

Generational Change

Task Force Report

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Statement from the GFOA President

While state, provincial, and local governments have been busy in recent years addressing an array of issues including a struggling economy, balancing difficult budgets, and meeting new legislative and reporting requirements, an issue has been lurking in the background that has best been described as the “retirement tsunami.” Few governments are ready for the significant knowledge transfer necessary as baby boomers retire from key finance officer positions. Even fewer governments are prepared for the many challenges that must be faced in addressing generational change.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Strategic Plan objectives related to Financial Leadership and Raising Public Awareness of Sound Financial Policy and Practice were drawn upon to initiate a Generational Change Task Force that has formulated a number of recommendations to assist members in meeting generational change issues. The report provides practical and supportive tools that will assist governments in meeting the upcoming challenges, regardless of their state of preparedness at this time.

For many reasons, the issue of generational change in the workplace is an incredibly important topic for me. As you will see throughout this report, evidence shows that there are differences in work style, motivation, technological skills, and personal values among the various generations in the workplace. At times, we struggle as managers with how to relate to and motivate younger generations. We are acutely aware that it’s essential to adapt our methods in order to best reach this talented upcoming generation of public servants and finance officials.

Evidence shows that there are differences in work style, motivation, technological skills, and personal values among the various generations in the workplace.

I have found that one of the most effective ways to impact the younger generation is in the formation of mentoring relationships as part of their ongoing career development plans. Effective mentors will not only impart specific knowledge and expertise, but they can also help to stimulate a passion for public service in those that they spend quality time with. Mentors can also facilitate professional networking by introducing protégés to influential individuals within academic and organizational contexts. I personally am committed to being a mentor and promoting the benefits for both mentors

and those being mentored within my organization. I see it as a way of ensuring the future of my government. I strongly encourage you to do the same.

I would like to thank the members of the Generational Change Task Force who gave their time to talk about this important issue and how we may begin to address the challenges facing us. Their work on this report means that other government agencies will be able to develop programs that will positively impact careers, the workplace, and service to the public. I would also like to thank Shelley Fulla for her role in expertly steering the Task Force and in crafting this report. Best wishes in your future endeavors, Shelley!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PM', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Paul Macklem

GFOA President, 2009 - 2010

About the Generational Change Task Force

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Generational Change Task Force was created in June 2009 in response to GFOA membership recognition of the pressures the profession is facing. The Task Force identified three main issues for consideration: recruiting, retention, and retirements. These three issues were then translated into the six objectives for the Task Force's specific recommendations (Exhibit 1 lists the issues and objectives; Chapter 5 identifies strategies and actions for achieving these objectives). This issues/objectives list is not meant to be an exhaustive discussion of the challenges that public service/finance will face in upcoming years. Rather, it is intended to serve as a primer on the topic and to provide a context for developing recommendations and action steps for local and state government agencies to follow.

The Task Force focused on developing a set of recommendations regarding actions governments can take to address these issues as well as actions that the GFOA can take to assist its governmental members. This report is the culmination of that work.

Task Force activities can be broken down into four phases: research, analysis, review, and report. The research phase began in June 2009 with the first

Exhibit 1

Key Issues and Objectives for Workforce and Generational Change

Issue: Recruiting

- **Objective #1:** Create a larger, broader, and more qualified pool of public service candidates.
- **Objective #2:** Reimagining the recruitment process in government to make government/government finance profession(s) appealing to job seekers.

Issue: Retaining a competent and committed workforce

- **Objective #3:** Managing and motivating a workforce composed of diverse generations, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs.
- **Objective #4:** Addressing inter-generational differences to assure a positive multi-generational work environment.

Issue: Managing the retirement of baby boomers

- **Objective #5:** Understand the potential for retirements and take steps to harness the commitment and experience of retirees as a resource for government.
- **Objective #6:** Prepare public agencies for the future through effective knowledge transfer and mentoring strategies.

meeting of the Task Force at the 2009 GFOA Conference. The Task Force began work on a core set of issues that would guide the project. It was agreed that the research would focus on critical issues and challenges in recruiting and retaining staff in finance offices and strategic issues in generational change, primarily around the issues of management and motivation of a multi-generational workforce. To provide meaningful and applicable recommendations, the Task Force began investigating strategies employed by governments that were already addressing these issues.

The research focused on critical issues and challenges in recruiting and retaining staff in finance offices and strategic issues in generational change.

The second phase, analysis, was initiated in November 2009 with the second meeting of the Task Force. The focus was on providing synthesis and prioritization of the many critical issues and challenges within the identified issue areas as well as identifying local government examples of innovative programs – such as new employee programs, internships, employee development, and succession planning – that address generational change issues. Lastly, the analysis focused on review, evaluation, and identification of portable lessons from successful programs appropriate for other jurisdictions.

Phase three, review, began in March 2010 with the development of draft recommendations for the Task Force to review at its third meeting. The focus of the draft report was to develop recommendations that included concrete examples of how public finance offices can integrate generational change and management programs into their operations. The Task Force provided feedback on this report, which resulted in the final report. This report was approved by the Task Force at its final meeting and presented as part of the 2010 GFOA Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

The GFOA would like to thank Task Force members who so generously gave their time and thoughts to this worthwhile endeavor. Without their guidance, this report would never have been completed. These individuals are:

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Lastly, the GFOA would like to acknowledge the following cities, counties, and individuals who provided information on the topic of generational change and information as part of the case studies. Their insight was invaluable to the compilation of this report.

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Overview of Generational Change

“Generational change” refers to the shifting of our workforce to one that includes four diverse generations, with differences in characteristics, core values, experiences, and working styles. Given the entry of younger generations into a workforce where their careers overlap those of older generations who have delayed retirement due to economic factors, a large number of impending retirements, and encore careers of already-retired professionals, there is a need to quickly learn how to integrate varied perspectives and adapt to this new combined workforce.

However, the Task Force found that although generations are defined by age groupings, generational identity is dependent on individual experiences and there are many individual exceptions to the generalized cohort identity. As the Task Force discovered, it is also common for individuals to identify across multiple generational characteristics. Consequently, this report considers a wide range of issues related to transition in the workforce, not just those narrowly related to age grouping.

Still, there is value in understanding the common differences and distinctions observed between generations, differences that often are the source of issues and challenges that are present in our workplaces. Exhibit 2 presents a synopsis of differences between the generations on a number of dimensions important to identity creation as well as behaviors and values. For the purpose of this report, we reference these generations as grouped and characterized into four classifications (see Exhibit 2): matures, baby boomers, generation X, and generation Y.

In addition to the challenge of creating a workforce that allows for the productive interaction and performance of these varied groups of employees is the challenge of ensuring continuity and consistency of service delivery in the face of potentially high rates of voluntary turnover. With large numbers of government employees eligible to retire, there is a concern that not enough qualified or available workers will be there to replace them. In the next section, we will discuss some of the statistical evidence of workforce challenges.

Workforce Issues for the Public Sector and Public Finance

One of the most pressing issues that government agencies will face in the next 10 years is the aging of their managers. One study found that only 13 percent of today’s local government managers are under 40 while nearly 71 percent were under 40 in the early 1970s (Henderson 2008). The fastest growing segment of the workforce is individuals older than 55; the population of workers between 35 and 44 (prime executive development years) is declining (Calo 2008). The numbers are simple: 80 million baby boomers will be retiring in the next decade, there are only 50 million generation Xers to

Exhibit 2

Summary of Generational Classifications and Differences*

	Matures	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Age Estimations	Born before 1946	Born 1946 – 1964	Born 1965 – 1978	Born 1979 – 1988
Representation in Workforce Today	10%	45%	30%	15%
Characteristics	• Savings is important as a result of the Great Depression. • Generally worked for only one place in their lifetime. • Men made up the workforce and women stayed home to run a household.	• Credit card debt. • Some choosing to lead the second half of their careers with a different focus. • In control of the nation's most important institutions. • Coined the term "workaholic."	• No concept of life without debt. • First to be told they would not be as successful as their parents. • Watched major institutions fail public trust (Watergate, S&L failures). • Viewed as "slackers," "unmotivated," and "irreverent." • Influenced by the rise of the personal computer.	• Born into a tech-savvy world. • Have known great affluence. • Children of baby boomers and the oldest Xers. • Considered a coddled generation. • Large group; rivals baby boomers in size. Members just starting to enter the workforce.
Core Values	Sacrifice and hard work, conformity and respect for authority, delayed reward, and duty before pleasure.	Team orientation, personal gratification, health and wellness, personal growth, youthfulness, work and involvement.	Self reliant, question authority, authority, balance between life and work.	Civic duty, achievement, sociability, and morality. Socially conscious and volunteer-minded, while materialistic.
Notable Individuals and Influences from this Generation	Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, John Glenn	Bill Gates, Bill Clinton, the Beatles, Muhammad Ali, and Oprah Winfrey	Kurt Cobain, Michael Jordan, dot.coms, MTV, sit-coms, entrepreneurs, e-mail, Earth Day, Gulf War	Britney Spears, reality TV, cell phones, blogging, terrorism

	Matures	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Working With	• Complied with established systems, policies, procedures. • "Climb company ladder by working hard." • Workplace is a formal, separate environment from social structures. • Many continue working past retirement.	• Number of hours worked = success with company. • Loyal to their company and value title and rank. • Competitive. • Personal accomplishment is important. • Respond to managers who reward them for their hard work. • Prefer managers who facilitate vs. dictate rules. • Like flexible schedules and hours.	• Consider themselves "free agents" in the workforce. • No expectations of job security. • Need to offer them a work environment that they find hard to leave. • Prefer a workplace that is less hierarchical and formal. • Training is one of their best motivators. • Adept at technology.	• Looking for an opportunity to learn and move about. • Desire leadership from management; "army waiting to be guided." • Free-agent mentality. • Comfortable with change. Used to tackling multiple tasks with equal energy. • Prefer "fun" workplaces. • Managers should use technology to communicate with them. • Need positive reinforcement. • Managers should place them in roles that push their limits.
Workplace Strategies		• Sabbatical options – longevity leave • Increased vacation • Retirement packages • Fitness benefits • Consulting options	• Leadership development • Mentoring • Recognition/incentive • Vacation • Cafeteria benefits plan • Cross training • Education	• Leadership development • Mentoring • Recognition/incentive • Vacation • Cafeteria benefits plan • Cross training • Education
* The table has been adapted from "Two's Company, Three's a Crowd, and Four's a Lot to Manage: Supervising in Today's Intergenerational Workplace," by Dr. Willow Jacobson. The article appeared in <i>Popular Government</i>, Vol. 73, No. 1, Fall 2007.				

fill in the gap (Benest 2005), and there is a large cohort of generation Y workers who may not yet have the experience to fill leadership roles.

