by Deborah Walker, CCMC

Making a career change is one of the toughest job-search challenges. For clarification, “career change” means much more than “job change.” A career change means choosing a completely new profession or industry. A “job change” is simply changing employers within the same industry and profession.

Why do people change careers? The two main reasons are:

- The industry or occupation becomes obsolete (or is outsourced overseas)
- Job dissatisfaction (If you dread going to work on Monday morning, you’re probably in this category.)

What makes a career change so difficult? After all, most job seekers attempting a career change know exactly why they would do well in a new profession or industry. The problem comes down to communication. Most job seekers have difficulty communicating in their resume their ability to excel in a new career. Resumes, by definition, focus on career experience (history), but career changers need employers to see their expertise (current skills) in order to be viewed as a viable candidate.

If you are attempting a career change, it becomes easier when you understand the ABC’s of career change:

- A: Assess
- B: Bridge
- C: Communicate

Assess what you want changed.

Before you can make a successful change, you must decide what needs changing. Is it the duties you perform? Your overbearing boss? Your current geographic location? The industry you work in? The size of company you work for? The level of responsibility you hold? Once you pinpoint your exact source of unhappiness, you’re on your way to making the correct choice for change.

Bridge the gap between what you’ve done and what you want to do.

The key to selling yourself based on your expertise rather than your experience is transferable skills. Transferable skills

work like bridges to help you cross over from one industry to another or one occupation to another.

Transferable skills are those skills you now possess that qualify you as a viable candidate for your career change.

Communicate your ability to excel in your new profession or industry.

Your resume is your front-line communication tool to prospective employers. No matter how well you interview, if your resume doesn’t sell you, there won’t be an opportunity to convince them in person. Use your accomplishments to prove the strength of your transferable skills, and you’ll get interviews faster and with more enthusiasm.

An experienced career coach can help you apply these ABCs to your current resume and your interview skills. Once you practice the ABCs of career change you’ll be on your way to changing your career and changing your life—for the better!

AGA New York Capital Chapter Balance Sheet As of February 7, 2007

Assets	
Checking/Savings	\$33,429.00
Accounts Receivable	645.00
Accounts Receivable	<u>3,649.00</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$37,723.00</u>
Liabilities & Equity	
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$510.00
Due to Other Organizations	<u>8,000.00</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$8,510.00</u>
Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$25,557.00
Net Income	<u>3,656.00</u>
Total Equity	<u>\$29,213.00</u>
Total Liabilities & Equity	<u>\$37,723.00</u>

SEC Votes to Ease Audit Requirements

by Carrie Johnson, Washington Post

Securities regulators unanimously embraced a plan that they said would slash costs and restore common sense to an audit rule attacked as too expensive by business groups and lawmakers.

The Securities and Exchange Commission voted 5 to 0 to instruct corporate managers to focus their reviews on the areas that pose the greatest risk of fraud on financial statements.

Congress required executives and auditors to scrutinize corporate financial controls in the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which was passed after huge frauds at Enron and WorldCom. The rule, which cost businesses millions of dollars more than regulators anticipated, has been a lightning rod almost ever since, becoming what SEC Chairman Christopher Cox called “the single biggest challenge” in the accountability law.

SEC staff members said that under the new proposal, they would urge corporate managers to use their best judgment in evaluating controls, rather than requiring them to scrutinize specific things such as the integrity of executives and the accuracy of petty cash accounts. But, rejecting an approach advocated by some business interests, regulators refused to create special exemptions for small companies. Instead, they said their plan encourages managers to develop tailor-made reviews based on the size and complexity of their businesses.

Corporate managers have criticized outside auditors for performing unnecessary and expensive work to protect themselves from liability and make more money. Accounting firms argue that the high costs were the result of long-deferred maintenance and have since declined. The Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, which oversees the accounting industry, will make companion proposals for accountants.

SEC Commissioner Roel C. Campos, a Democrat, said the agency’s proposal and the forthcoming rule proposal for auditors “will significantly reduce and in many cases wholly eliminate the inefficiencies and excessive costs while retaining all of the good.”

Commissioner Paul S. Atkins, a Republican, said the plan may not be enough to force executives and auditors to focus on the most meaningful and risky aspects of their companies’ finances. But SEC staff members expressed hope that their proposal was flexible enough so they would not need to revisit the issue.

