

Passion for Learning

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by Linda Kloss, RHIA, CAE, chief executive officer

Lifelong learning is a key responsibility of professionals in all fields. Professional development is the focus this month because it's important for each of us to periodically reflect on how well we are doing. In this issue, experts discuss the importance of professional development planning, and colleagues reflect on the benefits of a passion for learning in their careers.

Learning-The Mission of AHIMA

Merida Johns reflects on the principles that have grounded the advancements in HIM over 80 years and on the critical role AHIMA has played in advancing the field in "In the Winds of Change, Principles Provide a Steady Course." "HIM professionals are a flexible and adaptable breed," writes Johns. Today's changes are momentous, but Johns puts them in perspective by reminding us that change is constant and learning and adapting has always been a hallmark of the HIM field.

AHIMA's mission reflects its commitment to your professional development through continuing education, analyses of emerging and best practices, and expert guidance through professional journals and publications. Investments in technologies such as the Communities of Practice, Body of Knowledge, and online learning enable each of us to choose what, how, and when we wish to learn. AHIMA's commitment to supporting professional development in HIM has never been more front and center.

Finding the Time

Professional development is not an event that occurs on a particular day; rather, it must be part of daily work life for professionals. But this requires time to read, visit the Communities of Practice, take Web courses, and attend seminars. It requires time to reflect on the lessons of the work day, which is very hard to do in our over-scheduled lives. In "Master Plan" Zada Clarke and Angela M. Hill advise that a professional development plan can ensure that learning is deliberate and takes you in the direction you want to go. Reflections from HIM colleagues bear this out. Their stories demonstrate that professional development plans can be road maps for advancing your career.

In "HIM Laboratory" Sandra Kersten, Mohit Saigal, and Kathie Owens describe a new technology funded by AHIMA and FORE to support HIM student learning. The Virtual Lab brings e-HIM® technologies to the student laboratory via the Web, thereby enabling schools to offer student experiences that would otherwise be beyond their reach.

For many in our field, professional development plans involve earning or advancing an academic degree. In "Back to School" Ruth Carol introduces us to colleagues who are earning advanced degrees. Their professional development plans call for earning a master's, doctoral, or law degree and finishing that bachelor or associate degree. Thousands of HIM professionals are advancing academically as evidenced by the fact that in just 10 years the share of AHIMA members with master's degrees has doubled, from 8 to 16 percent.

Mary Lou Ingeholm, In K. Mun, and Seong K. Mun contribute to our understanding of an important new wireless technology, radio frequency identification (RFID) in "RFID in Healthcare." RFID, a type of automated data collection or data capture technology, is at last reaching healthcare through a variety of important applications.

Join Us in Denver

Next month AHIMA will host its 78th Convention and Exhibit in Denver. Attendees always report that they come away re-energized about the importance of their work and with new resolve to advance their professional impact and their careers. Reignite your passion for learning at this year's celebration.

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Driving the Power of Knowledge

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