All of this comes at a time when public-sector employment has been growing. In 1992 there were 10,531,000 people working for local government. In 2008 there were 14,779,000, representing a 2 percent annual growth rate (Franzel 2009). This compares to a 1 percent growth rate for state government and 1.6 percent growth rate for private employment. This same study found the public-sector workforce to be older than the private-sector equivalent (44 median age for state/local compared to 30 for private), more educated, and with a higher need for knowledge workers. Further, it identified public agencies as having a lower rate of turnover. Although the recent economic downturn may have negatively impacted employment in all sectors, the influence of aforementioned trends could reassert itself as the economy recovers.

Workforce Issues and the Great Recession: Upsides and Downsides?

While clear data are not yet available for the public sector, experiences from the broader economy suggest changes are taking place that might moderate workforce change issues. For example, many private-sector workers are delaying retirement due to declines in the value of their financial assets and homes. Younger workers may now have a new appreciation for the stability associated with public-sector employment. A general reluctance to change jobs on the part of all workers decreases turnover and, hence, recruitment challenges. While it is too early to know the magnitude or duration of these changes, they could moderate some of the challenges described in this report. For example, government agencies might not face the mass exodus of employees they thought they might and younger workers may become easier to recruit as there is less intense competition for workers from private employers.

However, the downside of the Great Recession is that layoffs and other retrenchment tactics may disproportionately impact younger workers – just those that government may need to keep over the long term.

While most of the private sector is reeling from the current economic crisis, impacting job openings and hiring patterns, some public-sector occupations are expected to increase by more than 10 percent between 2006 and 2016 (Franzel 2009). Most notable to this listing are accountants.

While this is just a small sampling of some of the statistics available on aging of the workforce and available talent, they all come together to present the perfect storm of activity: there is a shrinking pool of candidates to replace the retiring baby boomers, which is compounded by the fact that public-sector employment experiences a 2 percent annual growth rate. Further, public-sector accounting needs are growing quickly. Also, one must

consider that public employment has become a decreasingly prestigious occupation over recent decades, making it harder to attract qualified applicants.¹ It is no wonder that state and local governments are feeling the hiring crunch. Now, consider how prepared local governments are to manage the range of human capital changes they face.

Human Resource Management in the Public Sector

Unfortunately, many public-sector agencies are ill-prepared to handle the issues of generations working together, along with the impacts of mass retirements.

The International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA – HR) conducted a survey and found that 60 percent of respondents had no strategic succession plan for human resources at all. For those that did, 97 percent identified recruiting as a primary component of that plan. They found that “failure to have a succession plan in place suggests that the organization approached HR management in a fragmented and reactive fashion” (EquaTerra 2009).

Workforce and succession planning is an area where local/state agencies are weak (Choudhury 2007). The characteristics of smaller governments – their size, political status, administrative capacity, and culture – pose particular challenges to adopting such initiatives (Choudhury 2007). Simply put, they do not have the organizational capacity to manage such tasks or the political will to require it. This same study identified conditions for effective workforce planning initiatives: adequate funding, top management support, and flexible adaptation and clear demonstration of benefits.

While state and local government may be lagging in workforce planning, some emerging approaches to planning in general and recruitment and selection in particular show promise. One study found that procedural changes to enhance government’s attractiveness, adoption of flexible and appealing hiring procedures, faster of applicant screening, validation of entry/examination requirements, institution of worker-friendly personnel policies, and the development of more flexible job descriptions have helped public-sector agencies modernize recruitment processes (Lavigna & Hays, 2004).

Government Employment Appealing to New Workforce

Amid the problems of the hiring gap, the graying of the workforce, and the lack of institutional capacity to support planning initiatives lies some encouraging news: for many students on the verge of entering the workforce, government employment is becoming increasingly attractive. In a 2009 survey of college students, 38 percent were at least fairly interested in pursuing a government job after college. This is up from 26 percent in 2001 (Hart Research Associates 2009.) The same study found that job security and health and retirement benefits are the most appealing aspects of working for government. (To a degree, this contradicts the literature indicating that generation Yers are not concerned with pensions and benefits because they do not anticipate staying with one organization for their entire careers – an understanding that is also contradicted by some of the anecdotal evi-

dence provided by students in interviews.) However, the study also revealed aspects of government employment that concerned the students. These included concerns that personnel decisions will be based on politics instead of merit, too much bureaucracy, and low pay. While the first two may be valid concerns, for public finance, the good news is the public finance sector of government is on a level playing field for compensation (though applicants may not be aware of this!). Trend data shows similar salaries for accountants and auditors in both the private and public sectors for 1992 and 2000 and negative variation of \$13,000 for 2008 (Franzel, *The Public Manager*, 2009). While there is a slight variation in salary, the study also identified higher rates of pension coverage in the public sector which may offset any direct salary variation.

While young people may have concerns about working in government, employers may have concerns of their own. In a survey of 400 employers

Four generations are working concurrently along with a high number of anticipated retirements.

examining the perceptions of basic knowledge and applied skills of new entrants to the workforce, results reported that employers perceived that far too many young people are inadequately prepared to be successful in the workforce (The Conference Board, 2006). The most common deficiencies found were written communications, writing in English, and leadership. These are all important to the current discussion. What happens if public-sector agencies appropriately plan and recruit but do not have the proper training mechanisms in place to ensure the ongoing professional development of the individual?

Evidence of Promising Solutions

We have always had multiple generations in the workforce and tensions have always existed among them. The current workforce change is significant because of the impact of four generations working concurrently along with the high number of anticipated retirements. How does the organization adapt? What can public-sector agencies do in order to respond to this increasing change and minimize the risk to the organization?

In order to answer these questions, the Task Force looked for promising practices in government agencies, and particularly public finance offices across the United States and Canada. We found numerous programs that can serve as examples to others. We will discuss these strategies in action in the next chapter.

Notes

1 From John D. Donahue, *The Warping of Government Work* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008).

Case Studies

GFOA Task Force staff conducted inquiries into public agencies with initiatives focused on issues related to generational change. Initially, these were identified through research and interviews with nonprofits such as the Center for State and Local Government Excellence, IPMA – HR, and AARP. Additionally, an article was placed in the GFOA Newsletter requesting information on programs addressing generational change. With the responses received, staff conducted interviews from August 2009 through March 2010. These open-ended interviews were designed to glean information regarding programs that offered promising practices in the area of generational change. Interviews were supplemented by secondary research from professional and academic literature.

The case studies examined by the Task Force aimed to respond to the challenges articulated above and the priority issues identified for this report. Cases included initiatives in the areas of: workforce/succession planning, internships, fellowships, university partnerships, encore careers, and employee development/training programs. GFOA research indicated that these areas offered promising practices for addressing the issues and objectives presented in Chapter 2. These interviews provide a foundation for the identification of strategies and Task Force recommendations found in Chapter 5. Exhibit 3 shows the jurisdictions examined by type of program.

In this chapter we will discuss some of the highlights and lessons learned from each of these programs. For more detailed information on an individual program, please refer to Appendix 2 for a detailed write-up on the interview.

Recruitment and Hiring Strategies: Internships/Fellowships/University Partnerships

The practice of placing recent graduates or current students into public agencies through internships or fellowships was a common strategy found in the case review. Significant variation was seen in the main goal and implementation aspects of these programs. While one program focused on high school students, others focused on college graduates. Some programs were based out of a particular jurisdiction, some were housed by a nonprofit, and yet another was based out of a university. Program goals varied as well: some programs focused on recruitment for a specific agency, while others were concerned simply with promoting public service in general. Still others attempted to assist governments in their succession planning initiatives. Though the specific outcome of the programs varied, these programs consistently were seen as promising mechanisms to recruit young workers into public service.

Although there was variation among the programs, a number of promising practices and lessons were learned. These are summarized below.

1. Goal clarification is essential. Organizations should think through their goals and objectives before pursuing an internship/fellowship/university partnership program. While internship and fellowship programs have been very successful, the goals and objectives vary from organization to organization and among their target audience. It is important to consider the focus and need of the organization before establishing the program, allowing for more tailoring and clarity in operations and marketing. For example, if an organization is looking to address near-term hiring needs, a high school internship may not be the right solution. Similarly, many fellowships are meant to be temporary positions that give young workers exposure to different work relationships. Often, students participating in these programs will move on to graduate school. One of the respondents working with a fellowship program identified this as a major shift in their thinking. Initially, staff had hoped that participation in this program would elicit staff willing to work with the organization in the long term. When this did not occur, staff had to reassess recruitment strategies.

