



# Quarterly Newsletter

## Igniting Change Through Diverse Membership

When looking at the success of an organization, it is determined by the achievements, commitment, and diversity of its members. As an organization, it is important to emphasize diversity; to include different backgrounds, education, and skill sets. Diverse perspectives spark innovation, enhance problem-solving, and expand the impact an organization can have on the ever-change work environment and our communities.

When there is a broad range of influences, experiences, and viewpoints within an organization, it is more likely to come up with creative solutions to complex challenges. Different ways of thinking and problem-solving lead to a more dynamic and adaptable organizations. This is why the AGA Charleston SC Chapter is committed to recruiting members from various backgrounds, to enrich our collective knowledge and ensure that we stay ahead in a rapidly changing world.

Every member of the AGA Charleston SC Chapter can contribute to the diversity of the organization by inviting new members, engaging in outreach, and providing mentorship and support to those in and outside of their fields. A great way to begin is by inviting others to experience AGA firsthand, and you can do that at the upcoming Holiday Happy Hour. Each member is encouraged to invite someone, who is not yet involved with AGA, to our next event on Thursday, December 7th. With your help, we hope to expand our network of diverse professionals.

### Upcoming Events

ON TO LIVE: OVERCOMING  
CHALLENGES WITH  
COURAGE, KINDNESS AND  
COMMUNITY: DECEMBER 6

CGFM LIVE, VIRTUAL  
COURSE 1:  
GOVERNMENTAL  
ENVIRONMENT: JANUARY  
18-19

CGFM LIVE, VIRTUAL  
COURSE 1: GOVERNMENTAL  
ACCOUNTING, FINANCIAL  
REPORTING AND  
BUDGETING: FEBRUARY 6-9

PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT TRAINING  
(PDT): FEBRUARY 22

# Message from the President

We are off to a great start with our new program year. We've hosted several events with the most recent being the Adopt-A-Classroom where our Community Service Committee hosted a Thanksgiving lunch for one of the kindergarten classes in the Charleston County School District. A special shoutout to Sonya Willemse, Tonya Walker, Laura Vanadore and Casey Szegi, all members of the Community Service Committee, for volunteering their time to ensure a fun and festive Thanksgiving for the children.

We have also increased our membership by 10% and have welcomed 7 new members to our Chapter.

Our membership drive/holiday happy hour will be on Thursday, December 7, 2023, from 5pm-7pm and we hope to have members join on the spot!

And finally, we are bringing back our Professional Development Training event! The event will be on Thursday, February 22, 2024. We need volunteers to help with the success of this event. Please contact me directly to assist with our Chapter's PDT2024.

I hope everyone has a warm and joyous holiday season! Thank you to every one of you in helping to revitalize our Chapter!

## Community Corner

The Community Service Committee has been off to an encouraging start this year! In September we organized a school supply drive for a local non-profit organization, Neighbors Together, and delivered several bags of supplies for local children and schools.

We have also started a promising partnership with a local school, Mary Ford Early Learning & Family Center, for the 2023-2024 school year. Our AGA Charleston SC Chapter has "adopted" a kindergarten classroom at Mary Ford, and we are thrilled to be supporting the teachers Ms. Hamilton and Ms. Miller. Our involvement with this class will include contributing items for class parties,

supplying snacks and treats, arranging donations for gently used clothing such as coats and shoes for the students, and offering tutoring, mentoring, reading, and other face-to-face support for the students and teachers. We are so excited to be able to partner with this wonderful school that gives back so much in the community!

Wanting to join the fun? We will be asking our AGA Charleston SC Chapter members to help us with donations for the class's Christmas party; stay tuned for more information! If you are interested in playing a role in the Community Service efforts of the AGA Charleston SC Chapter, please reach out to: [WillemseSP@state.gov](mailto:WillemseSP@state.gov).

## Unlock Your Potential: Continued Training and Development with AGA

In a rapidly evolving world where change is the only constant, the importance of continued training and development cannot be overstated. Whether you are a student, a professional, a leader within

government, or simply an individual aiming to thrive in an ever-competitive environment, it is important to remain focused on your personal and professional growth.

AGA offers several avenues for you to pursue your continued training and development. Whether it is local or national, with-in your career field or a new pursuit, in-person or virtual, AGA offers opportunities for everyone.

AGA National offers virtual course and webinars on a variety of topics throughout the year. These topics range from financial management, fraud, and risk management to technology and leadership. A full list of offerings can be found on the AGA website.

AGA also offers national and local Professional Development Trainings (PDT) each year.

The National PDT is a multi-day event where members come together to network and learn from leading professionals within the industry.

Your AGA Charleston SC Chapter will be hosting a local PDT this winter, where you will have the opportunity to hear from several local leaders and area experts.

Be sure to stay connected with your AGA Charleston SC Chapter and all the local and national events by following us on our social media platforms and visiting our website.

[www.agacgfm.org/CharlestonSC](http://www.agacgfm.org/CharlestonSC)

## New Member Spotlight

**Shea  
Hester**



Shea is one of our newest Chapter members. A North Carolina native who transplanted to Charleston in 2009. He graduated from Appalachian State University (Go 'Neers) with a major in Spanish and a minor in General Business. His work experience includes food and beverage, construction, customer service, sales, sales management, project management, publishing, and now, financial management. He and his wife recently welcomed their first child, Daisy Ann, back in May.

He heard about AGA from members of his company, IFAS LLC, and saw it as a great way to expand his network. He is extremely excited about the leadership and growth opportunities available through AGA. He is also looking forward to attending the many webinars and trainings that are offered.

## Holiday Happy Hour

We will be hosting a Holiday Happy Hour on Thursday, December 7th. This is a great opportunity for you to network with your fellow AGA members. If someone you know is interested in joining AGA or just learning more about it, we encourage you to invite them. The event will be held from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at The Royal American, located on Morrison Drive. There will be food, drinks and a raffle for a \$100 gift card.

We will also be collecting nonperishable items for our "Stock the Box" project. You can earn an additional raffle ticket with your donation.

We are asking that everyone RSVP by Tuesday, December 4th. You can do so by visiting our event page,

<https://agaholidayhappyhour.rsvpify.com>.

We look forward to seeing everyone there!