



2022–2023 NCRA CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE *Due date: February 17, 2023*

Please type your responses after each question. Your completed questionnaire should be emailed to Laura Butler at lbutler@ncra.org by **February 17, 2023**. Please include your name on each page of the questionnaire.

NCRA’s Nominating Committee may use your answers within this questionnaire and information provided in your curriculum vitae to reduce the number of candidates under consideration for an interview with the committee. Please provide as much detail as possible when responding. The answers to your questionnaire are confidential and are for the Nominating Committee’s eyes only. However, if there is more than one candidate for an open position, all responses pertaining to that position will be published to the NCRA website. The questionnaires will be removed immediately after the election.

Please attach a comprehensive résumé and/or CV with your questionnaire, along with three letters of reference from within or outside of the profession. Please note that Board policy states that, even though individual Board members are encouraged to submit names of highly qualified persons for consideration as possible candidates for the Board of Directors, Board members shall limit submissions to the name of the potential candidate only. As such, letters of endorsement or reference letters from Board members cannot be accepted.

Questionnaires and supplemental information such as letters of reference received after the deadline will not be accepted. Please note that reference letters are to be sent by the candidates with their questionnaire. Reference letters may be from non-members.

I. SELF-ASSESSMENT

1. What do you seek to contribute to NCRA by way of your Board service, both personally and professionally?

Professionally, I seek to contribute my leadership skills as president of the Maryland Court Reporters Association, Chair of the NCRA Membership Committee, committee member of the Student/Teacher committee, NCRF Angels Gatherers Committee and the PAC Committee. Serving as the Vice-President of Membership at the D.C. Courts Toastmasters Club, I can contribute strategies that I have learned to grow and retain members. I have a passion to serve and give back because of all that this great profession of court reporting has given me and my family.

I can contribute my views, opinions, education and experience. Upon successfully completing the D.C. Court’s yearlong Management Training Program in 2010, I am more equipped to work collaboratively on teams, committees, and boards to accomplish tasks and goals that benefit the greater good of an organization. I have learned how to listen carefully and to be heard, in a

professional manner. I always exhibit and maintain a professional level of respect, objectivity, and passion while in working environments. I seek to contribute diversity to NCRA, by way of Board service. My professional and personal experience as an African American female stenographer for 23 years in Washington, D.C., has afforded me great opportunities to intentionally create spaces and host events centered around diversity, equity, and inclusion. I have always had a heart to serve the under-served, to recognize the unrecognized, to include the excluded.

Obtaining a bachelor's degree in Court Reporting, an Associate degree as a Legal Assistant and a concentration in psychology, along with my leadership and career experience has prepared me for the position of Director of NCRA. I also know that no matter how many degrees, certifications or accolades I have obtained, I continue to be a humble person, ready to serve our great association.

Personally, I seek to contribute to NCRA, by way of Board service, my creativity and ideas, my passion to serve and promote our great profession, my positive attitude, my ability to have fun and be serious, when appropriate. Because of my life experiences, both personally and professionally, I can understand others and lead with empathy. Growing up in the south, I innately create an atmosphere of family, togetherness and belonging in my personal and professional life.

a. What motivated you to pursue this position? Why do you want to be on this Board?

My top motivation is that I love court reporting. It has been my passion since I was in the ninth grade... just a few years ago. I truly believe I was created to serve in this career. A friend of mine calls me "The Esther of Court Reporting." I believe that my talents and abilities will be beneficial to NCRA to help our present members thrive and to help future stenographers train well, stay connected and shape meaningful court reporting careers.

Secondly, I have experience on state boards as a director, secretary, president-elect, and president. That experience has given me a boost of confidence that would help me contribute my strengths, skills, and talents at the national level. I am excited about expanding my scope of volunteer service at the national level with NCRA. I believe this experience will help sharpen my skills, make me a more effective leader, and enable me to learn from other strong and talented court reporter leaders.

Thirdly, being an African American court reporter, residing in the Nation's Capital, I was motivated to pursue this position. I know that I would be a representative of a diverse organization that is welcoming to all NCRA members.

