



KSRC

Kentucky Society For Respiratory Care

The Bluegrass Breather

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A letter from the incoming President

2017 President's Note: Requests & Resolutions

My promise to you:

I stumbled into respiratory care over thirty years ago. I knew immediately that I found my place, my future, my career. I truly love what I do both as a direct care provider and as a leader. In 2009, I landed in Kentucky. I was welcomed not only at the hospital but by respiratory therapists across Kentucky. You have allowed me to call Kentucky home and given me the chance to be involved. I am honored that you are providing me this opportunity to serve and represent the therapists across the Commonwealth.

I was fortunate to attend the 2016 Congress and bump into a variety of KSRC members while there. My question du jour to those I met was, "How can I better serve you as a member of the KSRC during my upcoming presidency?" The answers were:

1. **Communication** – Communicate with members (and non-members) so they know what the society is doing to support them. Be transparent in actions through communication.
2. **Passion** – Be passionate about what you do. When you are it shows that you care and will re-energize other therapists to become involved.
3. **Growth** – growth in membership (and membership involvement) in the KSRC is key to



our future success. The growth and strength of our districts is also an important factor and a huge opportunity for the upcoming year.

4. **Align** – Align the KSRC with the AARC presidential goals. As a state affiliate, the KSRC needs to be working towards and supporting the AARC stated goals.

My Request of fellow therapists:

1. **Involvement** – The KSRC Board of Directors are dedicated and talented therapists. We need your input and support to garner the changes you feel are warranted. Minimally, continue your membership and ask a non-member peer to join. Also, plan to attend a KSRC sponsored event. There are meetings and events in each of the districts. We will work on better communication of these events and I plan on attending at least one in each district in 2016. As a volunteer organization, help is always needed. There are opportunities to serve at the committee level. If you have an interest in participating in a committee please contact us at ksrcbod@gmail.com.
2. **Communicate** – Communication happens when two or more individuals share ideas. We need to know what is going on in your area. Your input will give us the opportunity to celebrate events and become involved.

3. **Advocate** – You are the best spokesperson for our profession. Speak up for yourself, your profession, your patients and their families. Become involved in events and issues that affect the respiratory health of our community.

Resolution to the therapists of Kentucky

I promise my time, dedication, and passion to advocate for you, our profession, our patients and their families. I also promise to work diligently in raising awareness of lung health issues and ensuring the public understands the importance of therapists as a partner in health care. Respiratory therapists are a team. I sincerely believe that as a team we can create, and move toward a vision of care that is advanced in practice with involved and dedicated therapists throughout.

Lisa M. Houle, MS, RRT
2017-2018 KSRC President

A letter from our outgoing President

KSRC President 2015-2016

Being President of the Kentucky Society for Respiratory Care has been an honor. I love to help support our profession and hope I have made an impact. There have been many activities the society was involved in throughout the last two years. We have bonded our Treasurer and Co-Treasurer as the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) requested. We attended the AARC PACT meetings on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. the last two years. This enabled us to show our support for the Medicare Telehealth Parity Act, which allows respiratory therapists to be listed as providers. I was blessed to go in 2015. Our delegates were able to attend the AARC Summer Forum and the International Congress the last two years as well. We had great representation from the respiratory therapists in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We need to continue to be involved in what the AARC is moving toward in the coming years and voice our opinions. I look forward to seeing what the KSRC will do in the future. I want all the therapists in the state to know we care and want what is best for our profession. I want to thank all that have

supported me in this position. Please join the AARC and be a member of your society.

Vicki Walters, MSL, MPA, RRT-NPS, CPFT

Highlights from the AARC Congress, and Kentucky was made proud!



Winter greetings from your KSRC Delegates! This year's 62nd International Respiratory Convention & Exhibition (also known as the AARC Congress 2016) was held in October in beautiful San Antonio, Texas. I am proud to report Kentucky was well represented and definitely in the house!

