

## Phil Branstetter



As Director of Data Processing for the Riverside County Office of Education I was heavily involved in both student and administrative systems for a number of school districts. In the early part of my experience at RCOE many of our districts were very small with limited resources and computer systems were largely mainframe based and expensive--so we supplied the student data systems as well as the mandated payroll and financial systems. When I joined the CEDPA (CETPA) Board of Directors I was fortunate to participate with the organization during a remarkable period of technology evolution and transition. It was a very exciting time with the emergence of the Internet as a tool that bridged the historical divide between classroom and administrative systems. We did live labs at our conferences which was the first many had actually touched the Internet. We were active with the beginning of CSIS to help educational entities pass information

electronically. There was rapid expansion of microcomputer-based systems with dramatic cost reductions in computer technology making it feasible for school districts to be self-sufficient and innovative in using technology in ways that dramatically enhanced school operations and educational programs. The landscape changed rapidly and dramatically; and CEDPA was a forward-facing organization that embraced change and became CETPA.

Subsequent to my career in education I became the COO of the Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP)--a startup MediCal-based health plan in Southern California. The data system parallels to the educational industry were remarkable. I spent almost 18 years at IEHP from startup with no systems or personnel to over a \$1B/year operation. My areas of responsibility included: IT, Eligibility Processing, Data Analytics and Reporting, Member Services, Facilities, and Claims. The CEDPA experience was invaluable in preparing me to work effectively with agencies like the California Department of Health Services; knowledge of vendors; and a background with the Internet that allowed us to be innovative in how we shared data with our medical group and hospital partners.

In reflecting on the CEDPA experience the most valuable aspect was the remarkable people who made the organization what it was and is....fantastic people on the Board (several of whom are HOF Members today), the general Membership that supported and challenged us to keep the organization relevant during an unprecedented time of transition, vendors who supported the organization, partner organizations like Far West Labs and CDE. Being part of this organization is a lifetime memory.