Dear Fellow Members:

It was a great year! I know what you’re thinking...Didn’t the year just start? Well, yes, the calendar year is still relatively new. However, our HFMA year is coming to an end...and what a year it has been!

The Chapter provided over 3300 hours of education to its members this past year! In addition, we gathered to network and celebrate at multiple social and networking events (see the pictures from the Crunch hockey game further on in the newsletter!), welcomed three new Medal of Honor winners, and started a new study group for those wishing to take the exam to become a Certified Healthcare Financial Professional.

With the end of the year also comes the end of my term as President of the Chapter, and I can’t help but reflect on my volunteer time with HFMA. I have served as an HFMA volunteer in various roles for nearly 15 years, and it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. I have made connections with countless industry peers, many of whom I’d have never met without the HFMA link. More importantly, I have made more than a few true friends along the way.

The success of the Chapter and the positive nature of my volunteer experience are owed to the support of a tremendous group of Officers, Directors, and Committee members. THANK YOU to each and every one of you for your time and dedication. I extend a special thank you to Michele Mecomonaco, the incoming President, for putting up with me for far more years than we’d care to admit! I step aside in comfort knowing the Chapter is in excellent hands with Michele.

It has been a privilege to serve the members of the Central New York Chapter. If you have the opportunity to volunteer, do it! It will pay tremendous dividends down the line. Even if you’re unable to volunteer, don’t forget renew your membership and take advantage of what HFMA has to offer.

HFMA’s Annual National Institute is June 22nd – June 25th in Las Vegas. This huge event is packed full of useful information. See www.hfma.org/ani for more information.

We have also set a date for the annual Region 2 Fall Institute. It will be held October 22nd – 24th at the Turning Stone Casino. The agenda is looking fantastic, so clear your calendar!

Finally, I’d like to thank all of the members, without whom HFMA wouldn’t exist. It’s been a wild ride!

Karen Carter, CPA
HFMA CNY Chapter President
**In the news…**

**Obama: 8 million “signed up” in Marketplace**

President Barack Obama said Thursday 8 million people have “signed up” for coverage in the government-run health insurance marketplaces created by his signature healthcare law.

The announcement came two days after the end of an extended enrollment period the administration allowed for the marketplaces’ first open enrollment period.

The enrollment numbers are likely to change, however, because they include people who have not paid their premiums and whose coverage will be cancelled, which have included 10 to 20 percent of applicants in recent studies. For example, California announced Thursday that 15 percent of its 1.4 million enrollees have not paid their premiums.

Additionally, it remains unclear how many of the new signups switched from policies cancelled by the law or were previously uninsured, which Congressional Budget Office projections said the law would reduce this year by 14 million. As few as one-third of new enrollees were previously uninsured, according to one recent survey by the Rand Corporation.

But if close to 8 million sign ups of the uninsured are sustained, then it would mark a major reversal in the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA’s) first enrollment period, which began with widespread technical failures in the fall that that made the projected 7 million enrollments look highly unlikely.

**Challenges Remain**

Remaining obstacles to the marketplaces’ success also emerged from Thursday’s figures, which note that the share of young adults needed to maintain insurance risk pool solvency rose to only 28 percent—far short of the 40 percent the administration said was needed.

Possibly bolstering the sustainability of those risk pools is the 5 million additional people who enrolled in individual plans directly from insurers. Insurers are required to consider those enrollees as part of the same risk pools they when setting their 2015 marketplace plan rates, the administration stated.

The administration also noted that 3 million more people were enrolled in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) as of February than were enrolled before the marketplaces opened. Although those figures include enrollments by people in non-expanding states who qualified under pre-ACA limits, Medicaid and CHIP enrollment will continue throughout the year.

Obama also stepped up his political attacks on Republican legislators and governors in the 24 states that have not approved expansions of their Medicaid programs to the degree authorized by the ACA. Obama attributed their opposition to “no reason other than political spite.” The administration said 5.7 million people would be uninsured in 2016 because of the lack of expansion in those states.
Chapter Goals

In our last newsletter, we started to discuss with you the Chapter Balance Scorecard (CBSC) goals that HFMA National sets for our local board. They do this to ensure that their mission and vision are carried out in each of their individual chapters. Their mission is to be “Leading the financial management of healthcare” and their vision is “by 2020, HFMA will be recognized as the leading organization for healthcare financial expertise.” In order for chapters to help them get there, they have implemented these CBSC goals to keep your local board leadership on track. The chapter year runs from June 1 – May 31st, with some goal deadlines being April 30th. Each goal has a weight assigned to it based on importance and the Chapter has to achieve 60 out of 100 points. Last newsletter we discussed the membership, education and board composition goals.

