

Connection, Knowledge, Leadership Mark AHIMA Accomplishments

Save to myBoK

by Barbara Odom-Wesley, PhD, RHIA

This is the time of year when we reflect on the previous year and formulate resolutions for the coming year. It has been my honor to serve as your president this year. Thank you, my AHIMA family, for the support, encouragement, and contributions that make AHIMA all that it is today.

My tenure as president has been extremely rewarding. I have grown through the opportunity to meet so many of you through the CoPs, Team Talks, leadership conferences, state association meetings, and the work of our volunteer structure. As I come to the close of my presidency, I find myself reflecting on a memorable year for AHIMA.

Something to Celebrate

We've been cheering accomplishments all year long at AHIMA. The success of the Association can be attributed to each of us. We have an elected board of directors engaged in strategic planning and knowledge-based governance. Our volunteer structure boasts about 1,000 volunteers involved in various committees, councils, and task forces to advance AHIMA's mission. There's also state leadership, our House of Delegates, and, of course, our members. Finally, our staff is guided by the leadership of one of the "most powerful people in healthcare" according to *Modern Healthcare* magazine, Executive Vice President and CEO Linda Kloss, RHIA, CAE.

We are all AHIMA and it takes all of us to be effective in recruitment, membership retention, advocacy efforts, environmental scanning, support for our educational programs, bridging generation gaps, and maintaining AHIMA's leadership position.

A Diverse Year

This past year I identified one of our greatest challenges as the increasing diversity of our membership. We work in a multitude of settings, with a variety of standards and requirements. We are also geographically diverse, as we employ our HIM skills in a variety of different cultures. We have become chronologically diverse, with a membership spanning generations. AHIMA's Diversity Task Force has taught us how to celebrate our differences while recognizing our similarities.

The Communities of Practice has provided an electronic networking tool to keep all of us connected. We now have 150 CoPs, each with a different focus. AHIMA strives to meet the needs of its 42,000 members with programs, resources, and educational activities such as the "Getting Practical with Privacy" workshops and our e-learning campus. As we move into the future and an increasingly electronic environment, we can depend on AHIMA to provide the tools we need to succeed.

We also launched a comprehensive study of the work force to help identify present and future needs. We have a clearly defined career ladder for coding, with resources to facilitate progression. Consumer involvement has captured our attention, and we are investigating our role in personal health records. And we've taken time to say "Happy 40th Birthday, FORE," with our donations.

A Timeless Mission

While you are enjoying the benefits of AHIMA membership, pause occasionally, consider the responsibilities, and ask yourself, "What difference can I make?" I think you'll find the more you contribute, the more you gain. Think how much stronger AHIMA would be if every member resolved to participate, vote, get online, volunteer, and keep up to date with what's happening in HIM and the Association. As we strengthen each member, we strengthen the AHIMA community.

My sincere thanks to each of you for your dedicated service to AHIMA and passion for the HIM profession. Have a blessed holiday season.

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