

# CAHL NOW

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**CAHL**  
California Association  
of Healthcare Leaders

An Independent Chapter of

 American College of  
Healthcare Executives  
*for leaders who care®*

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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPTER REGENT



**ACHE Regent's Role**  
Regents are the elected representatives of ACHE members residing in a set geographic territory and are the primary liaison between ACHE, state and local ACHE Chapters, and healthcare associations in their jurisdiction. Regents are also the primary conduit for communications between ACHE higher education network student chapters (HENs) and ACHE. As the elected representatives of ACHE members, Regents serve as advisors within the ACHE governance structure to the Board of Governors.

Thank you again for this opportunity to share this Fall 2021 Regent's message. First and foremost, welcome to all of our newest members, hello again to our continuing members, and congratulations to those who have recently advanced to and recertified their Fellow status!

I was privileged to see well over 100 of our members attend the [2021 CAHL Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony on August 26th](#). The event's keynote speaker was Carrie Owen-Plietz, FACHE, current ACHE Chair and Regional President of Kaiser Permanente Northern California. Many inspiring and admirable characteristics of CAHL, ACHE, and our members were on display during the event, themed around our Healthcare Heroes: dedication to Diversity and Inclusion, commitment to professional development in oneself and others, mutual admiration, and respect for our peers, and service to our communities. Of all these, one particular trait truly stood out as a driver for all the other: that of lifelong learning.

The thoughtful and impassioned keynote remarks highlighted the importance of this and conveyed how an intentional focus to continue to learn can be the catalyst to effect the changes we wish to see in ourselves, others, our organizations, and the communities we serve. This focus was also a key quality highlighted as

a distinguishing factor in selecting the 2021 Regent's Award Winners. In addition to modeling exceptional leadership during this difficult past year with COVID-19 responses and the racial inequities & unrest, the award recipients also modeled [ACHE's Code of Ethics](#), demonstrated and advocated for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, innovative and creative management, participated in civic, community, hospital and health association leadership activities, contributed to the development of others, and demonstrated an unwavering commitment for continuous learning and truly embodying the commitment we wish to see in others. Thank you to the [2021 Regent's Advisory Council](#) for reviewing this year's nominees and selecting the award recipients. Please join me in congratulating:

- **Early Careerist Healthcare Executive Award Recipients**
  - Navpreet Atwal, Kaiser Permanente
  - Kiren Sakina Rizvi Jafry, Sutter Bay Medical Foundation
- **Senior Careerist Healthcare Executive Award Recipients**
  - Tosan O. Boyo, FACHE, John Muir Health
  - Tracey L. Taylor, FACHE, Stanford Health Care Valley Care

With "lifelong learning" as a key focus

for ACHE, the [Fund for Healthcare Leadership](#) was established by ACHE in 2006 to bring innovation to the forefront of healthcare leadership. Since then, the Fund has worked to strengthen the field of healthcare leadership through educational programs and scholarships, such as the Executive and Senior Executive Programs.

Without the generous support of our members to invest in the lifelong learning and development of our peers,

demonstrate your commitment to the healthcare profession. If there are session topics you would like to propose or are willing to host a virtual event – please contact me.

Further, lifelong learning is always a two-way communication: a learning moment for one is also a teaching moment for another. Thus, I continue to encourage you to engage in opportunities and teaching moments, whether it be providing

*“Without the generous support of our members to invest in the lifelong learning and development of our peers, the Fund would not be able to provide these resources.”*

the Fund would not be able to provide these resources. This Fund, as well as the variety of other educational programming across ACHE and locally within CAHL, assists members with meeting the educational requirements for becoming a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE). I encourage our members to contribute to this fund and continue to work toward achieving this credential – and for those who already have achieved it to retain it via ongoing education and learning. Please include your FACHE credential designation in all your communications to colleagues, media mentions, and your organization's website as another method to

an informational interview with an early careerist or student, hosting a job shadow day, or chatting with a peer about professional and personal development opportunities. These opportunities for lifelong learning - and lifelong teaching - truly allow us the privilege of continually improving ourselves, our organization, and our profession.

Finally, I encourage all our members to catch up on all the episodes of the *Healthcare Executive* podcast, which are available [here](#) online. Ranging from 18 to 25 minutes, these episodes offer incredibly deep and thoughtful insights, tips, and learnings from healthcare leaders across the country.

Profound, passionate, and pertinent, these conversations will leave you inspired and provide an even greater appreciation for the work we all perform.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this note on lifelong learning to you this quarter, and another heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to all 2021 ACHE & CAHL award recipients! Whether related to lifelong learning or any other topic, I want to hear from you so I can better serve as an advocate for the membership and CAHL Chapter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [Baljeet.Sangha@sfdph.org](mailto:Baljeet.Sangha@sfdph.org) with thoughts, suggestions, challenges, and insights.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the next CAHL event. Please refer to the CAHL website [here](#) to register for the next event!

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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPTER PRESIDENT

## Our most valuable asset is our minds

I never felt compelled to attend school or even graduate when I was in high school. My parents never made education or even graduating from High School a priority in my mind, which almost resulted in me dropping out of school. If it weren't for some family friends who intervened to make sure I graduated, I most likely wouldn't be where I am today.

But even after graduating from High School, my attempts to go to college never really stuck. I just couldn't get engaged and I didn't really have much of a desire to learn as at the time, it didn't seem necessary or even relevant.

It wasn't until I was in the military where I got exposed to lifelong learning and its benefits. The military required education credits to get promoted. We would sign up for courses on different topics around leadership which would last about 4 to 6 weeks and receive credits towards our next promotion. I didn't realize it at the time, but this exercise stuck with me and even after the military, where I would seek out courses to help me learn more.

Lifelong learning is defined as any learning activity that is voluntary, self-motivated, and undertaken throughout

life. Simple enough, right? To me, yes but I've found for others, not so much. It seems we have a habit of letting "life" get in the way of pursuing learning opportunities. I've heard just about every reason from financial, children, family obligations, too busy, or it's just not the right time. While some reasons I find are formidable, others are not so much. It seems that we overthink our educational opportunities rather than thinking small. Learning doesn't need to be a multi-year full time commitment!

Let's start with our mindset. What does it mean to be a lifelong learner? First, abandon those commonly held beliefs that learning is a one and done proposition. Instead, think about learning as a nonstop career transport system. As you move through your career, you need to keep learning to evolve, remain agile, adapt, and keep up with the needs of the organization or the industry. The new skills, knowledge and abilities learned will keep you on the transport system. Second, this is about you. Personal development often gets lost as we get involved with other demands throughout our life. I typically need to remind others that as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs indicates, self-actualization or achieving one's full potential, is at the top of the pyramid. Nothing in the Hierarchy that indicates

the need to put oneself last or put others before yourself.

Professional development is the process of learning that reinforces your skills, confidence, and above all, your mind. Further, improving your self-confidence also strengthens your self-esteem, job performance, and ability to adapt to quickly changing

subject; take a course in something that interests you to re-ignite what makes you tick as a person. Diversity in learning indicates your desire to progress and engage in life. It also gives you an advantage in the workforce.

For example, I've learned and participated in many different careers. I worked as a teacher (math), real

It's never too late. Lifelong learning truly means lifelong. I received my bachelors when I was 42 and my masters at 48. I've seen others get their degrees in their 50s and 60s. It was a matter of getting out of their comfort zones and not settling for the status quo. It was getting beyond the fear and excuses we feed ourselves to move into a zone of finding new purpose and conquering our limits. Every time we get out of the comfort zone, we learn something new; even if we fail, we learn.

I often tell others it doesn't matter the course or activity; it matters that you are learning and doing something that matters to you. Challenge yourself and take responsibility for your future; seek out opportunities to learn and grow. Don't think "Mountain," think "transport system." Stretch beyond what you think is possible and start small.

"Commit yourself to lifelong learning. The most valuable asset you'll ever have is your mind and what you put into it."

