

NEWSLETTER

September 2020



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

In the previous newsletter, Alice Wilson, President-Elect CKY AGA, and Kristen Coffey, Co-Chair of Education CKY AGA, weighed in on the PDT training we received from National AGA. Both of these CEC members highlighted some of the inspirational messages that we were privy to at this virtual conference. I wish that all of you could have attended, because I got an emotional boost from the leadership speakers and would want that for all of you.

Alison Levine spoke at one of the plenary sessions and she was the first team captain of the American Women's Everest Expedition. After nearly two months traversing Mt. Everest, she and her team had to return to base camp when they were only a few hundred feet away from the summit as a result of perilous storms. She and her team were devastated. Upon returning home, her friend told her that she would be back on Everest and she summited eight years later. She did not give up.

The closing session featured Leon Legothetis who traveled throughout the world relying only on the kindness of others, which included procuring food, gas, and housing. You can see his work on Netflix in "The Kindness Dairies." I had seen it prior to seeing him speak and it is a remarkable show. Full disclosure, I do not moonlight for Netflix. His point was to just be kind. We need that now more than ever. He also encouraged us to reach out to him, so I did. I asked him for a quote that I could use to start a campaign to help restaurant workers in our region. True to his word, he responded and said this, "When the tough times come, and they always come, how we show up defines who we are as people. Today may look bleak, but I promise you, that if you keep going things will brighten up. Just. Keep. Going." No truer words have ever been spoken.

We all have to deal with issues that were previously unforeseen, but, it's okay. Just. Keep. Going.

Thank you and be well,

Jared Crawford, Chapter President



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Spotlight

Elizabeth Smith

Assistant Accounting Director-Cash Management

Kentucky Retirement Systems

“Tell us about yourself Liz, it will be easy,” Jared said. Hmph, yeah right Jared.

Hi, I’m Elizabeth (Liz) Smith, and I’m a Kentucky transplant. I was born and raised in South Louisiana. I knew two things about my future when I was a senior in high school: One, I wanted to go to a small liberal arts school; and two, I wanted said school to NOT be in Louisiana. I decided on Centre College in Danville because they offered me more financial aid than any of the other schools I was considering. Even with the financial aid and scholarships that I had lined up, there was still a significant balance due for my tuition. I considered the military as a potential income source, so I spoke to my guidance counselors. “Oh honey, the military is not for you!” they said—gauntlet dropped, challenge accepted!

If you could have seen me in high school, you may have been on my guidance counselors’ side. I had to gain five pounds in order to meet the minimum weight for my height in order to enlist. So in 1986, I was 18 years old, barely 100 lbs, heading off to Ft. Dix, NJ for basic training (scared to death, but I was going to do it). I enlisted in the US Army Reserves for 6 years to help pay for college. Meanwhile, 27 years later, I retired from the Kentucky Army National Guard as a Major. I consider myself fortunate to have never served in a combat zone, but I learned so much about myself in those 27 years. The military taught me so many life skills which I continue to use in my personal and professional life. I can honestly say I am confident that I would not be in the position that I’m in today, were it not for the military.

Fresh out of college with a degree in Economics, “the perfect” finance job was not ready and waiting for me. As it turns out, bartending was in my future. I will tell you that bartending will help improve one’s people skills. Bartending/waiting tables can also be very lucrative. When my mom finally convinced me that benefits (insurance, retirement, a steady paycheck) in a “lower paying” job with the state were better than a career in bartending (a.k.a. underpaid therapist) with an uncertain cash flow, I was in it for the long haul. I took the tests at the Personnel Cabinet and got on the register (with veterans preference). My first interview was at Kentucky Retirement Systems, and Glenn Valley hired me on the spot. I was not prepared for that. I thought that there would be a second interview—I hadn’t worn my best interview outfit. Oh well, it made the perfect “first day of real work” outfit.