Exhibit 3 Research Subjects by Type of Initiative

Type of Initiative	Jurisdiction
Internships, Fellowships, and University Partnerships	1. City Hall Fellows Program (San Francisco, Houston, New Orleans) 2. City of Auburn Internship Program (Police, Fire, and Finance) 3. City/County of San Francisco 4. Chicago Summer Business Institute 5. Northern Illinois University 6. Local Government Management Association of British Columbia
Succession Planning	1. City of Palo Alto, CA 2. Montgomery County, MD 3. City/County of San Francisco, CA 4. Clackamas County, OR 5. AARP 6. Henrico County, VA 7. James City County, VA
Encore Careers	1. Civic Ventures
Leadership and Employee Development Programs	1. Interconnect 2. Cal-ICMS Coaching Program 3. City University (San Francisco) 4. Clackamas County, OR

High school internships or fellowships, if used properly, provide helpful insight. For instance, the City Hall Fellows program in Houston, Texas, used high school fellows to make recommendations on how the city could improve the hiring process in order to garner interest in public service from younger workers.

2. Collaborate to enhance your recruitment network. Long term partnerships with universities have proven to be a successful strategy for recruiting younger workers or to satisfy short term organizational needs. When partnering with a specialty program such as Masters in Public Administration, students are generally at the pinnacle of their education and are likely ready to enter the workforce. University internships, work study programs, and capstone projects provide government agencies with the ability to tap into recent academic research, local talent, and potentially, supervised activities of the students. Also, faculty or program staff are important sources of information for graduate students looking for permanent employment. Consequently, governments can establish standing recruitment mechanisms through relationships with academic institutions.

Typically, training focuses on issues like how to navigate through multiple departments and how to work with labor agreements.

3. Training is key to success. The most successful internship programs include a training or professional/leadership development component. Each of the programs that we examined had an educational program coordinated with the internship/fellowship that provided the students with the guidance to be successful in the workforce. Typically, this training focused on issues like how to navigate through the multiple departments, how to work with labor agreements, etc. The training also can address issues relating to how younger workers need to behave in the workplace (e.g., timeliness in reporting to work, dress code, interpersonal relations, culture, etc.). The reserved training/professional development time provided an excellent opportunity to work with new entrants on workplace expectations and generational differences. At least one program made it a program objective to have a baby boomer in charge of the educational component to provide for mentoring as well as integration of older workers into forward-thinking programs. Those governments considering an internship program may also need to orient supervisors on how to work with interns.

4. Mentorship is a meaningful component. Many of the programs have established mentors in the program. Generation Y workers desire some guidance from their managers and supervisors. Mentoring provides an excellent opportunity to deal with on-boarding issues as well as personal development. Further, pairing individuals from different generations can lead to a greater understanding of one another and a more harmonious work environment. In addition to the mentoring of the younger worker, this two-way or reverse mentoring can assist and develop current workers. Reverse mentoring on technology, for example, has been successful.

5. Consider all important players in the organization. Some programs may require planning with union organizations, particularly if you are looking to gain long term employees. An excellent example of this is the 1649 Accounting program at the City/County of San Francisco. Here, the county was looking to standardize and raise the bar for accountancy across their 66 departments. It worked with the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, Local 21, AFL-CIO, the bargaining unit representing the classifications in the Accounting Series, to get their endorsement of the program. This was a temporary, 18-month position. Upon “graduation,” interns would be placed on the eligible civil service list. This program boasts a 97 percent success rate and program staff credits a portion of the success to its ability to work with the AFL-CIO.

Workforce/Succession Planning

As discussed in earlier in this report, workforce/succession planning is uncommon among small and mid-sized jurisdictions. One of the reasons is that many organizations do not have the capacity for it or have not made it a top priority. Many of the organizations that we spoke with on this topic are larger jurisdictions. However, there are many lessons that can be taken away from these programs for organizations of all sizes. Though organizational size can be a limiting factor, it should not be an excuse to avoid taking action.

1. Use existing tools. There are tools available that can help in determining organizational need and risk. AARP has developed a free, confidential workforce assessment tool to help organizations determine current and future workforce needs.¹ It is a resource for HR managers to assess how retiring workers will affect their organization, address skill shortage challenges due to staff attrition, create a work environment that attracts qualified workers of all ages, manage a multi-generational workforce, and build an employer brand that attracts and retains top talent. Assuming you can compile the data needed to perform the assessment, it takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. A customized summary report is provided based upon your responses. To date 1,700 public and private organizations have used this tool.

Research shows that organizations with an integrated approach to succession management have higher retention rates, increased employee morale, and an environment that stimulates innovation and organizational change.

2. Integrate your efforts. A succession plan should be the product of a broader organizational response to managing employee turnover. Research shows that organizations with an integrated, rather than “just-in-time,” approach to succession management experience higher retention rates, increased employee morale, and an environment that stimulates innovation and organizational change. Four key components of an integrated succession management approach include: workforce planning, succession planning, knowledge management practices, and recruitment and retention practices (CPS Human Resources 2005).

3. Invest in leadership development. Leadership development needs to be a component of any successful succession planning initiative. Those interviewed expressed difficulties with the long-term stability of the employee in the absence of formal on-boarding activities. Many organizations will focus more on recruiting the new employee and less on orienting the person to the position and the ongoing development of the employee. When leadership development occurs, the employee has proven to be happier in the position and satisfied with the organization. The organization then benefits from developing a leadership pool for other positions.

Personal professional development benefits the organization over the long term by helping employees gain the skills they need to assume increased responsibilities.

4. Integrate personal development. Personal professional development activities need to be a key part of the succession planning effort. Personal development is different from succession planning; an individual's personal development goals may conflict with succession planning. However, personal professional development benefits the organization over the long term by helping employees gain the skills they need to assume increased responsibilities.

5. Formalize your plan. A formal, written succession plan will provide a framework for succession initiatives. Without a formal plan, workforce/succession planning tends to take place in a haphazard fashion. A formal plan identifies risks and strategies, thereby providing a guiding framework for specific succession initiatives, including how employees are eligible to participate and what being part of the succession plan means. Succession plan initiatives can generate a lot of fear or rumors. Plans that have been thoughtfully articulated and communicated to the organization are more likely to be successful. Additionally, formalization of plans indicates organization and leadership commitment to the program, which is critical for success and for sustaining the program across political and leadership transitions.

6. Do not overlook knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer is a critical component of a successful succession. Budgeting for overlap of the tenure of a retiring staff person and their successor provides the opportunity for the incumbent to share their job experience. One effective strategy is to develop a flexible budget line for contractual or temporary employees. This can be shared by the entire organization so that when one employee retires, that employee can act as a temporary consultant in order to facilitate knowledge transfer.

7. Think more broadly about diversity. Make sure diversity training covers diversity in age groups and work styles. Diversity training is an increasingly common feature of the modern workplace. This trend can be expanded upon to include training in working with those of different generations, management approaches, and working styles.

Encore Careers

A relatively recent phenomenon, “encore careers” focus on older workers in the second half of their careers. Baby boomers in retirement are often more financially secure, allowing them even greater focus on the non-monetary benefits of work. These careers combine personal fulfillment, social impact, and continued income, enabling people to put their passion to work for the greater good. One study has found that more than five million people aged 44 to 70 have begun encore careers. Of those that are not already in encore careers, 50 percent say they would like to pursue them in fields such as education, health care, government, and the nonprofit sector (MetLife Foundation 2008). Civic Ventures is a mission-driven organization that is focused on helping people “define the second half of adult life as a time of individual and social renewal” through various programs, with encore careers chief among them. Civic Venture’s research indicates that little is known about what works best for hiring older individuals into government jobs, but suggests the following for making encore careers a possibility in government.²

Encore careers combine personal fulfillment, social impact, and continued income, enabling people to put their passion to work for the greater good.

- 1. Offer flexible work arrangements. While many individuals are potentially interested in encore careers, they may not be willing or able to maintain a traditional full time working schedule.** Organizations are experimenting with what this might look like. Options such as part-time work, job-sharing, and flexible schedules and flexible-place arrangements are providing mechanisms to both meet the needs of the organization and employees.
- 2. Recognize potentially diverse reactions. Consider how existing employees will react to encore workers.** For example, how readily will encore workers be accepted? If encore workers are seen as potential threats to the career prospects of younger workers (i.e., outsiders who take on the most desirable responsibilities), then their presence could become counterproductive to addressing generational change issues. At the same time, organization leaders may need to let existing employees know that the experiences of encore workers are potentially valuable and that the organization may have to work harder to assimilate the new ideas encore workers can bring in. It is also important to clarify the encore employee’s role, which may be different than the role held previously. For instance, a former manager may now fulfill a support role. Distinguishing the difference is important for staff collaboration.
- 3. Orientation is still a must. Provide mentoring and orientation programs for encore workers.** Just like other employees, encore workers will need to learn the ropes of the organization. For workers who have spent their careers in the private sector, a larger adjustment may be required. Part of this training should include acknowledging that diversity now may differ from their pre-

vious work experience. Further, they may need assistance adjusting to being managed by a younger person.

4. Encore workers must be attracted to government. Find ways to recruit encore workers. Possibilities include developing a fellowship programs at higher levels of government for encore workers, forming relationships with the private organizations that have the type of talent that might be most appropriate for an encore career in government, and re-examining compensation policies that discourage the re-hiring of retired government workers.

Leadership/Professional Development Programs

Leadership/professional development programs provide an employee with the skills to further their careers and stay in the organization. These programs may be part of a succession plan but also should and often are provided even in the absence of a plan. The following is a list of trends and promising practices.

