

Fall
2011

Health Information Management Association of Hawaii

P.O. Box 22314 Honolulu, Hawaii 96823

www.himahawaii.org



An Affiliate of
AHIMA
American Health Information
Management Association



President's Message **Emma Thompson, RHIT, CCS** [**ETHompson65@aol.com**](mailto:ETHompson65@aol.com)

Hello everyone!

It's been a busy few weeks since the AHIMA Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. I felt so honored and proud to represent you, thank you so much for your support!

I'm always so excited about attending the AHIMA Convention, it never gets old for me, there is always so much to learn, making new connections and walking away feeling inspired and motivated to put into play new concepts. Next year's convention is in AHIMA's hometown, Chicago, Illinois. If you have never been to an AHIMA convention, or even if you attend regularly, I encourage you to go and make your reservations early, with ICD-10 implementation a year out from this conference; Chicago will be one of the best attended AHIMA conventions.

Check out the contents of the newsletter for some of our convention highlights, AHIMA's announcement on the new CEO, updates on Heald College and an article on the new HIT Pro certification.

The holidays are coming up fast, as busy as we are, find the time to enjoy the holidays with family and friends!

Happy Holidays!

Mission Statement

Leading and improving healthcare by advancing best practices and standards for Health Informatics and Information Management. Continuing as the trusted source for education, research and professional credentialing.

Vision Statement

Quality Healthcare through Quality Information

H I M A H

K A M E A H O H A W A I I

**HIMAH
Board of Directors**

2011-2012

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My Experience as a first year Delegate

By Mary Webber, RHIT, CCS

Volunteering as defined by Wikipedia “is considered an altruistic activity, intended to promote good or improve human quality of life, but people also volunteer for their own skill development, to meet others, to make contacts for possible employment, to have fun, and a variety of other reasons that could be considered self-serving. Volunteering is the act of selflessly giving your life to something you believe free of pay.”

After several years of serving in various volunteer roles as a HIMAH member, this year I was elected to serve as HIMAH President elect for the 2011 and 2012 year. Thank you to all who voted for me. As part of my role as President elect I also will serve for the next two years on the AHIMA Board of Delegates. This is my first experience to serve as a delegate; it was very exciting and interesting and gave me the opportunity to meet many people from other states. Hawaii has two delegates they are the President Elect and the President. Many states have five delegates the number of delegates is based on the number of members that a State has.

This year the Delegates met at the Grand America Hotel in Salt Lake City Utah at the annual AHIMA convention. The meeting began with a House of Delegates briefing on Saturday evening. The briefing was conducted by Rose Dunn. Hawaii has been very fortunate to have Rose speak on many different topics and as most of you know she is a very engaging speaker. She was true to form welcoming all the new delegates and explaining what we would be doing for the next day and a half and that our hard work would culminate with the call to order at the House of Delegates Meeting that would take place Sunday afternoon.

Saturday evening I met from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. with the Profession Development and Recognition team. I was assigned to this committee in July and had attended a virtual meeting from my office. Attending this meeting was very enjoyable and it was nice to put faces to names. The committee to date is working on several projects which include the AHIMA Delivers Value Poster. C-Suite letters which can be sent by members or by the Component State Association to prospective employers of HIM professionals. If you would like more information on this please contact me by email at maryjwebber@gmail.com. We are also looking at developing elevator speeches for various audiences to include lay people and other pro-

**HIMAH
Committee Chairs**

2011-2012

Annual Meeting

Patrice Jackson

patricemljackson@aol.com

Bylaws

Jocelyne Chun

jocelyne.chun@us.army.mil

Education

Ginger Watson

ginger.g.watson@kp.org

Legislative

John Nagamine

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Nominations

Vanessa Duplechain

vad@hawaii.rr.com

professionals that we work with. We are also charged with promoting the ICD 10 Ambassador Program.

Sunday morning our day began with a breakfast meeting starting off a strategic meeting session. This session was headed by Glenn Tecker of Tecker International a consulting company hired by AHIMA to lead the strategic session. We were divided into eleven different groups and each given a different task with a thought prompter to get us started. I was part of the Master HIM Practice Realms our topic of discussion centered around the thought prompter given to us "What must happen for the HIM professional to be considered a master of the HIM practice realms: Clinical Documentation Improvement, Compliance and Quality Assurance." I was thrilled with this topic as I have spent the greater part of my professional career interested in improving physician documentation in an effort to make the job of a coder not only easier but knowing this is the key to reporting an accurate picture of the patient encounter.

