

# F.Y.I. about H.I.M.

News from the Health Information Management Programs

May 2003

## Health Information Management Programs at DSU Continue to Receive National Accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) recently awarded both the Health Information Technology and Health Information Administration programs at Dakota State University with Continuing Accreditation. The peer review conducted by the American Health Information Management Association's Council on Accreditation (COA) and the commission's Board of Directors recognizes the programs' substantial compliance with the nationally established accreditation standards. The next comprehensive evaluations of the programs are scheduled to occur in 2006-2007.

Dakota State University has earned accreditation for these programs without interruption since first awarded in 1975 and is the only South Dakota institution offering these accredited degrees. Courses are offered on the Madison campus and through distance delivery.

This CAAHEP accreditation makes graduates of Dakota State University's HIT and HIA degree programs eligible to write the national certification exams to become Registered Health Information Technicians (RHITs) or Registered Health Information Administrators (RHIA's).

## Health Information Management Club Completes Successful Year

The HIM Club members had a wide variety of social, educational, and community service projects during the 2002-2003 academic year. These events give the students opportunities to work together, learning and having fun as their schedule and interests permit. Some activities included attending state professional meetings, having a scavenger hunt on the DSU campus, helping with an archiving project, and socializing at meetings, parties, and banquets.

The HIM Club was honored with the DSU Certificate of Merit Award at the Honors level and was also the recipient of the state Board of Regent's Organizational Leadership Award for this year.

For more information, visit [www.clubs.dsu.edu/him](http://www.clubs.dsu.edu/him)

## HIM Faculty Member Recognized

Rose Goeden, RHIA, received the Distinguished Alumnus Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education award from the SD Board of Regents. Goeden was honored at a banquet in Pierre in January 2003.

## Supervised Professional Practices Scheduled

Supervised professional practices have been scheduled for HIM students to complete internship-type field experiences at a variety of health care facilities during the Summer of 2003. Students will be in the facilities for 1-4 weeks to complete these courses under the direction of qualified site supervisors. Dorine Bennett, HIM Program Director, reports that since December she has been working to successfully reach agreements for 50 placements during the Spring and Summer semesters. The students will be working at large, medium, and small acute care hospitals, long term care facilities, a specialty hospital, physician and dental clinics, and a quality improvement organization. Most of these sessions will be within South Dakota, but some of the students chose to work in Minnesota, Nebraska, Missouri, North Dakota, or Arizona. Bennett says, "These are very valuable learning experiences for the students and we are very appreciative of the cooperation from the professionals in the facilities who are willing to share their expertise and assist in teaching the students."

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### DSU Student Selected for Loan Forgiveness Program

Dakota State University student, has been selected as a recipient of the Sioux Valley Hospital USD Medical Center Student Loan Forgiveness Program.



The program offers students a financial resource, assisting students with expenses in association with completion of their health information management degree. Sioux Valley Hospital USD Medical Center will provide \$8000 to selected students enrolled in DSU's Health Information Technology or Health Information Administration degree programs in return for the students' agreement to become employed full-time at Sioux Valley Hospital USD Medical Center for a period of time following graduation.

The HIM Program at DSU is very appreciative of the support provided to the students. Dorine Bennett, Director of the HIM Program, said, "I'm glad that Stacy Smidt has been selected as a recipient of the SVH Loan Forgiveness Program. Not only is it a financial benefit for Stacy and a nice reward for her hard work, but it is good to know that she will be employed in South Dakota. It will be good to have her part of the HIM profession in this region."

Following the selection process, Bennett was notified of the award by Sioux Valley Hospital USD Medical Center. Jeri Jordan, recruiter for the facility, said, "We really appreciate the high level of your [DSU's] students. I'm sure Stacy will be a dedicated HIM professional."

Stacy Smidt of Aurora, SD, will graduate this year with a baccalaureate degree in health information administration. She said "Sioux Valley is a great organization and I'm looking forward to being a part of their team. I'm very happy to have received this award."

### Health Information Management Course Offerings Continue to Develop

The Health Information Management Program has continued to grow and develop since it's beginnings as "Medical Record Technology" in 1975. Degree offerings have expanded to now include a baccalaureate degree in health information administration, an associate degree in health information technology and a certificate in healthcare coding. These are designed to easily allow a student to progress from one level of completion to the next — in other words, the work on the certificate is a part of the associate which is a part of the baccalaureate.

The course delivery methods have also been evolving and changing over the years. The faculty and students are experiencing new methods of teaching and learning via distance delivery.

For several years, the internet has been used to offer the 300-400 level HIM courses. While still maintaining a regular semester schedule with established assignments and due dates, those classes do give the students the opportunity to "log on" for class at any time of the day and from anyplace with internet access.

The courses in the first two years of the program (100-200 level) have more recently moved into also being offered in a non-traditional method. Beginning in the Fall of 2002, the Dakota Digital Network (DDN) was utilized to allow for live class interaction between multiple sites at the same time — the courses were taught in a Madison DSU classroom and a Sioux Falls USDSU classroom simultaneously. In the Fall of 2003, we plan to continue this method and expand it to include web-casting of the classes over the internet. The classes will be videotaped and posted to a website, allowing an internet student to log in and watch the course on the computer.

### HIM Club Members Enjoy Trip to Sioux Falls

On April 4th, several members of the DSU Health Information Management Club traveled to Sioux Falls for the annual Spring club trip. The group began the day's events by touring the Heart Hospital of South Dakota, learning more about the cardiac services available and health information management functions in that facility. The Heart Hospital of South Dakota is the region's first and only hospital dedicated solely to the diagnosis and treatment of heart disease. After spending some time eating and shopping at the Empire Mall, they resumed their educational activities with a tour of the corporate headquarters of Good Samaritan Society. Good Samaritan Society is the nation's largest not-for-profit long-term care organization with hundreds of nursing facilities in 25 states. The students were escorted on the tour by one of the company's health information management consultants who discussed career opportunities in the long-term care industry. The day's events concluded by going to a show, Cosmic Voyage, at the Washington Pavilion and enjoying dinner at Green Mill.

### Dakota State University Reports Career Placement Rates for Class of 2002

Dakota State University officials reported an astonishing career placement success rate for the Class of 2002. The overall placement rate was 96% with various academic areas, including the Health Information Management Program, reporting 100 percent placement!

The 2002 Health Information Administration and Health Information Technology graduates are working in a variety of healthcare settings including acute care facilities, long term care facilities, and outpatient settings. Some of the associate degree graduates are choosing to continue their education to seek the baccalaureate degree as well.

It is anticipated that the 2003 placement rate for the HIM Program will also be excellent. There are four HIA and two HIT graduates for 2003.