MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow MHA Students,

First, I would like to thank everyone that made it out to our social event at Bazbeaux Pizza in Broad Ripple a couple of weeks ago. We had a really good turn out and I feel that everyone had a great time. We hope to have more events like this in the future so stay tuned.

After evaluating the first semester so far, I strongly feel that it was a good first semester for the new MHA Student Association. We had 2 guest speakers come and speak with us along with having several social events. I think as the program grows and more people get involved with MHASA, we can only expect to have more events and greater success. The MHASA officer’s have also appointed two new chairs, which will better help our organization serve our purpose, school and community.

Jessica Wiejak has been appointed our Philanthropy Chair, and Casey Sprouse has been appointed our Webmaster.

Jessica has already worked hard on creating the first annual MHASA Riley Hospital for Children Toy Drive, and also has several other ideas for community service events for the upcoming semester. Casey has worked tirelessly on helping our organization create the MHSA Student Association website. The website will allow us to better promote upcoming events, and serve our purpose of helping students be more prepared for the challenges they will meet upon graduation. If you have any philanthropy ideas or website comments, then please feel free to contact either Jessica or Casey.

I know this can be a stressful time of year for everyone with end of year work projects and finals, so the officer team has decided to postpone MHASA social/learning events until next semester. However, we do have a toy drive currently going on (see article in newsletter), so please donate if you can. The kids at Riley really would appreciate anything you could donate, especially during the holiday season.

We are still debating on what type of guest speakers or workshops you all would be interested in having next semester so please let any of the officers know ideas you might have.

As for social events we are looking into attending an Indiana Pacers’ game, or when the weather warms up, an Indianapolis Indians’ game. There will be more information on that in the coming months. As always, thank you for your time and participation in the MHA Student Association.

I wish you all the best of luck on finals, and a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely,

Dave Hyatt
MHASA President

MHASA Alumni Profile: Paula Berbeco, IU MHA ‘05

Paula Berbeco is a 2005 graduate of the Indiana University MHA program, and is currently a Project Analyst in the prestigious WellPoint Health Insurance Professional Program (HIPP) Fellowship. The HIPP program is a highly competitive/selective accelerated talent management program for high potential, emerging leaders. Each year, WellPoint performs a nation wide search to find the very best high potential individuals for its very limited positions in the HIPP Fellowship.

1. What is your educational/work background?

My educational and professional path was and is an evolution. My bachelor’s degree from Purdue University was to provide psychosocial services and support to pediatric patients and families in hospitals, and soon after I worked as a Child Life Specialist at Riley Hospital for Children. I completed my Master’s of Science from Indiana University Counseling Program with an emphasis in Grief & Bereavement, and completed an internship at Clarian Home Care and Hospice. During those years I was able to work in the trenches; talk to families, employees and volunteers about their positive and negative experiences in the hospital setting; and see how internal and external decisions filtered down to influence patient care. As my experience evolved, I found myself involved with administrative projects, research, committees, and leadership roles. In addition, I realized the potential to impact patient care in Health Care Administration. While completing my MHA degree, I worked for a year as a Clinical Research Specialist with the Breast Cancer Team at the Indiana University Cancer Center.

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First Annual MHASA Riley Hospital for Children Toy Drive

The MHASA proudly presents its first charitable event of the year, the Riley Hospital for Children Toy Drive.

The Toy Drive is only one of many upcoming philanthropic events that the MHASA has planned for the upcoming year. Riley has requested that the toys be new and not gift-wrapped. Toy collection will continue until December 11th. Toys can be given to MHASA Officers Jessica Wiejak, Matt Guanzon, Dave Garrison, Dave Hyatt, Nicholas Dus, or Casey Sprouse.

Please be mindful of the professors and only give the presents to the collectors before class, during break, or after class has ended.

For any further information, or to obtain a copy of the Riley Toy Wish List, please feel free to contact me (Jessica Wiejak) at jwiejak@iupui.edu.

I hope you all have a Happy Holiday Season, and I wish everyone the best of luck with finals!

Jessica Wiejak
MHASA Philanthropy Chair

Profile: IU MHA Alumnus Paula Berbeco (cont.)

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Then for three years, I served in a liaison role within Clarian Health as Director of The Cheer Guild - the hospital auxiliary that serves both Riley Hospital for Children and Indiana University Hospital. Throughout those years, I also accepted opportunities to be involved with side projects, clubs, and volunteer work, in and outside of the healthcare setting; which also enhanced my professional knowledge and skills, and educational opportunities.

2. Was it your career goal to work in health insurance?

I did not consider the health insurance industry until I heard about the HIPP fellowship at WellPoint. The health care crisis in this country does not exist in a vacuum, and the chance to experience health care from the “insurance” perspective was extremely enticing! The fellowship is structured to include three one-year rotations through different departments that include, but are not limited to, Health Care Management, Marketing, Operations, Underwriting, and Sales. Educational and networking opportunities with Senior Executives and the other HIPP fellows are interwoven. The rotations can be completed within the Midwest region, and we learn about WellPoint’s services nationwide. Since working at WellPoint, I am seeing the health care crisis from another perspective and exponential learning has occurred. I am inspired by the leaders and my colleagues who want to positively impact the health and care of their members, as well as the uninsured.

3. How did the IU MHA program help prepare you for your current role as a Project Analyst?

I feel as if the emphasis of the MHA program was predominately on hospital and physician business practices; however, the mix of theory and real-life application was invaluable. I appreciate that the MHA degree is applicable to multiple fields within the health care setting.

4. What is your fondest memory of your time in the IU MHA program?

I am recalling the adage, “What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas!” – and it directly applies to some of my fondest memories! Otherwise, the students, professors, and adjunct faculty brought a diversity of ideas and knowledge to the classes, and I am glad to have mingled with them all. I recall a few professors who took the time after class to share helpful advice on real-life issues occurring within my job in healthcare. Additionally, I continue to network with as many of my MHA alumni and current students as I can, as each path is unique and we can learn from each other.

5. What advice do you have for current students?

There are no short cuts in life, so be prepared to work hard for anything worth having. Be open to paths that you haven’t considered. Meet as many internal and external constituents as possible, and do more listening than talking. It’s important to work hard, but play hard too!

Paula Berbeco
Project Analyst, Indiana Network Management
WellPoint Health Insurance
Indiana University, MHA '05

MHASA Newsletter Editor: Nicholas Dus