



Illinois AAHAM Original Member's Tribute

Full Responses

Betty Marschang

CRCE - Member since 02/07/1981

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

Amusing how things can happen. In May 1980 on a Friday at 5 pm, I was packing up my desk as a bank customer service representative assisting the President, Vice Presidents, and Marketing Officers. The following Monday morning, I sat down at a desk at Community General Hospital – CGH (now known as CGH Medical Center) in Sterling, IL and my title was Patient Account Manager. What did I know about billing, Medicare, Medicaid, Charity Care, etc.? Absolutely **ZILCH!!** Bear in mind that this was May 3rd and fiscal year end was April 30th!! What are Medicaid and Medicare LOGS??? At that time the Medicare and Medicaid Logs were handwritten on 18 column journal paper, listing patient name, Medicare or Medicaid Number, Account Number and all charges were categorized. The journal was balanced across and down. Don't forget ... this was during the "old days" and my "computer" was an IBM Selectric Typewriter! Note: The logs were completed prior to the audit beginning after working long days and weekends!

I left CGH in July 1997 to begin the position of Director of Patient Financial Services at Rockford Hospital – RMH (now Javon Bea Hospital). I left RMH in August 2003 and went to work for the collection agency I had utilized at both hospitals as a Director of Marketing until retirement in 2015.

God Bless our BC/BS Representative, Jim Dillier, who spent many days explaining and teaching the facts and fundamentals of the Logs, etc. I was not afraid to ask for help and I would devour all the information available.

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

As I've mentioned above, I knew that I had a LOT to learn and coincidentally, I received an invitation to a 2-day fall seminar sponsored by Iowa AGPAM (American Guild of Patient Account Management). This experience was the beginning of my AGPAM adventure and thirst for learning. This meeting offered the most exciting healthcare speakers/topics. I could not take enough notes and the handouts were like gold to me (and with permission, I took extra for my staff). The people from IA, who were actively involved in AGPAM/AAHAM, became close friends over the years as well. I also was fortunate to meet my lifetime buddy and dear friend, Bob Anderson from Illinois at the Iowa meeting. We started talking about why Illinois didn't have their own Chapter. Bob will remember the history and facts much better than I. Bob knew Gen LeGris from Kankakee Hospital and between those two and their expertise and people they knew, several people (10-15) joined us at our initial meeting to discuss organizing an Illinois AGPAM Chapter. Everyone was excited and consequently, on February 21, 1981, through the assistance of the Iowa Chapter and National, the Illinois Chapter was formed!!

Betty Marschang

CRCE - Member since 02/07/1981

We had a small budget through the help of the National Office, so our first few meetings were held at hospitals. I remember many conference calls to plan a meeting. I would type the flyer and fax it to the officers assisting. We typed the address labels once and then made copies to stick on envelopes and added to the list. My daughters, Susan and Sheri, loved our “pizza night” when my parents would come over and help us place stickers on the envelopes, fold the flyers and stuff and seal the envelopes. We did this for a few years but was so worth the memories! Having the AGPAM Meetings in Illinois gave us the opportunity to choose the speakers regarding topics affecting Illinois hospitals.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

In the 80's with our struggles to increase membership and work together, we were a family and bless all of you, that never changed! We even had one weekend “retreat” where we all took our families to become better acquainted. While the kids played in the pool and game room, officers/board members were talking about meetings as that was so special to us. What an awesome time we had. An association is what you and I make it. For me, AGPAM/AAHAM was a life saver as I thrived on every meeting, every networking opportunity, and every contact. Our first Chapter President was Gen LeGris so she would attend the National Meetings and report back to us. My first experience at a National Meeting was in Miami in 1984.... mercy – what a grand experience!!

ARE YOU CERTIFIED? NO? WHY NOT? What more could you ask for but to study the certification material and learn at the same time? Doris Dickey (Rochelle Community Hospital at the time) and I studied for the “CPAM” (now CRCE) exam together. That was a huge help as the knowledge was a real asset. The exam was truly a challenge. At that time, it was all longhand with some true and false questions, essays, and a long list of words that you defined. We were given 8 hours to take the exam and it took all of that! If you aren't challenging yourself and taking these exams, you are truly missing out. It's all online and much more convenient today. You don't have to drive two hours for a proctor either! Even if your facility won't pay for you to take the exam, pay for it yourself! What a great way to show your administrator that you are eager to be promoted!

