

October 10, 2025

NCSRC Annual Business meeting called to order at 0801.

### **Presidents Report by Nikki Barrett**

- Nikki wanted to give a huge thank you and shout out to our sponsors, including our Platinum sponsors: Medtronic, Novant Health, UNC Charlotte and the University of Virginia
- Thank you to the Program Education and Student Engagement Committee who did a really good job and Wilkes Community College on their Sputum Bowl win.
- Moment of silence extended for all the victims of Hurricane Helene
- Conference ended a day early last year due to Hurricane.
  - Offered 6 virtual CEU's to make up for the conference ending early.
  - We applied for the disaster relief grant for our members affected.
  - We were able to help seven applicants from North Carolina - all located in affected areas of Hurricane Helene and approved to receive funding of \$500.
- We were able to extend funds to Southwestern Community College Program, Bougie Boogers, 2024 State Sputum Bowl winners to attend Nationals.
- Encouraged everyone to donate to the AARC disaster relief fund when renewing your license, via:
  - Check or Money Order, payable to AARC, P.O. Box 630007, Irving, TX 75063-9998, and put "**Disaster Fund**" in the memo section.
  - Online Donations, <https://my.aarc.org/Donate>
  - Call Crystal Leighton at (972) 406-4682 to make a donation.
- Members (Nikki Barrett, Trisha Miller, Lisa Cutshaw, and Sheila Ball) attended 2024 AARC Congress and received the Summit Award on behalf of NCSRC.
- Reminder shared with members that board meetings are held throughout the state and are open to all members and the minutes are available online.
- Financial reporting obligations were completed and submitted to AARC Chartered Affiliate Committee
- We were honored to support the North Carolina Respiratory Care board and their advocacy for House Bill 71. Everyone on the society was able to write a letter, and all of us signed it, including our medical advisors, and we were able to send that out to our legislators in support of this HB71.
- Nikki attended AARC leadership boot camp and encouraged all board members to attend.
- New committees HOSA, Student Engagement
- Looking Ahead

- Strategic planning for 2026
- Promote society values and bylaws.
- Expand outreach through social media and email campaigns to boost membership engagement.

### **Treasurer's Report by Marcus Ferguson**

- We try to be financially responsible, and this team has done an incredible job with the limited resources that we have.
- Total money that we have is \$174,000.
- We are financially sound for the year, but anything can change that at a moment, like a hurricane, or COVID.
- Very appreciative of the vendor support this year.
- Thank you to all the managers and Program Education Committee.
- Hoped to make \$60,000 from the conference and we hit \$68,000.

### **House of Delegates Report Trisha Miller**

- Trisha is the senior delegate, and her term ends December 2026
  - Amber McVeigh will become senior delegate.
  - Looking for someone to become junior delegate
- Amber will be going to Phoenix, AZ for winter meeting.
- Delegates meet three times a year.
  - Virtually in March, July, December
- AARC elections are in process now.
  - Encourage everyone to go to AARC website and vote.
- The House of delegate elections include the Bylaw Committee and the Elections Committee.
  - Trish will cast the NC vote in these elections before October 17<sup>th</sup>.
- AARC has put together the next gen network for students and recent graduates.
- Resolutions Introduced: Six key resolutions were introduced and discussed by the House of Delegates:
  - \$2 Pre-Check Donation at Membership Renewal
  - A resolution for the AARC to consider implementing a voluntary \$2 donation checkbox during membership renewal. -Resolution was defeated by the BOD.
  - Collaboration with AAIR Foundation
  - A resolution encouraging the AARC Board of Directors to explore a partnership with the Asthma, Allergy, Impact, and Rescue Foundation (AAIR). – Resolution

was withdrawn & recommendation was made for leader of AAIR to reach out to EO directly to engage & discuss opportunities.

