

FOCUS ON FACULTY: CAHME'S ROLE IN PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT AND ACADEMIC CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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Commission on Accreditation
of Healthcare Management Education

FORWARD





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“The currency of real networking is not greed but generosity.”

— Keith Ferrazzi, Founder and CEO, Ferrazzi Greenlight

I often speak to students in healthcare management programs. Many are young professionals in the early stages of their careers, working to become future leaders in healthcare. They are often surprised when I give them this piece of advice: “Don’t network.”

Of course, building a professional network is important. Broad and robust relationships with academic or business colleagues are an important element of any successful career. But “who you know” is only half the story. Networking can’t just be transactional. We all know individuals who reach out only when they need something from you.

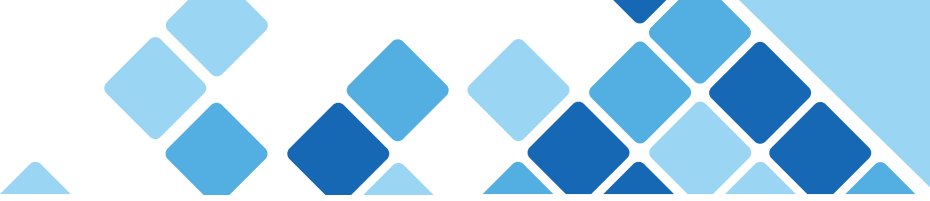
But it’s the next piece of advice I give students that I really want them to grasp: “Help someone.” I believe strongly that helping others is the key to professional success, whether you’re in the first decade of your career or the fourth.

This white paper highlights six faculty members who live the “help someone” credo, while also recognizing the importance of networking. Though representing different institutions and different career paths, each of these academic leaders has something in common: engagement with CAHME. Some are graduates of CAHME-accredited programs. Some now lead CAHME-accredited programs. Some volunteer with CAHME as committee members or site visitors.


Each of them speaks to the value of engagement with CAHME to one’s personal career development and to enhancing the quality and experience of healthcare administration education. Certainly, interactions with CAHME have helped these academics build networks of colleagues nationally and internationally. But that networking serves the larger purpose of helping others: students in their programs, colleagues seeking professional advice or guidance, programs looking to stay one step ahead of the ever-changing world of healthcare administration.

CAHME’s mission is to enhance the quality of healthcare management education, and engagement with CAHME has provided these individuals with a rich environment in which to help others while also furthering their own professional development. It can be challenging work to serve on a CAHME committee or to take part in a site visit determining a program’s CAHME accreditation. But as these profiles show, the hard work has helped these academics advance their programs and benefited them professionally.

These six individuals are just a small sample of the many academics whose careers have thrived through an association with CAHME. They represent nearly 250 academic volunteers that work with CAHME each year. More than just networking, they are helping others. If you are also interested in helping others by engaging with CAHME, please email me at astanowski@cahme.org.



FOCUS ON FACULTY



A photograph of two business professionals in an office setting. A man with a beard and dreadlocks, wearing a light blue shirt, is seated and looking towards a woman. The woman has curly hair and is wearing a grey blazer over a striped scarf. They appear to be in a meeting or discussion. The background shows a modern office with large windows and other people working.



Lesley Clack, ScD, CPH

Associate Professor and Department Chair, Health Sciences
Program Director, BS Health Administration and
MS Health Sciences
Marieb College of Health & Human Services
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida, USA

“I think the best way to learn about Health Administration education is being affiliated with CAHME.”

After prior experience with CAHME-accredited programs, Lesley Clack, ScD, CPH, is now working to achieve CAHME accreditation for the Masters of Science in Health Science program at the Marieb College of Health & Human Services at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU).

Dr. Clack became chair of the department and director of the program in 2021, but her in-depth experience with CAHME began in 2018, when she became a CAHME Fellow. Since then, Dr. Clack has been involved in almost a dozen site visits to review programs as they prepare for their first, or seek to renew, CAHME accreditation. CAHME Fellows provide essential coordination and guidance during the accreditation process. This includes site visit logistics, document review, interviews with key constituents, drafting site visit reports, and participating in the presentation of results to the Accreditation Council. The goal is to ensure an overall positive experience for the program being accredited as well as for the site visit team.

