

The Coalition Chronicle

Coalition for Baccalaureate and Graduate Respiratory Therapy Education

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“Quo Vadis”

José D Rojas, PhD, RRT, RPFT, FAARC
Chair, CoBGRTE NBRC Doctoral Award Committee

As I approach my 63rd trip around the sun, I pause to reflect on the things learned and wistfully consider the future of our profession. At this year’s Congress, I was heartened by Richard Kallet’s 1st annual *Robert M. Kacmarek Scientific Lecture*. The presentation was a great tribute to the legacy of a giant in our profession and brought to mind the words attributed to Sir Isaac Newton, “if I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.”

Respiratory therapy is a relatively young profession. Our continued advancement of the profession can be further enhanced by respiratory therapists (RTs) pursuing advanced degrees, including doctoral studies. Those who have trekked that route know that it can be challenging. Each one of us who has completed the task stand ready to support therapists pursuing that dream, but moral support alone is not all that is needed. We need visionary professional organizations to act in propelling us to be all that we can be.

I am happy to announce the collaboration between CoBGRTE and the NBRC to financially support RTs pursuing doctoral degrees. The CoBGRTE Board of Directors requested scholarship funding from the NBRC for therapists pursuing doctoral degrees. The NBRC agreed and graciously provided two \$10,000 scholarships for CoBGRTE to award to registered therapists who are pursuing doctoral degrees. Collectively, both organizations understand that the future of our profession lies in developing researchers, educators, and leaders of our profession. Those with doctoral degrees will have significant opportunity to advance the profession.

The CoBGRTE Board of Directors is pleased to invite applications for two, NBRC supported, \$10,000 scholarships. The intended recipient is a CoBGRTE member and a registered respiratory therapist pursuing a doctoral degree. The application criteria include being enrolled in a doctoral program, letter of support from the department chair or a committee chair, and submission of a ‘vision’

paper that describes: 1) how they plan to use their degree to advance their practice/profession/patient care, or 2) how the degree and subsequent work will close a particular gap in the existing research, or 3) why they are pursuing a doctoral education and how they plan to use it.

Applicants must submit their vision paper, curriculum vitae, and letter of support to the CoBGRTE scholarship committee chair by 1/31/2022. Award recipients will be announced in February 2022. The CoBGRTE Board of Directors thanks the NBRC for their financial support of this initiative.

Submit materials to:

CoBGRTE NBRC Doctoral Award Committee

Attention: José D Rojas, PhD, RRT, RPFT, FAARC

jdrojas@utmb.edu

CoBGRTE: A Year in Review

**Christy Kane, PhD, RRT, RRT-NPS, RRT-ACCS, AE-C, FAARC
President 2020-2021**

What a year!!! As we close out 2021, I wanted to provide the membership with an overview of CoBGRTE's activities this year. Here are the highlights:

- CoBGRTE's Board of Directors (BOD) met virtually in April and November. The BOD heard committee reports in April and concentrated on strategic planning in November.
- CoBGRTE's Executive Committee (EC) met monthly (virtually).
- Dr. Gregg Marshall (President-Elect) and I provided three reports (virtually) to CoARC's Board of Commissioners.
- CoBGRTE hosted a joint AARC/CoBGRTE Executive Committee meeting on March 5th.
- COBGRTE's EC published the following position statement regarding CoARC's proposed change to Standard 1.01.

It is the position of the Coalition for Baccalaureate and Graduate Respiratory Therapy Education that the current accreditation policy (CoARC Standard 1.01) remains in effect requiring that all new entry-to-practice respiratory care educational programs must award program graduates a baccalaureate or graduate degree in respiratory care upon completion.

In addition, CoBGRTE's EC wrote letters to the CoARC Commissioners regarding our concern about the proposed change. I also wrote the presidents of the AARC, American Society of Anesthesiologists, American College of Chest Physicians, Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions, American Thoracic Society, and AARC Board of Medical Advisors expressing my (and CoBGRTE's) concerns with the proposed change.

- Awarded Life Membership to Jeff Ward for his exemplary service on the Coalition Chronicle Editorial Board and his excellent submitted articles.
- Met with Kim Bennion to discuss skills and knowledge needed of new graduates (at both the baccalaureate and graduate levels).
- CoBGRTE collaborated with the AARC to host the first Student Journal Club in November. Dr. Viren Kaul led a discussion on his work *Describing the Digital Footprints or Sociomes of Asthma for Stakeholder Groups on Twitter*.

Additional CoBGRTE Committee Activities

****I apologize in advance if I missed something. Our CoBGRTE committees have been hard at work. Thank you to the chairs and committee members for their outstanding efforts.***

Advanced Practice Committee: Kim Clark, EdD, RRT, RRT-NPS, Chair

The committee developed a program guide/resource page for programs wanting to start an APRT program. The committee has been asked to work with the Legislative Committee to develop draft language for states wanting to add APRT licensure.

Coalition Chronicle Editorial Board: Tom Barnes, EdD, RRT, FAARC, Editor in Chief

The *Coalition Chronicle* published 12 excellent editions of CoBGRTE's newsletter.