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM stories you've experienced?

I was very privileged to serve on a National Committee for many years as a UB-82 liaison. Jim Whicker (Utah at the time) and I shared the responsibility. I would travel to Chicago and Boston for the meetings twice a year and he attended the two western states meetings. We would type our notes to be published in the National Journal. We also attended the National Meetings and the two annual National Board Meetings. I began on the UB committee following my 4 years as Illinois President. Then in the late 90's and early 2000's, I was National Secretary for four years. Yes, dear members, you work hard at these meetings, but the friendships made are for a lifetime. We have had retired AAHAM friends from Texas meet us for dinner in Perdido Key/Pensacola, FL where we winter for three months. After being retired for so long, I honestly can't think of a specific funniest story. Yes, there is lots of laughter at all meetings as humor is the spice of life!

Betty Marschang

CRCE - Member since 02/07/1981

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

You should be so proud to be a member of the Illinois Chapter. AAHAM has come so far in sharing top-notch educational meetings for all. How could you not want to attend or become a member for the added benefits and opportunities presented to you? The webinars alone are fantastic and provided with very timely topics. I hope you realized from the information I shared how important it is AND BENEFICIAL TO YOU to get involved. Run for the Board and learn what job assignments are delegated to each officer. After a few years of learning on the Board, run for an officer position—you will never regret it.

Yes, I'm just a little bit prejudiced, but I believe our Illinois Chapter is one of the elite chapters in the U.S. For many years, we were tied for being one of the largest chapters. We've had so many great people as Illinois Chapter President – Attorney Barry Novak, Dave Dorman, Martin Tintari, Bob Anderson, Josh Johnson, Doris Dickey, Kenny Koerner and John Currier and currently Vanessa Hayden – to name a few. Our own John Currier was National President and what an honor for him AND Illinois. Kenny Koerner will be a National President in a few years as well. That says so much for Illinois.

GET INVOLVED.... BE ACTIVE GET CERTIFIED LISTEN TO THE WEBINARS AND HOPEFULLY, BY NEXT YEAR, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS IN PERSON!

HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY TO OUR ILLINOIS AAHAM CHAPTER!!!

Doris Dickey

CRCE - Member since 01/09/1985

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

47 years

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

I greatly benefited from not only the educational opportunities but by the networking of individuals in the same business. I know I would not of been as successful in my career without the benefits of AAHAM.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

Friends made at the state and national levels were immeasurable. I will forever treasure those friendships. Attending meetings was also a huge stress reliever to hear from others who were or had struggled with some of the same issues. I often walked away from a lunch or round table discussion with a new idea or solution to something I had struggled with.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

The themed ASI banquets in December were so enjoyable. Everyone relaxed and unwound with their business associates who had become friends.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

The benefits of membership and attending educational meetings will benefit your career beyond measurement. After returning from a meeting, I shared with upper management the information I learned to help them understand the benefit of the professional organization. There were several times in my career when I attended meetings using vacation benefits and personal family expenses. I never regretted it. I also worked long hours before going to meetings or the days following. I knew my career success was dependent on AAHAM.

Sandra (Kay) Senesac

CRCE - Member since 05/01/1991

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

I have worked in healthcare revenue cycle for 42 years.

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

After a new Director of Patient Accounts was hired in the 1980's, he encouraged me to join AAHAM, I believe it was AGPAM at that time, and I began learning more about the bigger picture. I believe AAHAM helped prepare me for my leadership role at Riverside.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

The networking and life long friendships are at the top of the list. Knowing I can call on anyone at anytime and they will help me with what I am researching. Additionally, the education we receive at our meetings and the fun times. It is a truly funny group of people and we always need laughter.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

Sorry! My mind is a blank. I blame this on chemo!!! LOL!

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

Every reason I've stated previously. I don't think I would have ever been encouraged to enter the leadership team at Riverside without the backing, certification, education and support of the AAHAM family. If a person wants to excel in revenue cycle, they should join AAHAM. HFMA is too broad. AAHAM provides the tools a person needs to excel in revenue cycle specific needs.

