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FROM THE PRESIDENT



"I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people."

I am excited and honored to be the President of NYHIMA this year and I know with our outstanding Board of Directors, committee chairs,

central office staff, members and volunteers, combined with the financial support of our corporate members and vendors, we will achieve the goals we've set for 2008-2009.

My journey to this position began as president-elect and I approached it as a new adventure with excitement and a strong sense of responsibility. I have always believed that the strength of our association is not because everyone has the same ability, but because each member contributes unique skills to the success of the association. I love the diversity of our members, and the wealth of ideas that they and our Board members bring to the table. This is what makes us so vibrant.

In accepting the responsibility of serving as your President, millions of questions and ideas went racing through my mind. But the one that stood out the most was, "How can I best serve NYHIMA and what can NYHIMA do to best meet the needs of its members?" Our visions, missions, and outlook animate us as an association and as individuals to stand in service to promote the professional excellence of our members through advocacy, alliances, education, and recognition.

Your 2008-09 Board has been installed and will take a multi-level approach in addressing the needs of our members. This year's strategic plan will entail encouraging leadership and practice innovation in transitioning to e-HIM, provide innovative education, promote the awareness of HIM professionals,

maintain membership and increase recruitment efforts.

Volunteering your time for NYHIMA will provide you with opportunities to develop your leadership skills, including learning effective communication, public speaking, and networking. It is an honor for me, as your President, to see our passionate volunteers investing their valuable time in improving the professional lives of our members. I'm thankful for each of you who volunteer. I count it a joy and a privilege to continue to look forward to a meaningful relationship with everyone. I would like to ask, indeed implore you, to join our 'get a member, be a member' effort.

The Board is interested in hearing from the membership. If you have any suggestions, insights, or words of wisdom for improving our association, please contact me.

Lastly, I want to share with you a story from an unknown author about the mayonnaise jar and two cups of coffee. It talks about things in your life that seem almost too much to handle and when 24 hours in a day are not enough. It goes like this: "A professor stood before his class, picked up a large, empty mayonnaise jar and filled it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full and they said it was. Then he picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly and the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He asked the students again if the jar was full and they said it was. Next, he picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. The sand filled up the remaining space in the jar. He asked once again if the jar was full and the class responded with a yes. The professor picked up two cups of coffee and poured them into the jar, filling the empty space between the sand. He said, 'I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life: the **golf balls** are the important things [God, family, your children, your

health, your friends, your favorite passions] that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The **pebbles** are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, and your car. The **sand** is everything else – the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same thing goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get a medical checkup. Take your partner out to dinner. There will always be time to clean the house or fix the garbage disposal. One of the students raised his hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor was glad to point out that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend!"

When life sometimes seems almost too much to handle and 24 hours in a day are not enough, think about the story of the mayonnaise jar and the 2 cups of coffee. Set your priorities, take care of the things that really matter to you, and remember that the rest is just sand.

Renato L. Estrella, MSHA RHIA

IN THE NEWS

On the National Front

House Subcommittee Passes Health IT Bill

The Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee passed **HR 6357**, the Protecting Records, Optimizing Treatment, and Easing Communication through Health Care Technology Act (PROTECHT), by voice vote in July. Although passed, it comes with controversy as it re-opens the HIPAA privacy rules requiring consent for the use of health information for healthcare operations. Several amendments were introduced to address the privacy provisions, but were ultimately withdrawn. The full House Energy and Commerce Committee will also have to mark up the bill.

HR 6357 was also referred to the House Science and Technology Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee who will also have to address portions of the bill.

Negotiations in the Senate on advancing **S. 1693**, the Wired for Healthcare Quality Act, are continuing.

*Source: AHIMA Advantage e-Alert
Volume 10, Issue 27, July 2, 2008*

Stark Introduces Health IT Legislation

Rep. Pete Stark, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee, has introduced **HR 6898**, the Health e-Information Technology Act of 2008, which addresses three major areas:

- Establishing clear standards and deadlines to spur development of health IT systems,
- Establishing incentives to drive adoption of health IT systems, and
- Establishing strong rules to protect the privacy of personal health information.

