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Healthcare Business News



Dunn's efforts as interim CEO hailed

By [Joseph Conn](#)

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Tags: [American Health Information Management Association \(AHIMA\)](#), [Information Technology](#), [Lynne Thomas Gordon](#)



Dunn

The regular session of the American Health Information Management Association's 83rd annual convention and exhibit got under way Monday with a hello and thanks to top leaders.

AHIMA Board President Bonnie Cassidy introduced incoming CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, who will be giving her keynote address to the convention Tuesday. But the warmest welcome—including two standing ovations—came when Cassidy introduced outgoing interim CEO Rose Dunn.

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A former AHIMA board member and president, Dunn stepped up and served as interim CEO when [Alan Dowling abruptly stepped down](#) as the head of the organization earlier this year.

"Rose has given the ultimate service to AHIMA in the past 16 weeks," Cassidy said.

"After 16 weeks, I now know the meaning of relief, and it's not Alka-Seltzer," Dunn quipped.

Such jocularly aside, the turmoil that roiled the organization extended to more than an abrupt change in top leadership and resulted in a revision of the AHIMA bylaws and a structural reorganization.

Cassidy said that "during a turbulent time" the 2011 AHIMA board "was called upon over and over" to make smart, critical decisions ranging from reassessing AHIMA's leaders to reforming the organization's governance structure. Cassidy said the board exercised its duties with "courage and effective stewardship."

Organizational changes approved over the weekend by the AHIMA House of Delegates included allowing for ex officio members to assist the organization in better decisionmaking, Cassidy said. The board now has its own continuing education and professional development program and the reorganization created a Council for Excellence in Education, Cassidy said. The council will guide academic work groups and develop curriculum for

health information management associate, baccalaureate and master's degree programs.

Cassidy closed with a pep talk for members who face accelerated change brought on by increased use of health information technology and healthcare reform legislation.

"We are in the midst of the greatest transformation in the history of our healthcare system," Cassidy said. "We see no reason to believe it will be done successfully unless we provide strong HIM leadership."

Also attending the convention's opening session this year was retired AHIMA CEO Linda Kloss, who was given the organization's highest honor, its Distinguished Member Award.

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