At the conclusion of the strategic planning session when each group had to present a brief power point presentation detailing our thoughts that would move AHIMA forward in the coming years. Even though we all had different topics we all came to the same conclusion that we would have to increase our knowledge within other areas of Health Care outside of HIM and most importantly expand our collaboration with other professional organizations in order to meet the future demands of the Health Care Industry.

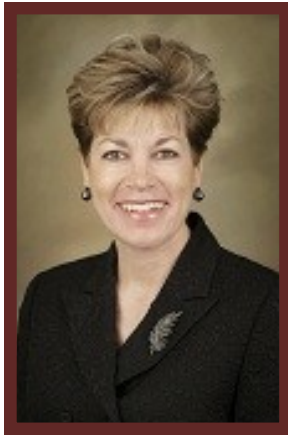
Following the Strategic Planning Session we began the process of registration and credentialing which was a matter of checking in to confirm our attendance at the Call to Order for the 2011 Business Meeting.

Proposals brought before the House included AHIMA Proposed Bylaw Revision, Code of Ethics revision and House resolution on Diversity and Inclusion all of these amendments and bylaws passed easily.

I can truly say that it is an honor to represent Hawaii as a Delegate and I look forward to this year and next.

I hope to see you at the HIMAH meeting this year, if you would like to volunteer or to become more involved please drop me a line. Thank you again for giving me this opportunity to volunteer.





AHIMA Announces New CEO

On behalf of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the AHIMA Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, FACHE, as Chief Executive Officer, a post she will assume on September 29, 2011.

A proven executive, Thomas Gordon joins AHIMA after serving as associate vice president for hospital operations and director of the Children's Hospital at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, IL. She also is a member of the Rush University faculty in the graduate program in health systems management.

Prior to Rush University Medical Center, Thomas Gordon served as the administrator of Houston Medical Center in Georgia and chief operating officer of Children's Hospital of Michigan and Shands AGH in Florida. She started her HIM leadership career at Piedmont Hospital and progressed to positions of increasing responsibility in the health information and operations areas at Scottish Rite Children's Medical Center in Atlanta.

Thomas Gordon holds active membership in AHIMA and ACHE. She has served on the information management taskforce of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and Governor on the ACHE Board. She held several additional offices for ACHE and was awarded their Early Career Healthcare Executive Regent's Award. She is a past president and board director for the Georgia Health Information Management Association and a recipient of the GHIMA Distinguished Member Award. Thomas Gordon also has received AHIMA's Achievement and Education-Practitioner Awards and has served on the AHIMA Nominating Committee and as a member of the House of Delegates.

Thomas Gordon will be attending the 83rd AHIMA Convention and Exhibit. Please take the opportunity to meet her while we celebrate and advance the health information profession in beautiful Salt Lake City.

We are pleased to have Lynne Thomas Gordon as our new CEO. We thank you for your ongoing support and look forward to a continued partnership for many years to come.

Bonnie S. Cassidy, MPA, RHIA, FAHIMA, FHIMSS
2011 AHIMA Board President

New AHIMA CEU Center Now Available

Certification is always striving to make your AHIMA experience better. Now recertifying is easier than ever! AHIMA recently launched a newly redesigned CEU Center. The new CEU Center is more user-friendly to make recertification more convenient.

In the new CEU Center, certificants can record and report continuing education units (CEU) online throughout their two year recertification cycle. The new system also allows you to upload documents such as certificates of completion or notes. Certificants can also print a new, improved Validation Certificate in the new CEU Center.

What else is new? Certified coding professionals can now purchase and take their annual self-review. Also, all CEUs for quizzes and self-reviews will be auto-populated. Importantly, the new CEU Center also allows for the reporting of CEUs in the domain of ICD-10 towards your ICD-10 recertification requirements. Why not begin your recertification process today? To access the new CEU Center, log into myAHIMA and select the CEU Center.



