

A Heartfelt Farewell from the AHIMA Family

Save to myBoK

By Lynne Thomas Gordon, AHIMA chief executive officer, and Angela Kennedy, AHIMA president

It is with great sadness that we mourn the passing of AHIMA's President and Board Chair, Kathleen Frawley, JD, MS, RHIA, FAHIMA. Kathleen first became a member of AHIMA in 1972, and in over 40 years of service worked in various roles while striving to lead the HIM profession through several periods of great change.

Kathleen was thrilled to serve as president in 2013, at the same time the association marks its 85th anniversary. When she took the stage at the 2012 AHIMA Convention, her message to all of us was to not only "Dream Big," but to "Believe"-a sentiment that she carried out each and every day. She told us to "believe in ourselves, believe in AHIMA, and believe in the indispensable role health information management professionals will play in our technologically-driven 21st century healthcare system." Kathleen worked tirelessly to build on the great work of previous presidents, presiding over the publication of AHIMA's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan, advancing HIM education through Reality 2016, and working with the House of Delegates to lead the profession's workforce transformation.

Kathleen was known by many for her enormous heart and her enduring modesty. "To be able to lead a board where every member is a leader and passionate advocate in the healthcare industry is an opportunity I am excited-and humbled-to have," she stated in her AHIMA Convention address.

Her AHIMA journey took her from member to employee to Distinguished Member and Fellow, culminating with her presidency during a special year in AHIMA's history.

On top of it all, Kathleen was a lifelong learner and teacher and believed that education is the most effective means to drive the profession to new levels. As a role model for others, her own education included a bachelor's degree in English from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, a master's degree in health services administration from Wagner College and a Juris Doctorate from New York Law School. She also went out of her way in her position as professor and chair of health information technology at DeVry University to identify and assist students at risk of failing or dropping out of school, and helping to ensure their success.

"So what turns dreams into reality? An unwavering belief that you can and will achieve your goals," Kathleen once said. Kathleen believed that each and every one of us is now in a position to proactively assume leadership roles and to continue to evolve the HIM profession. She also knew that AHIMA stands beside its members as a champion, supporting them throughout their career and acting as a guiding light for the entire profession.

As President/Chair-elect, Angela Kennedy will assume Kathleen's role immediately and carry AHIMA through the rest of 2013. It is incumbent upon all of us at AHIMA to continue to move forward, to advance the profession and improve the quality of care for patients, and to build upon the work that Kathleen started.

Thanks to Kathleen's leadership, AHIMA will continue to serve as a lighthouse and guide HIM leaders for many more years to come. Believe!

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