



## President Jeff Johnson's Message

### Making a Difference

I'd like to start by thanking everyone in the chapter who has worked so hard to make 2015 such an amazing year. Some of the items accomplished in 2015 included:

- ◆ First Women's Conference
- ◆ Joint meeting with WA/AK and OR
- ◆ New Vendor / Sponsorship Modifications and Involvement
- ◆ The creation of the new Networking Committee to drive chapter engagement opportunities
- ◆ Combining of Problem Solving and Patient Accounts Programs for a stronger learning platform
- ◆ The Lip Sync challenge from the Oregon Chapter to all other chapters in the nation

We have accomplished a lot as a chapter, and look forward to helping our members meet even more industry and chapter needs in 2016.

#### Chapter Survey Results:

We would like to thank everyone who provided additional feedback through the chapter survey that was sent last quarter. Your feedback is important and helps implement strategies that will continue to make the Oregon chapter of HFMA a successful one.

Among the feedback was a desire for richer program content at conferences and webinars. We take these requests seriously and are working on plans to create stronger and timely content to all conferences and webinars. We welcome additional support and feedback as we work to make everyone's experience attending an Oregon HFMA event, the best possible.

#### Conference vs. Webinar...The Power of Meeting Together:

I often get asked if the Oregon Chapter is considering holding the quarterly conferences more

on a virtual meeting platform to help alleviate some of the travel expenses associated with the actual meeting costs. The Oregon Chapter has been pushing forward with additional e-learning / webinar opportunities outside of our regularly scheduled conferences...but there aren't current plans to move away from our regularly in-person conferences. In response as to why we haven't moved all of our education to a webinar platform, I thought I'd share some information I was able to gather on the benefits on meeting in person.

The truth is that today's technology has made webinars and online learning easy and affordable. For many people, catching a virtual conference gives them flexibility to work on never-ending email responses while trying to catch pertinent or new information. While webinars are a great tool to share information in a timely and affordable manner, studies continue to prove that there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings.

Peter Andersen, author of four books, including *Nonverbal Communication: Forms and Functions*, and a professor of communication at San Diego State University, proposed that business relationships are in part personal relationships. "It would be fool-hardy to have a business relationship solely in cyberspace," Andersen says. "There are so many different channels of communication – handshake, touch, inter-personal space, nuance with tone of voice, facial expression, hand gestures, use of space."

Elizabeth Umphress, an associate professor at the University of Washington concurs with Andersen on the benefits of in-person meetings. "We convey a lot more information with nonverbal communication cues such as pitch, tone of voice, facial expressions and body language. There are a lot of potential barriers with virtual contact-other things in your environment or theirs-blocking communication. In person is much more effective. You don't have other distractions."

Additional benefits of face-to-face meetings include:

- ◆ Richer experience for the participants who are getting to know associates and colleagues
- ◆ Maximum attention span for virtual meetings is 45 minutes, while face-to-face events can feed, entertain and inform and offer a focused environment for days.
- ◆ In real-time, speakers can read the audiences body language and adjust the presentation accordingly.
- ◆ In person conferences foster networking and brainstorming opportunities not easily replicated with virtual meetings.

Thus, with all of the benefits of meeting together in-person, I look forward to seeing everyone

at the upcoming Winter Conference in Eugene, February 17-19, and our amazing Spring Conference in Salishan on May 18-20. As promised, we will continue to strengthen educational opportunities at our quarterly conferences while utilizing technology wisely to supplement learning and open appropriate educational opportunities.

May 2016 be an amazing year for everyone and as Yoda said, “May the force be with you!”

**Jeff Johnson—*Oregon Chapter of HFMA President 2015/2016***