CoBGRTE Graduate Council: Douglas S. Gardenhire, EdD, RRT, RRT-NPS, FAARC, Chair

Two "white papers" on graduate RT education are being developed. The first entitled ["New Models for Strengthening Graduate Respiratory Care Education"](#)

has been published in the AARC's *Respiratory Care Education Annual*. The second paper is being finalized.

Election Committee: Gregg Marshall, PhD, RRT, FAARC, Chair

The following BOD Officers were elected to serve for the 2022-2023 term:

- President–Elect – Doug Gardenhire, EdD, RRT, FAARC
- VP for External Affairs – Kim Clark, EdD, RRT, RRT-NPS
- VP for International Affairs – Janelle Gardner, DHSc, RRT, AE-C
- VP for Research – Chris Russian, PhD, RRT, FAARC

Exhibit Committee: Michele Pedicone, DHSc, RRT, RRT-NPS, Chair

The Exhibit Committee continues to meet in preparation for our return to face-to-face meetings. I am excited about the creative ideas they will launch in 2022.

International Outreach: Wendy Castro, MS, RRT

The International Outreach Committee continues to investigate a virtual “exchange” program.

Marketing Committee: Randy Case, PhD, RRT, RRT-NPS and Sarah Pehkle, MHS, RRT, Co-Chairs

The Marketing Committee produced 10+ videos for programs to use for recruitment.

Membership Committee: Daneen Nastars, DHSc, RRT, RRT-ACCS, Chair

The Membership Committee successfully launched our web-based application service, which allows for auto-renewal. The committee also facilitated the addition of one new corporate sponsor. Thank you to Jones & Bartlett and Draeger for their ongoing support.

New Program Committee: Ray Hernandez, MPH, RRT, RRT-NPS, Chair

The New Program Committee developed a program development website/resource page. The information can be found here:

<http://www.cobgrte.org/newprogramresources.html>. We hope this helps programs/institutions as they develop new entry-level and degree advancement baccalaureate and graduate RT programs.

Legislative Committee: Abdullah Alismail, PhD, RRT, RRT-NPS, RRT-SDS, FCCP, Chair

The Legislative Committee continues to work on draft language for the *BSRT-in-10* initiative.

Program Committee: Jamy Chulak, MS, RRT, Chair

The Program Committee hosted the CoBGRTE Virtual Summer Seminar on July 22nd. Attendees received three CRCE credits and learned about marketing/recruitment strategies as well as how programs can add additional skills into their curriculum.

Scholarship Committee: José Rojas, PhD, RRT, RPFT, FAARC, Chair

The Scholarship Committee awarded ten CoBGRTE Scholarships (including the inaugural Tom Malinowski award) for a total of \$12,000. In addition, they have launched the application process for the two \$10,000 NBRC-supported doctoral scholarships.

Social Media Committee: Megan Koster, EdD, RRT, Chair

This year the committee added a student member as well as increased CoBGRTE's presence on social media.

Strategic Initiatives: Chris Russian, PhD, RRT, FAARC, Chair

Dr. Chris Russian and Dr. Gregg Marshall led the strategic planning discussion at the November BOD meeting. The strategic planning findings will assist President Marshall as he establishes his goals for 2022-2023.

Web Site Committee: Tom Barnes, EdD, RRT, FAARC, Chair

The Web Site Committee continues to update the CoBGRTE site as needed.

Thank you to the CoBGRTE members and leadership for their work this past year. While challenging, I am proud of the work we accomplished. I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and all the best in 2022.

CoBGRTE Member Interview

**Nathan Rodrigues, MSIS, RRT, RRT-SDS, RRT-NPS, EMT
Assistant Professor, Texas State University**



What is your background, and how did you end up as a respiratory therapist?

It is diverse, I bounced around a lot; and the profession was never in the cards at its inception! I was born in Montana on an Indian Reservation. My grandmother was a Native American, and both sides of my family were living near there at the time. I grew up in the Pacific Northwest, which was an amazing place to be as a kid. My childhood was spent playing sports in the spring and fall, snow skiing in the winter, and my summers were often spent fly fishing in Montana with family. During high school, a military recruiter coerced me (laughs) into joining the United States Army. He told me about how *glamorous* it was to be a paratrooper, and that I could earn money to pay for college after I was done serving. So, I boarded a plane in Seattle and ended up at Ft. Benning, Georgia where I completed my basic training, infantry training, and airborne training. I ended up serving with the 505th and 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiments. I thought about that recruiter often when things were not as “glamorous” as he had portrayed it to be. Albeit he was correct about earning money for college, and I put emphasis on the word “earning”, because it was not a walk in the park (pun intended). But I learned early that life is precious, and anything worthwhile does not come without hard work and dedication.