~Brian Tracy



**Darrielle Ehrheart, FACHE**  
President, CAHL

*“Lifelong learning is defined as any learning activity that is voluntary, self-motivated, and undertaken throughout life.”*

environments. A professional development mindset also fulfills our need to explore, learn and grow which changes and evolves over time. For example, during my military time in Okinawa, I was curious about history and culture. So I traveled to other countries and read about their history. After the military, while I still traveled and read about different histories, I became curious about business and management. Curious about the healthcare system and leadership. Taking courses throughout your career can inspire you, keep you mentally sharp and give you an edge in the workforce. It doesn't really matter the

estate agent, travel agent, electrician, research analyst, web application designer, network designer, database administrator, and desktop support technician, to name a few. While all diverse endeavors, each experience has given me an excellent background to work in ambulatory healthcare operations. To supplement experience, I've completed bachelor's and master's programs while taking smaller and shorter courses to become certified in areas I thought would be important to my professional development like Lean Six-Sigma, change management, and organizational design.

And for those that think it's too late...

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPTER PRESIDENT ELECT



## Being a Leader through Change

Innovation is a value that we see throughout organizations that are constantly looking for ways to improve, update, remodel, reset, or change their service for the better. Whether it's making the service faster, cheaper, new and improved, and/or bigger or smaller, we see innovative change all around us. The problem with innovation and change is that it can be disruptive. It takes time to learn about a new product or service and how to navigate through the change. Service innovation and change are particularly difficult, striving for improved outcomes that create a better experience. Yet the task of getting there is hard and requires us to be a "leader through change."

Look back at all of the changes we've seen in healthcare in the last five years that include having the option to pay our bills electronically or schedule an appointment online, responding to an automated voice mail recording about an upcoming medical appointment, having online access to our medical record to send a provider an email, or most recently having a video visit with a physician or clinician. While all of these changes

have created new opportunities for us to receive more efficient and effective healthcare, they have also challenged us in our ability to accept these changes as they occurred. Sometimes, when these healthcare changes are made, I hear co-workers say, "Couldn't we just go back to the way things were?" and "Life is getting so complicated. There's so much technology change out there. Can't we just stop?" Unfortunately, with change all around us, we can't stop it. Change is all around us. What we can do is change the way we respond to change and see if we can "lead through change" effectively.

At CAHL, we have gone through a tremendous amount of change in the last year. We have grown to a membership association of over 1,500 members in 50 counties. Whether we are considered a membership association, networking group, advocacy organization, or healthcare education leader, CAHL is recognized for its ability to innovate, pivot, and navigate through so many changes and continues to be well-positioned to undergo many new and exciting future changes in the development of new programs and services. For example, at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020 and all of 2021, we converted all of our events to a virtual format including the Board of Governors Exam Prep Series,

the Statewide College Bowl 2021, and the Student Career Resource Fair (2nd Annual). What an amazing amount of change management to make these initiatives a reality.

These events are important and provide needed services and it took an incredible amount of time to put them together in the new format. It required everyone to "lead through the change" with hope and optimism, a commitment to an outstanding membership experience, and a willingness to work through the change with solid communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. We're all in this together and our success is based on effectively meeting identified member needs. But the dynamics of change is that it's fluid and ongoing and so we continue to work together to be better, to provide meaningful connections, and to be innovative, supportive, and valuable to our members.

Lastly, CAHL change was evident in further advancing our Mentorship Program. Over 50 CAHL members have agreed to serve as mentors and at least 23 mentor pairings have been created to further support our members to enhance their skills, knowledge, and education. It demonstrates a valued and needed service that the membership recognizes as a high priority and it

gives our members another way to seek personal and professional development. These kinds of changes are necessary for us to continue meeting our members' wants and priorities. With your commitment, we'll continue to "lead through change" with character and integrity, compassion and empathy, and patience and resilience, we will continue to be a premier healthcare membership association.

Thank you for your commitment to CAHL and for leading the way for change. You are making a difference and we appreciate your efforts. Please feel free to reach out to me and share your ideas on how we can continue to support you, our members, in your professional and personal development.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael O'Connell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Michael O'Connell, FACHE**  
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# AN INTRODUCTION TO CAHL'S SENIOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

By Rachael McKinney, MHA, FACHE, Chief Executive Officer, Sutter Davis Hospital

Throughout our careers as healthcare leaders, our own personal and professional development needs evolve dramatically. From our years as early careerists to days as senior executives our involvement and engagement in professional organizations and volunteerism

*“What one leader may find value in as a new manager varies greatly from what a C-Suite Senior Executive might find important particularly as the stages of life change.”*

fluctuate based on our goals and priorities as well as our availability. What one leader may find value in as a new manager varies greatly from what a C-Suite Senior Executive might find important particularly as the stages of life change.

To that end, CAHL has prioritized the advancement of the Senior Executive Engagement (SEE) committee to support our senior executive members with meaningful engagement and involvement in chapter activities. The SEE committee will work together with the Regent to 1)

raise the visibility of CAHL programming specific for the executive audience, 2) encourage mentoring and speaking opportunities for our senior executives to provide learning opportunities for our early careerists and mid-careerists, 3) develop networking and education opportunities to bring our senior executives together with other members through relevant and thought-provoking programming and 4) advise the Regent and chapter on further opportunities based upon feedback from senior executive peers. The committee's goals for this year are to gather input from CAHL senior executives via a survey that will be distributed later in August. The feedback obtained via the survey will be used by the committee to formulate strategies and goals for 2022 that help us to pinpoint CAHL's unique value to Senior Executives as well as grow and sustain active membership through opportunities.

The chair of the SEE committee will also serve as the liaison between the CAHL Board and the Regent's Advisory Council (RAC) and provide updates and share information between the two bodies.

The committee is comprised of CAHL members: Efton Hall, Jr., Sarah Khan, MPH and Mark Lisa, FACHE and is looking to recruit a new member who can represent the CAHL northern geography with experience in the ambulatory setting. If you are interested in learning more please contact committee chair Rachael McKinney, MHA, FACHE at [mckinnr@sutterhealth.org](mailto:mckinnr@sutterhealth.org).

# TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A CAREER FAIR

*By Jason Lee, Director of Growth & Market Strategy, Stellar Health*

The job market in 2021 is set to present new and exciting golden opportunities for healthcare employment. Therefore, it is critical for early and mid-careerists to seize every available chance to advance their careers or seek out new ones. Opportunities can manifest themselves in a variety of ways, such as people, locations, and times. Being open to all of these possibilities and understanding the significance of continued education will broaden one's professional choices and make available career alternatives if desired.

A position with the appropriate degree of freedom can provide a match to your skillset that fits like a hand in a glove, or be like the oil that fuels your interests in a range of capacities. It is optimal in your search for long-term job happiness to find the profession that works best for you. But every career pursuit, every quest for the right job, every checklist of must-haves in an employer starts with a simple question. Where do you start?

Taking advantage of a job fair, even a virtual one is beneficial in this day and age. Seeking that next career pathway or advancing on current career steps may



seem like a relic of the past, but remains a necessity in an era where websites and applications are around every turn. Career fairs can offer excellent insight through networking as well as by taking the time to spark a conversation with someone who knows a lot about their profession or company. As a bonus, a career fair offers a forum to satisfy your curiosity about a particular role or provides additional information about a company. So, whether you're logging onto a panel of recruiters or walking up and down the aisles of an exhibit hall, there are some key steps to taking advantage of a career fair.

***“Being open to all of these possibilities and understanding the significance of continued education will broaden one’s professional choices and make available career alternatives if desired.”***

To begin, learn about the core value proposition of the respective companies that will be participating. Getting the most out of a career fair takes some preparation and a bit of introspection. Preparation begins with learning about what organizations will be represented at the fair. Is it an industry that you're interested in joining?

What do they do? What do they sell or provide as a service? Understanding this information will allow you to target and speak with representatives from the most interesting companies to you.

Next, start to craft open-ended questions about the roles or types of jobs that you find interesting, once you've narrowed your targets. Ask yourself, what kinds of skills do I have, and what do I enjoy doing? Do you seek more collaborative roles or more independent ones? Can you thrive in a job that demands organization or one that takes advantage of your creativity? Career fair representatives will be able to tell you about the roles and the mission of their organization while providing insight into the culture and work-life at the company.

