



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?

I see myself working well with other members on the board, as well as with NCRA staff, in working towards the goals and mission of the current Strategic Plan. I will be committed, focused, and a team player on any issues that the board may be confronted with.

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

My motivation is my passion for this profession and my undying support for my national association. I truly believe I am aware and in touch with the needs – and wants -- of membership. I'd like to see change in some areas, especially in the form of embracing the technology that is making our jobs as stenographers more efficient!

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

I understand the concept of "always on" when you're on a board, especially when serving at a national level. I do think the time commitment will be more than I've experienced before when serving, but I'm prepared and ready for this responsibility.

There's always some form of financial sacrifice when volunteering; time spent answering e-mails, text messages, or dealing with issues that arise is certain to take time away from daily work. I understand that I am required to donate to NCRF, of which I'm a second-year Angel. I also am aware that I'll be asked to contribute to the PAC.

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

Board service at a national level will be more complex than serving at the state level. The NCRA board must stay abreast of what's happening in each state.

Any major decisions and changes made to policy by the board must be viewed in the light of how it might affect states and affiliates as many states rely on NCRA standards in testing, certification, ethics, and policy.

- d. Why is now the best time for you?

With 33 years in the field, 10 years in state leadership, and 9 years serving on NCSA, I truly believe I'm at the right time in my professional life that I would be a contributing member of this board.

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

I have my dream job; I am an Official Court Reporter of the United States. I'm not seeking this position to strengthen my resume, but rather I see this as an opportunity to give back to an association -- and its membership -- that has played a significant role in my success over the years.

II. SELF-ASSESSMENT (continued)

3. What are your interests and activities outside of the court reporting/captioning environment?

I enjoy going to concerts, traveling, reading, and spending time with family and friends. I also am a co-founder and member of a women's shooting club, Women With Weapons (W3).

Do you see any of these interests and/or activities as an asset to NCRA?

Yes, I do. I was very much hands-on in forming the structure and mission statement of Women With Weapons. This concept of a women's shooting club was very new to me, but I did the research and put in the time to help form a club that welcomes and empowers women from all walks of life. I view the role I played in its formation as an attribute that I could bring to the NCRA board, knowing I can tackle any task put before me.

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

I'm task-oriented; I make a list, prioritize, and take action.

Do you have other potential strategies on which you are working?

Faith in God and knowing it's all in His hands.

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 have such positive memories with many board members from interactions through NCSA, at conventions, or speaker appearances at our association's events. I appreciate their professionalism and have nothing but respect for all members of the board.

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

I'm pretty moderate and reserved when it comes to social media. I mostly enjoy seeing pictures of friends, associates, family members; their travel, their kids, their animals. I keep my posts pretty positive and encouraging of others, and I avoid posts that may be inflammatory or offensive to others.

I am a Facebook administrator of "The Waiting Room," which is a laid-back version of Rich Germosen's 100-day challenge practice group. There are stenographers as well as voice writers in the group who are trying to improve their skills.

- a. With which social media platforms are you engaged?

I post mostly to Facebook and Instagram. I do have a LinkedIn profile, but I'm rarely on the platform. I do not have Twitter.

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

I will admit, I've gone back and read them during this process. Several years ago, I was in charge of revamping Virginia Court Reporters Association's bylaws. So I looked to NCRA's Constitution and Bylaws for guidance in certain areas.

II. ACHIEVEMENT IN LEADERSHIP

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

One who is transparent, approachable, and my equal.

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

I am one who likes to think outside the box. I don't shy away from throwing out a "crazy" idea or concept that may lead to a worthwhile brainstorming discussion. While I believe in tradition and tried-and-true techniques/concepts, I do think we need some forward-thinkers in this everchanging environment.

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

I listen, I research, I include others, I'm respectful, I'm responsive, I'm knowledgeable, I'm fair.

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

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

I've been an active member of NCSA since 2014ish, and I've been either chair or co-chair for the past six years; serving with Huey Bang, Liz Harvey, and Joshua Edwards. I was instrumental in launching the "Congress" under Max Curry and Sue Terry's direction, assisted in writing/reintroducing the resolution process with Liz Harvey, and contributed to writing several resolutions; most notably is the 2022 resolution to amend the Exam Retention Policy to include an appeal process. We conducted a poll that garnered over 600 responses which were for and against the policy. Ultimately, the board adopted the resolution and an appeal/reinstatement policy is in place.

When I was President of VCRA, I served on a "task force" under Virginia Senator Mark D. Obenshain and assisted with the initial wording of our now anti-third-party-contracting bill; fundraised to hire a lobbyist, John Stirrup; disseminated key Senate committee members' e-mail address links as well as NCRA's Voter Voice to members and Virginia reporters; met one-on-one with senators, delegates, and staff in Richmond; and testified before the Senate Courts of Justice Committee and the House of Delegates. The bill passed and is now law.

As Immediate Past President of VCRA, 2019-2020, I served on its Governing Committee and participated in the structure and preliminary writing of the proposed licensure bill. I met with Delegate Jason Miyares (Virginia's current Attorney General), and he agreed to sponsor our bill in the House. (With assistance of our lobbyist, Richard Stuart agreed to sponsor our bill on the Senate side.) At the General Assembly, the bill was "tabled" in committee in 2020 due to strong opposition by digital firms and their many hired lobbyists. It is VCRA's hope to re-present the bill when the timing is right.