The SEC proposal will be subject to a two-month public-comment period. Regulators hope they can pass a final version by April, in time for companies and auditors to use next year, said John W. White, director of the SEC’s corporation finance division.

Stress at Work: What Keeps Employees Up at Night

AccountingWEB.com

A recent survey reveals disturbing results showing 95 percent of managers feel life is stressful at the office. As a result, stress caused 28 percent to take time off from work. And stress at work is not restricted to managers.

“Stress in the workplace is a major issue for businesses,” Managing Director of SoftSkill EMEA, Kevin Young says of the study. “Helping people to manage stress can have a positive effect on their effectiveness at work and reduce the number of stress-related absences.”

The major causes of managerial stress at work are:

1. Workload: 61.6 percent
2. Deadlines: 50.3 percent
3. Feeling undervalued: 38.9 percent
4. Having to work longer hours than they should: 37.3 percent
5. Having to take on the work of others: 34.1 percent
6. Lack of control over the day: 31.9 percent
7. Targets: 30.3 percent
8. Type of work: 30.3 percent
9. Too many emails: 28.1 percent
10. Changes in organization that effect them or job: 27 percent

Respondents were allowed to choose more than one cause of stress. Interestingly, when asked what keeps them up at night, they don’t give any of these reasons.

“What keeps me up at night (I’m an EA, not a CPA) is worrying about a particular client’s case. I find myself working out solutions to complex cases I had worked on earlier that same day. Some nights what keeps me up is new brochures to gain new clients. And some very rare nights I fear a lawsuit by an angry client: how am I going to placate them and get them back to happy?” Liz Zitzow says. “If I’m very lucky, what keeps me up is inventing some nifty new card-counting scheme for online poker.”

Brenda Richter, CPA from Santa Barbara, Calif., agrees saying, “Sometimes, I worry about my clients and their problems. I think about solutions and wonder if there is anything else I can do for them. Other times I worry about making a minor technical mistake. Between GAAP, FASB, SARS, SOX, IRS code, state tax codes, state licensing, etc., it’s almost like you need a 67 page checklist just to answer the phone correctly.”

States Told to Expect Real ID Draft Regs by Dibya Sarkar, Federal Computer Week

The Homeland Security Department will issue draft regulations to specify how states should implement mandatory federal standards for driver's licenses.

Jonathan Frenkel, director of law enforcement policy at DHS, said the draft regulations will better explain the broad mandates of the Real ID Act of 2005.

Creating the regulations took longer than expected because DHS wanted to get them right the first time, Frenkel said. Officials reached out to several agencies and consulted other interested groups, including the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators; the Information Technology Association of America; and privacy, civil liberties and immigration groups.

Frenkel said DHS tried to make its intentions as clear as possible so states could take steps before regulations are released for comment. States have until May 11, 2008, to meet the federal requirements.

"Those states that have done something are going to be in a much better position to come into compliance," Frenkel said, speaking at a recent conference sponsored by ITAA.

The Real ID Act establishes nationwide security and data standards for driver's licenses and identification cards as a way to verify and authenticate individuals' identities. The new ID cards will include name, date of birth, gender, primary residential address, a digital photograph, physical security features to prevent fraud, and computer-readable technology.

When applying for a license, an applicant must supply an identity document, such as a birth certificate, which state employees must verify and store electronically.

Betty Serian, deputy secretary for safety administration at Pennsylvania's Department of Transportation, said states are at different stages of upgrading their motor vehicle systems, cleaning their databases, creating implementation and transition plans, and improving their business processes.

For example, Serian said Pennsylvania has an \$85 million appropriation to help it meet federal standards, but she didn't know whether that would be enough money.

Bernard Soriano, chief information officer of California's Department of Motor Vehicles, said the state anticipates having an additional 2.5 million customers a year because of the federal mandate and has considered revamping business processes to handle the increase. He said officials are planning other actions, such as retooling Web applications, expanding facilities and deploying new technologies.

State officials generally agree with the intent of the federal law but have complained about its projected costs and time constraints.

"It is flat-out impossible for DMVs to implement the prescriptive requirements of this law by May 2008," Serian said.



IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program

Where: VITA sites throughout the Capital Region

Time: February through April 2007. Varies by location—weekdays, evenings and Saturdays available.