Since career fair settings are usually informal, the exchanges you have with the company representative are stress-free (unlike job interviews) and designed to encourage a conversational flow. Recognize the importance of your one-on-one time with the representative, be yourself, and have discussions that address your thoughts about the company and your future. Furthermore, don't be afraid to request follow-up questions or inquiries! Many recruiters will view a request for a conversation as a positive sign of interest and a possible fit.

All in all, when attending a career fair, virtually or in person, your goal should be to come away with more information than when you started. Refine your research and apply it to the company that matches your interests. Lastly, remember to seek, be informed, take the initiatives, follow your passions, and make those connections...for a brighter career and future. Good luck!

# LIFELONG LEARNING: PERSPECTIVES FROM A VETERANS ADMINISTRATION LEADER

By, Nathan T. Kellett, Col, USAF, MSC, FACHE



Academic journals in an array of disciplines are replete with studies lauding the benefits of lifelong self-directed learning. Likewise, healthcare leaders, today exalt the importance of continuous learning as a tool to adapt to the complex, dynamic and uncertain healthcare landscape. To evolve and thrive in these demanding workplaces, organizations promote and finance continuing educational activities throughout their employee's careers, developing their professional aptitudes and leadership skills. These opportunities range in scope from formal courses to experiential fellowships and tuition reimbursement for traditional academic degrees.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet and discuss perspectives on lifelong learning with industry leader Bill Caron, the Director, and CEO of the VA

Southern Nevada Healthcare System. In his role, he oversees 3,000 staff and 85,000 Veterans, and a \$750 million

*“Are my front-line clinicians equipped with adequate safety precautions? Do I have enough supplies? Are we capable of handling these cases?”*

annual operating budget. During our interview, Bill shared his professional journey and offered insight into being a lifelong self-directed learner.

**What inspired you to become a lifelong learner?**

Science and the art of medicine are incredible catalysts that fuel my question of understanding. After 30 years in the industry, I'll pick up a journal, book, or magazine and learn something new that I had never understood before. I'm fascinated with the world around us and realize that life is impermanent, especially the art, science, and business of healthcare. My love of reading and insatiable curiosity makes me feel like a futurist rather than a business leader. As my mind reflects on changing ideas and technical advancements in our industry, I'm fascinated with what may or can be. I never feel like I must read because of my profession. Instead, I read to appreciate life and encourage as many of my colleagues to do the same so that we have

the opportunity to share ideas and learn from one another.

### How do you relate learning to the application [of learning]?

I don't see learning as an end state and believe self-directed learners seek understanding to evolve. Our industry requires and needs leaders to be flexible and adaptive. It also needs disruptive thinking to solve some of the most complex questions facing humanity today. I encourage leaders not to seek an answer but rather to be curious about why and how people, medicine, and technology interact and evolve. In this state of curiosity, I believe, we encourage and evolve a futurist mindset, visualizing processes and services that we provide to transform, adapt and adjust in the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment we find ourselves working in every day.

### What are the necessary traits of being a self-directed learner?

I believe successful self-directed learning traits are akin to successful leadership traits. Self-directed learners tend to be humble, open-minded, insatiable, adaptive, resilient, and competitive. These traits, collectively, assure learners/leaders can view the environment without unconscious bias. They are more willing to take risks, understand the meaning better, and often have a strong drive to communicate and adapt their thinking to the future environment.

### Do you believe self-directed learners handle uncertainty better?

As I reflect upon the current pandemic, uncertainty abounds. I recall the first COVID patient coming through the hospital's doors and my mindset initially being gripped with fear for the patient and my Team. Are my front-line clinicians equipped with adequate safety precautions? Do I have enough supplies? Are we capable of handling these cases? Undoubtedly, the past 18-months have been filled with unprecedented challenges,

but operating as a self-directed learner has helped calm my anxiety. These real-time lessons further expose the fact that learning is uncertain and ambiguous. What we think may be the correct answer at the moment often changes in retrospect when viewed over time due to continuous learning. Acknowledging uncertainty is exactly what you do when you commit to lifelong self-directed learning. A unified common theme in learning is being able to make decisions based upon the best information you have at the time and accepting the fact that uncertainty is a part of the process and not something that must be overcome.

### What resources do you promote to encourage leaders to be lifelong self-directed learners?

Organizations such as ACHE allow leaders to network and advance learning through local and national meetings and interactions within the industry. I also strongly encourage leaders to get outside of the profession, go beyond their comfort zones and seek opportunities to learn

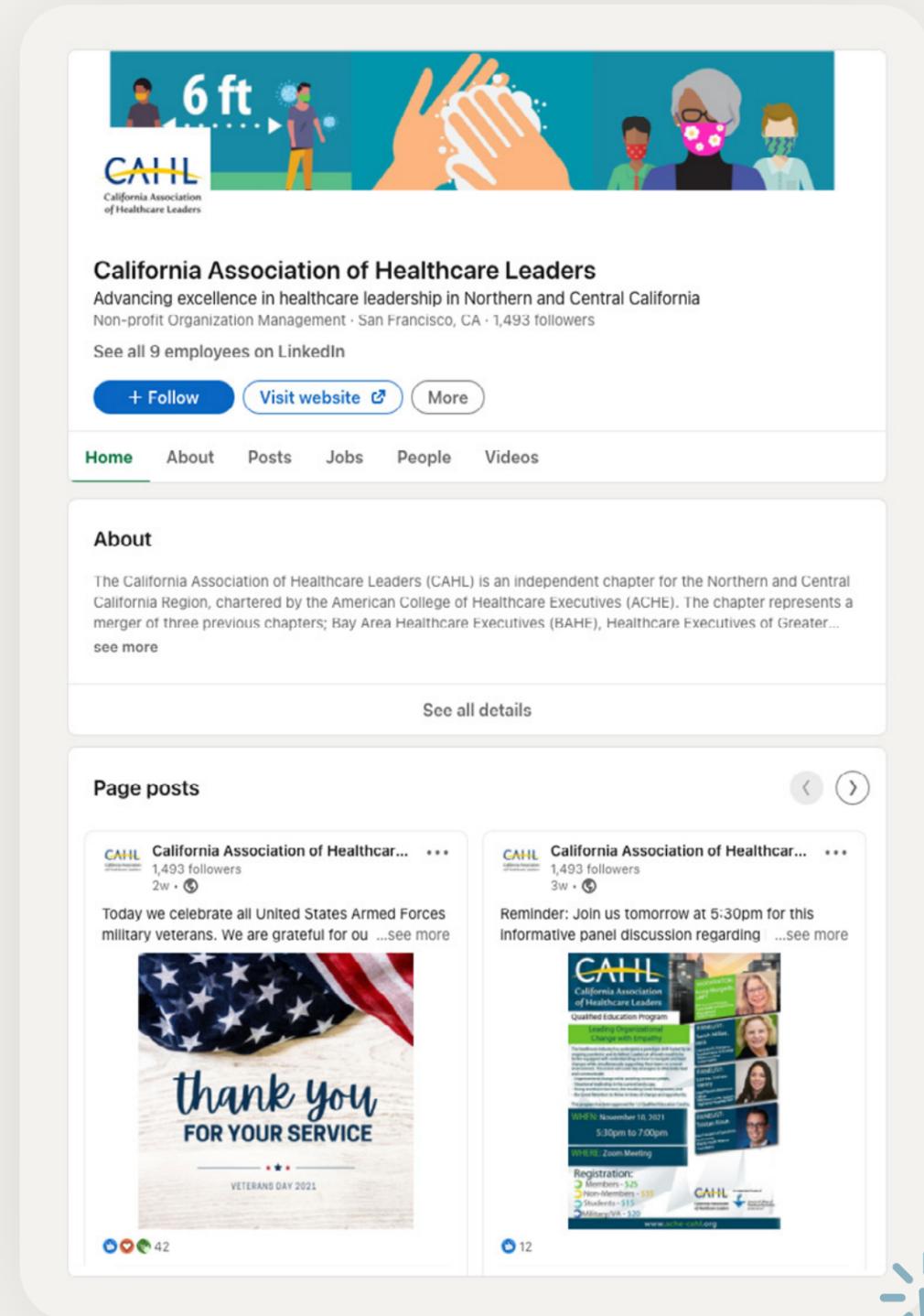
in unlikely ways. For instance, I joined a book club focused on fiction. Although not normally an avid fiction reader, I found myself broadening my perspective based upon the creative thoughts elucidated by some of the authors we studied. Realizing the benefit of opening yourself to experiences that you do not normally gravitate to has an even more significant impact on your creativity than you normally think.