Why do I want to be on this Board? I would be honored to be on the Board so that I can

contribute my time, talents, education, and experience to help NCRA accomplish its current and future goals. I understand that there is a new NCRA Strategic Plan underway, and I am ready to contribute.

b. What is your understanding of the time and financial commitment of the position for which you are applying?

Per Section 4: Board of Directors #2, regarding time commitment, I am to attend and actively participate in all meetings of the Board, **of which** there are three: Preconvention meeting, fall meeting, and spring meeting, in addition to Board Zoom calls.

As it relates to the financial obligation, Board service is uncompensated and requires significant time commitments. Most expenses involved in board service are reimbursable. In addition, according to C: Cost and Expenses, Number 11 of the Policies and Procedures, it states that "Each party shall bear his or her own costs and expenses with respect to any proceeding except as may be specifically authorized by the Board." I am also aware that it is encouraged that board members give to NCRA court reporting-related ventures during their tenure, for example NCRF fundraisers, donations to A to Z, whatever offerings that NCRA Board members are expected to support, such as NCRA Strong and the Political Action Committee.

c. How do you feel NCRA board service will be different from state service? (Governance/Implementation)

NCRA Board service will be different from state service because it's on a national level, representing and serving a larger group of individuals, nearly 14,000 members. The Board members may be comprised of individuals from different geographical locations in the United States. Policies, procedures and decisions are made based on all reporters in the United States on federal and state levels, not just in a particular state. NCRA will advocate for stenographic court reporters, using a global point of view.

d. Why is now the best time for you?

Now is the best time for me to serve as a NCRA director because my term is ending as the President of the Maryland Court Reporters Association. Both the timing and my desire to serve make me an ideal selection to serve as an NCRA Board member. I am completing my 20th year as an official court reporter, and I am transitioning into CART and Freelance work, which will give me more flexibility to serve. It is a great time for me to challenge myself to become a better leader and communicator. Given the state of emergency, as it relates to

stenographers, this is the best time to vehemently promote the profession and to advocate on a higher level to carry out the mission and deliverables outlined in the Strategic Plan of NCRA.

2. How does NCRA Board service play a role in shaping your professional aspirations within the next five years? Ten years?

Board service will provide me with the necessary professional skills and experience I will need when applying for other opportunities within other NCRA committees and initiatives.

3. What are your interests and activities outside of the court reporting/captioning environment? Do you see any of these interests and/or activities as an asset to NCRA?

My interests and activities outside of court reporting/captioning environment are spending quality time with my daughter, event and conference planning, hosting seminar and webinars, creating graphics and products, serving in the community, traveling/vacationing, exercising, hosting practice sessions, speaking to students, encouraging others, teaching court reporting and boosting morale.

Yes, I do see some of my interests and/or activities as assets to NCRA.

4. Are there any proven strategies you employ to confront challenges in your personal and/or professional life?

Yes, there are proven strategies that I employ to confront challenges in my personal and professional life. Some strategies that I employ to confront challenges are determining if it's really a challenge, is it something that I can handle on my own or do I need to seek help from a respected professional to get advice on how to confront the challenge. I do my best to listen to understand others, assessing the challenge before responding. I also assess whether I am a contributor to the challenge. I have learned to carefully choose which battles to fight and which to let go. I have also learned that a soft answer always turns away wrath and that I can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. Because I have confronted challenges in life, I realize that trouble does not last always, and that joy will come. So, realizing that it's not the end of the story, gives me hope to continue to move on with a positive attitude, knowing that I will overcome.

Do you have other potential strategies on which you are working? Yes, I do have some potential strategies on which I am working on. I am working on making wise decisions on whether to speak with people that I may have a challenge with rather than responding through

emails or texts. Sometimes electronic communication can be misconstrued or taken the wrong way and I have found that a phone call can resolve a misunderstanding. Sometimes thinking before I speak is a great way to confront challenges in a professional manner.

5. Do you have a personal or professional relationship with any existing NCRA Board member that could contribute to a positive working environment or create a potential conflict? If so, please explain.