Organizations must consider how they are going to integrate all employees into their work environments.

1. Do not limit who is included. New are not always right out of college; development programs should address this. When we talk about new employees, often it is assumed that the employees are recent college graduates or younger workers. This is not always the case, particularly with the rise of encore careers. Organizations must consider how they are going to integrate all employees into their work environments. While a mixer or brown bag lunch hour may bring all employees together for networking, training opportunities that focus on how to adapt to the work environment may target generation Y (more often recently graduated from college) more than baby boomers (potentially pursuing an encore career). Organizations need to be careful not to alienate older “new” employees and provide them with opportunities that speak to their stage in life. This could be done by encouraging both younger and older “new” employees to explain what brought them into public service, such as their education, background, or previous professional and/or personal experiences.

2. Protect training from budget cuts when at all possible. Find ways to preserve leadership/professional development programs during cutbacks. These are often the first programs to go when budgets come under pressure. In one example of preserving such programs, each department contributed a small, affordable amount to fund shared training opportunities. The amounts were based on a sliding scale and at a cost of no more than \$3,000 per department. Even in tough economic times, \$3,000 will probably not be cut because it is such a small amount. But when these amounts are aggregated across the organization, they provide resources to engage employees and provide them with a chance to build a network and understand the full operations of the organization.

3. Identify low cost or existing resources. For organizations with little funding to address personal and leadership development, there are free alternatives. The

Cal-ICMA Coaching program³ provides an extensive array of trainings. The goal of the program is to support the professional and personal development of new and aspiring managers. AARP has an Employer Resource Center⁴ where they provide information on promising practices in the workplace as well as free webinars.

4. Train employees to succeed in a diverse organization. Develop skills to manage a workforce that has four generations. Workers coming to the organization with different perspectives, skills, and expectations can benefit from the opportunity to better understand the preferences and expectations of those that they are working with. Just as organizations have recognized the benefit of traditional diversity training on issues such as race and gender, organizations are beginning to recognize and train on the generational diversity. Providing training that establishes a common understanding of the differences as well as strategies of how to work more successfully together can both address current challenges and stave off future issues. Training can include a range of issues such as communication preferences, style, motivational bases, and work design.

Notes

1 At <http://www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/template/index.cfm>.

2 Civic Ventures' research was focused on the U.S. federal government. GFOA staff has focused on those findings with the most relevance to state and local government.

3 At www.icma.org/cal-icma/coaching.

4 At http://www.aarp.org/money/work/employer_resource_ctr/.

Task Force Recommendations

To provide the state and local public sector with a blueprint addressing generational change, the Task Force has identified six objectives, which stem from the three overarching issues the Task Force addressed:

Issue: Recruiting

- **Objective #1:** Create a larger, broader, and more qualified pool of public service candidates.
- **Objective #2:** Reimagining the recruitment process in government to make government/government finance profession(s) appealing to job seekers.

Issue: Retaining a competent and committed workforce

- **Objective #3:** Managing and motivating a workforce composed of diverse generations, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs.
- **Objective #4:** Addressing inter-generational differences to assure a positive work environment.

Issue: Managing the retirement of baby boomers

- **Objective #5:** Understand the potential for retirements and take steps to harness the commitment and experience of retirees as a resource for government.
- **Objective #6:** Prepare public agencies for the future through effective knowledge transfer and mentoring strategies.

This chapter presents these six objectives and the concrete recommendations of the Task Force for achieving them. The Task Force has developed recommendations that government agencies can put into action, as well as recommendations for how the GFOA can continue to support governments as they adapt to workforce change. The recommendations are derived from the promising practices revealed by our case studies, suggestions from professional and academic literature, and deliberations on the foregoing by the GFOA Generational Change Task Force.

Objective #1

Create a larger, broader, and more qualified pool of public service candidates.

Strategies for Achieving

- Establish partnerships with local universities.
- Re-imagine branding and recruitment approaches, utilizing media used by younger generations. The focus here is to make governmental jobs more accessible.

Local Government Actions

- Adopt a human resources strategic plan. This will identify organizational

objectives and will lead to initiatives in this area.

- Create formal partnerships with local colleges and universities that benefit both government and students. Examples might include internship programs or capstone research projects.
- Assess organizational needs. For example, does the organization need entry-level employees or mid-career employees?
- Develop formal programs (e.g., internships, fellowships) to create a continual pool of job candidates.
- Consider compensation strategies to attract younger workers, such as flexible scheduling and work/life balance policies. Be sure such policies are compatible with the realities of the organization's culture and business model. Also, recognize that one type of flexible schedule may not fit everyone. For instance, a four-day, 10-hour day work week may be great for some but not for others.
- Consider partial tele-commuting portions of an internship to allow interns to work for agencies outside of regular business hours.

Consider compensation strategies to attract younger workers, such as flexible schedule and work/life balance policies.

- Consider social media tools (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) as a method for advertising government employment. Adapt IT policies to accommodate such tools.
- Consider pilot programs to test some of the ideas above and learn from experience before implementing a fully realized program.
- Host networking opportunities, such as having government leaders attend a party so that interns can interact and learn from their experience.
- Remain aware of IRS and FLSA requirements that impact internships in order to remain in compliance.

GFOA Actions

- Refine GFOA student membership option and then cooperate with NASPAA on their "Go Public" program to promote public finance careers and GFOA membership to students.
- Consider establishing a local government finance academics committee. This committee would draw half of its membership from practitioners and half from academia. Its goal is to help the academic community with advice on aligning their curriculums and teaching practices on public finance with the needs of public employers. The group would also serve to help bridge divides between academics and practice.

- Make connections with public management degree programs and find ways that the GFOA can add value to existing internship (or capstone project) programs, such as promoting the programs among GFOA member governments. The GFOA could also alert members of third-party grant opportunities that can be used to hire interns; the association could also make available special opportunities for interns to attend the GFOA annual conference.

Develop a mechanism to find retirees who are interested in offering their services on a part-time or temporary basis. This could be a clearinghouse for resumes that includes some basic filtering meta-data.

- Develop a mechanism for public employers to find retirees who are interested in offering their services on a part-time or temporary basis. This could be a clearinghouse for resumes that includes some basic filtering meta-data (e.g., willingness to travel, maximum time commitment, etc.).
- Establish a scholarship for outstanding undergraduate/graduate students to attend conference.
- Modify the existing GFOA Best Practice on Strategic Planning to include elements of workforce planning. Also identify good examples of workforce plans and how these workforce plans have contributed to the government's financial planning (e.g., provide insight into future cost structure). These examples should be made available to GFOA members as illustrations. GFOA standing committees can consider the need for further Best Practice revision or new Best Practices based on the findings of this research.

Objective #2

Reimagining the recruitment process in government to make it more appealing to job seekers.

Strategies for Achieving

- Where possible, streamline the hiring process. Set standards for qualification of candidates (i.e., within 14 days of receipt of application, candidates will be screened and qualified/disqualified for eligibility).
- Create an automated process whereby applicants can check the status of their application.
- Provide more flexibility in benefit options for new employees. Cafeteria benefits provide the most flexibility for bridging the gap between generations.
- Consider alternative recruitment vehicles. Check out how other public and private agencies are doing their recruitment – for instance, some use Twitter or Facebook to post openings. Also look at nonprofit career sites, such as Idealist.org and Indeed.com, where civic-minded individuals seek job leads. Government agencies need to move beyond a simple list in city hall or on a Web site.

Local Government Actions

- Develop entry-level or intern positions not subject to union hiring regulations, making it easier to transition students into the workplace. These should be temporary positions.
- Survey workers, by generation, to determine which benefits are more appealing.
- Develop a recruitment plan for the organization, highlighting the channels to be used for advertising positions.

GFOA Actions

- The GFOA will re-examine its current “employment announcements” to move beyond straight reporting of positions. For example, the GFOA could post articles on the top 10 reasons to be employed by government or highlight successful young public servants to tell their story and bring a face to public service.
- Examine the accessibility of information to younger staffers in member organizations. Determine whether or not younger generations are accessing GFOA information and if there are gaps, how to bridge them.
- Provide access to high quality recruiting plans for members to benchmark against.

Objective #3**Managing and motivating a workforce composed of diverse generations, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs.****Strategies for Achieving**

- Provide staff with learning opportunities geared towards their individual career goals.
- Guarantee the management capacity of mid and senior managers.
- Provide staff with networking opportunities to allow them to get acquainted with other people in the organization from different departments, identify mentors, create a better understanding of the larger organization, and feel connected to the organization.
- Train managers in working with differing work styles and encourage them to be adaptive.

Local Government Actions

- Establish a new employee group where new staff can network with one another and learn about the greater organization.
- Provide managers with ongoing training and leadership development. By having managers who are able to cross generational lines in their management techniques, agencies are ensuring a heightened level of connection to the larger organization.

- Develop clear career ladders and paths to encourage retention of employees. This would show existing employees how they can grow within the organization. Career paths could include not only moving up to management positions, but also participating in special projects or learning new skills.
- Work with existing employees to create personal development plans for how they will move along the available career paths.

Clear career ladders and paths encourage retention of employees, showing them how they can grow within the organization. Career paths can include participating in special projects or learning new skills.

- Develop stronger relationships with the HR function of the organization to successfully tackle workforce change issues. For example, leverage HR policies to help achieve workforce change goals and work closely with the HR function to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of workforce strategies.
- Develop communication strategies that recognize that different employee groups may interpret the same message in different ways. This may require a multi-modal communication strategy.

