



We're thrilled to relaunch the GFOA-PA's newsletter, *The Ledger*, after a brief pause since 2022. Our goal is to bring you timely regional updates, trending articles, and useful tools to help you stay informed and connected. Each edition will feature letters from our President, exciting member spotlights, celebrate new members, board announcements, and highlight upcoming events you won't want to miss.

We're excited to reconnect and continue providing valuable resources to support our work in government finance. Special thanks to the GFOA-PA Communications Committee for revamping *The Ledger* — your creativity and dedication has brought on a new energy to this project, and we couldn't be more grateful.



THE LEDGER PARTICULARS

“After a 3-year hiatus, the Communications Committee is thrilled to welcome you back to The Ledger! We hope that this publication will once again serve as a valuable resource and we look forward to sharing The Ledger with our members!”

*Amanda Jennings, Shaler Township
GFOA-PA Communication Committee Chair*

The Ledger newsletter aligns with the GFOA-PA mission to enhance the education and development of finance professionals in Pennsylvania's governmental entities, while supporting our vision of being the premier organization for financial professionals at all levels of government across the state.

LOOKING BACK: A FAREWELL NOTE FROM OUR PAST PRESIDENT MARK ROMITO

Now that my term as GFOA-PA President has concluded, I want to take a moment to reflect on the past two years and express my gratitude to our members, my fellow board members, and our staff who help keep GFOA-PA moving forward.

Over the past two years, the GFOA-PA leadership team has refocused the strategic plan, transitioned to a new management company, and launched a new online membership platform to better serve our 500+ members. We also achieved record-breaking conference attendance and sponsorships – an incredible testament to the strength and value of our professional community.

Thank you to the GFOA-PA Board of Directors whose leadership, collaboration, and commitment allowed us to tackle these key initiatives aimed at strengthening the organization and ensuring its continued growth. Thank you also to Katie Koon and her staff at Beacon Association Management who took over management of GFOA-PA last January on short notice and had us running at peak power within months.

Thank you to Terri Noll, whose guidance and counsel over the past two years were invaluable to me. I am so excited to have Terri as our new GFOA-PA President. Her leadership, vision, and dedication will build on the momentum she helped to create and will steer GFOA-PA to new heights.



Thank you to the four board members whose terms concluded in 2024 – Bruce Koller, Dan Berty, Marita Kelley, and Michael Lehman. We should all be grateful for the hundreds (likely thousands) of volunteer hours these four members have collectively dedicated to GFOA-PA over their many years of service.

Lastly, I want to thank our entire membership for your trust and support of the Board of Directors. Their dedication to this profession and organization is evident in everything they do, always keeping the needs of our members at the heart of their work.

Serving as your President has been an honor, and I look forward to seeing GFOA-PA continue to thrive in the years ahead.

L8tr dudes.

Mark

REGION UPDATES

East Region

The East Region of GFOA-PA had a dynamic year in 2024, featuring a series of engaging events that brought together professionals from across the region. Below is an update on the key events that took place:

- Summer Networking Picnic at Warwick Brewery – Warwick, PA
- Education Meeting on the Passage of Act 49
- Holiday Gathering at PJ Whelihan's – Blue Bell, PA

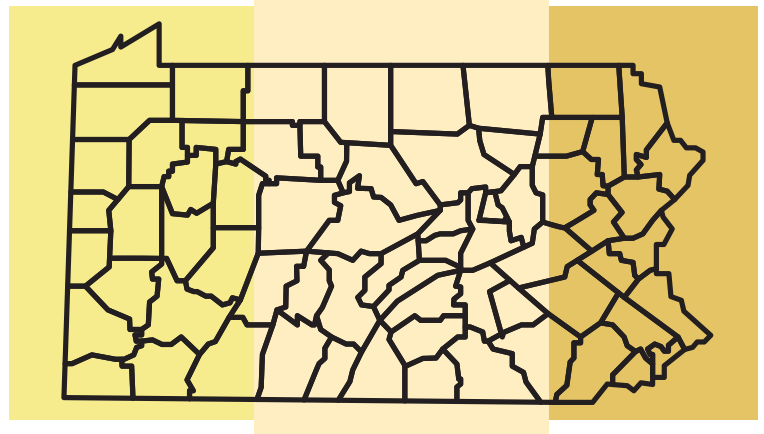
The East Region remains committed to providing valuable educational, networking, and social opportunities for its members. With the success of the 2024 events, the association looks forward to continuing to support the professional development of government finance professionals in the East Region in the years to come.