Volunteers are needed to participate in the VITA program, which provides basic income tax assistance to low-income taxpayers. Prior tax preparation experience is helpful but not necessary. Volunteers will be required to demonstrate an ability to prepare basic tax returns by passing an open book certification exam. Prospective volunteers will be provided with a study guide for the exam and other IRS resource publications.

The VITA program offers low-income taxpayers free electronic filing of returns, which are prepared using the TaxWise software package. Training in using the software is provided. If interested in learning more details or to volunteer, please contact Wally Donnelly at wdonnel2@nycap.rr.com or (518) 437-1897.

Lights in the Park

Thanks to the following AGA Chapter members who participated in the Lights in the Park event in December at Albany's Washington Park: Brian Gee, David Malone, Ann Marsh, Roger Mazula, Paula Messac and Jim Nellegar. They shared their holiday spirit and helped a great cause, the Police Athletic League (PAL), which provides activities and programs to children.

CGFM Profile: Second Career Prompts Dave Swindell to Find 'Right' Certification by Christina Camara, AGA Publications Manager

Like many career military officers, Dave Swindell needed to make a big transition after his retirement. Unlike many of his peers, he did not shift to consulting work, contracting for the Department of Defense or maintaining close ties to his Army past.

He made a big break, moving to an area with no military presence and taking on something completely new: a job in local government.

“When you change careers, everything’s open. I considered the private sector, but in the end I was fairly pleased with the ethics and purpose of government. I don’t know if I could work that hard to make someone else money.”

Swindell ended his 22-year military career, and moved from Oklahoma to Pocatello, Idaho, where he has served as the city’s chief financial officer for the past five years. One of his first priorities was to become certified, and the CGFM turned out to be the broad-based governmental accounting certification that he was looking for.

“I was influenced by others who were active in AGA,” Swindell said. “Pocatello is home to Idaho State University and Kitty Pumphrey. Kitty is the Professor of Governmental Accounting and an active AGA pusher - and on my selection committee, I later found out. She got me thinking about the CGFM.”

Swindell said that as a federal employee, he became well schooled in

financial and policy analysis. He also earned a master’s degree in public administration along the way. In the Army, his focus was on setting budget priorities, not the specifics of governmental accounting.

By contrast, one of Swindell’s first hires - CPA Joyce Stroschein - was stronger in accounting techniques and not as experienced in financial analysis. He purchased the self-study guides and got to work. After he passed the first exam, Stroschein also started studying, and ended up earning her certification before her boss did.

“We really studied on our own, but we encouraged each other. I couldn’t help but finish,” he said. “There was a little honor involved.” In addition to her CGFM, Stroschein received a promotion from senior accountant to controller. “She also found the program to be a good refresher of just how everything is connected between accounting, management, leadership and accountability to the public,” Swindell said.

Earning the CGFM from Pocatello was somewhat complicated. To take the exams, Swindell traveled to Ogden (130 miles), Salt Lake City (177 miles) and Boise (240 miles), with his wife in the passenger seat quizzing him on the way to the testing centers. Being an AGA member isn’t simple either, as the Idaho Centennial Chapter meets in Boise, on the other end of the state. Swindell and Stroschein attend AGA’s regional conferences and as many chapter functions as time and distance allow.

Taking a job in local government has been a great experience and a huge growth opportunity, Swindell said. Since entering West Point at age 18, his life had been wrapped up in the Army, a life he understood and knew well. He was comfortable walking the halls of Congress or the Pentagon, but nowhere is the role of government in people’s lives more obvious than in City Hall. Approving a setback for a garage may sound mundane, but it’s pretty important to the resident involved. At the federal level, the direct impact of what you do can be somewhat lost, he said. “Everything a city does is generally important,” he said. “I found the right niche for me.”

The values he learned through his military education-becoming a well-rounded person with awareness of many disciplines-applied to the CGFM. As a big believer in what he calls a “core education,” the CGFM fit into his desire to understand the big picture. Studying for the CGFM Exams gave Swindell a stronger knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings of governmental accounting, describing the origin of certain rules and how they evolved to the point where they are today.

“I think the CGFM distinguishes you amongst your peers,” he said. “I can testify to the value of it.”

