



**CELEBRATING
30 YEARS OF AFC**

2022 A YEAR IN REVIEW

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Accredited Financial Counselor® (AFC®) certification program, and we have a lot to celebrate!

What began in a spare bedroom of our co-founder's home 30 years ago, is now a thriving, growing certification program that continues to create impact in the lives of individuals, families, and communities across the country.

Today the AFC is truly **SETTING THE STANDARD:**

- It is the only financial counseling certification that is nationally accredited, demanding consistent excellence and ensuring public trust.
- We now have approximately 3,000 AFC professionals in good standing worldwide, and more than 1,600 candidates pursuing the designation.
- And, most importantly, our impact is far reaching. From academia, to private practice, to nonprofits, to military, to banks and credit unions, and beyond. AFC professionals are on the front lines – helping individuals and families navigate their personal financial wellbeing at every stage of their financial journey.

Every year we publish a “Year in Review” as a way to share our milestones, while also offering transparency around our strategic goals and values. However, this year we had another goal in mind. We wanted to share how the various parts of our organization—**CERTIFICATION, EDUCATION, and MEMBERSHIP**—work together to create **IMPACT**.

Whether you are new to our community or have been a part of AFCPE for many years, my hope is that you will read this report and discover something new. Maybe it's a new program to expand your knowledge. A new opportunity to grow your network. Or a new way to get involved.

Or maybe you'll feel inspired to tell someone about AFCPE. To share the value of the AFC with a peer. To invite a colleague to join AFCPE Membership. Or to encourage your organization to invest in AFC certification or Essentials training to build capacity for high quality, culturally-competent financial counseling and education in your community.

30 years from now, we want the AFC to be a household name. We want to ensure that anyone who needs an AFC professional has access to one—regardless of income or background. And we want AFCPE to be a professional home for a more integrated personal finance field—a place where personal financial professionals can lean on one another, learn from one another, and thrive in their work and their careers.

This year we honor our past, celebrate the present, and look to the future. Thank you for being an important part of our community.

Cheers to #30(more)yearsofAFC!

RACHAEL DELEON
Executive Director, AFCPE®

FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS, the Accredited Financial Counselor® (AFC®) certification has set the standard for the highest level of knowledge, skill, and integrity in the field of financial counseling and education.

We are proud to deliver a program that has held accreditation by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) since 2015. Accreditation demands consistent excellence and ensures public trust of a program's value and worth. By holding ourselves to the highest standards, we elevate the profession and its dedicated professionals.

CELEBRATING
#30YEARSOFAFC

WHY THE AFC?

If you're passionate about helping people with their money to improve their lives, *you're in the right place.*



**PEOPLE PURSUE
THE AFC® TO:**



Improve Confidence

Your passion for helping all people reach financial wellness sets you apart—but it also means you're likely to feel a stronger pressure to provide sound guidance. An AFC® certification gives you the tools to feel confident in your recommendations.



Gain Credibility

Trusting someone to help with your money is a big decision. You can assure prospective clients of your ethics, skills, and the quality of your guidance by getting certified.



Enhance your Career

If you measure your career growth by the impact you have on your clients, you've come to the right place. An AFC® certification empowers you to build deeper trust with clients, foster respect among colleagues, and expand your skillset to make a bigger difference.



In celebration of 30 years, we didn't settle with 3 reasons—we gave you 30 Reasons to become an AFC

WHO IS PURSUING THE AFC®?

Organizations: Do well and do good.

AFCs work for nonprofit organizations, in academia, for financial institutions, within the military, in private practice, and more. Increasingly, organizations are recognizing the value of the AFC as a capacity builder to provide high quality financial education in their communities.

Students: Experience for a lifetime.

The AFC is affiliated with more than 30 undergraduate and graduate programs—allowing students enrolled in a Registered Education Program to meet the educational requirements to sit for the AFC exam.

AFC® registrations
for students from
a Registered
Education Program
+44% LY

Career changers: Find more of what matters.

People come to the AFC from all areas of lived experience. We have actors, musicians, financial analysts, social workers, and more. Money touches every aspect of our lives, and AFCs are often inspired to help their community.