- Enhanced Open Forum Rejection Feedback
- A resolution calling on the AARC to improve the clarity and constructiveness of rejection communications for Open Forum submissions, offering more detailed rationale and feedback for declined abstracts. -VP of Internal to follow-up with all these suggestions directly with program committee.
- Two-Year Professional Membership for HOSA College Winner
  - A resolution to award a two-year professional AARC membership to the first-place winner of the college/university-level HOSA competition. -Approved & sent to EO to operationalize.
- Student Membership for HOSA High School Winner
  - A resolution to award a student AARC membership to the first-place winner of the high school-level HOSA competition. -Approved & sent to EO to operationalize.
- Disaster Relief Raffle
  - A resolution for the HOD Disaster Relief Ad Hoc Committee to hold a fundraiser beginning with the 2026 AARC Congress to support disaster relief funding. - Approved so long as we make sure everyone uses the appropriate verbiage – this is a FUNDRAISER, not a raffle.
- Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapist (APRT): A roundtable discussion focused on the growing role and future implementation of the APRT.
- Interstate Compact Licensure: Updates were provided on state participation in the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact. Washington State recently signed the compact into law, joining a growing number of participating states.
- Disaster Relief was a hot topic at this year's Summer Forum. The Ad-Hoc Committee asked for support from the house & all of the affiliates with rebuilding the fund & ensuring it's sustained. The team is working hard to get Disaster Relief marketing enhanced & encourage grass-roots efforts (including the resolutions above) to continually grow the fund. Discussion was also held regarding moving the fund to ARCF. The Ad-Hoc committee has offered to explore this & present findings/options at the fall meeting.
- Organizational Updates
  - HOSA Event Participation: AARC representatives attended a national HOSA event in June, which saw participation from over 300,000 students across 49 states.

- New AARC Headquarters: The Executive Director announced that the AARC will move into its new headquarters in Dallas, Texas, by late September or early October 2025.
- New Publication Launch: AARC will soon debut a new scholarly publication, Respiratory Care Reports, which will be published alongside the Respiratory Care Journal. Notably, the Respiratory Education Annual will now be published under this new journal.
- Additional Updates
  - State Bylaws
  - Approved bylaws for Puerto Rico, Alaska, Georgia, Oregon, and West Virginia
  - See Past Speaker Report (AARConnect post by Past-Speaker Jackson) for detailed report from the Past Speaker.
  - This two-day session demonstrated the continued commitment of the House of Delegates to shaping the future of respiratory care through collaboration, innovation, and leadership.

### **By Laws and Standing Rules**

- NCSRC Bylaws were updated.
- Changed a lot of terminology to generic terms.
- New addition: Treasurer-Elect position
- Nominations & Elections Committee combined.
- Approved by AARC, May 28, 2025
- Posted on ncsrc@ncsrc.org website
- Government Affairs, Political Advocacy Contact Team (PACT)
- Committee Members: Susan Gallo (Chair), Tim King, Tina Frazier, Vacant (this could be you)
- Susan Gallo, RRT, Med, FAARC, represented NC at the PACT meeting.
  - North Carolina requested sponsorship for two legislative bills:
    - Supplemental Oxygen Access Reform (SOAR) Act
    - Sustainable Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Act
      - Permanently allow for virtual Pulmonary Rehab
- North Carolina is represented by 14 Representatives and 2 Senators.
  - Meetings were arranged with 5 Representatives and 1 Senator (Thom Tillis); all showed interest and had some awareness of these Bills.
    - Coordinating meetings with legislators requires significant effort, including numerous emails and phone calls to each office.
    - Certain offices only respond when contacted by constituents from their own district.

- While Susan was thankful for the opportunity to represent North Carolina, the state greatly appreciates her continued dedication and service.

### **Program & Education Committee**

- Committee Members: Tori Johnson (Chair), Candace Hill (Co-chair), Lisa Cutshaw, Danyelle Miray, Dustin Smith, Marissa Monteith, Kelly Bowers, 3 Vacant Seats
- Shifted from a 3-day to a 2-day conference (due to recovery from Helene) and due to budget restraints.
  - Offering 9 Live CEUs
  - Including 4 Asynchronous (non-traditional) recorded sessions.
- To be fully transparent, although we valued the chance to experiment with a non-traditional format, it turned out to be more complicated than expected. We might reevaluate this method in the future.
- Vacant seats are available if you're interested in joining this committee.
- We passed a motion to increase the committee from 10 to 15 members.
  - Need members that will join the committee and actually lend a helping hand.
- Planning for next year's symposium
  - We should be on the East Coast again.
  - looking at venues down here.
  - We are going to try to do a venue that is combined with a hotel, but again, budget constraints just kind of messed with that this year.
  - Maybe we can try to add a little bit more fun.

### **Communications and Publications**

- Trisha Miller speaking due to Chair Lawson Miller not present.
- Shout out to website that had lots of information but may not be very user friendly.
  - Going to be updated with awards and winners
- Looking for someone interested in being social media champion.
- Going to be updating social media so send info and pictures to Trisha.
- Plan to revive NCSRC times newsletter.

### **Membership**

- Amy Witschey is current chair as VP but will transition to Michelle Sumrall
- 32% of practitioners in NC are AARC/NCSRC members.
- Challenge each person here to recruit one person to join.

- A lot of committee vacancies coming up with a lot of opportunities to get involved.
- Committee focused a lot on speaking to second year students.