It is possible the House Ways and Means Health Committee and full Committee will consider this legislation in the near future although, since Congress is expected to complete legislative business other than budget matters by September 26, there isn't much time for discussion. If the Committee does pass the measure, it will need to be consolidated with **HR 6357**, the PROTECHT Act, passed by the House Energy and Commerce Committee on July 23.

*Source: AHIMA Advantage e-Alert
Volume 10, Issue 38, September 17, 2008*

FROM YOUR PEERS

News from the IPRO Front

March Quarterly Meeting

The quarterly meeting of the IPRO Provider Relations Committee was held on March 4, 2008. In addition to NYHIMA, there were representatives from the hospital community and professional associations, IPRO and the New York State Department of Health and Office of Mental Health.

Medicare/Federal Activities:

- There was much discussion on the upcoming 9th scope of work (SOW). IPRO is in a competitive bid process for this contract. There are five main activities of focus:
 1. Beneficiary protection.
 2. Patient safety and prevention, with emphasis on use of an EHR in healthcare settings.
 3. Disparities – states with a higher proportion of an underserved population are being asked to submit a proposal for outreach to this group; New York will do so.
 4. Patient pathways; with emphasis on decreasing inpatient hospitalizations, working with all levels of providers throughout a community.
 5. Chronic kidney disease, with emphasis on monitoring for early diagnosis and treatment.
- Clinical topics for improvement remain the same, with emphasis on diabetes, pressure ulcers, use of restraints and methadone resistance.
- IPRO has received numerous letters of support from organizations throughout New York State. The letters will be attached to the proposal that is due to CMS on March 25, 2008. CMS will make a decision on awarding the contract in July 2008, with an effective date of August 2008 for the 9th SOW.

Medicaid/State Activities:

- IPRO continues to work on improvements in asthma and diabetes care in community health centers; and is encouraging centers to start to collect their own data.
- IPRO will be responding to the RFI from NYSDOH by May 9, 2008 for the next contract extension which will be effective March 2009.

The next Provider Relations Committee meeting will be held on June 3, 2008 immediately following the IPRO Annual Meeting.

Submitted by:
Cindy M. Boester, MS RHIA
NYHIMA Representative to IPRO

THE CODING CORNER

Question: If a physician owns the equipment that generates the 64-lead ECG, which of the new Category III codes should be used?

Answer: If the physician owns the equipment and employs the personnel who perform the graphics and analysis, report Category III code **0178T** (electrocardiogram that uses 64 leads or greater, with graphic presentation and analysis; with interpretation and report). This code would be used when the physician then interprets the ECG using the graphics and analysis for interpretation and dictates a report. Report Category III code **0180T** if the physician is performing only the interpretation and report.

Question: Can computer-aided detection (CAD) be billed with a breast MRI?

Answer: Yes. If performed and documented, it is appropriate to also assign Category III code **0159T** when performing breast magnetic resonance imaging (MR).

Question: Is it appropriate for a hospital to assign code 93555 when an injection procedure has been performed during cardiac catheterization?

Answer: Hospital staff billing for these procedures sometimes wonder whether they can or should report codes **93555** and **93556** because the definition of these codes state, "imaging supervision, interpretation and report." Often, they wrongly assume that they should not submit these codes because they are not providing a report, which the physician does. However, even though the cardiologist does supply the report, the hospital must assign either or both codes **93555** and **93556** depending on the procedure performed. Otherwise, they will encounter rejected claims.

Submitted by:
Kelley J. Lawson, RHIT CCS CPC-H
Source: www.medlearn.com/questions/

On the Local Front

HIMA of New York City

A TRIBUTE TO JOEL SCHWARTZ

Traditions are very important to people. Many families hope that their firstborn is a son and Joel's father was thrilled when Joel came into this world on May 16, 1936. The Schwartz's lineage would continue. Here are some of his accomplishments: Columbia University, BA 1957, BSEE 1958; Jersey Institute of Technology, MSEE 1962; Hunter College