CAHME Engagement Drives Program Improvement

The experience has been valuable in Dr. Clack’s own professional development. “I think the best way to learn about Health Administration education is being affiliated with CAHME. The knowledge that you gain from other programs is essential. It helps me as much as it helps the other program because you’re able to dig deep and really understand the content a little bit deeper so that you can apply it to your own program.”

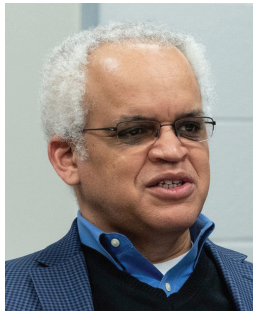
Dr. Clack’s experience with CAHME—which has also included serving on task forces—has “benefited me as an administrator. The overall in-depth knowledge of an accreditation process has been tremendous because I have programs with other accreditations in my department. It really has a lot of transferability that you can then apply to other accreditations.”

At Florida Gulf Coast University, Dr. Clack is leveraging her CAHME experience to lead the program toward applying for CAHME accreditation. The Masters of Science in Health Science program at FGCU is fully online. “CAHME now accredits fully online programs. It is wonderful to be able to have the ability to still seek accreditation for an online program so that we can make sure that we have the best quality program for students.” Dr. Clack notes that CAHME accreditation provides a common thread of program quality, even as each program maintains its unique structure or curriculum.

A Community of Caring Professionals

Dr. Clack cites another benefit from her association with CAHME: the strong network of professional and personal support. In the wake of Hurricane Ian, which devastated the area in 2022, “it was just outstanding to me how many people reached out to me from CAHME, from the president of CAHME to site team members and program directors that I had only met one time.” With CAHME “you just feel like you’re part of a community of people who are after the same thing: to help each other and to support each other.”

And even when dealing with daily professional responsibilities, “if you’re needing help with your program, you can reach out to anyone who is part of CAHME and they are happy to be able to provide you with assistance for making your program better. The overwhelming sense of support has just been amazing and something that I am proud to be a part of.”



Christopher E. Johnson, PhD
Director, Institute of Health Administration
J. Mack Robinson College of Business
Georgia State University
Georgia, USA

“Involvement with CAHME has been very beneficial in my career in terms of being able to develop the best program that I can for my students.”

When his career in the Marines came to an end after the Persian Gulf War, Christopher E. Johnson’s family members encouraged him to think about healthcare as a new arena to apply his interests in leadership and service. He shadowed a healthcare administrator in California, while his father suggested he pursue a PhD in healthcare administration. Doing so at the University of Minnesota included extensive research studying healthcare organizations. It was a fruitful decision since “I was more interested in studying how these organizations function as opposed to leading within those organizations.”

With his advanced degree in hand, Dr. Johnson’s academic path has included leadership of healthcare administration programs at Texas A&M, the University of Washington, and the University of Louisville. Today, he is the Director of the Institute of Health Administration of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University.

Building a Network with CAHME

Early in his career in healthcare management education, Dr. Johnson also got involved in CAHME. “I first got involved in CAHME many years ago because of my desire to see how other health administration programs function,” Dr. Johnson explains. In addition to leading numerous program site visits, Dr. Johnson serves on CAHME’s Candidacy Committee, Standards Committee, and the Accreditation Council. Engagement with CAHME provides “the opportunity to see and talk to faculty all over the country about how they’re dealing with issues or how they’re recruiting students or what their curriculum looks like. Those kinds of things have been very beneficial in my career in terms of being able to develop the best program that I can for my students.”

Dr. Johnson often recommends engagement with CAHME to colleagues. “I talk to my junior faculty about this all the time. One of the things that CAHME does do is put you in a community of scholars. And... you get to develop strong relationships” which Dr. Johnson cites as benefiting his career path. “I’ve paid it back by writing letters of recommendation for (individuals) involved in CAHME when they have come up for promotion or tenure.”

The Importance of CAHME Accreditation

With his long career in healthcare management education, Dr. Johnson notes how opportunities for students have expanded in recent years. In addition to traditional hospital and health system roles, graduate students today are finding careers in start-ups, private equity, and entrepreneurship. “Now students are thinking about starting their own businesses and developing their own solutions to some of the problems that healthcare is dealing with.”

CAHME accreditation remains important in this shifting environment because of its emphasis on program quality. “CAHME’s main focus is, if you’re going to produce somebody who’s going to work in healthcare, what are the things that person needs to be successful... If you are a member of CAHME and of a CAHME-accredited program, it opens up a door to a whole lot of opportunities that your students will have.”



