



2018 | RESOURCE GUIDE

**EDUCATION &
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT GUIDE**

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PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Continuing Education and Professional Development Vital in Ever-Changing HIM Industry

LIKE EVERY TECHNOLOGY- and information-focused industry, the health information management (HIM) profession has had to do some soul searching to keep up with the pace of change. AHIMA has been doing its part by researching workforce trends and identifying skills that HIM professionals will need in order to succeed in the near future.

That's where HIM Reimagined (HIMR) comes in. HIMR is an AHIMA initiative that provides guidance on how to take the newly updated educational competencies and use them in the profession. A goal of HIMR is to help students and the workforce prepare for the "new" HIM of the future, centering on newer areas of specialization like data analytics, informatics, and information governance.

Part of HIMR's recommendation is that upcoming and current HIM professionals get additional education and professional development in these new areas of expertise—training that is offered by the vendors in this Resource Guide.

Julie A. Shay, MBA-HIN, RHIA, associate professor and program director of Santa Fe College's Health Information Technology Management Programs, has been very involved in HIMR and has been working to bring its benefits to her students.

"AHIMA has done its due diligence in identifying the skills the industry is currently looking for—and more importantly, what skills the industry will be looking for in the future," Shay says. "Thus, we are charged to look within and see where we need to improve and then take action steps; whether it is obtaining another credential or obtaining additional training in tools such as Excel or Access."

The recent HIMR White Paper lays out a number of recommendations to prepare the HIM profession for the future.

- Increase the number of AHIMA members who hold relevant graduate degrees (i.e., HIM, Health Informatics, MBA, MD, MEd, MPH) to 20 percent of total membership within 10 years.
- The RHIA credential should be the standard for HIM generalists. HIMR contains a proviso that provides the ability for an individual with an RHIT credential and a baccalaureate degree to be eli-

gible to sit for the RHIA credential.

- Increase the opportunities for specialization across all levels of the HIM academic spectrum through curricula revision, while retaining a broad foundation in health information management and analytics.

Shay practices what she preaches. "In 2015, I personally went back to school to obtain my MBA with a specialty in health informatics. In fall 2015, I hired a full-time faculty with IT, informatics background because I knew I would need assistance in implementing what was on the HIMR horizon," Shay says.

She adds that AHIMA's workforce research has found that HIM students and practitioners have a long way to go in terms of being prepared for the future. Advanced skills in technology, business and finance principles, critical thinking, leadership, and interpersonal skills are vital. People skills are paramount. Some of these skills are tangible but others are not—thus, the educator's challenge, according to Shay.

The resources found in this guide offer education and professional development services that can help one obtain the expertise needed for in-demand HIM positions.

Other resources available to those looking to further their education and workforce development include:

1. The AHIMA Career Map helps chart out what training people need to reach certain job roles: <http://hicareers.com/CareerMap/>.
2. AHIMA has developed new strategic objectives in an effort to move the industry forward. These objectives are: lead in informatics/analytics; champion information governance. More information about strategic objectives are available at www.ahima.org/about/aboutahima?tabid=strategy.
3. The HIMR White Paper details the new expertise areas HIM professionals should gain education and professional development in, and is available at www.ahima.org/about/him-reimagined/himr?tabid=whitepaper.
4. More specifics, including a video about HIMR, can be found at www.ahima.org/himr. ○



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