

# FISCAL FORUM



Florida Government  
Finance Officers Association



**EDUCATE**  
SHARE KNOWLEDGE.  
BUILD FOUNDATION.



**ELEVATE**  
INSPIRE GROWTH.  
ENCOURAGE POTENTIAL.



**EMPOWER**  
SUPPORT LEADERS.  
STRENGTHEN OUR FUTURE.

## A Message From FGFOA President Kelly Strickland



Hello everyone! My name is Kelly Strickland, and I am honored to serve as the FGFOA President for 2026-27 as well as the Finance Director for the City of Sarasota, Florida. With 35 years dedicated to government finance, my career has been shaped by the powerful influences of education, mentorship, and community.

My journey with FGFOA began back in 1994, when I sought opportunities for learning and growth, hoping to find a place where I could truly belong. What I discovered was far more profound—an organization that not only boosted my confidence but also helped me recognize and develop my strengths. FGFOA introduced me to inspiring role models who guided and encouraged me throughout my professional path.

Over the years, by consistently participating, embracing challenges, and welcoming new opportunities, FGFOA has become the space where I learned to step outside my comfort zone, refine my voice, and evolve into the leader I am today.

As President, my vision is grounded in the theme **Educate. Elevate. Empower.** My priorities include expanding CGFO certifications, strengthening engagement among emerging professionals, and ensuring FGFOA remains modern, relevant, and deeply supportive. I want to emphasize creating a space for new voices and honoring the mentors and programs that helped guide me in my own career trajectory. My message to every member is one of encouragement and possibility: **show up, commit to growth, and let FGFOA continue to be the community where lives and careers are transformed.**

# 2026 Annual Conference Wrap-Up

## Another Outstanding Year!

The FGFOA Annual Conference has come to a successful close, bringing together government finance professionals from across Florida for several days of learning, networking, and professional growth. This year's conference delivered an exceptional experience, highlighted by inspiring keynote speakers (Hoan Do and Nicole Gasparri) who challenged attendees to think differently, lead with purpose, and embrace innovation in an ever-evolving profession.

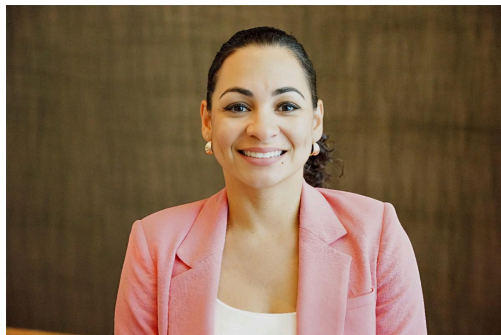
Attendees also enjoyed a memorable Tuesday night networking event, providing a fun and relaxed opportunity to connect with colleagues, strengthen professional relationships, and celebrate the finance community. The event was a favorite among participants and showcased the camaraderie that makes FGFOA so special.

Throughout the conference, members had access to a wide variety of informative and engaging educational sessions covering timely topics in government finance, leadership, technology, budgeting, accounting, and emerging industry trends. The knowledge shared by presenters and the active participation of attendees created valuable learning opportunities for professionals at every stage of their careers.

Thank you to our speakers, sponsors, volunteers, and attendees who contributed to the success of this year's conference. We look forward to building on this momentum and seeing everyone again next year for another outstanding FGFOA Annual Conference!



### Spotlight on Leadership



### **Congratulations to our newest Board Member Kadem Ramirez!!**

Kadem Ramirez serves as Chief Financial Officer for the Village of Wellington and brings more than a decade of experience in governmental finance. She oversees accounting operations and the preparation of the Village's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), while leading initiatives that promote efficiency, transparency, and continuous improvement. A former U.S. Army service member, Kadem credits her military experience with instilling the values of service, integrity, and leadership that continue to guide her career.

Kadem's involvement with FGFOA began as a student at Florida Atlantic University, where a presentation by FGFOA leaders introduced her to the profession and the organization. Those early connections helped launch her local government career and fostered a lasting commitment to professional development and mentorship. Through committee service, chapter involvement, conferences, and leadership opportunities, FGFOA has played a significant role in her growth as a finance professional.

Today, Kadem serves on the FGFOA Board and is passionate about creating opportunities for members to connect, grow, and lead. Her most rewarding FGFOA experience has been serving on the Professional Development Committee, first as a member, then as Chair, and now as Board Liaison. She is especially dedicated to mentorship, leadership development, and university outreach, helping cultivate the next generation of government finance professionals. Outside of work, Kadem enjoys traveling with her husband and two children and appreciates their unwavering support throughout her professional journey.

[CLICK HERE to Learn More About Kadem](#)

## Member Spotlight



## 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award

The **Lifetime Achievement Award** honors a government finance professional who has made a significant and lasting contribution to the citizens of Florida through dedicated service at the local level and who has advanced FGFOA's mission of elevating the government finance profession.

This year, we proudly recognize **Sarah Koser, Retired**, for her decades of exceptional leadership, mentorship, and unwavering commitment to excellence in public finance.

Throughout her distinguished career, Sarah has made a profound impact on government finance professionals across Florida. She was instrumental in the development and launch of FGFOA's first mentoring program, creating valuable opportunities for knowledge-sharing and professional growth. She also played an integral role in the Emerging Leaders Program, helping to cultivate and inspire the next generation of finance leaders. Sarah's enduring contributions, dedication to the profession, and commitment to supporting others leave a lasting legacy that continues to strengthen FGFOA and the communities it serves.

[See All Past Honorees Here](#)



## 2026 CGFO of the Year!!

The FGFOA **Certified Government Finance Officer (CGFO)** designation recognizes the advanced skills and knowledge required of professionals working in Florida's public financial management sector.