After I completed my military enlistment, I was honorably discharged, and returned back home to Seattle. Although my military occupation was on the other side of the spectrum regarding its true purpose, I really enjoyed its fast-paced, structured environment with clear goals. Additional medical training was completed while in the Army which was directed towards treating basic trauma conditions in combat situations such as controlling bleeding, intravenous insertions, medications, airways, etc. It was basically “save your buddy” type stuff, and I was drawn to being able to provide that type of care. Service appeared to be the direction that best suited me, so I started searching for civilian careers with similar aspects that provided a way to give back. At the time, I considered working in law enforcement and the fire department before deciding that

healthcare was a more suitable fit and career. Living in Seattle, I set a goal to go to nursing school at the University of Washington, however acceptance into that program was very competitive, so I started working in emergency medical services to give myself an edge on my nursing application. I worked full time on an ambulance while knocking out my basic college courses. It was while working on the ambulance and spending a lot of time bringing patients to the emergency rooms when I decided, like many other respiratory therapists, that some of the tasks that the nurses were doing were not things that I wanted to do.

By this point in time, I had already completed all my prerequisite college courses for the nursing program and ruled out a career working in emergency medical services. So, I started looking around and asking colleagues and friends about other related medical options. Someone had mentioned to me that respiratory therapy might be a better fit. I reviewed the admission requirements, and the prerequisites were nearly identical to the courses that I had already completed. At that time, there were no four-year baccalaureate programs in Washington State; I really wanted to use my hard-earned education benefits to obtain at least a bachelor's degree. I started searching around the country for the best baccalaureate programs in respiratory therapy. After making a trip to Texas State University to visit its program chair, Dr. Gregg Marshall, there was no doubt in my mind. I moved to Texas and was able to support myself by working in emergency medical services while simultaneously completing my bachelor's degree in respiratory care.

Describe your journey to complete your graduate degree.

It didn't happen overnight. I began working on my graduate degree while completing the last year of my bachelor's degree. I have always been grateful of Texas State University to offer that opportunity because although it was difficult to work on completing both degrees simultaneously, it cut back on the amount of time it took to earn my graduate degree. After I completed my bachelor's degree and was solely focusing full time on completing my graduate degree. I was working full time as a respiratory therapist and continued part time in emergency medical services. After about a couple of years, it became too much, and I stopped working in emergency medical services. There were a few hiccups along the way, and I had to withdraw from the university at one point for a semester to re-focus my research efforts for my graduate thesis, but I stayed the course and persevered thanks to the mentorship and guidance from my committee and chair. In the end, the hard work and dedication paid off, and I graduated with a 4.0 grade point average.

How has your graduate education helped your career in education?

I discovered early on during my undergraduate studies in respiratory care that I wanted to teach at the baccalaureate level or above and made that my goal. All my professors were very knowledgeable, professional, and had an intrinsic desire to share their experience with the next generation of respiratory therapists. Education opens doors, and a graduate degree opens even more doors. It is important to study something that you are interested in, meaningful, and worthwhile. I was fortunate to be able to complete a graduate degree which allowed me to tailor my studies in respiratory care with other emphases in applied research and education. This was a perfect segue toward my goal of becoming a professor of respiratory care.

What is something that you tell your students/colleagues about furthering their education?

We have all seen the grumpy, negative therapists in the report room who will always be against furthering their education, because they believe that it is not needed in this profession. Many believe that an associate degree is all you need, and that advanced credentials are a waste of time. There is sometimes no chance of changing some minds. But the truth few will ever fault someone else for furthering their education. Whether it be through inservice education, earning an advanced degree, or through obtaining advanced credentials, furthering their education is investing in themselves. In our profession as respiratory therapists, we are healthcare providers, and when we invest in ourselves, we are also investing in patients. The outcome of their care directly affects them but also everyone else involved. Something that I often see in students is that they want immediate success right now, but success doesn't happen overnight. Anything worthwhile takes hard work, dedication, and time to build. If success happened overnight, they would not build the character needed to sustain success. The trials, tribulations, hiccups, and small victories along the way are all part of the learning and building process. I try to connect with my students and help them learn to be both patient and understanding. I explain that everyone makes mistakes, but it is the lesson that is learned through making those mistakes and failures that truly help build their character, personal growth, professional growth, and ultimately success. If there is something that my students remember me for, I hope that it is because I helped them understand that and pass it along to the next generation of respiratory therapists, so that their patients will benefit.

New Year Resolutions

CoBGRTE is reprinting savvy advice from 24 leaders in our profession from interviews published in *The Coalition Chronicle (2017-2021)* that asked the question:

What would you recommend to new graduate therapists just beginning their career?

The interview editors (Jeff Ward, Karsten Roberts, and Tom Barnes) hope that the advice will lead to New Year resolutions that will improve your quality of life and respiratory care practice in 2022. Many thanks to the 24 professionals that shared their advice. Institutional affiliations and credentials were operative at the time of the interview.

Joe Sorbello, MEd, RRT, Chairman Emeritus, Respiratory Therapy Department, SUNY Upstate Medical University – Syracuse - June 30, 2017

“Relax, always be open to learning and live that motto for your entire career. There are few things worse than being close-minded and arrogant. Remember that the patient comes first, always. Be kind to everyone, especially those who seek to hurt you. Be accountable for everything you do and say. If you can, make work fun. Do not let your work or your profession define you but seek to be excellent. Learn how to work and develop yourself both professionally and personally. Did I mention to have fun? Life is short, enjoy it!”