Career enhancers: A Differentiator.

The AFC provides validation for employers and credibility for clients. It sets you apart from others in the field and shows that you are doing right by the people you serve.

“Using an empathetic, shame-free, culturally-sensitive approach, AFC® professionals work hard each day to break the stigma attached to money and put the ‘personal’ back in personal finance.”

— JAROD TAYLOR, AFC®



SNAPSHOT OF AN AFC®:

AFC professionals are located in every state, and on military bases around the world.

Unlike the majority of the financial industry, 67% of AFC professionals are women.

According to our 2018 job analysis survey, up to 48% of our professionals are people of color.

SUPPORTING YOUR CERTIFICATION JOURNEY

AFCPE staff is dedicated to supporting our candidates throughout their certification journey. From special office hours, webinars, meetups, and more; all content is created with your success in mind.



NEW IN 2022

For those interested in the AFC

“Wanna be an AFC” webinars:

A no-pressure, informative session where we give you all the information you need to make your decision.

For those pursuing the AFC

A new and improved AFC Candidate Community:

Our online discussion platform helps you build community with other candidates—to exchange resources and ideas and motivate one another on your path to certification.

For AFC professionals

FindanAFC.org:

In 2022, we launched a new microsite to help consumers find an AFC professional. You can customize your page through your myAFCPE profile, even adding a client-facing bio.

TESTIMONIALS

“As an AFC® Candidate, I have loved learning how to help people avoid the financial pitfalls that are rampant in our society. I specialize in teaching young moms how to have stability, clarity, and freedom in their money. Having experienced what I would call “money trauma” as a kid growing up, I feel passionately about helping families, especially moms, have the skills and knowledge base they need to confidently lead their family. My education through AFCPE® is helping me do that, and I am so grateful! Here’s to 30 more years!”

— TAYLOR SANCHEZ, AFC® CANDIDATE

“This is one of the most practical, humble, and useful designations that I have taken, and I have taken A LOT! I have already started putting valuable information learned into practice to better serve our clients.”

— ANDREW KOMAROW,
AFC®, CFP®, CHSNC®, MSFS, AEP®, CAP®

AFC: CREATING IMPACT

PRO BONO FINANCIAL COUNSELING INITIATIVE

FOR NEARLY THREE YEARS, AFC® professionals have generously provided pro bono financial counseling as part of a nationwide initiative launched at the height of the pandemic. When the program began, AFCPE staff and volunteers expected to be flooded with clients who were overwhelmed and in need of financial guidance and support during uncertain times. While uptake was slow, and no show rates at times discouraging, the outcomes and feedback from the thousands of Americans who have connected with an AFC counselor were incredibly positive.

Participants consistently left 4.5/5 star reviews, often naming their counselor within the review. And counselors would stop by AFCPE office hours and share their excitement about how they were able to meet the needs of clients in situations that appeared to be insurmountable.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS HAD TO SAY:

“Valuable information to use for a lifetime, my counselor was knowledgeable and understanding of my situation. I would recommend [meeting with an AFC®] to anyone who needs some insight and expertise with financial counseling. Great starting place of information to form a financial plan with a high success of a great achievement.”

“I greatly appreciated the opportunity to work with my financial coach. His expertise, his ability to listen to my story and my needs, and his wise counsel helped me to clarify the way forward in a coherent and supportive way. I would recommend him to anybody.”



VETERANS INITIATIVE

In February 2022, AFCPE partnered with the Association of Military Banks of America (AMBA)'s Veterans Benefits Banking Program (VBBP) and the National Foundation for Credit Counselors (NFCC) to provide financial and credit counseling services to Veterans. In August, the VA began a letter campaign with information about the program going out to nearly 3 million Veterans through mid-2023.

84% currently in counseling or complete.

VETERAN SNAPSHOT:

60%

MALE

70%

HAVE A DISABILITY

55%

PEOPLE OF COLOR

38

DIFFERENT STATES

The Veterans initiative is planned to continue into 2023.

