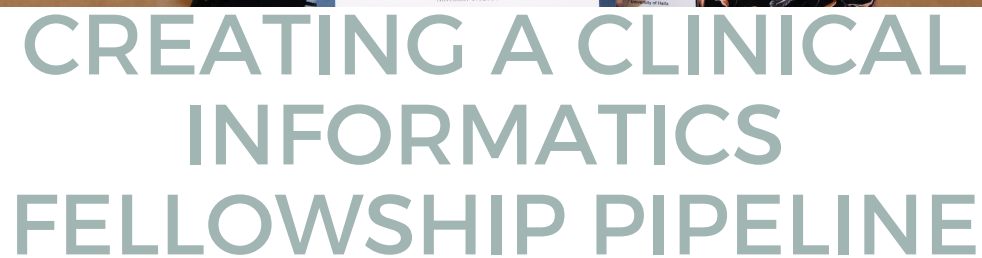


The Women in AIA  
UPDATE  
Monthly E-Newsletter



- We spotlight Dr. Martha Hellem, director of the Clinical Informatics Fellowship Program at the University of Virginia (p. 2). *This is part of an ongoing series that will feature clinical informatics fellowship directors and explore ways to increase the representation of women in clinical informatics fellowship programs across the US.*
- Timeline of AMIA award nominations for 2021 (p. 5)
- New Episode on *For Your Informatics* featuring Emory School of Nursing Project NeLL (p. 6)

## Steering Committee Members:

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# Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors



## Martha Hellem, MD, MS, FAMIA

**WIA:** *What is your current position and title?*

**Martha:** I am an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and an Associate Chief Medical Information Officer and Clinical Informatics Program Director at the University of Virginia.

**WIA:** *How did you first find out about clinical informatics?*

**Martha:** I had been practicing clinical informatics long before I'd heard the term "informatics." Medicine is a second career for me. After college, I studied operations research and operations management and was an analyst in a non-medical field, doing least-cost planning modeling and forecasting. My father-in-law is a physician and got me interested in medicine. When I turned towards this new career, I hadn't planned to try to incorporate my engineering and management background into my medical practice, but it was a natural evolution. Over time, I worked in quality improvement, taught epidemiology and data analysis, and worked with our EHR teams.

I was in a leadership position in the medical center at a time when we were moving into a new outpatient Children's Hospital and needed to plan for information and communication technology support for that new center. I was invited to take on a role as ACMIO, initially to support that move. Our CIO was very supportive and encouraged me to pursue Clinical Informatics board certification, with a long-term goal of designing a CI fellowship program.

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# Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors, cont'd.

**WIA:** *What made you decide on a career path that includes clinical informatics?*

**Martha:** I started by doing my homework. After I took on the ACMIO position and was considering whether I wanted to work towards sitting for the CI boards on the practice pathway, I took the on-line CIBRC board review course to learn more about what CI encompasses. I also became involved in AMIA and attended AMIA conferences, and I took the OHSU 10x10 course.

As a general pediatrician in an academic center, I have always felt that my job is to serve in a supporting role – supporting patients and parents to optimize children’s health and development, supporting medical students and trainees as they develop expertise and skills. I saw clinical informatics as a way to support our health system team members to optimize patient care. My best informatics successes are behind the scenes. People notice their IT and communication systems when they aren’t working well and it’s very satisfying to see when solutions, tools, and systems are smoothly integrated into workflows.

**WIA:** *What do you find most exciting about your work as a Clinical Informatics Fellowship Director?*

**Martha:** I really enjoy working with such smart young doctors. We have a small CI program so I get to know our fellows very well and I learn so much from them about applications of clinical informatics in different medical specialties and clinical settings. We’re building a team of Clinical Informaticians in our health system, and I am proud of the contributions of our CI program. Our fellows have started major important projects at our institution that have evolved into ongoing work and faculty positions. In the process, fellows have had a big, visible impact in their clinical departments – they are defining the role of physician informaticians in our institution. We have also brought together colleagues working and teaching and training in different health informatics fields through our seminars and other educational activities.

