

## Synergy Corner

*An Interview with Director of Revenue Ryan Cavanaugh*

## Health Care Heroes

*Pioneers in Health Care and the FQHCs That Bear Their Names*

## CEO's Message

*Our Commitment to Health Care Justice*

# SYNERGY POST

Spring 2016 Synergy Billing Newsletter

## HEALTH CARE HEROES: WHAT'S IN A NAME?



*Many community health centers bear the names of pioneers who devoted their lives to improving access to health care and serving our most*

*vulnerable populations. We believe the stories behind these names are inspiring and instructive, and we want to share them with our friends and colleagues. This month, we honor Mr. David Herndon Raines, whose name graces the David Raines Community Health Centers, operating in four Louisiana parishes: Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, and Webster. We are grateful to Mr. Willie C. White, III, MPH, their CEO, and his staff for permission to use this history from their website.*

“Mr. David Herndon Raines was born in Dexter, Arkansas, in 1860. He became a successful and prosperous farmer in Pine Island, LA. He was noted as a businessman, community builder, and philanthropist, and by 1936, was worth more than a million dollars from oil holdings and properties

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## FULFILLING OUR MISSION ADVANCING HEALTH CARE IN OUR COMMUNITY



Conceptual drawing

Nearly every week a distressed health center contacts us with a critical need. Many times, they are calling because a colleague whom we serve has recommended us. If a CHC is in distress that means that deserving people may not have access to the health care that they need. The mission of Synergy Billing is health care justice, access to health care for America's most vulnerable populations. When we have to ask an anxious CEO or CFO to wait until we can serve them flawlessly, it honestly hurts. The simple truth is, that we are moving rapidly to increase our capacity. We want you to know

what we are doing to respond.

We have two problems. One is that we continue to hold very high standards for Synergy Billing Specialists. That means that we can't take every applicant who comes to us. We find that even people who share our mission still need training. The other is that we have run out of space at our current location.

To address the first problem, we have expanded our Synergy Billing Academy. This remarkable program began three years ago to teach experienced billers and coders about the special needs of

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## *Continued from page 1, Fulfilling*

FQHC revenue cycle management. We are now working with exceptional people who do not have a background in health care to teach them the full range of skills they need to be worthy of the title of Synergy Billing Specialist. We designed this much longer curriculum to meet our exacting standards and make certain that our clients continue to receive the careful attention that resulted in a return of more than \$16 million to Synergy Billing clients in 2015.

To be able to accommodate the number of people that we need to serve all of those who are waiting for our services, we are planning The Fountainhead at Holly Hill, a 25-acre corporate campus that includes Synergy Billing headquarters, a home for the Synergy

Billing Academy, day care center, dining and fitness facilities, workforce housing, and a Federally Qualified Health Center that will serve the entire



*Former home of Holly Hill Middle School. Future home of Synergy Billing.*

community. Not only will this campus provide the space we need, it will also draw the best and the brightest to Synergy Billing from across the nation.

In fact, we named this campus The Fountainhead because it will serve as a wellspring for a river of knowledge and prosperity for our clients and our community. We are proud that we are able to help communities across the nation. Our own community is in need. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in 2015, more than 100,000 people in our County were uninsured. We cannot overlook them.

We are excited about the benefits that these new developments will bring to our clients. We will be able to expand our services, achieve much operational efficiency, and decrease our costs. We look forward to continuing to keep you informed about our progress and to welcoming you to The Fountainhead at Holly Hill.

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owned. Mr. Raines was a Christian and responsible for the construction of the First Negro Church in the Herndon community.

Mr. Raines was also concerned about the plight of black youth and the elderly. He made large contributions to Wiley College and the Home for Elderly Negroes in Dexter, AR. His most outstanding contribution was to help boys who had been labeled juvenile delinquents. He realized that boys should not be housed with adult criminals and gave 22 acres of land for the sole purpose of providing facilities to help troubled boys become better citizens. The land is located in North Shreveport, now known as Martin Luther King, Jr., Community. The Home for Boys was built and kept in operation until the Caddo Parish Detention Home was erected. In 1963, the land was leased to the David Raines Association to build a recreation center. Today, this site houses David Raines Community Health Centers, Medical

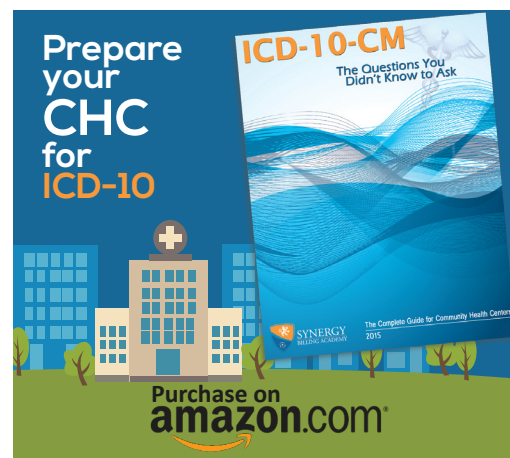
and Dental Clinics, North Shreveport Caddo Community Action Agency, Head Start Program, Fitness Center and a park. Mr. Raines passed away in 1945.

The doors of David Raines Community Health Centers opened in 1971 as the Cooper Road Medical Clinic, a satellite of Louisiana State University Medical Center. Medical care was provided for underserved, low-income, and uninsured families. In 1992, DRCHC became an independent Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing quality, affordable, primary and preventive services for all. DRCHC is continuing the legacy of Mr. David Herndon Raines, serving our communities, yesterday, today, and tomorrow..."

