

Nashville Chapter Secures “Preferred” Status for CGFM Applicants

Job seekers with the CGFM will have an advantage over uncertified competitors if they apply for certain positions in Tennessee’s Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury.

AGA’s Nashville Chapter was instrumental in making the CGFM a “preferred” qualification for three positions in the Office of Management Services within the comptroller’s office: contract review administrator, business administration manager and legislative sourcing oversight manager.

Nashville Chapter President Karen B. Hale, MAOM, CGFM, said she was asked last spring to review job specifications, titles and duties after the retirements of two longtime leaders in the Office of Management Services—including Past AGA National President Charles Harrison, CPA, CGFM. During the reorganization, she proposed the three job specifications include the statement, “A certification as a government finance manager (CGFM) is preferred.” Comptroller of the Treasury Justin P. Wilson approved the change, effective Aug. 1.

The process took a few months, but it was fairly straightforward. Hale’s office is full of AGA supporters and CGFMs, many of whom were involved in the CGFM’s earliest stages, such as Harrison and Past AGA National President Richard Norment, CGFM, CIA. Her director, for example, is Immediate Past Regional Vice President Melinda Parton, CGFM. “We’re fortunate here to have such a rich history,” Hale said. “They laid the groundwork.”

All three positions are now filled with professionals who have passed the CGFM Examinations. Hale, who is the current business administration manager, said she believes that the CGFM certification strengthens an applicant’s knowledge base. “You can’t just walk in off the street and start working and be successful right away,” she said. “These positions involve a lot of on-the-job training, a lot of mentoring, and the more knowledge you bring to the table on the front end, the better.”

Tennessee has had many successes over the years. The state formally recognizes the CGFM designation with a salary increase if that particular department chooses to do so. The comptroller’s office also sponsored legislation two years ago that requires all municipalities in the state to employ a certified municipal finance officer (CMFO) to produce its financial statements. CGFMs are exempt from the educational requirements of the CMFO designation.

Katya Silver, AGA’s director of Professional Certification Administration, applauds the Nashville Chapter for its work. “It is great to see the Nashville chapter’s initiative and hard work pay off. What a wonderful example of AGA leadership and teamwork!”

In fact, Silver encourages other chapters to learn from what’s been accomplished in Tennessee and around the country. AGA recently held a teleconference dedicated to CGFM recognition—successful practices, challenges, ideas and tools.