



GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION  
**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***GFOA Awards 2020 Scholarships***

(Chicago, Illinois – March 26, 2020) Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has announced the recipients of its 2020 scholarships. GFOA's mission is to advance excellence in government finance to build thriving communities. Awarding of scholarships is an important way GFOA accomplishes its mission.

The recipient of the **\$15,000 Goldberg-Miller Public Finance Scholarship** is **Carmen Avila-Yiptong**. *Funded by the Girard Miller Foundation.*

- **Carmen Avila-Yiptong** is Research and Policy Analyst at the Privy Council Office, Ottawa, where she supports efforts to attract foreign direct investment into Canada. Previously, Carmen worked in the Debt Management Division at the Bank of Canada and provided research and policy assistance for the Bank's role as fiscal agent for the government. She holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Ottawa with Honors in International Economics and Development. Carmen is pursuing a Master of Arts degree in International Economics and Finance from Johns Hopkins University – School of Advanced International Studies.

The recipients of the two awards for the **Frank L. Greathouse Government Accounting Scholarship** are **Mimi Livermore and Dachel Carmelo Payrol Gomez**. Each will receive **\$10,000**. *Funded by the Government Finance Officers Association.*

- **Mimi Livermore** is Finance Director for Adams 12 Five Star Schools in Thornton, Colorado. She has served the District for 15 years, including prior roles as Budget Analyst and Accounting Manager. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Finance from Metropolitan State University of Denver. Mimi is currently pursuing a Master of Professional Accounting degree from Colorado State University-Global Campus and will graduate in November 2020.

- **Dachel Carmelo Payrol Gomez** currently works for Miami-Dade County. He was recently promoted from Accountant II to Budget Administrator at the Transportation Planning Organization department (TPO). He holds a Bachelor's degree from Florida International University (FIU) and graduated in 2018 with Magna Cum Laude honors. He is currently enrolled as a full time student at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) pursuing a Master's degree in the Executive Accounting program and expects to graduate in December 2020. He is also working on attaining a CPA license in the state of Florida.

The recipient of the **\$10,000 Minorities in Government Finance Scholarship** is **Donny Hernandez**. *Funded by the Government Finance Officers Association.*

- **Donny Hernandez** is Budget Analyst with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD), the largest municipal housing development agency in the nation. At HPD, he works on housing issues that affect the city's most disadvantaged communities, such as affordability, quality, and fairness. Before coming to the United States, Donny served as Advisor to the Consejo Superior de la Judicatura (Judicial Branch) in Bogota, Colombia, where he evaluated the social and economic impacts of justice reform. He holds a BS in Public Affairs from Baruch College and a BS in Economics from Javeriana University. Currently, he is an MPA candidate at the Austin W. Marxe School of Public and International Affairs at Baruch College.

The recipients of the four awards for the **Government Finance Professional Development Scholarship** are **Ashley McGowen, Jared Mullane, Emmanuel Buapim, and Ryan Pennington**. Each will receive **\$10,000**. *Funded by the Government Finance Officers Association Scholarship Reserve.*

- **Ashley McGowen** currently works as Accountant/Analyst II for the City of Grand Junction, Colorado. Ashley's duties include analyzing, maintaining, and reviewing accounting records, including reconciliations and financial reporting for two comprehensive annual financial reports. She is confident that her work in the Master of Science in accounting program at Boise State University will challenge and teach her skills necessary to become a better financial professional and leader for her municipality.
- **Jared Mullane** is Town Auditor/Assistant Town Accountant for the Town of Andover, Massachusetts. His responsibilities include performing internal audits, assisting with annual state reporting, cash reconciliations, and providing Munis training to town employees. Jared is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Public Administration from Southern New Hampshire University. He plans to pursue a career as a municipal finance director in Massachusetts.
- **Emmanuel Buapim** has dedicated 10 years of service to New York State government. Currently a Senior Bank Examiner for the New York State Department of Financial Services, he serves as an Examiner-In-Charge overseeing examinations of Foreign Banking Organizations. He holds a Bachelor of Science

degree in Accounting. He is also a Certified Internal Auditor and Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist. Mr. Buapim is pursuing a Master's of Science degree in Enterprise Risk Management from Columbia University in New York.

- **Ryan Pennington** has served as Compliance Manager for the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development since 2012. In May 2020, he will complete a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Kentucky with a graduate certificate in public financial management. He plans to continue a career focused on state or local government financial analysis.

The recipients of the three awards for the ***Jeffrey L. Esser Career Development Scholarship*** are **Jessica Knight, Laura Morin, and Mindy Miller**. Each will receive **\$5,000**. *Funded by the Government Finance Officers Association.*

- **Jessica Knight** is Chief Secretary to the CFO for the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, in Harvey, Louisiana, where she has worked for five years. Her responsibilities include assisting in the preparation of the annual operating budget, audit, and comprehensive annual financial report. She has a Bachelor's degree in Business Management from Southeastern Louisiana University and is currently enrolled in the Pre-CPA program at the University of New Orleans with a goal of completing the required coursework for the CPA exam by the end of 2020.
- **Laura Morin** has been working in government finance for ten years at Eastern Suffolk BOCES school district in Long Island, New York. She will be graduating from SUNY Empire State College in May 2020 with a Bachelor's degree in Business, Management, and Economics with a minor in Accounting. She plans to use her degree to advance her career at BOCES.
- **Mindy Miller** works as Budget Analyst for the City of Pensacola, Florida, and is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration at the University of West Florida. She currently has a degree in Aviation Management. Her educational goal is to both enhance an understanding of the processes in her current position, and to gain knowledge and technical skills for future advancement of her career. Additionally, she participates in several finance organizations, including GFOA and FGFOA.

**For more information about GFOA's scholarships, please contact Gen Carter, Senior Consultant, at [gcarter@gfoa.org](mailto:gcarter@gfoa.org).**

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