



October 2026

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November 6



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Member Spotlight

Elizabeth Cranston, RHIA

Chair of Finance



Elizabeth Cranston, RHIA, is a health information management professional who brings a unique combination of business experience, technology, and a passion for improving the way health information is managed and used. After earning her Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management from Southern New Hampshire University, Elizabeth earned her RHIA credential in 2025.

Her professional experience has included supporting Epic implementations across multiple clinical settings, working directly with front-desk staff, providers, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. Elizabeth is currently working for CSI Companies as the Program Coordinator, assisting multiple implementation projects from abstraction to on-site go-live support planning.

Elizabeth is also passionate about professional involvement and giving back to the HIM community. She has actively volunteered with the Massachusetts Health Information Management Association (MaHIMA), serving on multiple committees, including Chair of the Finance Committee and as a leader in annual conference planning. She enjoys creating opportunities for HIM professionals to connect, learn from one another, and share practical knowledge.

For Elizabeth, HIM represents much more than managing records—it is about bringing together people, technology, data, and healthcare operations to help ensure that health information remains accurate, accessible, secure, and meaningful. She looks forward to continuing to grow within the profession while contributing to the future of HIM in Massachusetts.

President's Message

Howdy! Amy Bittle and I had a great time in San Antonio representing MaHIMA at the House of Delegates. I was fortunate to stay for the conference where the hot topic was Artificial Intelligence!

We all know Artificial Intelligence is moving faster than we can keep up with. I use Copilot and Chat GPT many times a day in my work and personal life. However, for this article, I've challenged myself to do it the "old-fashioned way" and only use spellcheck! Why? I was inspired by our recent webinar with AHIMA board member, Kelly Canter. She suggested not letting the skills we have learned, like writing, atrophy because we use AI to supplement or take over tasks. Most of us can spot AI produced information and it's important for us to continue to contribute with our own words and voice. Don't get me wrong, I will continue to use AI for writing and other tasks, AND I will still take time to continue to use the skills I've worked hard to develop. I encourage you to do the same!

We are more than half-way through the fall conference series, with several more interesting topics and terrific speakers coming up. On the heels of the fall conference series, we will have our annual Dot Wagg Legislative Conference. Registration is OPEN!

Our Education Committee has begun planning the Annual Conference. It will be May 3rd this year at the Hogan Center. We heard how cold everyone was last year, the size of the room and windows makes it difficult to regulate the temperature. This year we are looking at a set of rooms in a different part of the Hogan Center. This will also allow us to run two different tracks, including one focused on coding and revenue cycle.

Thank you to those who attended our first Town Hall. Attendees received a free CEU and learned more about 2026-2027 Strategic Plan

Please be on the look out for future town hall meetings!

If you have comments, concerns or suggestions please reach out: kbogard@mgb.org
-Karen



Karen Bogard RHIA

- MaHIMA Strategic Plan - three major areas of focus for this year:**
- 1. Rebuild engagement through two-way communication, clearer member value, and a stronger sense of belonging**
 - 2. Lower the barriers to volunteering with flexible, welcoming entry points for broader involvement**
 - 3. Strengthen engagement with students and new professionals to build our future workforce and leaders.**

Committee Reports

Finance Report

Finance Report – First Quarter (July – September 2026)
Submitted by Elizabeth Cranston, RHIA Finance Committee Chair

The membership approved the FY 2027 budget of \$71,865 at the Fall Business meeting. First quarter income was \$8,473 with expenses of \$13,125. Sixty-three (63) % of this income was from educational meetings. Remaining income came from AHIMA member rebates.

Expenses for the quarter include the educational meetings and administrative costs.

At the end of September, MaHIMA has \$57,250 in assets with \$52,507 in our reserve account.

Considerations:

- Board with Adminisitrative Director reviewing costs to identify potential cost savings
- OG FY27 Budget errors need correction approvals.
- New estimated rate of sustainability by reserves, 3years.

Education Report

2026 Fall Virtual Conference Series

- 12 CEUs (6 sessions)
- ~30 registrants

Upcoming

Career Building Over Coffee

- November 18
- Resumes and Interviews

Dot Wagg

- 4 CEUs (2 sessions)
- November 6 & December 4

FY26 is off to a great start with our Fall Conference series. We are halfway through continuing through the end of October. We also have Dot Wagg split into 2 sessions. A new Career Building Over Coffee offering with Amergis for resumes and interviews in November.

The Education Committee is planning the Winter Meeting for January & February 2027.

We are looking forward to kicking off plans for our in person Annual Meeting on May 3, 2027 at the Hogan Center at Holy Cross.

SAVE THE DATE!