I do have professional relationships with some existing NCRA Board members that could contribute to a positive working environment. I have worked with Cindy Isaacsen on an event that I hosted entitled "Court Reporting & Motherhood" and an article entitled "Mind, Body, and Steno: The Steno Fitness Challenge.". I have worked with Immediate Past President Debra Dibble on events that I have hosted related to certifications. I have also worked with Cathy Penniston, as we taught an A to Z class together. I have worked with Saba McKinley, as she was a speaker at the High Tea for High Achievers event that I hosted for court reporting students at the NCRA Conference in Denver, Colorado. Saba was also a speaker/NCRA representative at the Maryland Court Reporters Association Conference. I have worked with Vice President Keith Lemons at Legislative Bootcamp 2019, as he was a member of our Bootcamp project sessions. I have worked with President-Elect Kristin Anderson, as she was the NCRA representative for MCRA's Conference in 2021. As a NCRA leader, as the chair of the Membership committee and serving on several committees, I have worked with President Jason Meadors professionally.

6. How do you use social media and how often do you use social media?

I use social media, mainly, to promote court reporting and court reporting-related events that I host or that other court reporters host. I also use social media to advertise products that I create and to highlight others who are doing great things for the court reporting profession. As an NCRA Brand Ambassador, I use social media to promote anything that NCRA would like promoted. As an Angel Gatherer, I use social media to encourage NCRA members and other to give and become NCRF Angels. As the creator of the Stenographers Leveling up with Certifications Facebook group, I use social media to promote NCRA testing and certifications.

a. With which social media platforms are you engaged?

The social media platforms that I am engaged in are Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

7. What is your familiarity with the NCRA Constitution and Bylaws?

I have read and understand the NCRA Constitution and Bylaws. I do not know them verbatim and would need them for reference, if asked about specific language in the Constitution and Bylaws. As a president of a state association, I do understand the importance and reason that they are needed when establishing any organization as they are a guide to ensure the purpose, goals and expectations of the

organization are being adhered to. I am familiar with the layout of the documents, as a president of a state association and having to revise and update bylaws.

II. ACHIEVEMENT IN LEADERSHIP

1. What comes to mind when you think of the ideal NCRA Officer and Director?

I think of a stenographic reporter who is passionate about the profession, someone who is serving or who has recently served on NCRA Committees. I envision someone who is respected and trusted in the profession by peers, students, and leaders. Someone who is professional, ethical, and who will be a representative on behalf of all stenographers. Someone who is promoting the profession and serving the community. Someone who goes above and beyond to advocate for the profession. Someone who is positive, visible, and supportive. Someone who promotes inclusivity and diversity. Someone who is welcoming and approachable, not judgmental or impatient. Someone who will be able to work collaboratively on a team of their peers to achieve goals for the benefit of the profession.

2. What strengths would you bring (or continue to bring) to the NCRA Board?

The strengths that I would bring to the NCRA Board is the ability to help execute established goals. I have been the president of the Maryland Court Reporters Association and served in several roles. I know my strengths and weaknesses. I have also been a member of the Values Change Committee at D.C. Courts where I was tasked with implementing creative ways to promote the values of the D.C. Courts to my peers and leaders in the court reporting division. Board meetings are important, so I strive to be consistent and responsive, attending and participate in all meetings. I have an ability to see strengths in others, which provides me direction when delegating tasks and encouraging my peers to join and serve on various committees.

3. What specific leadership skills do you possess that qualify you for the position you seek?

I have successfully served as a director on a state level as well as served as a secretary, president elect and president. As a leader, I act in good faith and in the best interest of the organization or committee that I am a member of. I seek input from all board members before a final decision is made and I support the final decision made by the Board. I keep confidential matters confidential. I am aware that my actions both professionally and personally may affect the organizations that I am associated with, so I strive to be impartial, unbiased, and professional as possible. I take on tasks with confidence and seek guidance, when needed. I have developed and established policies on a state level, so I am comfortable collaborating with other directors to develop policies. I am accessible and responsive to correspondences, emails and phone calls

in a timely manner. I strive to be as transparent as possible.