Robert L. Chatburn, MHHS, RRT, RRT-NPS, FAARC, Research Manager of the Cleveland Clinic, Professor, Department of Medicine, Lerner College of Medicine, Case Western Reserve University, editorial board member, RESPIRATORY CARE. - July 31, 2017

“First of all, find your purpose in life and let that guide your choices, all of them. Second, find mentors who have achieved what you want to do, and let them guide you. Formal education is just a pass to get through the doorway. The rest is up to your motivation, mentors, and your good karma. **And always remember – to achieve extraordinary results you must live an uncommon life.**”

Robert Kacmarek, PhD, RRT, FAARC, Professor of Anesthesiology, Department of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine Harvard Medical School Director of Respiratory Care, Respiratory Care Services Massachusetts General Hospital. - August 28, 2017

“First, **get a job that is going to challenge you**. Make sure the institution where you chose to work will help your professional development. The worst thing for an RT to do is to go to a small community hospital doing routine care that will not help their growth and development as a professional. They should seek institutions that will force them to develop, that will force them to learn and to be exposed to the full spectrum of what respiratory therapists can do. They will never develop without taking care of really critically ill patients. Steer new graduates to hospitals where they will continually learn.

Second, visualize your career 10 - 15 years from now. If you don't already have a baccalaureate degree, you should get one, even better, get a master's degree. Remember think about what you want to do in the future and **be prepared** to take advantage of opportunities.

Third, **find a mentor**, regardless of which direction you want your career to go you will need a mentor. It is impossible to know what to do in many professional situations without someone to guide you, to point out the benefits and pitfalls of a potential decision. The longer you have the advantage of having a mentor the better it will be for career.

Fourth, do not be afraid to **take risks**, to extend yourself beyond your perceived limits. Nothing will be achieved without a willingness to take that risk. If you are willing to work hard you do not have to be the smartest in the room. I am not, and for my entire career I have not been the brightest in the room, but I have **worked harder** than anyone else in the room!”

Teresa A. Volsko, MBA, MHHS, RRT, CMTE, FAARC, Director, Respiratory Care, Transport and the Communication Center, Akron Children's Hospital - September 28, 2017

“Be a risk taker! Embrace change, by seeking out and taking advantage of opportunities that allow you to stretch, grow and move out of your comfort zone. During your career recognize that there will be many individuals that can influence your career. Embrace the opportunity to learn from formal mentors as well as those who are not. The key to launching a successful career is being open to opportunities and new experiences. Lastly – pay it forward. Give freely your time and talents to your organization, community, and profession. You can make a big difference!”

Robert L. Joyner, Jr., PhD, RRT, RRT-ACCS, FAARC, Special Assistant to the Provost for Healthcare Programming, Associate Dean - Richard A. Henson School of Science & Technology, Director - Respiratory Therapy Program, Salisbury University - December 27, 2017

“Take a good accountability of what you don’t know. It’s vast and as you learn more it’s like peering over the mountain to see the limitless valley on the other side. Learn everything you can. Everything is your job. From making adjustments on the mechanical ventilator to helping clean a room just after a code. Always be respectful and have some understanding of how the words you are using will be received. Will they portray the correct sentiment or are you responding in the heat of a moment? Never allow yourself to be put in a position where you must say I don’t know what the next step is. Even if that next step is “I need to do some additional reading.” Your patients and other caregivers depend on your knowledge. Take responsibility for it and work at it every day.”

David C. Shelledy, PhD, RRT, FAARC, FASAHP, Dean and Professor, School of Health Professions, University of Texas Health Science Center, CoBGRTE President (2018-2019). - January 28, 2018

“I would encourage aspiring new graduates to complete the BS degree in respiratory care and go on and complete one of the emerging MS degree programs that are becoming more and more available across the country. For those with no experience in respiratory care, but a strong science background and a desire to work in an amazing healthcare profession, I would encourage prospective therapists to explore one of the entry-to-practice respiratory care MS degree programs, such as are available at Rush University Medical Center, Georgia State University, Samford University, Bellarmine University, St. Alexius Medical Center & The University of Mary, UT Health, and UTMB.

We also need many more respiratory therapists prepared to teach, perform research and fill other professional leadership roles. There are now several MS in respiratory care and PhD programs in health sciences, which will provide the training and education needed for these leadership positions.”

Margaret F. Traband, MEd, RRT, FAARC, Professor & Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, The University of Toledo - February 28, 2018

- “• Believe in yourself and in the value of your profession
- Take pride in your work and have compassion for those you treat
- Continue to seek new knowledge
- Share professional and disciplinary expertise with communities of interest

- Develop a career plan, modify as needed
- Develop your communication skills
- Actively participate in your professional organizations”

Karen S. Schell, DHSc, RRT, RRT-NPS, RRT-SDS, RPFT, RPSGT, AE-C, CTTS Clinical Assistant Professor University of Kansas Medical Center AARC President-Elect - March 27, 2018

“Put your patient first, trust what you have learned, find a mentor, and get involved.”

Will Beachey, PhD, RRT, FAARC, Professor Emeritus, Department of Respiratory Therapy, School of Health Professions University of Mary, Bismarck, ND - June 29, 2018

“Keep in mind that upon graduation you have just opened the door to a new world of learning. You have an obligation to your patients to continue your education and stay abreast of new developments in the profession. This means you have duty to be a part of your professional organization, the American Association for Respiratory Care.”

