

NASBA State Board Report

A Digest of Current Developments Affecting State Accountancy Regulation

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April 2012

Carlos Johnson Nominated for Vice Chair

Carlos E. Johnson, CPA, Ed.D. (OK) was selected on March 19 as NASBA's Nominating Committee's candidate for NASBA Vice Chair 2012-2013, to automatically accede to NASBA Chair 2013-2014. Dr. Johnson, currently serving as a NASBA Director-at-Large and Chair of the Uniform Accountancy Act Committee, is a former Chairman of the Oklahoma Accountancy Board, former NASBA Southwest Regional Director and an active member and former chair of NASBA's Committee on State Board Relevance and Effectiveness.



Carlos Johnson

Earlier this year, he presented the report of the Business & Professional License Facilitation Task Force, created by Oklahoma Senate Bill 772, to which he was appointed by Governor Mary Fallin and which he chaired. Despite pressures for the consolidation of professional licensing boards, the Task Force recommended the implementation, maintenance and upgrade of the common database system and "that professional licensing and enforcement issues continue to be managed by existing licensing boards."

Dr. Johnson, currently of counsel to Eide Bailly, LLP, CPAs, is a retired partner of KPMG, a former partner of Lisle, Compton, Cole and Almen of Oklahoma City, and of Horne & Company of Ada, OK. With over 40 years of accounting experience, he has specialized in the practice of financial institutions, higher education, government, not-for-profit and retail accounting. Dr. Johnson was head of the Business School at East Central University, in Ada, OK, and also taught at Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma University. He holds a BS from East Central University and an MS and Ed.D. from Oklahoma State University.

Elections for NASBA officers will be held at the Annual Business Meeting on October 30, 2012 in Orlando, FL. NASBA Nominating Committee Chair Michael T. Daggett has asked that all State Boards submit to him their recommendations for NASBA Regional Directors and Directors-at-Large for the 2012-2013 NASBA Board of Directors by May 30, 2012.

Nominations for any elected position, including the office of Vice Chair, may also be made by at least five member Boards if filed with NASBA Chair Mark Harris at least 10 days prior to the Annual. No nominations from the floor will be recognized. ♦

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Executive Directors at the 30th Annual Meeting

EDs Share Information at 30th Annual

Lack of CPE compliance, tight budgets, revised education rules and IT advances were among the often mentioned subjects at NASBA's 30th Annual Executive Directors and State Board Staff Conference, held in San Antonio, TX, March 11 -14, 2012. Over the past year, some Boards have at least temporarily survived the threat of merger, others have been absorbed under umbrella organizations, and still the destiny of some remains to be determined. Executive Directors and staff members from 34 Boards attended and shared information about their successes and failures, as well as their suggestions for future improvements.

(Continued on page 2)

EDs Share Information at 30th Annual (From page 1)

Among the information reported by the Executive Directors:

- Merit raises have been eliminated in both Alabama and Kentucky. In Iowa over the past four years the Board has seen a 25 percent staff reduction and each year the Board's budget has decreased.
- Forty-two percent of the Colorado licensees who had their CPE audited were disciplined for not meeting requirements.
- Maryland moved back to requiring candidates have 120 hours to take the Uniform CPA Examination and 150 hours for licensure, which resulted in a 55 percent increase in applications this year. Ohio Executive Director Ron Rotaru said he is proposing a similar move in Ohio.
- The Missouri Board was overruled by the state's Administrative Hearing Commission, and Virchow Krause, LLP, was entitled to a new firm permit in the name of "Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP"
- Mississippi is sending an explanation to licensees on what "retired" means to the Board, because some licensees are confused as to what they can and can't do as a "CPA – retired."
- To meet its ethics continuing professional education requirement, North Carolina will accept behavioral or regulatory ethics CPE courses as registered with the NASBA Registry of CPE Sponsors.
- Virginia will be implementing a new fee structure in January 2013, the first change in 20 years.
- Beginning in 2016, universities in the state of Washington will be offering three-year baccalaureates to academically qualified students, without necessitating their enrolling in summer classes or carrying more than a standard full-time class load.
- Wyoming is encouraging their licensees to hold on to their original certificates in case they may want to reactivate them in the future; the Board does not have records for those who gave up their Wyoming licenses 15 or more years ago.