4. Indicate your most significant contributions to NCRA, your state, or other professional organizations.

Some of my most significant contributions to NCRA is serving on various NCRA committees, contributing court reporting-related articles, creating fun and exciting events for students and my peers, such as Steno Karaoke and steno practice sessions. Being a speaker at the NCRA conferences for NCRA and NCSA, promoting the profession and serving the community at such events as the Transcribe-A-Thon are some of my most significant contributions. I have introduced stenography to people who have never heard about it. Attending the NCRA Legislative Boot camp and going to Congress to speak with Legislators about Court Reporting was a significant contribution to NCRA.

On the state level, as the president of MCRA, I have participated in many Career Days in the Washington, D.C./Maryland area at local schools and at malls, promoting the NCRA A to Z program. These contributions have resulted in potential students enrolling in the NCRA A to Z program. Under my leadership as the president of MCRA, the membership tripled.

What led to the program or initiative being successful or unsuccessful?

I strongly believe that support, effective communication, advertising and marketing led to the program's success as well as membership attendance and participation, collaborations and teamwork. Having a great reputation, forming great relationships, planning and organization also led to the programs or initiatives being successful.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION AND NCRA

1. In your opinion, what are the greatest challenges facing:

a. the profession and why?

In my opinion, one of greatest challenges facing the profession is implementing court reporting programs in high schools and training people to become court reporters in a reasonable amount of time. Another challenge is training people, preferably people with a knowledge of court reporting, to become court reporting instructors or teachers.

Why?

We do not have enough people/court reporters who are available, physically or financially, to become court reporting instructors or teachers.

b. NCRA and why?

In my opinion, the greatest challenges facing NCRA is Membership. Why? I believe many reporters are retiring and/or leaving courthouses for a work/life balance, especially after the Pandemic. Some people fear their future in court reporting due to the threats of Artificial Intelligence. Many states do not require certifications in order to work, so some people do not feel that membership is necessary.

What would you like to see NCRA do to address those challenges?

I would encourage NCRA to reinstate the CRI Certification and the MCRI Certifications, along with a three to six-month virtual program or boot camp on how to teach court reporting beyond the A to Z program. This program will also teach, those interested, how to establish and set up a new school, either virtually or brick and mortar. I would like NCRA to join with NCRF to create a grant for certified court reporter instructors to help them establish and promote their court reporting school. We need to continue to promote Court Reporting as a trade in high schools, trade school and community colleges.

I would also encourage NCRA to stay connected with its current members, sending quarterly check-ins, polls, surveys and maybe quarterly or biannual videos from one or more of its board members informing members of how appreciative they are and that they have the member's best interest at the forefront.

As the chair of the Membership committee, we have promoted the value and benefits of being a member, as far as the savings, the support, educational and networking opportunities.

2. Of the programs or services in which NCRA is currently engaged, which do you think are most important to the profession's future?

Of the programs or services in which NCRA is currently engaged, I think what is most important to the profession's future is advocating for stenographers' employment in the workplace, nationally and internationally and marketing and advertising the importance of hiring a human stenographer to be the impartial and unbiased guardians of the record. Ensuring student retention and new professional success, the Career Launcher Program is also an important program that NCRA is currently engaged in.

What are your suggestions for new programs, enhancing current programs, or discontinuing current programs?

I think we need to allocate funds to offer more member benefits/discounts as it relates to health and wellness. A new program that I would suggest is an Advocacy Boot Camp. I would enhance

the Career Launcher program to include the different career options such as Officialship, CART and Captioning. A program that may be beneficial is to add CART and Captioning training programs for students and court reporters who are seeking flexibility.

3. What thoughts do you have, if any, on the current Board makeup and whether it adequately represents the career options that comprise NCRA membership? Are there ways that NCRA can improve upon addressing the needs of each group?

I believe the current Board makeup is comprised of experienced, selfless stenographers who love their profession so much that they have given their time, talents and skills to serve the organization and to serve the members of the organization.