### **Awards and Scholarships**

- Kara Horn, chair, introduces award nominees.
- Gail Gane Educator of the Year award winner Ashtyn Paff presented by Marcus Williford
  - I am honored to nominate Ashtyn Paff, RRT, RCP, for the Gail Gane Educator of the Year Award presented by the North Carolina Society for Respiratory Care (NCSRC). Ashtyn serves as an instructor in the Respiratory Therapy Program at Forsyth Technical Community College, bringing over seven years of diverse clinical experience to her role. Her background includes significant work with pediatric and neonatal populations, equipping her with specialized insights that greatly benefit her students.

Before transitioning to full-time faculty, Ashtyn excelled as a clinical instructor, demonstrating a natural aptitude for teaching and mentorship. Her commitment to education is evident in the engaging and welcoming learning environments she creates, fostering both academic excellence and personal growth among her students. Ashtyn's passion for respiratory care education is unparalleled; she consistently goes above and beyond to ensure her students are well-prepared for their future roles as respiratory therapists.

Ashtyn's dedication to the field and her students embodies the qualities celebrated by the Gail Gane Educator of the Year Award. Her contributions not only enhance the reputation of Forsyth Technical Community College but also advance the standards of respiratory care education throughout North Carolina. I wholeheartedly endorse her nomination for this prestigious honor.

- Practitioner of the Year award presented to Candace Gilbert by Marcus Ferguson
  - It is with great pride and admiration that I nominate **Candace (Candy) Gilbert** for the prestigious title of **Respiratory Care Practitioner of the Year**. With over 30 years of dedicated service at **Novant Health Pender Medical Center**, Candy has consistently exemplified the highest standards of clinical excellence, compassion, and professionalism. She truly

embodies the qualities every Respiratory Care Practitioner (RCP) should aspire to uphold—commitment, integrity, empathy, and an unwavering dedication to her patients and community.

Candy began her journey in respiratory care as an on-the-job trainee, demonstrating a remarkable commitment to growth and lifelong learning. She later pursued formal education at the **California College for Health Sciences** and successfully earned her **Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)** credential through the **National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)**. Never content to rest on her accomplishments, she is currently preparing to obtain the **Adult Critical Care Specialty (ACCS)** credential and pursuing her **Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care**—a true testament to her drive for professional excellence and continuous advancement.

Throughout her career, Candy has been a beacon of compassion and integrity. She has spent more than three decades serving a rural community in an acute care hospital, where she has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of her patients through education on pulmonary diseases, respiratory medications, and lifestyle modifications to enhance lung function. Her patients consistently benefit from her empathetic care, and she is deeply respected by her peers, providers, and the leadership team at Pender Medical Center.

I have had the privilege of knowing Mrs. Gilbert for many years, serving as her direct leader for the past three years and as her Clinical Educator at NH NHRMC for more than fifteen. During this time, I have witnessed firsthand her dedication to both her patients and her profession. Candy gives selflessly, always seeking more knowledge to improve the health and well-being of her community. Her ability to connect with patients and colleagues alike has made her an invaluable member of our healthcare family and an inspiring role model for others in the field.

Without question, **Candace (Candy) Gilbert** is one of the most deserving Respiratory Care Practitioners ever to be nominated for this award. Her career is a shining example of what it means to serve with heart, skill, and purpose. It is an honor to recommend her for the **Respiratory Care Practitioner of the Year Award**, recognizing her decades of service, compassion, and unwavering commitment to the profession of respiratory care.

- Harvey Jacobs Leadership award presented to Nikki Barrett by Kara Horne
  - It is with great pride and admiration that I nominate **Jevonnie “Nikki” Barrett** for the **Harvey Jacobs Leadership Award**. Nikki’s outstanding

leadership, professionalism, and transformative impact in the field of Respiratory Care make her an exceptional candidate for this prestigious recognition. Her unwavering dedication to excellence is evident in every facet of her work—from clinical practice and patient care to education, mentorship, and professional advocacy.

In my 39 years as a Respiratory Therapist, I have never worked alongside anyone more passionate, professional, and hardworking than Nikki. She consistently demonstrates exceptional leadership skills and an unyielding commitment to patient-centered care. Nikki's drive to elevate patient outcomes is evident in her innovative approach to problem-solving, her proactive nature, and her constant pursuit of improvement within our department and the wider respiratory care community. She frequently works beyond her regular duties to ensure her patients receive the highest standard of care, and her ability to inspire others fosters a culture of excellence among her colleagues.