Steven Dennis

CRCE & CRCS - Member since 03/01/1992

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

I was in healthcare for 30 years. 1989 to 2019

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

I found the education invaluable as I often learned about issues, processes and new opportunities (think vendors for example) through my involvement with AAHAM. In my career I was a staff person, a team lead, a supervisor, a manager and a consultant, involved in Billing, collections, Payment processing, Software development, development, testing, installation and support. I conducted AAHAM Certification training sessions for members, but also for our staff, acted as a Proctor and developed training tools for those interested. Because of these experiences and my involvement, I was able to offer suggestions and/or solutions to my leadership, co-workers and my team.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

The education sessions, the ANI, but the networking most. I could call anyone if I had a question. It was and still is the best group of folks for business AND for socialization.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

We had a couple of themed ASI's where we dressed up in costumes (I'm thinking 1920-30's mobster casino nights. There were some pretty good outfits both men and women. Think mobsters, gang molls etc.

One other time I recall as a funny and very appreciated moment was in 2006 at the ANI I received a National Recognition Award. I arrived late to the opening session due to travel. I was still in travel clothes, Rock & Roll T-shirt, jeans and ball cap. I was called to the front to accept my award. We had a good laugh about my being late and attire. I'm sure there is a picture somewhere. (I had no idea this award was going to be given to me)

All for great fun and fond memories.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

I think everyone in Revenue Cycle should be involved in AAHAM is because you will find out "you are not alone". There are others who have experienced the problems you are having or have had. It's the shared experience that helps to build confidence. And I had the opportunity to share my experiences and improve my skills thru AAHAM by participating as a Board Member. I was involved in Certification, Chapter eZine and was a presenter.

And lastly, while I retired in April 2019, I follow AAHAM through the Lincoln Log and the National emails. I monitor the websites to see what's going on. I look forward to the time when we can meet as a group in person.

John Currier

CRCE - Member since 11/5/1992

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

I worked in Healthcare Revenue Cycle for 30 plus years.

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

I joined AAHAM and the Illinois Chapter early in my healthcare career. I was working as a high balance collector for a large hospital at the time. I attended every meeting and listened to all the wonderful speakers giving insight into the field of Revenue Cycle Management. From that first collector position, I went "up the ranks", serving as a credit manager and then taking on my own shop for a small hospital. During that experience I was elected to serve as a Director for IL AAHAM. I continued my career advancement and moved over to the professional side for awhile, running a CBO for a very large physician group. Returning to the hospital side, I then became more involved in IL AAHAM, running for and being elected for an officer position on the board. I also earned my CRCE certification. I then continued to advance my role in IL AAHAM, eventually becoming President and later serving as Chairman of the Board. After serving IL AAHAM, I went on to National AAHAM Board of Directors, serving in several roles. I was National President for four years and currently serve as Chairman of the Board. While advancing my roles in AAHAM, at the same time I was advancing myself in my career path, retiring with the role of Executive Director of Revenue Cycle.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

AAHAM serves to keep members up to date with issues facing us daily. While education is important, I feel that the biggest part of being involved in the IL AAHAM "family" is the networking. To me, networking is the key to advancement in ones career. Through AAHAM, I built a network of peers in all aspects of Revenue Cycle Management. Any challenge that I may be facing, I could scan my "network" and find someone who had the same issue, or able to offer a solution, one that was tried and true. This network, as a bonus, also includes making new friends.....friends for life.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

I would love to share a funny story about my time with IL AAHAM, but over many years there have been so many funny, happy, and sad memories that I can't single out just one. There was a time at Jumer's when we got in trouble for playing the lobby piano and singing (at a very late hour) or when we paid the bartender to stay open after closing hours, or seeing one of our members "over served" and totally out of character....(ask me who). Maybe after a few cocktails, the stories would continue to flow !!

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

As previously stated, to me, the networking aspect is why every Revenue Cycle professional should join IL AAHAM. Of course, Education, Certification, Compliance, etc. are all very advantageous to membership, but the networking is number one. You are never alone. As I have stated numerous times when addressing groups at the Chapter and National level; there isn't any issue that I don't have at least one contact to assist me in a solution.

Randall Bounds

CRCE - Member since 01/01/1995

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

Actually, working in the field, I started in 1991 and left in 1999, but I've maintained my affiliation with the organization.

