



The Monitor

From Your President



Conference Exhibitors

For the first time in a number of years, three exhibitors participated at our conference in Salt Lake City. We want to extend our appreciation to them for their support which helps keep conference cost to the attendees at an affordable rate.

Exhibitors have their own agenda for their presence: some are looking for auditors, some are looking to market their services and some are there to provide information and support to AAMAS. More often, there are elements of all three.

For a fee, AAMAS provides booth space to the exhibitor as well as a list of attendees and their contact information. That is the industry practice, and the Board feels this is a fair and equitable trade. We encourage members to visit the exhibit booths and find out what they are doing.

If you attended our conference and receive an email from one of the exhibitors, please do not be offended. They are our partners. If you do not wish to receive the email, just delete it. It is unusual that there will be repeated emails. If that happens, you can “unsubscribe” at the bottom of the email.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness to them. This year’s exhibitors were:

- Escalate
- Health Management Systems (HMS)
- National Alliance of Medical Auditing Specialists (NAMAS)

We thank them for their participation and hope they will join us in San Antonio next year.

MJ LaBelle
AAMAS President

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NAMAS

Many of our conference attendees received an email from NAMAS welcoming you as a “LITE Member”, and the board wants to explain this to you. The email described who they are: a national association of physician coders that educates and certifies E&M coding auditors. It is interesting to me that just because a coder is certified in his/her field of coding, it doesn't mean they can audit coding sequences. Auditing, whether clinical or coding, is a specialty unto itself.

NAMAS taught an E&M coding class at our preconference and also had a booth, which many of you visited. All exhibitors are entitled to a copy of the attendants, which is why you received their email. They are offering you a lite membership so you can attend their webinars if you so choose. Additionally, they are offering a discount to you for their November 11-14 conference. If you are interested in physician coding, you might want to join them. David Eklof and I will be speaking at their conference in November.

AAMAS and NAMAS are pursuing a potential partnership opportunity. We are both national auditing certification and credentialing associations (although CMAS spun off on its own). We are non-profit, and they are for-profit, but many of our goals are the same: Educate.

We will keep you informed of our endeavors as time goes by.

MJ LaBelle
AAMAS President

A Message From Your Past President

This is my first article as Past President that I'm submitting to the Monitor. With that in mind, I have reason to reflect on what has occurred during my tenure on your Board as President.

We've certainly have had our struggles in moving forward and finding people to engage in the philosophy of our organization. I was very fortunate in that everyone that held a seat on the board was engaged and helped immensely in their support of actions we took to better the organization.

You've seen some of the progress we've made in re-establishing the list-serve and the improved communications with regular editions of the Monitor being sent. We also were able to begin online voting. At this past conference we were able to demonstrate our new website. Updating this was necessary, but it's also expensive. Our old website had issues and used a computer language no longer supported by any of the current browsers, leaving us at risk for cyber-attacks.

This year's conference was excellent. The program offerings were well received and provided some balance. We had a few sponsors each having a booth. That too was an improvement compared to the last few years. Theresa Crothers, our program chair, did an excellent job. Our onsite hotel selection was managed by our very own Mike McManus our Executive Director.

The Baton has been passed from me to Mary Jane LaBelle. She is your new President. The Board of Directors has some new faces: Katie Stanford, Karen Cooper and Teresa Gulino. Their energy and ideas will be a welcomed addition to our organization. Mary Jane will share with you the plans she has for our organization. We're on our way back and will be better than ever.

It's been a pleasure being your President. I have one more year on the Board as Past-President. I hope to continue my contributions to our organization beyond my tenure on the Board.

Enjoy your summer!

David Eklof
AAMAS Past President

A Message From Your Vice President

Hello from your new Vice President!! I'm very excited to be serving on the BOD and ready to help this wonderful group of people you have elected to our organization.