Bill concluded our discussion by noting the capacity to learn is the catalyst to obtaining an effective advantage and is critical to preparing for the unexpected. Organizations, he suggests, must shift away from models that control assets to monitoring and influencing adaptive ecosystems and human resources. This will require organizational leaders to invest in education as well as feedback and mentorship programs that promote and prioritize learning processes so employees are equipped to handle critical situations productively.



Bill Caron, Director and CEO of VA Southern Nevada Health System

CHECK US OUT ON 

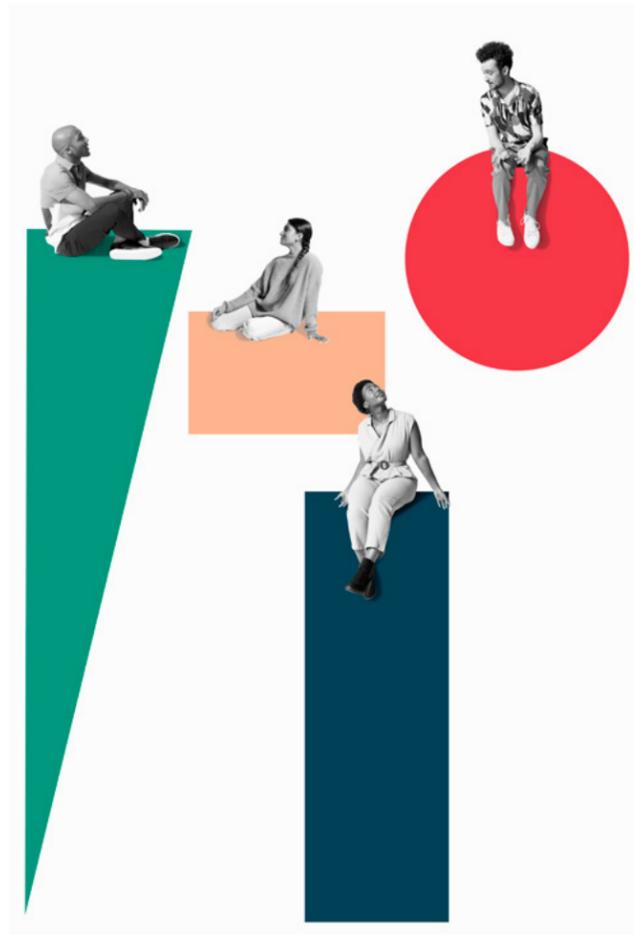


The screenshot shows the LinkedIn profile for the California Association of Healthcare Leaders (CAHL). The profile banner features an illustration of people wearing masks and hands being washed with soap, with a '6 ft' distance marker. The profile name is 'California Association of Healthcare Leaders' with the tagline 'Advancing excellence in healthcare leadership in Northern and Central California'. It is a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, CA, with 1,493 followers. The page includes navigation tabs for Home, About, Posts, Jobs, People, and Videos. The 'About' section provides a brief description of the organization. The 'Page posts' section shows two recent posts: one celebrating Veterans Day with a 'Thank you for your service' graphic, and another reminding members of a Zoom meeting on November 16, 2021.



# JEDI WARRIORSHIP

Today's healthcare professionals must possess the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively lead staff and organizations that are increasingly diverse and in need of inclusive, culturally competent, and psychologically safe settings for patients and staff alike. Leaders who embrace a just, equal, diverse, and inclusive workforce can be highly effective culture change agents within their organizations. Studies have shown that transformational leaders drive more innovative thinking and results for their organizations and the communities they serve. Diverse partners fuel organizational change and growth by embracing foundational differences, respect, integrity, trust, and professionalism. Creating multidimensional teams promotes members of all backgrounds to learn from each other and drive organizational success by leveraging their global work, education, and life experiences.



The CAHL Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee includes health leaders from all walks of life who are passionate about sharing and promoting the knowledge and importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The JEDI Committee – previously called the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee – was formed in 2014 and was driven by engagement from CAHL members and the CAHL Board's passion for being a positive change agent. The committee's inaugural event was hosted on June 19, 2014, celebrating the importance of diversity and inclusion in healthcare. For the first time in any ACHE Chapter, national leaders of ACHE's affinity groups collectively discussed the shared imperative of improving

*“Diverse partners fuel organizational change and growth by embracing foundational differences, respect, integrity, trust, and professionalism.”*

healthcare for patients in all communities. The event provided networking opportunities and an avenue to identify new approaches for pursuing excellence in healthcare. In 2021, after hearing the cries of social justice and equity from our communities, the D&I Committee incorporated justice and equity into the committee's name and is now recognized as the Justice, Equity, Diversity,

and Inclusion Committee. The JEDI Committee consults with and advises other CAHL committees, members and disseminates best practices within the industry. The committee has been developing a JEDI Toolkit for our chapter's use, and the anticipated rollout of the resource will be later this year. Becoming part of CAHL's JEDI Committee brings members together on the path to amplify the voices of the communities we live and work in – which for many may be one step in their journey of discovery and becoming a JEDI Warrior. The JEDI Committee has welcomed many new members this year, and each has a unique perspective on what brought them to the JEDI Team.

As a mental health advocate, our JEDI Warrior Sonya Young has consistently recognized the lack of diversity in mental health providers to deliver care to a population of patients with very diverse backgrounds; Sonya believes providers must have cultural awareness and competency to meet the needs of the diverse patient populations they serve. Additionally, she is striving to address the racial disparities which play a tremendous role in equal access to care for many minorities and people with socio-economic challenges. Sonya joined the JEDI Committee because cultural awareness and culturally sensitive care, equity in access to care, and diversity and inclusion are critical and paramount in today's healthcare climate; she believes the best care is just, inclusive, culturally aware, affordable, and equally accessible by all.

Dr. Sharnjeet Sandhu is another new member of the JEDI Team. Dr. Sandhu shares that working with individuals who also believe in diverse, just, and culturally sound processes led to her realization of the benefits and wholesome effect of this exceptional work. This understanding

provides a sound foundation for providers and their leadership development; this is how she came to the JEDI Committee – wanting to be part of a focused group that creates guidance and provides a space for healthcare leaders to share and grow together. Dr. Sandhu believes the more people see that working together in diverse workgroups can lead to a more stable, happy, and growth-oriented workplace, the more we can collaborate to create better workplace solutions and grow our working and personal communities.

After raising a family, returning to school to pursue a graduate degree, and overcoming challenges along the way, JEDI champion Brenda Captain believes that recognizing strengths and weaknesses, as well as being accountable and adaptable, is essential to the JEDI journey. Determination and networking became Brenda's most valuable tools to overcome social determinants of health in her community; she gave back to her community while advocating the value of diversity. Brenda shares that she became a member of the JEDI Committee not because of protocols or expectations but because she has encountered significant challenges and conquered them like a true warrior.