Jami Jones, PhD, MHA
Professor and Chair, Department of Healthcare
Leadership and Management
Medical University of South Carolina,
South Carolina, USA

“CAHME accreditation is really a stamp of quality on your program.”

Focus on Competencies Supports Program Excellence

Her work gives her perspective on the challenges facing healthcare management education. “One of the challenges in graduate healthcare management education is to be flexible and fast enough to adapt your curriculum for the needs of a rapidly changing healthcare environment... We really have to stay in touch with the external environment to update our curriculum and make sure our students are competent and have the skills that they need when they go out into the healthcare industry. Teaching our students flexibility and adaptability is critical.”

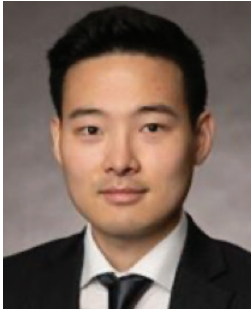
Dr. Jones believes CAHME accreditation supports the excellence of the MUSC healthcare management program. “CAHME’s focus is competency-based education, (which) allows our program and other programs to have the flexibility to reassess the competencies, adapt, and change competencies when needed” based on real-world feedback from industry and program alumni. One recent example: a new telehealth and digital innovation certificate program.

The relationship with CAHME has been valuable because CAHME “appreciates our efforts to maintain and update our curriculum as we need to, based on our communication with our external stakeholders and environment... I appreciate the collaborative relationship between CAHME and the health administration programs.”

Involvement with CAHME Aids Professional Development

Dr. Jones’ involvement with CAHME—as a CAHME Fellow and as a member of the CAHME Accreditation Council—has also benefited her professional development. “As a CAHME fellow, I was able to go on site visits to other programs and really learn best practices in program management. I got to see new and creative ways of doing things, of engaging students, of engaging alumni.” As a program director, Dr. Jones’ engagement with CAHME exposes her to other programs, allowing her to “learn about what they are doing and take best practices back to my faculty to make programmatic improvements.” Through site visits and accreditation council meetings, “I’ve really broadened my professional network across the US, visited schools that I might not otherwise get to visit and seen different ways of doing things.” Her work with CAHME has also provided mentorship opportunities.

“CAHME accreditation is really a stamp of quality on your program,” Dr. Jones says. “Students ask about it when they are looking at programs... It’s important for the long-term sustainability of any healthcare management graduate program.”



Dae Hyun (Daniel) Kim, PhD
Assistant Professor of Health Management and Policy
Department of Health Management and Policy
School of Health
Georgetown University
Washington, DC, USA

“Serving as a CAHME Fellow has been one of the most enriching experiences for me.”

Like many in academia and industry, Dae Hyun (Daniel) Kim, PhD, anticipates profound changes in healthcare management education driven by rapidly developing generative AI (artificial intelligence), especially as the use of AI spreads within the healthcare industry itself. With technological advancements happening so quickly, the need for competency-based graduate healthcare management is more important than ever, according to Dr. Kim. “If (AI) is something that students are going to utilize in the real-world setting, why not teach them how to utilize it within the safe learning environment? Because at the end of the day, what employers want is for their employees to have that real world experience or the ability to utilize what they’ve learned in graduate healthcare administration programs to real world settings. CAHME stands out because it... really emphasizes the importance of competency-based education.”

Benefiting from CAHME Engagement as a Student, Teacher, and Volunteer

Dr. Kim’s experience in healthcare administration education has taken him to longstanding CAHME-accredited programs at the University of Michigan and the University of Alabama at Birmingham as a student. He served as a Portneuf Medical Center Endowed Assistant Professor and MHA Program Director at Idaho State University and now teaches in Georgetown University’s Department of Health Management and Policy. Even with this expansive background, he says that “working as a CAHME Fellow has been one of the most enriching experiences for me.”

Being a CAHME Fellow “allows me to travel across the country and visit various programs to assist these programs to improve upon things they’re already doing... The opportunity to see what other programs are doing to improve the quality of education that they provide to the students—as a faculty member, that’s a very valuable experience for me. And not only am I able to see, hear, and talk in depth about best practices or the future of graduate healthcare administration education, I’m also able to form very meaningful relationships with faculty members and C-Suite executives that are working in the field.”