I think the current board represents all career options that comprise NCRA membership, according to the requirements of being a NCRA board member. I do realize that videographers are also members of NCRA, but I understand, per the board requirements, they are not eligible to serve on the NCRA Board.

Are there ways that NCRA can improve upon addressing the needs of each group?

There are ways that NCRA can improve upon addressing the needs of each group. One idea may be to have Chat & Chew open forum or some type of virtual event with each specific group to discuss their current concerns, successes and how to navigate and handle different issues as it relates to their specific career option. This would be similar to the Town Halls.

4. What would be your response if a member asked you if NCRA should consider opening its membership and why?

If a current member asked me if NCRA should consider opening its membership, I would ask them to provide more details as to who NCRA should consider opening its membership to. My response would also be that current members have the right to vote on who should be a member of the organization and the NCRA works on behalf of its members. Additionally, I would also respond that I cannot answer that question of what NCRA should consider, but I could refer them to the mission, Constitution and Bylaws of NCRA as to the reason. I would also encourage this member to submit their requests and vote, if they are passionate about NCRA opening its membership.

5. NCRA bought a lottery ticket and won. What would you allocate the winnings to?

First, I would need to know how much the winnings were. I am going to be optimistic and say it's a winning ticket worth \$2 Billion. I would first seek advice from NCRA's chief financial officer

and request a Board meeting to discuss, with the board members, the needs of the organization and where the money should be allocated.

Some of my suggestions would be to pay off any debts that NCRA owes and allocate funds for future operating expenses for the next five to ten years. I would sponsor or partner with some brick-and-mortar court reporting schools to help support student enrollment, retention, and graduation. Allocating funds to help offset school tuition costs, may also be beneficial.

I would also allocate some of the winnings to help fund the initiatives of the Public Relations Campaign, supporting their marketing and advertising efforts as they promote the career of stenography. To help NCRA members regarding education and advancement, I would allocate funds to create NCRA Study/ Practice sessions/videos to help NCRA student members pass school tests and reporters obtain certifications. I would allocate funds to create a three- to six-month training program to help prospective teachers start court reporting programs. I believe some funds should be allocated to the PAC Committee to help with legislative and advocacy efforts. I would also allocate funds to host certification testing at NCRA conferences. I would definitely allocate funds to offset costs to Board members as they serve the association when attending conferences and carrying out the duties of a board member.

6. There are 13 Board Core Values. The following three values have been selected for your comments and input. Please express what each means to you, its importance to Board service, and how you have put these values into play in your professional life.

a. Transparency/Trust

Transparency means being aware of self, embracing the fact that you are not perfect, that you have and will make mistakes and that it's okay to admit and apologize when you are wrong. It's being able to comfortably speak your truth in a safe space even when it's hard to do because of what others may think of you. Being open and honest can be tough, but I have learned that it inspires others to accept who they are and to be open and honest. Transparency is important to Board service because it allows you to communicate with NCRA and board members about anything that's going on in your life professionally or personally that may cause harm or is seen as a conflict of interest. It is best to inform your Board members of any potential harm or conflict of interest before it is publicized and may cause a legal or financial burden to the organization.

Trust: Trust means being able to confide in someone, knowing that a trusted person will not try to harm you, embarrass you, judge you or gossip about you, that they will do their best to support, protect, help and guide you. Trust is very important to Board service because there are many issues that Board members discuss that cannot be disclosed to anyone outside of the board members. Confidentiality is the key and you must be trusted to refrain from disclosing confidential information. As stenographers, we learn to be

impartial officers of the court in trial proceedings, and Board service is no different.

How I have put Transparency and Trust into play in my professional life.

When I talk to students, colleagues and leaders, in candid conversations, I let them know who I am, who I am not, I admit my mistakes, I apologize when I am wrong. I speak about my strengths and weaknesses. Professionally, as it relates to trust, if someone tells me not to repeat something, I will not repeat it. When I say I am going to do something, I do my best to do it.

b. Mutual respect

Mutual respect means that everyone listens to each other's opinions without judging them, realizing that everyone comes from different walks of life and that everyone plays a vital role in decision making. Mutual respect, as it relates to Board service, is important because everyone on the board is serving for the same reason, to focus on the needs of the members and the enhancement of the profession. Board members are human beings, sacrificing their time, talent and abilities and everyone should feel welcome to express themselves and their opinions without being ignored or judged. Mutual respect garners a safe place for people and brings out the best in people.

