

SHSMD26 CONNECTIONS

Health Care Marketing, Strategy & Communications

American Hospital Association Conference
September 27-29 ⚓ Baltimore

From Guidance to Advocacy: How Mentorship and Sponsorship Strengthen Healthcare Leadership Pipelines

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Outline/Agenda

- Mentorship is essential to leadership development—but sponsorship is often the differentiator between readiness and advancement. In healthcare marketing and strategy, where visibility and influence drive impact, sponsorship plays a critical role in building resilient leadership pipelines. In this executive-level session, Melissa Fors Shackelford, Terri Flood, and Jhaymee Tynan explore how mentorship and sponsorship work together to accelerate leadership readiness, improve retention, and support succession planning. Through real-world executive perspectives and strategic scenarios, attendees will learn how intentional advocacy strengthens organizational performance and future-proofs marketing leadership.

Learning Objectives

1. Evaluate the distinct strategic roles of mentorship and sponsorship and determine when each is required to advance leadership readiness within healthcare marketing organizations.
2. Apply executive-level sponsorship strategies to intentionally increase visibility, access, and advancement opportunities for high-potential marketing and strategy leaders.
3. Integrate mentorship and sponsorship into leadership and succession planning efforts to improve retention, reduce leadership gaps, and strengthen organizational performance.

Leadership Readiness Is Not the Same as Leadership Opportunity

- High performance does not always translate to visibility
- Development alone does not ensure advancement
- Leadership gaps create retention and succession risk
- Intentional advocacy helps move talent forward

From Guidance to Advocacy: Where Each Matters

- **Potential → Development → Readiness → Visibility → Opportunity → Advancement**
- **Mentorship**
Guidance • Perspective • Development • Preparation
- **Sponsorship**
Advocacy • Access • Visibility • Opportunity

We Have Lived This Conversation

■ CONNECTION → ADVOCACY → MENTORSHIP → MULTIPLICATION



Membership to Sponsorship

■ CONNECTION → ADVOCACY → MENTORSHIP → MULTIPLICATION



Sponsorship Happens in Leadership Decisions

- Who gets...

Visibility?

Access?

Stretch Responsibility?

Introductions?

Credit?

Advocacy

Executive Scenario: Ready, But Not Seen

- Scenario:

A highly successful director consistently delivers results and is considered dependable and ready for more responsibility. However, the individual has limited exposure to enterprise strategy and senior leadership.

A VP opportunity becomes available.

- **Their name never surfaces.**

Developing and Advancing Talent at Every Level

- **DEVELOPMENT**

Trust • Perspective • Challenge • Reflection

- **ADVANCEMENT**

Visibility • Access • Advocacy • Opportunity

Who is receiving both? Who may be receiving neither?

From Talent Development to Succession Strategy

- If a key leader left tomorrow...
 - Who could step into the role?
 - Who is almost ready?
 - Who has enterprise and organizational exposure?
 - Who had advocates?
 - Who knows they are being developed?

Make It a Leadership Discipline

- **IDENTIFY → DEVELOP → EXPOSE → ADVOCATE → ADVANCE → MULTIPLY**
 - **IDENTIFY** potential
 - **DEVELOP** capability
 - **EXPOSE** to new experiences
 - **ADVOCATE** when opportunities arises
 - **ADVANCE** intentionally
 - **MULTIPLY** by developing others

The Leadership Challenge/Executive Exchange

- Who invested in you?
- Who advocates for you?
- Who are you investing in now?

Leadership pipelines don't strengthen by accident. Neither does advocacy.

Three Key Take-Aways

- Evaluate the distinct strategic roles of mentorship and sponsorship and determine when each is required to advance leadership readiness within healthcare marketing organizations.
- Apply executive-level sponsorship strategies to intentionally increase visibility, access, and advancement opportunities for high-potential marketing and strategy leaders.
- Integrate mentorship and sponsorship into leadership and succession planning efforts to improve retention, reduce leadership gaps, and strengthen organizational performance.

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Questions?

- Please be sure to complete the session evaluation on the mobile app!

Terri Flood

Terri Flood is a healthcare executive with 20+ years of experience in marketing, business development, strategic planning and rural community health. As Vice President of Marketing and Business Development at Wayne HealthCare, she leads marketing, communications, strategic partnerships and rehabilitation services, advancing growth, community engagement and organizational priorities. Known for translating strategy into action, Terri brings a data-informed, mission-driven approach to brand, growth and cross-functional leadership. She is equally committed to developing leaders, mentoring talent and expanding opportunity through sponsorship. Terri serves on the SHSMD Advisory Board and is a SHSMD Rising Star honoree.



Jhaymee Tynan

Jhaymee Tynan is a Principal in Korn Ferry's Healthcare Services Practice, where she advises hospitals, health systems, academic medical centers, and other healthcare organizations on executive search, leadership, and talent strategy. She partners with senior executives and boards to identify and develop transformative leaders, with a particular passion for strengthening leadership teams and advancing greater representation at the executive level. Prior to Korn Ferry, Jhaymee held leadership roles at Atrium Health (now Advocate Health), where she led complex, multi-billion-dollar post-merger integrations, and Deloitte Consulting, where she focused on healthcare business model transformation. A nationally recognized thought leader on sponsorship and leadership advancement, Jhaymee is the published author of *Inclusive Sponsorship: A Bold Vision to Advance Women of Color in the Workplace* and regularly speaks on the role of sponsorship in building stronger, more inclusive leadership pipelines. She holds a BS in Finance from Virginia Tech, an MBA from Emory University's Goizueta Business School, and is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Jhaymee served on the SHSMD Board from 2019-2021.



Melissa Fors Shackelford

Melissa Fors Shackelford is a nationally recognized marketing strategist, author, and speaker with 20+ years leading growth and brand transformation in healthcare. As founder of Shackelford Strategies, she advises mission-driven organizations on scaling with integrity and purpose-driven leadership, and serves on the SHSMD Advisory Board. She wrote the Amazon #1 bestseller *Harnessing Purpose*, and her honors include AMA Nonprofit Marketer of the Year, Top 50 Women Leaders in Healthcare, and Ragan's Top Women in Marketing.



Bibliography/References

