



## Arkansas Health Executives Forum August 2021

### A Message from Your AHEF President



As Arkansas experiences another surge in COVID-19, I want to take a moment and thank every AHEF member and all health care employees for your efforts in combatting this pandemic.

As hospitals continue to respond, ACHE and AHEF are here to support you in educational resources and professional contacts. As we look to the fall, AHEF will continue to provide virtual face-to-face panels and will have board positions that will need to be filled. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please reach out to me or to Michael Givens, ACHE Regent for Arkansas.

I also want to congratulate our new ACHE Fellow – Ashlie Hilbun with Arkansas Children’s Inc. Your hard work and dedication are recognized, and we are excited to celebrate this achievement with you! Also, welcome to our new members; we look forward to working with you and assisting you in your executive role. And finally, congratulations to our Recertified Fellows – we congratulate you on your continued professional development. *New members and Recertified Fellows are listed on page 3-4.*

"Take care of your team and each other!"

Sincerely,

Greg Crain, FACHE  
President, Baptist Health Medical Center-Little Rock  
AHEF President

### AHEF Reminder

If there are edits that need to be made to your record or qualified education hours that need to be added, the AHEF board is not able to do that for you. You must update your record yourself by logging into your account at <https://www.ache.org/>. Face-to-face hours automatically post to your record two to four weeks following attendance.

## AHEF News

### Dr. Stephen Bowman Rejoins UAMS as MHA Program Director

**Stephen (Steve) Bowman, PhD, MHA** rejoined the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences as the MHA Program Director. Steve previously served on the faculty of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Walden University and National University where he served as MHA director and faculty liaison to the San Diego Organization of Healthcare Leaders (local ACHE chapter.) His professional experience includes more than 15 years in public health practice with the Washington State Department of Health where he held management positions, including director of the Office of Community Health Systems, director for the state's tobacco prevention and control program and manager of the trauma designation, EMS and trauma registries and statewide quality improvement programs. He received his PhD in 2006 in Health Services Research from the University of Washington where he also completed his MHA. Steve's research has focused on emergency health systems, injury prevention, acute care injury outcomes, and occupational injury surveillance and identifying new methods for capturing occupational injuries from secondary data sources. In addition to quantitative research, he brings expertise in qualitative and mixed methods research.

### AHEF Board Members in the News

**Dr. Saleema Karim**, Culture and Diversity representative on the AHEF Board of Directors and associate professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health at UAMS, has accepted an opportunity with Virginia Commonwealth University. The AHEF Board and Members thank her for all she has done for the association and wish her only the best.

**David Muns, FACHE**, has been named chief operating officer at CARTI. Muns will oversee clinical and business operations for the statewide cancer care provider, which operates 19 treatment locations in 16 communities across Arkansas. Most recently, Muns served as chief operating officer at Merit Health Wesley Medical Center in Hattiesburg, MS, where he was responsible for the daily operations of a multispecialty healthcare organization that includes 10 clinics and 1,000 employees. He previously served as vice president, system development at Memorial Hospital in Gulfport, MS, where he led 100 physicians and midlevel providers in a variety of operational settings. Muns is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE), and previously served as president of the Mississippi Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives. He is a retired Air Force Master Sergeant with 23 years of service.

**Michael K. Givens, FACHE**, Arkansas Health Executives Forum Board Member and ACHE Regent for Arkansas, was recognized in the American College of Healthcare Executives' May/June 2021 issue of Healthcare Executive as winning the award for best message from the Regent (Geographic Regents) published during the 2020 to 2021 Convocation year. Michael is the Administrator for **St. Bernards Medical Center** in Jonesboro.

*If you have news to share, we would love to add it to our newsletter, please contact Lyndsey Dumas ([ldumas@arkhospitals.org](mailto:ldumas@arkhospitals.org)).*

## AHEF Members and Fellows

Welcome to the new AHEF members from April to July 2021, and congratulations to AHEF's recertified Fellows and the newest ACHE Fellow!

### New Members

Jacob Abrey  
Baptist Health

Jerrold R. Anderson, MD  
Hospitalist & Inpatient Rehab Director  
White River Health System

Sophia Blythe  
Cabot

Nicholas T. Brady  
Pharmacy Buyer  
CARTI

Col John Brineman, MD, MS  
Medical Director & Interim CEO  
Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield

Cheri Cartwright  
CNO  
Mercy, Fort Smith

Tara Dunnick  
Director of Operations & Compliance  
Somerset Senior Living, LLC

Kellee M. Farris, PhD  
CEO  
Lee County Cooperative Clinic

Britni L. Green, PharmD, MBA  
LifePoint/National Park Medical Center

Lori House  
President & CEO  
Sevier County Medical Center

Diana McDaniel  
Arkansas Children's Northwest

Dawn M. Michel, MSN, RN  
Chief/Quality, Safety & Value  
Veterans Health Care System of the  
Ozarks

