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## **AHIMA Receives Certification of its National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards at Healthcare Forward Summit**

*Certificate will help the industry meet the growing need for HIM professionals*

WASHINGTON – June 10, 2013 – The American Health Information Management Association's (AHIMA) National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards – certified by the United States Department of Labor (DOL) this week – will help the industry meet urgent demands for highly-trained health information management (HIM) and technology professionals.

The DOL officially awarded the certification Thursday during the *Healthcare Forward Summit: Roadmap to Building the Rural and Veteran Workforce* presented by AHIMA and the AHIMA Foundation. The certification of the guidelines will help bridge the gap for graduating or post-certification students seeking a career in HIM through paid apprenticeships, which will provide a clear pathway to full-time employment by prospective employers who offer the program through the DOL's Employment and Training Administration. The job titles for which the guidelines were developed identify some of the fastest-growing career opportunities within HIM: hospital coder, clinical documentation improvement specialist, HIM business analyst and HIM data analyst. Additional positions will also be developed.



The Department of Labor's Joseph Jenkins congratulates AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon at the Healthcare Forward Summit where the DOL certified AHIMA's National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards.

"The Department of Labor's certifications of AHIMA's guidelines not only highlights the value of the training and certifications AHIMA provides, but is a catalyst for the HIM profession to keep pace with the rapid use and growth of information technology needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> century healthcare workforce," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. "We're especially pleased to be awarded this certification here at the Healthcare Forward Summit during an important discussion about how best to fulfill existing and future demands in HIM."

The summit convened thought leaders, innovators and stakeholders who are actively involved in technology workforce development to address the shortage of an educated and trained HIM/IT

workforce in rural and underserved communities as well as increasing employment opportunities for U.S. veterans transitioning from military service to the civilian workforce.

During the summit, public and private sector leaders discussed best practices to map veterans' skills attained during their service to skills needed for HIM/IT positions and identified educational gaps to be filled.

According to the HIT Workforce Shortage report by Computer Sciences Corporation, there is a need to increase the HIM/IT workforce by 38 percent to meet provider demands. For healthcare providers in rural areas, this is one of the top 10 issues in healthcare reform and of the 22 million veterans in the United States today, approximately 6.1 million live in rural areas.

“There is a growing demand for HIM/IT professionals in rural and underserved areas and many veterans have the background and foundation to be successful in this profession,” said AHIMA’s vice president of education visioning and executive director of the AHIMA Foundation, Bill Rudman, PhD, RHIA. “Through discussions with healthcare leaders and stakeholders at the summit, we have laid the foundation for a successful partnership to bring employers in rural areas together with veterans interested in a career in HIM.”

To further assist veterans in their interest in an HIM career, the AHIMA Foundation announced the creation of a Veterans Scholarship program designed to provide financial assistance for veteran military service members and spouses of active or veteran service members, including surviving spouses. The \$10,000 award will be given to an individual who has been accepted into an accredited HIM or Informatics program in the United States and is enrolled as a full time student in an associate, baccalaureate or graduate degree program. The application deadline is Sept. 6. To apply for the scholarship, visit the application [website](#).

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### **About AHIMA**

Celebrating its 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 67,000 educated health information management 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](http://www.ahima.org)

### **About the AHIMA Foundation**

Created in 1962, the AHIMA Foundation is a, 501 (c)(3) affiliate of AHIMA. The Foundation provides an infrastructure of knowledge, research and education in the field of HIM. Its role is to envision the future direction and needs of the field—and to respond with research, policy, strategies, and information that keeps HIM on the forefront. The Foundation will continue to focus its overall vision on “Better Health Information for All.” [www.ahimafoundation.org](http://www.ahimafoundation.org)