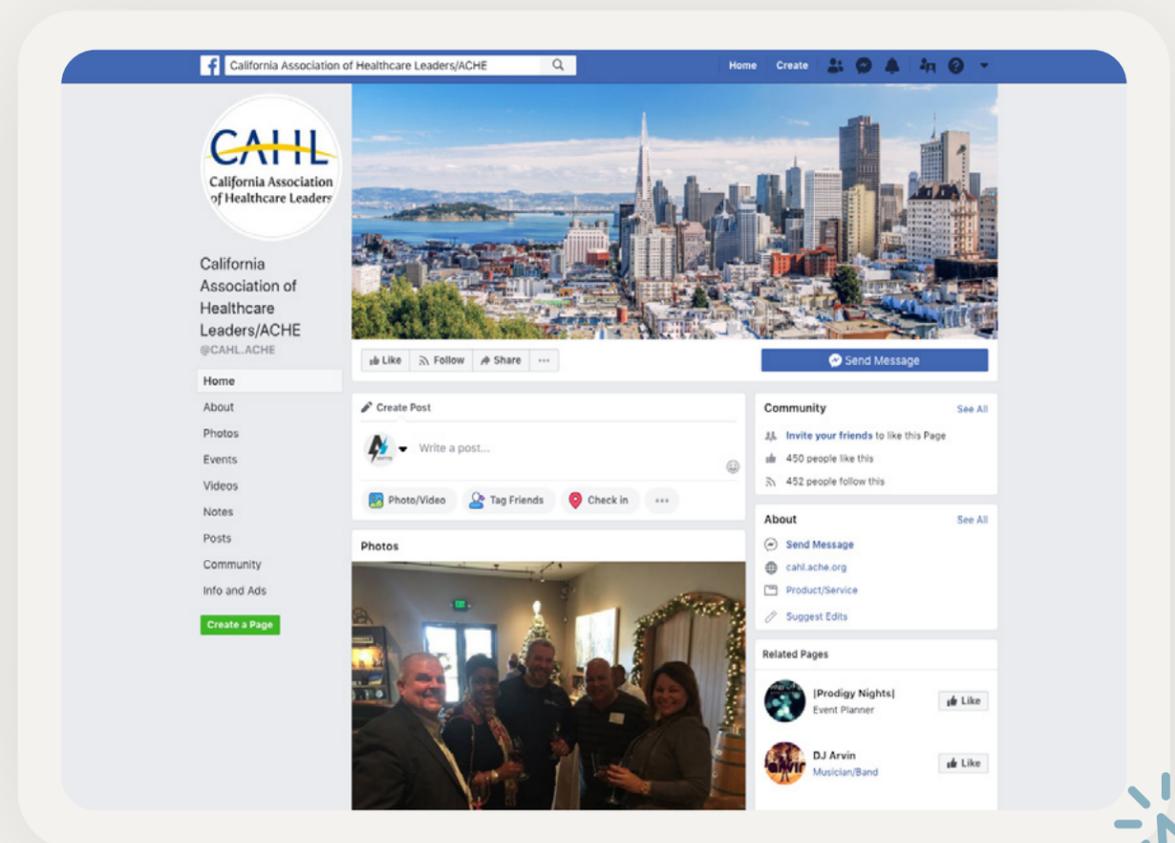
The quest for JEDI Warrior distinction includes many resources that go beyond our JEDI Committee, such as looking into your healthcare organization's diversity and inclusion (D&I) work and offering to get involved. Additionally, the

ACHE website includes ample suggestions and offerings related to both general and career D&I resources, as well as networking opportunities with the newly created ACHE D&I Communities (Asian Healthcare Leaders Community and LGBTQ Healthcare Leaders Community) and several community-specific healthcare leader organizations such as National Association of Health Services Executives and National Association of Latino Healthcare Executives, to name a few. A simple online search for "diversity and inclusion" also yields a plethora of books and courses available to include in the warrior's lifelong learning toolbox.

JEDI Warriorship is quickly becoming the new pulse of healthcare organizations. JEDI Warriors are agents of change and provide a galaxy of new ideas shared among healthcare professionals to inspire others to reach their goals and destiny of becoming models of just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive healthcare organizations and community pillars. For those interested in volunteering time to CAHL's expanding D&I work, becoming a JEDI Committee partner will enhance your social, cultural, and justice awareness through our shared experiences working with each other and creating a more open space for conversation about growth and inclusion. May the force be with you.

- CAHL JEDI Committee

CHECK US OUT ON 



# THE PATH OF VOLUNTEERISM

By -Laura Hill Temmerman, FACHE, and Michelle Nguyen



Let's start with the question of what is volunteerism? According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, it is "the act or practice of doing volunteer work in community service." (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/volunteerism>). We find ourselves reflecting on this question frequently as we prepare for each new volunteer onboarding session we offer for our CAHL chapter volunteers upon starting their volunteer journey with us. As an entirely volunteer-run organization, CAHL is completely reliant on the time and energy of our volunteers. We would not be where we are without their generosity, and we are grateful to each and every volunteer.

But what exactly drives volunteers to give the gift of their time? What led the Candy Strippers and the Grey Ladies to help out? What is it that provides that sense of self-fulfillment for the hospital volunteer who gives of his Saturdays while then sharing the stories with his children later that day? What motivates the CAHL member to reach out to us to assist and soon helps pull together an upcoming panel discussion regarding leadership development paths? Each of us has worked in healthcare long enough to know that volunteering in this field isn't for the faint of heart, and it requires dedication and a strong personal desire to help one's community and contribute to a greater good for others. That said, most all health care volunteers will all agree, it's a deeply fulfilling experience.

When we reflect on the stories we are privileged to hear from many of our volunteers, the UN Volunteer's description of volunteerism resonates highly. "Volunteerism is a basic expression of human relationships. It is about people's need to participate in their societies and to feel that they matter to others. We strongly believe that the social relationships intrinsic to volunteer work are critical to individual and community well-being. The ethos of volunteerism is infused with values such as solidarity, reciprocity, mutual trust, belonging and empowerment, all of which contribute significantly to the quality of life." (<https://www.unv.org/power-volunteerism>) Several committee leaders refer to volunteer colleagues as their "CAHL family." This sense of trust and gratitude for each other stems from the importance of shared values in supporting the learning paths for each other professionally and personally.

Our volunteers have embraced the community that CAHL has provided for them, and they want to give back to keep building the strength of our professional organization for the continuity of future generations. This continuity comes from the dedication of our volunteers not only in giving

of themselves but also in introducing new colleagues to volunteer opportunities, teaching peer volunteers about their roles, and helping transition new volunteer leaders across our committees to sustain the growth for CAHL. In addition, the sharing of information and networking not only brings a richness to the volunteer experience but also strengthens the professional network for our volunteers.

Our volunteer base is strong, with currently over 130 volunteers having contributed to date for 2021. The volunteer base is highly diverse, from many cultures, career levels, and healthcare settings, including not-for-profit, for-profit, government, academia, rural and urban care, technology, and consulting. We have many volunteers who've been with us for over a decade, and this year alone, we've introduced more than 25 new volunteers to our CAHL family. In addition, our volunteers have joined one of 15 committees spanning endeavors such as Local Programming Councils to Career Development and Transition to our Justice, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee. These various committees partner together closely to ensure alignment and programming, and planning for our CAHL chapter.

The collaboration within CAHL provides additional learning opportunities for us as peers in new and trending areas of our industry while also providing a supportive community to hone leadership skills. The last year and a half have brought its share of challenges in understanding how we find a sense of community, collegiality, and social support. We have seen a continued outreach from many of you with a strong desire to volunteer with CAHL, and we are forever indebted to each of you. For others who may be interested, we hope you may find this link on our chapter website of help. As opportunities arise, we'd be honored to speak with you and see where there may be a match with your skills and expertise.

Similar to how employee engagement is a key driver for patient satisfaction in the healthcare provider setting, we also believe volunteer engagement is fundamental to sustaining our membership growth and ensuring our member satisfaction. Most of you have likely participated in ACHE's annual member needs survey (ACHE surveys its members and Fellows in May each year). In turn, we at CAHL have felt strongly about listening to our volunteers' voice and do a chapter-wide survey each fall regarding volunteer needs, interests, and level of engagement with the volunteer experience. We hope many of you will participate in the upcoming survey this fall. It is a cornerstone of our annual strategic planning process.