Nicole Nastasi  
Director of Imaging Services  
Arkansas Children's Hospital

Sarah Newbern  
Administrative Fellow  
St. Bernards Healthcare

Kingsley Nwabeke, MD  
UAMS

Sophie Overton  
Administrative Fellow  
Baptist Health

Callie Parks  
Baptist Health

Stephanie Parson  
Baptist Health-Fort Smith

Gabe Porta  
Multi-Site Manager, Rogers

Bradley Smith  
UAMS

Mitchell Strack  
St. Project Manager  
Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield

Karesha Taylor  
Program Eligibility Supervisor  
Department of Human Services

Camille Wilson, RN, MSN  
Market Director of Population Health  
Management  
CHI St. Vincent (Arkansas Health Network)

## Recertified Fellows

John J. Ballard, PhD, FACHE  
CEO  
Forrest City Medical Center

Nathan H. Johnson, PhD, FACHE  
Dept Chair/Lab Sciences  
UAMS

Chris B. Barber, FACHE  
President & CEO  
St. Bernards Healthcare

Brenda F. Million, RN, FACHE  
Vice President  
St. Bernards Medical Center

Gus B. Brady, FACHE  
COO  
Arkansas Children's Research Institute

Talmage J. Whitehead, FACHE  
Chief Financial Officer  
ARcare

Connie H. Hill, DNP, FACHE  
Vice President, St. Bernards Medical  
Center

## New Fellow

**Congratulations to [Ashlie J. Hilbun, EdD](#),  
Chief Strategy Officer & Senior Vice President, Strategic Marketing  
with Arkansas Children's, Inc. for passing the  
Board of Governor's Exam and  
advancing to Fellow with ACHE!!!!**



## ACHE News

### [Connect With Your Peers](#)

ACHE is pleased to offer members three free online communities for physician executives, Asian healthcare leaders and LGBTQ healthcare leaders. The communities' platform makes it easier than ever for peers to connect in real time, tackle issues together and ask important career-related questions. Members can participate in discussion threads, share resources and best practices, and crowdsource innovative ideas and solutions.

To join, follow these steps:

1. Log in to [my.ache.org](http://my.ache.org).
2. Under "Helpful Links" on the right-hand side, click the last option, "My Communities."

3. Click the “Add” button to choose the online communities you wish to join. *An MD or DO degree is required to join the Physician Executive Community.*
4. Watch your inbox for your welcome email and instructions to access your new community! The email will arrive within 24 hours.

We hope you will join these communities. If you have any questions, please email [communitymanager@ache.org](mailto:communitymanager@ache.org).

### **[Our Exclusive On-Demand Content Library Can Help Advance Your Career](#)**

Did you know that as a member, you have access to guided presentations to assist with your healthcare management career development? Our Career Resource Center (CRC) has compiled a [library](#) of member-only, on-demand sessions that provide information and resources for healthcare leaders at all stages of their careers. Whether you are a student entering the field, a leader aspiring to a position in the C-suite, or a clinician transitioning to an administrative role, there’s something for everyone. All sessions within the CRC’s [On-Demand Content Library](#) were recorded at the 2021 Congress on Healthcare Leadership. We encourage members to explore the On-Demand Content Library and other resources and tools available just for them in the [Career Resource Center](#).

### **[Healthcare Consultants Forum Member Directory: Connecting Executives to Consultants](#)**

The [Healthcare Consultants Forum Member Directory](#) offers a robust search functionality to help you identify a consultant who meets your needs. This directory will also be available in the upcoming September/October issue of *Healthcare Executive* magazine. If you are a consultant looking to gain visibility with decision-makers, consider joining the [Healthcare Consultants Forum](#). The forum also offers resources tailored to a healthcare consultant’s specific career development needs.

### **[ACHE Blog and Podcasts](#)**

Gain best practices and learn from your peers through our [blog](#) and the [Healthcare Executive Podcast](#). Both the blog and podcast provide up-to-date content on the issues most pressing to healthcare executives. Be sure to share these with your colleagues. Follow the Healthcare Executive Podcast wherever you access podcasts.

## **Articles of Interest**

### **[Tackling Important Conversations Virtually](#)**

Regardless of the circumstances, executives are always seeking effective, efficient methods of communication. But these days, executives need virtual ways to communicate that are just as effective and meaningful as face-to-face encounters.

For many, communicating in the virtual space has become the preferred method of doing business. Following are strategies for getting the most out of day-to-day work communications, engaging with remote employees and having meaningful conversations virtually.

## **Good Manners Equals Great Communication**

Many of us have been working remotely for months; however, we can't let our guard down and forget virtual meeting etiquette. Some recommendations for maintaining good virtual meeting manners include:

***Have an agenda and stick to it.*** If possible, send out an agenda a day or two before the meeting. An accurate agenda not only lets everyone know exactly what will be discussed but also gives meeting participants the opportunity to ask or answer questions prior to the meeting.

