

2016 Speaker Bios

Clifford Blackwell, CGFO

Clifford Blackwell is the Director of Administrative Services for the City of Bedford, Texas. His management areas primarily consist of Finance, Accounting, Cash Management, Investments, Vital Statistics, Utility Billing, Teen Court & Municipal Court. He began his career of local government finance in 1996 with the City of Fort Worth, Texas by working as an Accountant within the Water Department and later working as a budget analyst within the City Manager's Office. His duties consisted of reviewing and monitoring the budgets of several major departments while coordinating the annual budget process on behalf of the City Manager.

In 2000, he landed a position as an Assistant Finance Director with the City of Watauga, Texas. From there, Clifford expanded his financial role to include economic development and represented Watauga in the Quad Cities DFW conglomerate. Later in 2006 and 2008, Clifford became the Finance Director for the Cities of Kennedale and Forest Hill, respectively. In Kennedale, he was able to assist the city in achieving its first ever GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation award. In Forest Hill, he assisted the city in overcoming major budgetary constraints by passing its first balanced budget in ten years.

In January 2010, Clifford joined the City of Bedford as its Director of Administrative Services and has been in the position since his employment. In addition, Clifford is a proud member of the Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) of the U.S. and Canada as well as the Government Finance Officers' Association of Texas (GFOAT) since June 2000. He currently serves on the GFOAT Board of Directors and is currently the GFOAT President-Elect for 2015- 2016. He is the former Membership Committee Chairperson and currently serves on the Resolution Committee for the Texas Municipal League (TML).

He holds a Bachelor's of Business Administration in Accounting from Prairie View A & M University and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of North Texas.

A native of Fort Worth, Texas, Clifford currently lives in Bedford. Aside from work, he enjoys traveling with his family, playing ball or working out and occasionally enjoying a great cigar.

Dr. Robert Bland

Endowed Professor in Local Government and Faculty Director, Center for Public Management

Education

- Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs
- M.B.A., University of Tennessee
- M.P.A., University of Tennessee
- B.S., Pepperdine University

Dr. Bland joined the faculty at UNT in 1982, then in 1992 he along with the other faculty in political science helped to establish the new Department of Public Administration. He served as the department's first chair until 2013. He teaches courses in government financial management, revenue policy, and governmental budgeting. He is the author or co-author of five books, and his articles on local tax policy, the municipal bond market, and governmental budgeting have appeared in a number of journals. In 2007 he was awarded the Terrell Blodgett Academician Award by the Texas City Management Association and the Stephen B. Sweeney Academic Award by the International City/County Management Association. In 2012 he was elected as a fellow to the National Academy of Public Administration.

Michelle Bonner



Assistant City Manager/Financial and Leisure Services

With more than 20 years of service to the City of Amarillo, Michelle Bonner was promoted from finance director to assistant city manager of Financial and Leisure Services in March 2013. In her role, she also serves as a trustee and the secretary for the Amarillo Firemen's Relief & Retirement Fund. Bonner oversees a number of departments ranging from Finance to Parks and Recreation to the Amarillo Public Library. She is a certified public accountant and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from West Texas A&M University. In 2014, Bonner was honored with a Career Achievement Award by the Amarillo Women's Network.

Paul Diaz

Paul Diaz is the Budget Manager for the City of Georgetown. In this role, he leads in the development of the City's Annual Operational Budget and Five Year Capital Improvement Plan. In his role, Paul serves as the chief financial forecaster for the City. Mr. Diaz has earned a bachelor's degree from Baylor University and a master's degree in Public Administration from Texas State University.

Monette Fisher

Monette Fisher is a Senior Account at the City of Decatur. Her career began with Standard Register, a fortune 500 company, as a Purchasing Agent in the Document Management, Secure Document Division where she also served as a regional trainer in the Lubbock, Tyler, Shreveport, Little Rock and Fort Worth offices. In 2003, she began working in government finance. She attended the Southwest School of Government Finance through a scholarship from GFOAT. She has been an active member of GFOAT since 2003 and has enjoyed having the opportunity to participate on the Ethics Committee and to serve as co-chair. Her hobbies include fly fishing and outdoor activities with her family. She can be reached at mfisher@decatortx.org

Bradley Ford

Deputy City Manager Bradley Ford

Service History

- Bradley Ford has worked for the City of Burleson since 2008. He was appointed Deputy City Manager in October 2015. His public administration career includes:
- Transportation Researcher for East Texas Center for Independent Living in Tyler, Texas (2003- 2004)
- Planner and Senior Planner for the Fort Worth Police Department (2004-2008)
- Planning Official, Director of Economic Development, Director of Development Services (2008- 2015) for the City of Burleson.
- Responsibilities: Economic Development, Building Permits and Inspections,

Personal History

Ford earned a bachelor of science degree in Political Science from the University of Texas at Tyler and a masters of City and Regional Planning from the University of Texas at Arlington. He and his wife Deanna have three children.