# DEVELOPING A THINKING FORCE: LEARNING ORIENTATION VS PERFORMANCE ORIENTATION

By, Kionna D. Myles, MPH

In order to create a healthcare culture that prioritizes ACE's goal to, "**Educate, Engage and Inspire Leaders to Improve Health**" leadership, integrity, diversity and inclusion and lifelong learning are the fundamental core values. Lifelong learning affords leaders the opportunity to apply innovative solutions that improve themselves and their organizations. The theories and research on motivational goals that emphasize achievement and influence behavior have been grouped into two categories: learning goals and performance goals. Learning goals are self-referential, focused on the development or mastery of a skill. While performance goals are normatively based standards that demonstrate one's ability compared to others, colloquially, one can think of this as being learning-oriented instead of evaluation-oriented. Learning goals foster long-term success that is based on intrinsic motivation, while

performance goals obfuscate the effort to improve because failure is attributed to the lack of personal ability. When leaders adopt mastery goals, they focus on effective learning strategies such as process improvement initiatives, learning from their mistakes, and seeking out help when needed. Performance goals focus on outcome versus process learning and include achieving "right" to avoid the appearance of incompetence. Learning-oriented people have two qualities in common: they are willing to apply innovative solutions to problems, and they learn from their shortcomings. As healthcare leaders, patient care that is **safe, patient-centered, equitable, efficient, effective, and time-based** is largely dependent upon the competence of those in our organizations. How can leaders create a physiologically safe environment that minimizes fear and maximizes risk-taking?



## GIVE YOUR TEAM A VOICE

In healthcare, operational issues have a huge impact on the employee experience, and in return, patient outcomes. For years, the focus of healthcare has been on eliminating wastes and reducing costs. However, today's successful organizations are also continually seeking to improve the patient experience. Enlisting employees in creating solutions rather than just implementing them is critical in achieving positive outcomes. When individuals feel autonomous, organizational agility and innovation are enhanced. Simultaneously, leaders leverage the diversity of thought, background, experience, level, and role.

## MODEL A MASTERY APPROACH

Providers in healthcare organizations must be effective leaders in order to influence the care of individual patients, the performance of diverse clinical teams, and the direction of major healthcare organizations. The ability to influence is the foundation of healthcare leadership. People have a natural tendency to model the behaviors around them. Show your providers that mistakes are handled in a way that evokes learning rather than disdain when mistakes are made. Employees need to see strategies that intentionally promote better healthcare outcomes.

## FORMATIVE FEEDBACK THAT FOCUSES ON PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT

Feedback is embedded in education, training, and daily professional activities. It is a valuable tool for indicating whether things are going right or redirection is needed. Therefore, leaders must practice informal and formal feedback that provides solutions to improve future outcomes and opportunities for enhancement of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA).

An environment that emphasizes a learning orientation will dampen concerns related to outperforming others and enhance intrinsic motivation. Ultimately, a learning orientation helps improve critical thinking, an integral health care delivery skill. Leaders who implement a learning orientation gain employees who value the learning process and are interested in using information seeking as a personal strategy to improve quality care. The future gold standard of healthcare depends on learning, not memorization; improvement, not appearances; competency, not competition.

Author Bio: Kionna D. Myles is a Healthcare Administrator in the United States Navy currently studying at Naval Postgraduate School. She has vast experience in healthcare management and performance-based healthcare delivery.

# WHAT I LEARNED FROM PURSUING A POST-PROFESSIONAL DEGREE AND WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

*By Sherie Ambrose DNP, MBA, RN, FACHE, BC-NE  
Adjunct Professor, University of San Francisco  
School of Nursing and Health Professions, Nurse  
Consultant B.E. Smith*

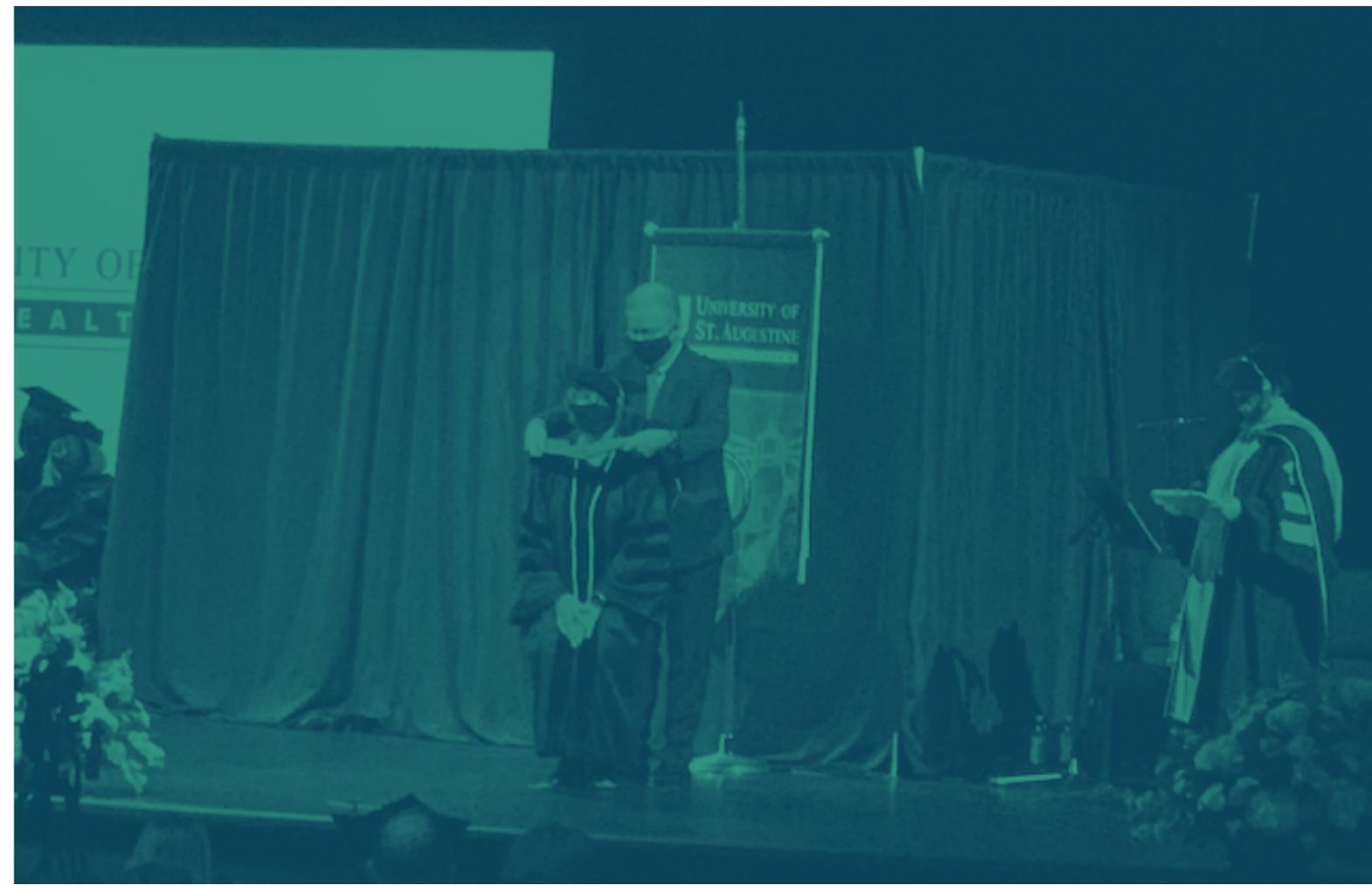
## **What was your career path?**

I decided to go into healthcare during my junior year in high school while volunteering at a hospital. I saw it as an opportunity to serve others while engaging in a profession with many options for personal and professional growth. Though it sounds corny, I felt like I was called into nursing and health care. I attended the University of San Francisco, graduating with a BSN. After graduation, I worked in the trauma intensive care unit at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. I had the opportunity to write a chapter in a nursing trauma textbook with ICU colleagues and Dr. Donald Trunkey. That was my initial academic scholarly project that blended well with my clinical journey.