AGA's 2006-07 Member-Get-A-Member Campaign *Reach for the Stars*

Reach for the Rising Stars and You Could Be a Star in Nashville!

by Thalia Davis, Chapter Vice President for Membership



Recruit 10 or more members by March 31, 2007 and get placed into a fishbowl drawing for a FREE trip (round-trip airfare and registration to AGA's 2007 Professional Development Conference in Nashville, Tennessee). Recruit 10 members, get one chance at the drawing, recruit 16 members, get seven chances and so on. The more members recruited, the more chances to win.

The membership team is continuously working on recruiting new members.

On Friday, October 27, 2006, Suzanne Trzcinski gave the recruitment presentation to the Rockefeller College (School of the University of Albany). The presentation was given to students (early career) studying for a Masters in Public Administration from the Professional Applications class. The class emphasizes the early development of professional skills, the ability to work in teams, career planning, and an awareness of trade-offs in modern administration. One requirement of the class was to join a professional organization. She shared with the students information about AGA, our local chapter and the CGFM. Many students were interested in joining the AGA.

On November 29, 2007, Karla Schumaker and Thalia Davis visited a Technology and Audit class at Siena College and talked about the benefits of joining AGA. We navigated the website and discussed information about the scholarships and job resume bank for the students. We

On January 31, 2007, Danielle Rancy and Thalia Davis visited the Albany State University Black Alliance (ASUBA) group to discuss the benefits of joining AGA to an audience of about 25-30 students. We handed out flyers for our big presentation on February 1, 2007 where we will serve refreshments and give away two student memberships. To encourage participation in our "How I Got To Be Me" breakfast on February 6, 2007, we will sponsor six students for the breakfast.

Membership Roster - New Members since 10/20/06

Davis Bradford	Kevin W. Smith
Brian Couterminer	Kevin S. Smith
Timothy Egan	Christopher Stephens
Beth Ferracane	Linda Teelon
Estelle Filkins	Duncan Tuninga
Cynthia Green	Jeremy Vet
Marilyn Griffis	Lauren Wainer
Edmund Lasek	Terry Wilber
Thomas Lukacs	Kenneth Ziobrowski
Ed Nadareski	
Glenn Richter	

Membership as of 1/31/07 - 400 members
New members to date: 35 new members

Thank you to the following members who recruited new members during our Reach for the Stars Member-Get-A-Member Recruitment Campaign (as of 12/31/06):

Jim Cox - 1
Thalia Davis - 12
Margaret Donnelly - 1
Jill Flinton - 4
Randall Griffin - 1
Ray Harris - 1
Marcella Junco - 4
Helen Kaczor - 1
Matthew Lindemann - 1
Stanley Lockwood - 1
Robin MacGowan - 1
Ann Marsh - 1
Sheri Pease - 2
Gregory Schreffler - 1
Linda Zinzow - 2

The Paper Trail Isn't Dead, Yet

AccountingWEB.com

The demise of paper has been predicted for decades. Paper, however, is proving more durable, and important, than many imagined, particularly in the wake of history's largest corporate scandals. The 29 million short tons of printing and writing paper consumed in the U.S. during 2006, in fact, is the same amount consumed in 2000, the News Journal reports.

"In this day and age of disaster recovery, technology is still vital for archived data," explains Robert Voelk, CEO of Omtool, a document solutions firm based in Andover, Mass. "But paper isn't going away, it's simply being managed more effectively. The ability to harness data in both the physical and electronic form, a mixed mode of sorts, will be vital as the office evolves."

According to a recent survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, 65 percent of participants reported they could not envision an office or home without paper in five years and 60 percent indicated they would find it more stressful to read a 20-page document on a computer screen than in a hard (printed) copy.

Dr. Gilda Carle, psychotherapist, professor and author, is not surprised.

