



COMMON GROUND

INDUSTRY LEADERS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AT THE 20TH HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNUAL SUMMIT CELEBRATED THEIR MUTUAL GOAL OF IMPROVING PATIENT CARE.

BY LISA KISNER, B.A., CQIA, ELS, ASRT DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS

A steady wind swayed limber palm trees as radiologic science leaders gathered May 1-3 in Palm Beach, Florida, for the 2018 Health Care Industry Advisory Council Annual Summit. The summit is unique because it gives participants the opportunity to connect with peers from medical imaging and radiation therapy companies and associations and share their challenges and ideas about their shared goal — improving patient care — in an environment of professional camaraderie.

“The summit is a forum where industry leaders discuss the latest trends in technology — specifically how changes affect students, educators and radiologic technologists in the clinical setting,” said ASRT CEO and Executive Director Sal Martino, Ed.D., R.T.(R), FASRT, FASAE, CAE. “Early on, we recognized the

technology was changing very quickly, so it’s important to exchange ideas annually to see how what’s coming will affect R.T.s.”

Georgia Hitzke, R.T.(R)(M), chairman of the ASRT Foundation Board of Trustees, has attended several summits and appreciates their relevance to the profession. “The vendors’ participation allows them to work together for the good of the industry while helping the educational institutions and the professional societies understand the importance of keeping up with technology,” she said.

The council’s goal is to share and promote strategies for educating technologists and preparing them for the future of medical imaging and radiation therapy. To help achieve that goal, the summit offered this year’s nearly 50 attendees a day and a half of educational sessions selected to encourage discussion.

20 Years of Collaboration

According to Dr. Martino, the 20-year mark is a good time to evaluate what the Health Care Industry Advisory Council has accomplished and what still needs to be done.

"We want the collaboration to continue," he said. "However, we have to consider new ways to bring industry leaders together to make changes that improve the field for everyone. Doing so will ensure HCIAC's relevance for another 20 years."

Founded in 1998, HCIAC first met in 1999, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. That meeting served as a think tank for ASRT and the council's 12 charter members. The willingness of industry partners to share their ideas and challenges over those two days set a crucial precedent of trust that continues today.

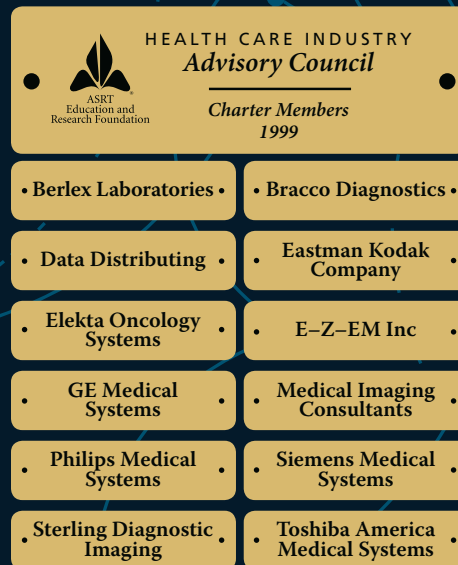
When Dr. Martino joined the ASRT staff in September 1999, he set his sights on the council's long-term success. For the past two decades, he's worked to ensure that HCIAC adapts to meet the needs of the radiologic sciences and produces tangible benefits for technologists, such as a white paper that addressed best practices for applications training. The annual summit also has changed, and by 2002, formal educational sessions were added.

"The HCIAC meeting offers a safe place where industry leaders can discuss issues, solve problems and develop relationships," Dr. Martino said. "It is rare for companies to get together this way."

This year marked the 20th summit, and to celebrate the milestone, select associations were invited to join the corporate partners at the summit, which brought new perspectives to the discussion. The difference was noticeable to Cheryl Mooney, M.Ed., R.T.(R)(T)(M), CMD, of Varian Medical Systems.

"While we all have different contributions to health care, we're all striving to provide the best care for our patients," she said. "It is important for Varian to be present to collaborate with others in the industry, and this is the best venue to do that."

Since the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists joined HCIAC in 2005, Executive Director Jerry Reid, Ph.D., has presented yearly on changes in certification. His talks allow the corporate partners and association leaders to hear directly from ARRT and find out what's coming. It also gives Dr. Reid an opportunity to take their feedback back to his team.



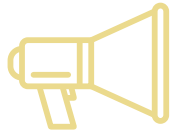
The 12 original members from the first HCIAC meeting in 1999.

"ARRT cannot achieve its mission in a vacuum," he said. "Opportunities to interact with representatives from all players in medical imaging and radiation therapy are essential."

As an ASRT Foundation endeavor, HCIAC has played a significant role in funding awards and programs since its inception. When the Foundation was established in 1984, its leadership knew that donations from corporations were necessary; however, in those early days, it was difficult to solicit and allocate funds in a standard way. Creating HCIAC helped forge a link between companies affiliated with the radiologic sciences and the technologists they serve.

According to ASRT Executive Vice President of Development and Corporate Relations Steve Hardy, M.S., R.T.(R)(T)(CT), CMD, the Foundation's involvement in HCIAC is just as crucial now as it was 20 years ago.

"Our role is to ensure the ideas discussed at the summit are captured and acted upon." Those efforts have paid off: The council is responsible for more than 30 percent of the Foundation's annual program funding, and the formal processes ensure effective use of every dollar.



Advocacy

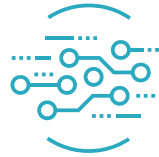
Patrick Hope, J.D., is the executive director of the Medical Imaging & Technology Alliance and a member of the Virginia House of Representatives. He served as the summit's keynote speaker. MITA represents medical imaging equipment and radiopharmaceutical manufacturers. Its corporate members' sales make up most of the global market for medical imaging technologies.