Winter Business Town Hall

- January 22, 2027 10AM

Winter Virtual Meeting 2027

- January 29
- February 5

2027 Annual Meeting

- May 3

Committee Reports

Communication & Member Engagement Report



The Committee has recently been focused on Membership Engagement and Re-engagement efforts in conjunction with AHIMA’s Fall Membership Drive. Discussions have concentrated on effective outreach strategies for current members and those who are credentialed but are not members of MaHIMA. Involvement and participation are needed to grow our association and keep it viable.

There are also efforts beginning with student recruitment. Member hope to participate in high school career fairs this year and to possibly reach out to HOSA – Future Health Professionals Group in Massachusetts.

As in the past, efforts continue for virtual meetings with those students currently enrolled in HIM programs. Outreach is being done to HIM program directors in all Massachusetts and some of the other New England schools.

The committee’s members include Amy Bittle, Karen Bogard, Donna Casey, Elizabeth Cranston, Sandra Guy, Elaine Ippolito, Diana Lindo, Stephanie Lupien, and Love Otuechere.

We welcome any member who would like to join the committee. Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at noon and are virtual.

Committee Reports

Advocacy Report

The Advocacy & Legislative Committee was thrilled to add several new members for the 2026-2027 year. Currently, members include Deborah Adair, Amy Bittle, Karen Bogard, Jacqueline Judd, Marianne Garfi, Ann M. Dooley, Susan Brierly, Maria Cross, Kathleen Forde, Ellen Vaitkunas, Ann D’Arcy James, and Amy Merson.

The committee completed a planned legislative outreach effort in August. Follow-up communications were sent to federal offices visited during Hill Day, including offices for Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Edward Markey, Representative Jake Auchincloss, and Representative Seth Moulton. The communication reminded offices of key AHIMA advocacy issues, including the MATCH IT Act and Artificial Intelligence in non-clinical health care. In addition, we reached out to Massachusetts congressional offices, including Whip Katherine Clark and Representatives Bill Keating, Stephen Lynch, Jim McGovern, Richard Neal, and Ayanna Pressley. The letters introduced MAHIMA and identified advocacy priorities, including the MATCH IT Act and artificial intelligence. Karen received one acknowledgement from a policy contact thanking MAHIMA for the information and connection.

This Fall, we are having two Dot Wagg Educational Seminars:

- November 6th – 11am-1pm- Jennifer Mueller (AHIMA) and Elizabeth McElhiney (VERISMA) are scheduled to present on the patient naming framework, the future of identity integrity, and HIPAA related privacy and security rule updates.
- December 4th – 11am-1pm – Dr. James Kennedy will speak to the controversy and recommendations regarding Sepsis coding & reimbursement and revenue. Finally, Attorney Colin Zick will discuss the current issues surrounding access and sharing of health records and related issues arising from the Lindsey Clancy case.

We are looking for **nominations** for the **MaHIMA Advocacy Award**. Please take a moment to submit your choice of a colleague you believe to be a strong advocate for advancing our legislative initiatives in support of privacy, electronic records, patient rights, or other important topics. We will present the winner of the Advocacy Award at the Dot Wagg seminar on December 4th.

Thank you!
Debbie Adair, Chair



Commitee Meeting Dates

All Committees meet on Mondays at 12pm ET

- Education 1st Monday
- Communications 2nd Monday
- Advocay 4th Monday

Open Roles

We are seeking passionate volunteers to fill the following board positions:

- Director of Education
- Director of Communications
- President-elect



Interested? Reach out to the Nominations Committee or visit mahima.org for details.

ADVOCACY MADE EASY

Advocacy does not have to mean traveling to Washington or becoming a policy expert. The [AHIMA Advocacy page](#) offers simple ways for health information professionals to make their voices heard, often in just a few minutes. When MaHIMA members participate, our individual actions combine to strengthen the profession’s influence on policies affecting health data, patients, and the healthcare workforce. In addition, the more actions taken by each of you, the more points Massachusetts scores towards earning an Advocacy award at the end of the year.



Five Easy Ways to Get Involved

- Use the **AHIMA Action Center**. Respond to a campaign by sending a prepared letter or email, commenting on a regulation, or sharing an advocacy message on social media. This is super-easy and takes seconds - you are basically signing your name.
- Build your advocacy know-how. Complete an AHIMA advocacy training module or watch a free on-demand advocacy webinar.
- Stay informed. Review AHIMA Advocacy News, listen to the HI-Five podcast, or scan the advocacy agenda and policy statements for an issue connected to your work.
- Show up locally or virtually. Attend an advocacy webinar, congressional briefing, town hall, or meeting with a legislator or staff member.
- Share your expertise. Volunteer as a speaker or author; or join an AHIMA or the MaHIMA Advocacy & Legislative Committee to participate in addressing regulatory comments, policy statements, or other federal policy topics.
- Turn Individual Action into Grassroots Momentum

Component associations like Massachusetts help translate national priorities into grassroots engagement. One great example is the Match-it Act. MaHIMA members can watch for state advocacy updates, volunteer for policy-focused workgroups, contribute an article or presentation, and participate in coordinated outreach to elected officials.

