**Convocation 2010 Philadelphia**

**By Michael Hotz, LNHA, CNHA, FACHCA, New Jersey**

**2010 Convocation Committee Chair**

It is hard to describe our convocation in just a few words because it is such a diverse experience. We go Convocations for several reasons, but mostly networking and camaraderie, education and learning, peer recognition, looking at what our vendors offer in the way of products and services, just plain fun, and professional renewal. For hundreds of members, this year accomplished all that and more.

There were several highlights that were told to me by many, but running around behind the scenes caused me to miss so many. I did catch all three of the main speakers, and I enjoyed and learned from each one – Chip Bell, Eva Goldfarb, and Tim Gard. I already have people quoting their policy manuals to me. I was pleased to participate in the Chapter Development meeting and hear from some very successful chapters and be inspired by the success of some of the newer efforts to begin chapters.

I always enjoy the communal meals and all contain some peer recognition. It really is humbling and gratifying to be recognized by the people who do what you do. We had our Certified Administrator and Fellow Lunch where we recognized newly advanced members received a special seminar on mentoring. I was also pleased to be a part of the peer to peer lunch where we raised some funds to donate to the Academy. And of course, there was our annual banquet. We were greeted by pleased award winners, Steve’s Farewell address as Chair, and Tim’s first barn burning speech to us all.

We had a new treat on the way in to the vendor hall – students had prepared posters regarding their projects as they further their collegiate studies into long term care. After sharing with them, we got to visit with our favorite sponsors, supporters and vendors. They showcased some new products and offered some special deals. We are grateful for all our vendors do for us and I am pleased to say that most picked up some new business.

Our annual fundraiser contained many moments that our staffs would have loved. For the benefit of the Academy, some of us took big risks, and some showed some serious talent. I was thinking of mentioning some here, but trust me, if you come to the next one, you’ll know what I mean. I do know that I left Philly feeling refreshed and renewed. I hope you have reserved the end of April to join us in New Orleans, which is a wonderful town for getting together with friends, old and new, and to meet new people. I hope to see you all there.

**First-timer at the ACHCA Convocation in Philadelphia**

**Christopher Masterson, Master's Student at Kean University, AIT, New Jersey**

I have always had anxiety about becoming a nursing home administrator, but it was not until I attended my first national convention that I became more comfortable with the idea of this becoming my career. The convention was very informative and well-constructed. I truly felt like I had already started my career with the number of amazing administrators and working professionals I met in one day. The seminars and meetings I attended truly opened a whole new world of information, and I know that this feels like the right path for me.

The convention also enlightened me to the true purpose of the college, and it is simply to create better administrators and ultimately improve the quality of care in nursing homes around the nation. It was obvious to me that the college has strong leaders, and I am looking forward to remaining a member of this resourceful organization.