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Jennifer Garza

Director

U.S. Public Finance-State & Local Government Group

Jennifer Garza is a Director for the U.S. Public Finance Ratings Group, focusing on state and local government ratings. Jennifer is responsible for analyzing and rating issuers and transactions in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. In addition, she is the lead portfolio analyst for the state of Tennessee and is a leader for the contingent liquidity criteria.

Prior to joining Standard & Poor's in 2005, Jennifer worked with a local economic development corporation conducting research and performing economic impact analysis reports.

Jennifer is a member of the Southern Municipal Finance Society and the National Federation of Municipal Analysts.

Jennifer earned a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the University of Houston, and a Master of Science in Applied Economics from the University of North Texas.



The Management Connection, Inc.

PROFESSIONAL FACILITATORS

Joe M. Gonzalez CEO and Professional Facilitator

Joe became owner of The Management Connection, Inc. (TMC) in 1992. TMC recently celebrated its 24th anniversary in January 2016. Joe serves TMC in the roles of Chief Executive Officer and Professional Facilitator. He is a natural leader, visionary and entrepreneur with tremendous insight and understanding of business, municipalities, and individuals. The Vision, Mission and Principles of TMC are a direct reflection of Joe's dedication to exceptional personal leadership, long-term relationships and his goal that the client not only achieve, but exceed their desired results. From this foundation, Joe serves to design and facilitate processes to maximize the ability of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities to reach their full potential both professionally and personally. He facilitates organizational development through four levels of impact: 1) Personal Leadership, 2) Interpersonal Leadership, 3) Managerial Leadership, and 4) Organizational Leadership. For more information about The Management Connection, Inc. please visit their website at www.profacilitator.com.

Before TMC, Joe was the Director of Adult Services for Sandstone Psychiatric Hospital. As Sandstone's Director of Adult Services, he supervised Master level therapists, nurses, social workers, educators, substance abuse counselors, and support staff. He also worked for the City of Bryan as a Personnel Specialist where he managed the Employment Department. In addition to that role, he conducted grievance to management and intervened with employees at risk. For the 20th Judicial District, he worked as a Probation Officer. He counseled one-on-one and group sessions, provided crises intervention, developed educational programs to improve quality of life, and developed, implemented, and monitored a comprehensive training program for volunteers from social agencies to work with probationers. Furthermore, Joe served in the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force Reserves. He credits his service in the Military as the foundational pillar attributed to the success of TMC.

Joe has a Bachelor of Science in Education with a Minor in Business Management and received his Clinical Education from Scott and White Memorial Hospital. He also received the Air Force Commendation Medal for Outstanding Performance.



Will Hampton

Will Hampton has been the City of Round Rock's Communication Director since March 1998. During Will's tenure, the City has won communications and citizen engagement awards from multiple state and national organizations. He has presented at national and state conferences on social media, citizen participation and branding. Prior to joining the City, he worked as a journalist for newspapers in Round Rock, Galveston and Bay City, Texas. He earned his bachelor of journalism from The University of Texas at Austin. He lives in Round Rock with his two teenage sons.

Stephen E. Heaney

Stifel Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated Director of Public Finance

Stephen E. Heaney joined Stifel in 2011 through its acquisition of Stone & Youngberg, where he served as the Head of Public Finance, Chair of the Operating Committee and a member of the Board of Directors. Under his leadership the firm expanded its investment banking practice beyond California and was a leader in K-12 education financing as well as development-related infrastructure financing nationally. In 2013 he was appointed Director of Public Finance for Stifel assisting with the growth and operation of the public finance banking group, with particular attention to developing the firm's capabilities, systems and responses addressing regulatory changes in the municipal market following adoption of SEC and MSRB rule changes. Mr. Heaney has focused on development-related financings over the past 25 years, as well as directing issues for transportation, utilities, schools, and local government. Over his career, Mr. Heaney has lead managed several billion dollars of municipal bond issues, primarily in California and Nevada, pioneering many financing techniques for use with large and small scale development and redevelopment projects.

From 2009 to 2013 Mr. Heaney served on the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board and was the Vice Chair of the Board in the 2012-13 year. He is the past Chair of the California Public Securities Association and a past Trustee for the California City Management Foundation. Mr. Heaney earned a B.A. from Texas Tech University, an M.P.A. from the Maxwell School of Citizenship at Syracuse University.