GFOA Actions

- Develop opportunities for younger generations to get more deeply involved in the GFOA. For example, many professional associations have a “young professionals” subgroup to engage younger members. Such a group would interact primarily through electronic forums and social networking technologies. The group could be invited to specialized networking forums such as the national conference, regional training, and perhaps state GFOA events. The group’s viewpoints could also be sought out for developing publications, research, and training strategies.
- Provide training opportunities for managers focused on how to better manage and motivate human capital, including managing staff with different perspectives and backgrounds.
- Survey younger members to assess their membership needs (i.e., are they receiving the services, research, data they need/expect?).

Objective #4

Addressing generational differences to assure a positive multi-generational work environment.

Strategies for Achieving

- Create organizational understanding for the differences between generations and how the workforce can be more productive.

- Acknowledge that generational identity is not necessarily based on age and that definitions of generational characteristics are meant as a guide, not a categorization of employees. Most people find that they identify with characteristics across a spectrum of generations.
- Create opportunities for multi-generational interactivity to facilitate understanding.

Local Government Actions

- Survey employees to determine where there are issues to deal with in the workforce. Determining employees' satisfaction with their jobs, training, and opportunities will provide the organization with regular feedback about how positive the work environment is.
- Utilize existing training (AARP and Cal ICMA) on generational differences to promote understanding of management strategies.
- Work with local GFOA chapters to create shared resources that other members can use.

Generational identity is not necessarily based on age;
most people identify with characteristics across a spectrum
of generations.

GFOA Actions

- Create specialized networking events for younger generations and/or new entrants into public finance. These could be at the national conference, regional training, or perhaps state GFOA events or online forums.
- The Committee on Retirement and Benefits Administration should examine the implications of the Task Force's findings for GFOA's Best Practices portfolio. For example, Best Practices on benefits may need to change to address new realities like tiered benefit structures and differences in benefit preferences between generations.
- Develop an Effective Workforce Change Strategies Award for local government displaying excellence in this area.

Objective #5

Understand the potential for retirements and take steps to harness the commitment and experience of retirees as a resource.

Strategies for Achieving

- Scan the organization to identify potential retirements.
- Determine what the organization's capacity is for succession.
- Assess written policies and procedures to facilitate knowledge transfer.
- Consider strategies like encore careers and mentoring programs.

Local Government Actions

- Complete AARP Workforce Planning Tool.
- Meet with retiring staff and document job responsibilities.
- Take steps to find out which employees are eligible to retire and, if possible, the specific retirement plans of individual employees.
- Recruit retirees as mentors. Retirees may be interested in performing this kind of community service.
- Work with employees near retirement to examine the potential for encore careers.
- Reach out to the community to look for qualified individuals who may be interested in encore careers.

Recruit retirees as mentors. Retirees may be interested in performing this kind of community service.

GFOA Actions

- Develop a mechanism for public employers to find retirees who are interested in offering their services on a part-time or temporary basis. This could be a clearinghouse for resumes that includes some basic filtering meta-data (e.g., willingness to travel, maximum time commitment, etc.).
- Provide tools for jurisdictions to examine work processes and make better use of technology through business process management and redesigned processes.

Objective #6**Prepare public agencies for the future through effective knowledge transfer and mentoring strategies.****Strategies for Achieving**

- Employ programs designed to encourage encore careers.
- Develop a succession plan.

Local Government Actions

- Adopt a human resources strategic plan.
- Relate workforce change activities to creating a sustainable financial future. For example, how can the government use the opportunity provided by workforce change to change its compensation structure and staffing strategy to make it more affordable for the taxpayers over the long term?

- Document organizational policies and procedures.
- Create a mentoring program pairing a young employee with an organization veteran.
- Establish policies for the organization focused on transitioning knowledge from retiring staff back into the organization.
- Create temporary organization positions focused on older workers.
- Recruit retirees as mentors. Retirees may be interested in performing this kind of community service.

GFOA Actions

- Develop a mechanism for public employers to find retirees who are interested in offering their services on a part-time or temporary basis. This could be a clearinghouse for resumes that includes some basic filtering meta-data (e.g., willingness to travel, maximum time commitment, etc.).

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Appendix 1: Interviews Conducted

Date	Individual Interviewed	Program
August 4, 2009	Willow Jacobson, Ph.D.	General understanding of generational change programs
August 21, 2009	Cindi Evangelisti, City of Chicago	Chicago Summer Business Institute
August 24, 2009	Kurt Thurmaier, Ph.D.	Northern Illinois University Internship Program, ICMS Local Government Education Committee
September 1, 2009	Beth Kellar, Center for State and Local Government Excellence	AARP Workforce Assessment Tool, Montgomery County, Surveys, ICMA Next Generation 1649 Accounting Program
September 1, 2009	Louis Voccia, City/County of San Francisco	
September 2, 2009	David Ramberg, City of Palo Alto	Succession Planning
September 2, 2009	Chantelle Renwick, Government of Saskatchewan	Interconnect Program
September 3, 2009	Samantha Fischer, Northern Illinois University	Internship Program
September 3, 2009	Tina Chiapetta, IPMA HR	Association programs
September 16, 2009	Maire Coulthard, Government of Saskatchewan	Interconnect Program
September 16, 2009	Tristan Levardo, City/County of San Francisco	1649 Accounting Program
September 16, 2009	Frank Benest	ICMA Next Generation, Cal-ICMA Coaching, Management Talent Exchange program
September 30, 2009	Donna Kotake, City/County of San Francisco	City Hall Fellows Program, City University, Succession Planning
October 6, 2009	Elizabeth Brennan, Local Government Management Association of British Columbia	British Columbia Internship Program
October 7, 2009	Beth Coolidge, Siebert Branford Shank	Chicago Summer Business Institute
October 8, 2009	Debra Carson	Chicago Summer Business Institute
October 12, 2009	Bethany Henderson	City Hall Fellows Program
October 16, 2009	Anita Brady, Montgomery County	Succession Planning
November 25, 2009	Karen Pearson, Clackamas County	Workforce Planning, young employee organizations
December 2, 2009	Phyllis Cohn, AARP	Workforce Issues Team for AARP
January 25, 2010	Andrea Jackson, City of Auburn	Interns

Appendix 2: Case Studies

1649 Accountant Intern Program

Jurisdiction

City/County of San Francisco

Area(s) of Focus

Internship Program, Mentoring, Training

Description of Program

Started in 1997, the 1649 Accountant Intern Program was conceived because management wanted to raise and standardize accountancy across the 66 city/county departments. The program hires interns at approximately \$50,000/year (current) into full-time positions which are exempt from civil service. Term of the internship is eighteen months, with two nine-month rotations in different departments. This program is extremely competitive. The most recent pool of interns saw 300 applicants for 7 intern positions. However, the program boasts a 97 percent success rate.

Management wanted to raise and standardize accountancy across the 66 city/county departments.

Overall responsibility for the 1649 Accountant Intern Program resides with the Office of the Controller, by delegation from the Department of Human Resources. The International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, Local 21, AFL-CIO, the bargaining unit representing the classifications in the Accounting Series, endorses this program.

The program requires applicants to have a bachelor's degree with at least 12 units of accounting. Applicants must undergo both a written examination and an oral/performance interview. During the 18-month internship, interns are assigned a mentor and supervisor during each rotation to guide and train them. There may be multiple supervisors during a rotation and/or supervisors may change, depending on the training topic. In some cases, the mentor and supervisor can be the same person. Mentors and supervisors work closely together to provide interns with comprehensive, quality training.

In addition to the standard work they complete in their rotation, interns attend various training workshops to build their technical competencies and develop an understanding of the city's purchasing and accounting procedures. In addition to specific accounting

systems training, the interns are also familiarized with various city and county processes, policies, and procedures, with emphasis on their relationship to accounting.

Throughout the course of their internship, the interns are evaluated against a competency skills checklist. These skills include the hard skills associated with standard accounting procedures (encumbrances, accounts payable, revenue, payroll, budget, etc.) and operation of the accounting system (FAMIS). Additional skills evaluated include communication and knowledge of procedures.

Interns receive official notification of successful completion of the program from the Controller's Office HR Unit. At the conclusion of the program, successful interns compete to be promoted to permanent status in Class 1652 Sr. Accountant (civil service), the beginning of the Accounting series. Successful interns are placed in permanent positions. Since 1997, approximately 300 to 400 interns have completed this program.

Lessons Learned

- A contributing factor to the success is that the Department of Human Resources and Local 21 (the union representing accountants) agreed to allow the city/county to keep the interns as exempt employees until completion of the program. This allows the Controller's Office the ability to control and standardize their training and experience, at least until they get to their respective departments.
- Departments that evaluate interns cannot "pass" an intern unless they are willing to hire that person into their department.
- Partner with local colleges in order to get knowledge of the program out there. Staff running the program would like to start advertising at the HS level.

Departments cannot "pass" an intern unless they are willing to hire that person.

Interview with Participant in Program

GFOA staff had the opportunity to interview a former intern in the program. This former Intern was in the first intern training class in 1997 and is now a mentor in the program. This person identified the following overall benefits of the program:

- Educates the intern on how the city/county works, not just the accounting department;
- Familiarizes the intern with FAMIS and how to navigate accounting functionality in the system;
- Assignment of a formal mentor;
- Development of accounting skills, which allows for easier transition between departments; and
- Development of soft skills (i.e., leadership, through training).

The program allows interns to establish an informal network of peers that survive the internship program. The former intern said the following of the intern program: “It gave me an opportunity to create a good reputation for myself.” This reputation was established in at least two departments due to the formal relationship established in the program, but also in a number of other departments due to the informal relationships established in the program itself.