TOP 3 REASONS FOR COUNSELING:

30%

BUDGET COUNSELING

14%

IMPROVING CREDIT

12%

DEBT REDUCTION

“Jodi was so helpful, and non-judgmental. It's always scary to talk about money, and I have never had a healthy relationship with it. So we are really starting from square one with me. She talked me through everything and asked me about everything, not just my spending habits, but why I spend the way that I do. It was a holistic approach to something that could very easily have been ‘just numbers.’”



ESSENTIAL EDUCATION

THE FINANCIAL WORLD IS ALWAYS EVOLVING, so we're tireless in the pursuit and development of education opportunities that don't just keep pace—they set the pace.

AFCPE
EDUCATION:

Essential.
Live.
On Demand.



NEW IN ESSENTIALS IN 2022

AFCPE Essentials courses moved to a new learning management system to provide a more stable platform, better student support, and more options to improve and grow our courses!

A new version of Money Management Essentials launched! Same great content. Brand new format.

THE NEW COURSE ALLOWS YOU TO:

Practice your financial counseling skills on a client.

Gain a deeper understanding of financial concepts through reinforced learning.

Test your knowledge through quizzes and discussion questions.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023

We're partnering with Sage Financial Solutions to deliver Coaching Essentials: planned to launch in spring 2023!

We're refreshing Financial Inclusion Essentials, developed in partnership with the National Disability Institute (NDI).

We introduced Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Essentials, a course developed with generous grant funding from JPMorgan Chase & Co.

TAKE ALL THE COURSES. COLLECT ALL THE BADGES.

Essentials courses provide you with specialized skills and knowledge to enhance your work with clients.



Money Management Essentials

Financial Inclusion Essentials

Military Essentials

College Finance Essentials

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Essentials

Coaching Essentials
(Coming in 2023!)

AFCPE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The financial world is never stagnant, which is why AFCPE delivers new professional development content every month—on topics that matter to you and support the work you do with your clients.

ACCESSIBLE

Offered live and on demand—so you can fit it into your busy schedule.

All new webinars offer closed captioning (cc)—and in 2022, we updated our library of on demand webinars to include cc as well!

AFFORDABLE

We keep our prices low and our quality high. Better yet, join AFCPE Membership and all live and on demand content is free to you!



In 2022, our largest educational event, the AFCPE Symposium went hybrid for the first time ever! This decision was designed as a bridge, to give our community a little extra time before moving back to a fully in person event in 2023.

NEW IN 2022

All general sessions and featured breakout sessions were live streamed and featured ASL and real-time captioning.

All in person breakout sessions were recorded – and were made available to both in person and virtual attendees through next October!

More networking chats and lunch and learn opportunities were added to our in person event—a fan favorite from our virtual event.

AFCPE MEMBERSHIP is separate from certification. It brings together professionals from a variety of financial fields, creating a strong network of knowledge and delivering professional development, resources, and benefits that positively impact your work and enhance your career.

In 2022, more than 2,200 financial educators, researchers, and practitioners made AFCPE their professional home!

DID YOU KNOW?

AFCPE was first founded as a membership association in 1983, nearly 40 years ago!

AFCPE MEMBERSHIP

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE (AND EARN CEUs)

Membership offers free (and discounted) professional development opportunities. Pre-approved for AFC CEUs, but also applicable to personal finance professionals serving all areas of our field.

TOP WEBINAR TOPICS IN 2022

- Long Term Care
- Understanding the Federal Retirement System and Benefits (FERS)
- Maximizing Student Loan Forgiveness with the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program



BUILD COMMUNITY



AFCPE Membership is the place to find your people. Connect with professionals who share your passion to help individuals and families obtain financial security while making an impact in the field.

NEW IN 2022

AFCPE Member Exchange: We moved our online discussion board to a new, more interactive platform!

Expanded meet up and practitioners' unite topics.

TOP SESSIONS OF 2022:

- More than Just Finances—Using Financial Therapy to Ignite Change
- Practitioners Unite! Creating a Fee Structure
- Creating Online Courses to Spread Financial Literacy

ACCESS RESEARCH THAT INFORMS PRACTICE

As an AFCPE Member, you have access to groundbreaking research and articles, bringing you interesting, timely, and thought-provoking content that bridges the gap between research and practice.

