



news

233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.
Chicago, IL 60601

phone >>(312) 233-1100
fax >>(312) 233-1090
web >>www.ahima.org

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For more information, please contact:

Bridget Stratton

Public Relations

312-233-1097

bridget.stratton@ahima.org

AHIMA Announces 2015 Board President/Chair, New Board Members

Cassi Birnbaum elected to serve as President/Chair

CHICAGO (Jan. 5, 2015) — [American Health Information Management Association](http://www.ahima.org) (AHIMA) members elected Cassi Birnbaum, MS, RHIA, CPHQ, FAHIMA, as president/chair of the 2015 Board of Directors. Her one-year term began Jan.1.

In her role, Birnbaum will work with the board and CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA, to provide strategic direction to AHIMA, the preeminent nonprofit association for health information management (HIM) professionals who are responsible for protecting the accuracy of patient health information as well as safeguarding and preserving its privacy. The association has more than 71,000 members.

Birnbaum is senior vice president of HIM and consulting for Peak Health Solutions, a company specializing in providing remote coding, auditing, clinical documentation improvement, ICD-10 transition and HIM resource planning services and consultation nationwide. Birnbaum will also serve as a board member of San Diego Health Connect in 2015.

Previously, Birnbaum held positions as the director of health information, CDI and chief privacy officer for Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego and director of quality resource management at Scripps Health.

Birnbaum served as a director on the AHIMA Board from 2009 to 2012 and chaired the Governance Committee and the Advocacy and Alliance Task Group. She is the past president of the California Health Information Association and received its Distinguished Member Award in 2009. She was the co-chair of the CCHIT Privacy and Compliance Workgroup, California Healthcare Association's Health Care Informatics and Information Technology Group, and the California Privacy and Security Advisory Board's Privacy Committee. Birnbaum has also been actively involved at the regional, state and national level in leading and participating in HIE initiatives, and has been an adjunct faculty member and an advisory member for HIT programs at the University of California, San Diego and San Diego Mesa College.

"As board president/chair, Cassi's passion, HIM knowledge and experience will be of great value to AHIMA, its members and the Board while we continue to lead the HIM community and promote steps to improve the quality of health information," Thomas Gordon said.

“I’m honored and excited to work with Lynne, the board, our members and the AHIMA staff as we continue AHIMA’s legacy as an advocate for HIM professionals and consumers,” Birnbaum said. “I look forward to putting my expertise to work as we continue to assist with important initiatives including ICD-10 implementation and the industry’s movement toward use of electronic health records to ensure healthcare professionals and patients have access to quality information when and where they need it.”

In addition to Birnbaum’s appointment, members elected a President/Chair-elect, Speaker of the House and three members of the board of directors (who each will serve a three-year term):

- President/Chair-elect: **Melissa M. Martin, RHIA, CCS, CHTS-IM**, is chief privacy officer and HIM director for West Virginia University Hospitals. She is a third-year AHIMA director of the board. Martin is a past president and distinguished member of the West Virginia Health Information Management Association, having served as director and secretary as well as chairperson for many committees. She has presented recently on information governance, recovery audit contractors, AHIMA volunteerism, leadership and coding education programs to various groups. Martin will serve as president/chair of the 2016 Board.
- Speaker of the House: **Laura W. Pait, RHIA, CDIP, CCS**, is senior director, HIM, Novant Health, and is responsible for the HIM operations at all the Novant acute care facilities. She is the co-business owner for the ICD-10 Transition Project at Novant and member of the North Carolina Healthcare Information and Communications Alliance ICD-10 Workgroup. She has served as a co-chair for the AHIMA House of Delegate’s Best Practice team and the Communities of Practice Advisory Committee. Pait served as president of the North Carolina Health Information Management Association and is currently serving as an elected delegate for the association. She is a widely published speaker on the subject of coding, documentation, and billing.
- Director: **Barbara J. Manor, MA, RHIA**, is vice president of HIM at Sisters of Charity Health System based in Denver. She has served two terms as president of the Colorado Health Information Management Association (CHIMA). Manor has been the recipient of the CHIMA Distinguished Member Award and the AHIMA Mentor Triumph Award. Past service for AHIMA includes many years in the House of Delegates and serving on the nominating and Triumph Awards committees and e-HIM Task Force. She is an adjunct faculty member at Regis University in the HIM program. She is a noted speaker and writer on subjects of HIM transformation, data stewardship, meaningful use, privacy and ICD-10.
- Director: **Dwan Thomas-Flowers, MBA, RHIA, CCS**, is an independent contractor offering expertise in coding, management, HIM operations, quality management and revenue cycle. Currently, she serves as an ICD-10 consultant and co-chair of AHIMA’s Clinical Terminology and Classification practice council. Other AHIMA activities have included serving on the professional ethics and Triumph Award committees, House of Delegates Best Practices and Standards and Operations teams, and receiving AHIMA’s Action for Community Excellence designation. She is former chair of the HIMSS ICD-10 Task Force, past-president of the Florida Health Information Management Association (FHIMA) and recipient of multiple industry awards, including two AHIMA Triumph Awards for Leadership and Mentoring and two FHIMA Distinguished Member designations.