Glenn Hegar

Elected in November 2014, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar serves as Texas' treasurer, check writer, tax collector, procurement officer and revenue estimator.

- Hegar is a sixth-generation Texan, who grew up farming land that has been in his family since the mid-1800s.
- Before becoming Comptroller, Hegar served in the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate, and also served as chair of the Sunset Advisory Commission, which works to eliminate inefficiency in government agencies.
- Hegar attended Texas A&M as an undergraduate, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts. He then attended St. Mary's University, earning a Master of Arts and his law degree. At the University of Arkansas, he earned a Master of Laws degree.
- Glenn and his wife Dara have three young children — Julia, Jonah and Claire.

Jason Hughes

Managing Director

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Specializes in public finance

Profile

- Works with cities, school districts, counties, economic development corporations, development districts and water authorities
- Has extensive experience with both short-term and long-term debt, including general obligation bonds, certificates of obligation, tax notes, revenue bonds, lease/purchases, variable rate demand notes, commercial paper, advance refunding, debt restructurings and synthetic debt products
- Provides financial advisory services for Texas, New Mexico and Missouri Education
- Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and Economics, Texas Tech University
- Current Affiliations
 - TML
 - TCMA ▪ GFOAT
- Licenses Held
- Registered Representative of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) o General Securities Representative, Series 7
 - o Uniform Securities Agent, Series 63
 - o Investment Bank Representative, Series 79

Lynda Humble

Lynda Humble Consulting

Believing that government, in general, is in peril by citizen disenchantment, media focus on the worst of government and a drive for "less government," local officials can make change in their local conditions by better educating our public on the value of what we do. After all, local government plays a significant role in the quality of life that its citizens have come to take for granted. I have a personal philosophy that government service is a noble profession, providing an opportunity for employees at every level to make a difference in the quality of life for those served on a daily basis. In addition, I believe that it is critically important that citizens come to see the value in local government. While not driven by maximizing profits as private corporations are, an argument can be made that the City's purpose is WAY more important which is to maximize life, health and safety related services provided to our citizens.

Offering 25+ years experience in the public sector, having worked for several DFW Metroplex cities in various roles including as City Manager, I have a proven record of creating transformational change and solving specific concerns with my extensive knowledge and broad based understanding of the inter-workings of all aspects of local government organizations and systems. I utilize my talents to help identify problems and find solutions tailored to fit each organization because no two cities are alike. Sometimes, you don't know what you don't know that you don't know....are you treating symptoms or really solving problems? Using a diagnostic process tailored around the City's value and purpose, I help organizations understand what is really driving their culture and offers solutions to build upon success and make improvements focusing on the 4P's - Process, Performance, People and Passion....always keeping our citizens in mind.

Bill Longley

Legislative Counsel at the Texas Municipal League

Bill Longley graduated from the University of Richmond in 2004 with a degree in political science and sociology. In 2007, he received his law degree from the University of Texas School of Law. Bill worked as a law clerk at TML while in law school. Prior to joining the TML Legal Department, Bill served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Open Records Division of the Office of Attorney General.

In his seven years at TML, Bill has worked on a variety of legal and legislative issues as they relate to Texas cities. He co-authored the TML Revenue Manual and TML Economic Development Handbook, and has spoken on numerous topics, with a focus on economic development, municipal revenue, open government, and elections.

Debbie Maynor

Debbie Maynor is currently an Assistant Director for Human Resources with the City of Austin. Ms. Maynor's previous employment includes 18 years of experience in human resource management including Director of Human Resources for Travis County, Director of Human Resources for the City of Killeen and Director of Recruitment for the Texas Department of Human Services. Ms. Maynor has a B.A. in Behavioral Science from the University of Maryland and a Master's in Business Administration from Tarleton State University. She holds the IPMA-CP certification as well as SPHR (Sr. Human Resources Professional) certification and the SHRM-CP certification. Drawing on her extensive management and human resources background and experiences, Ms. Maynor combines her practical management style and her successful leadership experience to do what she believes is most important: building creative learning groups and collaborative partnerships to help leaders and employees reach their fullest potential.

Lewis F. McLain, Jr.

Lewis F. McLain, Jr, is President of CityBase.Net. He has a BBA in Accounting from UNT and has taught graduate courses at SMU and UNT. He was the Budget Director for Garland and the first County Budget Officer in Texas at Dallas County during the 1970s. His consulting practice began in 1980 and continues today. After many years in a variety of specialties with numerous cities, Lewis' consulting practice is now solely in sales tax analysis and reporting. CityBase has an electronic news clipping service covering municipal news in Texas. He has written dozens of articles and presented many seminars over the years. He is currently writing daily blogs at www.citybaseblog.net. Lewis was the first Executive Director of GFOAT [and has an award program named after him.] CityBase is a GFOAT Gold Sponsor.