Carl Hinkson, MS, RRT, RRT-ACCS, RRT-NPS, FAARC, Director, Pulmonary Service Line Providence Regional Medical Center; Everett, WA AARC Adult Acute Care Section Chair - October 31, 2018

“For the first three years’ work at your job to establish your skill set. You need to reach the level of unconscious competence before moving to the next stage of your career. Having clinical competence is necessary before moving on. It is important to realize that you can never stop learning. Too many clinicians have been practicing more than a decade but haven’t learned anything new since they graduated from RT school. This is a mindset that helps you be introspective about what can you do better to help your patients. Lastly, never stop pursuing your goals, but also be realistic about them.”

Natalie Napolitano, MPH, RRT, RRT-NPS, FAARC, Research Clinical Specialist, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA - November 29, 2018

“You have entered a profession, not found a job. Keep learning. Medicine is lifelong learning, if you stop looking for answers and accept the status quo than you have become an ineffective clinician. Strive to practice at the top of your profession. Be a member of the AARC, they are fighting for you. Do not work for a

manager or director that is not a member. Respect is earned not given; you need to work for what you want. So much is learned in the process.”

Daniel D Rowley, MSc, RRT, RRT-ACCS, RRT-NPS, RPFT, FAARC, Clinical Coordinator, Pulmonary Diagnostics & Respiratory Care Services, University of Virginia Medical Center Charlottesville, Virginia - December 28, 2018

“Take pride in being a respiratory therapist and commit to a career of life-long learning. Identify people you work with who demonstrate professionalism, clinical excellence in patient care, and the image you see for yourself in the future. Work hard to apply existing knowledge while also learning how to use and leverage evidence-based literature to help guide clinical decisions. Ask for help when you need help and speak up when you do not understand something. Take initiative to identify and solve problems and aspire to be a transformative leader that improves patient care and all that you do as a respiratory therapist. Be the change you want to see!”

Dr. Lynda Goodfellow, EdD, RRT, AE-C, FAARC, Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Georgia State University - August 30, 2019

“For new graduates entering the profession of respiratory therapy, my best advice is to never allow your AARC and CoBGRTE membership to lapse, continue your education to the highest level, read the journal *Respiratory Care* cover-to-cover every month, and attend the AARC Annual Congress as often as you are able. I believe these to be the secrets to maintaining and renewing your connection to the profession.”

Robert C. Shaw Jr., PhD, RRT, FAARC Vice President, Examinations National Board for Respiratory Care Overland Park, Kansas - October 31, 2019

“Assume you know enough to get yourself into trouble. Proceed cautiously while asking questions should you want to avoid this trouble. Despite recent incidences of skepticism about expertise among some who wish the world was different than it is, advancing one’s education still tends to help. Citing exceptions does not prove this tendency to be false. However, achieving an advanced education level does not promise career advancement or change. Skill while interacting with people remains part of fulfilling the potential that advanced education creates.”

James M. Maguire, Ph.D., RRT FCCP Emeritus President, Maguire Healthcare Consulting, LLC Senior Consultant, VA Regional Medical Center Visiting Professor of Medicine, Xi'an Medical University - April 30, 2020

“The bottom line is that you must love your job and continue to make yourself better at it. My advice is to get advanced degrees, cultivate friendships, look for opportunities, think outside the box, volunteer for national professional association and state affiliates. When possible, conduct research, and publish its findings. Help other professionals learn so they can become better at what they do. I’ve learned the value of treating everyone as you want to be treated, and never, never, ever, lose sight of what a privilege it is, to make the world better place for our patients.”

Dean R. Hess, PhD, RRT, FAARC, FCCM Massachusetts General Hospital & Northeastern University Boston, Massachusetts - August 31, 2021

“Be a clinical leader: There is a difference between the boss and a leader. All of us can be clinical leaders; few of us are the boss. Make a difference in every clinical interaction. Advocate for your patients. Bring the best available evidence to the care of every patient.

Never stop learning: Try to learn something new every day. Read RESPIRATORY CARE and other journals. Pay attention to the peer-reviewed literature. There should come a time not too long into your career when what you have learned after graduation is greater than what you learned before graduation.

Use the best evidence: Evidence-based practice is the standard. There’s no acceptable alternative. Don’t be one of those persons who goes through their careers doing the same things over and over with increasing confidence.

Be a team player: Healthcare delivery is a team activity. If you do not agree with the care plan, use the best available evidence to advocate your position and get it changed. Don’t take pot shots at other members of the team. Be respectful of other members of the team and they will respect you. “Play fair. Don't hit people. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.” (Robert Fulghum)

Remember your family: Work hard, but schedule time for your family. Be available for your parents, spouse, and children. “I've always thought anyone can make money. Making a life worth living, that's the real test.” (Robert Fulghum)

Take time for yourself: Also take time for yourself. Find something that you enjoy doing outside work. Find the best balance between profession, family, and self.