I make my home in the "Bluegrass State", home of the Kentucky derby and of course our beloved Kentucky Wildcats. While I'm not much of a basketball fan or a horse enthusiast, I am a huge fan of the "bluegrass" or at least the small piece that I call home. I live on a 130-acre farm in Northern Kentucky where my husband and I raise cattle, chickens and two small dogs. I love my life on the farm and can't imagine living anywhere else. While I love my home, I do love to travel and we try to visit new locations across the US each year. Well that's enough about me.

I'm sure everyone will agree that Salt Lake City was a beautiful location for the 2018 AAMAS conference. If you missed the 2018 conference you really missed out on some great educational resources. I thoroughly enjoyed the knowledgeable and entertaining speakers this conference and wish I could have attended all the breakout sessions. I made many new connections at the conference this year and look forward to making many more in 2019. I hope to see ya'll at the 2019 conference in San Antonio.

Karen Cooper
AAMAS Vice President

A Message From Your Treasurer

My name is Katie Stanford. I am the new Secretary-Treasurer of AAMAS and a member of the Board. A few years back I vowed not to get involved with being on boards again, but here I am, and I am actually very excited to begin this journey. AAMAS is made up of a wonderful group of people, and that is the reason I said 'yes' when asked if I was interested in this position.

The meeting this year was very informative which is the primary reason we all attend. It is important that we know the latest trends in the auditing field so we can perform meaningful and accurate audits. Learning from other auditors also allows us to give the best advice to our clients or employers. If I had to audit in a vacuum, I would not feel I was giving the best service available. And I like hearing both the provider side and the insurance side.

Although I have always audited for providers, I feel it makes me more of an expert if I know both sides of the coin. For example, it is an advantage to know not just what an insurer might deny for payment but also the rationale behind it. As insurer and provider auditors,

we have much in common and much to learn from each other. I feel we are auditors first and any of us could work for either "side". I hope we continue to have speakers that enlighten us on the developing trends from both perspectives. I feel a great deal of respect exists between AAMAS members and fostering that respect is part of the AAMAS purpose for existing.

I felt the goal was accomplished at the meeting in Salt Lake City this year. It was an exceptional meeting. The speakers were good, and I again gained new knowledge as I have every year. The hotel was top notch. I loved my room and felt I could have moved in! It was very large, beautifully furnished and had an incredibly comfortable bed. The conference ran very smoothly. The food was really good including full breakfasts, lunches and snacks. It was all great, but the networking aspect of the conference was the best.

A night was arranged for us to take tour buses to the Salt Lake City Hogle Zoo on Thursday evening. The zoo was open just for us. The evening activity was included in the conference so almost everyone attended. We had the opportunity to stroll through the zoo, talk, eat dinner together and visit while partaking of wine, beer or other beverages. It was a beautiful night and so relaxing. I met quite a few new people and heard about their audit positions. I caught up with long time friends. I watched a friend FaceTime with her granddaughter and a lion!

There were more attendees this year than last year, and I hope this trend continues. I hope we get many more in San Antonio next year. Looks like we will be on the awesome River Walk. Hope to see ya'll!!

Katie Stanford
AAMAS Secretary-Treasurer

2018 AAMAS Conference Highlights

I would like to thank those of you who came to the AAMAS conference and preconference in Salt Lake City. It was great to see so many of you, and you helped make the event a great success. I would also like to thank Allan Shane for working hard again to obtain the necessary nursing, coding, and CMAS CEU's, and the Board of Directors for all the suggestions and support I received in planning. I also want to thank our exhibitors, Escalate, HMS, and NAMAS. Your participation was appreciated.

The special event at the Hogle Zoo was a welcome relief after spending all day sitting indoors. We were able to walk around the Zoo, and it was a beautiful evening. The lions, elephants, and monkeys were enjoying it as well. As I wandered around to mingle with the attendees, I was impressed to hear that a lot of networking was occurring. I stumbled upon many conversations where members were discussing issues they were dealing with and seeking information about how others dealt with similar issues in their environments. Networking is the true value of conference attendance!

