



Thanks to the extraordinary commitment and expertise of AHLA leaders, the American Health Lawyers Association continues to thrive and serve as the essential health law resource in the nation. The Association's strong foundation reflects a history that is vibrant, meaningful and worth sharing. Finding a way to preserve AHLA's history was especially relevant in light of the Association's 50th Anniversary, which was celebrated throughout 2017.

This transcript reflects a conversation between AHLA leaders that was conducted via audio interview as part of the Association's History Project. More than 60 of AHLA's Fellows and Past Presidents were interviewed. A video documentary was also prepared and debuted on June 26 during AHLA's 2017 Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA.

March 9, 2017

Tom Hyatt interviewing Anthea Daniels:

Tom: This is Tom Hyatt, a partner at Denton's in Washington DC. It is my great privilege and pleasure to talk to my friend and colleague, Anthea Daniels for the AHLA Oral History Project. Anthea, welcome.

Anthea: Thanks Tom. Nice to talk with you.

Tom: You bet. Have a few minutes today to talk about things that we're preserving for posterity. It's one of the things that I wanted to chat with you about is your thoughts as being one of the early women leaders of the association, how you are president, of course, of AHLA from '06 to '07. What are your recollections about that experience?

Anthea: It's interesting because, where do I begin, Tom, right?

Tom: Exactly, yes.

Anthea: I think that it all sort of hearkens back to the first annual meeting I went to, which was an NHLA one, one of predecessor organization. That was in 1990 annual meeting. I can remember the ballroom in Washington DC where it was at. I think it was at the JW Marriott. I can remember standing and meeting Donna Fraiche at one of the receptions in the evening. I'm not sure if she was the president or if she was the president-elect, but it set a tone for me because that was my first annual meeting and the two women leading the organization were Donna Fraiche and Marilou King, who was the executive director at the time.

I saw it as really a very friendly woman organization. Maybe it would've been different if I would've gone there that first year and there would've been two guys in those positions, but I didn't. I saw these two women and they were both very intelligent. They spoke, I remember Marilou King did the year in review, or whatever it was called back then. Donna obviously did all the ceremonial introductions, et cetera. Here were these two really bright women, but also very colorful and outgoing and personable and charismatic women. I just thought, "Geez, this is something I really want to be a part of."

American Health Lawyers Association

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Being one of the earlier women leaders was a fabulous opportunity, but there were so many women before me with Beth Shermer and Almeta Cooper and Nancy Wynstra on [inaudible 00:05:48] board. There were just so many really talented engaging women.

Tom: As I recall, Anthea, that you had an unusual end to your initial tenure as president of the association?

Anthea: I did. What was amazing is that the first annual meeting I missed since being a first year associate in Cleveland because I had attended the first one in 1990. I graduated in '89 from law school. It was in 2007 after 18 consecutive year annual meetings I gave birth to twins the night before the board meeting. Unfortunately I was not able to make it, but I had a really good excuse. God blessed me with something wonderful, different, but wonderful. Although I will say that Saturday when I woke up and went down to see the babies and everything I thought about all my friends at HLA and wondering how it was going.

Tom: Just to finish that loop for those who don't know, you had twins and that kept you from coming to that meeting?

Anthea: I did. I had twins and actually they came a couple weeks early. I remember meeting with my OB a month or two before saying, "I want to go to Chicago for this meeting. I got to get to Chicago." They were like, "Can't they just video clip you in?" I don't understand. He's like, "You're not going. You're not flying with twins at 35 weeks." I cried.

Tom: Good decision all around and we got you back the next year to give your remarks to the board, which we were all delighted at so that all had a happy ending.

Anthea: All is good.

Tom: Pull back a little further in time, Anthea, to your thoughts about starting out in this area of the law as a new attorney. Do you remember what it looked like to you at the time, and whether the health law bar was much in existence at that point? What about health law appealed to you as a young lawyer?

Anthea: What's interesting is me being maybe a little younger than some of the real founders of the organization, health law was sort of alive and well at the Cleveland Bar Association in Cleveland. There were quite a few law firms that had people that had been practicing in health law, although a lot of the hospitals didn't necessarily all have general counsels. That was sort of starting to occur. What I found fascinating about the topic was that was the stark. We had over I think 89 was the first iteration of Stark One. The safe harbors came out in 91, Medicare and Medicaid. There was so many intricacies and so many topics to learn about and so many opportunities to learn that I found it fascinating.

