

For those of you who were able to join me in Chicago for the 50th Annual Conference, I think you will agree it was outstanding! The ACPC did an outstanding job creating a memorable time for us to learn, and collaborate and experience those "**golden opportunities**". From the opening session with Charles "Peanut" Tillman where he shared with us the importance of healthcare volunteers in his experience with his daughter's health challenge, to giving back to those in similar situations. What a wonderful **opportunity** I had to sit down with Charles and take questions from the audience, and learn a little bit more about him.

Vicki Hess challenged us to Choose Joy...engagement is a personal matter. Vicki challenged us to find those **opportunities** to:

- Develop personal accountability for engagement and job satisfaction
- Create and maintain positive connections with coworkers
- Reduce stress and increase energy by generating constructive outcomes
- Implementation of long term behavior changes

Congratulations again to all of the HAVE and AHVRP award winners. These programs and individuals recognized **opportunities** to make a difference in their organizations and communities! What a remarkable difference we are making in the lives of others, and YOU have chosen to go above and beyond. Thank you again for all you do!

Mandy Harvey was a HIT at the Gala celebrating 50 years of AHVRP. If you aren't familiar with Mandy, I encourage you to Google her story, which showcases the true meaning of recognizing personal **opportunities** which are ever present in our lives. Mandy is a golden example of reaching for your dreams.

Finally, for those of you who were at the conference, I think you will all agree the APP was a hit! The **opportunity** for real time engagement, feedback from sessions and pictures showing all the networking (and fun) added a new level to the conference. A little friendly competition to be the top poster didn't hurt either!

As I sit back and reflect about the extraordinary individuals I get to call peers, I am thankful you have chosen to walk this path we call Volunteer Management together. I am thankful for each of you, and appreciate all you do to make what we do extraordinary! As I close out this message I would like to share (or refresh) your mind with my message from the conference.

It is exciting to think this is the 50th year of our vibrant organization. Fifty years of collaborating, networking and making a difference in the communities we serve. Our profession has come a long way over the past fifty years, and our association has been

there though all the changes to support, develop and educate. What wonderful leaders we have had to steer the ship as we encounter new directions and possibilities.

Take a minute to think about the number of volunteer hours our organizations have provided to our patients and communities over the past 50 years, I am sure you will agree, it is extraordinary. The magnitude of lives we have touched through the years is too much to consider. I often wonder how I ever got so lucky to have a career where I have the opportunity to work with such dynamic individuals who choose to share their time and talents with those we serve. There are not enough thank you's to show our gratitude to those who help us deliver the amazing programs we create to support our patients and their families? So much has changed over the last fifty years, but one thing has stayed constant, our teams desire to make the patient experience the best possible in the most difficult of situations.

I encourage you to think about the changes our profession has taken over the past fifty years. This year's conference theme "**Golden Opportunities Patients, Communities & You**" invited us to explore the opportunities which present themselves regularly as we tackle the ever changing face of healthcare. I ask you to think about the following: How do we continue to meet the needs of our patients? Are we delivering creative programs in our communities, which meet the needs of those we serve? Ask the tough questions, brainstorm with your peers and develop new creative ways to reach out to our patients and our communities. I am hopeful that by working together we can have the answers (or ideas) how we can serve those in our communities more creatively and completely.

As I shared last year, one of my favorite things about my job is the opportunities which present themselves to us on a daily basis. First and foremost are the opportunities we are privilege to experience in interacting with our patients. It is our greatest opportunity to make their experience the best possible in often the most uncertain of situations. Second are the opportunities which lie within our local communities. The chance to connect with our communities on a more personal and creative level. In these situations, we often have the opportunity to share our talents in a non-threatening environment, still offering the delivery of health care services. Finally are the opportunities offered to me personally. The opportunity to challenge myself personally and professionally both within my community, my organization as well as being involved with a national organization like AHVRP. Only when we embrace opportunities can we truly move to the next level, to challenge, grow and flourish.

I hope you will embrace this amazing opportunity of a lifetime as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of AHVRP. I hope you will all find the opportunities in AHVRP to enjoy your time together, rejuvenate your creativity, drive and purpose by networking and exploring

new ideas. Finally, I hope together we can set the foundation for another fifty years of creating those networks and friendships which will last the test of time.