I would like to address a few issues that arose during the conference. When sending out requests for speakers, we do make known that our members represent both payers and providers. We stress that advocating for one side over the other is not advised. I know there were complaints regarding the sessions that Day Egusquiza presented with their provider bias, and I apologize for that.

There was a complaint that we do not provide bottled water for the sessions or at the break. Unfortunately, we would be charged by the bottle, and that is an additional cost that is hard to justify. The hotel provides fresh water and glasses on each of the tables at no cost to us. We try very hard to keep the food/beverage costs down as that affects the overall cost to you.

The temperature of the room is a frequent complaint, and is hard to control. Different parts of the room will be different temperatures depending on where the vents are. Some may be too cold, others too warm. I can only suggest that attendees dress in layers, bring a sweater, pashmina, or some type of wrap.

In closing, I just want to say that I am very pleased with the responses I have received from the conference attendees. It seems to have been a great success, and I think a good time was had by all.

I hope to see you all in San Antonio next year for our 25th Anniversary Celebration!

Theresa Crothers
AAMAS Education Committee Chair



Maria Petz Auditor of the Year 2018 Awardees

This year, the Marie Petz Auditor of the Year award was given to two individuals. These two have demonstrated through their practice a level excellence and professionalism we all strive for as Medical Auditors.

Our first nominee and awardee is Katie Stanford. The following is an excerpt (Edited for content) from the person who nominated her.

“She has demonstrated all the attributes of an excellent auditor and possesses the utmost professionalism. Katie has been a strong proponent of education for her staff. She encouraged everyone to join AAMAS and our local state auditing association.”

Katie, RN, MSN, CMAS “...was instrumental in helping for auditors get their CMAS designation and thus having 100% of her staff CMAS certified.”



Katie Stanford, RN, MSN, CMAS [Pictured Left]

“Katie has contributed to AAMAS over the years, not only attending conference but helping the board with strategic planning. She has encouraged her staff to contribute to AAMAS by becoming board members and participating in conferences.”

“The leadership and management skills I now possess are a result of Katie’s patient encouragement and support. She has not only been a great mentor and manager, but she became a true friend who I will continue to look to for guidance and advice.”

–Submitted by Amy Armstrong.

Our second nominee and awardee is Karen Cooper. The following is an excerpt (edited for content) from the person who nominated her.

“It is a privilege to recommend Karen Cooper, RN BSN CMAS for the Maria Petz Auditor of the Year Award.

As an employee of Bottom Line Systems, LLC for the past 11 years, Karen has been a true leader in the chart auditing division. You will not find a more professional or nicer person to represent AAMAS.”



Karen Cooper, RN BSN CMAS [Pictured Left]

“Karen was auditing a couple of years before sitting / achieving the CMAS certification. She takes great pride in this accomplishment and strongly encourages her fellow auditors to do the same. She uses multiple resources to enhance her skills like attending AAMAS conferences.

“Karen completed her studies to earn her BSN a few years ago. She stated the continuing education keeps her on her toes. The integrity of her work is not matched by any outside auditor she encounters. She provides quality and will not settle for anything less form anyone else in the industry.”

–Submitted by Nancy Binder

Having been a recipient of this award a few years ago, I can think of no one better to join our ranks than the two people who were awarded the Maria Petz Auditor of the Year.

Congratulations to the both of you! You are well deserving of this recognition and accolade from our organization.

David Eklof
AAMAS Past President

AAMAS Board of Directors Update

Exciting activity for our membership this year were the appointments of several advisory positions to the board by our new president and the nomination and election of two highly qualified new board members: Karen Cooper BSN, RN, CMAS and Katie Stanford MSN, RN, CMAS. You may find their professional qualifications in an earlier nomination email sent prior to conference.

