

Funding HIM's Future through FORE

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by Barbara Odom-Wesley, PhD, RHIA

When you think of leaving a legacy, what comes to mind? For many, giving to others has the greatest impact. This year, the Foundation of Research and Education (FORE), AHIMA's charitable affiliate, will begin Fast FOREward, a two-year campaign that presents an opportunity for every AHIMA member to make a long-lasting, significant contribution to the future.

A Campaign for the Future

FORE provides financial and intellectual resources to sustain and recognize continuous innovation and advances in HIM for the betterment of the profession, healthcare, and the public. Through research, education, and public awareness initiatives, the Foundation ensures the vitality, visibility, and viability of the HIM profession.

This year FORE celebrates 40 years of service to the HIM profession. The Foundation's role has never been more critical, as HIM professionals are faced with revolutionary changes such as HIPAA and the electronic medical record. Intensified efforts are needed now to design new models of practice, introduce practice innovation, meet future work force needs, and develop future HIM leaders.

The profession has actively prepared for these changes, but the time has come to move to new ways of managing patient information even faster. That's what the Fast FOREward campaign is about—accelerating the profession's ability to anticipate, educate, and innovate to successfully make the transition to the new world of HIM.

A Foundation of Resources

Fast FOREward is an ambitious campaign to raise \$1 million during the next two years to provide new and expanded Foundation programs. The bulk of the funds will support HIM professionals by funding the groundbreaking work force assessment study and expanding the availability of FORE merit scholarships. The second priority is to identify and support practice breakthroughs by rewarding the development of best practice solutions and providing grants-in-aid for applied research.

Professional resources will be enhanced by expanding the AHIMA Library, the Association's online body of knowledge, which is available through the Communities of Practice at www.ahima.org. HIM educators will benefit from the development of innovative, collaborative, and technology-based educational resources to advance the HIM curricula. Additionally, the campaign will sustain both personal and professional leadership development through the annual leadership conference and the recognition of members with the Triumph Awards.

A Commitment to the Profession

The Fast FOREward campaign is evidence of the HIM profession's resolve to seize and shape the opportunities of a new world of practice, to succeed in advancing HIM, and to ensure that the next generation of professionals is prepared to lead. So what can you do? Many of you have already made contributions to FORE with your annual dues or during the Not-So-Silent auctions at the National Convention. Some of you have acknowledged mentors with contributions in their honor, and others have even included FORE in your estate plans. Every contribution is valued.

For those of you who routinely make FORE donations, I encourage you to analyze what you give and consider increasing it during this special campaign. For those who have never considered a FORE donation, this is your opportunity to join in collectively making a mark on the HIM profession that would be impossible to do as an individual. By funding research for practice breakthroughs and providing professional resources and leadership development, FORE not only prepares AHIMA members for tomorrow, but also forges the future.

For more information or to make a gift online, go to www.ahima.org/fore, or contact the Foundation by e-mail at fore@ahima.org or by calling (312) 233-1100.

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