"People feel more secure when they are dealing with paper as opposed to electronic data. They can touch paper, feel it, and move it where they need it to be. That puts them in control of where there [sic] documents are at all times," Carle said. "People also feel an attachment to paper because it's a tangible item that they can permanently save in their own private place. Sometimes there is peace of mind in being able to hand a colleague a document rather than worry about

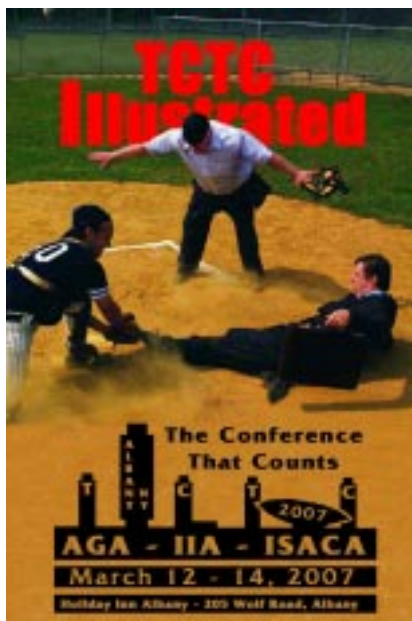
whether it will not be received because of spam filters or email delays. Technology is streamlining the way paper is being used, but we're a long way from eliminating it all together. Feeling the security of the tangible is one of our most primitive needs."

Apparently one of the tangible things more than half of Americans don't need is an individual federal tax return. This year, 53.4 percent of American taxpayers filed electronic tax returns, compared to 3.7 percent in 1990. In addition, more than 12,500 of the largest corporate taxpayers filed their 2005 corporate tax returns electronically. Although large corporate taxpayers, having assets of \$50 million or more and filing at least 250 returns, were required to e-file, most of the more than half a million corporate tax returns filed electronically, were filed voluntarily. The electronic filing requirements will be expanded to include tax year 2006 returns of corporations with assets of \$10 million or more, that file 250 or more returns a year.

"More than 12,500 of the largest corporations have successfully made the transition from paper to electronic returns," said Deborah Nolan, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Large and Mid-Sized Business Division (LMSB), in a prepared statement regarding e-filing by corporations. "This is a significant milestone in the Service's modernization efforts that will pay dividends for years to come."

Accounting firms, like Wausau, Wis.-based Wipfli, are following the lead of the IRS and gradually weaning themselves from reams of paper documents.

"We've become paperless on our audit and accounting side and also on our tax side," Randy Mahoney, partner in charge of Wipfli's Fox Cities office, told the northwestern.com. "And we're currently planning to have a firm-wide document management system. We're really trying to cut back on paper."



Spring Training at TCTC XII

This marks the 12th year that the local chapters of AGA, IIA and ISACA team up to sponsor The Conference That Counts (2007). Spring Training comes to Albany!

Join us on March 12-14, 2007 and come to bat at any of the three educational tracks: Information Technology, Fraud, or Management and Auditing. TCTC Monday features three quality keynote speakers, including former New York Yankee Jim Bouton.

Register now at www.aganycap.org

**Association of
Government Accountants
New York Capital Chapter
Chapter Executive
Committee
October 17, 2006 Meeting
Highlights**

In attendance: Marcella Junco, Mike Abbott, Jim Cox, Jill Flinton, Brian Gee, Raymond Harris, Emily Kunchala, Ann Marsh, Katie Meyer, Kirk Schanzenbach, Suzanne Trzcinski, Sandra Schleicher, Amanda Zibella, and Linda Zinzow.

Action Items

1. Review performance measures included in the operating plans and make sure that they are "measurable"; All Committee Chairs; Overdue
2. Contact OSC Division of Local Government and fix past membership issue; K. Schanzenbach; In-Process
3. Discuss MOU with TCTC Committee; S. Trzcinski; 11/15/06
4. Discuss the frequency of posting financial statements to the website; M. Junco and S. Trzcinski; 11/5/06
5. Send T. Davis any suggestions for replacing J. Jennings as a speaker; All Attendees; 11/5/06
6. E-mail electronic survey for events to M. Junco; K. Schanzenbach; 11/5/06
7. Contact Kelly Lopez and let her know that we are sending out a survey for the Transforming State Gov't event.; K. Schanzenbach; 11/5/06
8. Check availability of having an audio conference at DOT; L. Zinzow; 11/16/06
9. Add wording to the newsletter to tell members to add AGA to their e-mail safe lists; M. Junco; 11/5/06
10. Add wording to the newsletter to tell members to check their mailing addresses; M. Junco; 11/5/06
11. Send T. Davis e-mails that are not going through; A. Marsh; 11/5/06
12. Discuss 30 and 35 year gifts; Awards Committee; 11/5/06