Over the years I found that what is a blessing is also a curse. Unlike being a real estate lawyer or corporate lawyer where the law doesn't change radically from year to year, I often say to young students that are thinking that they want to be health lawyers, I ask them if they want to continue to read the rest of their lives and be students. You really have to continue to read and ponder. I think I don't know if I would've stayed with this area of the law but for NHLA and AHLA. I think within two months I went to the fundamentals program which was put on then by the academy in Chicago, and so I saw that. I don't know if I went to Medicare or Medicaid or then I went to the end, I know I was at the annual meeting.

I saw all these people really passionate about what they were practicing and I also saw people enjoying each other's company at the social events. I thought, "Wow, that's something I really want to do and I want to be like those people." I think if you talk to a lot of other people, I've heard other people say it too, that they felt the same way. It was sort of like, "Wow, this is almost like a little university in the bit university of lawyers that I can be a part of and feel this community." I don't think a lot of other lawyers in other practice areas have that same feeling.

I was at something yesterday speaking at the Cleveland Bar and I was talking about this community of health lawyers around the country and being a young lawyer in Cleveland and the practice, but didn't have a ton of health lawyer that all of you, Tom you included, and lots of other people. David, Dennis Barry, David Mattyas, Mike Anthony, those were my colleagues. Those were my senior partners that I would call and ask questions to and everyone was just so generous of their time. I think they kept me in it.

Tom: All for good reason. I want to circle back just for a minute to a point you made that's such a good one about the association. When you think back about to when you started as a young lawyer, certainly when I started as a young lawyer, there were no Stark experts. There were no HIPAA experts. Those bodies of law didn't exist then, but yet the association has really made opportunities for all of us to explore whole new areas of law.

Anthea: Right. It's the single best part of practicing law over the last 27 1/2 years I've been giving it or whatever. It's the best part that I think if it didn't exist it would feel a lot emptier experience.

Tom: You bet. Do you recall Anthea, when you joined and when I joined the association on our side it was The National Health Lawyers Association. Of course that led to a much bigger organization over time, ultimately with a combination with The American Academy of Healthcare Attorneys from the AHA side. What are your recollections about that period of time and what that transition was like?

Anthea: I remember walking into the meeting and it was the annual meeting. It was NHLA and it was Dallas, Texas. I remember walking in because I was going to be a new member of the board. I believe there was six of us from NHLA that year, six or four of us. I can't recall now. I remember walking into the meeting and they introduced us and they shook our hands and the board stood up and clapped. We sat down and they said, "First order of business, we're merging." I can remember where I was sitting and I can remember you sitting across the room to my left. I can even remember where you were sitting and I remember that all the conversation.

I remember when we had our first retreat after that meeting. I think it was a couple of months later. We were doing a little bit of the us and them and we do it this way and they do it that way and doing a little bit of that. When I think back on it it was little bit like the key club merging with Figi and pi phi sorority. [crosstalk 00:13:28] but that's a little bit like what it was. We were a little bit different. We had similarities, but we were different. Over time we melded together and the we and the you and the us and the them, that quickly disappeared, but those first couple of meetings were very interesting and transitional in nature.

Tom: Boy does that bring back memories. I remember little differences, social differences that we certainly at NHLA needed to take a lesson from. They would take half of Tuesday off and actually do things in the city and then they had a dinner dance. What was that all about?

Anthea: Right, we did all of that.

- Tom: Indeed, very funny. As we wrap up, and boy you just never have enough time. We'll have to do volumes two through 10 of this another time. Any particular memories or anecdotes you'd like to share as we wrap up?
- Anthea: There's so many great parts. I didn't even know that there's one I can point to. I remember people having a great time shaking martinis at the Philadelphia Marriott at the annual meeting where we had guest bartenders. Fond memories of people crazy dancing on the dance floor and fabulous keynote speakers at the meetings. It's so hard to come up with any one thing, but just a feeling of family and community is sort of the overreaching feeling whenever I think of the association.
- Tom: You bet, and boy is that a common theme in these so oral history conversations, so very true and shared by everyone, which is really one of the hallmarks I think for AHILA.
- Anthea: It's been a wonderful time.