Annual Meeting Update

Patrice Jackson, RHIA, CHP, CCS



HIMAH will sponsor with a sister organization the HAMBAA (Hawaii Chapter of the American Medical Billing Association) for a brain busting, information packed, annual meeting and education extravaganza. The location is set, and due to popular request we are returning to the Ala Moana Hotel on May 3th, and 4th, 2012.

For those who wish to stay the night, there are a block of rooms set aside for us for May 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. Just mention HIMAH and they will honor the following prices:

	Single/ Double	Triple
Kona Tower	\$109	Not applicable
Waikiki Tower	129.00	169.00

The Annual Committee will begin planning the event agenda in our October meeting. We do plan to continue the same format used last year as it proved to be very successful. There will be sessions of general interest in the mornings and breakout sessions in the afternoon for coding, long term care and, and billing. Included will be some motivational, team building, secondary education, discussions. We have begun interviewing possible key note speakers. We have found that there are significant island talent interested in speaking for our associations.

I hope if you have any topics or speakers you would like considered, you'll drop me a line at Patrice.jackson@hawaii.edu.

a hui hou!



HIT PROGRAM

A special thank you to the following hospital's HIM team for hosting Heald College's HIT Externs during the July 2011 Quarter.:

- ♦ **Hawaii Pacific Health—Straub Clinic and Hospital and Pali Momi (Gloria Brooks and her Team)**
- ♦ **Kaiser Permanente—(Ginger Watson and her Team)**

Big Mahalo!!

Professional practice experience (PPE) or externship, is a way to strengthen the academic experience for students. In addition externship assimilates theory with practical application in order to work toward achievement of AHIMA entry-level competencies in a real-world environment. Students deserve an opportunity to work in the field in some capacity in order to prepare them to become new practitioners. To learn more about externship, contact Vanessa Duplechain, at Heald College.

There are many ways to mentor a student from traditional field placement, to online project-based assignments. AHIMA-credentialed professionals that provide direct supervision (substantive oversight and involvement) of students are eligible for 5 continuing education units (CEUs) per year or 10 CEUs per two-year cycle by participating in the PPE experience. In addition, other AHIMA-credentialed professionals assigned as mentors from the same site are eligible for 1 CEU for every 60 minutes of direct contact with a maximum of 5 CEUs (five hours of contact) per student, and a maximum of 10 CEUs allowed in each recertification cycle.

Your support is vital; students are eager and ready to gain real work experience and you are just the person to help them achieve their goals! Make it real - sign up to be a clinical practice site manager today!

If you would like to host a HIT extern student please notify me at

vanessa_duplechain@heald.edu or by phone at 808-687-0855

Congratulations!

July 2011

HIT Externs



HIMAH'S FIRST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Congratulations to Jade Rodriques, winner of the very first HIMAH's Scholarship award for the April 2011 Quarter.

The scholarship supports the Health Information Technology Program at Heald College and students who have met specific criteria and sitting for the AHIMA RHIT exam. Recipients use the scholarship funds to off-set the RHIT exam.

Big Mahalo HIMAH!!

Calendar of Events

HIMAH Annual Meeting

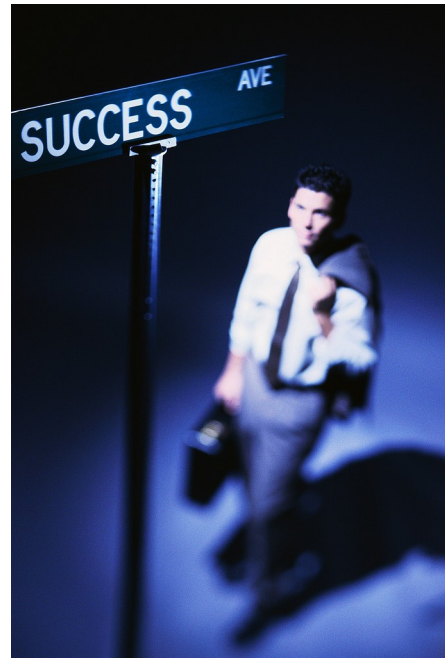
May 3 and 4, 2012



CONGRATULATIONS!

