

# Kentucky Society Of Respiratory Care

# KSRC Newsletter

Fall 2016

## Letter From the President

We have had a productive and exciting year. Many agenda items were completed or started. We are focusing on many things, but the one issue we have is we only have 15% of the Respiratory Therapists in Kentucky as members. We started sending note cards to the members that are lapsing or lapsed with the AARC/KSRC membership. We would love to increase this number to have the support of the therapists in the state. It is hard to fight for our cause if we do not have support. Remember, there is strength in numbers. When we are in Washington DC for the AARC PACT meeting and meet with Congressmen and Senators about an act or bill that affects our profession, we need your support.

Some of the issues that were addressed this year were:

1. Bonding the Treasurer and cosigner of the funds for the KSRC. We were able to obtain a Fidelity Bond with State Farm Insurance that satisfied this need at a very reasonable cost.
2. We sent a therapist to Washington DC for the AARC PACT meeting to meet with Congressmen about the H.R. 2948 The Medicare Telehealth Parity Act. The act will be important for our profession to open doors with telehealth and open new positions for therapists. We are not the only profession that wants this act to pass the House of Representatives. The other professions mentioned in the act are Physical Therapists, Speech Therapists, Diabetic Counselors, as well as other professions. With all

of the professions asking the Congressmen to support this act we do have a very good chance the act will pass through. This is actually the very first act that lists Respiratory Therapist in the wording. This would be a huge step for our profession.

3. The KSRC Delegates, David East and Rebecca Higdon, were able to attend the AARC Summer Forum House of Delegates. We are very fortunate to have such wonderful representation on the national level for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Our voice can be heard and we will also be able to keep up with everything going on across the nation involving our profession.
4. The President Elect, Lisa Houle, and I were able to attend the AARC Membership Workshop in Dallas, TX last spring and we are exploring different ways to increase membership. At the workshop, we learned many things about the AARC and being an affiliate.



5. The KSRC Annual Convention was September 15 and 16<sup>th</sup> this year in Lexington. Look for Save the Dates next year.
6. This is the first year for the Military Liaison Committee and we are honored to have Robert Beaty, BA, RRT-ACCS, AE-C representing the Commonwealth of Kentucky as Committee Chair. This was the first time in the history of the annual convention we had a Color Guard Presentation at the opening of the ceremonies on September 15<sup>th</sup>. He also attends the Military Roundtable meetings. The roundtable was established (2010) as a commitment from the AARC in ensuring support, networking, and an enhanced academic and professional achievement for veterans, families, supporters, and active/reserve duty service members.
7. The KSRC Delegates will also attend the AARC International Congress this October.

***-Vicki Walters, MSL, MPA, RRT-NPS, CPFT***  
***President of Kentucky Society of Respiratory Care***



## ***How One Therapist Began Her Management Career***

My career in Respiratory started while attending Bellarmine University in 2007. Since completing my Bachelor Degree in 2009, I have been a Registered Respiratory Therapist for a little over 7 years. I had been working for St. Elizabeth for the last 5 years and I had felt that there was an opportunity to implement positive changes to our department. We had a recent change in leadership not only in the department but also the organization. This opened the doors for Respiratory to be included in interdisciplinary committees, disease management, and quality improvement projects and I wanted to be a part of that.

I knew that in order to further my career that I would have to go back to school. I enrolled in a Master's program at University of Cincinnati. One of the project's I needed to complete before graduation was to implement a health program that would affect a certain population of people. Smoking cessation was becoming a huge focus for the hospital and I was able to do enough research and networking to show that I could complete a project successfully. Being a manager you have to be able to communicate effectively, network with other disciplines, and facilitate meetings. I was able to show to my director that I was able to contribute to the department outside of my frontline role.

I have only been in my role for one year, so I still have a lot to accomplish. But one of the biggest projects that needed to be completed for our department was reintroducing Respiratory Therapist's to the ED, Medical Surgical and TCU floors at two of our other facilities. Nursing had been administering respiratory medications for the last 20 years. This required the help of my director, supervisors, and education coordinator to help hire and orientate 31 Respiratory Therapists in order to complete this RT expansion project.