Oklahoma, Georgia and Montana have been able to push back efforts to centralize their Accountancy Boards, but New Hampshire was merged, NASBA President Ken Bishop reported. According to press coverage, Alabama is considering consolidating all regulatory boards in 2013, Alabama Executive Director Lamar Harris noted. Legislation had been introduced in Tennessee that would bring the Accountancy Board completely under the umbrella of the Department of Commerce and Insurance.

The latest information about the Accountancy Licensee Database and CPAverify was presented to the Executive Directors. Elizabeth Bachhuber, ALD Manager, showed a sample of the videos that have been prepared for State Board members, staff and other interested parties to explain how these projects work.



Doris Cubitt, CPA, provides an update on the South Carolina Board of Accountancy during the Roll Call of States.



(L to R) Bob Brooks, Mike Barham and Pat Hearn participate in one of the group exercises at the Conference.

Technical materials have also been prepared for these audiences. Currently 35 jurisdictions are live on ALD and 24 are on CPAverify, she reported. Rebecca Gebhardt, Compliance Services Manager, explained that the data feeds to the ALD site need to be kept current with the state's updates of their own Websites. Disciplinary e-mail alerts are being sent by the ALD staff to the Executive Directors to let them know disciplinary action has been taken by a state that is providing data.

In response to a request from the Executive Directors Committee, NASBA Chief Financial Officer and Vice President Michael Bryant presented an overview of NASBA's finances. He reported that the financially strong organization built under Past President David Costello has allowed NASBA to now refocus on providing more service to the State Boards.

The requirements of the IRS PTIN program and its relationship to the State Boards were described to the Executive Directors by Larry Gray, of Alterman Gray & Co., CPAs, LLC, a member of the NASBA Enforcement Committee. If someone prepares a tax return for a fee or for barter, even as an intern, the Internal Revenue Service considers him a paid preparer and he needs to have a PTIN (Preparer Tax Identification Number). The responsibility lies on the CPA firm to ensure its employees who need a PTIN have one. While the IRS is setting continuing professional education standards for unlicensed preparers, it is depending on the State Boards to have the appropriate CPE requirements for CPAs. ♦

President's Memo

The First 100 Days

When Franklin D. Roosevelt took office as President in 1933, in the midst of a great depression, he pioneered the concept of “the first 100 days.” As he moved to implement change, he set the 100-day threshold as the benchmark for measuring his administration’s success. He ultimately was able to pass 15 major pieces of legislation that established many of the social programs which exist today. Every President since Roosevelt has been “measured” as to the accomplishments of his first 100 days. Being a lover of history, as I considered topics for this month’s *President’s Memo*, it occurred to me that by the time you read this piece, I will have been President and CEO of NASBA for 100 days, so I thought it would be interesting to reflect on some of what has happened in “the first 100 days.”

A cornerstone of this period was the announcement and implementation of the “back to our roots initiative.” Several components of that initiative have taken place, including: At the recent Executive Directors and State Board Staff Conference, NASBA Chair Mark Harris and I announced the new strategic planning process for the upcoming year, wherein participants will include State Board members, executive directors, NASBA Board of Directors and designated staff. The inclusion of stakeholders, to what has been a staff-driven process, will bring a new perspective and fresh ideas to the process. Dan Dustin joined the NASBA staff as Vice President of State Board Relations in January, and he has been busy providing a communications conduit that has already built bridges between NASBA and State Boards who had drifted away from participation in NASBA. Our Communications Department has rolled out its new program to help State Boards create and produce high quality newsletters, social media videos and other educational materials without charge.

NASBA is also ramping up our legislative support capabilities. In the first 100 days, NASBA, through staff and volunteers, provided resources that successfully supported or opposed legislative initiatives in Maine, New Hampshire, Wyoming, Tennessee and Georgia. We are currently working with several states across the nation on legislative matters, and expect the number to rise as states face threatening proposals that could weaken or damage their capability to protect the public. NASBA volunteers and staff have participated in hearings, forums and roundtables, and written letters and responses, to insure that State Boards’ perspectives and positions are represented. The recent adoption of the “NASBA Position Policy” for developing responses enhances this capability and our representative voice. We are continuing to create a legislative office within NASBA, including the addition of legislative support staff, to augment our capability to support State Boards.