Nikki is also a remarkable mentor. She generously shares her knowledge and expertise, empowering others to grow both personally and professionally. Her leadership style is inclusive, encouraging collaboration, and promoting a supportive and motivated work environment. Through her example, she inspires others to embody the same compassion, dedication, and professionalism she demonstrates every day.

Beyond her impact within the hospital, Nikki has been an influential leader at the state level through her long-standing involvement with the **North Carolina Society for Respiratory Care (NCSRC)**. Her commitment to advancing the profession is evident in her active participation and leadership within the organization. Last year, under Nikki's leadership, the NCSRC earned the **AARC Summit Award**, a distinguished national honor recognizing excellence in state society achievement. Nikki led the committee responsible for the application process, working relentlessly to gather information, coordinate efforts, and ensure the success of the submission. Her organizational skills, determination, and vision were instrumental in achieving this milestone for our state.

Nikki's leadership trajectory within the NCSRC further exemplifies her dedication—first serving as **President-Elect**, and now as the **current President**, where she continues to demonstrate extraordinary leadership and commitment. She keeps members informed and engaged through frequent communication, fosters collaboration through committee work, and consistently strives to elevate enthusiasm and pride within our

profession. Her influence extends far beyond her immediate team, shaping the future of respiratory care across North Carolina.

As **Adult Manager of Respiratory Care at Advocate Health Care**, Nikki continues to embody the highest standards of our profession. Her ability to balance clinical excellence with visionary leadership has resulted in measurable improvements in patient outcomes, team morale, and professional development.

For these reasons—and so many more—I am honored to nominate **Jevonnie “Nikki” Barrett** for the **Harvey Jacobs Leadership Award**. She exemplifies what it means to be a true leader: compassionate, driven, innovative, and deeply committed to advancing the art and science of respiratory care.

- Gary Dukes Award presented to Trisha Miller by Nikki Barrett
  - It is with great respect and admiration that I nominate **Trisha (Trish) Miller** for the **Garry Dukes Award**. Trish’s remarkable 40-year career in respiratory care stands as a testament to her unwavering dedication, professionalism, and service to both her patients and the respiratory care community.

Throughout her four decades in the profession, Trish has made lasting contributions as a **therapist, educator, and leader**, continuously advancing the field through her expertise, mentorship, and advocacy. She has been an **active member of the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC)** for all 40 years of her career, exemplifying lifelong commitment to excellence and professional growth.

Trish has played an integral role within the **North Carolina Society for Respiratory Care (NCSRC)**, where she has served in numerous leadership capacities, including **President** and now as the **Senior Delegate**. In addition, she currently serves as the **Executive Secretary** for the NCSRC, ensuring the smooth operation and continued success of the organization. Her knowledge, organization, and reliability have made her an invaluable asset to the Society and an enduring influence on its progress.

Even beyond her official roles, Trish continues to give selflessly of her time and energy. In her free time, she supports the **Program and Education Committee (PEC)** and helps manage the **NCSRC website**, contributing to the society’s communication, outreach, and educational initiatives. Her tireless efforts behind the scenes help keep the Society connected, informed, and forward-moving.

Trish's four decades of leadership, mentorship, and advocacy have left an indelible mark on the respiratory care profession in North Carolina and beyond. She embodies the spirit of service, excellence, and dedication that the **Garry Dukes Award** represents.

For these reasons, I am deeply honored to nominate **Trisha (Trish) Miller** for the **Garry Dukes Award**—a well-deserved recognition of her lifelong commitment, leadership, and profound contributions to our profession.

- Physician of the Year award presented to Dr. Aaron Blackshaw by Kara Horn
  - It is with the deepest respect and admiration that I nominate Dr. Aaron Blackshaw for the North Carolina Society of Respiratory Care's Physician of the Year Award. This honor recognizes a physician who embodies outstanding leadership, collaboration, advocacy, and an unwavering commitment to patients and their communities—qualities Dr. Blackshaw exemplifies in every aspect of his work. As an emergency medicine physician at Novant Health, Dr. Blackshaw demonstrates an extraordinary ability to lead with both skill and compassion. He shows up each day with quiet confidence and steadfast dedication, bringing calm, clarity, and kindness to even the most chaotic circumstances. Whether treating a trauma patient, comforting a worried family, or mentoring a team member, Dr. Blackshaw leads by example, inspiring trust and respect from colleagues, patients, and families alike. His patients remember him not only for his clinical expertise but for the dignity and compassion with which he treats every individual. A natural teacher and mentor, Dr. Blackshaw takes great joy in supporting the growth of others. He invests in students, residents, respiratory therapists, and colleagues, generously sharing his knowledge and fostering a culture of continuous learning. His leadership style is rooted in empowerment—encouraging innovation, challenging others to think critically, and inspiring his team to deliver the very best care. He does not seek recognition for himself; instead, he lifts others up, creating an environment where both patients and staff feel valued. Beyond his clinical and professional excellence, Dr. Blackshaw is deeply committed to the community he serves. He devotes time to educate his patients and coworkers, supports local outreach initiatives, and advocates tirelessly for improved systems of care and greater access to respiratory services. His dedication extends far beyond the walls of the hospital, reflecting a genuine desire to improve the lives of individuals and strengthen the community as a whole. In a field that demands so much, Dr. Blackshaw consistently gives even more. He is the kind of