Programs Benefit from CAHME Involvement

Not only has Dr. Kim’s involvement with CAHME been personally and professionally rewarding, he has also seen the benefit of accreditation for programs themselves. “Whenever various programs reach out to me to inquire about the CAHME accreditation process, I highly encourage them to go through the process. Not only is the accreditation process beneficial for the programs, but ultimately, it’s more important to the students who are eventually going to be healthcare leaders in the future... Because besides the competency-based education, what CAHME really emphasizes to the students is for them to become continuous learners.”



Dale Sanders, DO, DHA, MBA
Director, Master of Health Administration Program
Salem Academy and College
North Carolina, USA

“I quickly learned that CAHME was the gold standard for master’s level programs.”

As a physician, Dr. Dale Sanders brings a unique perspective to his role as a graduate healthcare management education leader. “I see the complexities of healthcare from both a clinical standpoint and an administrative lens.”

In the early stages of his career as a physician, Dr. Sanders faced his own health challenges, an experience during which he came to understand that the “greatest health system in the world is just not great for everyone.” His desire to understand the impact of the business side of healthcare led him to earn a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Northwood University and a Doctor of Health Administration (DHA) from Central Michigan University. In 2022, he was named director of the Master of Health Administration program at Salem College.

Healthcare Administration Can Solve Problems for Patients and Communities

In his new role, Dr. Sanders hopes to encourage students to appreciate healthcare administration and its relevance in the healthcare sector. “Health Administration shouldn’t be a second, third, or fourth (career) choice. It should be a first choice, and it should be considered the important role of taking care of the health of our communities.”

In Dr. Sanders’ view, healthcare administrative leaders can “become the advocates for those who sometimes can’t advocate for themselves.” Healthcare management education can give these leaders the skills, attitude, resiliency and grit to understand that “there are no problems that they can’t solve or at least identify alternative ways to solve problems” on behalf of patients and communities.

CAHME Supports Quality Education of the Next Set of Healthcare Leaders

Earlier academic appointments exposed Dr. Sanders to CAHME, where he rapidly identified the benefit of CAHME accreditation for programs and for students—something he intends to bring to the MHA program at Salem College. “I quickly learned that CAHME was the gold standard for master’s level programs.” Dr. Sanders cites CAHME’s emphasis on competency-based education as an essential element for any graduate-level healthcare management program. “As healthcare and healthcare management changes, CAHME has kept up and prioritized supporting how we educate this next set of leaders.”

The professional support from colleagues at other CAHME accredited programs is also valuable to Dr. Sanders. Colleagues at other CAHME accredited programs have reached out to him to be helpful in the early stages of the Salem MHA program’s development and accreditation process. CAHME is “open, welcoming, and provides support for programs as they develop and begin the accreditation process. I have worked with many accrediting bodies during my career and CAHME ranks among the best relative to the quality and organization of the accreditation process.”



Steven J. Szydlowski, MBA, MHA, DHA
Chair, Department of Health Administration and
Human Resources
University of Scranton
Pennsylvania, USA

“Being involved with CAHME helped me learn exactly what it means to develop and improve curriculum and program level competency.”

For Steve Szydlowski, MBA, MHA, DHA, engagement with CAHME began almost 20 years ago when he pursued his master’s in health administration from the University of Scranton. The MHA program at the university was CAHME-accredited when Dr. Szydlowski enrolled. It remains so today, and in the intervening years Dr. Szydlowski’s involvement with CAHME has expanded to include serving as a CAHME Fellow, being a member of the CAHME Board, chairing the CAHME Standards Council, and as a leader of multiple program site visits nationally and internationally.

Today, in his role as chair of the University of Scranton’s Department of Health Administration and Human Resources, Dr. Szydlowski believes “CAHME is critical to higher education in Health Administration. It is focused on student-centric excellence in education... Being involved with CAHME helped me to learn exactly what it means to develop and improve curriculum and program level competency.”

CAHME Supports Rigorous, Competency-Based Education

According to Dr. Szydlowski, the field of healthcare management education faces multiple challenges, including how to support enrollment at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, optimizing the ‘time to degree completion,’ and addressing the continuing cost pressures facing colleges and universities generally. At the same time, Dr. Szydlowski sees opportunities for graduate healthcare management students “across the continuum of health service delivery. It’s not just hospital administration—there are opportunities in insurance markets and opportunities in post-acute settings, and opportunities in home-based care.”

