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Behind the scenes at the General Service Office, our employees serve the Fellowship and help ensure A.A.'s continuity. Alongside those who are A.A. members, nonalcoholic employees contribute their professional experience and expertise to support these services, as they work together to carry forward A.A.'s primary purpose.

The following reflections from two nonalcoholic employees, the Archives Director and the Chief Financial Officer, offer a glimpse into how their work supports A.A. as a whole. While Archives preserves who we are and where we have been, A.A.'s financial stewardship helps ensure where we can go. The prudent use of [Seventh Tradition contributions](#) supports not only the services we see today, but also the preservation of our history and our ability to serve generations to come.

Together, these efforts reflect a shared responsibility: to honor A.A.'s past, support its present, and safeguard its future. Through the collective contributions of the Fellowship, both the preservation of our history and the delivery of vital services remain possible, ensuring that A.A. is here for the next alcoholic who reaches out for help.

Michelle Mirza, Archives Director

My name is Michelle Mirza, and I am not an alcoholic, so I freely share my full name. I have the honor of serving in the Archives Department at the General Service Office, working alongside a dedicated team of archivists. I have served in this role since January 2009, following earlier positions in the department beginning in November 1999.

With nearly 27 years at GSO, I have gathered many meaningful memories. One of my favorites is what I fondly call my "typewriter story." When I first arrived, the Archives consisted of two employees, two computers, and a single typewriter. That typewriter was eventually replaced only because we could no longer find parts to repair it.

Although the GSO Archives formally opened in November 1975, materials have been collected and preserved since A.A.'s earliest days. Leading that effort was Nell Wing, GSO's first Archivist, who also served as Bill W.'s secretary beginning in 1940. Since then, we have grown from a few filing cabinets into multiple storage facilities housing both paper and digital collections. In the earlier days of our work, documents were stored on floppy disks—a technology that now feels like a charming artifact of its time. I've even kept a few samples to remind us just how far we've come. Today, we're fortunate to partner closely with our colleagues in the Technology Services Department, ensuring that our digital

records are preserved securely in modern Cloud Storage. It's a meaningful evolution from those early formats to the reliable systems that safeguard our records now.

I've often been asked: How do A.A. Archives help carry the message of recovery? Why dedicate resources to preserving what may appear to be "old materials"? While much of our work happens behind the scenes, it plays a vital role in documenting A.A.'s history, supporting research, and preserving the identity of our Fellowship. Less visible, but equally important, is our responsibility to collect and preserve legal and administrative records, helping ensure accountability and transparency for A.A. as a whole.

Archives may not always be recognized as providing direct service, yet what we witness every day is a deep and enduring appreciation for A.A.'s history. This spirit is reflected in the thousands of inquiries your archivists respond to each year, supporting researchers, answering questions, and helping locate specific documents and facts. As we look ahead to the General Service Conference in April, delegates spend the week exploring agenda items and engaging in thoughtful and sometimes spirited discussion. It's helpful to remember how often we turn to our past. The successes, the missteps, and everything in between all help guide us toward well-informed decisions. And behind the scenes, the Seventh Tradition contributions of the fellowship allow our professional archives staff to carefully invest in preservation tools and supplies that make this ongoing connection to our history possible.

Our responsibility also extends to local archivists serving district and area archives. We provide complimentary materials and resources to support them in this work. These materials are printed, published, translated, photocopied, mailed, or made available on aa.org, and are developed in response to local needs.

Perhaps we can view the information in our Archives not simply as storage, but as a living asset. To be an archivist is to practice patience, think long-term, and make decisions that will matter decades from now. Without this work, supported by Seventh Tradition contributions, valuable historical records could be lost, leaving gaps in A.A.'s story.

The Archives staff at your GSO join me in thanking you for your trust and support.

Learn more about the GSO Archives at aa.org.

Paul Konigstein, **Chief Financial Officer**

My name is Paul Konigstein. I am not an alcoholic, so I freely share my full name. I have had the privilege of serving as Chief Financial Officer at the General Service Office since October 2020.

In this role, I provide the General Service Conference (GSC), General Service Board (GSB), and A.A. World Services (AAWS) Board with timely, accurate, and relevant financial information to support their responsibility as prudent stewards of Seventh Tradition contributions. I also manage the development of the annual and mid-year reforecast budgets and provide leadership and Staff with the information they need to make decisions aligned with those budgets. In addition, I oversee the processing of contributions, the financial aspects of literature sales, and payments to vendors.

I have spent more than 35 years in financial management across a range of nonprofits, gaining experience with organizations of many sizes and types.

Our Seventh Tradition is unique among other nonprofit organizations. Besides other Twelve Step programs, no other organization I know of believes that public solicitation of funds is dangerous and acceptance of large gifts is unwise. I know of no other organization that declines outside contributions or gifts designated for a specific purpose.

This uniqueness is one of our greatest strengths. Many nonprofits rely on government funding that can fluctuate with economic or political priorities. By declining outside funding, A.A.'s commitment to the still-suffering alcoholic remains steady and independent.

By not accepting public funds, large gifts, or earmarked contributions, we ensure that resources are directed according to group conscience—through the GSC, GSB, and our corporate boards, rather than donor preferences. This allows us to support essential services such as our website, the Meeting Guide App, Fellowship Connection, and the Corrections Correspondence System, as well as other priorities of the Fellowship.

As CFO, I have the opportunity to see how every department contributes to A.A.'s primary purpose through the wide range of services and initiatives supported by Seventh Tradition contributions, including:

- The upcoming Fifth Edition of the Big Book and progress on a Fourth Edition in Spanish, which both reflect the evolving needs of our Fellowship.
- The Public Information assignment's coordination of Public Service Announcements to attract the still-suffering alcoholic to A.A.
- Sharing our experience around the world by Trustees at Large, the General Manager, and Staff.
- The work of the Treatment, Accessibilities and Remote Communities assignment to make every alcoholic feel welcome in A.A., regardless of their background, culture, orientation, challenge, or location.
- The Corrections assignment's efforts to extend the hand of A.A. into correctional facilities.
- The work of the Cooperation with the Professional Community assignment to raise awareness and understanding of alcoholics and A.A. among professionals such as those in healthcare, law, corrections, and the clergy.

In my role at GSO, it has been an honor to contribute to self-support literature, including the pamphlet *Where Money and Spirituality Mix*, and to help develop the A.A. Finance Guidelines, which share experience with groups on managing financial resources responsibly.

It has also been personally gratifying and moving to see the impact of our Seventh Tradition-supported work on behalf of the Fellowship. For example, as the parent of a neurodivergent adult, I was greatly moved by the presentation of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities at the 74th General Service Conference on updating A.A. service material to better carry the message to alcoholics with intellectual or information-processing challenges, communication challenges, and diverse

neurological abilities. As I cried knowing that if my son suffered from alcoholism, A.A. would make every effort to be there for him. I cried again when I read the shared experience from neurodivergent members, suggestions for meetings, and suggestions for sponsorship that are now part of the flyer [Making the A.A. Message Accessible](#) in a new section “The Alcoholic Who Is Neurodivergent.”

I am grateful to serve as Chief Financial Officer at the General Service Office. Thank you for your trust and for your Seventh Tradition contributions, which make this work possible.

Learn more about the Seventh Tradition and the power of Self Support at aa.org