

Hello PA-AHDI members!

Thank you for the opportunity to represent the wonderful state of Pennsylvania in the AHDI HOD. I must admit I am a little overwhelmed as I embark on this new role, but I am taking it one step at a time. There is a lot to learn and “newbie” is my new middle name! I had NO idea how busy AHDI really was until I started exploring the extensive resources and information AHDI has to offer right on the AHDI website....If you haven't visited the site recently, you should!

Since the new year, I have participated in several informative webinars, including orientation, several education sessions, and the first quarter HOD webinar. There is great excitement heard through our Speaker of the House, Brenda Hurley, CMT, AHDI-F; our Executive Director Peter Preziosi, PhD, CAE; AHDI President Susan Lucci, RHIT, CMT, AHDI-F; and others. It is hoped that President Obama and other government leadership will keep healthcare documentation at the top of conversations and policy changes and to include our profession in those conversations. This year's Advocacy Summit (June 2-4) is more important than ever to show our presence on Capitol Hill. The AHDI Legislatives Issues Group is working hard to prepare for this event. I hope our state can be well represented this year! Please consider joining us in Washington, DC., and/or joining the LIG (webinars for meetings!).

You all surely recognize the many challenges we have to remain competitive in our global economy. AHDI is working on our behalf to find ways to continue to adequately prepare MTs for workplace opportunities and the complexities in the documentation stream, whether in a traditional format or EHR/EMR. The ongoing NexGen campaign, the newly launched BenchMark KB (Knowledge Base), third edition of the Book of Style, Model Curriculum and Education Program Approval, and the Leadership Institute are but a few areas AHDI is addressing for workforce development and the future of our association. Alliance building, credentialing, and membership growth also continue to be top priorities for 2009.

As Patty Barrett, CMT, AHDI-F, has mentioned, PA-AHDI will be supporting several of the AHDI Mission Possible initiatives this year, including the Military Spouse Program, Credentialing, and Advocacy Summit. Please join us as we focus on these important initiatives. We are also actively seeking new members from the student population and welcome opportunities to engage our newest practitioners into our state and local chapters.

Please consider participating in the AHDI's philanthropy project, the Arbor Day Foundation, by becoming a member, planting a tree, etc. With spring around the corner, Arbor Day is soon thereafter, April 24th. AHDI has a “Go Green” strategy for 2009, which includes everyday business practices and ACE in Nashville. See the AHDI website and *Vitals* for details on this 2009 project as well as the Arbor Day Foundation.

Thank you again for the opportunity as PA-AHDI delegate to make a difference in our profession, participate in solutions to challenges our state members face in the changing face of healthcare, as well as share in our successes as our profession evolves. Stay tuned for further developments from the HOD!

Judy Lichtenberger, CMT, AHDI-F

PA-AHDI Delegate