

# GATEWAY GATHERINGS



**hfma** greater st. louis chapter  
healthcare financial management association

Volume 28, Issue I

making  
connections

Summer, 2008

## ***HFMA Officers 2008-09***

### ***President***

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### ***President-Elect***

**Tami Knobbe, FHFMA**  
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### ***Vice President***

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### ***Secretary***

**Becky Phillips, FHFMA, CIA**  
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### ***Past President***

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## ***Board Members 2008-09***

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### ***Barb Auer-Thompson***

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### ***Laura Holt, FHFMA***

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## **From Our President...**

Teri Reger, FHFMA  
President, Greater St. Louis Chapter  
Healthcare Financial Management Association



HFMA Greetings!

In keeping with our National Chairman's theme, I am continually impressed by the connections we make in the healthcare profession on a daily basis. Some connections are effortless, natural, and come without a second thought. And then there are those that are deliberate, with intention, with a purpose. Webster defines connection as an association, relationship. No matter how it is accomplished, a meaningful connection with a patient, a patient's family, a colleague, friend or family will give you enormous joy and satisfaction, both professionally and personally.

Please take advantage of the many opportunities you will have in the coming months to make a connection with fellow chapter members and healthcare associates. Our mini-LTC (Leadership Training Conference) will take place on August 22 which will give you a wealth of information about the National HFMA organization and the Greater St. Louis Chapter. The 3rd annual joint conference with the Missouri Healthcare Executives Group in August will provide a look at the future of healthcare financing. Our annual golf outing will be held at Wing Haven Country Club in September and the annual Fall Conference cosponsored by the Greater St. Louis, Show-Me of Missouri, Heart of America and Sunflower Chapters will be held on September 24-26 at Tan-Tar-A at the Lake of the Ozarks. Additional details for all of these events are available on the Greater St. Louis Chapter's website at [www.hfmastlouis.org](http://www.hfmastlouis.org) and in the monthly e-news.

Thank you very much to our outgoing President, Kathy Hughes, for her leadership and guidance over the past year. Thank you to the chapter volunteers for their time and energy. Thank you also to our chapter sponsors. We appreciate their continued support. I am looking forward to a wonderful chapter year. Please contact me if you have any questions, comments or suggestions on how we can make your membership in HFMA more valuable.

Sincerely,  
Teri Reger

## Committee Chairs 2008-09

### **Archive Committee**

**Bob Salmo**

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[bobsalmo@hotmail.com](mailto:bobsalmo@hotmail.com)

### **Audit Committee**

**Mark Solari, CPA**

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[mark.solari@samcstl.org](mailto:mark.solari@samcstl.org)

### **Awards Committee**

**Jerrie Weith, FHFMA**

Anders Minkler & Diehl LLP  
[jweith@amdcpa.com](mailto:jweith@amdcpa.com)

### **Certification Committee**

**Becky Phillips, FHFMA, CIA**

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### **Communications Committee**

**Jeff Morgan**

Revenue Cycle Partners  
[jmorgan@revenuecyclepartners.com](mailto:jmorgan@revenuecyclepartners.com)

### **Membership Committee**

**Joanne Hollett**

[j.hollett@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.hollett@sbcglobal.net)

### **Member Directory**

### **Committee - Co-Chairs**

**Diane Ortlip**

Kramer and Frank, PC  
[dortlip@lawusa.com](mailto:dortlip@lawusa.com)

**Connie Stimpson**

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### **Newsletter Committee**

**Tom Sale, Craneware**

[t.sale@craneware.com](mailto:t.sale@craneware.com)

### **Nominating Committee**

**Kathy Hughes, FHFMA**

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### **Program Committee**

**Tracy Packingham**

Consumer Collection Management  
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### **Social Committee**

**Rosemary Hakenwerth**

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### **Sponsorship Committee**

**Don Rapp, The Outsource Group**

[drapp@togarm.com](mailto:drapp@togarm.com)

### **Strategic Planning**

**Tami Knobbe, FHFMA**

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### **Yerger Committee**

**Joseph Salmo, MedAssist**

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### **Webmaster Committee**

**Jeff Morgan**

Revenue Cycle Partners  
[jmorgan@revenuecyclepartners.com](mailto:jmorgan@revenuecyclepartners.com)



# MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

Submitted by: Joanne Hollett

We are pleased to announce several colleagues as new members of the Greater St Louis HFMA Chapter. Please welcome the following people to HFMA and our Chapter.

