



# Set the Record Straight with *On Assignment*

Health Information  
Management



**Robert Kramer**

RHIA

## OA EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

I was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and have resided there my entire life. I have been married for over 25 years to a wonderful woman whom I adore. I have a 24-year-old daughter who is getting married this July. I'm looking forward to several grandchildren in the future. I enjoy playing the guitar, long distance running, and cycling as well as winter downhill snow skiing, both for exercise and the challenge. I have finished over 100 marathons and ultramarathons, and numerous century bike rides, both for charity and my own personal enjoyment. I enjoy walking for peace and the quiet it provides to reflect and pray on a daily basis. I remain active in my local church as much as possible when I'm home and can participate.

Years ago, following graduation from seminary, I discovered my interest in the medical field. I met with a college counselor and after taking a self-assessment exam to determine my areas of interest, it became apparent that this was what I wanted to do. I went on to achieve an associate's degree in general studies at Florissant Valley Community College and then a bachelor's degree at St. Louis University in their Allied Health Program. After graduating, I obtained my certification as a Health Information Administrator (MRA then, now RHIA credential).

I have been a medical coder now for over 25 years, and during that time have had the privilege to work in various prominent St. Louis area hospitals in positions that included night shift manager,

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?WHO KNOWS?

## Earth Day Activities for Adults

By Leah Gillis

Earth day is now a popular day for people to come together and perform actions to care for the earth. There are a number of ways people get involved on Earth Day, either by planting a tree, cleaning up litter, or changing out harmful light bulbs in their home. No act is too small and they all count. Here are some ways you can get involved to celebrate Earth Day by making a difference.

Earth Day is important nowadays, and has been growing in popularity especially as climate change is ravaging communities and the earth's resources. People used to think we had a never-ending supply of everything from fish in the sea to clean water, but resources are being depleted. Earth Day is growing in importance and popularity as people realize resources are precious to us all – no matter what your political party or geographic location. We all have one Earth and it's in everyone's best interest to work together to keep it healthy.

### The History Of Earth Day

Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson's idea for Earth Day was to create an event for environmental activism and enlighten everyone to the idea of widespread support for environmental issues. Nelson's plan was so successful that it inspired grassroots support for environmental legislation including the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and the need to protect wilderness areas in the United States. In fact, it was only three years after the first Earth Day celebration on April 22, 1970, that the Environmental Protection Agency was created.

The website earthday.org has a campaign called One Billion Acts of Green, asking people, businesses, and governments to record their acts of kindness toward the earth. No matter how you reduce carbon emissions – whether just in your home or in a big company, millions of acts have been recorded and they want to reach one billion. For example, people in Louisiana are working to assist residents with the installation of free, energy-efficient light bulbs. In Afghanistan, the Earth Day Network is working with government and village leaders to start recycling programs, clean water programs, and alternative energy practices. You can start initiatives like these in your area, or work to inform others on the importance of preserving our environment – on Earth Day the important thing is to get involved somehow.

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## ASK THE EXPERT

### What is Osteopetrosis?

Osteopetrosis (aka Albers-Schönberg disease, ivory bones, marble bones, stone bones, and osteosclerosis fragilis) is an extremely rare inherited (congenital mutation) bone disorder that causes bones to become abnormally dense, structurally inadequate and prone to fracture, and a number of other feature symptoms. This is due to an imbalance of normal bone growth between the formation of new bone (performed by osteoblasts) and the breakdown of old bone caused by failed bone resorption from a dysfunction of osteoclasts. Mutation in up to nine known genes associated with the development and function of osteoclasts will cause the disorder (in all of its variations); these mutations produce abnormal or reduced osteoclasts. Essentially, without functional osteoclasts, old bone is not broken down as new bone is formed and this creates an unusually dense bone type throughout the skeleton that is unstable and prone to fracture.

There are several variations of the condition that are distinguished by their pattern of inheritance:

- Autosomal dominant: occurrence of 1 in 20,000 and is the milder and more common form.
- Autosomal recessive: occurrence of 1 in 250,000 and is the more severe form.
- X-linked: fairly rare in comparison to the other two.

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### Look for On Assignment HIM at these upcoming events:

**Louisiana HIMA (LHIMA)  
Annual Convention, April 18–20  
in Lafayette, LA  
and  
NCRA Annual Conference  
April 18–21 in Washington, DC**

Stop by to see us and enter for  
your chance to win a great prize!





