

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 8:50 AM CT, MONDAY, SEPT. 28

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AHIMA Honors 10 for Outstanding Contributions to Health Information Management

AHIMA Triumph Awards ceremony recognizes professionals, students

NEW ORLEANS – Sept. 28, 2015 – The [American Health Information Management Association \(AHIMA\)](#) honored members at its annual AHIMA Triumph Awards ceremony today. The awards recognize the excellence, dedication and service of health information management (HIM) professionals who have made steadfast efforts to enrich the field.

The awards were presented during AHIMA's 87th Annual Convention and Exhibit in New Orleans.

"The AHIMA Triumph Awards are an important way to recognize and thank those who make a significant difference in our professional community of health information management," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. "The 2015 award winners are leaders who build our knowledge, prepare future HIM professionals, and share their talent with the rest of the field. Their dedication and excellence are what makes them models for all."

Distinguished Member Award

Patty Thierry Sheridan, MBA, RHIA, FAHIMA, is the 2015 recipient of AHIMA's highest honor, the Distinguished Member Award. She is passionate about HIM, leadership and volunteerism. In her experience as president of Care Communications, Inc., and her numerous senior roles at AHIMA, including as board president/chair, Sheridan has made significant contributions to healthcare leadership in HIM, patient access and data management. She currently serves as senior vice president of IOD, Incorporated, and as a community trustee on the Resurrection University Board of Directors for the College of Nursing and College of Allied Health.

Educator Award

Marjorie H. McNeill, PhD, RHIA, CCS, FAHIMA, is honored with the Educator Award for excellence in preparing the next generation of professionals for their HIM careers. For more than 30 years, McNeill has been an instructor and clinical coordinator. She's currently program director/associate professor for the Division of Health Informatics and Information Management at Florida A&M University. Her contributions to research in HIM education, such as authoring "Information Retention and Access" in the *Professional Review Guide* for the RHIA and RHIT Examinations, have demonstrated her scholarly efforts.

Innovation Award

Kelly McLendon, RHIA, CHPS, is the recipient of AHIMA's Innovation Award. McLendon founded CompliancePro Solutions to design, develop and deliver a state-of-the-art, web-based software program that organizes, investigates and tracks privacy and security incidents along with performing HIPAA and state breach determinations. For more than 37 years, McLendon has championed innovation and commitment to the HIM profession and the advancement of health information systems.

Leadership Award

Melinda A. Wilkins, PhD, RHIA, FAHIMA, is honored with AHIMA's Leadership Award. With more than 30 years of experience from director to educator in HIM, Wilkins' has served twice as a component state association (CSA) president. She has been a member of several AHIMA practice councils, given numerous presentations and created research papers as well as serving as HIM Accreditation Council Chair of CAHIIM and Fellow of AHIMA. In her roles in health informatics programs at Arkansas Tech University and Walden University, Wilkins has demonstrated positive leadership to her students, colleagues and coworkers.

Kelly Wilson, MBA, RHIA, CHP, HCRM, FAHIMA, also received a 2015 Leadership Award for her 20-plus years of experience in health information management roles including HIM chief operating officer at HCA/Parallon Tampa Shared Services Center. In this role, Wilson provides oversight for the HIM operations for 25 hospitals and 325 employees. She brought strong knowledge of health information as HCA explored opportunities to consolidate functions and design HIM into a sustainable business model.

Literary Legacy Award

Darice M. Grzybowski, MA, RHIA, FAHIMA, received the Literary Legacy Award for providing more than 100 published articles and interviews, multiple chapter contributions, lectures and most recently authoring a book. For more than 30 years, Grzybowski has provided US and international HIM professionals, IT staffers, clinical, and financial professionals, corporate leaders and government agencies with ongoing guidance to help in managing health information, product development and industry education.

Mentor Award

Danielle P. Berthelot, MHI, RHIA, CHTS-IM, is the recipient of the 2015 Mentor Award. Berthelot is the director of Health Information Management services and Utilization Management at Woman's Hospital in Baton Rouge, LA. For more than 25 years, she has been

a mentor and served as a clinical preceptor accepting students from various CAHIIM-accredited programs. Berthelot is active in the Louisiana Health Information Management Association.

Research Award

Prerna Dua, PhD, RHIA, CHTS-IM, recognized with the Research Award, demonstrates her research expertise in healthcare, decision support and translational bioinformatics. This has translated to her nine years as a researcher at the department of Health Informatics and Information Management at Louisiana Tech University. She has published several journal and conference publications and book chapters and also serves on the AHIMA Graduate Resource Alliance committee and the AHIMA Foundation's Research Network.

Rising Star Award

Priscilla O. Keeton, MS, RHIT is receiving AHIMA's Rising Star Award, which honors individuals who embody great hope for the HIM field. In less than five years, Keeton received an associate's of Applied Science in HIM technology degree, a Master of Science in Health Informatics and a Registered Health Information Technician credential. She is an officer of the Dallas Fort Worth Health Information Management Association and has presented on many topics for the Texas Health Information Management Association.

Student Award

Nonica Isabella D. Santiago is recognized with this year's Student Award, which recognizes excellence in new talent in CAHIIM-accredited or AHIMA-approved coding programs. Santiago graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Health Informatics and Health Information Management program at the University of Central Florida. She has participated as a student member in both AHIMA and FHIMA for nearly two years.

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About AHIMA

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 101,000 health information professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA 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