Interconnect

Jurisdiction

Government of Saskatchewan (Canada)

Area(s) of Focus

Mentoring, Training

Description of Program

Interconnect was started two years ago out of the New Professionals Network, which was created in 2003 to support employees with five years or less of experience in executive government. The program focuses on providing this support through discussion forums, learning events, and networking opportunities. The New Professionals Network at its peak had accrued only 100 members and had difficulty in achieving some results. To build upon this program, a proposal was developed creating Interconnect, a formal division of the Saskatchewan Government. It created a coordinator position to be funded by each ministry in the government. It also established both an Advisory Committee and an Executive Sponsor Group. The proposal was approved and implemented in 2007.

Interconnect allows new public-service employees to:

- Make connections with other new employees;
- Enjoy opportunities for professional growth;
- Talk with senior officials; and
- Share questions in a constructive environment.

As of September 2009, the program boasts a membership of 700 employees. While it is a “new employee” network, the membership is from all age brackets. Membership breakdown is listed below:

Age Categories	Percentage of Total Membership
20-24	10.46%
25-29	26.42%
30-34	16.98%
35-39	12.35%
40-44	14.41%
45-49	10.81%
50-54	5.15%
55-59	2.74%
60-64	0.69%

The program is funded on a sliding scale (based on size) of each ministry in the government. Each ministry contributes \$1,500 - \$3,000 annually to the mission of Interconnect. The funding goes for the program coordinator and the monthly activities the project sponsors. According to the coordinator, the distributed funding mechanism has contributed to the program's success. Each new member is required to complete a membership profile. The program coordinator utilizes this data to tailor monthly programs to member needs. Interconnect has provided sessions on work/life balance, networking opportunities, professional development, and lessons learned from top ministry officials. Participants attending these events complete an evaluation to provide the coordinator with feedback on the sessions.

One member provided the following testimonial: "Interconnect has provided not only professional and personal development workshops to me, but also a sense of belonging to the Government of Saskatchewan. I am receiving supports that I cannot obtain anywhere else."

"Interconnect has provided not only professional and personal development workshops to me, but also a sense of belonging to the Government of Saskatchewan."

Lessons Learned

- "By Interconnect connecting individuals from multiple generations, backgrounds, and perspectives, these individuals are able to find common threads. The common experiences of being new public-service employees bind them together as part of a much bigger thing – working for the people of Saskatchewan. By having a venue for discussion about the workplace, Interconnect members can discuss the idiosyncrasies of each generation outside of their work environment as well as have the opportunity to discover other commonalities that may exist and learn from their differences."
- Communication with the members presents difficulties. Currently the main communication is e-mail, but some members do not have access to e-mail. New communication tools (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) are not used as these are not media that executives are comfortable with.
- The monthly events are always held in the Saskatchewan seat of Regina. However, members are spread throughout Saskatchewan and not all are in Regina. This eliminates some people from being able to participate. The coordinator is currently looking for liaisons in other cities in order to meet these needs.

Interview with Participant in Program

GFOA staff had the opportunity to interview a member of Interconnect and now a member of the Interconnect Advisory Committee. She has been in Saskatchewan government for 4½ years and been a member since inception. Her experience with the program has provided her with a substantial networking pool, informal mentoring opportunities, and a general understanding of how the Saskatchewan government works.

As a member of the Advisory Committee, she indicated that they set goals for each year and it is these goals that inform the program choices of Interconnect. The committee meets quarterly to assess and review its goals. It focuses on how it can do things better for new employees. One of the improvements that came out of this committee was a new orientation program that started on a limited basis in fall 2008 and was government-wide by May 2009. This effort sought to provide new employees with additional information and training not previously received.

In discussing some of the challenges, the committee member addressed the availability of resources, recognition of program, communication, location, and multiple priorities for Advisory Committee members. In spite of these challenges, she feels that the Interconnect program facilitates the development of personal and business relationships as well as counteracting the image that many have of government – that it is “slow and stodgy and has a lot of red tape.”

She offered the following suggestions for how government can make itself more attractive to younger workers:

- Focus on the number of opportunities that government service brings. There are varying programs (public safety, public works, and economic development) that can be attractive to someone just starting out. Learning skills in multiple areas makes the job more attractive.
- Competitive wages, pension, and above average days off is certainly a bonus.
- Offer flexible hours.
- Recognize differences in lifestyle; not all employees enjoy the same life. Offer cafeteria benefits so that if fitness is more important to an employee, he or she can structure their health plan that way. Benefits should adapt with the employee.
- Keep the work area modern and up to date. Working in an old and outdated environment makes it more difficult to focus.

MPA Internship Program

Jurisdiction

Northern Illinois University

Area(s) of Focus

Government/University Partnership

Description of Program

The Internship Program at NIU has been a critical component of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program for 45 years. NIU partners with approximately 50 governmental and nonprofit agencies each year to offer public administration students who lack previous public-service experience a developmental learning experience in the

mainstream of public management. Previous experience is generally defined as: at least two years of administrative full-time work experience in the student's area of interest in the MPA program.

Beyond providing professional development for interns, participating agencies also benefit from the program by being able to tap the resources of talented, motivated graduate students to help meet agency needs. This enhances the governmental/university partnership. By design, interns are expected to utilize knowledge gained in the classroom setting in a practical, real-world setting.

Beyond providing professional development for interns, participating agencies also benefit by being able to tap resources of talented, motivated graduate students.

All internships are paid (fall 2008 average hourly salary: \$14.57), part-time (20 to 24 hours/week) positions. They focus on connecting the intern's interests and long-term goals. Interns also receive 1 credit hour for each semester worked. As this is a two-year program, interns will receive a total of 5 credit hours. Last year, there was a 98 percent job placement rate for graduates; 35 percent of which were placed in the jurisdiction in which they interned. Basic objectives of the internship program are:

- to provide the pre-professional with a valuable learning experience in his or her area of public service interest
- to provide agencies with talented pre-professionals at reasonable cost and,
- to strengthen the university/community bond.

To obtain the right placement, NIU hosts an internship placement event where prospective employers can interview interested candidates. The program provides consistent feedback on the intern's performance. NIU requires that the jurisdiction employing the intern complete an evaluation of performance on a number of factors in the areas of core and professional competencies. These include a variety of hard and soft (communication, leadership, teamwork, etc.) skills. Conversely, the interns also complete an evaluation to ensure that the work they are completing is challenging and that they are receiving value from it. To further ensure smooth placement and that the work coincides with school objectives, the coordinator for the internship program makes annual work site visits. Program guidelines require the coordinator to complete this visit before graduation.

Lessons Learned

- Federal agencies generally want 40 hour/week internships, so placement has been difficult at this level of government.
- Given the current economic conditions, getting nonprofit agencies to participate has been difficult. Many individuals are volunteering more at nonprofit agencies in the hopes of getting a job. This makes it harder for

the university to obtain paid internships. In the most recent placement year, there was no nonprofit, paid internship.

- It is always a challenge to find a good fit for an intern and ensure that the student's career goals mesh with the internships available.

Succession Planning

Jurisdiction

City of Palo Alto, CA

Area(s) of Focus

Succession Planning, Workforce Development, Utilizing Baby Boomers

Description of Program

In 2005, the city conducted an initial review of its workforce to determine the retirement profile it represented. To begin, the city used its organizational charts to identify (based upon age) where employees stood in relation to average retirement age. Senior management found that in a five-year period, it was facing a potential retirement rate of 35 percent of its workforce. Further compounding this problem was the fact that these individuals were primarily senior managers. The following is a breakdown of their retirement projections:

- 2007: 9.6%
- 2008: 8.0%
- 2009: 4.0%
- 2010: 6.8%
- 2011: 6.8%

The city found that in a five-year period, it was facing a potential retirement rate of 35 percent of its workforce.

To address this critical issue, the city completed the following key actions: (1) completed a workforce analysis; (2) discussed department talent and succession plans at three executive team offsite meetings; (3) formed a leadership development team; (4) reached out to all employees regarding advancement opportunities and resources; (5) revamped its management academy; (6) utilized the Cal-ICMA coaching program; and (7) explored alternative staffing arrangements with key retirees.

Key to these activities was the fact that the city built in the capacity for flexible staffing. When completing the annual budget, the city programmed for five to seven FTE positions in its authorized head count. These positions were used on a temporary basis to facilitate succession planning. For the most part, these positions made possible an overlap period that allowed the city to recruit in advance of retirements. These positions were also used to hire back retirees as temporary workers or contract employees.

To facilitate the knowledge transfer from retiring positions, senior management instructed staff to update policies and procedures. Further enhancing

the knowledge transfer was the exit interview process. Each retiree had to fill out an exit interview and succession plan questionnaire. Questions included: What have you been doing on the job? What key knowledge is needed? Who are the people who currently possess this knowledge? Who are the people who will need this knowledge in the future?

The approach that Palo Alto took to filling these positions was to develop an internal pipeline. Management felt that it was easier to build the talent internally to allow for position overlap. Staff found that many of the assistant directors were moving into director positions. However, this required some training. Staff worked with an individual from the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers to retool its Management Academy. They developed new coursework and brought in outside instructors to provide internal staff with the training necessary to make them more viable transition candidates.

Lessons Learned

- One of the challenges to succession planning is being able to simultaneously mentor and plan for the future. It is difficult to continually recruit and at the same time help guide a new employee's professional development. In response, the city conducted annual and biannual reviews and developed an informal mentoring program which encouraged growth and development.
- "Any time you have established processes strained by extra volume, the bureaucracy comesthrough." The city found that it needed to simplify its current processes in order to accommodate the increased hiring.