Finally, we have made significant internal changes and improvements in the first 100 days. Through reorganization we have moved and changed staff positions, and made structural changes in our Nashville and New York offices to improve efficiency and effectiveness. We have ramped up our data management capabilities, including developing a membership database that provides a better understanding of our stakeholders, which will be invaluable for incoming chairs as they make committee and task force appointments.

We (the staff of NASBA) are enjoying the opportunities that change brings and are excited about the opportunities ahead of us. There are more plans and projects in the works that will occur in the next 100 days. Who knows? Maybe I will introduce the “fireside chat” -- so keep your radios warm!

Semper ad meliora. (Always toward better things.)



Ken L. Bishop

— Ken L. Bishop
President and CEO

PCAOB Listens to Rotation Panels

The first of what may be several public meetings on auditor independence and audit firm rotation was held by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board on March 21-22 in Washington, D.C. Opinions expressed about the PCAOB's concept release ranged from investor groups endorsing mandatory rotation of audit firms after a set period, to former SEC Chair Roderick Hills stating: "Do not surrender the audit committee to the bureaucracy of mandatory rotation." PCAOB Chairman James Doty began the public meeting by stating: "The discussion will focus on ways to insulate the audit process from the pressure to maintain a long-term relationship with the audit client, pressure that could affect how an auditor approaches tough decisions on an audit." While speakers did not make unexpected comments, as many had previously provided written comments to the PCAOB's concept release, Mr. Doty felt these presentations were "important to have them on public record." Many recommendations were made that the PCAOB members said they would consider.



James Doty

System) has developed its own principles that call for holding competitive bidding for auditors every five years, explained Mary Hartman Morris, CALPERS investment officer. Ms. Morris, Damon Silvers of the AFL-CIO and Edward J. Durkins of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters all endorsed the mandatory audit firm rotation concept. Mr. Silvers observed that over the last ten years we have seen the "diminishing relevance of financial reporting," which became clear with the financial crisis of 2008. He believes that firm rotation was contemplated when the Sarbanes-Oxley Act was created.

Working on a seven-year cycle, TIAA-CREF made rotations among the big audit firms and did not see a 20 percent increase in audit costs that some have projected, John Biggs, former chairman and CEO of TIAA-CREF stated. He suggested that disclosure in the proxy statement of the audit firm's tenure would be a good thing, and real-time firm audits would be very useful, but he said that mandatory firm rotation would be at the top of his list to improve audit quality.

Many of the speakers acknowledged that the capabilities of audit committees vary. Audit committees are not equipped to do the job of determining whether audit firms should be replaced, according to John C. Bogle, founder of The Vanguard Group. "They have the responsibility, but not enough knowledge." He recommended that audit committees have their own staff. The system used in Norway, where shareholders are included in the auditor selection process, was suggested by Mr. Bogle. He maintains that accountants don't want to offend their actual clients or their potential clients, which is why the audit committee should be strengthened with its own staff, and why shareholders need to stand up for their rights.

**"Nothing will eliminate all future fraudulent reports."
- Former SEC Chairman Harvey Pitt**

Former SEC Chairman Harvey Pitt recommended, rather than having all firms be forced to switch after a designated time, leaving it up to the audit committee to make the determination whether a change is needed, and the PCAOB could articulate the determinants for a firm's retention. "Nothing will eliminate all future fraudulent reports," Mr. Pitt observed, but, he added "we must constantly strive to improve financial reporting."

Similarly, Robert Pozen of the Harvard Business School suggested: "The PCAOB could require the audit committee of every publicly traded company to hold a RFP process for its auditor at least once in any designated period, such as 10 to 20 years. The existing audit firm would be allowed to submit a proposal in response to the RFP and be chosen by the audit committee if it determined that the existing audit firm would likely perform the highest quality audit relative to costs over the designated period."