physician every patient hopes for, every family is grateful to encounter, and every colleague is proud to work alongside. For his leadership, compassion, advocacy, and the countless lives he has impacted, I can think of no one more deserving of the title Physician of the Year.

- Scholarships awarded to 4 respiratory students
  - Destiny Vargas: Catawba Valley Community College
  - Zachariah Stader: Pitt Community College
  - Elizabeth Radek: Pitt Community College
  - Bethany Jarvis: Wilkes Community College
- Student Engagement
  - Dustin Smith chair
  - Committee held Sputum Bowl last year and committee membership was increased for more responsibility this year.
  - Began as a subcommittee of Program and Education Committee but increased to full committee.
  - Student involvement increased this year.
    - Congratulations to Wilkes Community College Sputum Bowl champions.
    - Duke held a student workshop this year.
    - Scavenger hunt in vendor hall
  - Plan to get students more involved.
    - Students to follow NCSRC committees.
    - Junior House of Delegates
- Chartered Affiliate
  - Sarah Chambers is chair but not present.
  - Email her pictures, brochures, etc. of all of the great things we do like conferences, and philanthropy.
- Managers Group
  - Tina Lovings chair
  - Really trying to just build this community and build a list of managers within our state.
  - Working on a list but still missing a lot of managers
  - Working with Dr. Croft to build the list
  - 106 managers listed statewide
  - Directory used to promote NCSRC annual symposium (emails sent)
  - Gaps: Large systems (Duke Health, UNC, etc...) & homecare leaders incomplete or missing
  - Exploring new methods to improve list accuracy
  - Considering regional leaders to help fill gaps

- Educational offering by Dr. Croft in development

## North Carolina Respiratory Care Board

Bill Croft, Executive Director

- **Key Board Transitions:**
  - Myra Stearns, MHA, RRT, RPFT, RCP, FAARC
  - Dr. James Davidson
  - Mr. Dwayne Weitzel, RRT, RCP
  - Dr. Lanny Inabnit, PhD, RRT, RRT-ACCS, RRT-NPS, RCP, FAARC
  - Mrs. Tina M. Lovings, MHS, RRT-ACCS, RCP
- **Legislative efforts**
  - A primary focus throughout the year has been coordinating outreach to promote the progress of House Bill 71 and Senate Bill 160.
  - These bills seek to establish licensure for Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapists (APRTs) in North Carolina.
  - From a regulatory standpoint, the Board managed a steady caseload of disciplinary matters, including investigations of unlicensed practice, license reinstatements, and ethical violations.
  - Ended the fiscal year in stable financial standing, supported by improved revenue from licensing and continuing education fees.
  - Forward-looking investments in IT infrastructure and legislative tracking systems reflect the Board's commitment to modernizing operations and sustaining advocacy.
  - With licensing numbers stabilizing and public engagement increasing, the Board remains well-positioned to support North Carolina's respiratory care workforce in the year ahead with a robust reciprocity licensing process.
  - The reciprocity license is a same-day licensing process for therapists holding an out-of-state license.
- **Nominations and Elections**
  - The NCSRC 2025 Election was concluded on August 5, 2025.
  - **Results:**
    - **President-Elect:** Amy Witschey
    - **Vice President:** Michelle Sumrall
    - **Secretary:** Marcus Williford
    - **Treasurer Elect:** Candace Hill\*
    - **BOD West:** Stephanie Barbour & Pam Holly

- **BOD Central:** Tina Lovings, Jordan Hall, & Josh Baucom\*
  - **BOD East:** Tim King
- Installation of officers was done virtually before the conference.
- Thank you to outgoing board members.
  - Detra Moore
  - Victoria Johnson
  - Kelly Bowers
  - Michele Pedicone
- Next Board of Director's Meeting
  - **Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist**
  - **Innovation Quarter**
  - 575 Patterson Ave Winston Salem, NC 27101
- Motion to conclude the annual business meeting by Michelle Sumrall and seconded by Marcus Ferguson
- Meeting adjourned at 0915.