*Mark G. Hinsen, CPA, Anders Minkler & Diehl LLP*

*Dawn Crump, SSM Health Care*

*John Howard, St. John's Mercy Health Care*

*Tim Noonan, Saint Louis University*

*Karri L. Murphy, G2N, Inc*

*Lisa Dille, St. Luke's Hospital*

**Please welcome the members to our chapter when you see them at an HFMA program or event!**

There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer for committee work (and fun) which benefits the chapter and helps you develop relationships with your peers. All the committees are listed in the left hand margin. Please contact the Committee Chairs to express your interest to volunteer.

**Our membership makes us  
a strong organization  
and working together, we can  
"Make A Difference."**



# Cardinals Tickets

## Win a chance for two tickets!

### CORPORATE SPONSORS

#### DIAMOND



#### GOLD



#### SILVER



As mentioned in the last 2 issues of the monthly e-news, the Newsletter Committee has arranged for a Scavenger Hunt. This is intended to be fun, enabling you to better acquaint yourself with our Chapter website, plus the Newsletter itself. (You may find an occasional link to bounce you to National HFMA website for the answer.)

Please answer the questions below. Then follow the instructions to submit your entry for the drawing. Those who answer the questions correctly will be entered into a drawing for a certificate for two free tickets.

#### Questions:

1. Name the current President of the Greater St. Louis Chapter.
2. Where is the current Secretary employed?
3. What event is planned for September 22, 2008?
4. How many chapter members received Founders Awards in 2008?
5. Name the 3 Gold Level Sponsors.
6. How many local chapters are there?
7. Who is HFMA's current national chairman?
8. What does HFMA stand for?
9. Who is the membership chair of Greater St. Louis Chapter?
10. What does LTC stand for?
11. What date is the Mini-LTC?
12. What 4 awards did the Greater St. Louis Chapter win at ANI?
13. Which 2 HFMA members passed the exam at Spring Conference?
14. How many new members were recognized in this newsletter?
15. Where is the Fall Conference being held on September 24-26?

#### Instructions:

- Aug 18 – Answers are due by NOON Monday.
- Aug 18 – Raffle will be drawn and the winner will be notified.
- Aug 21 – Certificate is delivered to winner.

Please submit your entries by e-mail to Tom Sale, Newsletter Chair, [t.sale@craneware.com](mailto:t.sale@craneware.com). (Please title your email as "Cards.")

Tickets have been donated by Mel and Jerrie Weith.



# Spring Conference...

## CORPORATE SPONSORS SILVER



## BRONZE



## Post Spring Conference Wrap-Up

Submitted by: Lisa Haug

### A Successful 2008 Spring Conference

This year's Annual Spring Conference co-hosted with the Show-Me of Missouri Chapter was a rousing success. From the venue (St. Charles Convention Center), the program topics and speakers, to the social events and networking, everyone had great things to say about the event. We had a record number of attendees at this conference since its inception 5 years ago.

The program started off on Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Joe Zebrowitz of EHR discussing Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) updates. Then we rolled into a financial assistance panel discussion with panelists Kathy Hughes, Kathy Vogt and Tamie Osburn. The day was wrapped up with a welcoming reception and networking.

Thursday offered many learning opportunities, but none stand out more than the anticipated answer to the question posed by John McGuire; "Why don't anteaters get sick?" Well, "because they are full of Anti-bodies." OK, back to the task at hand....