I have always known that I wanted to work in accounting. I enjoy reconciliations and making things balance. Sometimes it’s like a puzzle, and always rewarding. I started at KRS processing service purchase payments. I was doing such a great job at it, that the Governor decided that my pay grade deserved not one, but two “poverty level” raises. So my job (that required a bachelor’s degree to even qualify for testing) had to have two increases in order to bring my wage up the poverty level—interesting. Over the years, I worked my way up to my current position, Assistant Accounting Director – Cash Management. I had an opportunity to leave KRS early in my career for more money, but the wise words of my mom came back into play. She knew how much I enjoyed my job and the people that I worked with. She told me that finding a job that you love and love going to every day is worth staying with, (money isn’t everything). I couldn’t agree more. I’ve been at Kentucky Retirement Systems for my entire career with the state (almost 26 years).

I was lucky enough to work closely with Sandy Bush for 15+ years before she retired. She was probably my most influential mentor. She encouraged me to join the AGA many years ago. The AGA continues to offer great guest speakers for our monthly luncheons (virtual now); meaningful training opportunities throughout the year; and, a platform to network and share ideas with peers. I’m proud to be a member and currently the Treasurer of our Central Kentucky AGA Chapter.





Mark Your Calendar

>> UPCOMING EVENTS

UPCOMING MEETING

September 9, 2020

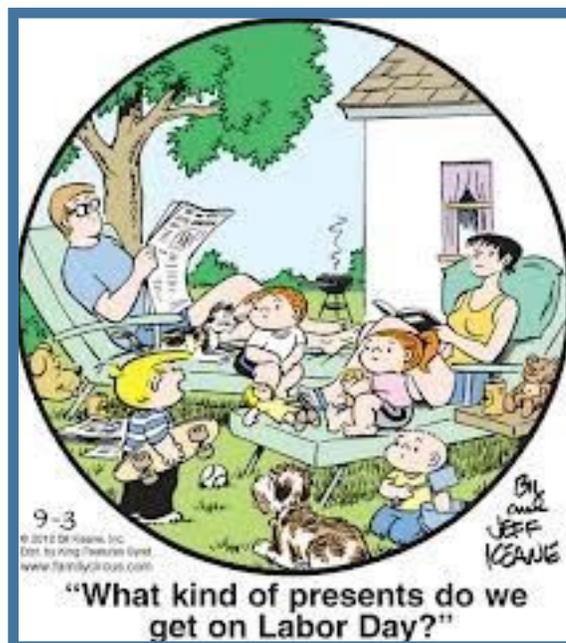
FREE for Members, \$5 for Non-Members
(PayPal invoice)

Upcoming AGA Programs

Date	Speaker	Topic	CPE Hours
September 9, 2020	John Hicks, State Budget Director Commonwealth of Kentucky	State Budget, COVID effects	1

Note: If there's a topic or speaker you'd like, please reach out to the 2019—2020 Education Co-Chairs. Their contact information can be found on the last page of the newsletter.

Excellent presentation! Having worked for nonprofits all of my career, I think questioning and probing not only finances but the quality of services should also be explored. -Evie Barry on John Cheves presentation from August 12th



September Presenter



John Hicks is the State Budget Director for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He was appointed by Governor Andy Beshear in December, 2019.

Previously, he was the Executive Director of the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) in Washington, D.C. Prior to leading NASBO, he served in Kentucky state government for 32 years, including 25 years in Kentucky's Office of State Budget Director. He served as the Deputy State Budget Director in his last ten years.

Hicks graduated from Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky and received his master of public administration degree from the University of Kentucky's Martin School of Public Policy and Administration.

Hicks was NASBO's President from 2011 to 2012 and is the recipient of NASBO's 1987 George A. Bell Service and 2013 Gloria Timmer awards, which each recognize outstanding contributions and service to public budgeting and management in state government.

