



May 2020

Training

Check calendar and register on-line.

Employment Opportunities

See openings or add an announcement.

VGFOA Certificate Program

Course content & requirements.

Membership Directory

Contact someone, or update your information online.

VGFOA Board

Meet your Board, see committee assignments and make contact.

Do you have a story to share? Submit an article to the [Editor](#) for a future newsletter.

VGFOA's Strategic Plan

Directions for the future.

Renew Membership

President's Message



JILL UNDERWOOD

Greetings VGFOA Members!

As I write this message, the spring conference in Norfolk should only be a couple of hours away. Instead, finance professionals across the state are navigating a new “normal” with teleworking, social distancing, furloughs, revising budget projections and calculating revenue losses. In March, after the Governor restricted the size of crowds, the VGFOA Board began evaluating options for the spring conference. The possibility of rescheduling was discussed but was deemed not feasible due to the fall conference dates previously set several years ago. Instead of holding two conferences relatively close together, we made the difficult decision to cancel the spring conference.

This pandemic has brought many challenges, but has also opened the door to a new way of doing things. GFOA switched their annual conference from New Orleans to a virtual conference that spans the period of a month, instead of several days, and allows professionals to earn more CPEs. They have also added additional low-cost webinar options. Virginia Tech started hosting a weekly Zoom call with updates on the economy and other pertinent information during this time for local government professionals. The VGFOA listserv has been active, with colleagues reaching out to see what others are doing during this difficult time.

VGFOA
Announcements &
News

See the latest updates and news.

National GFOA on
the Web

Visit now

Join the conversation at:

Linked in or

VGFOA Listserv

Discuss and exchange information with the membership

VGFOA
Committees

Join now

We will get through this challenge and learn as we navigate through it. I am very hopeful that we will be able to gather for the fall conference at the Omni in Richmond on October 14th. Also, beginning in 2021, for a three year period, we will be at the beautiful new [Marriott property in Virginia Beach](#) for our spring conference. I am excited at what this new venue can provide!

Take care and see you all soon!!

HOT OFF THE PRESSES - Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) NEWS -

If you have not heard the GASB Board at their May 2020 voted to postpone, for 18 months, the implementation of certain pronouncements including GASB 87 on Leases. Please visit the GASB website for more information. www.gasb.org/home

VGFOA Certificate Program

The Virginia Government Finance Officers' Association (VGFOA) certification program provides training in many job-related areas and support for those wishing to pursue the national Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) designation. Due to restraints on travel and other social distancing rules as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the VGFOA has made strides to continue to offer courses both via Zoom video-conference technology and through online resources. Please find the schedule below for the upcoming summer months, and refer to the website for additional information on each course and how to register:

Certificate Courses:

[June 4-5, 2020 – Internal Controls, Auditing & Fraud](#)

[July 16-17, 2020 – Operating and Capital Budgeting](#)

[August 6-7, 2020 – Human Resources](#)

[August 13-14, 2020 – Issuing Public Debt](#)

Online Courses:

[Debt Management for Public Finance Officers](#)

[Cash Management and Banking](#)

[Introduction to Governmental Accounting](#)

[Intermediate Governmental Accounting](#)

[Internal Controls, Auditing and Fraud](#)

[Retirement and Benefits, Risk Management, and Procurement](#)

[Lawful Employment](#)

Announcement – Weekly Finance Discussion

As we navigate these challenging financial times, please join the weekly Virginia Local Government Finance discussion webinars on Wednesdays at 9am sponsored by Virginia Tech and hosted by Stephanie Davis. These meetings are an excellent way to collaborate with other finance professionals and each week informative guest speakers provide COVID-19 financial information pertinent to Virginia localities. The meetings are moderated and kept to one hour. To join, please contact Ms. Stephanie Davis at sddavis@vt.edu.

Also, please find the following link to a web page for local government finance resources. This website contains useful information on Virginia economic conditions and minutes from previous meetings. <https://spia.vt.edu/leadership-development/localgovcovid19.html>.

The New Normal in Telecommuting

Since mid-March, most government functions have converted to working from home. As technology has enabled us to continue performing most of our work from home, it has brought new challenges as well as opportunities. Many of us have learned how to hold virtual meeting on various platforms. We have also learned to cope with unfamiliar distractions in our meetings such as dogs barking, children playing and the ever present “**can you hear me**” when meeting technology does not seem to work.

There is a growing realization by managers and employees that teleworking can and does work. As governments transition back to opening our offices to the public, there will be many changes in the work environment. Social distancing will become the “new normal”. Depending on the size and requirements of your office, incorporating teleworking into policies and practices may be the new standard.

As finance professionals, can set clear work expectations, trust employees to do their job, and most importantly, be available to them. We need to find ways to engage employees to work together - frequent shorter meetings help employees connect. Communication is paramount - using various methods – phone calls and virtual meetings can be just as effective as emails.

Setting work boundaries is imperative - just as a person would not always be at their desk at work, we should not expect employees to be available at their home every minute of the day. Have standards on responsive communication of emails and phone calls.

Encourage your staff to create space in their home for work. Promote the creation of daily to-do lists and suggest that your team document what they have accomplished. Frequently encourage your team members to take periodic breaks and to stop working at the end of the normal workday. And, above all remind staff to be casual but that they need to get dressed each day!

Finance Can be Fun

Quality entertainment is getting hard to find as the stay at home period progresses. Did you know there are many financial professionals featured in popular tv movies and books? Below are popular books and movies that feature an accountant-type as main character, superhero or even the villain of a story. Grab your popcorn and read or watch these fictional characters use their accounting skills to improve their life or even catch a criminal.

Novels

1. Aaron Faulk, The Dry novel by Jane Harper – movie in August 2020
2. Special agent Tara Holloway, CPA, Death, Taxes and a French Manicure, by Diane Kelly (2011)
3. Ian Hamilton, The Ava Lee Mysteries (2011-2016)
4. Paul Anthony, Old Accountants Never Die (2013)
5. John Grisham, Skipping Christmas (2001)
6. Paul Bennett (crime thriller author) - Nick Shannon is an accountant who investigates fraud Due Diligence, Collateral Damage, False Profits, and The Money Race

Movies /TV

1. Cher playing Loretta Castorini as the bookkeeper in “Moonstruck”
2. Ben Affleck, “The Accountant”
3. Ben Kingsley playing Itzhak Stern in “Schindler’s List”
4. Gary Oldman playing Bob Cratchit in “A Christmas Carol” (2009)
5. Rick Moranis playing Louis Tully in “Ghostbusters”
6. Kevin Costner playing Eliot Ness who hires Oscar Wallace, the accountant who lands Al Capone in “The Untouchables” – Little known fact...Al Capone practiced accounting in the 1920s
7. Tim Robbins playing a tax accountant and former banker in “The Shawshank Redemption”
8. Kevin James in “Hitch”
9. Linda Ferguson in “Orange is the New Black,” manages the prison’s finances
10. Anna Gunn as accountant Skylar White an accountant helping her husband in his criminal deeds in “Breaking Bad”