

In Step with the RBMA Board of Directors

Alicia Vasquez, RBMA's Western Director BY DAPHNE BROWN

Alicia Vasquez is the new Western Director for RBMA. Accepting her two-year position in June 2004, Alicia is a welcome addition to the RBMA Board. She brings with her the enthusiasm and desire to overcome challenges, as well as the drive to continue to build RBMA.

Alicia is the practice administrator for Arcadia Radiology Medical Group, a 30-year old company in Arcadia, California. Arcadia Radiology manages a nine-physician practice, one freestanding imaging center, and services for three hospitals. Arcadia Radiology employs 70 dedicated employees, performs in-house billing, and provides imaging in all modalities to the patients of the San Gabriel Valley. They have a joint partnership with another radiology group in the area. Alicia feels fortunate to be part of such a dynamic group. Most employees have a minimum tenure of 12 years, and the physicians, in the eyes of Alicia, are visionaries.

She began her career as a technologist after attending Pasadena City College and earning an Associate of Science degree. She chose to become an x-ray technologist because it offered diversity in an ever-changing, exciting field. As a student, she trained with Arcadia Radiology and after graduating, worked for two large radiology groups in the greater Los Angeles area. In 1988, she returned to Arcadia Radiology as a technologist and to assist in managing their new MRI scanner. Alicia was eventually promoted to the operations manager for the corporation, and in 2001, the previous practice administrator retired, and Alicia was offered the opportunity. Not afraid to take on a challenge, Alicia accepted the position and has not regretted it since. As practice administrator, Alicia is responsible for the operation of the entire practice from physicians to PACS.

Alicia learned at the beginning of her new career to seek an ally in RBMA. When she made the transition from technical to administration, she had wonderful mentors who were members of RBMA and encouraged her to join and take advantage of the valuable resources she continues to receive and use daily.

"We are moving toward a data-driven specialty and one of RBMA's strengths going forward will be to set standards and to provide data upon which we benchmark our practices. Radiology is becoming more and more technical, and these new resources must be utilized to the fullest to remain profitable," says Alicia.

During her term, Alicia hopes to focus on RBMA's strengths and rich potential.

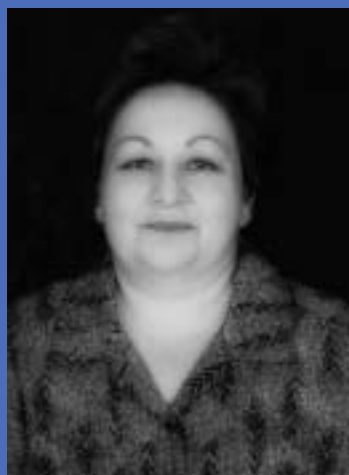
"As an association, we should be looking at tools to advance education. Focus on online learning and mentoring and more development of regional groups. Get local involvement and use technology to spread the word for members who can't travel," believes Alicia.

Alicia has served on the RBMA Imaging Committee as well. As a part of this committee, she hopes to bridge the gap between the technical and administrative aspects of radiology. Through this committee, RBMA can bring the technical side to members and help non-technical managers further understand the complexity of radiology, especially when dealing with imaging centers. When running an imaging center, one needs to be as familiar with the reimbursement as with staffing, equipment capabilities, regulatory issues, supplies, and marketing. According to Alicia, RBMA has the potential to be a leader in all areas of imaging sciences, not just the business end.

Alicia values what RBMA has to offer. The resources, education, and contacts are vital. She has learned more from sitting next to a fellow RBMA member at lunch than in some educational sessions of other non-radiology based meetings. Practical experience is valuable and everyone is so willing to give input and share their knowledge.

Alicia also faced another challenge in her life. After her

Q & A with Alicia Vasquez



If you could be anywhere in the world, where would you be?

I would be sitting outside our motorhome on Convict Lake in the High Sierra's of California watching my family catch **big** trout.

If you could eat in only one restaurant for the rest of your life, what would it be?

If I could only eat in one restraint for the rest of my life it would have to be Emeril's in New Orleans; a great steak, a wonderful glass of red wine, and going through the rest of the menu would be an adventure in itself.

What's your motto?

It is not fair to ask others what you are unwilling to do yourself.

Who or what were your major influences?

Girl Scouts allowed me to have role models, experiences, and meet people that I would never have had otherwise. I traveled, mountain climbed, and backpacked throughout the west and Canada. Girl Scouts taught me that to be a good leader you must be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and above all to be responsible for what you say and do.

What fad in high school did you find yourself going along with?

In the late 70s, there were multiple fads that I followed, to the amusement of my family, as we look back on pictures taken in high school. Bellbottom pants, platform shoes, mood rings, and the music of Fleetwood Mac, the Eagles, and Three Dog Night that I still listen to today.

niece, Madelyn, was diagnosed with leukemia, Alicia told Madelyn not to give up; that there was nothing she couldn't accomplish if she focused and tried. One day in the hospital, after watching the Ironman competition on television together, Alicia told Madelyn she had always wanted to try a marathon. Madelyn said she should – after all, Alicia had just told her not to give up. With that, Alicia, her husband, sister, and brother-in-law became members of Team in Training, supporting the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. After successfully raising funds, the foursome walked the 26.2 mile route in San Diego, California, to complete the 2002 Rock 'N Roll Marathon with Madelyn meeting them at the finish line. Madelyn is now in remission and has returned to teaching kindergarten.

In her off-work time, Alicia attends Azusa Pacific University and is completing her Bachelor of Science degree in

organizational leadership. She has been married to Fernando, her childhood sweetheart, for 24 years. They have three children: the oldest David, 22, is a linguist in the Air Force; Alicia, 19, is a psychology major in college, and Kevin, 13, is entering high school. "My family is by far the greatest joy in my life and getting together with our extended family for large Sunday dinners is a priority." Alicia and Fernando are renovating their home on the Colorado River in Arizona. As a family, they spend as much time as possible traveling in their motorhome, and enjoy fishing and camping, especially near water. When not reading technical journals, Alicia enjoys reading biographies and learning through their leadership styles and experiences.

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