Mandatory rotation of audit firms is "a very blunt instrument," Donald T. Nicolaisen, former SEC chief accountant, observed. Recognizing that there are legal limits as to what the PCAOB can disclose about a particular firm, he suggested, "perhaps there are limited situations where the PCAOB could meet with an audit committee of a particular company to indicate that the PCAOB has significant concerns about an audit relationship." He commended the PCAOB for steps it has taken to have the audit partner sign the opinion, stronger enforcement, better training, and he said he would welcome dialog between audit committees and the PCAOB.

CALPERS (the California Public Employees' Retirement

**"They have the responsibility, but not enough
knowledge."
- John C. Bogle, founder of The Vanguard Group**

Proctor & Gamble employs all of the Big Four firms, P&G Senior Vice President Valarie L. Sheppard told the PCAOB. It employs one of the firms to be its auditor and the others to provide consulting services. Over 900 people are involved in P&G's audit work worldwide. With mandatory rotation P&G would have to decide at least a year in advance of the rotation which of the firms it would need to drop as a consultant, so that firm could take over the role of auditor. Ms. Sheppard reported P&G believes mandatory rotation would be disruptive, add significant costs, and would not result in improvement of audit quality. Speakers from Entergy Corporation and Goodyear Tire & Rubber agreed with P&G. Darren Wells, Goodyear Executive Vice President and CFO, observed that no regulation could force the minority of auditors who do not abide by professional standards to do so. Theodore

(Continued on page 7)

NASBA Responds to JOBS Bill

Both houses of Congress passed the JOBS Act (the Jump-Start Our Business Start-Ups Act - H.R. 3606 and S. 1933), on a vote of 390 to 23 in the House and 73 to 26 in the Senate. NASBA had encouraged Accountancy Board members, staff and other interested parties to contact their U.S. Senators before the bill's passage on March 22. NASBA Chair Mark Harris and President Ken Bishop wrote to Senate members on March 16.



Mark Harris

“Section 3 (c) of S. 1933 would prohibit FASB from establishing ‘any accounting principles that would require an emerging growth company to comply with any new or revised financial accounting standard as of an effective date that is earlier than the effective date that applies to a [privately held] company ...’

“The inclusion of Section 3 (c) would undermine the rigorous, independent standard-setting process undertaken by FASB, and effectively prevent FASB from considering and balancing the broad range of interests in setting an effective date, including the time and effort necessary to transition to new requirements. The provisions would significantly compromise the FASB’s mandate of ensuring that investors have the benefit of high quality financial statements

that provide uniform, timely, transparent, and representative depictions of a company’s financial condition and would establish a dangerous precedent by effectively legislating accounting standards.”

SEC Chairman Mary L. Shapiro had also voiced her concern about the legislation’s weakening important investor protections. NASBA Past Chair, U.S. Congressman K. Michael Conaway observed: “Almost 80 years ago, Congress had the wisdom to establish an independent body to develop those standards so that accounting was never influenced by politics. Today, as more Americans than ever are active participants in financial markets, the need for a trusted, independent arbiter of public accounting standards has never been more important....”

As the Senate version of the bill added provisions to prevent “crowd-funding” practices (which allow companies to acquire thousands of investors giving very small shares of stock to each), the bill went back to the House and was again passed by a vote of 380 to 41.

President Obama has said he will sign the legislation. The *Wall Street Journal* commented: “The measure marks a significant rollback of the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley law...as well as the first major slackening of securities law since the Dodd-Frank financial overhaul.” ♦

Georgia Board Averts Consolidation

Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp has stepped back from his plan to take authority from 43 licensing boards, which govern 460,000 professionals, and give it to a new seven-consumer-member board appointed by the governor (SB 445). His goal is to expedite the professional licensing and license renewal procedures. “If we can knock out 70 to 80 or 90 percent of the applications that are clean, we can reduce the number of board meetings,” Mr. Kemp said. The existing professional licensing boards would be converted to professional licensing policy boards composed of licensees and professional association members. On February 24 Mr. Kemp released a statement: “I was elected to be a leader and public servant, which means increasing operations efficiency in each agency division and reducing regulations for license holders and entrepreneurs. I would rather spend the coming year crafting a bill that addresses the needs and concerns of all parties than to haphazardly rush the legislative process.”

