

A familiar home, a new beginning, a bright future



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“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”

Epictetus (AD c. 55 – 135)

As the new President and CEO of AMIA, I'm excited to begin a journey with the organization that has been my professional home for over 20 years. AMIA is the professional home to informatics researchers, clinicians, implementers, practitioners and health IT professionals who recognize the value of applying informatics knowledge and expertise to the problems of health and health care. I'm proud to be able to serve my colleagues and the field, gently stepping in the shoes of predecessors, Drs. Don E. Detmer, Edward H. Shortliffe, and Kevin M. Fickenscher.

Professionally, this is the culmination of my informatics work in academic research, clinical practice, and government service. I come to AMIA after five years with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology as the Chief Science Officer. I worked to develop community-driven approaches to accelerate the development of national, consensus-based standards; to engage the research, innovation and health IT developer communities to create new and innovative approaches to health IT; to develop ways to empower patient access to their own medical information in an electronic format; and to extend that work to the international initiatives, including the roadmap for the US-EU memorandum of understanding engaging international companies to create common formats for how patients can access information.

It's been a productive and exciting time to be in informatics across the spectrum of informatics activities. As the president and CEO of AMIA, I'm here to listen—to understand the challenges and opportunities that face our diverse membership, and to guide the contribution and growth of our association to the broader national and international community.

The strength of AMIA is in our diversity, and I strive to be the informatics ‘every man’, taking with me, the voice of our 5000 AMIA members. Our leadership in the field and throughout health and healthcare is needed for the transformation we seek. We need to be able to provide the best information, be a positive force for change, and provide an unbiased counterpoint to the industry and vendor perspectives.

We've seen tremendous changes in informatics over the past 20 years—the development of bioinformatics as a discipline, the widespread implementation of clinical information systems, and the dramatic increase in the volume of research, clinical, and patient-generated data. We have the

expertise to do both the fundamental research to support new and novel ways of using information, as well as implement, evaluate and improve—in a practical way—the use of that information. AMIA's leadership has not only the researchers and data scientists to ground the science, but also implementers and clinicians to propel change forward. The country needs the experience and expertise of the AMIA informatics community, and our unvarnished science and data driven approaches to understanding how to do things better.

As for the future, we won't solve new challenges in a vacuum, in a committee, or in theory. We will solve them practically, incrementally, and collaboratively. It will take the collective experience, practice, and expertise of the informatics community to effect change. I want to hear from members about what they see are the challenges and opportunities. I want to listen and understand how AMIA can be a catalyst for change, with smart, positive people providing solutions that the country needs. We can use this information to chart a path for AMIA, to update our collective strategy, and to create a roadmap for future growth.

The root and branch of AMIA is a strong foundation to build upon—we have a respected informatics journal with an increasing impact factor each year. We have the respect of our peers as an informed, data-driven, scientific, practical, and unbiased source of solutions. We host highly rated conferences serving a diverse, multidisciplinary gathering of professionals and students from academe, government, nonprofit and industry. We have the 10 x 10 partnerships to bring informatics education to more health and healthcare professionals. We birthed the clinical informatics subspecialty certification and are well on our way to developing our advanced interprofessional informatics certification. We develop health and healthcare policy through the eyes of trained informaticians, a perspective few organizations can replicate.

To AMIA members, I'm listening. Look to the president's corner for information on what our community is saying. The future is bright for informatics, and I'm honored to step into the role of ‘servant-leader’ to represent our community as we lead the way.

The purpose of the Messages from AMIA section is to provide a forum for AMIA to inform and involve its current and potential members about the goals and the directions of the association. These messages, which reflect the directions and opinions of AMIA leaders only, are intended to inspire members and readers to connect with the association on strategic objectives and activities.

See also <http://www.amia.org/presidents-page>.