In 2025, the East Region will host a wide variety of educational meetings—the first one scheduled for March 27 by PFM's Melissa Hughes, titled *Capital Planning Amid Financial Constraints*—as well as a variety of networking events, such as a summer picnic and a holiday gathering.



Central Region

Welcome Todd Garrett as the new Region Chair for the Central Region in 2025. Stay tuned for more information on several events in 2025 including education sessions and a summer mixer!



West Region

The West Region Board is currently planning four events for the upcoming year. The first two are tentatively slated for May and July 2025.

We are also looking for new board members. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Krista Watt, West Region Chair, at kwatt@moontwp.us.



NEW TO GOVERNMENT FINANCE SERIES

Pamela Heard, CPA

Welcome to government finance! If you're transitioning from the private sector, you'll quickly find that public finance operates under a different set of rules, priorities, and constraints. While private finance is driven by profitability, competition, and market performance, public finance is rooted in accountability, transparency, and legal compliance to ensure taxpayer dollars are managed responsibly.

Government finance focuses on funding essential services, maintaining public infrastructure, and supporting economic stability. It operates within a framework of laws, regulations, and budgetary controls designed to serve the public interest. Rather than prioritizing growth and profitability, government finance emphasizes long-term stability, equity, and public trust.

To get started, we'll cover key foundations of government finance—accounting, budgeting, and reporting—as well as touch on other important areas and provide resources to help you learn more. Stay tuned as understanding these core principles will give you the tools to navigate financial responsibilities effectively and ensure compliance with public sector requirements.

Fund Accounting: Government entities operate under a unique financial management system known as fund accounting, which prioritizes accountability. Government organizations must ensure that funds are used for their intended purposes and managed in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

At all levels—federal, state, and local—governments rely on fund accounting to track and control financial resources. This system helps maintain transparency by segregating funds based on their source and intended use, preventing overspending and ensuring that taxpayer dollars are allocated appropriately. Fund accounting allows governments to meet public obligations, support essential services, and demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

Government financial reporting follows standards set by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), which establishes guidelines similar to those of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) in the private sector. Adhering to GASB standards ensures consistency and accountability in how governments report financial data.

Maher Duessel has 35 years of experience in serving Pennsylvania governments.


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NEW TO GOVERNMENT FINANCE (CONT).

Types of Government Funds: Government finances are organized into distinct fund types, each serving a specific purpose:

- **Governmental Funds** – Used for core government activities, including the General Fund, which covers daily operations, and specialized funds such as capital projects or debt service funds.
- **Proprietary Funds** – Used for self-sustaining government services, like water utilities or public transit, that operate similarly to businesses.
- **Fiduciary Funds** – Used to manage resources held in trust for others, such as pension funds or investment pools.

Basis of Accounting: There is no single required basis of accounting for all government financial activities—different funds and reports follow different standards. Government entities use varying accounting methods based on the type of fund and reporting requirements. For example, governmental funds typically follow modified accrual accounting, while proprietary and fiduciary funds use full accrual accounting. Some internal reports or budgets may use cash or modified cash basis accounting. Adhering to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) ensures transparency and consistency across financial reporting.

Understanding these principles is essential for sound financial management. In the next issue, we will explore other key foundations, such as budgeting and reporting.



About Author:

Pamela Heard, CPA, is a part of the East Region of GFOA-PA, representing Wright Township, Luzerne County. As Township Secretary/Treasurer, Pamela oversees municipal operations,

finances, and services to ensure effective governance while balancing fiscal and legal requirements. She leads short- and long-term planning, including capital projects, to support residents, businesses, and visitors. Pamela is currently excited about several ongoing projects, including road paving and park improvements within the Township and completing the READY Appalachia initiative.