In response to critics of the plan, Secretary Kemp said that in 2011, the call center for the professional licensing boards received 58,094 calls from applicants requesting the status of their license application. Since 2008, the budget for Georgia’s professional licensing boards division was cut 17 percent, which resulted in board staff being reduced from 126 to 86. Mr. Kemp claims his plan would allow him to leverage the limited resources he has. The proposed Georgia Board of Licensing and Regulation (GBLR) would hear appeals on decisions of the Secretary of State’s office and hold hearings for passage of rules.

Secretary Kemp claims licensees in the state are “waiting a month or longer to get their license.” NASBA’s processing time for a Georgia CPA license is approximately five days, NASBA Director of Client Services Patricia Hartman reports.

Mr. Kemp wrote to a critic, “To address the prevailing concern of how the GBLR could make rules for a profession in which it is not an expert, it is important to remember that the creation of rules is limited by the enacting statute. A proposed rule will be heard and judged on its merits and if it is a good rule that complies with the statute, it will be adopted.”

The Georgia Secretary of State’s enforcement staff contains 16 post certified investigators and 10 inspectors. Mr. Kemp comments: “The investigators and inspectors have the experience and training to know when an investigation or inspection requires the knowledge of an industry expert or when there is a routine violation. Therefore I am puzzled by the board members who are so adamantly opposed to formalizing this work.”

According to a report in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Secretary of State Kemp had looked for the support of Governor Nathan Deal. However, a spokeswoman for the Governor said he would support a streamlined concept for licensure and renewals, but he also supports the policy expertise of the 43 boards.

NASBA supported the Georgia Board of Accountancy’s and the Georgia Society of CPAs’ opposition to this bill. NASBA’s President Ken L. Bishop commented: “While arguments for consolidation sometimes seem to have some validity, the tendency to treat the regulation of the accounting profession, with its complexities and national and global links, the same as all other regulatory boards is problematic. In truth, the Georgia Accountancy Board’s ability to protect the public would be enhanced by greater, not lesser, autonomy. We were pleased that Governor Deal recognized the importance of relying on the policy expertise of the members of the Georgia Board of Accountancy.” ♦

House Subcommittee Ponders Oversight

Whether or not the PCAOB should have the authority to require auditor firm rotation was among the issues addressed at a March 28 hearing on “Accounting and Auditing Oversight: Pending Proposals and Emerging Issues Confronting Regulators, Standard Setters, and the Economy,” held by the Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises Subcommittee of the House Financial Services Committee. A cornerstone of that hearing was an amendment to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act drafted by Michael Fitzpatrick (R-PA). He proposed that Section 103 of SOX include: “(c) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY – The Board shall have no authority under this title to require that audits conducted for a particular issuer in accordance with the standards set forth under this section be conducted by specific auditors, or that such audits be conducted by an issuer by different auditors on a rotating basis.”



Mike Fitzpatrick

Subcommittee Chairman Scott Garrett (R-NJ) voiced his support for the amendment as he opened the hearing. He observed the PCAOB’s concept release on mandatory rotation “is concerning.” In his opening remarks, Committee Chair Spencer Bachus (R-AL) stated: “Regulatory overreach seems to be alive at the PCAOB.” Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA) said she was eager to explore ideas other than firm rotation.

Gary Kabureck, chairman of Financial Executives International’s (FEI) Subcommittee on Relations with the Financial Accounting Standards Board and chief accounting officer of Xerox Corporation, outlined for the Congress the FEI’s reasons for opposing mandatory rotation: only the Big Four firms have global resources to effectively audit the larger multinational corporations; selecting and transitioning to a new auditor will be extremely costly for the auditor and the company; non-audit relationships with a Big 4 firm would need to be curtailed and replaced if they were to be selected as the next auditor; industry expertise among the Big 4 varies and may limit potential selection as a new auditor; and complex transactions may extend over several periods and it would

be desirable to have the same auditor present at the beginning and end of these transactions. He referenced Section 301 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and stated: “Mandating auditor rotation would circumvent this external director governance responsibility and compromise the audit committee’s ability to effectively engage, oversee and terminate an audit firm.”