REBECCA MEYER

Director

Rebecca Meyer is a director with Fitch Ratings in the U.S. Public Finance Group, focusing on tax-backed issuers in the southwest region. She has over 20 years of experience in financial and credit analysis. Before joining Fitch, Rebecca was employed by water and electric utility, financial consulting and commercial banking concerns.

Rebecca earned a B.A. in Economics from the University of Chicago and a Master in Professional Accounting from the University of Texas at Austin. She is a chartered financial analyst, certified public accountant and certified information systems auditor.

Marcy Miranda

Communications Analyst, City of Irving

As a Communications Analyst at the City of Irving, Miranda focuses on growing Irving's social media presence and improving citizen engagement through social networks. She has nearly a decade of experience working in communications, having started her career as a reporter and producer in Colorado before transitioning to digital communications and government.

In Irving, Miranda has worked to update the city's social media policy and develop an online voice that matches the city's brand. She led the city's effort to include more multimedia content on its social media platforms and helped launch the city's official Instagram account.

Miranda graduated from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism in Illinois. She lives in Plano with her husband.

experience talent



**Lanny W.
Morrow, EnCE®**

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With 20 years of experience at BKD, Lanny is the senior data scientist and technical lead in advanced data mining and digital forensics for BKD's Forensics & Valuation Services division.

He uses **data mining** to identify concealed patterns in financial, nonfinancial and textual data otherwise undetectable due to the data's size and complexity. He also applied the principles of **text mining** to develop proprietary artificial intelligence capable of uncovering patterns and relationships in structured and textual data. This technology helps investigators assess the overall emotional state of communications, identify hidden relationship networks among subjects in an investigation and trace the evolution of topics, concepts and emotional states over time. Lanny's **artificial intelligence** technology allows BKD's fraud investigators to rapidly identify relevant content in emails, documents, social media and other sources early in an investigation. In addition, Lanny specializes in extracting information from databases and has developed numerous proprietary data mining tools and programs using a variety of programming languages.

Lanny is an EnCase® Certified Examiner (EnCE®)—a designation awarded to digital forensics professionals. He collects, preserves and analyzes digital evidence and conducts investigations related to Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, theft of intellectual property, public corruption, corporate espionage, fraud and white collar crimes, merger and acquisition due diligence, incident response and identity theft. He is a testifying expert in administrative, state and federal jurisdictions and has worked extensively for attorneys representing banking, health care, transportation, insurance, financial services, retail and manufacturing clients.

He performs statistical analysis related to litigation, investigations and regulatory compliance, designing appropriate sampling methodologies, determining valid strata, performing extrapolation and reviewing expert reports. His work in artificial intelligence and machine learning incorporates advanced statistics.

Lanny is a frequent speaker and writer on data mining and digital forensics, including contributions to university textbooks and the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners' **Fraud Magazine**. He also is an adjunct professor in the Master's in Data Science Program at Rockhurst University, Kansas City, Missouri.

He is a 1995 graduate of Missouri State University, Springfield, with B.A. degrees in accounting and finance.

Grayson Nichols

Grayson Nichols is an Assistant Vice President-Analyst on the Southwest Local Government Ratings Team located in Dallas. He is responsible for credits in Texas, Colorado, and New Mexico. Prior to joining Moody's, Grayson worked in the banking industry as a commercial credit analyst. Grayson holds a B.B.A. in Finance and Entrepreneurship from Baylor University and a M.B.A. from Colorado State University.

Diane Palmer-Boeck

Diane Palmer-Boeck, CPPO, CPPB, has 21 years municipal procurement experience and 26 years experience in public procurement, beginning with the US Army in West Germany, Redstone Arsenal, AL and Ft Hood, TX .

Diane is currently the Chief Procurement Officer at the City of Plano overseeing the activities of the Procurement, Inventory Control and Project Management Divisions.

Diane served on the Board of Directors for the National Purchasing Institute from 1998 - 2006 and is a Past President. She has served on the education and certification committees for the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing and is currently on the Board of Examiners for Universal Public Procurement Certification Council.

The City of Plano has received the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award each year since its inception in 1995.

Eddie Peacock

Eddie Peacock, CPA, Owner and General Manager of Eddie Peacock, PLLC, is a Financial Consultant to local governments. Eddie's areas of support include interim staff support, training in accounting and financial reporting, budget preparation and adoption, and other areas of municipal finance.