Medical Records Science Certificate, 1973. His professional instructional activities included training personnel in transcription 1970-2008; teaching medical transcription at Rockland Community College, 1980-85; providing clinical placement for student training practices, 1980s. [*"Dad, have I fulfilled your wishes honoring the Schwartz name? I hope that you are proud of the accomplishments I've had."*]

Joel was a member of AHIMA, NYHIMA and HIMANYC. He attended general meetings, conventions and workshops from 1970 to 2008. He was a delegate to NYHIMA in 1986 and 1987; served as treasurer of HIMANYC, 1990-93, 1998, 2001, 2008; edited the journal for GNYMRA and HIMANYC and contributed many interesting articles to the publication; served as the photographer for GNYMRA; and, as the owner of Hypertype, participated as a vendor at local and state conventions for more than 36 years.

He was President of GNYMRA in 1986 and 1987; chaired the nominating committee in 1987; and, upon receiving the Distinguished Member Award said, *"I want to thank everyone, particularly Mary, who has been my mentor and a mother to me for many years. When I started being involved with GNYMRA, I heard of this award. Now that I have it – I QUIT!! I'm only joking – I will never quit – this is my life and I enjoy it."*

Joel was a phenomenal athlete and enjoyed hiking, bicycling, climbing high peaks, participating in marathons for charitable causes, and swimming in the Hudson River with his beloved 16-year old granddaughter in 2005. He notable achievements included swimming three miles from Piermont to Irvington to raise money for multiple sclerosis and receiving four gold medals for swimming in 2007.

Joel was a good husband, father, and grandfather. He had the ability to build harmonious relationships with his peers, students and friends. He was a leader and inspired confidence in many. He always found the time to assist when help was needed.

Memorable quotes from the annual New Year's Party for medical friends at Mary's (Mom's) home: Christina Antypas: *"Invite Joel, without him there is no party."*

Cindy Boester: *"Joel, you keep talking, I'm too busy eating Greek food."*

Marc Gastovitch: *"Joel, that calls for another glass of wine."*

Eleanor Moulton: *"The girls would drool when Joel came to meetings."*

Joel to Rose Lefkowitz: *"Food is food, it's all going in the same place."*

Peter Micallef: *"No party is complete without our humorist."*

Vivian Russo: *"Keep our budget down, Joel!"*
 Helen LeClair (HIMANYC photographer): *"Will everyone sit still so I can take some good pictures? This is not a paying job!"*
 Joel to Mary (Mom): *"You're not only a good cook and a good hostess, but a special friend to all of us."*

Personal Memories:

- When I was working as Medical Record Director at Beekman-Downtown Hospital, we had a contract with Hypertype – pick up dictation today, deliver tomorrow. One day it was late and I said some harsh words to tell your boss. Very meekly you replied, *"I can't say that to my boss as she is my wife!"*
- When we were attending a convention in San Francisco, your wife Sally was there with Judy and Wendy, who were dressed like little princesses. I can still visualize them in their pretty dresses.
- At my 90th birthday party given by my niece, Helen LeClair, you took pictures of all our guests, including a table with our medical friends, and presented them to me in a beautiful album as a remembrance of that special day.

You have been honest, frank, a special friend, and spent years building a reputation. You gave our association the best you had to offer. Joel, we will never forget you. You were very special to me. Even though it hurts, I want to say you left this world doing what you loved best. Rest in peace, my friend.
 Mary (Mom) Zannis

People on the Move

Dawn Gallagher, MA RHIA CCS CCS-P CPC (HIMAWNY) has joined Jean Jurek Associates, Inc., of Clarence Center, as Director of Coding and Auditing Services.

Congratulations To



Michelle A. Green, MPS RHIA CMA (AAMA) CPC FAHIMA (HIMAWNY) on being selected as a FORE Triumph Educator.

Presented annually during the AHIMA Convention and Exhibit, the FORE Triumph Awards are designed to recognize those special individuals who have made a difference in the HIM

profession. They were developed as part of FORE's campaign to forecast future trends in HIM, envision HIM roles in the future, and focus on emerging HIM knowledge and skills. They honor leadership in the HIM field, reward contributions that build our knowledge base, recognize excellence in preparing future HIM professionals, and encourage fresh talent and new leadership.