City Hall Fellows Program

Jurisdiction

City/County of San Francisco, CA

Area(s) of Focus

Internship Programs

Description of Program

The City Hall Fellows Program was implemented in 2008 in San Francisco, California, and Houston, Texas. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, will join the 2010 class roster.) The program's mission is to empower the next generation of leaders for America's cities by: (1) introducing the best and brightest recent college graduates to the inner workings of local government; (2) bringing their talent and energy to bear addressing the challenges local communities face; and (3) exposing them to meaningful careers in public service. This program was patterned after the New York City Urban Fellows program, implemented in 1969.

The City/County of San Francisco partnered with the City Hall Fellows Program to provide a 12-month, post-college, pre-graduate school fellowship program that integrates hands-on, full-time work experience inside local government with intensive training in how cities operate and the peo-

ple, issues, and organizations that influence local policy. Fellows spend their service year working on high-need government-run initiatives in cities where they have personal ties.

During their service years, the fellows work full-time as special project assistants for a senior local government administrator or official.

The program groups fellows in cohorts within a partner city or metropolitan region. During their service year,s the fellows work full-time as special project assistants for a senior local government administrator or official. Their work is project-driven so the fellows do not supplant local efforts.

The year-long fellowship starts with a three-week orientation designed and run by City Hall Fellows that grounds fellows in the cultural, social, and political history of San Francisco and prepares them for the fellowship year. Thereafter, fellows gather weekly for a half-day to participate in an intensive, proprietary Civic Leadership Development Program (CLDP). Facilitated by a City Hall Fellows employee, the CLDP takes fellows on a structured exploration through the context and operations of local government. Fellows learn about the structure of the San Francisco government (including budget, civil service, labor and unions, and the governmental, quasi-governmental, and non-governmental organizations which regulate, impact, or provide public services to or within that community), the services the San Francisco government provides, its policy-making process, and local-state/local-federal relationships and interactions. Networking and engaged reflection are built into this curriculum. Through guided discussions with policy makers, policy influencers, and subject matter experts; behind-the-scenes site tours; reading assignments; and hands-on practice with policy making (in the form of service projects), fellows develop the knowledge, skills, and network necessary to become effective local civic leaders.

Lessons Learned

- This program is focused on encouraging government service. While only four of the eleven 2008 fellows stayed with the City/County of San Francisco, the remainder went on to pursue graduate school degrees. It is anticipated that a number of these fellows will seek out additional government employment following graduate school.
- The program is quite competitive. For the most recent year, there were 300 applicants, 90 were interviewed, and 6 selected. The number of fellowships offered is dependent upon local funding. Given the current economic conditions, this has been difficult. Consequently most of the funding is coming from enterprise departments.
- One of the difficulties was the varying maturity levels of the fellows. As seen in much of the research on generational change, the differences between generation Y and baby boomers were borne through this process. The City Hall Fellows Program is addressing this issue through training.

Interview with City Hall Fellows Executive Director

- Across the whole program, about 50 percent of the fellows stayed in public service. Approximately 95 percent pursue a graduate school program after completion.
- Fundamental differences in the City Hall Fellows program:
 - o Applicants are screened for a connection to the participating jurisdiction; they are not looking for fellows who “just want to hang out in the city.”
 - o This program is not an internship program; rather, it is a leadership training experience. Fellows receive 300 hours of training on how to navigate government and the “local eco-system.”
- Structural barriers to generation Y hiring: pay scales, “you can’t get fired,” and the hiring process itself.
- Challenges:
 - o Little money is being spent at the local government level to get students interested in public service; federal, yes, local government, no.
 - o The bureaucracy; generation Yers are frustrated with the hiring process and pay in government. With their short-term focus, pension and medical benefits are not as big a draw for them.

Workforce Planning and City University**Jurisdiction**

City/County of San Francisco, CA

Area(s) of Focus

Workforce Development and Succession Planning, Government/University Partnerships

Description of Program

In 2005, the city’s Department of Human Resources completed a civil service reform report. This report included approximately 50 recommendations on developing a blueprint for a modern and more effective personnel system. Employee investment/training and succession planning were two areas where recommendations were made.

San Francisco established City University to ensure that it has a educated and highly trained local government workforce.

City University. In response to the recommendations on employee investment/training, the city established City University (CU). This was done to ensure San Francisco has the most educated and highly trained local government workforce. As a result, the city developed partnerships with San Francisco State University College of Extended Learning (SFSU-CEL) and City College of San Francisco (City College). Through CU, the city funds a variety of courses taken at SFSU-CEL and City College. In addition, the city collaborates with these partners to provide more focused programs for critical needs throughout the city.

The goals of CU are as follows:

- Provide career ladders for city employees;
- Provide skill-building opportunities for city employees;
- Provide professional development opportunities for city employees;
- Provide learning opportunities to assist workforce planning and succession planning programs;
- Provide learning opportunities to address jobs that are difficult to fill due to a shortage of qualified candidates and competition with the private sector and other jurisdictions;
- Provide opportunities for city employees to learn new skills in a changing work environment.

The Department of Human Resources serves as the city's centralized HR agency, but with 66 departments to coordinate, a citywide succession planning effort is difficult, at best.

City University funds skill-building and professional development classes that will allow an employee to:

- Learn new ways to do tasks;
- Learn new skills applicable to the job;
- Learn new ways to improve overall success and efficiency;
- Gain new computer skills or improving existing ones;
- Practice these skills over an extended time period;
- Meet employees from other city departments;
- Meet professionals from other areas of responsibility.

As an example of how CU has benefitted the city, an assessment was done of individuals who had LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. Initially only two or three people were LEED certified citywide. After stepping up training through CU, the city now boasts 100 LEED certified employees.

Workforce Development/Succession Planning

In its succession planning recommendations, the civil service report noted "as of spring 2005, San Francisco's workforce demographics show that the average age of city employees is 47, and 43 percent are 50 or older. The average age for a manager or executive is 50, and 59 percent are 50 or older." With such striking numbers, the city began efforts to encourage succession planning throughout the city/county.

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) serves as the city's centralized HR agency. However, with 66 other departments to coordinate, a citywide succession planning effort is difficult at best. As a result, DHR interviewed 12 departments to determine the different approaches that were already underway. As a result, in 2007 DHR published a workforce and succession planning report (an updated 2009 report was recently published). This report highlighted best practices in the areas of knowledge management,

baby boomer retention, and recruitment. It also studies the utilization of pension enhancements in order to encourage retention of employees. In September 2009, DHR hosted its first succession planning conference, which was open to all city/county HR departments. The conference garnered 120 attendees from 30 different departments. Sessions included panels of city staff from small to large departments highlighting what they were currently doing in the areas of leadership, knowledge transfer, and mentoring. Video of this conference will be on the Web shortly.

British Columbia Local Government Management Internship Program

Jurisdiction

Local Government Management Association of British Columbia (LGMA)

Area(s) of Focus

Internships

Description of Program

In response to the trend of senior local government staff retirements putting pressure on the local government system and the need to find ways to recruit competent individuals from outside the local government field, the Local Government Management Association (approximately 800 members), in partnership with the Municipal Finance Authority and the Ministry of Community and Rural Development, created a pilot Local Government Management Internship Program.

The program provides five local governments with annual funding to host interns for 12 months.

Because many local governments lack the institutional capacity to tackle the issues related to mass retirements, succession planning, and weak recruitment programs, a three-year pilot internship program was created. The program provides five local governments with annual funding to host interns for 12 months, with the first internships starting in 2008. Interns receive broad management training opportunities and are exposed to all aspects of local government operations; in turn, they contribute to capacity-building of host local governments. This pilot project was based on a similar initiative completed in Alberta, Canada.

The internship program objectives are:

- To increase the management staffing capacity of the local government system;
- To make local government management a career of choice by encouraging and supporting work opportunities for post-secondary graduates;
- To provide a mutually beneficial experience for both the local government and intern by expanding local government capacity and providing a career-path experience for the intern;

- To encourage a greater understanding and awareness between post-secondary institutions and local governments that:
 - o Promotes awareness of careers in local government for students;
 - o Promotes the development of post-secondary coursework that is relevant for a career in local government; and
 - o Encourages local governments to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities for their staff.

The focus of the internship program is on providing management training opportunities. Internship opportunities are not intended to be for positions covered by collective agreements and if applicable, local governments may consider undertaking consultation with their unions to clarify the objectives of this program.

In general, senior staff has looked favorably on the opportunity to mentor or coach incoming staff. Many have found that this is a rewarding endeavor for them in their final five to ten years with an organization.

A grant of \$36,000 (\$27,000 for salary and \$9,000 for training and expenses) is provided to each local government for host intern costs. Local governments hosting an intern are required to provide a financial contribution toward the costs of the intern and commit sufficient human resources by senior management to support the program. LGMA provides a program manager to oversee it. An advisory committee oversees the program and selects host local governments.

Participating jurisdictions complete a work plan for the interns to follow throughout the course of the internship. Further, interns are partnered with a senior government manager for mentoring. In general, senior staff has looked favorably on the opportunity to mentor or coach incoming staff. Many have found that this is a rewarding endeavor for them in their final five to ten years with an organization.

The response to the program has been favorable. In the first year, there were 26 host and 30 intern applications. In the second year of the program there were 14 host and 50 intern applications. Inquiries for the third and final year of the program were up substantially. The program has been so successful that LGMA is considering an extension.