Decisions Made

1. Motion: Accept agenda for the September 19, 2006 meeting
Motion by J. Flinton, Second by A.Zibella, 11 votes in favor, motion passed.
2. Motion: Approve the budget with the following changes: the adjustments recommended by the Budget and Finance Committee (see B&F Committee Budget Adjustments/Questions/Summary document), Increase Membership - Food for an additional event (+\$400), Decrease Governance – Audit Fees based on additional information (-\$200), Decrease Governance – Chapter Development (-\$200), Decrease National Conferences - PDC (-\$1000), Decrease Communication for one less newsletter - Postage (-\$50), and Communications – Printing for one less newsletter (-\$350)

Motion by K. Schanzenbach, Second by M. Abbott, 13 votes in favor, motion passed.

Other Meeting Notes:

Welcome – Discussion of prior action items

National Item - The PDC may want to send another member (besides M. Junco) to the National Leadership Conference in February. The Sectional Leadership Meeting will be April 27 and 28, 2007 and up to eight members can go for free. (J. Cox, K. Schanzenbach, M. Junco, B. Gee, President Elect Designee, Incoming Vice Presidents for Certification, Education and Membership). (Note: If unknown, current VP's may attend)

Budget – The Budget and Finance Committee presented adjustments to the budget noted in the motion above. Scott Ray is a new BFC committee member. The BFC reviewed the financial condition of the chapter for its quarterly presentation. However, since there were very few transactions during the first quarter (July to September), the BFC is not preparing a formal presentation for the quarter.

Membership – 109 suspended and 373 active members. Committee may send a letter out to suspended members with a program to demonstrate the cost savings of membership.

Recent Events – M. Abbott recapped on events:

Transforming State Government – 60 attendees. There was not a formal evaluation, but we will send out via e-mail. See action items.

Strategic Budgeting – 60 attendees. Mostly non-members. Overall positive feedback.

Upcoming Events – Two audio conferences are coming up. The Fraud Seminar will be on November 21, 2006.

CPE Certificates – There was discussion about the availability and controls surrounding electronic signatures for CPE certificates. It was determined that the person doing the CPE certifications will get the president's electronic signature.

Longevity Awards – The Albany Chapter will be following the same policy as national, 5 year increments starting at 20 years. This year we will go back and catch up to make it consistent.

**Association of
Government Accountants
New York Capital Chapter
Officers Meeting
November 16, 2006
Meeting Highlights**

In attendance: Marcella Junco, Jim Cox, Thalia Davis, Jill Flinton, Brian Gee, Randall Griffin, Emily Kunchala, Matt Lindemann, Ann Marsh, Roger Mazula, James Nellegar, Sandra Schleicher, Suzanne Trzcinski, and Amanda Zibella,

Action Items

1. Any CEC members interested in attending the NLC should contact M. Junco; All Committee Members; 12/1/06
2. Follow up on external audit credit card finding for more details; J. Flinton; 1/1/07
3. Send out points and questions for chapter recognition program; B. Gee; 11/17/06
4. Let B. Gee know when operating plans were sent to National; M. Junco; 11/17/06
5. E-mail L. Zinzow regarding the brochures for the Fraud Conference; S. Trzcinski; 11/17/06
6. Pick a Charity for the Holiday Luncheon; M. Junco, A. Marsh, J. Cox; 12/1/06
7. Cancel CEC Meeting for December; M. Junco; 12/1/06

Decisions Made

1. Motion: Accept agenda for the November 16, 2006 meeting
Motion by R.Griffin, Second by R. Mazula, 11 votes in favor, motion passed.

Other Meeting Notes:

Welcome – Discussion of prior action items

National Item - The National Leadership Conference (NLC) is February 12-13, 2007. M. Junco has a scholarship letter to send one member since she is already attending as an employee of KPMG. It was decided that anyone that is interested in attending should e-mail Marcella.

Social Event – Nine tickets were sold as of November 14, 2006.

Strategic Direction of the Bylaws Committee (SDBC) – The committee will have its first meeting on November 27, 2006. A website link will be used as a central collection point for recommendations.

Website – L. Brown will be out of the office, please cc: J. Nellegar on all web maintenance requests. For the last 4-5 years, our chapter has been heavily reliant on our website. It should be considered in the future how much we rely on other resources to keep our website running such as external hardware.