# Set the Record Straight with *On Assignment*

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## OA Employee of the Month



**Susan Gray**  
*Senior Recruiter*  
HIM Contract Team

It's hard to remember a day when my first thought in the morning wasn't ... Who needs travel booked today? Who do I need to get an assignment? Or the ever popular ... What is going on with the weather

that will affect my people who may be traveling? These are just some of the thoughts that are foremost on my mind on a daily basis ... because staffing is in my blood! Or it has been that way for the better part of my adult life – since 1992 when I walked into a staffing company looking for work in Human Resources, having been freshly laid off from my first job out of college (a seven year stint at the Home Shopping Network as the On Air Talent Coordinator), and the owner of the company interviewed me and called the next day to ask if I had ever thought about staffing as a career. Staffing? No, I hadn't even heard of staffing, much less thought of it as a career choice! But evidently she saw something in me that showed potential and, since I had nothing better to do, I decided to give it a shot. Fast forward nine years: I was running her company of 4 locations and 24 onsite outsources when she decided to retire and let her family take over the operations. That was my cue to move on.

Armed with my knowledge and business savvy, I opened my own staffing company, specializing in local clerical positions. It flourished, but tough times were ahead and I was looking for other areas to staff. I really didn't know much about the medical field, but kept getting calls from potential clients asking if I could staff their coding positions. I had no concept of coding or health information management, but I knew I wanted to learn. I had an opportunity to make a change and merge my business with another that eventually landed me in a company (owned by a former Director of HIM) where I was staffing HIM positions. I was like a sponge to her teachings and focused on learning as much as I could about HIM, so I could understand the needs of the clients as well as the candidates. I put my own advice to the test: identify the obvious and extract the obscure ... and it worked. I enjoyed the people I was recruiting and respected the types of positions I was staffing. That's when On Assignment came calling.

After several phone interviews with the corporate office, I knew On Assignment was a company where I could hang my hat for a long time. The HIM division was just taking shape, but the company was stable and the strategy was quality is better than quantity. That was in early 2006 and it still holds true today, which is why I have been able to be so successful in my role. It's been a lot of blood, sweat, and tears over the years, but we have been able to grow the HIM division into something we can be proud of for ourselves, our employees and our clients. We have dedicated consultants on long-term assignments – some who have been on the same assignment for five years! Yet, if that stops working for their personal situation they know they can come to me to discuss and look for a more suitable assignment. My consultants will tell you that while I have become a whole

lot busier than I was back in the early days, I still am willing and able to make time for them and attend to their needs – whether it is to just visit, or speak about serious business matters. I don't ever want to lose that ability.

While work does take up a lot of my time, I find time to enjoy my personal life a lot! My husband and I have two adult daughters and my most cherished blessing, our ten-month-old granddaughter who has changed my life in ways I struggle for the words to describe! When not spending time with her, I am a devout Parrot-head, having attended over 50 Jimmy Buffett concerts; an avid college football fan; and will escape at any time to the Caribbean where my husband and I like to go to recharge and relax from our busy lives. Currently we are learning about being landlords as we have purchased a new home and will be keeping our current home for investment income. Time will tell how that works out!

It is an exciting time to be part of the On Assignment family, and my plan is continue to use my expertise to help our wonderful HIM team flourish by placing HIM professionals in assignments that are beneficial to them, both professionally and personally.

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assembly/analysis clerk, file clerk, correspondence clerk, inpatient coder, and outpatient coder. After a period of time, I decided to challenge myself and sought out various contract coding companies, and chose On Assignment HIM. The fit is great and my recruiter has been a highly enlightening and informed source of information for me, which has helped further my professional development.

I've had the opportunity to see various sites around the country, meet and befriend many wonderfully insightful people, experience different cultural environments, and learn more about healthcare coding and its related systems. The thing I have enjoyed the most working for On Assignment HIM is the continual excitement to adapt to healthcare changes as they relate to different locations around the country.

**For more information regarding our \$500 referral bonus program, please email [kristin.walsh@onassignment.com](mailto:kristin.walsh@onassignment.com)**





# Set the Record Straight with *On Assignment*

Health Information Management

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Fahr's Syndrome** (aka Familial Idiopathic Basal Ganglia Calcification) is a rare, inherited, progressive neurological disorder characterized by abnormal deposits of calcium in areas of the brain that control movement, including the basal ganglia and the cerebral cortex. Symptoms of the disorder may include deterioration of motor function, dementia, seizures, headaches, dysarthria, spasticity, spastic paralysis, eye impairments, and athetosis. The condition can also include symptoms characteristic of Parkinson's disease, such as tremors, muscle rigidity, a mask-like facial appearance, shuffling gait, and a "pill-rolling" motion of the fingers, although these symptoms generally occur later in the development of the disease. More common symptoms include dystonia and chorea. The mutant genes that may be responsible have been mapped to chromosome 14, 8, and 2.

*(Continued from page 1, Main Article)*

### Earth Day Activities You Can Do

There are a number of Earth Day events in your area that you can find by going to [earthday.org](http://earthday.org). You can also plan an event if you have something in mind, or want to copy an event you see in another area.

