

## **A Message from Deborah Howes**

Effective December 31, 2014, I will retire from the ED position with FOAJ. Thank you to everyone for his or her kind remarks and best wishes. My time as Executive Director has been filled with good relationships, challenging work and opportunities to grow.

I have been working on this transition with the FOAJ board for 3 years now and I am confident that the future of FOAJ is in good hands and exciting. However, I am not leaving FOAJ. I will continue to act as a resource to the new ED and to the Board. In addition, I will focus my FOAJ efforts on curriculum development and instructing. It is my hope that we will make significant advances in the course materials and resources over the next two years.

This transition will also enable me to focus on my High Clouds business and to seek that elusive work-live balance.

I'd like to acknowledge the four Presidents with whom I've had the pleasure of working – George Pheasey, who gave me the initial opportunity and always supported my vision for FOAJ and encouraged me to be the very best; Gerry Baron, who supported my efforts towards better governance and wider markets; Cheryl Ryder who supported our efforts towards e-learning; and Barb Evans, who helped make this transition a reality. In addition, I must thank all the directors whom I worked with and who always supported my initiatives to try something new and to reach for the next challenge.

I also wish to thank Karen Popoff and Sherilyn Danis and Bev Decore, whom you know as the FOAJ staff, for always making me look organized and professional. Without the knowledge and help of each of them, I would not have accomplished all that we accomplished.

To our 12 instructors, I can only say that I am humbled by your support and always enthused by your expertise and professionalism. Without the enthusiasm and energy of all these wonderful individuals, my role as ED would have been far less enjoyable and rewarding.

Last, but not least, my thanks to all the members and clients who have been so engaging, cooperative and enthusiastic.

In my first meeting with Joe Woytowich, the incoming ED, I was impressed with the passion and vision he was already showing for FOAJ. It reminded me of looking in the mirror! I encourage you to welcome Joe warmly and to show him the same support you have always shown me.

I truly enjoyed working with all of you as the ED and I really appreciate the extraordinary support you gave me and FOAJ during the past 12 years. I know you will extend the same support to the new ED. I look forward to seeing you in my new, but continuing roles as curriculum development coordinator and instructor.

Deborah Howes, CTAJ™  
Executive Director – Retiring