

Candidates for Councilor-at-Large:

Please vote for two candidates.

Teresa Bueno, DNP, MBA, MSN, APRN-C, FNP, FHFA, CCTC, CHFN



I am honored and humbled to accept the nomination to serve as Councilor-at-Large for NATCO as transplant has been part my 28 years of professional nursing career. My interest in this area of practice has continued to grow over time, throughout almost 3 decades I have had the privilege to provide care for transplant recipients and their families as well as contribute to the field of transplantation in many capacities such as bedside nurse in pediatric critical care, thoracic and abdominal transplant coordinator, transplant advance practice nurse practitioner, and mentored new transplant professionals. I have also served in various administrative roles, collaborated with organ procurement organizations, participated in research projects and volunteered on local and national transplant related committees.

In 2014, I left one of the largest and best transplant programs in the country to help develop a transplant service line within the healthcare system of my county of residence, 7 years later, we have created a successful multi-organ transplant center to serve our community residents who no longer have to face the burdens of traveling beyond our county to receive life-saving transplant services. In my various roles within the transplant discipline, I have taken every opportunity to promote the importance of ongoing education, integrating evidence-based practice for both transplant professionals and patients to ensure best outcomes. Commitment is an integral part of transplant clinicians, this is why I became a Certified Clinical Transplant Coordinator and this also why I advocate for all qualified transplant providers' to become certified.

If elected, I intend to work diligently to carry out NATCO's mission to advance education, promote certification, and further professional development of transplant professionals.

John Clarke



It would be a true honor to serve on the NATCO board, continuing to build upon the educational foundation developed by all our predecessors. With the fundamental changes to how organs are allocated and the continuous technological and scientific innovations, it will be imperative that we continue to work together to foster consistency and efficiency in the donation and transplantation processes. This all starts with education, collaboration, and the continued professional development of our members, new and old. Through all my experiences and the knowledge that I have gained navigating the day-to-day challenges in all aspects of donation, I know I

am fully equipped to help lead NATCO forward and will work tirelessly to promote our Mission.

I have over 17 years of experience in the OPO community, with a vast knowledge of many different facets of both organ and tissue donation. I am proud to manage our 24/7 Transplant Information Center, who is primarily responsible for evaluating, authorizing, and coordinating tissue donors, allocating and coordinating local and import organs for transplant, and supporting numerous research initiatives for our high-volume OPO. I oversee kidney and pancreas allocation, serve as one of Gift of Life's Tissue Administrators on Call, and support internal and external educational forums for our clinical staff, as well as our hospital, transplant center, and OPO partners. I presented at the 2015 International Society of Organ and Donation Procurement biannual congress. I have served as the Co-Chair of the NATCO Kidney-Pancreas Committee since 2019.

Karan Collins



I am honored to be considered for a Councilor-at-Large position on the NATCO Board of Directors. My personal experience with donation and transplantation began in 1995 when my father died suddenly at age 59 and was able to be a cornea donor. My 23 years of professional experience in donation and transplantation followed several years later in 1998.

In 2003, I was fortunate to participate in the initial work with Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative. It was evident that the collaborative relationships between the OPO, donor hospital and transplant center were critical.

The past 12 years I have been an active member of NATCO. Currently, I am serving on the planning committee for the 2021 NATCO Annual Meeting. My goal for being part of the NATCO Board of Directors is to leverage the education and development opportunities; professional relationships and individual's passion to increase organ donation and transplantation. By sharing best-practices; increasing professional networking; and continuing to develop professional education opportunities we can continue to increase donation and transplantation and end deaths on the wait list.

Gwen E. McNatt, APRN, PhD, CNN, FNP-BC, FAAN



I am honored to be nominated for a Councilor-at-Large position on the NATCO Board of Directors. NATCO and I have a shared history as we entered the transplant community in the same year, 1979. Over these decades, I served in many roles: staff nurse, transplant coordinator (including a brief stint as a procurement coordinator), nurse practitioner, and administrator. I am also a researcher with one of my keen interests being the role of the transplant coordinator. My doctoral dissertation research explored the relationship between kidney transplant recipients and their transplant coordinators. This work demonstrated the pivotal role of the coordinator in the patients' transplant journey.

In addition to my job-based management roles, I have served in many leadership roles in the transplant community including the American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA), where I served on the board of directors twice, and the American Society of Transplantation (AST), where I have chaired two committees as well serving in many other transplant organizations. I am currently the co-chair of the NATCO Kidney Pancreas Committee.