I choose to enroll in a Master of Business program as I felt it was important for nurses to be at the table with budget discussions. Upon completion of my MBA in Health Sciences from Golden Gate University, I started my healthcare leadership journey moving from nurse manger to nursing director roles and finally Chief Nurse/ COO.

## **Why pursue a post-professional degree? What should others consider before making that decision?**

Pursuing a post-professional degree enables a leader to see and appreciate the bigger picture. It also demonstrates a commitment to your career and helps you gain a strategic vision. As a clinician, that was one area that I benefited from the most



during my post-professional academic journeys. Researching various programs and determining your time commitment capabilities is essential when considering a return to graduate school. For example, I budgeted approximately 20 hours a week for my DNP program. In addition, find out if your organization offers a tuition reimbursement program.

It is not uncommon for us as healthcare leaders to either envision a new career focus or seek out opportunities to help develop skills that might support an entire “about-face” in a professional journey. This focus goes hand-in-hand with the ACHE policy on lifelong learning. An excerpt from their policy position includes the following example:

**To engage in professional leadership and development activities, healthcare executives should:**

- Share their experience by teaching in an undergraduate or graduate health administration program as an adjunct instructor. Preparation of the course material ensures the healthcare executive stays current on the subject matter, accessible at <https://www.ache.org/about-ache/our-story/our-commitments/policy-statements/lifelong-learning-and-the-healthcare-executive>

As a lifelong learner, you are never too old to engage in any educational activities. For me starting a Doctor of Nursing (DNP) program after serving in multiple healthcare leadership roles was quite the learning curve, though well worth the journey. The opportunity to change career direction in a

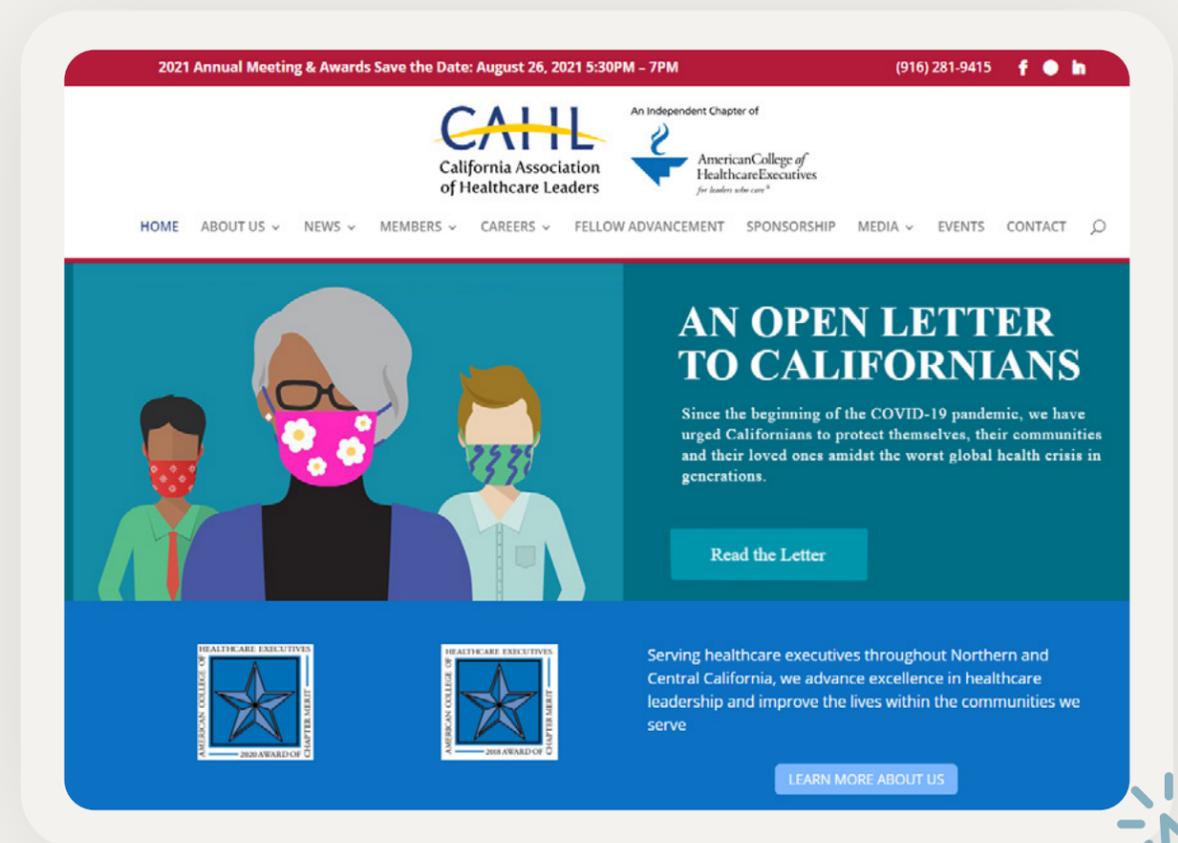
DNP program is much more achievable with new tools and scholarship methods gained with the degree. Upon graduation from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, I made the career transition to adjunct professor with the University of San Francisco in the School of Nursing and Health Professions. I look forward to continuing my commitment to mentoring future leaders in healthcare and inspiring others to continue their post-professional journey.

*“The opportunity to change career direction in a DNP program is much more achievable with new tools and scholarship methods gained with the degree.”*

**How activities within CAHL can assist with an academic transition:**

Serving on the CAHL member advancement committee provided an inspirational starting point to seek a healthcare academic career transition. Senior leaders inspired me in academic settings and the new graduates we served during our Board of Governor Exam review sessions. This experience provided a platform for sharing current knowledge and tools in virtual learning formats across generations. It also provided opportunities to practice with presentations skills and become reacquainted with adult learning principles.

**VISIT US ONLINE:  
ACHE-CAHL.ORG**



# SHARING PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: CAL-MAT DEPLOYMENT

The California Emergency Medical Services Authority's (EMSA) California Medical Assistant Team (CAL-MAT) is the state's disaster medical services response team. It includes physicians, nurses, paramedics, and other clinical personnel, as well as administrative personnel. Administrative functions include operations management, logistics, finance/administration, and planning (the functions found on a HICS organization chart). During the COVID-19 response, CAL-MAT has operated alternative care sites (ACS), skilled nursing facility strike teams, ventilator stockpiles, and oxygen depots.

Rick Narad, a former CAHL board member and Navi Atwal, a current board member, both serve with CAL-MAT. They describe why they joined, what they got out of the experience, and how their organizations benefited from their individual experiences.



## Why We Joined CAL-MAT

**Rick:** My early career was in emergency medical services and I never completely got away from it. I started as a firefighter/EMT and, after college, became an EMS administrator. As EMS Director for Sonoma County, I was responsible for the county's disaster medical services program and for the medical response to several incidents. As various disasters hit Butte County (including the 2017 Oroville Dam evacuation and the 2019 Camp Fire), I felt frustrated as an observer. I joined CAL-MAT to feel like I was helping.

**Navi:** As COVID-19 took over the world in early spring of 2020, I watched as my colleagues and friends bore the heavy burden of combating the virus. Much like anyone else, I supported the efforts in combating the virus by following shelter-in-place orders, masking, and adhering to a strict safety regimen to protect my family and others. However, as the year came to end and the COVID-19 forecasts continued to look grim, I felt compelled to help. Motivated to do more, I researched opportunities to help and landed on posting by Rick about CAL-MAT.

## What We Did During Deployment

**Navi:** My two-week deployment with CAL-MAT not only gave me an opportunity to help, but also allowed me to apply my skills in an unfamiliar setting and to gain expertise in a new area. As the Planning Section Chief, I supported EMSA's operations center by performing data analysis and reporting, enhancing forecast reports, and providing support to other sections in advance of a response. I experienced the close coordination required between EMSA/CAL-MAT and other federal, state, local, and private agencies that is needed to effectively respond to an emergency mission. I was able to learn about disaster medical management while working in the incident command system structure utilized by hospitals and health systems.

