

A Nod to the Past, a Glimpse of the Future

Save to myBoK

By Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, FACHE, CAE, FAHIMA, chief executive officer

Amelia Earhart made headlines as the first woman passenger on a transatlantic flight. Herbert Hoover was elected president. And ordinary peoples' lives would be changed by the discovery of penicillin and the sale of the first pre-sliced loaf of bread.

That was the scene in 1928, the year of the founding of AHIMA (known at that time as the Association of Record Librarians of North America). As we celebrate [AHIMA's 85th anniversary](#), I recall that the founders' aim was to establish and elevate our profession. We've made great strides, but there is still plenty of work to do.

Moving HIM Forward

To take our profession to the next level, we need to be ready to meet future demands for a skilled workforce. In June, AHIMA convened the Healthcare Forward Summit, bringing together national stakeholders to create and undertake a plan of action to develop the HIM and IT workforce.

In particular, the event focused on addressing the shortage of an educated and trained workforce in rural and underserved communities, and filling those gaps by providing employment opportunities for veterans transitioning to the civilian workforce.

This event, attended by a variety of public and private sector leaders, laid the groundwork for plans that will benefit both the industry and the workforce as the need for our skills grows exponentially.

Charting a Course

Today AHIMA envisions a future of "health information where and when it's needed." To get there, we must change the way we work. This change is already starting to happen, as shown in our cover story, "[HIM's Evolving Workforce](#)," which explores how shifting parameters and demographics are changing the profession and how HIM professionals can chart new career paths. You'll also see this change in progress in "[Focus on the Future](#)," an article discussing the latest iteration of the current environmental scan from the AHIMA House of Delegates' Envisioning Collaborative.

The scan identifies population health management as an emerging demographic trend. Bonnie Cassidy delves into this potential area of new HIM expertise, exploring the skills needed for what she calls "population health information management" in the article "[The Next HIM Frontier](#)."

Our educational paths are changing, too. The possibilities for HIM doctoral education and the challenges and opportunities ahead are examined in "[Taking the Doctoral Challenge](#)" and "[Mapping the Future of HIM Education](#)."

Experience on the job is key for students. "[Reengineering the Professional Practice Experience](#)" explains how faculty in the HIM program at Rutgers University reengineered their once struggling professional practice requirements to provide a better experience for both the practice site and the student.

Feeling overwhelmed by all this change? "[Embracing Change Ensures Career Resilience](#)" by Paul G. Stoltz explains how we can better understand our responses to change and adversity.

Finally, this issue contains a remembrance of [AHIMA's late president Kathleen Frawley](#), who died in June. With her slogan "Dream Big and Believe," Kathleen was a tireless advocate for the bright future of our profession. The articles in this issue serve as a fitting tribute to that belief.

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