Support your professional organization: Finally, support the AARC. We're all in this together. "And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world it is best to hold hands and stick together." (Robert Fulghum)"

Charles B. (Bud) Spearman, MEd, RRT, FAARC Assistant Clinical Professor, Loma Linda University School of Allied Health Professions, Department of Cardiopulmonary Sciences Respiratory Care Programs - September 30, 2020

"Here are some recommendations I have for new graduates: The first thing I recommend to new graduates after acquiring your RRT credential is to find a job that will give you a broad, sort of generalist patient care experience if possible. I believe that most new graduates are not quite ready for specialty areas and will benefit from a range of experiences with adults in general care and rotations through ICUs. After honing your skills in patient assessment, therapy application, airway care, mechanical ventilation etc., you then might consider being assigned to specialty areas such as adult, pediatric and neonatal critical care, home care, rehabilitation, and sleep labs etc. Assisting in departmental business aspects or staff education are also considerations. You should seek out any of the specialty credentials that you feel will help in your work and professional development. Memberships in the AARC, your state societies and CoBGRTE are highly recommended as is volunteering for these organizations when possible.

You should continue reading and researching information on best care methods, seek out the best continuing education information for your credentials and your practice areas. You should seek out and be available to mentors whenever possible whether they are at the workplace, professional meetings or elsewhere. Consider what the next level of formal education might do for you. Graduates with an AS degree should look for a bachelor's program as soon as possible and BS RTs should investigate graduate degrees that might apply to your professional development plan.

Take advantage of chances to contribute to your profession whenever possible. You never know where it might lead. Here is an example: In the early 1980's then president of the AARC Glen Gee, RRT asked if I would consider an appointment to the NBRC and I accepted. There I was able to help create and modify credentialing exams along with leaders in the profession such as Fred Helmholtz, MD, Robert Kacmarek, PhD, RRT, FAARC and many others that also served as mentors to me in their own way. Work for the NBRC at that time also included helping states that wanted to use an NBRC's exam for state licensing.

As I worked teaching at LLU in BS RT programs, I had an interest in promoting the development of other bachelor's level and graduate degrees in respiratory care. So, when Tom Barnes, EdD, RRT, FAARC was looking for people of like

mind to join a professional association called CoBGRTE I signed on. Currently I am finishing my last year on the Board of Directors of CoBGRTE. It has been my honor to serve with the leaders of respiratory care education and management on this board.

In the early 2000's, I had the opportunity to accept an appointment to the Respiratory Care Board of California (RCB) which is the licensing board for respiratory care practitioners in the state. My past medical director, co-editor and friend Richard Sheldon, MD, FAARC was also on the RCB at the time and encouraged me to accept the appointment which I did. I served eight years on that board from 2006-2014 serving as president from 2013-2014. During my time on the RCB we were successful in changing the minimum entry credential needed for a license from the CRT to the RRT. I was fortunate to represent the RCB and LLU at each of the 2015 and Beyond workshops presented by the AARC in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

So, to new graduates as you settle into the respiratory care profession, think of how you can serve your patients by expanding your knowledge, experiences, credentials, education, and membership in professional organizations. Volunteer and take advantage of opportunities that come your way. Invest in yourself and your profession and you will reap benefits for yourself and your patients.”

Tom Smalling, PhD, RRT, RRT-NPS, RRT-SDS, RPFT, RPSGT, FAARC Chief Executive Officer Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care Northport, New York - October 25, 2020

“Your first job(s) after graduation are critical to how you will view your potential in the profession. During my first job, I was working while completing my senior year at Stony Brook University (this was prior to state licensure). It was me, another fellow student, along with the burnt-out night shift therapist that covered the entire 400-bed hospital. We learned a lot but had no leadership and guidance. I thought to myself, if this is what it's like at other places, I'm going to burn out pretty fast myself. After graduation, we both got positions at the Northport VAMC. It was so different at this new place. Most of the staff were graduates of the program, the department director and medical director were very supportive. We could do pretty much everything- we were first in line to intubate over anesthesia (intubating a patient is stressful enough but try having an anesthesiologist next to you while doing it). We placed arterial lines, ran the 12 cardiac stress center, and set up a bronchoscopy suite in radiology just to name a few. That place made such a difference because it allowed us to reach beyond what we thought our potential could be as a respiratory therapist. So, if your first job is at a facility where you don't get to see much or do much, that may have a negative impact on how you view the profession.

You will learn more from your failures than from your successes. Never lose sight of the fact that the career you are entering is not an occupation – it’s a profession. Your passion drives your career. If you see yourself becoming indifferent or burning out, do something about it. Try expanding by looking at different areas of the profession. There are so many things you can do and remain a respiratory therapist.”

Katherine L. Fedor, MBA, RRT, RRT-NPS, CPFT Manager, Pediatric Respiratory Care Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital President, National Board for Respiratory Care - November 30, 2020

“My best advice to a new graduate is to care for patient as if each one is a member of your own family. Provide the best care means not looking for short cuts, being open to other ways to accomplish a task, yet being professional in offering evidence to support alternative approaches.”