My advice for those wanting to pursue management would be to talk to your current manager or director about your career goals. Let them know that

you want to develop leadership skills by volunteering to help with any projects for the department. Take any opportunity that makes you more versatile and shows you are able to communicate appropriately, work well with a team, and be a role model for the department. The ideal staff for any manager would be to have a department that is made of reliable, positive, and compassionate people. I am very fortunate to be surrounded by employees that are dedicated to their profession and patients.

A manager can create a positive impact by communicating appropriately and setting the expectations to staff about our mission and vision and how this is parallel to the organization. In order to be a strategic leader, it is important to set the expectations of providing high quality care and facilitating successful outcomes. It is also important to listen to the staff and be proactive to the needs of the department instead of reactive.

It has been extremely beneficial to be an AARC member as an RRT and a new manager. I have utilized being a member of the management section by being able to ask other managers about policies, productivity, and new equipment. The AARC offers an abundance of resources that help our department practice our profession at the highest level.

***Niki Kallmeyer RRT-NPS, MS***

***System Manager Respiratory Care, Ft.Thomas, KY***



## ***A Look at a Non- Traditional Role for a Respiratory Therapist***

I am a Registered Respiratory Therapist and Certified Asthma Educator. I am currently the Asthma Care Advisor for Passport Health Plan at the Medicaid Center of Excellence. It is my responsibility to ensure the needs of our asthmatic population are met. This includes educating the member on proper medication adherence and reiterating the importance of following an asthma action plan. Also, encouraging and educating on self-management skills, encouraging members to utilize their Medicaid benefits properly, and also collaborating with the providers to ensure a patient centered approach to care is achieved. I work to decrease overutilization of improper emergency services and to encourage members to obtain routine preventative care.

My 8.5 years of experience at the bedside helped me to develop vital interpersonal communication skills with my patients and prepare me for a role away from the bedside. It also allowed me to learn the skills necessary to perform in a team based care setting which included communications with RNs, physicians, and other medical staff. This face to face interaction with patients gave me the experience necessary to become a better educator. It allowed me to learn proper hands on techniques for teaching patients how to properly use their medications and perform crucial respiratory exercises such as peak flow measurements, incentive spirometry, and ventilator weaning trials.

I feel that RTs have the potential to obtain employment in other areas separate from the traditional hospital setting. I truly believe that in order to branch out and broaden your opportunities, one has to be open to change, open to new roles that aren't clinical, and willing to take on challenging and often times risky positions that may or may not require continuing your education. Often times, there will be opportunities granted to a professional who has more experience and has a broader degree than respiratory therapy. This is why it is critical to be willing to continue your education

and go above and beyond the traditional roles. Obtaining my AE-C credential has allowed me to take a step back from teaching with the mindset that everyone understands medical terminology and that everyone understands asthma. The exam to obtain this credential was tough and it reiterates the need to teach in such a way that you assume everyone is a lay person. It reinforces the need to get back to the basics and focus on other aspects of care such as how chronic illness effects a patient's mental state, how socioeconomic factors play a huge role in a patient obtaining proper care, and also taught me ways to break it down in a basic way so that I can truly help someone understand their chronic illness. I believe all respiratory therapists should obtain this credential to provide the best possible care for their asthmatic patients. This credential also makes you more marketable and there are current reimbursement policies in the works for payment of asthma education!

For one looking to move away from the bedside and take their respiratory career down a non-traditional path, it is a MUST to continue your education! Obtain as many credentials such as the AE-C as you can to make yourself more marketable. Also, the key to becoming successful is networking! The more providers and organizations you can become involved with and develop relationships with, the better your chances of making connections to further your career. Also, don't be afraid to go back to school to pursue Masters degrees in areas such as leadership and management. Volunteer as much as you can for organizations such as ALA, AHA, Operation Brightside, etc. These experiences help with networking and also look great on a resume when attempting to change career paths. Not only will they help you get that new job, but they will enhance your overall sense of purpose!