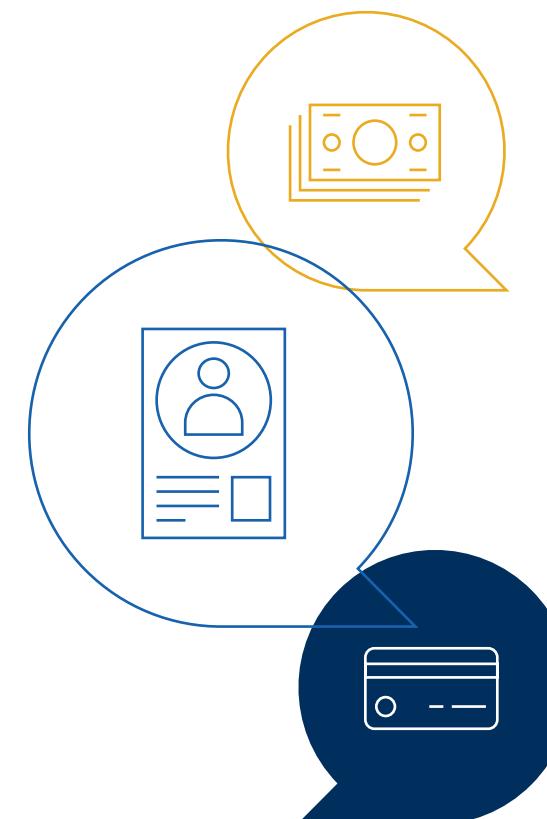
NEW IN 2022

The Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning (JFCP) is now published three times per year—March, July, and November!

Introducing Research Snapshots: Breaking down complex research into bite size takeaways that you can apply to your practice!

“Since becoming a member, I have been thrilled with the number of ways to be involved with the AFCPE community: virtual meet ups, mentorship connection, task force committees—to name a few. I am beyond grateful for these experiences.”

—MELISSA MITTELSTAEDT,
AFCPE MEMBER



GROW AND DEVELOP IN YOUR CAREER

AFCPE membership provides you with opportunities to find a mentor, build your resume, and develop new career-focused skills to advance the field.

NEW IN 2022

Launched an internship and experience portal!

Hosted a virtual career and experience fair—more to come in 2023!

COMING IN 2023

AFCPE Membership is moving to an anniversary year—giving you a full year of benefits no matter when you join!

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

LIKE MANY DURING THE PANDEMIC, AFCPE WAS AGILE—pivoting to deliver high quality virtual content to our professionals and providing virtual services to communities in need. But going virtual also magnified the critical need to integrate financial counseling, coaching, and education services directly within communities.

Building capacity for high quality financial counseling, coaching, and education helps break down barriers to access and creates trust—allowing people to find support right where they are.

THE AFCPE FORMULA FOR BUILDING CAPACITY

1

Begin with Money Management Essentials.

It provides a great step to certification, covering all the core competencies of the AFC®. It's great for a volunteer staff, and allows you to identify who should go on to earn the AFC.

2

Ensure you have at least one AFC on staff.

The AFC® is the standard. It ensures that you have a content expert on staff and someone who is committed to maintaining ongoing continuing education.

3

Become an AFCPE member.

Membership provides you with access to a professional community to ask questions, share best practices, and exchange new ideas. It also provides free continuing education to improve your work with clients.

4

Take an Essentials course.

Essentials courses provide you with specialized skills and knowledge to enhance your work with clients. Take all the courses. Collect all the badges!

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS BUILDING CAPACITY IN 2022

THANKS TO AFCPE STRATEGIC IMPACT FUND SCHOLARSHIPS

America Saves/ Consumer Federation of America

Austin Community College

Cape Fear Habitat for Humanity

Capstone Community Action

CASH Campaign of Maryland

Columbus Financial Empowerment Center

Community Forward SF

Compass Working Capital

Family Housing Advisory Services, Inc.

Girls L.E.A.P.