The Educator Award honors those who demonstrate excellence in preparing the next generation of professionals for their HIM careers. To be eligible, qualified individuals or departments of educators must teach in a formal HIA or HIT program granting associate, baccalaureate, or master degrees, and be involved in AHIMA activities at the state or national level.

Criteria for the award include the development and implementation of creative teaching tools and methods, high standards of excellence and high expectations of students, awareness of the instructor's impact as a role model, commitment to student mentoring in the classroom and beyond, and outstanding contributions to the research base of the field.

Michelle, on the faculty of Alfred State College since 1984, teaches courses on campus and online in health information technology and coding and reimbursement, and serves as academic advisor. In 1999, she created the college's first Internet-based courses under a campus grant from the Joint Labor Management Committee (United University Professionals and the State University of New York). She is the author of three textbooks for Cengage Delmar Learning, including *Understanding Health Insurance: A Guide to Billing and Reimbursement*, *Essentials of Health Information Management*, and *3-2-1 Code It!*

She was honored with the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2000, and received the SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor designation in 2004. Selected as an Outstanding Young Woman of America for 1997, she was also named to *Who's Who among America's Teachers* in 1994 and 2000.

In the Spotlight

[Editor's Note: The following is the text of the speech delivered by Renato Estrella, MSHA RHIA during the Installation and Awards Banquet at the 73rd Annual Conference in Saratoga Springs, on Tuesday, June 17, 2008]



"Good Evening! Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you as your President and I appreciate your trust and confidence in me.

My journey began as president-elect, a new adventure, with an excitement and a strong sense of responsibility. I have always believed that the strength of our association is not because everyone has the same abilities, but because each unique member is willing to contribute to the success of the association. I love the diversity of people, the ideas that the Board, committee members, and members bring to the table. This is what makes our association so vibrant.

NYHIMA is a wonderful association, full of very talented professionals, and I realize that I have very large shoes to fill. Donna Rugg has done a superb job during her term. Thank you, Donna, for your leadership and for being a mentor to me. Alison Nicklas, thank you for the work you have done; there were few, limited, occasions we were together but they were fruitful. The support you gave to us made the work much easier.

As I sat at my laptop last night to write this speech, I had millions of questions and ideas running through my mind. But the one that stood out the most was the question of how I could best serve the association and how can NYHIMA better meet the needs of its members. Our vision, mission, and outlook animate us as an association and as individuals to stand in service to promote the professional excellence of our members through advocacy, alliances, education, and recognition. As we embarked on our many years of leading our association, today we stand as stewards of that commitment and dedication. Just imagine, 73 years tonight since NYHIMA was born! For 73 years our association has made history in continuously promoting the value of the HIM profession, as well as shaping the future for years to come.

In reflecting on all that NYHIMA has accomplished, we owe a great debt of gratitude to those who came before us: our past presidents (62 of them – seven who have served twice and two who have served three times.) I believe some of our past presidents are here tonight and I would like them to be recognized. As I call your name, please stand and remain standing until I call everyone: Patty Sheridan, Diane Fabian, Michele Bohley, Lynn Wozniak, Cindy Reynolds, Sara Clark, Donna Barnard, Alison Nicklas, and Donna Rugg – ladies and gentlemen, I present the NYHIMA Legends! Thank you all for being instrumental in what we are today. Let's give them another big round of applause. Also, thank you to all of the exhibitors and corporate members who have consistently supported NYHIMA throughout the years.

Tonight marks a change in our leadership: a new board has been installed thanks to Patty Sheridan. This board will take a multi-level approach to handling the needs of our members as addressed in the 2008-09 strategic plan. This will entail encouraging leadership and practice innovation in transitioning to e-HIM; providing innovative education; promoting the awareness of HIM professionals; expanding the membership; maintaining membership levels; and increasing recruitment efforts. Substantial work is already underway. AHIMA, on the national level, ensures that our profession continues to survive and thrive in the electronic environment and is defining the skills and competencies needed for us to succeed. We are all in this together – let's meet these challenges

head on and team with our fellow members to show our value as HIM professionals.