Regardless of the challenges and opportunities, Dr. Szydlowski says “I believe that competency-based education is critical for our graduate student success... What we get out of CAHME is not only the rigor of standards that are set forth, but we also learn best practices and what other CAHME-accredited programs across the country are doing to improve student attainment of competency.”

Dr. Szydlowski values the professional and personal connections that are a feature of his involvement with CAHME. “CAHME faculty across the country is a family. It’s a peer group that we bounce ideas off of one another and share best practices. It’s helped me professionally with teaching methodology and best approaches to pedagogy and andragogy in the classroom, along with assessment and using assessment information to make program improvements.”

Paying it Forward Through Engagement with CAHME

Dr. Szydlowski believes that his engagement with CAHME has benefited his advancement in academic leadership at the University of Scranton because of the rich experiences it provides and the support of his peers. While being mentored has helped him, he now pays it forward. “It has been extremely important (to me) to be a mentor to other programs across the country and internationally. CAHME is a whole community of learning, developing, giving back, and mentoring.”



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ELEVATING ACADEMIC CAREERS





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Indiana, USA



The Profound Impact of Involvement: Elevating Academic Careers

A widespread perception is that academia revolves solely around research, publications, and isolated knowledge pursuits. While these aspects are undeniably essential, a successful academic career necessitates embracing a broader approach: relationship building.

Engagement with reputable organizations, though sometimes overlooked within academia, can fundamentally impact your career. Allow me to share how this involvement can elevate your academic journey.

- 1. Networking and Collaborations:** Becoming part of organizations provides a valuable opportunity to build your network. In academia, just as in other fields, forging connections can be as crucial as the knowledge you possess. These connections often give rise to collaborations, leading to research opportunities, joint projects, and an abundance of knowledge-sharing. ***You can't succeed alone.***
- 2. Remaining Up-to-Date:** The academic landscape is in perpetual evolution. Involvement in organizations keeps you abreast of the latest trends, research, and developments within your field. This ensures that you stay informed and maintain an edge in your discipline by attending conferences, seminars, and workshops organized by these groups. ***Learning doesn't happen in a vacuum.***
- 3. Professional Development:** Numerous organizations offer resources for professional growth, including workshops, training sessions, and certification programs. These opportunities can enhance your skills, rendering you a more competitive and sought-after academic professional. ***Iron sharpens iron.***
- 4. Leadership and Service:** Proactive engagement in organizations frequently presents leadership prospects. Serving on boards, committees, or adopting other roles allows you to refine crucial leadership skills applicable to your academic career. ***Serving others fosters your own growth.***
- 5. Advocacy and Impact:** Organizations often champion significant issues and causes relevant to their respective fields. Being part of such groups enables you to have a voice in steering the direction of your field and making a difference. ***A collective voice is a stronger voice.***
- 6. Recognition and Awards:** Many organizations acknowledge outstanding contributions through awards and honors. Your active involvement could make you eligible for these accolades, elevating your professional reputation. ***Your personal brand is an asset worth investing in.***

7. Enhanced Teaching: In academia, your teaching abilities are as vital as your research prowess. Associating with organizations can introduce you to innovative teaching methods and resources, enriching your effectiveness as an educator. *With the help of others, you can be a better version of yourself.*

8. A Diverse Perspective: Engaging with a variety of organizations allows interaction with academics from different backgrounds and institutions. This exposure broadens your perspective, enriches your research, and deepens your understanding of your field's global context. *Be part of something greater than yourself.*

9. Support and Mentorship: A sense of community is often fostered within these organizations. Here, you can find mentors and allies who provide guidance and support throughout your academic journey. *Do life together with others.*

Regardless of whether you are an aspiring academic or an established professor, make it a point to value the power of involvement. The connections forged, knowledge gained, and impact made through these organizations can substantially contribute to your professional success. Explore distinguished organizations such as CAHME, and take the initiative. Your academic career might just achieve new heights that exceed your initial expectations.

CAHME Corporate Members



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University of Washington-Seattle*
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Georgetown University
The George Washington University

Thomas Jefferson University
University of Alabama at Birmingham

CAHME Certified Programs in Healthcare Quality and Safety

Drexel University
University of Illinois Chicago

University of Pennsylvania

CAHME Certified Programs in Population Health Management

Boise State University
Lehigh University
Johns Hopkins University

Thomas Jefferson University
West Virginia University

*Universities offering multiple CAHME accredited programs. List represents status as of 3/5/2024

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