JOHN HICKS

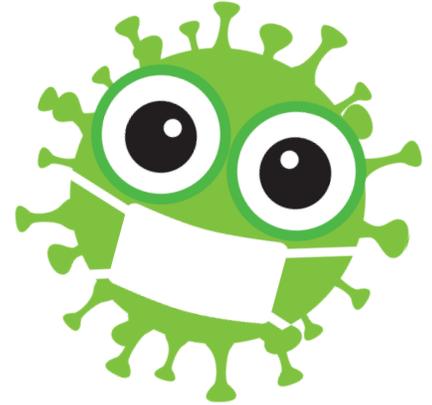
State Budget
Director
Commonwealth of
Kentucky

Personnel/Human Resources - FREE for AGA Members!

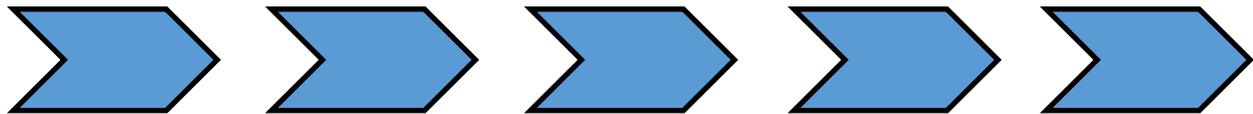
Build a Positive Workplace Environment - Even In a COVID-19 World!

September 2 | 1:00–2:00 PM ET | 1 CPE | FOS: HR

Every organization has its own distinct culture, shaped by its values, priorities, and the people who work there. These factors mix together to form the makeup of a company's everyday environment. What is considered a healthy work environment? It is one where employees feel valued, safe, comfortable, and afforded with the opportunity for growth.



The pandemic has forced the adoption of new ways of working and has impacted employees' levels of fear and uncertainty that can have negative effects on morale, engagement, and productivity.



Communicate and Lead Through Intention, Interaction, and Influence

September 9 | 2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs | 2 PDU's | FOS: PD

The pandemic has brought to light the importance of agile leadership, and the adjustment needed to focus on the most valuable aspect of our business, our people. It is not a matter of WHO leads, but HOW we lead that will impact the sustainable success of our agencies, businesses, and, most importantly, our teams.

Our focus has turned to innovative ways of elevating team communication and engagement, maintaining empathy during adversity, all the while still empowering our teams to continue a path of success while reaching the same milestones.

Internal Control/Improper Payments

October 7 | 2:00–3:50 PM ET | 2 CPEs | FOS: AUDG

As payment integrity programs mature, it is important for agencies to continue improving these programs to find the most effective and efficient methods to identify programs susceptible to significant improper payments and perform improper payment testing. This requires innovative risk assessments and leveraging the latest approaches and technologies to support the selection and testing of programs and adapt to rapid response payment integrity efforts such as emergency management and COVID-19 funding.

**July is a quiet
month for AGA.
There is no
Secretary's
Report available.**



July is a quiet month for AGA. There is no Treasurer's Report available.

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2019–2020 Chapter Executive Committee Members

President:	<u>Jared Crawford</u>
President-elect:	<u>Alice Wilson</u>
Immediate Past President:	<u>Krista Jackson</u>
Treasurer:	<u>Elizabeth Smith</u>
Secretary:	<u>Ann Case</u>
Education Co-Chair:	<u>Eveanna Barry</u>
Education Co-Chair:	<u>Kristen Coffey</u>
Education Co-Chair:	<u>Michelle Sutton</u>
Membership/Attendance:	<u>Catherine Hunt, CGFM</u>
Historian:	<u>Rachel Prestenbach</u>
Newsletter Editor:	<u>Terra Coffey</u>
Co-Webmaster:	<u>Amy Small, CGFM</u>
Co-Webmaster:	<u>Joe McDaniel</u>
Accountability (CCR):	<u>Kristen Hundley</u>
CGFM:	TBD
Young Professionals:	<u>Jetta Collett</u>
Community Service Co-Chair:	<u>Domonique Harris</u>
Community Service Co-Chair:	<u>Phil Nally, CGFM</u>
Chapter Travel Coordinator:	<u>Terra Coffey</u>
National Council of Chapters Representative:	<u>Phil Nally</u>

Are you looking to build your professional networking skills? Do you have a passion for AGA and want to share it with others? If so, contact a current Committee Member!