Sheri Tooley, BSRT, RRT, RRT-NPS, CPFT, AE-C, FAARC, President & CEO 2021-2022 American Association for Respiratory Care Supervisor Respiratory Care Education Rochester Regional Health, New York - December 28, 2020

“Find a mentor who you trust and respect, and then model that professional behavior. Do not get caught up in negativity. All days are not good, but my grandmother always told me that you need to learn something new every day. Ask yourself at the end of the day, “what did I learn?” Will it help me in life? In clinical or business practice? In being a better person? As a role model to someone else? Then, apply what you learned. It is the well-rounded individual that makes the best respiratory therapist. And last, do not ever forget to pay it forward. Someday YOU will be the one training our next generation of respiratory practitioners.”

Pat Munzer, DHSc, RRT, FAARC Dean, School of Applied Studies Washburn University President, Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care - January 31, 2021

“My advice to graduates is to keep learning because our profession is always changing. It is also important for graduates to be respectful, honest, and kind to others. Treat your patients, colleagues, and others as you would want to be treated. Remember that respiratory care is not just a job, it is a helping profession. Lastly, be open minded to other’s opinions. You may not always agree with those opinions, but there is always something that can be learned.”

**Gregg Marshall, PhD, RRT, RPSGT, RST, FAARC Professor and Chair,
Department of Respiratory Care and Texas State Sleep Center-Director
Texas State University – Round Rock Campus, President-Elect, Coalition
for Baccalaureate and Graduate Respiratory Therapy Education –
February 26, 2021**

“The respiratory care profession is such an amazing profession. We are trained as “generalist” and required to know patient care from preemie/neonates to the very elderly. We have subspecialties that allow us to become content experts in our specialty areas. Our practice adds to the quality and quantity of life for respiratory patients, and we have the privilege of stepping into the patient room or home to make a difference that may be either immediate or progressive.

Education continues to be such a career-maker for RTs of the future. Several states are moving toward the “RRT for RCP” and “BSRC for RRTs” with big plans to advance the profession. I would say the BSRC degree is an essential starting place for all therapists who wish to make RT their life-long career. Once the “bug bites,” we all know what happens. We love the fast-paced, adrenalin-junkie rush of being in the right place at the right time to save a life or make a huge difference in their outcome. The clinical side of our profession will always make us smile with lots of memories—that is an essential part of our RT-DNA.

Doors open with advanced degrees coupled with excellent clinical knowledge and experience. The MSRC degree will open supervisor position opportunities, along with unit manager positions, fulltime teaching positions at community colleges and universities, and the PhD option opens up research, scholarship, grant writing, and academic leadership opportunities.

New grads: go ahead and RUN to the ICU, RUN down the hall to the ED, RUN to the codes and learn from it all. When you are ready, there is so much more ahead for you and just like in my life....one open door opens onto another open door which opens onto another open door.... it’s all out there just waiting for you!”

**Guy M. Nehrenz, Sr, EdD, MA, RRT, Interim Dean and Professor,
Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences Nova Southeastern
University - May 30, 2021**

Never limit yourself. Stretch and grow constantly. Look for opportunities for training. Be a part of the growth of the profession and the best health care provider you can be. Then expand. Increase your educational credentials. The best way to move the profession forward is to demand higher education and continued training.

**Carl Hinkson, MS, RRT, RRT-ACCS, RRT-NPS, FAARC, Director,
Pulmonary Service Line, Providence Regional Medical Center, Everett,
Washington - June 30, 2021**

“For new graduates I think it is important to recognize the value of spending the first few years of their career honing clinical skills to be *really good* respiratory therapists. The RT school can prepare graduates with a foundation and prepare them to be safe. Following graduation, it’s up to them to become *really good*. They have to become lifelong learners as health care changes; it’s changing all the time and that’s part of the fun; I didn’t see my first BiPAP machine until I began working in a hospital. I would also recommend that new graduates learn to get involved in their professional societies so that the profession can continue to grow. This is especially important in a post-COVID-19 period as we are looking at staffing shortages with both baby boomers retiring and Covid fatigue. We need more RT’s.

**Ellen Becker, PhD, RRT, RRT-NPS, RPFT, AE-C, FAARC, Professor,
Department of Cardiopulmonary Sciences, Division of Respiratory Care,
College of Health Sciences, Rush University, Chicago – October 29, 2021**

“The most important first step a newly graduated respiratory therapist could do is gain work experience and refine clinical skills. Learning something new every day is easy in the beginning but make this a lifelong habit. Learn from challenging situations and reflect on how you can improve. Remember that finding happiness in your career is mostly your responsibility. When opportunities in your workplace appear limited, be brave enough to move on if or when you are able. Alternatively, remember to engage in professional organizations such as the AARC and other groups to gain knowledge and leadership experiences outside of your primary workplace. Never underestimate the power of networks and the terrific comradery that results from volunteerism.

Lesson #5: The respiratory care profession can be a lifelong rewarding career!