RAISE Texas

Ubuntu Institute of Learning

Women's Foundation California



“As a financial coach, I have a solid foundation in the technical coaching model and service delivery. The AFCPE courses complement my current knowledge by equipping me with advanced financial skills and knowledge to help my clients better manage their money and plan for their financial future.”

—MARICELA JIMENEZ, FAMILY STABILITY COORDINATOR WITH PATHFINDERS IN FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Received a scholarship from RAISE Texas for AFCPE's Financial Inclusion Essentials

RAISE
YOUR AFC
VOICE

AFC: IN THE MEDIA

For many Americans, finances are intimidating and overwhelming, and people often turn to the web or the news for financial advice. In 2022, more AFC® professionals than ever before were called upon to share their expertise—at the national and local level.

IN 2022, MENTIONS OF THE AFC BETWEEN JANUARY-AUGUST TRIPLED FROM THE YEAR PRIOR.

Bankrate

Nasdaq

GO BankingRates

CNBC

nerdwallet

Los Angeles Times

Forbes

The New York Times

MarketWatch

The Washington Post

the
Skimm'

AP

REAL MONEY, REAL EXPERTS

In 2022, AFCPE's *Real Money, Real Experts* podcast continued to deliver meaningful content that educated and entertained with a combination of expert tips, engaging interviews, and real-life storytelling. The year was divided into three distinct series:

Career Series

Exploring the various ways AFC® professionals are using their designation.

#30yearsofAFC

Honoring our history, celebrating milestones, and elevating AFC voices.

Symposium Keynotes

Getting to know our general session speakers.

65 Episodes recorded!
30,000+ Downloads

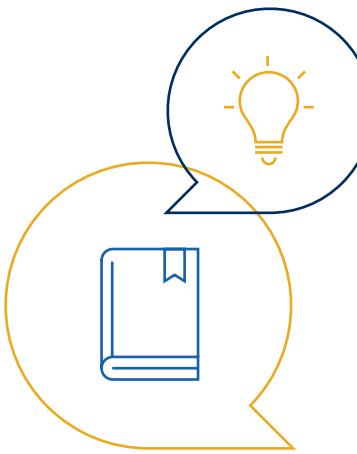
TOP EPISODES OF 2022

Exploring the Differences of Between Financial Therapy, Counseling, and Planning with Dr. Kristy Archuleta & Dr. Sonya Lutter, AFC®

Providing Real Value in Your Business with The Budget Mom, Kumkio Love, AFC®

Discovering Your Niche and Growing in Your Private Practice with Maggie Klokkenga, CFP®, CPA and Rachael Bronstein, AFC®

Empathy and the Art of Listening with Dr. Michael G. Thomas, AFC®



AFCPE STAFF + BOARD



A professional woman with curly hair, wearing a dark blazer and a purple shirt, is smiling and looking slightly to the side. The background is a blurred indoor setting. Overlaid on the image are five yellow circular icons, each containing a white line-art icon representing a different program area: Member Services (person icon), Education (graduation cap icon), Communications (speech bubble icon), Special Programs (book icon), and Certification (diploma icon). To the left of the icons, text describes the staffing investments made in 2022.

IN 2022, AFCPE made strategic investments in staffing, adding new positions across all areas of the organization:



MEMBER SERVICES



EDUCATION



CERTIFICATION



SPECIAL PROGRAMS



COMMUNICATIONS



MEET THE AFCPE TEAM

Rachael DeLeon

Executive Director

Sherry Wallace

Finance Manager

CERTIFICATION

Michelle Starkey

Certification Director

Jarod Taylor, AFC®

Certification Manager

Kay Robinson

Certification Coordinator

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Kate Mielitz PhD, AFC®

Special Programs Manager

Ann Hamilton

Special Programs Coordinator

Heather Baker, AFC®

Military Spouse Fellowship

EDUCATION

Summer Red, AFC®

Education Manager

Jessie Jimenez

Education Coordinator

MEMBER SERVICES

Zulairam Ruiz-Agosto

Member Services Manager

Amy Smith, AFC®

Member Engagement
Coordinator

Jing Jian Xiao, PhD

Journal Editor

COMMUNICATIONS

Luisa Singletary

Communications Manager

Brianna Then

Communications Coordinator

EVENTS

Sara Martin-Fuller

Special Events Manager

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AFCPE is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board acts on behalf of the members to provide fiduciary oversight and develop the organization's strategic direction. The AFCPE Board is made up of representatives across the following constituencies; financial industry, academia, practice, nonprofit, and military. And newly added for 2023—accessibility!