In my professional life, I put mutual respect into play when I honor people's opinions no matter who they are, even if they disagree with me, even if they are students, leaders, peers, children or friends. I always try to look through the lenses of someone else's glasses to see what they see.

c. Member-driven

Member-driven means a lot to me. As the chair of the membership committee, membership is near and dear to my heart. Born and raised in the south, hospitality has always been one of my strengths. So, making members feel welcomed and appreciated is key. As it relates to Board service, we have to ensure that members are heard, educated, informed and recognized. I believe that nothing in life is successful without support and membership. So, the needs and voices of NCRA members are important.

Member-driven, in my professional life, as the president of the Maryland Court Reporters Association, my main focus is membership retention and securing new members. To keep members engaged, I offered free seminars to MCRA members on topics that they suggested. I respond to emails and questions that members may have in a reasonable timeframe. I inform members that our board members are just like them, working reporters, advocating for our profession. The goal is to make people feel connected and cared about.

7. What elements of the NCRA Strategic Plan do you view as most important to the profession's future?

While I view all elements of the NCRA Strategic Plan important, the most important to the profession's future is the Strategic Plan for schools and promoting the profession through intense marketing. "Expanding NCRA A to Z programs into high schools to boost awareness of court reporting and captioning and to increase enrollment in court reporting programs." Another element that is important is the shortage of official court reporters, which I believe has to do with work/life balance, mental health, flexibility and leadership(court administrators) not having the knowledge and experience of court reporters or educated about the job of an official court reporter and all that it entails.

How important is it to adhere to the Strategic Plan as created?

It's very important to adhere to the strategic plan as created because many educated, qualified, passionate stakeholders and stenographers spent countless hours contributing to and creating the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is beneficial to all stenographic career options as well as students, firm owners, instructors, videographers and court reporting advocates.

While that work must continue, we must be prepared to react to new legislation that may interfere with our NCRA messages. We must adapt when emergencies arise. As Board of Director members, we must be ready to act to unexpected developments as we continue to work on goals identified in our Strategic Plan.

8. What is your vision of the profession five years from now, and what role do you see NCRA playing in that vision?

Court reporters, along with lawyers, will be the backbone of legal depositions, trials, and official proceedings forever. I envision 95% of stenographers providing excellent Realtime services to its clients. I envision Stenographers being regarded as the gold standard and the first choice when hiring someone to capture the spoken word in legal proceedings. Stenographers will be valued, appreciated, and respected. Every courthouse will hire only court reporters to capture all trials proceedings. All court reporter vacancies will be filled by qualified, Realtime stenographers and all courthouse administrators will be leaders who understand the job of a stenographer. Remote Court Reporters will be able to fill permanent positions in courthouses. Courts will hire qualified new graduates out of school.

NCRA membership will quadruple. Members will understand the importance of membership, advocacy, serving and promoting the profession. Students will be enrolling and graduating from court reporting schools at a fast rate because of effective marketing, student support and new

professional guidance and mentorship. NCRA will continue to be the national organization that support, protect, and advocate for stenographers all over the world. The number of CART providers and Captioners will increase immensely because of the training funds received as a result of PAC Committee efforts and Legislative Bootcamp training. NCRA will continue to provide quality education and training to keep stenographic court reporters, CART captioners and legal videographers trained with the latest tools and technological skills. The Strong Committee will be even stronger and all of their research, advocacy and awareness efforts will be appreciated by all members and. Artificial Intelligence used in legal proceedings will be banned. NCRA will stay alert and vigilant in its quest to protect the profession and its members.

Name/Signature: Margary Rogers/*Margary Rogers*

Date: 2/17/2023

SUBMIT TO NCRA

Please save and send via email to Laura Butler at lbutler@ncra.org.