Audit Committee Update – The Audit Committee report was distributed by J. Flinton. They are still looking for a third member for the Audit Committee.

Student Outreach – Early careers resources are on the National website and will be incorporated into our campus visits. My upcoming campus visits are planned.

Chapter Recognition Program – The deadline for second quarter points is November 20, 2006. We have several items out that need to be posted. B. Gee e-mailed J. Jones, and they

are not as concerned with posting periods, so we can post items from the first quarter now if they have not been posted.

Upcoming Events

Fraud Conference – A. Marsh has coordinated the raffle. As of November 16, 2006, 199 people have registered.

P-Cards Audio-conference– A location is still needed for this event.

Association of Government Accountants New York Capital Chapter Officers Meeting January 11, 2006 Meeting Highlights

In attendance: Marcella Junco, Jim Cox, Randall Griffin, Raymond Harris, Matt Lindemann, Ann Marsh, Roger Mazula, James Nelligar, Will Reynolds, Suzanne Trzcinski, Amanda Zibella, and Linda Zinzow.

Action Items

1. Contact M. Junco regarding any social event ideas, especially if a discount is applicable for groups; All Committee Members; On-going
2. The Social Committee should meet and decide on the next social event; The Social Committee; 12/15/07
3. Direct all nominations for the New Outstanding Achievements in Government Accountability Award to J. Cox; All Committee Members; 2/15/07
4. Direct all interest in attending the CGFM Course 1 or suggestions on how to encourage attendance to A. Zibella; All Committee Members; 1/29/07
5. R.Harris will work with A. Zibella to develop the CGFM brochure; R.Harris and A. Zibella; 3/15/07
6. A. Marsh will provide R. Harris with the information about the Valentine's Cookies for Veterans event necessary to obtain press coverage for the event and to encourage donations; A. Marsh and R. Harris; 1/31/07
7. R. Harris will promote TCTC after receiving the post card about the conference; R. Harris
8. Email any contact changes (email addresses/telephone numbers) to R. Mazula; All Committee Members; 1/25/07
9. M. Junco will send an email to all officers requesting information for the newsletter; M. Junco; 1/11/07
10. Go on "Members Only" on the AGA website to update your contact information; All Committee Members; On-going
11. Anyone interested in filling the chapter position of the TCTC liaison next year, please contact L. Zinzow; All Committee Members; On-going
12. S. Trzcinski will send out an email seeking volunteers for the AGA booth at TCTC; S. Trzcinski; 3/14/07
13. Send ideas for the membership survey to K. Schanzenbach; All Committee Members; 2/15/07
14. M. Junco will check on the timing for the survey; M. Junco; 1/31/07
15. S. Trzcinski will fax the bill for the Fraud Seminar to L. Zinzow for review of charges due to additional registrants (\$569). L. Zinzow may take additional actions if the invoice amount was more than the agreed amount; S. Trzcinski and L. Zinzow; 1/31/07
16. S. Trzcinski will send the printing bill to R. Mazula for review since the amount exceeded the budget for Marketing; S. Trzcinski and R. Mazula; 1/31/07
17. S. Ray will find out whether or not AGA can earn interest at a better rate at First Niagara and the possibilities of opening an account on the internet; Scott Ray; 2/15/07
18. M. Junco will send an email with the new date for the February CEC meeting; M. Junco; 1/31/07

Decisions Made

1. Motion: Accept agenda for the January 11, 2007 meeting
Motion by R.Griffin, Second by A. Zibella, 12 votes in favor, motion passed.
2. Motion: Increase the TCTC budget (seed money) by \$1000 because of speaker prepayments
Motion by L. Zinzow, Second by Raymond Harris, 12 votes in favor, motion passed.

Other Meeting Notes:

Welcome – Discussion of prior action items

National Item – Those attending the Sectional Leadership Meeting (SLM) in April in Indianapolis include the Regional positions, the current president, president-elect, president-elect designee, and the incoming VPs of Certification, Education, and Membership (outgoing if incoming is unknown). All but the RVP and RVP-Elect do not have to arrive until noon Friday, April 27, 2007. The SLM will end at 2 PM Saturday, April 28, 2007. There will be more information coming from National soon.

Social Event – The first event was a success with 15 attendees at Triple Espresso. AGA was also recognized and applauded at the show. The Cohoes Music Hall and a Valley Cats game were two suggestions for upcoming events.