- October 13 & 14th- David East & Rebecca Higdon represented Kentucky therapists in the House of Delegates meeting by networking, discussing and voting on issues that matter to the nation's RT's; issues such as advocacy, testing, licensure & best practices.
- October 15th- Thomas Baxter received The Ralph Kendall MD Outstanding Site Visitors of the Year Award
- October 15th – Christy Kane was recognized as an AARC Fellow
- Nicolaas Pesnichak, Northern Kentucky University respiratory student, represented Kentucky at the Sputum Bowl.
- October 15th –The AARC attendees set a new world record for pin wheel blowing
- October 17th –Robert Beatty participated in the flag folding ceremony & received the AARC presidential coin

October 17th – Stephanie Brothers & Sarah Pehlke both won Drager ventilators for Elizabethtown Community & Technical College & Bellarmine University

The vendors were excited to talk to us and eager to give away lots of goodies. I brought back a grant for a MetaNeb 4.0 and received a year subscription to the AARC Respiratory Care magazine for playing a game. I know others that won this way as well! (Ask our President, Lisa Houle about her diamond bracelet!) The AARC Congress offered 300+ original research projects, over 120 different speakers, three and a half days of networking and education with therapists/physicians/caregivers, over 210 sessions on current respiratory care topics, three days of exhibits with big companies in the industry and 20+ CEU's. Why do I bring this up now? **Next year's meeting is in Indianapolis on October 4-7!** Since it's so close to home I'd love to see more Kentucky therapists there. I encourage you to start requesting funds now and let's pack the house with RT's that mean business for patients and families! Let's make a difference!

Rebecca Higdon, MS RRT, KSRC Delegate



A Statewide Virtual Respiratory College Fair

This past fall semester, respiratory programs within the KCTCS system took part in a virtual college fair to become informed and encouraged to continue their education and complete their bachelor's degree. We ended up having six programs and over 50 students participate! It was a live video conference where universities were able to log in and speak to all our students in real time. Northern Kentucky University, Bellarmine University, University of Cincinnati, Eastern Tennessee State University and Boise State University all participated and spoke with students about their programs.

With recent changes and standards being rolled out in education requirements, programs in Kentucky are doing all they can to encourage students and therapists to continue their education. And with good reason. We are seeing opportunities and doors opening up for respiratory therapists in nontraditional roles and having a bachelor's degree is becoming crucial. Students currently enrolled are strongly urged to continue their education and seek all the information they can to be informed and find the right program for them. There are definitely perks to continuing education. When students graduate and become registered, they can start working and gaining experience right away. Also, they will likely have a portion of their bachelor's program paid for by their employer. That makes it much more affordable.

If you are a student, you are entering an exciting profession that is still young and finding its identity and place in the hospital. Each institution is different and expectations vary. There are a lot of options and opportunities out there. Having a bachelor's degree will open those doors for you. If you are a seasoned therapist, completing your bachelor's will also provide you opportunities and will complement your years of experience.

Kyle Mahan, MSM, RRT

2017-2018 KSRC Vice President

Taking the Plunge into Academe



Respiratory therapy is a growing profession. According to the AARC Respiratory Therapist Human Resource Study (2014), the number of respiratory therapists (RTs) grew by almost 19% from 2009 to 2014. Coinciding with this growth is an exponential turnover of educators from accredited programs. The profession must continue to prepare quality respiratory care specialists amidst the approaching retirement of the profession's experienced educators. The ongoing educational needs of the respiratory care profession may bring many clinical RTs into the academic setting, which can be a beneficial and challenging endeavor. Incoming faculty should be aware of the rewarding, but difficult, transition to academia.

Working as an educator provides the opportunity to impart knowledge, as well as a sense of passion, to incoming RTs. Playing a role in the development of a student from a novice to skilled professional is a worthwhile experience. In many ways, a staff RT can be beneficial to this process. Practicing RTs are aware of the competencies and professional needs of the working clinician. Experience gained in acute care highlights the needs of an effective specialist, as well as insight into effective care of high acuity patients. Specific instances from practice can easily be tailored to patient scenarios for students, and knowledge of equipment provides opportunities for hands-on teaching. The clinical relevance offered by "working" educators as they begin their practice of education is often well perceived by students.