The following individuals obtained their AHIMA credentials in Hawaii from November 2010 through August 2011:

Patrice Jackson, RHIA
Stephanie Bennett-Felipe, RHIT
Ann Marie Guillermo, RHIT
Michele Malek, RHIT
Winnie Kaneshiro, CCS
Sampuran Khalsa, CCS
Jonalyn Bautista, RHIT, CCS
Delana Hamilton, CCS
Bonnie, Ryan, CCS
Laurie Kaneshiro, CCS
Hallie Leffingwell, CCA



I hope you enjoy the new format for our quarterly newsletter.

In the next few issues I'll experiment with different templates to find the right fit. I'm interested in your feedback. Let me know if there are items you'd like to see, announcements or updates you'd like included in your newsletter.

This newsletter is for you!

Contact me, Deanna O'Neil at:

do.hawaii@hawaiiantel.net



Social Networking and HIMAH

Facebook is everywhere these days and the beauty of this type of media is that it allows the opportunity to dialogue instantly. Who hasn't updated their facebook status while waiting in the supermarket checkout line? Anytime, anywhere, you can get immediate feedback or just receive information. HIMAH would love to leverage the power of social media to share knowledge, post questions in the community, disseminate information or just network.

We now have two Facebook Groups: HIMAH and HIMAH Coding.

The HIMAH Group is for general HIM business, a place to post general HIM questions or share information. And because our State Association does not have an active Coding Roundtable, we set up the HIMAH Coding Group for the same purpose, but for topics related specifically to coding. I'd like for this to group to be a diverse group of facility and professional coders, feel free to invite your coding consultants to become members of this Facebook group

To join, please send a Friend Request to the HIMAH and/or HIMAH Coding Group. Or send a message to Emma Thompson, Mary Webber or Deanna O'Neil to be added to the group.

Happy Facebooking!



2011 AHIMA Convention Highlights

With Emma Thompson

House of Delegates

Please see Mary's article for excellent coverage on House of Delegates happenings.

- Membership growth from 61,000 to 63,000 to include 545 international members
- Clinical Coding meeting partnered with American College of Medical Coding Specialists and brought in 1,500 additional attendees
- New AHIMA marketing campaign to employers and public service announcements to promote the organization and HIM credentials
- New Consumer Health Information Bill of Rights is available
- AHIMA identified 11 strategic issues facing HIM. House of Delegate members collaborated on ideas and concepts to set the stage for everything we do for the next couple of years. It was truly exciting to be a part of a project that will have great impact on our profession and national organization.

General Sessions

Stephen M. R. Covey: Leading at the Speed of Trust

Stephen Covey talks about how teams can work harder, smarter and faster when there is a high level of trust in the work environment. Some of the behaviors that can enhance trust in relationships are Talk Straight (tell the truth), Create Transparency (be authentic) and Right Wrongs (apologize when you're wrong). Covey's workshops are typically daylong seminars but this powerful presentation was packed into a two hour session.

Dr. T. Bedirhan Ustun: Future of Health Records: To Code or Not to Code?

Dr. Ustun from the World Health Organization (WHO) provided a very interesting and humorous perspective on the US delay on ICD-10 implementation. His thoughts are why even bother with ICD-10 at this point, when the WHO is proposing ICD-11 implementation in 2015. Dr. Ustun pointed out that if it takes the US 23 years to implement ICD-10, how long will it take to implement ICD-11?

Apolo Anton Ohno: Zero Regrets: Be Greater Than Yesterday

Apolo Anton Ohno shared his story of being a troubled teen to finding remarkable success in Olympic speed-skating. Apolo also spoke of always striving to improve performance, appreciating the value of hard work and being the Dancing with the Stars champion. This man is far more handsome in person and never had I seen folks rush the stage to take photos of a motivational speaker at the AHIMA convention!

President's Premier Celebration

The theme of the Presidents Reception this year was Ancient Greece. The reception began at the Grand American Hotel where the ballroom was transformed into the Olympic fields in ancient Greece. Guests were then shuttled to the Rail Center for a fabulous concert with the Miracles!

