



### **FGFOA Member Spotlight: Sarah Simpson**

Sarah began her public finance career in the neighboring community of Miami Shores Village, where she also attended Barry University, earning a Bachelor’s degree in Accounting and an MBA with a specialization in Accounting. With 12 years of municipal government experience, Sarah progressed from Accountant to Controller during her tenure with Miami Shores Village. She currently serves as Budget Manager for the City of Aventura. A Certified Public Accountant, Certified Government Finance Officer, and Certified Public Finance Officer, Sarah has been actively engaged with FGFOA and served as the Chair of the Conference Program Committee—a role she has held for the past three years. She was recently selected to serve on the FGFOA Board of Directors.

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### **A Reflection on My FGFOA Journey**

Like many who become actively involved in FGFOA, Sarah describes the organization as truly exceptional—often noting that you never know where that first step of involvement may lead. She began attending local chapter meetings and conferences early in her career, but her engagement deepened while studying for the CGFO certification. Through the SOGF Review Courses, Sarah formed meaningful connections with fellow CGFO candidates, which fueled her desire to become more involved. What followed was a series of “stepping stones”: joining committees, participating in Leadership FGFOA, serving as a committee chair, and ultimately being honored with a seat on the Board of Directors. Each step reinforced her passion for giving back while continuing her own professional growth

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## **How FGFOA Has Shaped My Career**

FGFOA has played a critical role in Sarah's professional development from the very beginning. The organization's mission—Networking, Education, Information, and Leadership—has been instrumental in her growth as a Florida government finance professional. The relationships she has built through FGFOA have provided invaluable support, mentorship, and advice. Educational opportunities, particularly the CGFO program and subsequent CPFO reciprocity with GFOA, allowed her to sharpen her technical skills. Additionally, the Leadership FGFOA program helped Sarah grow both personally and professionally, equipping her with lessons and perspectives that continue to guide her today.

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## **What I Am Most Passionate About in FGFOA**

The most impactful FGFOA experience for Sarah has been Leadership FGFOA. The program challenged her daily, pushed her beyond her comfort zone, and confirmed her commitment to leadership and service. It fostered lasting relationships and provided personal insight and professional growth that she values deeply. Sarah enthusiastically encourages members to take part in Leadership FGFOA if given the opportunity—emphasizing that it is an experience they will not regret.