

OHIO GFOA E-NEWS UPDATE

Government Finance Officers Association

President's Message

Jessica Marquez, Manager-Financial Reporting, OPERS



Dear Members of the Ohio GFOA,

I am deeply honored to assume the role of President of our amazing organization. First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our outgoing President, Bethany Staats, the Board of Trustees, and all committee members for their outstanding leadership and dedication. Their hard work has laid a strong foundation for us to build upon, while we continue to work to meet the challenges of the ever-evolving profession of government finance.

Together, we have the opportunity to create a vibrant community that champions professional growth, collaboration, and excellence in government finance. Our organization has a rich tradition of supporting finance officers at every stage of their careers. Building on this strong foundation, my vision is to continue to offer high quality education and training opportunities. These initiatives will help us navigate the evolving challenges of our field and stay ahead of the curve. [Read more...](#)

Supporting Our Communities, Empowering Local Leaders Through CPIM

Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague



Local government fiscal officers play a critical role across the Buckeye State, as they manage and safeguard public funds and ensure the financial health of their communities. Ongoing education is essential in helping them strengthen financial management and navigate fiscal challenges when they arise.

The Treasurer's office, through its Center for Public Investment Management (CPIM), offers educational programs on topics like investment, cash management, debt issuance, ethics, tax collection, audits, and accounting. These courses, available in-person and online, are regularly updated based on feedback to ensure their relevance and effectiveness. [Read more...](#)

Maximizing Efficiency: The Role of Performance Audits in Public Accountability

Keith Faber, Ohio Auditor of State

Performance audits are a critical tool for public entities to promote transparency, improve operational efficiency, and achieve better



service outcomes. These audits identify opportunities for improvement within public entities. Unlike financial audits, which focus on legality and adherence to accounting principles, performance audits study whether funds are spent wisely and if programs are achieving their intended purpose.

The Auditor of State's Ohio Performance Team (OPT) comprises professionals with diverse expertise, including backgrounds in public administration, economics, information technology, human services, and more. This multidisciplinary approach enables the team to thoroughly examine different aspects of an organization and provide tailored recommendations that address specific challenges. [Read](#)

[more...](#)

Reflections from the Government Finance Officers Association Leadership Academy

Grace Lin, Finance Director, Cleveland Municipal Clerk of Courts



I was thrilled to attend the 2024 Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Leadership Academy and it was a very educational and transformative experience. Held at Charleston, SC, College of Charleston School of Business, this thorough program brought 42 government financial professionals together from across the country to explore best practices, innovative strategies, and leadership skills critical to public finance. [Read more...](#)



GFOA Recognition for Outstanding Public Service

Congratulations to Ohio GFOA member Darlene Wildes, Deputy Auditor, City of Columbus, for GFOAs Recognition for Outstanding Public Service, which honors GFOA members for their dedication to the profession, their colleagues, organizations and communities.

Under Wildes' leadership, Columbus became the largest city in the country to maintain AAA/Aaa/ AAA credit ratings. As City Auditor Megan Kilgore (who nominated her) said, "The citizens of Columbus likely do not know the name Darlene Wildes, but they have most certainly benefited from her 28 years with the city." Darlene has modernized systems, created a Transparency Portal that makes information accessible to the public, and started AI initiatives.



Board Brilliance Hunt: Seeking Candidates for 2025

The Ohio GFOA Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for the following trustee positions: City/Village, County, Library, Non-Governmental, and School.

If you're interested in serving on the board or would like additional information, please contact Bethany Staats, Chair of the 2025 Nominating Committee, at bstatts@newalbanyohio.org.

**Mark Your Calendar for
Ohio GFOA's 38th Annual
Conference and
Membership Meeting!**



38th Annual Conference &
Membership Meeting
September 17-19, 2025 – Columbus, OH

Join us from **September 17-19, 2025**, at the Hilton Columbus at Easton for an event packed with valuable education, training, networking opportunities, and fun-filled entertainment. The Ohio GFOA Board and Education

Committee are working hard to make this year's conference unforgettable!

Room Reservations Now Open!

Take advantage of the special conference rate of **\$199 per night (plus applicable taxes)** for attendees.

- **Reservation Deadline: Thursday, August 28, 2025**
- After this date, rooms and rates will be subject to availability.

Don't miss out—[reserve your room today!](#) We look forward to seeing you there!



2025 Accounting Seminar Training Dates

Introduction to the Finance Office

March 19-20, 2025 – Cleveland

This day-and-a-half seminar offers a foundational overview of public finance operations. Designed for newly elected or appointed officials and public finance office employees, it's also an excellent resource for any public official seeking to

understand the complexities of governmental finance.

Intermediate Governmental Accounting

June 18-19, 2025 – Columbus

This two-day seminar focuses on intermediate-level governmental accounting and financial reporting concepts. It is tailored for state and local government fiscal officers, staff, government auditors, and independent public accountants with some experience or training in preparing, using, and auditing financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Advanced Governmental Accounting

August 6-7, 2025 – Put-in-Bay

Ideal for those with at least three years of experience in governmental accounting or participants of Ohio GFOA's Intermediate Governmental Accounting Seminar, this advanced seminar dives deeper into complex accounting and reporting topics.

Stay Tuned for More Details!

Further information, including registration, will be shared soon via email and on the Ohio GFOA website calendar. Keep an eye out!



2025 Ohio GFOA Scholarships and Awards

Discover opportunities to grow and advance with our diverse scholarship offerings, designed to support continued education and professional development. Celebrate excellence in public finance by nominating a deserving individual for one of our prestigious awards, recognizing their outstanding contributions to the community.

These programs provide not only financial assistance but also a platform to honor the dedication and achievements of Ohio's public finance professionals.

For more details, visit the [Ohio GFOA Scholarships](#) and [Ohio GFOA Awards](#) pages.

Unlock New Possibilities: Explore 2025



Sponsorship Opportunities

Become a valued Ohio GFOA Corporate Sponsor! Partnering with Ohio GFOA enhances your brand's visibility and showcases your leadership in the public finance community. [Learn more...](#)



2025 Membership Renewal Reminder

Your membership plays a key role in advancing our mission to promote excellence in government finance through education, networking, and leadership.

By renewing your membership, you maintain access to valuable resources and reaffirm your commitment to the government finance profession.

If you haven't renewed for 2025 yet, please take a moment to [click here and renew today!](#)



Ohio GFOA LinkedIn Community

Connect with fellow finance professionals, share insights, and stay updated on the latest industry trends and best practice by joining Ohio GFOA's LinkedIn page. Let's learn, grow and make a positive

impact together. [Connect Now!](#)



Wishing You a Happy New Year!

As we step into this new year, we reflect on the successes of the past and look forward to the opportunities ahead. May this year bring you growth, happiness, and prosperity both personally and professionally.

"Shared Knowledge for Effective Government"

By promoting the exchange of information among finance officers of all local governments, Ohio GFOA works to meet the challenges of the ever-evolving profession of government finance and fosters increase cooperation among governments and private financial institutions.

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