Educational Tracks

As with every national convention, there were a number of educational tracks to meet the needs of every HIM professional. This year, the three hot topics: ICD-10, Meaningful Use and Computer Assisted Coding. Excellent speakers, powerful presentations and valuable networking make for a successful convention. Plan now to attend the 2012 AHIMA Convention in Chicago, Illinois, September 29-October 4, 2012.



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII
LEEWARD
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



ARRA / HIT / ONC / HHS / MU / REC

and other animal sounds associated with the electronic health records

Aloha everyone!

Mary Webber asked me to write you a little article about what HITPro is and what it will do for our Hawaii association professionally. In order to correctly answer this question, I need to go back to what ARRA is, how Health and Human Services is in charge of the Office of the National Coordinator and how money is awarded. Finally, I will tell you what “Meaningful Use” is because they are all inter-related.

ARRA stands for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and President Obama’s team pitched it and it was enacted shortly after his taking office. The purpose was to try to stimulate jobs and the economy. In the enactment, the law created something called the “ONC”. This is the “Office of the National Coordinator which is the ARRA “oversight” arm of the Department of Health and Human Services aka “HHS”.

I have a little experience with ARRA funding because I personally, tried to get a grant to open a business assisting physician offices with implementation of electronic health records. This would have been funded through ARRA to get providers up and running with an E H R and there is incentive monies offered to physicians from Medicare and Medicaid for installing and (MU) “meaningfully using” computerized health record technology. The businesses awarded this money help physicians achieve MU by assisting in hardware/ software selection, assisting in policy development, implementing electronic orders to drug stores and hospital and clinic pharmacies in the community among other things. So that is what MU would look like to us from the outside looking in on these processes. This was particularly important for rural areas in the islands. This funding initiative was called the REC (Regional Extension Centers) award. For our region which includes Hawaii, Samoa, and many pacific islands - the award went to HHIE (Hawaii Health Information Exchange) and their CEO, Alan Ito was one of our speakers at the 2011 annual meeting.

ARRA legislation secondarily awarded funding to develop curriculum and develop examinations too. The curriculum development portion was handled by many large mainland universities and colleges. They needed to develop teaching plans, power points, and testing and assignment materials for a variety of courses whose outcome is very similar to our AHIMA HIT / HIA courses but for rapid delivery (in 6

months). The names of the developing universities and colleges are not really important to this discussion but they were pretty significant places like Duke University for example. If you'd like more information on who developed the course curricula please email me and I will send you that information.

ARRA also gave funding to community colleges through consortiums to take the curriculum that was developed by the large educational institutions mentioned in the previous paragraph and educate community members on electronic health records in potentially six different roles. This training was again developed to take participants approximately six months to complete per role. The purpose was to assist in getting America back to work fast by job retraining. Here in the islands Kapi`olani Community College was listed as a member of the consortium and has worked through most of the University of Hawaii Community Colleges to deliver the education through online education. The courses were developed to train people in one of the following six roles:

- Practice Workflow and Information Management Redesign Specialists
- Clinician/Practitioner Consultants (These are Physicians)
- Implementation Support Specialists
- Implementation Managers
- Technical/Software Support Staff
- Trainers

The first four roles are considered mobile. That means that they "rove" and will go away after a couple of years (when the implementation phase is over). The last two roles Technical / Software Support Staff and Trainers are roles that are considered sustainable, meaning that they will be skills that are required through electronic health implementation and beyond. For this reason, I've elected to focus on these two roles when I look at Workforce Development for the University of Hawaii, Leeward CC deliverables. So when / if you saw the HITPro flyer I sent out, it included the information for the E H R trainer because that MOST closely matches our knowledge, skills, and abilities in the Health Information Specialist world. In fact, the description states just that by citing, "The previous background of workers in this role includes experience as a health professional or ***health information management specialist***".

Finally, HHS (Health and Human Services) through the ONC (Office of the National Coordinator) awarded monies to develop the HITPro exams to correspond to the six roles that the curriculum was developed for. AHIMA (American Health Information Management Association) was key to the endeavor; developing the exams beside PearsonVue and NOVA (Northern Virginia Community Colleges).