Stay tuned for the **Massachusetts Hill Day** happening in February. AHIMA’s Grassroots Advocacy Awards also recognize component associations according to member participation in activities such as Action Center campaigns, training, events, workgroups, councils, and congressional meetings. Every action helps Massachusetts build a stronger advocacy presence.

Choose one action this month: visit the [AHIMA Take Action page](#), respond to a current campaign, register for an advocacy event, or contact MaHIMA to ask about a grassroots opportunity. A few minutes of participation can help ensure that health information professionals are part of the policy conversation.

Deborah Adair, Chair Advocacy & Legislative Committee



Save the Dates

Fall Conference Series

October 21st

- Patient Health Literacy: It's Everyone's Responsibility
- The Workflow Whisperer: Fixing Broken Processes Before AI & Automation Make Them Worse

October 28th

- Medicare’s new TEAM model
- Building Trust in AI through Accreditation and Identity

Dot Wagg Legislative Virtual Seminar

November 6th
From EHR to Capiutol Hill: MA & Federal Government Updates
Elizabeth McElhiney, MHA, CHPS, CPHIMS
Verisma

AHIMA Patient Naming Framework and the Future of Identity Integrity
Elizabeth McElhiney, MHA, CHPS, CPHIMS
Verisma
Jennifer Mueller, MBA, RHIA, SHIMSS, FACHE, FAHIMA, FACHDM
AHIMA

December 4th
Sepsis Coding Advocacy
James Kennedy, MD, CCS
CDIMD

Planning Title **ROI and Current Events**
Colin Zick
Foley Hoag

2027 Dates
Winter Meeting
January 29
February 5

Annual Meeting (in-person)
Hogan Center @ Holy Cross
May 3

Career Corner

November 18
Career Building Over Coffee



The series returns this Fall with Morgan Menter from *Amergis* sharing tips for resume building and interviewing.

Volunteer Opportunities

MaHIMA thrives because of member involvement. Whether you have an hour or a semester, there's a way to contribute:

- '27 Annual Conference Planning Committee
- Newsletter Content Contributors
- Student Mentorship Program
- Social Media & Outreach Team



Volunteering is a great way to build your network, earn CEUs, and give back to the HIM community.

Micro Volunteer Opportunities

- Advocacy Emails to our Representatives
- One Time Mentorship

AHIMA House of Delegates (HOD) October 4, 2026

AHIMA House of Delegates celebrated it's 80th year. Delegates from 50 component associations were represented in San Antonio, Texas. Delegates approved:

- Use of a Consent Calendar
- Align bylaws with AHIMA member types
- Mission statement (changes in blue):

3.1 Purposes and Mission. The affairs and activities of AHIMA shall be carried out at all times for the purposes and in accordance with the terms set forth in its Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, and in conformity with all applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, (the "Code") affecting nonprofit organizations qualified for tax-exempt status as described in section 501(c)(6) of the Code. The primary purpose of AHIMA as a member association is to commit to excellence in the management of health information for the benefit of patients, providers, and other users of health information. Its mission is **lead the health information profession in advancing trusted, usable data and championing innovation to improve healthcare** ~~empowering people to impact health~~. AHIMA shall be and is a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Illinois.

Submitted by Amy Bittle, RHIA

In memoriam



Joanne Burndrett, RHIA - Died May 21,2026

Raised in Lowell, Joanne was a graduate of Lowell High School, Class of 1970, where she proudly served as a Girl Officer. She later earned her Associate’s Degree from Northern Essex Community College.

Before retiring in 2021 as Assistant Director of Medical Records, Joanne dedicated 52 years of service to St. John’s Hospital, now Lowell General Hospital ‘ Saints Campus. She was also a longtime member of the Massachusetts Health Information Management Association.

AHIMA Updates

New HI-FIVE Community



The AHIMA HI-Five™ Community is your place to connect with other members and HI leaders, nurture your career, and find success with the support of a strong community at the local and national level.

Upcoming AHIMA Town Halls

Free CEUs
October 29th
December 10th



AHIMA Advocacy Summit & Hill Day

March 15 & 16, 2027