**-Shawna Hickok BHS, RRT, AE-C.**  
**Asthma Care Advisor**  
**Currently working on Master's Health Science in Healthcare Leadership.**

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## ***Sputum Bowl Winners Are Headed to San Antonio!***

We had a great Sputum Bowl competition this year at the annual KSRC Conference in Lexington, KY. It was exciting, fun, and competitive. This year's winners were LUNG BUTTER and they are students from NKU.



Pictured from left to right are Nicolaas Pesnichak, Taylor Frye, Skyler Martin, and Marisa Ripard. Also pictured is Assistant Professor Debbie Patten of NKU. These students are Class of 2017, and we wish them the best of luck as they represent Kentucky at the national competition!

## ***Delegate Insight from the 2016 Summer Forum Meeting in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.***

I would be remiss not to start by thanking the Respiratory Therapists of our State Society for giving me the opportunity to represent Kentucky this past year as a Delegate. Serving in the House of Delegates has given

me tremendous insight regarding our profession nationally and where the future is heading regarding education, practice, and legislation. Networking with therapists from other states has been a pleasant experience, valuable to me in my teaching career and has stressed the importance of belonging to the American Association for Respiratory Care so that my voice can be heard and united with others that believe in the job we do every day.



So Kentucky RT's, what are we doing right? Last summer at the 2015 House of Delegates meeting AARC President Frank Salvatore challenged each state affiliate to identify an RT who has served our country to serve as their Military Liaison. This year eleven states were recognized as having completed this task and Kentucky was one of them! Robert Beaty is the Military Liaison for Kentucky and I encourage you to thank him for his service to our country and for taking on this task. At the House of Delegates meeting the colors are presented by retired military and it truly is a special time to share with these men and women who have served our country sacrificially. What else are we doing right? Each year the House of Delegates recognizes state affiliates for their efforts and achievements in promoting the field of respiratory care and promoting professionalism of respiratory care and the respiratory therapist. The Summit award documents the following seven areas of contribution: Education activities, Membership and recruiting, Legislation /advocacy, Promoting public awareness, Benefits to members, Collaborations with other health care organizations and Student activities. Kentucky received recognition for excellence in two of these categories! Great Job KY Therapists! But I bet we didn't turn in half of what you are doing out there

because we don't know about it. Please send the board of directors a note when you and your co-workers complete every day events! You can send them to [ksrcbod@gmail.com](mailto:ksrcbod@gmail.com) Send us a picture and we will include it on the website or this newsletter. Next summer the delegates can bring home that Summit Award with recognition in all seven areas!

What can we do better? The buzz for every state is recruitment and retention, aka MEMBERSHIP. Every state affiliate is searching for numbers to make their society grow. My challenge to you is to take a look at the **FREE** CEU's on the AARC website. See if you can find one or two that might be of interest to your coworkers. Complete them yourself so you know how they work then discuss them with others! All of us need the credit and there are many, many opportunities on the AARC site for **FREE**. Let's face it, unless I know there will be direct benefit for me I am unlikely to pay my money. Show me the benefits and I will pay you the cash. Be an advocate for our Profession. Excitement is contagious. Respiratory Therapist Are Real Life Heroes so let's step up and believe it!

**Rebecca A. Higdon, MS RRT**  
**KSRC Delegate 2016**

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## **Update on the KSRC Board of Directors and Recent Elections**

The Kentucky Society for Respiratory Care completed the nomination and election process for the upcoming 2017-2018 Board of Directors. The process followed all of the guidelines established in the KSRC bylaws. Based on bylaws, Vicki Walters MSL, MPA, RRT-NPS, CPFT will continue to serve as the Immediate Past President and Lisa Houle, MS, RRT, Director Respiratory Care & Patient Advocate, Baptist Health La Grange will transition into the President's role. Additionally, the current Junior District representatives will transition to the Senior District Representative role (Debbie Patten, Northern District; Brandon Wiles, Bluegrass District; Cumberland Valley, Rodney Weaver and West Central, Jennifer Albro). Finally, David East, RRT, Baptist Health La Grange, continues as the Senior Delegate to the AARC.