It's exciting to participate in a growing and evolving field. At UVa, we are able to modify and adapt our program as new opportunities arise - for example, our newest fellow is pursuing an integrated fellowship in Clinical Informatics and Pulmonary/Critical Care Medicine. Through AMIA, I have been able to have an impact as a member of a supportive and rapidly expanding community of CI program directors and have participated on a committee that reviewed and updated the Clinical Informatics Fellowship Model Curriculum.

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# Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors, cont'd.

**WIA:** *Do you have any words of advice for medical students or residents who may want to consider a career path that includes clinical informatics?*

**Martha:** Explore options for a research or improvement project in informatics. This will help you better understand what clinical informaticians do and help you decide if informatics is right for you. It will also give you the experience in and demonstrate the commitment to informatics that fellowship programs are looking for in their candidates. If your health system doesn't have a Clinical Informatics department, a good place to start is the electronic health record in use at your institution. How do the health care team and patients utilize it and how are they impacted by it? If you notice something that could be investigated or changed or improved, discuss your ideas with a faculty advisor or mentor. They should be able to put you in contact with informaticians or the equivalent at your health system.

AMIA is a great resource. Attend an AMIA conference. If your budget and schedule allow, you could consider taking an introductory course or a 10x10 course.

**WIA:** *There may be medical students and residents out there who would be interested in a clinical informatics fellowship but aren't fully aware of this option. Do you have any ideas on how to reach out to this group?*

**Martha:** I think we should be educating the educators about Clinical Informatics. Program directors and faculty advisors know their advisees so well and understand their talents and career interests. These faculty mentors can help identify informaticians-to-be and direct them towards resources and opportunities. In addition, as more faculty in medical education learn about clinical informatics, we can incorporate more informatics teaching into the medical school and residency curriculum. We can do this outreach in our own medical schools, through AMIA, and through informatics special interest groups in medical professional societies.

**WIA:** *What is something about you that you'd like to share that most people don't know about?*

**Martha:** I play old-time banjo, preferably outside on the porch.



# Timeline for 2021 AMIA Award Nominations



## NOMINATE SOMEONE TODAY!

Similar to other biomedical disciplines, women are underrepresented in informatics, especially in leadership and recognition. To improve gender representation in leadership and recognition within the biomedical informatics community, the Women in AMIA Awards and Leadership Subcommittee is collecting nominations for AMIA awards. This subcommittee will assist with the entire AMIA nomination process. If you have a nomination suggestion or would like to nominate yourself, please complete the survey using the link or QR Code below.

[https://clemson.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bjvRxHclE4F1xJk](https://clemson.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bjvRxHclE4F1xJk)



Enter  
Nominations  
Here!





Women in AMIA would love to hear from you about what's working, what's not, and what to feature in future editions of the newsletter. We also have some questions for you: How are you dealing with COVID-19? In these trying times, how are you focusing on the positive?

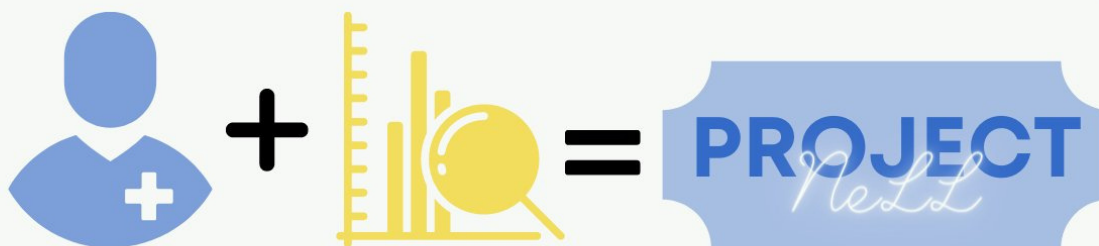
Please email us at:

[AMIA-2020womeninamiasteeringcommittee@ConnectedCommunity.org](mailto:AMIA-2020womeninamiasteeringcommittee@ConnectedCommunity.org)

## New Podcast Episode For Your Informatics

### Nursing, Data Science, and Research, Oh My!

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#### Upcoming Episodes:

- Forgotten No More Series featuring *New York Times* Journalist Pagan Kennedy
- Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors
- Informatics Leaders Around the Globe