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

It propelled me into the industry in the 1990's and elevated my knowledge of the field while allowing me to branch outside of the field.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

IL AAHAM (or AGPAM back in the day when I first joined) has been a family. We've helped each other along the way, mentoring ourselves until it was our time to mentor the next generation and the next.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

Just how crazy some of the ANI parties have gotten through the years. We've had many great speakers but the afterward networking at the meetings have been pretty incredible times.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

It's just a family that takes you in and willing to give the time and their knowledge to help develop you in the industry and as a professional.

Kenny Koerner

MBA & CRCE - Member since 01/01/1997

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

26 years

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

I first joined AAHAM in 1997. I was only a few years out of college and was working as a young supervisor in the business office at Kewanee Hospital. I had attended meetings and gotten to know some really great people throughout the state. But when I was pushed by Illinois AAHAM Mount Rushmore legends Doris Dickey and John Currier in to a leadership role within the chapter, that is when I really grew both personally and professionally, and that growth coincided with when my career at my hospital really took off. The Illinois AAHAM chapter and the leaders, who I have had the honor of working with and calling friends from over the years, really challenged me to become a more rounded and aware revenue cycle professional, which made me a better employee at my hospital, a better co-worker with my peers, and a better manager for my staff. Any time, energy and efforts that I gave to Illinois AAHAM always came back to me at least two fold in my development as a more well rounded person and professional. If I had to pick one thing that helped me most in my career development, I would choose Illinois AAHAM.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

I really love the networking time at in-person meetings. Whether before the meeting at breakfast or at the breaks or lunches, or at my favorite Illinois AAHAM event, the annual John Currier banquet, I really love seeing old friends and meeting new ones at the meetings. I also love how the chapter gives back to local communities at these events as well and always enjoy hearing about the great work that the local organizations are doing in their communities.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

I have a very long list of funny stories (at least they are funny to me) and great memories that have occurred at Illinois AAHAM events. So many shenanigans come to mind. There were chairs involved at Starved Rock at a meeting there. A vacuum cleaner at a meeting in Bloomington. Numerous trips to Steak and Shake in Peoria come to mind. Karaokeing to Guns n Roses, lead signing Taking Care of Business with the live band. The ASI banquets each year and sharing laughs with everyone's creativity in their theme costumes and outfits. Seeing Fatheads of yourself being held up by everyone in the meeting room, or being presented with a bobble head in your likeness in a speedo, all great times with many laughs and memories.....One year that I was President of the chapter, I was speaking in front of the group at an ASI with a packed meeting room, and a mysterious golden deer showed up out of nowhere in the back of the conference room in the middle of the aisle. I could see it, but none of the meeting attendees could see it. The group responsible was in tears in the back. Probably not as funny for everyone else, but for me, trying to keep it together while not busting out laughing....the deer showed up throughout the meeting that year in various rooms randomly....One thing with Illinois AAHAM, you always know you are going to have a great time and create some great memories!

Kenny Koerner

MBA & CRCE - Member since 01/01/1997

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

For me, if you work in revenue cycle, Illinois AAHAM is the organization that you absolutely need to be a member of. I'd go a step further, and would say once you do join, to get involved. Trust me, any time and efforts you put towards Illinois AAHAM, will be returned to you through personal friendships and professional growth. For me, I've made lifelong friends from all over the country that I reach out to on a regular basis for professional advice, but that I also meet with for dinners and weekend get-a-ways. The people you meet in Illinois AAHAM are authentic and truly are the reason the organization continues to excel.

Mary Farmer

CRCE & CRIP - Member since 12/10/1997

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

40 years :(

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

Provided reliable education, allowing advancement

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

Friendship & feeling welcome

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

The year that everyone received a surprise gift at ASI—A VCR. Really cool at the time. LOL.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

To keep abreast of current topics affecting the revenue cycle

Liz Baptist

CRCE & CHFP- Member since 12/14/1997

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

I have been in revenue cycle since 1988 (!)

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

I have met many peers and mentors through IL AAHAM who helped me grow my career and were always happy to help with various Revenue Cycle issues.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

The chapter is full of great people with diverse roles, and they always have very informative meetings.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

This is a tough one. I think it may be the time Doris Dickey was telling her penguin joke.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

You can't find a better group to network with.