MILITARY/ GOVERNMENT	PRACTICE	SERVICE	FINANCIAL INDUSTRY	UNIVERSITY/ EDUCATION
Michele Godfrey President	Brandy Baxter Secretary	Don Fulton Treasurer	Krista Loew	Lucy Delgadillo
Meredith Lozar Past President	Jen Hemphill	Holly Zugay	Bud Schneeweis	Rita Green
Andi Wrenn President-Elect	Michael Thomas		Amanda Wilson	

2022 AFCPE CERTIFICATION COUNCIL

Sue Rogan Chair	Jeanie Adkins	Carolyn Bird	Rebecca Selkowe
Laurel Kubin Vice Chair	Bret Anderson	Darryl Jones	



STRATEGIC PILLAR PROGRESS

APPLIED RESEARCH

- Developing funding opportunities for collaborations between researchers and practitioners.
- Launched an Impact webpage to share results from strategic partnerships and initiatives.
- Publishing a white paper to share the research and results of a nearly 3 year pro bono virtual financial counseling program.

INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

- Improvements made to technology platforms, including our virtual discussion boards and learning management system.
- Launched a micro site to help individuals and families find an AFC. Search functionality includes a search within radius, and improved filter/search options coming in 2023.
- Redesigned myAFCPE dashboards for enhanced user experience and data collection.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- AFCPE Certification Council is working on updating AFCPE's Code of Ethics to incorporate private practice considerations.
- Hosted internship and career fair.

BRAND MARKETING

- Government Relations Task Force is working on an advocacy toolkit to help members engage and advocate at the local, state, and national levels.
- Media kit created for AFC professionals.
- Consumer facing content being added to FindanAFC.org site.
- Offered our first-ever AFCPE Spirit Store.

ACCESSIBILITY

- ASL interpretation added to webinar reviews.
- Adding an accessibility widget to our website.
- Adding closed captions to all recorded webinars.
- Podcast offered on YouTube with closed captions.
- Scholarships provided for underserved/underrepresented populations.
- Code of Ethics being updated to include an equity lens.
- Implemented health insurance as an employee benefit.
- Updated AFCPE's parental leave policy to provide up to 12 weeks of **fully paid** parental leave.

OUR PARTNERS

OUR PARTNERS

AFCPE is proud to partner with many outstanding organizations who share our values, our vision, and a strong commitment to providing equitable, high quality financial counseling and education in order to improve the economic well-being of individuals and families worldwide.

2022 SPONSOR AND FUNDING PARTNERS



JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.



2022 PROGRAM PARTNERS



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT:

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

DONATE

AFCPE's Strategic Impact Fund is a quasi-endowment fund that helps ensure long-term impact and sustainability of our organization.



SCAN CODE
TO DONATE

THE FUND SUPPORTS INITIATIVES SUCH AS:

- Scholarships for certification and training—for students, nonprofit groups, and Symposium attendance.
- Research that informs practice.
- Community-based initiatives that focus on solutions to promote financial security in underserved communities.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

Get certified, take an AFCPE Essentials course, or become an AFCPE Member! Getting involved in the AFCPE community supports our mission. Share your time and talents with AFCPE – volunteer to be a mentor, join a Member task force, or participate in an online discussion group. Not sure where to start? Reach out to our [Member Services](#) team!

ASK US ABOUT PLANNED GIVING OPTIONS

Planned giving allows you to leave a legacy—supporting AFCPE and the causes you care about throughout and after your lifetime.

BECOME A PARTNER

AFCPE is proud to partner with organizations that share our guiding principles—high standards, integrity, accessibility, equity, and sustainability—and who share in our mission to improve the economic well-being of individuals and families worldwide.

[Let's work together!](#)



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