Here are some others that we must achieve:

**Certification** –
HFMA has designed several designations to help the healthcare industry identify specialists in healthcare financial management. Each chapter has a goal to maintain a membership percentage of these distinguished individuals. By passing the CHFP exam, you are showing your employer, as well as yourself, that you have a firm financial and revenue cycle knowledge base of the industry. To help our members achieve their goal, we developed the Certification Study Group with several other chapters from Region II and we hope to repeat it this summer.

Weight – 15

**Member Satisfaction** -
The member satisfaction survey focuses on your feelings regarding the educational programs and information that your local chapter provides. It lets national know that we as a board are providing you with quality education that is relevant to you and that it meets your high standards.

Weight – 20

**Days Cash on Hand/DCMS On-time reporting** –
National HFMA wants to know that your local chapter is properly using their funds and that a proper amount of money is being maintained to keep chapter’s running in order to provide education to you. They also have to monitor that we are providing education to you, we are holding board meetings, and that we are communicating with you with items such as this newsletter. All of that is done through the DCMS system.

Weight – 5 each

As mentioned, the chapter year end is on May 31st. In the next newsletter we will let you know how each of our goals stacked up and what our overall accomplishment as a chapter is. As of this publication date, we are on track to get 85/100 points. With your help, we hope to make our 2014-2015 a great success and reach 100 points!
Local Notes

The Regional Front – By Bruce K. Liebel, FHFMA

This month’s article has a little different twist, as I’m starting by going back to the President’s Message I wrote for the Spring 2008 edition of ‘Fine Print’ – the Western New York newsletter, and getting my inspiration.

My President’s Message back then started with the word **PRIDE**. I wrote how that word did not have a lot of special meaning to me until my son Tom joined the U.S. Army. His transformation after 8 weeks of boot camp at Ft. Jackson in South Carolina, led to training time at Ft. Lee, Virginia, then assignment to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs. It was at that time of my message that my family and I were preparing for his deployment to Iraq. Though it was going to be tough on us, we were proud of his commitment to his job, in serving our country.

From there I went on to convey my thoughts in serving as President of the WNY Chapter of HMFA. With the help of a committed team of volunteers, we were able to accomplish a lot – meeting goals, improving the chapter, and “Making a Difference” in our jobs, organizations, and even our communities. The chapter also provided me with much, with their confidence, trust, friendships, and the push to join the ranks of certified members. Yes, another type of **PRIDE** in and what our team was able to accomplish and provide our members. along with the opportunities afforded me.

Fast forward to April 2014, where much has changed, but really, much has not. My son notified us last month that he is to be deployed next month to Kuwait for 9 months. After a 3-year stint in Germany, a promotion to Sergeant, and a recent move to Ft. Huachuca in Arizona, he continues to serve our country well. We have been fortunate to have visited him at each stop, but while it tests our strength being away for long periods, what does not change is the **PRIDE** we have for him and his family, with their service.

And me, with but one month left in my term as Region 2 Regional Executive, I would have thought that I could not have been more proud of HFMA after having served as chapter President, but I have more **PRIDE** in it after having served in this position. Following the footsteps of Tom Crilly and a great line of Region 2 RE’s, last May I oversaw a rewarding Mini-LTC in Cooperstown, followed by the accomplishments of our Fall President’s Meeting in August. Shortly thereafter in October, I had the satisfaction of witnessing a great Region 2 Institute, which was the result of working with a great team of coordinators for almost ten months, along with a group of chapter volunteers that came together in the end to assist us.

Being in constant contact throughout the year with the 2013-14 Chapter Presidents, via meetings, conference calls and emails, I was able to hear of their accomplishments and concerns. It showed me not only their commitment to this organization, but to their members as well. It has led me to believe more in HFMA and its volunteer leaders, and to that I must say ‘THANK YOU’ to Karen, Kristen, Chris, David, Jeffrey, Julio & Rabin

As for the President-Elects, I see them ready to move up and successfully lead their chapters. With the help of the incoming Regional Executive, Teresa Figueroa, from Puerto Rico, the Region is in good hands. I can’t thank Teresa enough for her support this past year, along with her friendship. Waiting in the wings as RE, is Mollie Kennedy, from Northeastern New York, who I know will do a great job as well.

Welcome to the Spring Edition of my final “The Regional Front”, where as Regional Executive, I’ve been providing information on our seven chapters. It’s been a pleasure communicating chapter, regional, and national HFMA information to you.
Local Notes

The culmination of the year will be the upcoming opportunity to witness our Chapter Presidents walk on stage at ANI in June to receive, not only their chapter awards, but the expected Region 2 Yerger Awards, that are a result of the collaboration of the seven chapters.

As I reported at several sessions this year, our chapters should be most proud of the results of the annual Chapter Member Satisfaction Survey. Below they show that for the last 5 surveys, REGION 2 is #1 in the NATION, as a result of the 7 chapters combined efforts.