Chris Bryant

CRCP - Member Since 12/29/1997

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

38 years

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

IL AAHAM has been a great resource over the years. The networking with others and learning the tricks that work and what doesn't. The education opportunities was the #1 reasons I joined IL AAHAM (AGPAM).

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

Friendships, Education. I enjoy the IL AAHAM meetings (can't wait until we can meet in-person again) and catching up with everyone either in our day to day jobs or just talking about our families and sharing stories.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

So many laughs are shared at every IL AAHAM event.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

The education events that IL AAHAM offers at a low cost has always been a great opportunity to gain more knowledge in your position. Being involved at the board level is a great learning experience and sharpen professional skills.

Veronica Modricker
Member Since 02/03/1998

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

30 years and counting

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

By far, it has taught me the Patient Accounting, PFS, Revenue Cycle and all the names associated with this Leadership, into a new level of expertise. In my role, it has trained me to listen and learn...

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

In our 30 years of being with the ILAAHAM family, with all our up and downs in life, this group has shown me they support me with everything I have experienced. Never have I felt this before.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

So Doris Dickey's Penguin Joke....She has to tell you!!! I made her tell it at least every meeting....:)

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

You will grow in nurturing, mentoring by the best of the best. These people will be your life time friend in work and pleasure.

Dawn Clark

CRCE- Member Since 01/04/1999

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

I began employment at FHN Memorial Hospital in Aug 1979 in Outpatient Registration (Part time position). I then transferred to a part time position responsible for Insurance billing and AR follow-up in 1984. I accepted the Business Office Supervisor position in the summer of 1997 and have been in leadership ever since.

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

I joined AAHAM at the recommendation of Gary Klocke (former President). AAHAM provided the Certification program which allowed me to expand my knowledge of the Revenue Cycle and continually supports learning opportunities of topics within the Revenue Cycle.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

The support that is provided by the individuals in the organization when I have questions or when I am doing research.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

Don't really have any

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

AAHAM is an organization that supports its members. The organization provides networking opportunities, the opportunity to become certified, and is an organization that shares information on the many changes that are occurring within the revenue cycle. Examples of best practice and how members were able to improve processes or overcome obstacles is shared with all.

Joanne Schnabel

CRCE- Member Since 09/28/1999

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

35 Years. Started in 1986 as a Data Processing Clerk back when DP had the only computers in the entire facility! EVERYTHING was done on paper (stacks and stacks of papers). :)

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

.Joining Illinois AAHAM introduced me to some of the greatest mentors a person could have. #1 (always on the top of my list) is Doris Dickey. Followed by Ron S, Tim F, Betty B, Cheri L, John C, and on and on and on! Attending education meetings and networking with other members from organizations across Illinois expanded my knowledge and confidence. I eventually sat for the CPAM (back in the day) and failed it on my first try! Crestfallen and discouraged, John C and Doris D encouraged me to stick with it and I passed on my second try! And the doors opened up as I moved up enjoying several different roles over the years.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

Great friendships, networking, round table discussions, Corporate Partner' solutions top my favorites list!

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

Let's just say " What happens at the ASI, stays at the ASI". Lots of great memories! :)

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

Illinois AAHAM will support you and lift you up! Illinois AAHAM has a way of always fulfilling what a member needs. All you have to do is be open minded and ask! Someone is always there to respond or put you in touch with the right resources.

Bill Carlson

CRCE - Member since 03/16/2001

How long have you been/were you in healthcare Revenue Cycle?

I had been involved in the healthcare revenue cycle for 23 years working in sales for an accounts receivable management and medical billing company.

How has Illinois AAHAM impacted your career trajectory into Revenue Cycle Leadership?

Illinois AAHAM was very beneficial in my career providing continuing education regarding the healthcare revenue cycle as well as opening new client opportunities.

What are some of your favorite things about being part of the Illinois AAHAM family?

My years as an active member of Illinois AAHAM provided numerous friendships as well as memorable Legislative Day, ASI and ANI experiences.

What is one of the funniest Illinois AAHAM story you've experienced?

Hanging out at Hooters after a video shoot for a National AAHAM membership contest.

Tell us why you think everyone in Revenue Cycle should join Illinois AAHAM?

Membership in Illinois AAHAM as well as the National AAHAM organization is the absolutely the best source for revenue cycle education and career advancement.