**The current board extends congratulations to the following individuals who are newly-elected board members.**

- \* **President-elect:** Timothy Hadden, BA, RRT-ACCS, Clinical Coordinator/Respiratory Clinical Specialist, Continuing Care Hospital Kentucky One, Lexington
- \* **Vice President:** Kyle Mahan MSM, RRT. Director of Clinical Education, Jefferson Community and Technical College
- \* **Treasurer:** Stephanie Brothers, RRT; Director of Clinical Education, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College
- \* **Secretary:** Kelly Hayes, MS, RRT: Director of Clinical Education, Madisonville Community College
- \* **Delegate:** Rebecca A. Higdon, MS, RRT; Program Coordinator, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College
- \* **District Representatives:**
  - o **Bluegrass:** Zachary Simpson, RRT; Director of Clinical Education, Bluegrass Community and Technical College
  - o **Cumberland Valley:** Anna Jones, BS, RCP, CCMEC; Assistant Director/Outreach Education Coordinator, Southern KY Area Health Education Center

- o **Jefferson:** Sarah Perry, MHS, RRT; Adjunct Professor, Bellarmine University
  - o **Mountain:** Delilah Turner, BS, RRT-NPS; Student Affairs, Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College
  - o **Northern:** Brittany Warning, Staff Therapist, St. Elizabeth Hospital
  - o **West-Central:** Jessica Willhelm BSN, RN-C, RRT-NPS; Director, Respiratory Care, Baptist Health Paducah
- Lisa Houle, MS, RRT, Chair, Nominations and Elections Committee. Director Respiratory Care & Patient Advocate, Baptist Health La Grange**
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### **Learn a Little More About the ARCF**

There are so many organizations out there that work hard to represent and support respiratory therapy. We have the AARC, NBRC, KBRC, KSRC, NN2RC, CoARC CoBGRTE, and the list seems to go on. They all have important and unique missions and purpose. Some seem to get very little attention these days. One of them is the ARCF. The ARCF are doing great things in the advancement of respiratory education and research. With support from AARC, and other professional organizations, respiratory therapists and physicians are studying respiratory diseases and advancements

through grants and other funding sources to further and better treat various challenges our patients battle. “The American Respiratory Care Foundation is a nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of supporting research, education, and charitable activities.

The ARCF seeks to educate the public about respiratory health, assist in the training and continuing education of health care providers, and improve the quality of our environment” (ARCF, 2016). Many have ideas and thoughts on how to better the profession, and management of diseases. ARCF is a great way of taking that idea and turning it into action. They WANT to provide grants and resources to RT’s so they can research and implement new practices.

Recently, the ARCF has issued a few grants to therapists and other researchers to take ideas and turn them into action. “Justin Hoffman, BS, RRT, and the Cleveland Clinic Foundation have been awarded a \$30,000 grant from the ARCF in conjunction with the Alpha-1 Foundation and the American Association for Respiratory Care to conduct a project entitled “Respiratory Therapist Case-Finding Study of Alpha-1 Deficiency.” (ARCF, 2016) The idea behind this is that a study will be done to have an order for Alpha-1 blood test automatically established in EMR for early detection of symptoms and prevention.

