

President's Message, April, 2018

National Healthcare Volunteer Week just wrapped up and once again, the diverse talent we have displayed in our volunteer ranks humbles me. Gone are the days of the saying "only a volunteer". Our volunteers are so much more than ***only*** anything. They are serving right along our paid staff, often in roles our patients and visitors cannot identify as a volunteer.

In the past 50 years of AHVRP, we have seen many changes in the services provided by our volunteers and the patient is always in mind and the center of those changes. Having been in my position for the last 20 years, I look back to see how far we have come with serving our "patients". From the traditional role of the hospital gift shop to the tuck-in call for our hospice patients. Through it all one thing is clear: we could not do any of these amazing things without the volunteer.

Is one week enough to honor those who give so freely of their time and talents? A good volunteer manager will tell you no; we must honor them throughout their time with us. However, we must remember honoring our volunteers does not only mean gifts and banquets. It is the simpler gestures of thankfulness which our volunteers truly appreciate. Taking the time to get to know them, thanking them for sharing their time and talents, and above all praising them publically for their innovation, good deeds and execution of the task.

May is upon us and with that often brings state conferences! Michigan is no exception. This conference is May 16-18, Petoskey, Michigan, and they are having 2018 AHVRP Annual Conference Planning Committee Chair extraordinaire Rob Toonkel be their guest speaker. I am so excited to have Rob share his message with my Michigan colleagues who have not had a chance to hear Rob speak! Boy, are they in store for a conference filled with great information they can put into practice as soon as they return to their hospitals. MAHVRP is hosting its Spring conference, May 3-4, Columbia, Missouri; PAHVRP is hosting its annual state conference, May 9-11, Danville, Pennsylvania; WSSDVS is hosting its Leadership Summit, May 14-16, Vancouver, Washington; NEADVS is hosting its annual conference, May 22-24, Westbrook, Connecticut; NYSAVSA is hosting its 34th Annual Conference, June 6-8, Syracuse, New York and WADVS is hosting its conference, June 13-15, Madison, Wisconsin. For more details, [click here](#).

Speaking of conferences, I hope you have made your plans to attend the 50th Annual AHVRP Annual Conference & Exposition in Rosemont, IL. If you have not, there is still time to reserve your spot! The conference planning committee has wonderful speakers lined up as well as some wonderful events to round out the conference. It truly is going to be a memorable event that you do not want to miss.



Kristyn Ireland, CAVS
2018 AHVRP President