[ASRT to BSRT & MSRC Degree Advancement Programs](#)

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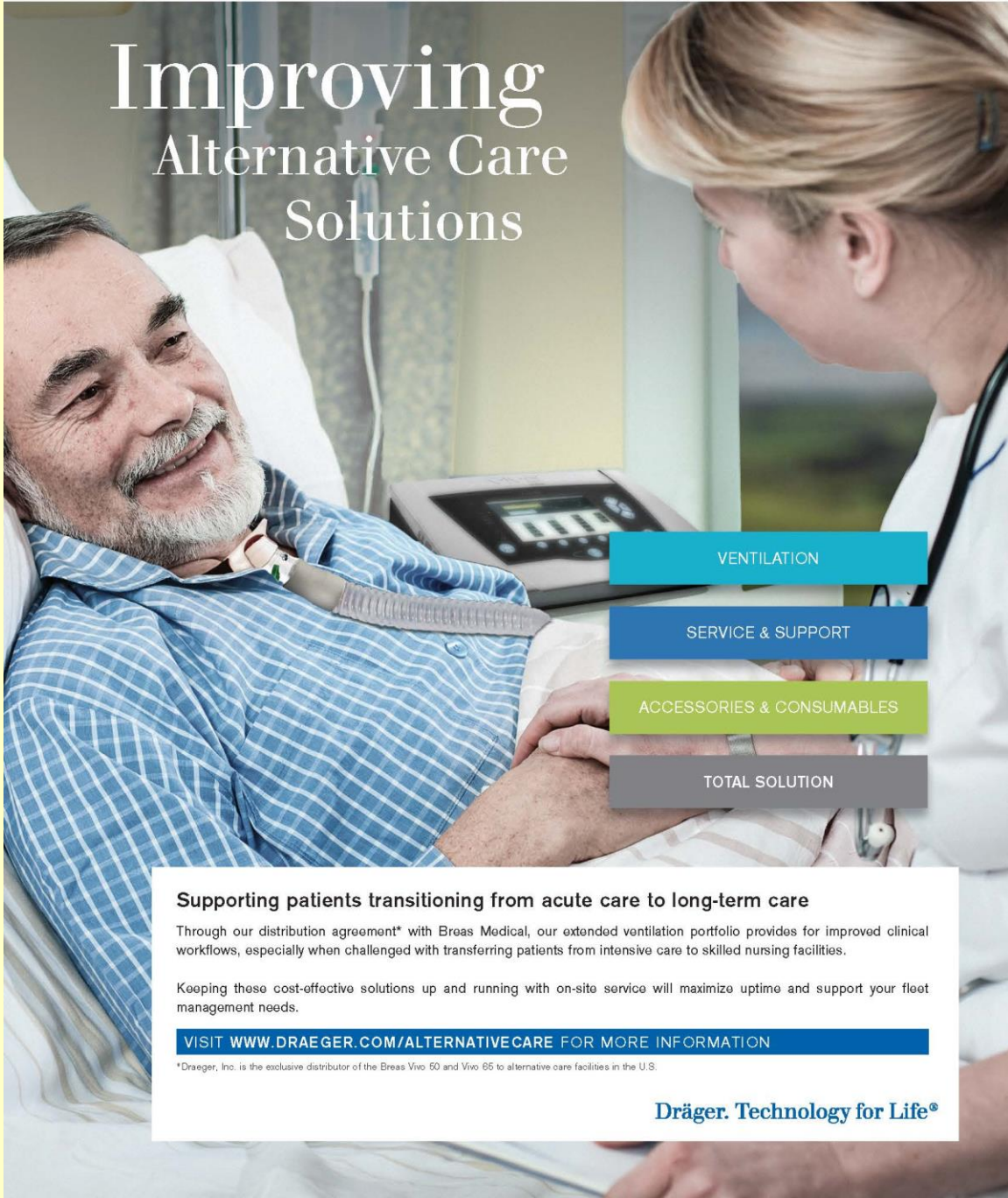
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If you haven't already decided to become a CoBGRTE member after visiting www.cobgrte.org, the following are 14 reasons why you should join the coalition.

Reasons Why You Should Become a CoBGRTE Member

1. Award scholarships to baccalaureate and graduate respiratory therapy students.
2. Assist in the development of ASRT to BSRT Bridge Programs.
3. Collectively work towards the day when all respiratory therapists enter the profession with a baccalaureate or graduate degree in respiratory care.
4. Support a national association, representing the 70 colleges/universities awarding baccalaureate and graduate degrees in respiratory care, to move forward the recommendations of the third 2015 conference.
5. Help start new baccalaureate and graduate RT programs thus leading to a higher quality of respiratory therapist entering the workforce.
6. Work to change the image of the RT profession from technical-vocational-associate degree education to professional education at the baccalaureate and graduate degree level.
7. Mentoring program for new graduates as well as new faculty members.
8. Join colleagues to collectively develop standards for baccalaureate and graduate respiratory therapist education.
9. Develop public relations programs to make potential students aware of baccalaureate and graduate respiratory therapist programs.
10. Help to publicize, among department directors/managers, the differences between respiratory therapists with associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees.
11. Access to over 75 Spotlight articles on BSRT and RT graduate programs, and major medical centers.
12. Round table discussion dinners and Meet & Greet member receptions held in conjunction with the AARC Summer Forum and the International Congress.
13. Help to support maintaining a roster and web site for all baccalaureate and graduate respiratory therapist programs.
14. Collaborate with CoARC and AARC to improve respiratory therapy education.

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