Gary Kabureck

In the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s statement to the Subcommittee, they repeated their charge that the PCAOB was engaging in “mission creep,” which had drawn a sharp response from PCAOB Chair Doty at their March 22 forum. According to the Chamber, the PCAOB “is leaving the realm of audit regulation and crossing the threshold of regulating corporate governance, a subject area that has been left to state corporate law and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Moreover, the PCAOB should clarify that their recent proposal for auditors to understand executive compensation is for risk assessment rather than trying to regulate corporate governance.”

The academic literature on the benefits of mandatory rotation is mixed, Joseph V. Carcello, director of research at the Corporate Governance Center of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, advised the Subcommittee. He recommended they allow the PCAOB to continue its examination of the issue of auditor independence and professional skepticism, under the active supervision of the SEC.

Professor Carcello pointed out to the Subcommittee members that the legislation proposed by Representative Fitzpatrick has a potential flaw as it “would prohibit the PCAOB from requiring public companies to use specific auditors. PCAOB Auditing Standard No. 5 (AS5) already requires an issuer to use the same auditor to audit the financial statements and internal control over financial reporting. This requirement in AS5 could be interpreted as the Board requiring an issuer to use a specific auditor. Eliminating this AS5 requirement would likely make audits more expensive and less effective.” ♦

Attorneys Consider Incorporated Standards

Attorneys and investigators from 22 Accountancy Boards considered mobility implementation, ways Boards use social media, standards incorporated by reference, conducting an investigation, audits performed by non-U.S. auditors and the Accountancy Licensee Database at the 17th State Board Legal Counsel Conference, March 11-13 in San Antonio. Stacey Grooms, NASBA Regulatory Affairs Manager, reported the 37 attendees, including five investigators, made for record attendance for this forum, which promotes the networking of the State Accountancy Boards’ legal counsel. She encouraged all the Boards to send their legal counsel to next year’s meeting.

NASBA Legal Counsel Noel Allen asked the attorneys: “To what extent can states by statute or rule adopt or incorporate by

reference standards developed by someone else?” The answer is different depending on the state’s rules and law, he said. ♦



Noel Allen speaks in San Antonio, TX.

PCAOB Listens to Rotation Panels (From page 4)

Bunting, Jr., Entergy senior vice president stated: “Any additional information brought to the audit committee can only help. But the decision [to change auditor] should be made by the audit committee.”

While Arthur Levitt, former SEC Chairman, commended the PCAOB for “taking on an issue that will be opposed by much of the business community,” he commented that, “The JOBS Act is a much greater threat” to the lowering of standards [see story on page 5]. He advised that the PCAOB can’t afford to “dilute the value of the audit committee,” but he did not believe that mandatory rotation would hurt the audit committee’s morale.

“Auditors are in the business of noticing when something is wrong. If they don’t see that, why do we pay them?” Max Bazerman, of Harvard Business School, stated. As an example, he pointed to the Madoff feeder funds’ accountants who had an incentive not to notice a problem with Madoff’s reports. Professor Bazerman told the PCAOB that current institutions prevent auditor independence as the auditors have the incentive to keep being hired, which biases the way they interpret data. Dr. Bazerman recommended that auditors be hired under contracts that specify there will be a change of auditors at the end of the contract. The staff should not be able to move to the successor auditor and the staff should be barred from working for the client. During the term of the contract, Professor Bazerman explained, the audit firm could only be fired if the PCAOB agreed that the firm had shown it was incompetent.

Financial statement insurance was recommended by Jack Ciesielski, president of R.G. Associates, Inc. He commended the PCAOB for challenging the status quo on behalf of investors, but he thought audit firm rotation could work counter to investor interests. “The client/payer relationship is the root cause,” of the

situation and there needs to be a change in the model for audit payment, Mr. Ciesielski explained. His solution is to have the insurance industry guarantee the usability of financial reporting. He admitted this would be a change going beyond the PCAOB’s authority, but he feels the PCAOB is the right regulatory body “to tee this up.”

Improving the strength of the audit committee was recommended by Arnold Wright of Northeastern University. He agreed that following the Sarbanes-Oxley Act there were dramatic improvements in the audit committees’ power and diligence, but a “passive role seems somewhat common,” Professor Wright said. He believes that the social or business ties that audit committee members may have to management threaten their independence. Based on research findings, he made four suggestions: Audit committees should fulfill their role of being the primary party in hiring the outside auditor. Audit committees can act as an ally of audit firms and should resolve audit disputes. Audit committee members should avoid social relationships with outside auditors or management. Companies should seek audit committee members who have industry expertise.