Lessons Learned

- Too many people find out about government service/positions by accident.
- Integrating a comprehensive mentoring and training program into the curricula of the program helps to provide for the individual's long-term development.
- At times it is difficult to ensure that local governments understand the value of mentoring. This is not a placement program to fill jobs.

- Provide a clear understanding of the program objectives to the prospective interns. It is important that they are ready to embark on their careers; not go back to school. The focus of this project is to encourage careers in government.
- There are right-sized communities for programs such as this. If there are only two or three people working in the government office, they may not be able to effectively mentor the intern. Some governments may also be too large and the intern can be “lost.”
- “Be articulate of the objectives. What are you trying to achieve?”
- Check in and conduct site visits to monitor intern and host performance.
- Different generations interpret words differently (e.g., commitment, contribution). Understand how to communicate. Feedback is very important to generation Yers; it is not the same for baby boomers.

Chicago Summer Business Institute

Jurisdiction

City of Chicago, IL

Area(s) of Focus

High School Internships

Description of Program

The Chicago Summer Business Institute (CSBI) was founded in 1991 to provide paid summer internships for Chicago high school students and to introduce them to the financial services sector. The goals of the program are to promote careers in public finance and give its participants an incentive to continue their education while preparing them for the business world. Participating agencies can be private or public institutions. Some examples of participating business include the City of Chicago, Cook County, Chicago Park District, Chicago Board of Trade, and McCormick Place.

The Chicago Summer Business Institute targets high achievers from Chicago’s public, parochial, and private high schools.

During its inaugural year, 25 positions at financial firms throughout Chicago were available to student interns. The numbers have climbed over the years. With the addition of legal, architectural, engineering, and development firms, CSBI has increased the positions offered to student interns. This has allowed the program to successfully broaden its goals beyond public finance, and reach out to more students interested in a valuable internship experience. Currently, CSBI has 140-150 students participating in the program annually; annual applications are between 300 and 400.

The Chicago Summer Business Institute targets high achievers from Chicago's public, parochial, and private high schools. Ideal candidates have above-average grades, extra-curricular activities, and plans for college.

The program combines on-the-job experience with classroom education. To achieve a well-rounded curriculum, the work week is divided into two

parts. For six weeks, four days are spent at work sites, where a supervisor guides and provides the student with general office work and meaningful projects. One afternoon a week, students participate in specially created seminars. These seminars are designed to help students combine what they learn in the classroom with their on-the-job knowledge. Some students return to the program for a second year and will serve as mentors to first-year participants.

Participation in the program gives students a chance to experience a summer internship that can help further their careers after high school. They are given the opportunity to see what happens and participate in the Chicago business community. Students are able to earn money and save for college. Working in a professional environment gives the students a sense of what working will be like after college: the challenge, the responsibility, and the feeling of accomplishment from a job well done.

Students hear about career opportunities and participate in sessions that help them better understand the stock market, the judicial system, and our government.

Weekly seminars are an integral part of the program. Students hear about career opportunities through lectures from industry professionals. They get to participate in sessions that help them better understand the stock market, the judicial system, and our government. Students get the opportunity to see what goes on at the institutions that are important to the business industry.

Programs replicating the CSBI model have been seen in the cities of Detroit and St. Louis.

Lessons Learned

- It is important to keep training materials fresh for students.
- Make sure that students know there are options out there for them.
- Funding is critical.
- Meaningful internships are essential; students should not just be filing papers.
- The program opens the door to government service to students who may not have otherwise considered it.

Succession Planning

Jurisdiction

Clackamas County, OR

Area(s) of Focus

Succession Planning, Professional Development

Description of Program

In 2007, Clackamas County Central Human Resources started looking at the impending retirements at the county. The county manager felt that the issue was critical enough that he established a full-time position to address succession planning for the organization as a whole. In response, the county has developed several programs to address the issue.

Early in the process a workforce planning guide was developed and rolled out to executives and mid-level managers. In four departments (finance, transportation, development, and employee services), design teams were established to work on developing programs. The finance design team was made up of seven employees from throughout the organization and at varying levels of authority. The team held 13 separate meetings from August 2008 – March 2009. In these meetings, the team discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the department, union issues, and other issues impacting their initiative.

There are two key approaches: 1) open invitation for employees to initiate career planning and development; and 2) specific career development projects offered to employees who want to learn new skills.

A staff development program has been prepared as one component of the finance department's workforce planning process. The staff development program offers avenues for employees to develop their careers and acquire new skills that will better prepare them for advancement opportunities in the finance department, or beyond their current job/department.

There are two key approaches: 1) open invitation for employees to initiate career planning and development (a collaborative and planned approach between employees and their supervisor); and 2) specific career development projects offered to employees who want to learn new skills and become better prepared to take the next step in their career.

On the voluntary side, the county offers four options: job shadowing, job rotation, stretch assignments, and mentoring. The following is a brief description of each.

Job Shadow

- Short-term exposure to a different position, typically one day to one week in length.
- Useful when an employee is considering career options and wants to explore a different type of job.
- Can be used within the same classification, or to different classifications; within same or different division or department.
- Employee not performing full scope of work in a different job. Maintains rights to, and pay in regular position.

Job Rotation

- Typically used for a predictable amount of time to allow employee to rotate to another position. Generally one to six months in length.
- Job rotation is within the same classification.
- Employees who rotate to different position maintain rights to return to their previous job after rotation has ended.
- Employees perform the work of another position (another desk) in the same classification. Can be within the same division or work unit, another division in the department, or even to another department with mutual agreement.
- Useful for career development – expands knowledge and experience within classification. Opportunity for employee to acquire broader experience within their chosen classification.
- Can be used to assist in coverage for vacations, leaves, extra assistance for work units, etc.

Stretch Assignments

- An employee voluntarily requests assignments or projects that will stretch their job responsibilities and allow them to learn some higher level tasks.
- Department managers identify specific, short-term projects to offer to employees who are seeking career development.
- Can be short-term tasks, used one time, or intermittently to allow employee to gain new experience.
- Assignments are specific, defined tasks or projects that will allow employee to acquire new experiences and skills. Employee can then add experience to resume for career development.
- Stretch assignments are generally offered to employees on a voluntary basis, and offer a chance to complete a new task under supervision.

The county offers job shadowing, job rotation, stretch assignments, and mentoring.

Mentorship

- Pairs two employees in a mentor/mentee relationship. Relationship-based learning and knowledge transfer.
- Can be a peer mentor or mentorship of a higher level position for career development and advancement.
- Assumes some base knowledge of the job an employee is interested in. The interested employee wants to invest the time to be mentored toward that goal.
- Mentorship goes beyond training on “how to” tasks, and often includes guidance on competencies, accessing views on interest topics, reviewing perspectives, mindsets, etc.
- Often used for key positions where longer time and guidance is needed for knowledge transfer, or when position has supervisory or managerial aspects to learn.

Lessons Learned

- Union support is always one of the biggest challenges. Must work with union staff early on to encourage a smooth transition.
- Encourage hiring managers to think about suitability for jobs beyond the one you are hiring for. Many people do not consider this when hiring. You need to look at the long term fit with the organization.

Internship and Student Specialists for Finance, HR, and Fire**Jurisdiction**

City of Auburn, AL

Area(s) of Focus

Internships

Description of Program

The City of Auburn is a university town and, as such, the city saw a perfect opportunity to access local talent for government use. To that end, the city has been working with local students for over twenty years for different internship opportunities. The longest program is with the Auburn Fire Department (AFD). This program has been in operation since 1989.

AFD offers a program where student firefighters receive tuition reimbursement and pay for hours of service, but do not receive health benefits. Participants must maintain a 2.0/4.0 cumulative GPA for the position and 2.5 per semester for tuition reimbursement. This allows students who are interested in fire services an opportunity to get extensive training and receive funding to help pay for school. Currently, about 50 percent of the firefighters in Auburn are students. Those participating in the program come from a variety of academic backgrounds, including fire science, pre-med, engineering, and communications.

The City of Auburn, a university town, saw a perfect opportunity to access local talent for government use.

The city also has employment opportunities for students at the police department, human resources, and the finance department. The police program was started around 1993 and is used for both dispatch and public safety. The student public safety officers take over some non-sworn activities such as parking tickets, report writing, and accident reports. They do not carry a weapon. The students receive full tuition reimbursement for grades of a C or higher and the reimbursement is tax free up to \$5,250.

The finance department also has a student intern working approximately 20 hours per week. This intern is generally an accounting major and gets to know the day-to-day operations of a finance department. Each student participates in department-specific and citywide training and has a direct supervisor who works with the intern to prioritize work. The student is involved with a number of activities, ranging from simple to complex.

To maintain these programs, the city has a good working relationship with Auburn University. City staff has been pleased with the results of the program and is exploring ways to expand the relationship. Currently, the city is looking at conducting an “Issues in Local Government Enrichment” series where exempt employees would meet for brown bag discussions on issues of concern to government.

Lessons Learned

Challenges:

- Fairly regular turnover: approximately 18-22 months. However, of the 42 full-time career firefighters AFD currently employs, 36 of them came from the student program and stayed on. The training costs for the turnover are extensive.
- The turnover highlights the fact that the student firefighter will be exiting the organization.
- Dealing with a younger workforce does pose challenges. Many of the student interns don’t like a lot of structure and do not have a lot of life experiences. This makes managing them more difficult at times. The city found that while the younger workers responded well to technical tasks, they needed some guidance with more rudimentary aspects of work life (i.e., grammar, spelling, and writing).

Advantages:

- Consistent stream of talented and eager students wanting to work for the organization.
- Reduced cost to the organization.
- Administrators from other communities have said that they will hire any of their students at any time. It creates a very educated group of young, civil servants.