

## **AGA Nashville Chapter Early Careers Committee Plan for 2011-2012**

**Ellen Dunkin, Chair**

The Early Careers Committee serves as the foundation for future generations of the chapter. Our main purpose is to cultivate members beginning their careers into leaders of AGA. To work towards this goal, this year's Early Careers Committee is going to build upon the great success of the previous work of prior Early Careers Committees as well as establish new programs. Our aims are to reach out to potential early career and student members, provide a welcoming environment for incoming early career and student members, and facilitate the growth of current early careers members.

### **RECRUITMENT OF NEW EARLY CAREER AND STUDENT MEMBERS**

The main source of new early careers members is through "new hires" entering the government workforce. Unfortunately, Tennessee as a whole and state, county, and city governments as well continue to operate in a challenging economic and budgetary environment. Although some individuals have been hired, the early careers membership has shrunk over recent years because there are not as many new employees being hired. We expect the current budgetary environment to continue through the 2011-12 chapter year, and therefore, expect the early career membership to remain at a lower level. Nevertheless, this budgetary challenge allows the Early Careers Committee to reshape its focus and cultivate new areas to recruit early careers members.

First, we will adapt to the current economic environment and use it as an opportunity to educate individuals preparing to enter the workforce about the benefits of working in government accountability. Because the current recession has affected most sectors of the economy, individuals who might not have been aware of the government accountability profession might be more receptive to learning about the public sector.

The Early Careers Committee will seek to be a vital link connecting individuals looking to enter the workforce to government accountability. We will do so by working within the academic communities to raise awareness of AGA and invite individuals to attend the AGA monthly luncheons and early career events. We will highlight that one of the major benefits of becoming a student member of AGA is that many of the decision makers in the government accountability profession are members of AGA and becoming involved in AGA would expose the students to networking opportunities. We believe that establishing this relationship with the student community will help to instill the values of AGA and build a future membership base.

Second, we will continue to offer some of the same incentives offered in previous years.

- The Early Careers Committee will offer a complimentary lunch to visiting potential early career or student members. The Early Careers Committee Chair will make sure to sit with any visiting individuals and/or introduce potential members to members of the chapter.

- The chapter will pay for memberships for two randomly selected early career or student members. Any new early career or student member who joins after July 1, 2011, will be eligible for the drawing. The drawing will be held at the Awards Meeting at the end of the chapter year, but the Early Careers Committee will work to promote it to potential new members throughout the chapter year.
- The Early Careers Committee will work with area colleges and universities to encourage their involvement in the Government Financial Management Case Challenge. The chapter will work with participating teams to award several members one year of free membership in AGA if the members enter a career in government accountability in the Middle Tennessee chapter area.

Third, the Early Careers Committee will seek to increase communication outlets in order to reach out to potential early career members. For example, the Early Careers Committee will continue to maintain its website and Facebook page. Additionally, the Early Careers Committee will reach out to federal agencies in the community and Metropolitan Nashville employees to encourage chapter involvement among their early career members; the federal government remains one of the only sectors still hiring and could be a valuable source for potential members.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF CURRENT EARLY CAREER AND STUDENT MEMBERS**

Although it is important to encourage new membership, the most valuable role that the Early Careers Committee can play in the present and long-term development of the chapter is to nurture the professional development of early career members. To achieve this aim, the Early Careers Committee will provide social, networking, and outreach opportunities for the early career membership.

We hope to partner with other chapter committees to facilitate even more involvement and maintain contact with other early career committees to stay abreast of any innovative ideas that we might employ in our chapter. This collaboration can work to strengthen those groups that the early careers members work with and the members themselves.

The Early Careers Committee will establish a mentorship program for early careers members. The Early Careers Committee will match each current and new early careers member wanting to participate in the process with a mentor. This relationship will be designed to give a person within AGA that the early career member can meet with, learn from his or her experiences, and receive encouragement. Additionally, this program will help connect a long time member with a new member in order to ensure that the institutional history of the chapter is maintained. The goals of this program are to facilitate the professional development of the early career member and to encourage a career-long connection to the chapter.

The Early Careers Committee will continue incentives that previous committees have offered.

- The Early Careers Committee will sponsor a “MVP” program for the early career member that obtains the most chapter participation points by the end of the chapter year.

The Chair of the Early Careers Committee will not be eligible for the MVP award in order to encourage more participation from members not already involved.

- The Early Careers Committee will sponsor two newsletter awards. The newsletter articles submitted by early career members will be judged, and the best two articles will each win a prize. The awards must be given to two different people.
- The Early Careers Committee will encourage leaders and managers, via the newsletter and other contacts, to nominate an early career member for the “Emerging Leader in Government Excellence Award.”
- The Early Careers Committee will sponsor a drawing to pay for the CGFM application of one early career member who has registered for the test during the 2011-12 chapter year.
- The Early Careers Committee will partner with the Awards Committee and the Accountability Outreach Coordinator to work with colleges and universities and the chapter membership to raise awareness of the chapter’s scholarship opportunities.
- The Early Careers Committee will partner with the Education Committee to potentially offer training opportunities targeted at early career members.

In an effort to cultivate more of a community among early career members, the Early Career Committee will host several social events. These events will occur at a variety of times and locations and will include various types of events in order to appeal to the diverse population of early career members. The main social outlet will be frequent lunch outings that will be convenient to most of the early career members working downtown. In addition, the Early Careers Committee will work with the Community Service Committee to encourage early careers members to engage in community service that will further facilitate the social and chapter connection. The Early Careers Committee will communicate each of these opportunities through a welcome letter and online updates.