“We do believe the status quo is not an option,” PricewaterhouseCoopers Chairman Robert E. Moritz told the PCAOB meeting. He reported that 92 percent of PWC audit staff reported they had to have a “difficult conversation” with clients in the past two years. “You don’t hear about the good audits,” he observed.

The written responses to the PCAOB’s concept paper can be found on its Website (www.pcaobus.org), as well as an archived Webcast of the two-day meeting. A NASBA representative has been asked to participate in a future forum the PCAOB will hold on this topic. ♦

CPT Announces New Student Chapters

The NASBA Center for the Public Trust has launched four new student chapters in the past six months:

- University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
- Rutgers University, Newark, NJ
- University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM
- Ohio University, Athens, OH

The chapters provide an interactive forum on ethics, while creating opportunities for students to network with the business community and develop professional leadership skills. Business Executives are brought to campuses to share real-life experiences and discuss ethical challenges. The chapters are open across all majors, although at this time about 80 percent of the members are either accounting or finance majors. Amy Walters, manager of programs for the CPT, estimates these new chapters will add more than 150 new student members to the SCPT.

Membership activities include regular special events, community service, the Student



Leadership Conference, “Campus Being a Difference Award,” and the “Ethics in Action” student video competition. The video competition was open to all college students, and students from across the nation registered. Winners will be announced April 10, 2012. See www.studentcpt.org

Building on the success of last year’s Student Leadership Conference, this year the CPT will hold the Student Leadership Conference in conjunction with NASBA’s Eastern Regional Meeting, in Philadelphia. Two student representatives from each established chapter and prospective chapters will attend. This year’s attendance is expected to be almost double last year’s. ♦

Register for June Regionals

It's time to go on line and register for NASBA's 2012 Regional Meetings, June 13-15 in Philadelphia and June 27-29 in Anchorage. The meetings will offer an update on the status of the Financial Accounting Foundation's private company standard setting initiative, presented by FAF Chairman John Brennan at the Eastern Regional and FAF President Teresa Polley at the Western Regional, and the results of the American Accounting Association's Pathways Commission's work, presented at both meetings by the Commission's Chairman, Dr. Bruce Behn. The Regional Meetings will once again feature the smaller interactive sessions that encourage dialog among the states. Besides the Regional Breakouts, there will also be sessions on the impact of international standards

on State Boards, keeping continuing professional education relevant, effective enforcement and communicating to licensees and the public on a limited budget. For those wondering how NASBA has fared since the re-firement of David Costello, President Ken Bishop and Chair Mark Harris will be describing the staff reorganization and projects underway.

There will be luncheons and receptions to provide networking opportunities, and a guest tour, as well as a gala event. Scholarships are available to assist State Boards that are unable to send a Board member to their Regional Meeting. To register or to obtain details on the meetings' full program, or more information on the NASBA scholarships, please go to www.nasba.org. ♦

Call for NASBA Award Nominees

Awards Committee Chair Billy M. Atkinson has called on State Board members, executive directors, associates and staff to submit their nominations for the 2012 William H. Van Rensselaer Public Service Award, the NASBA Distinguished Service Award and the Lorraine P. Sachs Standard of Excellence Award. Award criteria and nomination forms can be found on www.nasba.org. Completed forms should be submitted to Communications Manager Cassandra Gray (cgray@nasba.org) by June 15, 2012.

The William H. Van Rensselaer Award, in honor of NASBA's first full-time executive director, recognizes a volunteer who has

contributed to the development of a new or existing program for State Boards of Accountancy, or who has influenced the passage of rules or statutes to strengthen accountancy regulation. The Distinguished Service Award recognizes a volunteer for unswerving commitment and dedication to enhancing the effectiveness of State Boards. The Lorraine P. Sachs Award, in honor of NASBA Executive Vice President-Emeritus Sachs, is presented to a current State Board administrator who has done an outstanding job of improving the effectiveness of regulation.

Questions should be directed to Ms. Gray at (615) 564-2172. ♦