The president of AHIMA, Bonnie Cassidy stated that, "We are doing everything we can to increase job opportunities ***for members*** as we ***recruit more qualified workers*** into the HIM profession ... By collaborating with ONC on the front end to develop curricula and testing opportunities, we go a long way to satisfying the growing demand over the next 10 years." <http://community.advanceweb.com/blogs/hitpro/1/archive/2011/06/08/ahima-hit-pro-is-response-to-workforce-shortage.aspx>. And of course... she's the President of AHIMA so... she's right. On the last page of this article is the actual press release AHIMA sent out. Now that we cleared that up, let's get to how this benefits you... it's a \$299.00 dollar value and it's free. Does anyone else watch the show "Extreme Coupon-ers"? If you get a coupon for something free,

lotion, shampoo, cookies, or shoyu won't you pick it up? I will take anything if it's free. Someone somewhere will use it. There is no loss and I have a big family and a large circle of friends so I love to "gift" things too. Even if it's free – it's like the holidays all over, with every shopping excursion. And we love to share in the islands, we share our cultures, foods, free shampoo... right? So the HITPro is free too and it shows the industry that you have achieved another level of success and it proves that you have the temporary or sustainable skills to implement or instruct / support the electronic health record. It's good for you and it's good for our profession. It's another skill that you can use to collaborate in your organization, help you find a higher paying job OR help you communicate with the community and or providers while working together in the electronic health record. We are fortunate to be members of a National Association that has the foresight to help us stay on top of the electronic health record revolution . We are lucky that they keep their eyes on our future. .. and did I mention that the exam is free?

I am pleased to say that I took the HITPro Trainer exam to see what it was like and in order to develop the course plan - and I passed it! It was a good review of many of the materials we learn now as part of the HIT/HIA curriculum. ***“As the healthcare industry transitions to electronic health records (EHRs), HIT Pros show a commitment to their profession and their career. They are eager to demonstrate competency in this evolving field and are excited to work on the leading edge of health IT.”*** <http://www.hitproexams.org/>

There are a number of ways you can order a test voucher.

You can go through AHIMA for a free voucher, wing it and see if you can pass the test. (The issue with this is if you fail the exam and want to retest you will pay for the exam.)

You can take the Kapi`olani (6) six month online course (for a limited time as they will begin charging for the courses very soon).

You can take an (8) eight hour course Leeward Community College is also offering for AHIMA credentialed RHITs, RHIAs, CCS, CCS-P, CCAs right NOW! This is to introduce or refresh topics related to health training, electronic records, and IT basics. The course cost is \$100.00 for each individual or \$50.00 per individual for groups of 25 or more. At the end of this day's training - I will give you a voucher and walk you through the exam registration process. In the spring, this free voucher option will go away - so get it while it's HOT ... and free!

If you have any other questions or concerns, you can email me at patrice.jackson@hawaii.edu
Hope to see you in class!

NEWS FLASH---- AHIMA has announced that HITPro students will now be “ACTIVE” AHIMA members and therefore HIMAH members if they choose the state of Hawaii as their state affiliation. We should have an influx of new members soon! Get your HIT Pro now - while it's free.

Patrice M. L. Jackson, RHIA, RHIT, CHP, CCS



news

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June 6, 2011

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AHIMA TOUTS HIT PRO EXAMS AS INDUSTRY RESPONSE TO WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

Designed to increase eligible hires for electronic health record transition

CHICAGO— AHIMA President Bonnie Cassidy today informed members of the 83-year-old professional society representing health information management (HIM) professionals that the organization is working proactively to grow jobs for members while helping to fill the estimated 50,000 new positions that will be needed to implement the U.S. health system's transition to electronic health records (EHR). AHIMA collaborated with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) to develop the HIT Pro competency exams announced last week that will, for a limited time, be offered free to qualified U.S. citizens.

"We are doing everything we can to increase job opportunities for members as we recruit more qualified workers into the HIM profession," Cassidy said. "By collaborating with ONC on the front end to develop curricula and testing opportunities, we go a long way to satisfying the growing demand over the next ten years." The ONC estimates that hospitals and physician practices will need an additional 50,000 HIT workers during the next five years to satisfy EHR "Meaningful Use" criteria. Six new Health Information Technology Professional™ (HIT Pro) competency exams were released this month to help address this need. The HIT Pro exams assess basic competency of individuals seeking to demonstrate their proficiency in certain health IT workforce roles integral to the implementation and management of electronic health information.