Seriously, Thursday offered two general sessions starting with a national view of healthcare presented by Laura Noble of National HFMA. The other general session was led by Terri Winning and John McGuire (our own joke aficionado) as they discussed managed care payor accountability. There were also four breakout sessions offered to those attending.

Additionally, Joe Wewers of the Arkansas chapter spent the day, Thursday, with a handful of members preparing them for the Certification Exam. We did have 2 members take the exam Thursday afternoon. Congratulations to **Jeff Morgan** for passing the Core Exam, and to **Zahid Tola** for passing the Specialty Exam.

The social highlight was dinner at Lewis & Clark's in historic Saint Charles and the Pub Crawl, which included Big A's, Trailhead and Bottleneck Blues Bar. Some even ended up at the Ameristar Casino after the crawl. What a fun evening!!

Friday morning had the group focused on learning about the healthcare issues in the state of Missouri as Dwight Fine gave the Missouri Hospital Association's view of the financial future of our hospitals and those we serve.

Thanks to all those members that made this conference such a success. A conference of this size takes an extreme amount of time and energy from both chapters to pull off, and we want to thank all those that volunteered to make this a success!!



# Mini-LTC

Please join us at Mini-LTC!

Submitted by: Lisa Haug

**The 2008 - 2009**  
**Leadership Training Conference**  
& Board Meeting – Friday, August 22, 2008

|                |                                    |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| 8:00 – 8:15 AM | Registration/Continental Breakfast |
| 8:15 – Noon    | Leadership Training                |
| Noon – 1:00 PM | Lunch (provided)                   |
| 1:00 – 4:00 PM | Chapter Board Meeting              |

**SSM Health Care Corporate Office**  
477 N. Lindbergh Blvd. – St. Louis, MO 63141

The 2008 – 2009 year has officially started. In order to meet the needs of our chapter members now and in the future, the Greater St. Louis Chapter HFMA has organized a Leadership Training Conference. This conference will allow chapter leaders to communicate their plans for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, while giving members the opportunity to share their input and feedback.

This is YOUR organization, and we need your help to ensure member needs are met. Member input and ideas are very valuable to the chapter and organization. So, please take the time to help build the success of our chapter for YOUR benefit!

**Who Should Attend:**

- Chapter Officers – Board Members – Committee Chairs – Committee Members
- Chapter Members who want to help shape the future of our chapter

**AN OPEN INVITATION TO ALL MEMBERS:**

At all levels (chapter, regional and national) HFMA helps healthcare finance professionals meet the challenges of the modern healthcare environment by:

- Providing education, analysis, and guidance
- Building and supporting coalitions with other healthcare associations to ensure accurate representation of the healthcare finance profession
- Educating a broad spectrum of key industry decision makers on the intricacies and realities of maintaining fiscally healthy healthcare organizations
- Working with a broad cross-section of stakeholders to improve the healthcare industry by identifying and bridging gaps in knowledge, best practices, and standards

We encourage all members who have interest in any of the following to attend:

- Learn more about the Greater St. Louis Chapter
- Influence the direction and success of your chapter
- Participate in specific committee activities
- Develop additional leadership skills
- Grow professionally
- Build a strong networking group

*The Chapter Board Meeting will immediately follow lunch. The Officers and Board Members welcome all members to attend this meeting as well.*

For additional information regarding the Leadership Training Conference, please contact:  
Lisa M. Haug, Vice President – (314) 707-5000 Cell – [lisahaug64@hotmail.com](mailto:lisahaug64@hotmail.com)



# Individual Awards

## A Lot of Reasons to Celebrate!

Submitted by: Jerrie Weith

That's true of the Greater St. Louis Chapter of HFMA. Not only has our Chapter been recognized by National HFMA for its Chapter contributions, but we have some very distinguished individual member accomplishments also. Here's a recap:

### Individual Accomplishments

#### **Founders Awards (National)**

Rebecca Phillips – Follmer Bronze  
Kathy Vogt – Follmer Bronze  
Paul Doelling – Muncie Gold  
Jayne Singleton – Founders Medal of Honor

#### **President's Awards (Local)**

Lisa Haug  
Tracy Packingham  
Sue Richardson  
Connie Stimpson  
Debbie Watson

#### **Certification as Fellows**

Rebecca Phillips, FHFMA  
Sharon Redel, FHFMA

### Chapter Accomplishments

#### **Yerger Awards**

Conversion of Chapter Financials  
Chapter Sponsorship Improvement  
Website Re-development

#### **DCMS**

Bronze Award for Certification

Congratulations to everyone for their hard work and commitment to Greater St. Louis Chapter of HFMA.

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## Awards Committee

Well Isn't That Special?

Remember Dana Carvey's line? Always made you laugh. The Awards Committee is taking a similar approach this year. To paraphrase "How do we let our members know their contributions are special?"

We're soliciting ideas for awards and for award presentations. What do you like about what we've been doing – what do you wish was different? What have you seen in other organizations that we might "borrow?" How do you want our recipients to be recognized? At the spring conference? In the fall during a social hour? At a separate event?

We're also asking for volunteers. If you have some ideas in this regard and/or would like to help out with our recommendations to the Board, please let us know. You can contact Awards Chair Jerrie Weith at 314-655-5558 or [jweith@amdcpa.com](mailto:jweith@amdcpa.com).



# Chapter Awards at ANI...

## Greater St. Louis Chapter Receives Awards at ANI

Submitted by: Kathy Hughes

Thanks to the many contributions of our chapter leaders and members, the Greater St. Louis chapter received 4 awards at this year's HFMA Annual National Institute. Teri Reger (President '08-'09), Kathy Hughes (President '07-'08), and Tami Knobbe (President Elect for '08-'09) attended the Presidents Dinner to receive the awards on behalf of the chapter membership.

The 4 awards were:

- Bronze Award of Excellence for Certification
- 3 Helen M. Yerger Special Recognition Awards for:
  - Website Re-development
  - Conversion of Chapter Financials
  - Chapter Sponsorship Improvements





# Certification Committee Profile

## Certification Update

Submitted by: Becky Phillips

Congratulations to newly certified members. Way to go!!  
**Dave Andrzejewski, Emily Auten, Jeff Morgan, and Zahid Tola**

HFMA's certification programs lead to the designation Certified Healthcare Financial Professional (CHFP) and Fellow of the Healthcare Financial Management Association (FHFMA). Meeting the HFMA certification requirements helps prepare you for increasingly responsible positions in the healthcare industry and demonstrates your dedication to ongoing professional development. Research indicates that there is a clear relationship between certification and career advancement. Certified members of HFMA may earn a higher annual salary, are more likely to be hired for upper-level positions in healthcare finance, are promoted faster, and are respected members of the healthcare leadership team.

The Greater St. Louis HFMA Chapter Certification Committee is preparing to assist you in your pursuit of certification. Committee members include:

|                           |              |  |
|---------------------------|--------------|--|
| Rebecca Phillips (Chair)  | 314-994-7853 | <a href="mailto:rebecca_phillips@ssmhc.com">rebecca_phillips@ssmhc.com</a> |
| Bruce Weinberg (Co-Chair) | 314-251-4657 | <a href="mailto:bruce.weinberg@mercy.net">bruce.weinberg@mercy.net</a>     |
| Don Fitzgerald            | 314-286-2022 | <a href="mailto:dwf7210@bjc.org">dwf7210@bjc.org</a>                       |
| Elaine Watson             | 314-989-3282 | <a href="mailto:elaine_watson@ssmhc.com">elaine_watson@ssmhc.com</a>       |

(Anyone interested in joining the Certification Committee should contact the Chair or Co-Chair.)