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Yes, PRIDE; a word that continues to take on more meaning, as I soon leave the helm of this group. I cannot be any prouder of what we have been able to provide our members and accomplish as a Region, and cannot thank you all enough for the opportunities it has afforded me. Allowing me to be your representative at the Regional Council Meetings and in communications with National HFMA, and entrusting me to lead your meetings and Institute, I only hope that I have fulfilled the role as well as those that have gone before me.

In friendship and with my special thanks, Bruce
Local Notes

Upcoming Education

- The Certification Study Group will be holding another session this summer. Be on the lookout for information in May. If your employer doesn’t reimburse you, the Central New York Chapter will reimburse you the cost of registration for the exam (currently $395) and the cost of one study guide (up to $200) upon successful completion of the test.

  Go to http://www.hfma.org/Content.aspx?id=511 for more information on what the CHFP test is.

- A brochure will be coming out to register for our Long Term Care update to be held in June. We are putting the finishing touches on the agenda and will have more information mid-May.

Thank you Karen Carter!!!

Michele Mecomonaco (President-Elect) presents Karen Carter a gift of thanks for all her hard work and dedication to the chapter as our President.
Syracuse Crunch Hockey Night

Do you have an idea for a social networking event?

Please contact Karen Carter or James Godleski.
Member Spotlight – Ed Polly

Ed Polly is a Financial Analyst for St. Joseph’s Hospital Health Center in Syracuse, NY. As a financial analyst at St. Joseph’s, Ed has developed skills in database management, healthcare reporting, developing/maintaining web-based reporting tools for hospital management, and integrating financial and clinical information.

“In the current environment accurate and timely information is critical as institutions adapt to the changes they face. Being part of a team that provides that information is a gratifying experience.”

A graduate from Bishop Ludden High School, Ed grew up in Syracuse and went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from SUNY at Buffalo. Ed found his way into the accounting world through Regents College, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in accounting, and through LeMoyne College, where he earned his MBA, all while working in the accounting department at Philips Broadband Networks. He has been at St. Joseph’s Hospital Health Center since 1999.

Ed has been a member of HFMA for over 10 years and has been Chairperson of the Social Events and Web Site committees. He looks forward to serving on the board of directors later this year and understands the value that HFMA brings to his career.

“The focus of my job and reporting requirements have covered a wide range of areas over the years. As an HFMA member I have met professionals with expertise in a variety of areas who are always willing to share their knowledge. Educational events and webinars provided by the local, regional and national organizations are also a great way to maintain expertise and expand my knowledge into new areas.”

When he is not busy at work, Ed enjoys golf and running. Ed has run a program to encourage running for a local track club for the past 12 years, and he completed the Buffalo Half Marathon last year.
Local Notes

Welcome New Members

Teresa Arington – Manager General Accounting, United Health Services Hospitals
Carlene Dewane – Chief Financial Officer, Associates for Women’s Medicine
Paula Elly – Manager Cashflow, United Health Services Hospitals
Amy Mlynarczyk – Reimbursement Accountant, Faxton St. Luke's Healthcare
Kaitlin Pennello – Accountant, University Radiology Associates, LLP
Mark Spinner, Attorney – Burr & Reid, LLP
Mark Vanderpool – IMS, Inc.

Recruit new HFMA members and you could win:
• HFMA apparel item, duffel bag, or smartphone accessory
• $25, $100 or $150 Visa Prepaid Cards
• Cash prizes of $1,000 or $2,500
• Apple iPad Mini
• Grand Prize of $5,000*

Go to www.hfma.org for more information.

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Congratulations to Michele Mecomonaco, CPA, FHFMA

Mecomonaco, an HFMA member since 2003 and CNY HFMA participant earned this prominent designation by demonstrating a significant level of expertise, service, and commitment to transforming the healthcare finance industry.

“We recognize Mecomonaco as a leader who has demonstrated a depth of expertise that is critical to shaping our future,” said HFMA President and CEO Joseph J. Fifer, FHFMA, CPA. “Earning this distinction signifies a commitment of excellence and dedication to make a positive change in our industry.”

The FHFMA certification is the organization’s most elite professional certification. By earning the right to include this designation among their credentials, Fellows have demonstrated that they have achieved a gold standard in technical proficiency. This achievement signals a personal commitment to improving expertise and advancing professionalism.

To be awarded the FHFMA distinction, applicants must be credentialed as a certified health care financial professional; be an HFMA member for at least five years; complete a bachelor’s degree or 120 semester hours from an accredited college or university; and volunteer in HFMA or the industry. More than 1,800 individuals have received this honor in the organization’s 68 year history.

HFMA currently offers three levels of certification: Certified Revenue Cycle Professional (CRCR), Certified Healthcare Finance Professional (CHFP) and Fellow (FHFMA).