HIT Pro is a component of the Workforce Development program of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009. The exams are being funded by an ONC grant and developed through a partnership between Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), AHIMA, and Pearson VUE. Each of the six exams pertains to a specific HIT workforce role instrumental in the process of achieving meaningful use of EHR systems.

The purpose of the Workforce Development program is to ensure there are enough qualified workers to support the healthcare industry and efforts to implement EHRs and health information exchanges (HIE). All six of the HIT Pro competency exams launched last week and corresponding classes are now available for interested professionals and job seekers looking to change into growth careers. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and numerous career staffing services identify health information as one of the fastest growing job classifications over the next ten years. A broad-based effort by the White House, HHS and the HIM profession is currently underway to communicate the availability and value of the exams. More information about HIT Pro is available at www.hitproexams.org.

AHIMA's integral role in developing the exams has opened a new opportunity for those looking to establish their employability at an entry level, as well as for HIT experts seeking to optimize their employability in the current work environment. For both entry level workers and experts, the exams can provide a competitive edge so that they are better positioned to take on the new roles as they become available.

About AHIMA

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Represents more than 61,000 specially educated Health Information Management professionals in the United States and around the world, the American Health Information Management Association is committed to promoting and advocating for high quality research, best practices and effective standards in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA's enduring goal is quality healthcare through quality information. www.ahima.org

Dear CSA Leaders-

We are writing today to alert you to an exciting new membership offering from AHIMA to invite a growing segment of future health information professionals to the resources and benefits of AHIMA membership.

As part of the ARRA HITECH funding projects to expand the HIT workforce, educational programs have been created to train individuals via 6 and 12-month courses of study. Students in the HITECH programs charting a career in health information will benefit from the resources available through AHIMA membership.

However, the ARRA-HITECH students are not eligible for traditional AHIMA student membership. So, in order to offer this group of students an affordable opportunity to join AHIMA, we are presenting a time-limited special offer membership rate of \$50 while they are in these ARRA HITECH programs. Our goal is introduce these students, who would not likely have sought out membership otherwise, to a wealth of AHIMA resources now so that when they move along in their careers, they may continue with AHIMA membership. Promotion of this program will begin soon.

We expect that you will have questions, so we will address some of them here:

☐ **What will this mean for our state dues rebates?** You will receive 20% of the \$50 dues fee paid by this group, the same rate as you receive for existing dues. It's important to understand that this group is an expanded market opportunity so the revenue - while less per capita initially- is expected to be new money with the potential to grow as some of the group transition to full dues.

☐ **What type of members are these?** These members will be considered Active members and will get full benefits with the exception of the printed Journal (they will get the digital version instead).

☐ **How will we identify these members?** We are working to modify one of the CSA reports to have a column that will identify these specific Active members as the HITECH group so that you can know who they are and also be able to reconcile the dues rebate amount with the number of new members.

☐ **Why is this group not considered Student members?** In order to be able to continue to offer the HIM students who are attending CAHIIM accredited or approved programs with the lowest dues price and maintain the by-law guidelines that define that category, these HITECH students are Active members with a price break. This also allows us to limit the time they are eligible for the special price (while they are in the program with a maximum of 2 years). They are also not eligible for the New Grad category that is just for our CAHIIM students.

☐ **How will this membership opportunity be promoted?** In order to get this special reduced dues offer to those who it is meant for, we are going directly to the program directors of these programs to share with their students this offer. There has been a special registration web page developed specifically for this purpose. Because this is a limited time offer and opportunity, it will not be publicized on the main AHIMA.org site.

Please let us know what additional questions you have. Also, we will let you know more details when they are available in regards to the CSA reports.

The Board of Directors endorsed this initiative last summer and staff has been working quickly to make this available in order to maximize the opportunity to welcome new health information students to a professional home that they can value from, and contribute to.

Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie S. Cassidy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'y' at the end.

Bonnie S. Cassidy, MPA, RHIA, FAHIMA, FHIMSS

AHIMA President