Each year, FGFOA honors the individual who achieved the **highest score** on the CGFO exam. We are proud to announce the **2026 CGFO of the Year is Sharee Haynes-Dyer, CGFO**, Budget Manager with City of Davie.

[Learn About the CGFO Program Here](#)

## Events and Deadlines

### It's Time to Renew Your FGFOA Membership

Stay connected, informed, and engaged by renewing your FGFOA and local chapter memberships for the upcoming year. Thanks to FGFOA's continued partnership with local chapters, the renewal process is easier than ever with one streamlined system and flexible membership options.

Membership Options:

- FGFOA State Membership: \$100
- Local Chapter Membership: Varies by Chapter
- Combined FGFOA State and Local Chapter Membership: Conveniently renew both at checkout

**Renew by August 15th** to continue enjoying valuable member benefits, including:

- Discounted registration rates for the Annual Conference and School of Governmental Finance  
Access to more than 12 complimentary webinars each year
- Eligibility to participate in the Beginner Boot Camp and Leadership Class programs
- Professional development opportunities and a statewide network of government finance professionals

Don't miss out on the resources, education, and connections that help support your professional growth.

[Click Here to Renew Your FGFOA Membership Today!](#)

## Committee Corner

## **FGFOA Submits Comments on GASB Infrastructure Assets Exposure Draft**

FGFOA recently submitted a comment letter to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) in response to its proposed Infrastructure Assets standard. FGFOA generally supports the proposal while recommending additional clarification on infrastructure asset definitions, useful-life review requirements, disclosure expectations, and implementation guidance. The comments were developed by the Technical and Legislative Resources Committee and FGFOA Board of Directors, reflecting the Association's continued commitment to advancing practical and effective governmental accounting standards.

[Read the Full Response Here](#)

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## **Florida 2026 Special Legislative Session Update**

The FGFOA Technical and Legislative Committee has prepared an analysis of key actions from the 2026 Special Florida Legislative Sessions, including budget implementing bills, Florida Retirement System contribution rates, property tax changes, temporary sales tax holidays, and a proposed constitutional amendment to expand the homestead exemption.

[Read the Full Legislative Analysis Here](#)

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## **FGFOA Mentoring Program — Applications Now Open!**

Ready to grow your career, strengthen your leadership skills, and build meaningful professional connections? The FGFOA Mentoring Program is kicking off a new session, and now's your chance to join!

For Mentees: Connect with an experienced government finance professional who will help you navigate career goals, offer guidance, and support your path to success. "I gained a support system... I truly appreciated her willingness to help in any way she could."

For Mentors: Make a lasting impact while gaining fresh perspectives and strengthening your own leadership. "Just knowing I made a difference... that meant everything."

Whether you're looking to learn or ready to lead, this program offers an enriching, inspiring experience for all.

[Spots Are Limited - Apply Here!](#)

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## **Virtual Training Opportunities**

### **Upcoming FGFOA Webinars – Mark Your Calendar!**

Stay current and connected with FGFOA's lineup of professional development webinars! Each session is designed to provide practical insights, timely updates, and tools you can apply directly in your daily work. Whether you're looking to strengthen your technical knowledge or expand your leadership skills, there's a webinar for you.

- July 9, 2026 - Arbitrage
- July 23, 2026 – Common Reporting Deficiencies/Findings on IT Controls and Review of SAS 145
- August 20, 2026 – A Case Study of State Employee Theft
- September 17, 2026 – Revisiting Pensions & OPEB Disclosures

Visit the [FGFOA WEBINAR PAGE](#) and click “**Register Now**” or log in to your member portal and go to the “**Events**” tab.

**Don’t miss these valuable learning opportunities!**

## Looking for additional ethics CPE opportunities?

The Florida Institute of CPAs (FICPA) is offering “FICPA Ethics: Protecting the Integrity of the Florida CPAs,” created with the DBPR and approved by the Florida Board of Accountancy. Sessions are available online, in-person, and on-site (live or virtually).

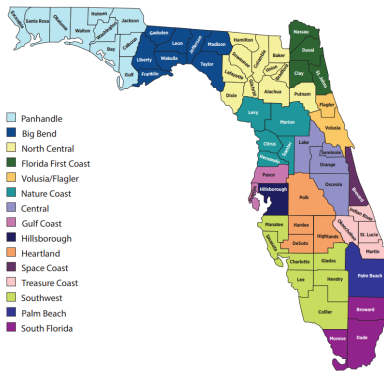
[Learn more and register](#)

## Spotlight on Membership

Do you know someone who goes above and beyond? A mentor, colleague, or chapter leader who deserves to be recognized? **Nominate them for the FGFOA Member Spotlight!** It only takes a few minutes, and your nomination could help highlight the inspiring work of a fellow member.

[CLICK HERE to Nominate a Member](#)

## Local Chapter News



FGFOA’s local chapters are the heartbeat of our organization, offering members valuable opportunities to connect, learn, and grow within their own communities. These events range from professional development sessions and technical trainings to networking socials and community outreach initiatives.

Attending your local chapter events is a great way to stay engaged, expand your professional network, and share ideas with peers who understand the challenges and opportunities of government finance. Be sure to check your [Local Chapter Calendar](#) for upcoming local chapter events and opportunities to engage with your peers.

## Stay Connected with FGFOA!

View all current and past **E-Bulletins** and editions of the **Fiscal Forum Newsletter** on the FGFOA website:

[www.fgfoa.org/e-bulletins](http://www.fgfoa.org/e-bulletins)

Follow the Florida Government Finance Officers Association on social media to get the latest updates, event announcements, and news that matters to government finance professionals.

**Stay informed. Stay engaged. Be part of the FGFOA**



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