**President Message #1**

**May 2021

Our CSMA fiscal year 2020-21 has ended.  Our country has endured a grave pandemic with the loss of over 570,000 lives.  If your family or friends have been among those we have lost, our sincere condolences.  It is never easy to lose a loved one but even an added difficulty under these circumstances. This pandemic is not over yet but there is a horizon and we will, hopefully, meet up with it soon.  Until then, we must take the steps we need to return our society to as near normal as possible. There are no perfect solutions to resolve this pandemic but there are avenues we can go down that may help to lessen the challenge.

The pandemic has affected every part of our lives, from family, work and social interactions.  For many months, we have been limited to virtual communication and our children and adults who go to school have suffered greatly from their mode of education, their relationship with their friends at school and our seniors in high school and college who have not had the opportunity of their special year as seniors.  But those are unfortunate circumstances that we are unable to be replace but we must all work together to focus on “where do we go from here.”

Our nation has been fortunate to have many “essential” workers and those who have stepped forward to help our nation work through these times at their own risks. These include our medical assistants who helped at their work and through other volunteerism at food banks, vaccinators, data intake jobs and many others.  Kudos to all our frontline workers, essential workers and dedicated Americans who stepped forward to help.  Our best wishes to all those still fighting the challenge to recover and protect us from this virus.

The CSMA had its Annual Meeting virtually in April. Beginning in May, we begin a new fiscal year.  Your Executive Committee from last year and this year have been working on plans to try to help our members for the next year.  Our sincere appreciation to President Lizon for leading the CSMA through this time.  She has ended her two-year service as president and helped direct decisions for our Society under the pandemic. Our appreciation also to our members who helped everyone through this.

This year, CSMA appointed an R & D Task Force (Research and Development) to look into virtual platforms for our use to communicate with our members.  Final decisions were recommended to the Executive Committee and the Executive Committee concurred with their recommendations in selecting Zoom.  It was felt that Zoom was an easier platform for everyone to use.

Zoom was chosen as the primary means of virtual communication with our members but we will also continue to communicate through emails and the use of our website and Facebook.  During this time, CSMA continued to develop a new program of offering CEU sessions virtually using Zoom.  CSMA has decided to offer these sessions free of charge for our members and other AAMA members during this fiscal year.  For nonmembers of CSMA\AAMA, there will be a small fee of $10 per hour for these sessions. CSMA wanted to add opportunities for our members to obtain CEUs needed for recertification and additional knowledge. There are also other societies offering inexpensive or free CEUs to our AAMA family and we will post as many of these as we**

**can to help you find them to maintain your credential.  East Coast offerings are difficult to attend because of the time zone differences but are sometimes worth the effort of getting up early. There are also CEU sessions on eLearning on the AAMA site so take a look as some may fit your schedule.  Some of these are free as well.  We will be planning for both weekend and weekday presentations to try to meet as many needs as is possible.  We will be practicing a couple of sessions before we open it up to our members to reduce the potential technology glitches but plan launching it sometime in late July or August.

Another program to reach out to our members is “Q & A for CSMA” via Zoom.  We plan to try to offer these sessions once every couple of months or every quarter as schedules can be worked out.  This is your opportunity to reach out to us, your leaders, with questions and offering your ideas.  We need YOUR input into YOUR Society so you can help us meet your needs.  As many of your Executive Committee members will attend depending on their schedules and this president will request that all Chairs attend for any questions from our members.  This will also depend on their schedules.  It will require a short registration form so we will know who will attend.  No CEUs are offered for these types of meetings; however, it is a means for you to express to the Society what we may plan for you now and in the future.

A new addition to our website will be a Job Opportunity page.  If employers contact us about potential jobs, we will post it to our website for a period of time for members to access if interested.  CSMA does not endorse any of these opportunities nor do we guarantee the certification status of our members. Prospective employers may visit the AAMA site to determine if a prospective employee is “current” with their credential. Members may contact prospective employers to see if the job offered is right for them. We are just setting up a connection for you and a prospective employer.

The SW Regional Conference, has just been postponed until 2022.  New Mexico is still in a lockdown and schools will not reopen until September so there are no in-person meetings and they are not able to coordinate an entire meeting on Zoom. Nationally, we will be headed to Houston, Texas, in September.  Time will only tell us whether it is safe to travel to Houston.  If all is safe, your delegates and alternates will represent you at this National AAMA Conference. For those members who would like to attend the AAMA National Conference, the conference brochure is on the AAMA site.

We cannot be afraid to return to a normal-type life; however we must remain cautiously safe. Only time will give us the direction we are headed.

CSMA has always tried to be an openly transparent organization and now, CSMA is trying to expand even more with transparency. We want you to know what we are doing and planning.  With your help, we will achieve our goals. We are hopeful that we will see and meet many of you via Zoom for the time being.  With your help, we can plan a positive future for this great Society. Please visit our website and our Facebook site for more information and utilize this opportunity to contact and reach out to your leaders with questions or concerns.

Let’s look forward to a new mode of presenting CEUs online for a short time while we might consider even adding it as a mode mixed with in-person when that is possible. Let’s look forward to hearing from you with the new “Q & A for CSMA.”  Let’s look for some good job postings for our members and let’s look to opening nationally to see our AAMA family across this great nation.

Be well, be safe and stay healthy.

Joyce Nakano, CMA (AAMA)
CSMA President 2021-2022**