An advertisement for Dallas Data Systems, Inc. It features a large blue speech bubble held by two hands, containing the text: "Proudly service hundreds of PA GFOA member for over 25 years!". Below the speech bubble is the Dallas Data Systems logo, which consists of a stylized 'D' and 'S' in a square. To the right of the logo is the text "DALLAS DATA SYSTEMS, Inc." and the tagline "Systems from People Who Know Government". At the bottom, there is a blue button with the text "LEARN MORE >>" and the website address "DallasDataSystems.com" with a hand cursor icon pointing to it.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MEGA BHANDARY, MBA



What region in PA do you represent? GFOA PA East Region, Lower Makefield Township.

Can you share your current role and responsibilities within your organization? Chief Financial Officer. I am responsible for managing day-to-day and long-term financial operation strategies and goals for the township.

When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? An actress!

How did you get started in the field of government finance? I worked in the private sector for 11 years in several different finance roles. I came across a position in the Township that I live in, Middletown Township, applied, and I never turned back. That was my first role in government finance. I am currently in my second role.

What projects or initiatives are you currently working on or are excited about? Right now, I am working on restructuring, rebuilding, and modernizing the townships financials, as well as a strategic planning initiative.

What has been your most significant accomplishment in your career so far? Moving into the role I am currently in, Chief Financial Officer. My expertise, credentials, and prior experience framed the perfect background for this role. I am very excited to be able to lead strategy and long-term financial goals for the township. I am excited to make a difference within the township.

What do you think are the biggest opportunities facing government finance professionals today? Talent gap, expanding scope and responsibilities, technology, and modernization.

What do you appreciate most about being part of this association? Networking and building relationships with those who work in the same environment. It helps navigate the day to day challenges as well as helps to run ideas across different expertise levels.

Do you have any advice for someone new to this field? Is there anything else you'd like to share with fellow members? Don't rush to change things. Really look at everything, build relationships, take things in and then start to make changes and build better efficiencies. Make your team the priority. Teamwork is dreamwork.

What are your hobbies outside of work? Dancing and spending time with my family—Husband, Two sons (6 and 3 ½), Mom, Mother In-law, Two dogs, and two birds.

JOB LISTINGS

Looking for a new opportunity or hiring in government finance? Visit gfoapa.org by clicking the job description to explore job openings across the GFOA-Pa network and to learn how Members and Non-members can post open positions.

Unemployment Compensation Tax Agent - Pittsburgh North Team - Home Headquartered
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Pittsburgh, PA

Accounts Payable / Payroll
Wilkins Township - Turtle Creek, PA

Finance Assistant
Township of Shaler - Glenshaw, PA

Assistant Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Crawford County - Meadville, PA

Audit Specialist 3
Commonwealth of PA - Harrisburg, PA

Full or Part-Time Finance Specialist
EDM - Remote, PA

Fiscal Assistant
Municipality of Murrysville - Murrysville, PA

Accounting Associate part time (Contract position)
Skippack Township - Skippack, PA

Become a Contributor

We want to hear from you! Share your insights, and success stories by submitting an article for inclusion in *The Ledger* newsletter. Help us inform and inspire—submit your piece to Amanda Jennings, ajennings@shaler.org!

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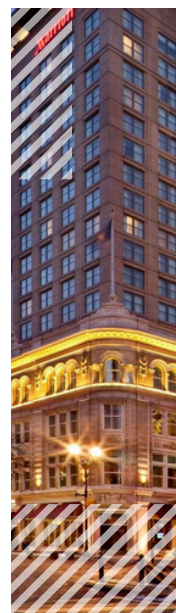
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GFOA-PA APRIL 27-30, 2025 ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE PENNSYLVANIA'S PREMIER FINANCE PROFESSIONAL EVENT

The GFOA-PA Annual Statewide Conference provides finance professionals in Pennsylvania an opportunity to meet with potential business partners in the Exhibit area, connect with peers, and receive up to 20 hours in continuing education.

First-time attendees are welcome—join us this year at the **Lancaster Marriott** and enjoy exciting networking excursions.

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