- Many people get together in groups with friends and family to go out and pick up litter at a park or local beach, or even right on your Main Street. Because picking up litter doesn't require much planning, you have a good chance of getting people to join in – and may find some people joining in as you go.
- If you want to get your hands in the earth, you can gather your friends and family to help plant a tree on your property, or see if you can get permission to plant a tree in your community, or at a park or local school. Talk to your neighbors and see if they are willing to also plant a tree on their property, or help with your effort to plant trees on community property.
- Your Earth Day contribution could be to start recycling in your home or switch to using renewable energy. You might not be able to install solar panels on your house or apartment, but you can switch out energy-sucking appliances and replace them with energy-efficient models. A few other easy actions are to separate your trash into recyclable and non-recyclable items, and get in the habit of buying recycled materials.
- You may have heard of composting, which is nature's way of recycling decomposed organic materials into a rich soil known as compost. Deciding to compost is a popular activity for Earth Day. Compost can be used in your garden as it is a very good source of nutrition for plants. Composting biodegrades your food waste, manure, leaves, grass trimmings, paper, wood, and crop residue, making it into something very good for the environment – which is a win-win!

- Check with your employer to see if they would like to participate in Earth Day activities. Maybe they don't recycle printer toner, paper, and aluminum cans – materials many businesses go through quickly. When businesses go green, in addition to helping the earth, they can oftentimes get tax deductions or other financial benefits, so see if your company is open to making an Earth Day commitment. If you have a home business, maybe you can see how your small business can go green – again, those small actions can yield big benefits for the environment and maybe even your bottom line.

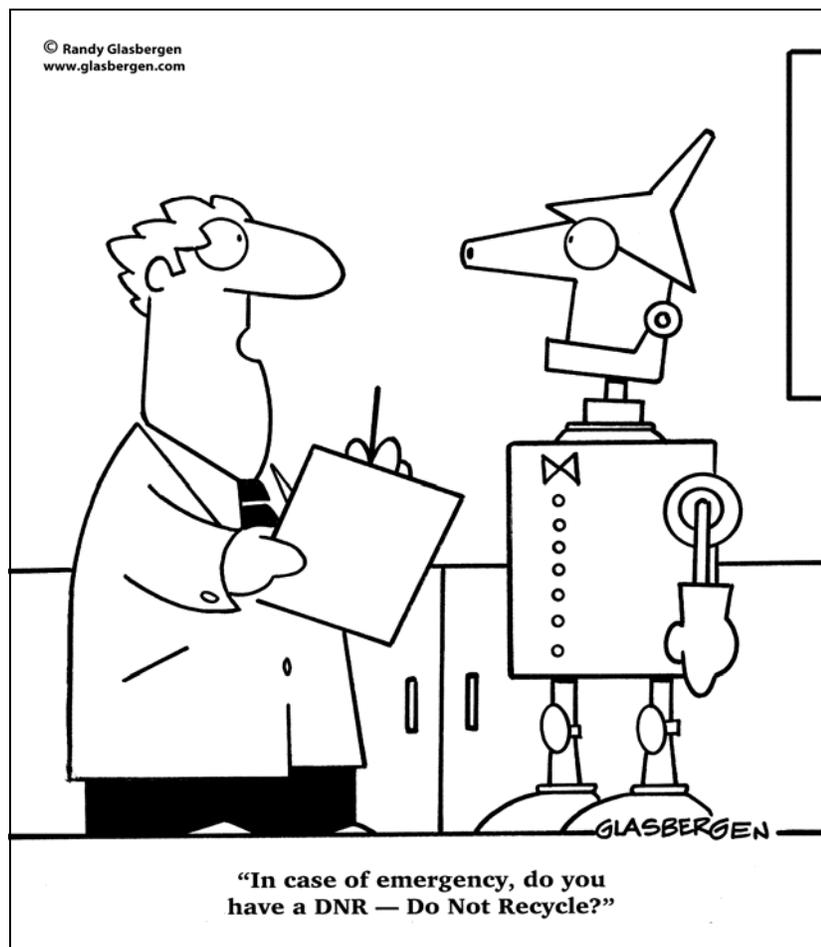
Cleaning up a local waterway such as a river or stream to remove garbage and debris is also a great way to celebrate Earth Day. You can also commit to helping people in other parts of the world, like Africa, to get access to clean water. Earth Day is also a day for education about the earth and realizing how you can help other communities that may need the things you take for granted – like clean water to drink and bathe in.

And while these actions are great for adults, get your kids involved. They love to plant, dig, compost, recycle, and be a part of anything that seems fun and they see adults doing. It's fun to get creative with kids and think of ways to do things differently to help the earth.

Go online and you will be inspired by the myriad of ways people have gotten involved to save the earth, and make sure you log onto [earthday.org](http://earthday.org) and share your contributions.