**Rick:** Last March, my two-week deployment stretched into three months. I served as the Chief of the Planning Section at an alternative care site. Since this was one of the first ACS to open in response to COVID-19, I was involved in decisions about organizational structure, staffing, and logistics as we created a new health facility from scratch.

Later in the year, I served for four weeks as the Chief of the Planning Section at the EMSA's operations center in Sacramento, CA. When my deployment ended, Navi took my place in the Planning Section. My quick description of the Planning Section is that we don't worry about what is happening today; we're focusing on next week. The job is primarily data analysis and reporting. Among other things, I redesigned a weekly report that uses current statistics and trends to identify future needs. This report allows state officials to see potential problem areas around the state that could require a response by EMSA/CAL MAT. Potential problem areas include direct COVID-19 concerns as well as other factors such as influenza levels that could have a direct impact on the COVID-19 response. I also developed a staffing model that predicted the resource needs based on expected patient levels.

## How Our Experiences Benefit Our Organizations

**Rick:** As a full-time faculty member at CSU, Chico, I want to be able to bring real-world experience back to my students. My CAL-MAT deployments gave me a chance to practice what I teach and to bring new examples to the classroom. This is particularly important now when COVID-19 is a constant topic of class discussions.

**Navi:** The experience with CAL-MAT/EMSA was an excellent way to strengthen my existing skills while expanding my knowledge bank. The deployment gave me an opportunity to teach others how to perform data analysis and how best to present findings to a wide audience. From this experience, I learned to place a greater emphasis on story-telling during presentations to ensure that my story can present the data not just in a palatable manner, but also how can it have resounding impact on my audience. In my current role, I have begun to consider how to infuse creativity and innovation while continuing to deliver value for the organization.

As at any healthcare facility, the clinical staff are on the frontline, providing care directly to patients but right behind them are administrators who help to organize and coordinate their work. While some healthcare executives cannot leave their organizations during the pandemic, others are able to do so. CAL-MAT offers an opportunity for them to serve.

# LIFELONG LEARNING: A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE

By, Capreccia Thomas, MSHA

Andrew James, RN, MS, MHA (EMHL), FACHE is the Vice President at HCA Healthcare. Previously, the Director of Operations and Improvements for the Santa Clara County Health Systems. With over 17 years of experience, he is a seasoned executive with the ability to balance strategic decisions and financial discipline with a hands-on approach to leadership. His commitment to being a student of his craft and sustained belief in continual growth serves as his anchor for lifelong learning.

The roadmap to a life of learning begins with the desire and passion to find purpose in one's life mission. Andrew James' journey of resilience has marched him forward as a true leader, committed to excellence. A story of trials and triumphs, he endured the narrow passage to find his North Star. Awakened his desire to never become complacent



and always find opportunities to grow. 'Never ever get complacent', a line that James is a firm believer in. His desire and passion to be the best drives him to continue walking a narrow path of patience, hope, and resilience. The greatest charge he has taken to affirm his purpose of living a life of learning is believing in himself. It defines who he is. "Without learning, you cease to exist and become stuck in a repeated cycle that lacks growth".

*"The roadmap to a life of learning begins with the desire and passion to find purpose in one's life mission. Andrew James' journey of resilience has marched him forward as a true leader, committed to excellence."*

There are distractions and discouragements that will arise on one's passage in life. James has had his fair share of highs and lows on his path getting from point A to B. Going through the fire of life's turmoils, his faith provided the confidence to overcome any shortcomings, naysayers, and doubters. Despite some missteps, he set his mindset on going for gold, completely committed to win. He

challenged his odds of becoming just a community college student by going through a strenuous and challenging nursing school program to receive his master's degree in healthcare administration and management from an Ivy League institution, Brown University.

Notably, James' faith is a huge part of his successful pursuit of living a life of continual learning. He's completely invested in the process of continual learning. In a world full of knowledge and information, James is well-versed in history, geography, political science, and more. He believes that learning does not have to be confined to one concentration or topic but varied on a myriad of subjects. Furthermore, he believes that learning is not a monolithic entity but focuses on making a choice every day to commit to excellence in all things.

'Settle for more, not less' is another line that James affirms his resilient stride to remain dedicated to a life full of learning. His denouncement of being complacent encouraged his advanced educational pursuits, where he recently received his FACHE certificate. The list of titles RN, MS, MHA (EMHL), and now FACHE that he graciously achieved is a nod to his resilient nature. James' mapped-out journey constitutes a life full of learning motivated by his eternal quest for gold status in all aspects of his life. It's a matter of results, he says, "Always remember the journey, the daily path of sacrifice to remain disciplined in a world divided. Plant the seeds, do the work. You will reap the harvest that you desire when you put in the work".

SPONSORED ARTICLE

# THE PURSUIT OF LIFELONG LEARNING

By, Cindy R. Chamberlin



Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts is committed to inculcating a lifelong learning environment that emphasizes clinical partnerships, utilizing learning platforms, and developing programs based on real-life outcomes. The institution offers quality allied-health and nursing programs that integrate professional skills and career-focused education, and real-life experience by empowering students to develop and achieve both personal and professional success. The institution employs three guiding principles to inculcate a culture of lifelong learning: value on clinical partnerships, learning platforms, and programs based on real-life outcomes.

## VALUE ON CLINICAL PARTNERSHIPS

“Partnerships are an integral part of didactic and clinical education,” said Abraham Cicchetti, Sacramento Campus Director.” With clinical partners, including Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Health, University of California, Davis, and RadNet, a reciprocal learning relationship is created, and students are molded into confident and competent professionals.” Fred Faridian, San Mateo Campus Director, recalled when the County of San Mateo approached the Academy for students to support a local clinic during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The institution is aligned with providers’ needs to address labor shortages that impede access by focusing on workforce development across the imaging and nursing professions. Patient satisfaction catapults when integrated approaches to simultaneously improve care, population health, and reduce cost per capita are employed.

## UTILIZING LEARNING PLATFORMS

To help navigate this evolving marketplace, Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts partnered with Career Edge, a professional career development company that provides insightful modules, videos, and resources to help students establish themselves for a future occupation in healthcare. Insightful modules such as learning to manage your stress, time management, and goal setting extend one’s knowledge beyond the industry-specific skillsets. The modules provide the soft skills imperative to make one successful during school, on the job, and in everyday life.

## PROGRAMS BASED ON REAL-LIFE OUTCOMES

As healthcare continues to evolve and novel healthcare concerns are at the forefront, the Academy’s robust advisory board annually evaluates offerings starting with outcomes. “We first look at employment opportunities for our graduates, then work our way backward to curriculum design. In some cases, this means developing a new curriculum,” says Faridian. As a career-focused institution program selection begins with outcomes.

*“A reciprocal learning relationship is created, and students are molded into confident and competent professionals.”*

Murrell, a Fellow in the Association of Educators in Imaging and Radiologic Sciences, describes learning as ‘leaning’—leaning into partnerships, platforms, the feedback given, the community, and more. School leaders champion lifelong learning as being crucial to shaping the communities they serve, and they eagerly ‘lean’ in to embrace the challenge. Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts seeks to embody lifelong learning in all that it does by implementing clinical partnerships, collaboration, use of learning platforms, and the development of programs based on real-life outcomes.

### Author Bio

Cindy R. Chamberlin is a Content Specialist at Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts. She has vast experience in crisis management and organizational brand reputation.

# VOLUNTEER FOR CAHL

The California Association of Healthcare Leaders (CAHL) is entirely run and operated through the service and generosity of our volunteers. From our board members to committee members, we appreciate all those who have made the commitment to devote their time, efforts, and passions to contribute to CAHL.

In addition to furthering a cause that you are passionate about a wonderful networking opportunity, volunteering with local chapter counts towards one of the requirements for Fellow Recertification – Participation in Healthcare activities!

- Volunteer Committees
- Advancement
- Career Development & Transition
- Clinical Leadership
- Communication
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Finance & Audit
- Higher Education Network
- Local Programming Councils
- Military Outreach
- Sponsorship Committee
- Volunteer Recognition & Member Outreach



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