In my role as co-founder of the W3 gun club, I researched and wrote the bylaws that were adopted by the membership. I'm not on their board at this time, but I am one of several who are finetuning our policies and procedures as we've been asked to open a chapter of W3 in North Carolina. Going forward, my role will be minimal and will be one of oversight to ensure (1) compliance with 501(c)(3) requirements, (2) that proper insurances are in place, and (3) adherence to bylaws and policies and procedures by future boards.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION AND NCRA

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

a. the profession and why?

Our number-one challenge is recruitment of new stenographers to the field. There's a lack of awareness of our profession, a lack of schools, and a growing presence/knowledge of artificial intelligence and digital reporting.

NCRA and why?

Membership numbers are dropping, and a lot of that is a direct response to my latter answer regarding the profession as a whole.

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

It's time to launch a massive advertising campaign to bring awareness to the profession.

I'd like to see NCRA work with community/junior colleges and universities to create a module program for court reporting that has a definitive time of completion to ensure success of students; thus opening up opportunities for student loans and grants to be more easily obtained.

I know I've heard the concept of representing our career to the National Honors Society. This idea should be addressed and pursued on a national level by NCRA and encouraged at the state level as well.

As far as membership, put members first!! Without our members, we don't have an association.

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

Certification is one that is very important. Many states rely on NCRA's certification to certify court reporters in their states. Federal courts use the RPR as a minimum threshold for applicants.

The A to Z Program is important. I'd personally like to see more data on the success of participants that continue on to a court reporting program.

The STRONG Committee has accomplished so much in bringing awareness of the dangers of digital reporting and putting in the spotlight the stenographer's role in the justice system and in CART and captioning.

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

I'm not privy to budgets and how much monetarily is allocated for certain programs, so I can't say with certainty what I feel needs to be discontinued. However, I do feel there's a missing yin-yang element when it comes to supporting STRONG. We need to institute programs bringing awareness to the field and attracting more stenographers to the field. STRONG has delivered on their end. Let's put into place a committee focused on bringing more professionals to the field.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION AND NCRA (continued)

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?

It seems there needs to be more of a representation of our CART and captioners. I realize sometimes it's hard to find people who are willing to serve, but it's important for anyone elected to the board to recognize that they represent and should support those interests as well. I must mention our videographers as well. The membership voted in 2022 not to allow them a "seat at the table." It's important that the board recognize and keep their interests in mind as well; they are members too.

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

My first thought is to ask for clarification. Opening membership to whom? According to NCRA's Bylaws, to add a new class of membership, it would have to be voted on by the membership and passed by a two-thirds majority.

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

- Members first!! We are an association that exists because of our membership. Let's reward our members first. As an example, it could be reimbursement for the last five years of dues, waiver of some future dues, or a one-time bonus.
- Then we hire more staff (or promote current staff) to focus on and oversee a future strategy that would bring awareness to the field, which may include some of my following responses.
- Then, after hiring a PR firm that reaches markets globally, we launch a campaign with creative advertisements and commercials. We use social media influencers. We buy air time during the most watched television programming; i.e., Academy Awards, the Super Bowl. Let's approach Family Feud during CRCW and fill that week with different state associations competing.
- We create programs and fund/build schools to educate new recruits.
- Create a Trust to ensure scholarships into the future.
- Create a fund to hire lobbyists, as needed, at the state level when key legislation affecting our industry arises.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION AND NCRA (continued)

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 is, to me, the most important core value to board service. It's vital that you have that trust with fellow board members, and trust is earned from your membership by being fully transparent. In my past leadership roles, I've seen boards work to accomplish so much when there is good communication that garners transparency and trust.
 - b. Mutual respect goes hand-in-hand with transparency/trust. It's important to be receptive to others' views, opinions, and ideas, knowing that yours will be heard as well.
 - c. Member-driven: As I've said throughout this questionnaire, NCRA's members should always come first! It's important to remember that NCRA is there to support all members, not just the fastest writers, not just the most "decorated" with certifications, not just those who participate and help out on committees. NCRA exists because of its membership! That is who I will serve if I'm selected to serve on the board.
7. What elements of the NCRA Strategic Plan do you view as most important to the profession's future?
- "Increase public outreach to highlight the profession."
 - "Advocate for increased caption quality legislation and standardization for captioning on television and videos."
 - "Promote stenography over digital recording/automated speech recognition."
 - "Review online testing platform, augment mentorship program, and create solutions for educational institutions wanting to add a stenography curriculum."
- How important is it to adhere to the strategic plan as created?
It's important to revisit the strategic plan throughout its three-year period to see what's working, what's not working, and to adjust the sails, so to speak, if need be.
8. What is your vision of the profession five years from now, and what role do you see NCRA playing in that vision?
I look to our future with a hope that technology will evolve to where it assists us in becoming more accurate and efficient but also keeps us relevant and vital in the legal arena and CART/captioning fields. NCRA should review its current practices with an eye toward bringing them up to date to reflect the way we work now and how technology is already assisting us.

Name/Signature: **Carol L. Naughton, RDR, RCR, CRR**

Date: **February 17, 2023**

SUBMIT TO NCRA

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