If you already recognize the value in becoming a certified member of HFMA, then now is the time to start. Contact any Committee member for answers to any questions you may have. The Chapter has two HFMA Certification Exam Study Guides for the Core Exam, as well as most of the Specialty Exam Study Guides. Or, you may order your own study guides from National. Study guides may not be copied.

To assist you, the Certification Committee is finalizing several exciting opportunities, which include:

- Scheduled exam dates with a study schedule to keep you on track. The exams are taken over the internet.
- Scholarships to reimburse for all or part of the exam fee.
- Certification coaching opportunities connected to upcoming Chapter programs.
- Small study group opportunities.
- Testing your knowledge in answering questions – game show style with prizes.

If you aren't quite sure about the value of certification or how to get started, and you missed the last Certification Breakfast, we will be scheduling a few more between now and the end of the year.

So increase your value to yourself, to your employer, or to your future employer. The year is half over, so don't delay in jumpstarting your development through HFMA Certification!!

# LEGAL LINES

Submitted by: Gerald J. Bamberger, Attorney  
Patient Financial Services St. John's Mercy Health Care



## ILLINOIS COURT HOLDS HOSPITALS BILLED CHARGES TO UNINSURED PATIENTS NOT UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE

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The recent decision by the Illinois Court of Appeals in *Galvan vs. Northwestern Memorial Hospital, et al.*, dismissed a class action suit filed by Antonio Galvan challenging the billing of full charges to uninsured patients.

Mr. Galvan was injured in a motor vehicle accident and taken to the emergency room of Northwestern Memorial Hospital (Northwestern) where he was treated for his injuries. Northwestern billed \$87,033.99 for its services and filed a statutory lien upon Mr. Galvan's personal injury claim. Mr. Galvan was able to negotiate an award of \$240,000 in settlement of his claim.

In an attempt to resolve the outstanding charges and lien of Northwestern, Mr. Galvan filed a class action suit against Northwestern claiming the billing of the full charges to uninsured patients constituted fraudulent representation, consumer fraud and was unfair and deceptive. Northwestern filed a motion to dismiss which was sustained by the court. In its opinion, the court held that Northwestern's charging higher charges to uninsured patients than to insured patients was not unfair, deceptive or unconscionable and cited the legitimate business interests for discounting charges to insured patients including the payment of insurance premiums.

The court added that insured patients have incurred expense in obtaining the health insurance by payment of premiums either directly or through their employers. Uninsured patients have not incurred such expenses. There was no claim by Mr. Galvan for charity care, especially since he was awarded \$240,000 in settlement of his personal injury claim.

This holding by the Illinois Court of Appeals must be distinguished from the facts and procedures of a collection case by a healthcare provider where it must prove, in addition to rendition of the services, that its charges were the usual, customary and reasonable charges. Whereas hospitals have qualified expert witnesses to testify on that issue, the defendants rarely do. Still, the reasonable value of services on a collection case remains an issue of fact to be determined by a judge or jury.

# Pricing Transparency and the Evolving Provider-Consumer Relationship

*Submitted by: James R. Wilson*

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The rules of the relationship between healthcare providers and consumers are changing. Until recently, providers faced few consequences for seeing consumers as essentially irrelevant to the pricing process. Hospitals and health systems focused instead on profitability and their relationships with payers. However, today many organizations are focused on creating pricing strategies that are fair, competitive, and consistent—a goal that will help them meet the demand for pricing transparency. The market and regulatory forces driving this shift in strategy are here to stay and will certainly grow in intensity over time.

From the consumer perspective, changes in the healthcare market are spurring demand for pricing transparency. Consumers in high-deductible and consumer-driven health plans want to know treatment and procedure costs upfront since they are responsible for substantial out-of-pocket expenses. Uninsured and underinsured Americans are on the hook for all of their charges; regulatory pressures are forcing changes in how providers bill members of that fast-growing group. Understandably, patients increasingly expect to receive accurate cost estimates prior to being treated. They also expect to be able to compare providers based on fees.