Thank you to the chairs and members of our committees, and to all of you who've offered to and/or volunteered. It is an honor as your President to see the passionate volunteers investing their time in making the lives of our members today. I thank God for each of you who volunteers and gives of his or her most valuable time. I count it a joy and privilege to continue to look forward to a meaningful relationship with everyone. I would like to ask, indeed implore, you to get a member and be a member. Be a mentor. The Board is very interested in hearing from you; please take a few minutes and send us an e-mail. If you have relocated or had other contact changes, please update your file. If you have any insight, ideas, words of wisdom or suggestions, please contact me.

Donna Rugg, our nominating committee chairperson, needs your help in identifying those members who have extensive leadership skills, as well as experienced members for service, on the Board of Directors. I encourage you to nominate yourself or a colleague who will provide strong leadership for NYHIMA. What an exciting time this is to be a part of this Association: the New York State Geographical CoP has been launched, thanks to Lynn Farnung and Karen Linder. If you have not visited it yet, please do so. Our Web site has been enhanced and made more user-friendly, thanks to our Training and Education Coordinator, Vinnie Martiniano. Our new Executive Director, Chris Harrington, is hard at work. Our committees and our dynamic Board of Directors are busy planning for the coming year.

My congratulations to our award recipients, and to our special Hall of Fame recipient, Mary Zannis, RHIT. Through the years, you have always been loyal to our profession. Thank you for being with us tonight.

Chris Harrington, thank you for your tireless efforts and dedication to our association. Please come and join me through this journey and let's continue projecting a positive and professional image to our members, and in keeping our members and customers satisfied.

Thanks, also, to Lynn Wozniak, Laurie Bach and all of the Adirondack HIMA volunteers behind this annual conference preparation. We could not have done it without you!

Last, but not least, thanks to my sons, Arjay and Renjie for being with me tonight, and thanks to all of you for being here and sharing this special evening with me. People say that behind every successful man is a wife – now I know it's true. Words cannot express my gratitude to my wife, Evangeline, for her support in allowing me to serve; you are truly 'the wind beneath my wings.'

Have a most enjoyable evening and memorable celebration. It is only through continued concern and commitment that we may hope to provide a better quality of service to our members. Again, thank you and I'm looking forward to my journey as your President. Good night."

[Editor's Note: The following is the text of the speech delivered by Mary Zannis, RHIT upon her acceptance of the inaugural Hall of Fame Award presented during the Installation and Awards Banquet at the 73rd Annual Conference in Saratoga Springs, on Tuesday, June 17, 2008]



"Madame President, Executive Board, Elected Officers and Welcomed Guests. My name is Mary Zannis and I am the inaugural recipient of the newly established NYHIMA Hall of Fame Award, presented in recognition of my many years of service and dedication to the HIM profession, NYHIMA and HIMANYC. I am honored and deeply moved.

This is the third time I am visiting Saratoga Springs with fond memories. In the 1970's, I was a delegate to our state convention. My roommate was Edna Rutherford, Director of New York Hospital. The phone in our room rang and it was the president of our association. She wanted to know if I would be the first speaker on the program as Oscar Soberano was unable to make it! 'Do you have his speech?' 'No?' "What should I say?" She said, 'You're a good speaker, just make it interesting!' I hung up the phone, turned to Edna and said, 'Let's write something, Edna.' Her response was, 'They didn't ask me, they asked YOU. Good night, Mary.' It really paid off as I wrote down some interesting stories about things that happened to all of us. The vendors all came in to see what the speaker was saying that caused such an uproar!

When I was employed at Horace Harding Hospital, now St. John's Queens Hospital, the administrator asked me to attend my first meeting of the Medical Records Association. The next day he asked me how I enjoyed it. I replied, 'I'm not going there anymore; the members are all old, in their 40s and 50s.' No comment.

When I worked at Physicians Hospital as Director of Medical Records, the urologist, Dr. Sam Lubash, came into my office with a huge Labrador retriever and asked me to take care of it. I look at him and said, 'I'll be fired.' He insisted, put the dog under my desk, and left. Ming, his dog, started crying so I picked up the phone to the OR and said, 'This is an emergency!' I spoke to Dr. Lubash and he said, 'Put Ming on the phone. Be a good girl, he said. Daddy is operating.' What a surprise – not another peep out of Ming!