For more information:

<http://www.idealhomegarden.com/holidays-crafts/earth-day-activities-for-adults/>





# Set the Record Straight with *OnAssignment* Health Information Management

## ? WHO KNOWS ?

This drug (on the market for about 10 years now) is recommended to be used to treat severe sepsis, septic shock, and the associated complications in (high-risk) patients admitted to hospital intensive care units. This drug is a synthetic version of a natural protein found in the body. The drug reduces inflammation, decreases blood clot formation in blood vessels, and helps break down blood clots. It is recommended for intensive care treatment for the reduction of mortality in adults with severe sepsis who already have a high risk of death.

It has been recently recalled worldwide (at least 50 countries) due to a lack of showing any clinical survival benefit in patients and possessing a potentially higher risk of bleeding in patients that are treated with it. Federal regulators and the company that manufactures the product has indicated that therapy should be discontinued immediately in patients receiving the drug, and should not be started in new patients.

Send your answers to:

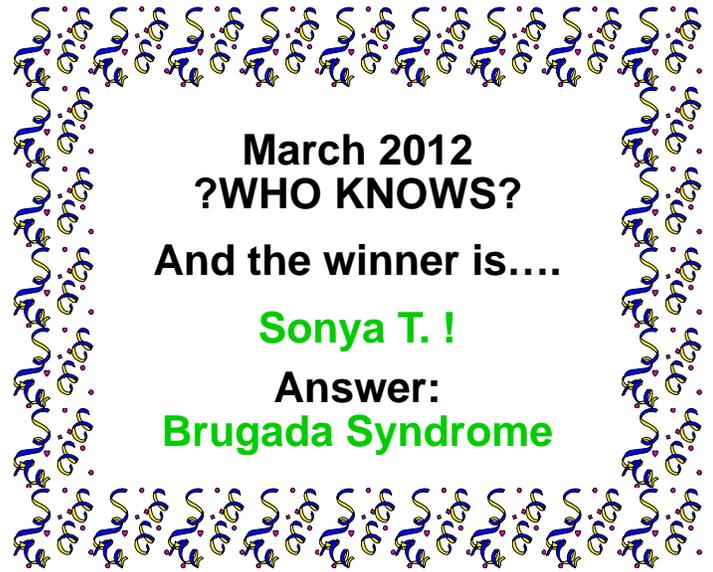
[kristin.walsh@onassignment.com](mailto:kristin.walsh@onassignment.com)

All correct answers will be put into a raffle for a chance to win a \$25 gift card from On Assignment HIM!

(Continued from page 1, Ask The Expert)

Some of the feature symptoms include:

- Recurrent pathological fractures that do not heal or heal slowly (along with chronic pain)
- Scoliosis
- Arthritis
- Osteomyelitis
- Obliterated bone marrow leading to hematological issues, including (but not limited to ) anemia, thrombocytopenia, and leukopenia
- Nerve compression (due to bone overgrowth), leading to headaches, blindness, and deafness
- Hepatomegaly
- Splenomegaly
- Frontal bossing of the skull
- Calcification in the brain leading to intellectual impairment and/or recurrent seizures
- Dental anomalies
- Slow growth, developmental delay, and short stature



March 2012  
?WHO KNOWS?

And the winner is....

Sonya T. !

Answer:  
Brugada Syndrome

People First.



## Interim Management Solutions

On Assignment's Health Information Management offers a cost-effective solution to ensure responsiveness and accountability. Our professional Director of HIM consultants assist healthcare organizations in meeting their operational and financial goals through Contract, Contract-To-Hire, and Direct Hire staffing. We partner with the healthcare industry to maintain the ongoing management and utilization of patient data, ensuring its timely availability.

On Assignment provides experienced, reliable management consultants when you need them the most:

- Vacancy at the Director, Manager, and Supervisor level
- Transitioning to a new HIM Director
- Assistance with preparation for department audits
- Mentorship and leadership

Our trained consultants assist with the following:

- Plan, communicate, organize, and problem solve within the HIM department to meet your defined expectations
- Thorough departmental assessment to determine deficiencies
- Evaluate your systems to optimize delivery of HIM related services to customers while meeting financial and compliance goals
- Effective leadership and team building help HIM staff maximize productivity in all areas
- Effective communication with administration to provide results on various goals and metrics

Get the results you are looking for!

On Assignment Services:

- Interim Management
- Hospital Inpatient / Outpatient / ED / IR Coding
- Remote Coding Services
- Auditing Services
- Coding Education / Training
- Certified Tumor Registrars

About On Assignment HIM

On Assignment Health Information Management is a recognized leader in the health and life sciences staffing industry. Making highly successful placements for more than 25 years has earned us the reputation as one of the best in the business.

The On Assignment HIM division is solely dedicated to recruiting, retaining, and placing top Health Information Management professionals in Contract and Direct Hire positions throughout the United States.