When it comes to actually providing the kind of pricing transparency consumers are coming to expect, most providers are ill-equipped to produce accurate estimates in an efficient manner. As documented by a California HealthCare Foundation study from December 2005, most consumers seeking an estimate have difficulty even reaching a representative willing or able to provide one. Multiple phone transfers, voicemail messages, call backs, and long hold times are the norm. Understandably, even savvy consumers are likely to give in to frustration and stop their research before it has even started.

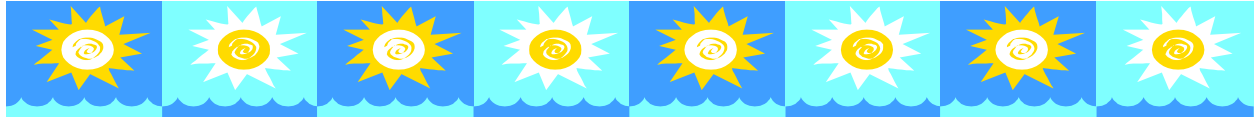
From the provider's side, consider the difficulties facing hospital staff charged with preparing a patient estimate. Typically, cost estimates must be calculated painstakingly by hand. Information must be gathered from various sources — phone calls, invoice review, database inquiry — and compiled in an ad hoc manner. Inefficiency aside, accuracy is also questionable. Employees might be able to locate prices for the procedures themselves, but the associated costs, from room charge to incidentals, will probably not be included. In short, estimates are rarely based on an adequate sampling of cases similar to what the prospective patient will undergo.

In response to pricing transparency demands and growing out-of-pocket expenses, companies have developed automated decision support applications that effectively help providers adjust to changing consumer expectations. Such software applications support defensible and transparent pricing through generating reliable patient cost estimates. Estimates can be based on a number of factors including the provider's own historical claims data, chargemaster files, and negotiated third-party contracts, or a combination of the three. Using this compiled data allows hospitals and health systems to provide patients with accurate estimates that are based on an average from previous such procedures. Producing estimates also becomes a quick, efficient process that reduces the burden on staff — eliminating the need for calls from one department to the next and digging through old paper files to find pertinent information.

Regulatory pressures urging for the implementation of strategic defensible pricing, and the changing provider-consumer relationship portend a significant shift for hospitals. It will take time for providers to make the necessary strategic adjustments. Providers must, however, accept the likelihood that consumers of the future will make their decisions in part based on cost when they are presented with the relevant information. By making this information readily accessible now and adjusting pricing strategies accordingly, providers stand to gain market share and a competitive leg up on the competition.

*Jim Wilson is president of Craneware, Inc., a leading developer of revenue cycle management software for healthcare organizations.*

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# This Month

- August 20**      **Missouri Healthcare Executives Group (Joint Conference)  
The Future of Healthcare Financing 11:30—4:00 PM  
St. Charles Convention Center—St. Charles, MO**
- August 22**      **Mini-LTC 8:00—1:00 PM  
Board Meeting 1:00—4:00 PM  
SSM Corporate Office (see page 5)**



# Upcoming Events

- September 22**      **Golf Outing  
Wing Haven Country Club – O’Fallon, MO**
- September 24-26**      **Fall Conference  
Tan-Tar-A — The Lake of the Ozarks**
- November 13**      **Legislative Update and Work Comp/Self Pay  
St. Anthony’s Medical Center**
- December**      **Holiday Party**
- January 19-23**      **Medicare Boot Camp – SSM Corporate Office**
- February 19**      **Medicaid Update – St. Anthony Medical Center**
- April 22**      **Payor Panel – St. Luke’s Hospital**

***CHECK OUT our Chapter Website  
at [www.HFMASTLOUIS.org](http://www.HFMASTLOUIS.org)***

