

Now is the Time: Realizing our Vision

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By Cassi Birnbaum, MS, RHIA, CPHQ, FAHIMA

As I enter my 35th year as an AHIMA leader, educator, practitioner, and volunteer, I am excited to celebrate AHIMA's 86 years of accomplishments and to have a role in paving the way for a bright future for HIM professionals everywhere.

I look forward to the months ahead, building on AHIMA's strategic foundation as we lead the healthcare industry in ensuring data integrity through groundbreaking information governance practices, health informatics, leadership, public good, and innovative practices that drive the power of knowledge. I am proud of our collaborative approach to demonstrating the value proposition achieved by early ICD-10 adopters following last year's delay. As disruption changes the healthcare industry, the organizations that will continue to thrive will be those best able to adjust their business models and practices to industry changes and external threats.

Health information and informatics professionals are poised to act as the conduit that ensures technology develops as a tool that improves an organization's ability to both tell and correctly interpret the patient's story. AHIMA's work in health informatics will provide a blueprint to seamlessly convert data into health intelligence to propel the improvement of population health.

To mark the occasion of my transition to AHIMA President, I launched an endowed research scholarship in memory of my brother, Joel Nagorner, who passed away during my first term with AHIMA's Board of Directors. My goal and vision is to enhance the HIM community's applied research pathway to promote the achievement of a better healthcare system through leveraging technology, HIM standards, and best practices to provide access to trusted information.

Joel would be proud that he is the inspiration for a gift that keeps on giving as the scholarship supports research that will tackle the challenges he experienced during his 20-year battle with cancer, furthering efforts that will enable quality healthcare information to be securely accessed anywhere and anytime. This ability is at the core of AHIMA's public good strategic pillar.

Over the past year I have heard from our members about the challenges they face, from changing roles, relevancy, and influence to new opportunities to shape their professional destiny. I encourage all AHIMA members to jump in the front seat when it comes to navigating our initiatives through the changing healthcare landscape.

The path ahead won't be easy, nor will it always be straightforward. It is critical for HIM professionals to continuously work to build leadership skills and knowledge in the new competencies that have been defined by our educational community as we transition to our 2020 vision.

In order to meet all of our strategic initiatives, we need to really push ourselves to the next level, outside of our respective comfort zones, align with multiple stakeholders both inside and outside of our association, fine tune our skills, and even reinvent ourselves as we strive for excellence in the execution of HIM duties. Together as an engaged HIM community I know that we can realize our vision and motivate our members to achieve their full potential while advancing the practice of HIM.

We've dreamed big, believed, and stepped up to lead. Now it is time to realize our vision!

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Driving the Power of Knowledge

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