- Director: **Susan E. White, PhD, RHIA, CHDA**, is an associate professor in the HIM and systems division at The Ohio State University where she teaches data analytics, healthcare finance, and database courses and provides statistical support for researchers. She is currently a member of the Council for Excellence in Education (CEE) curriculum workgroup and has co-chaired AHIMA's Data Governance and Analytics practice council and served as a member of AHIMA's Quality Initiatives and Secondary Data Use practice council. She presents regularly at the state and national level on data analytics, data governance and quality measurement. She is also the president and founder of Health Policy Analytics, LLC, a consulting firm dedicated to assisting clients in analyzing large claims databases to understand the impact of payment policy changes.

The AHIMA Board is responsible for setting long-term strategy and direction, governing the association's activities, and fulfilling the organization's fiduciary responsibility.

To further AHIMA's position as an industry leader, the 2015 Board will provide strategic guidance on information governance, ICD-10 implementation, informatics, leadership, innovation and advocating for the public good.

The AHIMA Board is composed of 13 elected members—including the president/chair, president/chair-elect, past president/chair, speaker of the house and nine directors at large; the CEO serves ex officio. In 2014, a Board advisor was appointed and will continue to serve in 2015.

The newly elected members join the following current AHIMA Board Directors:

- **Susan W. Carey**, RHIT, PMP, system director, HIM, Norton Healthcare; Carey will serve as Treasurer of the 2015 Board.
- **Zinethia L. Clemmons**, MBA, MHA, RHIA, PMP, senior health information privacy specialist, Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights
- **Virginia (Ginna) Evans**, MBA, RHIA, FAHIMA, business analyst, revenue cycle development, Emory Healthcare - The Emory Clinic; Evans will serve as Secretary of the 2015 Board.
- **Colleen A. Goethals**, MS, RHIA, FAHIMA, HIM consultant, Midwest Medical Records Association, Inc., and Cardone Record Services, Inc.
- **Dana C. McWay**, JD, RHIA, court executive/clerk of court, US Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri
- **Cindy D. Zak**, MS, RHIA, PMP, FAHIMA, executive director, corporate HIM, Yale New Haven Health System
- **Angela C. Kennedy**, EdD, MBA, RHIA, head and professor Louisiana Tech University Department of HIIM. Kennedy will serve as 2015 past president/chair.
- **David S. Muntz**, CHCIO, FCHIME, LCHIME, FHIMSS, senior vice president and CIO of GetWellNetwork. Muntz serves without vote as Advisor to the Board.

- **Lynne Thomas Gordon**, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA, chief executive officer, AHIMA, serves as an ex-officio member of the Board without vote.

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About AHIMA

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 71,000 health information management and health informatics professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA is committed to promoting and advocating for 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