***Punctuality matters.*** When participating in a virtual meeting, a tardy host is almost as frustrating as the recurring chime that announces the addition of a latecomer. Arrive a few minutes early and have the meeting program running in the background of your computer while you are working on other tasks. Finishing a meeting on time is just as important as arriving on time.

***Remove potential distractions.*** Silence your mobile phones, block time on your shared calendar, close the window to unnecessary websites, and let others who are working or living in your virtual office space know you're in a meeting and are not to be disturbed, if possible.

***Mute yourself.*** Unless you're presenting, be sure to mute yourself. It's amazing how much background noise microphones pick up.

***Dress for success.*** Although many bedrooms currently are doubling as home offices, loungewear is never acceptable office attire.

## **Can You Hear Me Now?**

We all want to be heard. And when communicating in the virtual space, it's often difficult to know if we're being heard or seen or even understood. Prior to 2020, most of us took for granted those little acknowledgements that let us know when we had successfully connected with another co-worker. Today, most of us aren't able to give our co-workers an encouraging pat on the shoulder, provide a hug to someone who might be grieving, or even onboard a new employee with a tour of the office and traditional meet-and-greet welcome lunch.

With remote work and the use of virtual platforms the norm for the time being, finding connections with each other is critical to preserving our mental health and ensuring a necessary standard of production to remain successful. Here are simple ways leaders can preserve connections with their teams:

***Prioritize daily face-to-face check-ins.*** A quick, 10-minute "huddle meeting" with your team at a set time each day can foster an atmosphere of collaboration and teamwork. Ask all participants to turn on their video, if possible. We all communicate much more effectively when we can be heard and seen.

***Celebrate milestones and accomplishments—regardless of size.*** Though we might not be physically together, that shouldn't stop us from getting together in the virtual space to celebrate each other and our accomplishments. Continue celebrating

birthdays, work anniversaries and team wins—big and small.

***Collaborate and educate.*** As an executive, you're part of a senior leadership team. Being a good team member includes sharing helpful information with other leaders. When meeting with your peers, include time on your agenda for ongoing training, best practice sharing and problem-solving. "What are you currently reading?" is a great question to spark an information-sharing session.

***Do lunch.*** Remember how nice it was to get out of the office for a bit and share a bite to eat? It's still possible to create that same atmosphere of connection and conversation, even when working remotely. Consider sending lunch via food delivery apps to one person or your entire team.

### **When an In-Person Meeting Is Needed**

All executives are tasked with performing duties such as delivering difficult news, negotiating contracts or disciplining an employee. Meetings related to these situations are best conducted in person. Face-to-face interactions allow meeting participants to share a common space, where distractions are minimized and technological issues eliminated. Unlike virtual meetings, an executive can control the environment of the in-person meeting and keep distractions and interruptions to a minimum. In-person meetings allow for a fuller sense of connection and trust over virtual meetings.

Because of our experience navigating 2020, we are all much better equipped to work in this new, virtual space. And now that we know better, we can all do better.

—Adapted from "[Tackling Important Conversations Virtually](#)," *Healthcare Executive*, Jean Willey Scallon, FACHE, regional vice president, operations, Signature Healthcare Services LLC, Corona, Calif., and an adjunct professor at Indiana University in the O'Neill School.

### **The Impact of Remote Work on Reading Body Language**

Many people are fully aware of how their body language can communicate their feelings and emotions to the outside world, whether intentionally or not. For instance, crossed arms might signal defensiveness or hostility, consistent eye contact can relay a sense of confidence, leaning forward can suggest engagement and interest.

But with the widespread shift to remote work in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of Americans have shifted to remote work, and for many that remote work is likely to remain a feature of employment for the foreseeable future, even as the pandemic subsides. This means, among other things, that common visual cues around body language are more difficult to pick up in the new remote world. There is widespread use of video conferencing tools, but these don't fully mimic the nuances of in-person body language.

There are many relevant cues that can be picked up through various aspects of digital communications in a manner similar to how body language is read. The ability to read that language is important for creating a positive work environment in remote and hybrid settings.



Something as simple as including a smiling emoji on an email or text can help set a friendly, disarming tone with colleagues and subordinates and change an email requesting a status update of a project from something that could be taken as demanding and impatient to a casual, friendly check-in.

The fact that millions of Americans have shifted to a remote work setting means that it's more important than ever to be conscious of how communication is received. While working in-person in an office allowed coworkers to rely on body language to communicate more effectively, that becomes more challenging in a remote setting.

Nevertheless, digital body language can help bridge the gap as long as employees understand how to leverage it. It's another form of communication that companies should be alert to as they help train their employees for success in the new world of work.

—Adapted from "[The Impact of Remote Work on Reading Body Language](#)," by HR Daily Advisor, a sibling publication to HealthLeaders, July 19, 2021.