Michael Davis, BS, RRT was awarded a \$20,000 grant and working with a doctoral student on tissue inflammation in the airway that could lead to new treatment options. “Simply put,” says Davis, “Is it there, how does it get there, and what does it do once it is there?” The findings, he continues, could lead to both a better understanding of the pathophysiology of inflammatory airway disease and more therapeutic options for patients. (ARCF, 2016)

Lastly, “A \$10,000 grant from the Jerome M. Sullivan Research Fund will go to Gerald Zavorsky, PhD, CSCS, ACSM-RCEP, RPFT, FACSM, an associate professor of respiratory therapy at Georgia State University in Atlanta, for a study entitled “Prediction Equations for Pulmonary Diffusing Capacity for Nitric Oxide in African-Americans.” Dr. Zavorsky decided to conduct the study

because there are currently no predictive equations for diffusing capacity for nitric oxide in this patient population. “Should this novel measurement be implemented in pulmonary function labs in hospitals, it will be easier to determine whether a patient is below the lower limit of normal, which would signify abnormal gas transfer,” says Zavorsky.

These are all great research projects that can have a factor on how we treat patients, and are being conducted by our fellow respiratory therapists! If we have an idea and want to put it into action, be sure to reach out to the ARCF for guidance.

If you have no desire to do research but want to support the cause, you can do that as well, and it can make a big difference. The ARCF has partnered with Amazon, and we are able to have a portion of our proceeds go directly to the foundation to help fund research! When you go to the website to purchase something online, first enter [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). after you do that, you will then select the foundation of your choice, and choose the American Respiratory Care Foundation. This is so simple, and a great way to show our support!

**For more information on the ARCF, be sure to go to [www.ARCFoundation.org](http://www.ARCFoundation.org)**

References from this portion of the newsletter came from the ARCF website.

***Kyle Mahan, MSM, RRT.***

***Clinical Director, Louisville, KY.***

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Care.**

**For questions, email [KSRCBOD@gmail.com](mailto:KSRCBOD@gmail.com)**

# PROUD TO BE A



# RESPIRATORY THERAPIST

## ***Be a Part of the Change.***

## ***Why You Should be a Member.***

If you are not an AARC member, you are missing out right now. Being a part of the AARC automatically makes you a member of the Kentucky Society of Respiratory Care, and there is definitely strength in numbers. We are at a moment in time where we can make a real impact in positioning respiratory therapy for the coming demands and changes in healthcare. Positions that have not always been available for RT's are now opening up, and a strong state society can help encourage these opportunities for the coming future. Here at the KSRC, we are committed to making a difference and a positive impact in our position. This can only be more apparent if we have more involvement. We are only as strong and resourceful as you allow us to be. Get involved. This is your profession.

### **Just a few reasons to join!**

- 1. Free CEU's are made available to you. You are going to need them. Why not get them for free?**
- 2. Help provide resources and representation of Kentucky.**

- 3. You are able to get involved and help with initiatives that directly impact RT's right here in your state.**
- 4. Career opportunities are made available on AARC's website**
- 5. Discounts for conferences and other events**
- 6. Are you interested in education, NICU, Adult ICU, PFT's and other specialties? You can join the AARC and be part of specific communities of specialists, and interact and share best practices.**
- 7. Students can be members too! In fact, being an AARC member gets you resources, libraries, and journals online, and DISCOUNTS FOR YOUR BOARD EXAMS.**
- 8. Be part of a larger community and understand that you are supporting lobbyists and other delegates that go before Congress to help push initiatives that make our profession stronger.**
- 9. Programs are offered to become a Certified COPD Educator. This can be marketable when looking at non-traditional career opportunities.**
- 10. Keep track and automatically manage your CEU's**
- 11. As health care changes, AARC can help to keep us up to date on medical issues as they arise. There has been updates on what RT's can do about Zika, Flu, Ebola, and other issues as they become known.**
- 12. Access to policies and procedures, and best practices being used around the country.**
- 13. Resume and letter writing tips geared for RT's.**

Our society and the strength of Kentucky's RT's is only as strong and influential as you want it to be. Please join, and get involved. Reach out on Facebook, or email an officer of KSRC. We want you involved and to help make Kentucky a state that has a strong member base and active involvement in the community. We have events to socialize, and conferences that bring us together statewide and have a good time and network. We hope to have you as a fellow member!