

Collaboration is Key to Leading Through Transformation

Save to myBoK

By Valerie Watzlaf, PhD, MPH, RHIA, FAHIMA

I am so inspired by our leaders all across the country. At last year's CSA Leadership Symposium it was agreed that AHIMA was in a state of decline and that change was needed. It was an amazing moment—one I will never forget and one that really inspired me as a leader of AHIMA.

At this year's CSA Leadership Symposium, we spent two days discussing AHIMA's transformation story and its new mission, vision, and strategy for 2020-2023.

The mission, which describes our purpose and reason for working in HIM, is, "Empowering People to Impact Health."

The vision is, "A world where trusted information transforms health and healthcare by connecting people, systems, and ideas."

AHIMA's strategy represents the steps we intend to take to meet our new vision. Our new strategy should result in three outcomes:

1. Advance and advocate for the creation and use of trusted information across the evolving healthcare continuum.
2. Shape the health information profession by growing the influence and competitiveness of health information skillsets.
3. Drive strategic transformation and renewed growth to make AHIMA a great organization to partner with and a great place to work.

Each attendee received a coin inscribed with the mission statement. In a powerful moment, we each held our coin high as we pledged our commitment to move AHIMA forward to renewal and innovation.

Jan Bazow of FORTIS Leadership spoke at the symposium, emphasizing key characteristics of leaders working in 2020 and beyond. At the top of the list was the ability to collaborate. As Grace Whiting Myers said in her first president's address in Chicago in 1929, "The group brings together all the excellence of many individuals, raises it to a high plane, and gives it a large outlook embracing great possibilities." Myers understood even then the importance of collaboration and that bringing a group together could harness unbelievable possibilities. We can still do that today by coming together as one voice, one group, and one profession working together to do the best for our organization.

Bazow asked each of us to come to the microphone and choose one word that reflected each person's wholehearted commitment to leading. It was deeply moving to see the openness and undying support for our profession and AHIMA as each person stepped up and shared words such as "love," "grace," "excitement," "calm," and "energy."

My word was "accountable," which demonstrates my commitment to make sure that AHIMA continues on the path of renewal and innovation. With the support of our members and leaders, we can make our vision a reality.

This year has not been easy. AHIMA has had to overcome internal challenges and external disruptors as we have moved through our transformation process. While some of these challenges have been difficult, they have made us stronger and given us more energy to achieve our vision for the future. I hope you will join us as we move forward in our transformation.

Valerie Watzlaf (Valerie.watzlaf@ahima.org) is vice chair of education and associate professor at University of Pittsburgh.

Article citation:

AHIMA. "Collaboration is Key to Leading Through Transformation" *Journal of AHIMA* 90, no.8 (August 2019): 6-6.

Driving the Power of Knowledge

Copyright 2022 by The American Health Information Management Association. All Rights Reserved.