Eddie has worked in the public finance field since 1986, and attained the CGFO certification in 1998. Eddie serves on the GFOA Special review Committee as a CAFR reviewer and is an Advisory Board member for the TexasTERM local government investment pool.

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Connie Rose

Connie Rose has over 40 years of experience working in property taxes. She began her career in property taxes as a tax collector clerk with the City of Palestine in 1975. She then went to work for the county and was elected county tax assessor-collector for Anderson County in 1992 and was re-elected in 1996.

Connie retired from the county and began employment with the Comptroller of Public Account's Property Tax Assistance Division as an Information Specialist. While employed with the Comptroller, Connie was the Team Lead over the Arbitration and Information Services Section. Connie and her team provided Appraisal Review Board training statewide, offered technical assistance relative to the Property Tax Code and administered the statewide arbitration system. One of her responsibilities was assisting with the Truth-in-Taxation Guide and responding to technical questions about the process. She was presented the Comptroller's Service to External Customers Award in 2006. Connie retired from the state at the end of 2015 after 15 years of service.

Connie now works part-time for the law firm of McCreary, Veselka, Bragg and Allen as Director of Education. She has extensive knowledge of the Texas Property Tax Code and is an Educational Course Instructor. She was presented the Instructor of the Year Award from the Texas Association of Assessing Officers in 2014 and 2015.

During her career, Connie has obtained certification as a Registered Texas Collector, a Registered Texas Assessor-Collector and a Registered Professional Appraiser.

Bennett Sandlin

Since October 1 of 2010, Bennett Sandlin is Executive Director of the Texas Municipal League. Prior to that, he was General Counsel of the League, where he helped cities primarily in the fields of tax, economic development, budget, and finance issues, including the municipal hotel occupancy tax and the economic development sales tax. Bennett authored the Revenue Manual for Texas Cities, and was an instructor in Public Funds Investment Training. Bennett is a 1993 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law and has previously worked at the Municipal Affairs Division of the Texas Attorney General's Office.

Robert B. (Bob) Scott

C.P.A., Assistant City Manager/CFO, City of Carrollton

Bob has responsibility for all aspects of the City of Carrollton's financial operations. He has a master's degree in accounting and a Bachelor of Science degree in political science from Texas Tech University. Mr. Scott began his career in public accounting, ultimately serving as an audit manager with responsibility for a large number of governmental clients. Mr. Scott has extensive experience in accounting and financial reporting issues, having served on various GASB review committees and task forces. He has been a reviewer for the last three editions of GFOA's Governmental Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting (known as the "Blue Book") and various other GFOA publications. He is a past chair of GFOA's Committee for Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting (CAAFR), and he currently serves on the GFOA's Executive Board. While in public accounting, he served as a Practice Fellow for the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) and later as representative to the Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Committee. In 2008, the AICPA named him the outstanding C.P.A. in local government.



Martie Simpson - Finance

Martie Simpson currently serves as the City of New Braunfels Finance Director. She and her staff are responsible for directing the city's finances, accounting, budget and management, grants management, and procurement operations. Martie joined the City of New Braunfels in December of 2014.

Martie started her career as an accountant with a large certified public accounting firm. She then went to work in the private sector for a manufacturing company and later for an insurance company. In 1997, she began her career in municipal government with the City of Killeen finishing her career with the City as the Executive Director of Finance.

She is a CPA and currently serves as the Treasurer for GFOAT.

Martie Simpson, CPA

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Greg Whitnell

Vice President of Sales and Marketing, International

Greg is responsible for System Innovators' international sales and marketing teams, programs, associations, and partner channels. Prior to joining System Innovators, Greg was VP of Sales and General Manager for public sector divisions of The Active Network.

Greg's operational and sales experience has been focused on the public sector technology market for the past 16 years. Greg has worked with customers at the local, state and federal levels of government in North America and internationally on transformative citizen-facing strategies for service improvement in the areas of CRM and case management, e-government initiatives, payments and revenue management, and self-funded programs.

Greg holds a B.Sc.(Eng.) and M.Sc. degrees in engineering from the University of Guelph in Ontario Canada. Greg enjoys getting outdoors with his family to camp, travel and play sports.

Leticia Zavala

Leticia joined the City of Georgetown in 2000. She has worn many “hats” in her tenure at the City. She has served as Chief Accountant, Controller, IT Liaison, Project Manager, and currently the Customer Care Director for Georgetown Utility Systems. She is a 1989 graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a BBA in Accounting. She currently serves as the Vice-Chair on the Texas Public Power Association Marketing and Customer Service Committee. She has worked in both the public and private sectors for the past 25 years.