MITA's mission is to reduce regulatory barriers, establish standards and advocate for the medical imaging industry. Its advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels include monitoring state bills; supporting the implementation of requirements to ensure all medical imaging equipment service providers deliver consistent service quality; and supporting policies that increase the access and affordability of medical imaging technology.

Technologists might see MITA's advocacy efforts as disconnected from their day-to-day work, Patrick said, but "ultimately, everything radiologic science professionals do — from industry leaders to clinical R.T.s — is for patient safety," he said. "Poor imaging leads to delayed diagnosis."

ASRT Associate Executive Director Greg Morrison, M.A., R.T.(R), CNMT, CAE, built on Patrick's presentation by talking about ASRT's advocacy efforts. The presentation was timely, according to Dr. Reid, because it illustrated the effect legislation has on the medical imaging and radiation therapy profession and showed why ASRT's advocacy efforts are needed.

For Steve, the biggest takeaway was recognizing how complicated technologists jobs have become. "The number of resources needed to keep up and make sure we're complying is staggering," he said. "And it's going to continue."



Technology

Technology topics dominated this year's summit agenda. Pete Conlin, ASRT chief information officer, tackled cybersecurity. He noted that everyone — patients, R.T.s, manufacturers and individuals — are susceptible to cybercrime. Citing a recent example, Pete said the antivirus firm Symantec issued a warning about Orangeworm, a new hacker group that used a Trojan horse virus to access computer networks. Some 39 percent of the targets were in the health care sector, including equipment manufacturers' software. More and more, health care is a target for hacker groups, he noted.

GE Healthcare's Tom Bennett, M.B.A., discussed another evolving aspect of technology: artificial intelligence. He said health care is behind in AI use because the workflows are complex and numerous but added that AI is ideal for tasks such as setting protocols, helping with patient preparation or ensuring quality control.

In her presentation, Ann Oberghell, J.D., R.T.(R), reminded attendees that, "social media is wonderful to educate, inform and connect." Ann is the associate vice chancellor of academic affairs and operations for Indiana University Fort Wayne. She warned that social media can be "damaging to personal or professional reputation if not used in a positive or appropriate way. Organizations and individuals need to monitor it closely and be mindful of the potential consequences when posting."

Ann's presentation and the talks on cybersecurity and AI were fascinating, said Peggy Glover, B.S., R.T.(R)(CT)(MR)(MRSO), of Hitachi Healthcare Americas. Michelle Kino, A.A.S., R.T.(R)(T), of Varian Medical Systems, said she also enjoyed the cybersecurity conversation and the work required to secure the health care industry against ransomware attacks and other forms of corporate espionage. "It was very eye opening," she said.



Education

With the plethora of information presented at the summit — from technological advancements to legislative endeavors — the question for many attendees was how to relay that information in a meaningful way to technologists and students.

To set the stage, Dr. Reid spoke about how Continuing Qualifications Requirements will affect registered technologists. “CQR is intended as a tool for technologists to help maintain qualifications over the course of their careers,” he said.

Mike Latimer, M.S.R.S., R.T.(R), FASRT, who was the chairman of the ASRT Board of Directors and an ASRT Foundation trustee at the time of the summit, rounded out the discussion by presenting the struggles educators face to keep pace with industry changes. While it can take a year or longer for curriculum changes to take place, the rapid pace of advances in technology outpaces these changes. Mike’s strategy for keeping the curriculum current is to have manufacturers and educational institutions work together to produce students who are prepared to operate the latest equipment.

Ann said she was particularly interested in education-related topics like the one Mike presented. “Rapidly changing technology requires that we educate medical imaging and radiation therapists in different ways both in academic programs and through professional development in the health care setting.”

Paul Larson, M.D., FACR, vice president of the ARRT Board of Trustees, came away from the summit — his first — convinced that the industry is a valuable but underused source of continuing education. Dr. Larson was impressed that representatives from various organizations and companies showed such a genuine desire to work together for the benefit of patients.

Patrick said the summit has always been a wonderful — if all too rare — chance for professional societies and equipment manufacturers to work together. “We all want to do a better job of seeking out opportunities to work together,” he said. “We share common policy interests and goals, and we should have more opportunities such as HCIAC to interact and exchange ideas.”

HCIAC Makes a Difference

**BY JANET MCEWEN, M.A., CAE,
ASRT DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RELATIONS**

Some annual meetings offer lectures by experts that give attendees a greater understanding of issues. The Health Care Industry Advisory Council Annual Summits go further: they allow representatives from industry and the largest association in the profession to collaborate on difficult issues and take collective action to develop resources such as white papers and original research.

Since 2006, HCIAC papers have been available to ASRT members and equipment manufacturers. In some cases, these efforts have affected medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals around the globe. For example, in 2012, ASRT published the HCIAC white paper, Radiation Therapy Safety: The Critical Role of the Radiation Therapist, and the world-renowned International Atomic Energy Agency (iaea.org) linked to the paper from its website.

Much of HCIAC’s work focuses on applications training and the importance of patient and R.T. safety. HCIAC’s first paper, New Skills Acquisition, highlighted the need for a customized approach to educating R.T.s on new technology and the importance of making the link between lifelong learning and quality patient care.

A later paper, Commitment to Succeed, spelled out the key principles for successful applications training and outlined the responsibilities of medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals and industry and institutional managers to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational experience. Several HCIAC companies send the paper to customers before scheduling applications training to share the partnership expectations in advance.

To find out more and read the papers and other research, go to foundation.asrt.org/hciac.