The transition to academia can often be challenging. The roles and responsibilities in academe are vastly unknown to the clinician considering opportunities in RT education. A new faculty member faces expectations of service, scholarship, teaching, and clinical practice, which coincide with the requirement to prepare comprehensive syllabi, lectures, learning activities, and examinations. The preparation alone is enough to overwhelm a clinician new to the practice of education. Incoming faculty should be aware of the time required upfront to meet these expectations. Any transition away from respiratory care clinician roles is likely to be difficult. Academia poses challenges for which some new faculty members may not be fully prepared. However, having access to resources facilitates continued growth. For clinical RTs considering a career change to education, seeking a mentor can be extremely beneficial. The challenges presented to a clinician turned educator are worthwhile as they can

provide the opportunity to grow personal knowledge, and most importantly, impact future respiratory care clinicians for many years to come.

Sarah Pehlke, MHS, RRT
Faculty Member
Bellarmine University – Respiratory Therapy

References

American Association for Respiratory Care (2014). AARC respiratory therapist human resources study 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.aarc.org/resources/tools-software/aarc-respiratory-therapist-human-resource-study-2014/>

Is Traveling Right for You?



Travelin Thru!

I've always had a really strong desire to travel and see the world, but up until now I haven't been able. I would never have thought that a career in healthcare would allow me to move somewhere new every 13 weeks. After graduation, a friend suggested becoming a travel RT and after looking into it, I decided it was the right path for me! I needed one year of experience so I spent a year in Louisville working at Norton Children's Hospital and then began my search for a travel position. Being a travel RT I've been able to work in hospitals away from Louisville and experience new ways of practicing respiratory care. I've been able to support my desire to

travel and experience new places including Las Vegas, Nevada; Grand Canyon, Arizona; Orlando and Naples in Florida and Chicago, Illinois. In February I will be taking 2 weeks to explore Italy, France, & England. Being a travel RT with Medical Solutions has allowed me the freedom to explore different locations and see new things. The requirements are not much different from traditional positions: an associates or bachelors in respiratory care, CRT/RRT certification from the NBRC, 1 year experience in respiratory care (sometimes specific to the hospital you are interested in traveling to), BLS & ACLS have been required for each position I have applied for, PALS & NRP for some facilities. My current assignment required the ACCS exam and Medical Solutions has reimbursed me 100% (what a fabulous incentive)! A license is required for each state you wish to travel to, and one perk of being an AARC member is inclusion to MANY state societies (which offer GREAT info regarding legislation and licensure renewal, not to mention traveling free of charge)! For more information, feel free to email me: TravelRTLee@gmail.com

Lee Wisdom, BHS, RRT-ACCS



Gryffindor
 Courage. Bravery. Determination.

The Respiratory Therapy Education Coordinator Role

The Respiratory Therapy Education Coordinator role can vary depending on the facility, but the core goal is to continually educate the respiratory therapists in the department on new and current topics, policies, procedures, and products. This role is very important

because the education coordinator prepares RTs to be an essential part of the healthcare team.

I greet all newly hired RTs to our department at corporate orientation and provide them with an orientation plan. I instruct their classroom orientation and setup their orientation days in the clinical areas. I also meet with them regularly throughout the orientation process to answer any questions and clear up any concerns. It is my responsibility to ensure that all RTs in our department are up to date on their skills, competencies, and licensures. In order to accomplish this, I create and instruct annual competency check offs and plan many in-services to help educate our department.

I meet with a variety of respiratory care product vendors and pharmaceutical reps to setup clinical in-services and possible clinical trials. This helps to raise awareness of new products that are on the market, and it keeps our department informed on devices and medications that they might come in contact with while caring for a patient who brings in their devices from home. As a Respiratory Therapy Education Coordinator, you are a leader in your department. I feel that the most important part of my job is to motivate RTs to reach their highest potential and to assist them in achieving their goals. I encourage all RTs to further their education, certifications, and credentials. This will make you a more marketable RT and can potentially create new options for advancement in the future.

I encourage all RTs to support their profession and become members of the AARC. As a member of the AARC there is access to FREE CEUs, articles on the latest products and research, and updates on changes and the future of respiratory care. This is a great way to keep up with the respiratory care profession!

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