[www.davidraineschc.org](http://www.davidraineschc.org)

## **MAKE SURE YOUR CENTER IS ICD-10 READY.**

"But," you say, "I thought that we had to be ready last October." It is true that ICD-10-CM implementation began on October 15, 2015. However, your centers have been able to use ICD-9 codes in some cases and still receive payment. This October 1, that "grace period" will end and you may experience delays in payment or even outright denials. For that reason, we wrote and published a book that is specific to FQHCs.






# HEALTH CENTERS SHOULD BE ALERT TO CMS PROVIDER ENROLLMENT REVALIDATION PROCESSES

Many Community Health Centers have difficulty getting their Board members to provide their Social Security numbers.

## CMS Disclosure Requirements for Board members:

“The CMS-855 form also requires that an entity disclose ‘full and



Board members believe that providing Social Security numbers isn't necessary.

CMS-855 Form requires disclosure of ownership and control interest for directors/officers of nonprofit.

**Why?** CMS cites ongoing effort to combat fraud and abuse as the reason for collecting this information.

complete information’ as to the identity of each person with an ‘ownership and control interest’ in the entity. See 42 U.S.C. §1320a-3 (2010). A person with an ‘ownership and control interest’ is defined to include an officer or a director of an entity if the entity is organized as a corporation—even if the corporation is a nonprofit or charitable entity without any ‘owners.’ ‘Full and complete information’ includes the social security number (SSN) of each of the directors and officers, as well as date and place of birth.

While this is not technically a ‘new’ requirement, CMS has stepped up its enforcement of this requirement and now expects entities to disclose this information. The SSN is used as an identifier in federal and state databases that list individuals who are excluded from such programs because of the large number of individuals on these lists whose identity can only be distinguished by use of the SSN.”

# SYNERGY CORNER

## An Interview with Director of Revenue Cycle Services, J. Ryan Cavanaugh



J. Ryan Cavanaugh recently joined Synergy Billing as Director of Revenue Cycle Operations. He came to us after more than a decade in health care billing. He is both a Certified Professional Coder (CPC) and Certified Medical Reimbursement Specialist (CMRS). His mission is to work with Synergy’s FQHC billing specialists to deliver amazing results to our clients.

**Q. First, thank you for taking the time to talk to Synergy Post. Can you tell us a little bit about what you were doing before you joined Synergy Billing?**

A. I have worked for more than 10 years in revenue cycle management. That includes positions in medical billing, client relations, provider credentialing, and, most recently, as Revenue Cycle Manager with oversight of more than \$40 million in annual collections. For about two years, I owned my own billing company.

**Q. That is real depth and breadth of experience. How has that prepared you for your role here at Synergy Billing?**

A. Well, first, it gave me real-world experience in all of the elements of the revenue cycle. I have worked with at least a dozen different software packages, and I have probably seen just about every challenge that can arise. So, not much surprises me.

**Q. What motivated you to join Synergy Billing?**

A. I have known Jayson Meyer since we were both in school. I was always aware of his growing business and, in a way, we were business rivals at one time. I really admire what he is building. Most of all, I love the mission of Synergy Billing. With my long history in health care, I know what a difference community health centers make for their patients.

**Q. What is your vision for Revenue Cycle Operations?**

A. We are continuing to work hard to perfect what we do. I see us - Synergy Billing - setting the industry standard for revenue cycle management. “There is no substitute for a Synergy Billing Specialist.”

**Q. Tell us a little bit about J. Ryan Cavanaugh.**

A. First, the J stands for Jason, so you can see why I go by Ryan now that I am with Synergy Billing! My wife and I have four young sons and that consumes most of my time. We do love anything that we can do outdoors - all kinds of sports, the beach or park, or off-roading. In fact, I am restoring an old Jeep for just that purpose. How fortunate we are to live in an area where we can be outdoors all year.

# SYNERGY POST

## LETTER FROM THE CEO

A Quarterly Message for the FQHC Community



Dear Friends and Clients,

It is difficult to believe that Synergy Billing was founded in 2006 - a decade ago. When I decided to devote all of my business resources to serving Federally Qualified Health Centers, I did not foresee the amazing journey that decision would launch. The mission of Community Health Centers has become our mission.

We began by working with our clients on revenue cycle management, and we have continued to tackle any aspect of their operations that affects RCM, including credentialing and training. We published a book about ICD-10-CM just for FQHCs and conducted training around the country to help prepare for last year's changes.

Often, it seems that health insurance reimbursement is a "rigged game." "The house" always has an advantage. This is why we have become ferocious advocates on behalf of our clients. We will not allow managed care organizations, or any organization, to take advantage of a community health center. We have extended our advocacy to the public arena, publishing editorials and personally contacting public officials to urge continued funding for FQHCs and expansion of Medicaid in states that have not done so.

I recently visited our contacts with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Oklahoma to discuss some issues that were slowing payments to our clients. We were able to achieve clarity around the credentialing process and approval to have a large volume of claims processed. Synergy clients have priority in Blue Cross/Blue Shield's PASS Claims Processing Department. Anybody can process claims, but at Synergy Billing, we touch every part of the cycle that could affect payment.



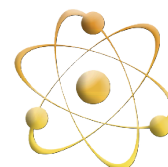
It is satisfying to look back at our beginning and see how far we have come. In 2015, we returned \$16,244,392 to our health center clients! That is millions of dollars that are being used to continue to improve access to health care for our nation's most vulnerable people.

Just about a year ago, I wrote to you, "They know, and I know, how much your patients depend on you to deliver the health care that they need. We know that you are depending on us to fight these battles for you so that you can take care of your patients. I pledge to you that we will persist, we will never tire, and we will prevail." That pledge remains intact today.

Sincerely,

*M. Jayson Meyer*

Chief Executive Officer  
Synergy Billing, LLC



SYNERGY BILLING

**877.242.8475 - [synergybilling.com](http://synergybilling.com)**