New Outstanding Achievements in Government Accountability Award – Received two possible nominations. The deadline is February 15, 2007.

Budget and Finance Update – Overall Finance conditions appear to be in excellent shape with a net profit of \$4,527 currently. Budget estimates for the Chapter Development and Facilities have been exceeded by \$647. A suggestion was made to have bills sent to the coordinator of a given event and have that coordinator approve the invoice amount prior to paying the bill. The budget for Marketing was also exceeded by \$300.

GFM Course 1 – Eight people are currently signed up with possibly one more. The date of the course is January 30, 2007. We will move forward with the event even though we may have a loss.

Operation Plan Review – Available chapter officers discussed their progress in implementation their portion of the plan, as follows:

Marketing – The operational plan is on schedule. R. Harris has advertised all events on the website and in emails, which will be included on the survey to determine whether people prefer receiving these emails or not. AGA is also advertised in five publications. The membership and sponsorship brochures were introduced. There is potential for starting a chapter in Rome, NY.

Certifications – The operational plan is on schedule.

Community Service – The operational plan is on schedule. All events have been well attended to date. Eight people volunteered for Lights in the Park, which is an increase from last year. Flowers to support Liberty Partnership Program and Valentine's Cookies for Veterans are the two upcoming volunteer events.

Communications – The operational plan is on schedule.

Upcoming Educational Events

Technology Conference on January 24, 2007

GFM Course 1 on January 30, 2007

Breakfast with Randolph Treece on "How I Got to be Me" on February 6, 2007

TCTC on March 12-14, 2007

20 Ways to Impress the Boss Be a Better Employee

by Kate Lorenz, CareerBuilder.com Editor

Whether you're vying for a promotion or just want to make a good impression, here are 20 ways to show you're dream team material:

1. Know the mission.

Align yourself with your boss' and company's goals and values. Make your boss' priorities your priorities.

2. Understand how you'll be evaluated.

Know precisely which skills, behaviors and accomplishments you will be judged on and rewarded. Focus on them like a laser.

3. Be dependable.

Do what you say you're going to do. Better yet, under-promise and over-deliver.

4. Project positive energy.

Don't be the one to whine or criticize the boss or company direction. Be a motivator: the person everyone wants to be around.

5. Make your boss look good.

Finish your work on time and with a high level of professionalism. Bring your boss ideas that will help him and the department and offer to take charge and implement them.

6. Own up.

Take responsibility for your mistakes by focusing on what you've learned rather than what you've done wrong. For example, "I think this project could have been better if we'd gotten the group's buy-in early on," or "Next time

I would talk more with the end-users up-front..."

7. Be organized.

Plan your next day before you leave work. Rank your tasks by urgency and importance and make a point of doing at least the top two items on your list.

8. Be punctual.

Arriving for work or meetings on time (even early) shows you're enthusiastic, dependable and able to manage your life effectively.

9. Be resourceful.

Don't run to the boss with every question you have or setback you encounter. Think things through first. If you must report a problem to the boss, develop possible solutions to present.

10. Broaden your horizons.

Take advantage of company-sponsored training courses and volunteer for projects in areas outside your everyday expertise.

11. Stay informed.

Keep abreast of industry and company trends by reading trade journals and attending professional association events.

12. Be trendy.

Stay current with technological, legal and knowledge advances in your area. Upgrade your skills and learn new ones.

13. Be courteous.

Show respect and loyalty to your boss and speak well of her to others. (At the

very least don't bad mouth her to anyone.)

14. Be flexible.

Change is inevitable. Companies need people who can adapt and go with the flow.

15. Take care of your health.

When you're run-down, productivity and ambition suffer — as does your image.

16. Leave your personal life at the door.

Using your co-workers as therapists not only hurts productivity; it damages your credibility and can contaminate your work relationships (even if people seem sympathetic).

17. Go beyond the call of duty.

Take on added challenges, put in extra hours, and never use the phrase, "That's not in my job description."

18. Be a team player.

Show your boss and co-workers you have their best interests at heart by being empathetic and offering to help out when they need it.

19. Take a break now and then.

A clear head and balanced life can give you energy and perspective.

20. Look and act promotable.

Don't let anyone think you work because you have to.