Our new Vice President is Karen Cooper. We feel that Karen will bring some important fresh eyes to the role and to the board as a whole. Besides her professional qualifications, we found at conference that she and her husband have raised their family and have a farm in Kentucky and raise cattle – surely her knowledge of cattle rustling will bring added value (grit!) to her activities on the new board!

We also welcome Katie Stanford to the board in her new role as secretary-treasurer. Many know Katie for her warmth and kindness, I know her for her attention to detail and quality (she is also my boss!). Perhaps these are the qualities she passed to her son in being successful in his work as a producer for the show, Dog the Bounty Hunter!

Both are well equipped for their service on the AAMAS Board.

We'd like to extend a sincere thanks to Amy Armstrong our past secretary-treasurer and to Anne Haider, our past vice president for their service on the board. We feel truly grateful to have members willingly contribute their time and knowledge in stewardship of the organization.

Future plans for the rest of us: it's not too early to ponder a position on the board for next year. Several positions will be up for election: Membership and Nominations for one and the position of President-elect.

Please consider serving the board for next year! Please feel free to contact me or any board member anytime regarding these positions. If you or another member is interested in serving, please contact us!

Thanks all!

Terese VanHout
AAMAS Membership/Nominations Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Jane LaBelle, President
Dave Eklof, Past President
Karen Cooper, Vice President
Katie Stanford, Secretary/Treasurer

Teresa Gilino, Program Chair
Anne Haider, Social Media
Theresa Crothers, Advisor
Mike McManus, Executive Director



AAMAS
Executive Director
Mike McManus
ext. 119



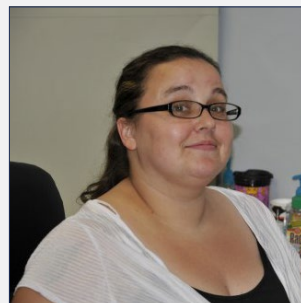
Liz Kutz
Chief Financial
Officer at Association
Executives Group
ext. 102

Vice President of Operations at Association Executives Group

Mike attended Seton Hall University, where he majored in marketing and was a member of the varsity golf and basketball teams. Mike has held a variety of management positions throughout his career, including a Director position with Tiffany & Co. and as general manager with the world's largest Minuteman Press organization. He also has more than 10 years of nonprofit Board and event management experience. He has held the position of Executive Director for eight associations during his career.



Roy Smith
Vice President of
IT at Association
Executives Group



Nicole Cheever
AAMAS Customer
Care & Membership
Manager
ext. 116

The opinions expressed in The Monitor are those of the authors or persons quoted. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the AAMAS Board of Directors.

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www.aamas.org



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL AUDIT SPECIALISTS Membership Application

Please Print Clearly:

Name: Dr./ Mrs. / Mr. / Ms. _____ Date: _____

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Affiliation: _____

Preferred mailing address: Home Business

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Home phone number: _____ Office Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Fax number: _____ E-mail: _____

Referred by: _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES SCHEDULE: Each membership is good for one full-year.

Individual Membership \$125.00 \$_____ Membership Total

Corporate Membership If three or more employees from the same organization join/renew, they each receive the discounted rate noted below. Please provide names and contact information on the back of this form.

Total Number of Members: _____ X \$112.50 = \$_____ Membership Total

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Please list other professional organizations to which you belong: _____

EMPLOYMENT SETTING

- Hospital
- Vendor
- Insurance Company/Other Payer
- Other

JOB CLASSIFICATION

- Auditor
- UR/QA
- Case Manager
- Other

BIRTH YEAR

- Prior to 1925
- 1925-1945
- 1946-1964
- 1965-1979
- 1980-2000
- After 2000

Your name, address, and email address will automatically appear in our online membership directory available only to members. Please check if you would like your name ***withheld*** from the online membership directory:

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Check/Money Order Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name on Card: _____ CVV Code: _____

Signature: _____

Return this form with your payment. Checks or money orders (in U.S. dollars) payable to AAMAS.

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TOTAL DUE: _____

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your application form to the
address at left. Or, you may join
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