I was living in Athens, Greece, during World War II. Our ambassador to the United States, Lincoln

McVeigh, was looking for someone to volunteer their services to the British Army Hospital in Kyfissia, a suburb of Athens. I felt qualified since I spoke both languages fluently and I was accepted. To be honest with you, it was not patriotism; I just wanted to meet handsome British officers!! Much to my surprise, it became a full time job. The doctors couldn't go on grand rounds without me, as the wounded patients only spoke Greek! Then, in 1942, my mother and I were among the 70 Americans exchanged for German prisoners of war. This experience was the one that gave me the incentive to continue in the medical field.

I received formal training for medical record sciences from Frieda Bell of New York Infirmary; Professor Stephen Henkin of St. Vincent's Hospital; Professor Mommarte from Cornell University which was affiliated with Buffalo Children's Hospital; and Sister Philomena from Mercy Hospital in Buffalo. In addition, I have attended various medical science programs in New York and New Jersey. I am thankful to all who taught and guided me along the way. Without their assistance, I could not have achieved all that I have, and decided to give back by teaching others interested in our profession. I have taught Medical Record Sciences at Booth Memorial Hospital; St. John's Queens Hospital; Jamaica Hospital; Beekman-Downtown Hospital; and at New York Hospital for the Touro College program. I am pleased to report that many of my former students became active in our Association and have continued to further our profession. I have also lectured on many different topics, including: applications of computers in hospitals; data processing for medical records personnel; research and development; training clerical personnel for disaster and emergency programs; on the job upgrading of medical record secretaries; disaster procedures for hospital personnel; and mobilization for youth training programs for residents and interns.

I have also had the pleasure of working extensively with Peter Micallef, MLS RHIA CCS, Past President to have our local association name changed from Greater New York Medical Records Association (GNYMRA) to Health Information Management Association of New York City (HIMANYC). I assisted Emanuel Hayt, LLB with his two Medical Legal Aspects of Medical Records publications and was mentioned in the forward. My reward was a 14K gold book charm with inscriptions on each page. I authored the Manual for Medical Record Librarians and submitted it to the Missouri Library. In 1992, I wrote the Release of Information that was published by HIMANYC. Peter Micallef, many times President of NYHIMA, LIHIMA and HIMANYC, once wrote in an article, 'Mary Zannis is the senior politician, advisor and spokesperson of HIMANYC.'

I have also served on most of the committees for AHIMA, NYHIMA, and HIMANYC, including: editor of the Medical Record Publication – no computers, only

mimeograph, which had to be hung up to dry before mailing to our members; delegate, panelist and speaker for AHIMA, NYHIMA and HIMANYC; director and coordinator of medical records for the Catholic Medical Center of Brooklyn and Queens.

I created the Jennie Reiter Memorial: Jennie gave me \$20 for the Lew A. Hochberg Foundation. When she retired to Florida, I wanted to do something to honor her name since she had contributed so much to our local association. At our meetings the president would bang on the desk to gain the attention of the members, so I decided to buy a gavel and call it the Jennie Reiter Memorial in honor of our departed members.

My vision has always been to see us treated and regarded as professionals not as glorified clerks in the basement of a hospital. I am pleased to see we have successfully climbed that ladder and have become proud professionals in the medical field.

My life has been richer with the feeling of fulfillment in serving our profession for over 60 years. This is how I came to the decision to establish a scholarship for NYHIMA. My objective was to provide financial assistance to a student currently enrolled in an AHIMA-approved HIT or HIA program in New York State. This fund is known as the Mary M. Zannis Scholarship.

My advice to our neophytes and future professionals is two words – GET INVOLVED! Our association cannot grow with the changing times without your participation. Don't leave the responsibility to others. Be proud! Stand tall! Aim high!

I hope you have enjoyed the history of my time in the medical field. What? – you want more?? I probably have many more stories from my sixty-plus years, but I've told you enough for now. I thank you and I am grateful for your support, love, and this very special honor. I cherish my years as a member of this association and hope that I will be able to continue to serve for many more to come."