Since I attended my first NATCO meeting in the 1980's, I have seen the practice of transplant coordination change a great deal and NATCO change as well. Education and training have always been a keystone of NATCO, but other members of the transplant community have moved into our education space and less dollars are available for travel and education. This pandemic has also taught us that virtual meetings are very possible and will be in demand. Providing quality education and training in a variety of formats for transplant coordinators as well as others in transplantation such as dietitians and tissue bank professionals will be a key to both member service and revenue generation.

I was surprised to learn that over half of the registrants for NATCO education and training are non-members. I believe we should continue to market our offerings to the entire transplant community as well as explore ways to convert these attendees to members as we need to stabilize, if not grow, our membership numbers.

I am very excited about the Emerging Leaders Program. I would like to see NATCO continue to offer Professional Development offerings to members and non-members alike. I am co-author of a paper in which we demonstrated the need for leadership training for transplant medical directors. This might be an opportunity for NATCO.

Lastly, I believe advocacy is important. As the co-chair of the Kidney Pancreas committee, I have been involved with helping the board respond to UNOS/OPTN calls for public comments. NATCO also has a history of advocating for legislation such as the National Organ Transplant Act (NOTA) and lifetime coverage of immunosuppressive medications. I also have been fortunate to be able to influence Medicare regarding the Conditions of Participation Interpretive Guidelines and crafting first-person consent legislation in my state.

I believe that NATCO is headed in an exciting direction and would be honored to help guide the organization in fulfilling its mission of advancing education, promoting certifications, and furthering the professional development of donation and transplant professionals in the community, to empower each individual to reach his or her highest potential.

Anita K. Sites, RN, MSN, AG-ACNP-BC, CCTC



I graduated from the University of Virginia in 1998 and have been fortunate to be part of the transplant community since that time. I started my nursing career as an acute care nurse taking care of abdominal transplant patients, also at the University of Virginia (UVA). In 2002, I began my journey as a transplant coordinator in the outpatient setting. While continuing to function in a variety of capacities within the UVA Transplant Center, the primary focus of my practice transitioned to the care of living kidney and liver donors in 2004. I completed my Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner program of study in 2015. I function as the clinical lead of the UVA Transplant Center's Living Donor Program.

In addition to my clinical practice, I am actively involved with multiple transplant program-specific and institutional initiatives such as ambulatory optimization, quality metric capture and analysis, staff education planning, and advance practice provider professional development. On a national level, I am a member of the National Kidney Registry Operations and Research Committees. As an active member of NATCO, I am a faculty member for the CCTC review course and am also a member of the 46th Annual Meeting Planning Committee.

As a member of NATCO and prospective Councilor-at-Large, professional education will continue to be the focus of my involvement and vision. NATCO is a proven industry leader in transplant education and continually responds to the needs of its members. In the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic, NATCO was able to rapidly transition multiple course offerings and meetings to virtual platforms with great success. A year later, NATCO's virtual optimization initiative has continued to improve while exceeding participants' expectations. My involvement in this virtual innovation has been a personally-rewarding learning experience. Many of my most meaningful professional relationships have resulted from my involvement with NATCO over the past several years. Being a part of creating these connections and celebrating our commonalities, as well as what makes us unique in our roles, ultimately enhances the patient care we provide. My vision as a leader in NATCO encompasses each of these goals.

Candidate for President Elect

Erika Demars, RN, BSN, CCTC



NATCO is a pivotal organization for the education of donation and transplantation and provides a large networking avenue with resources for the health care professional. Learning and taking care of patients should be fun, educational, and provide a sense of worth and accomplishment. The COVID 19 Pandemic and worldwide deficiency of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are unprecedented challenges, requiring us to adapt and look outside the box for solutions. I am highly motivated, organized and a promoter within the Transplant Community, always looking for ways to improve our daily workflow as well as the patient's experience. I work at Henry Ford Hospital and have been an Advanced Heart Failure/Heart Transplant Coordinator for the last 13 years, with my past 23 years as a cardiac nurse. During my career, I have been the lead of several process improvement initiatives and have spoken on a National level as to our success. I have been a NATCO member since 2014, on the Board of Directors since 2017, faculty member for CCTC Review, and am completing my Master's Degree in Leadership and Management. As such, I am confident I can face this new challenge, and will take ownership, change, accountability and leadership skills to the next level. I am hoping to take the position of President Elect so that we can all work together to make a difference within NATCO and at our current places of employment.

Candidate for Treasurer

Jennifer Reese,



It is a great privilege to be nominated to serve on the Board of Directors as Treasurer. I am a proud member of NATCO and have considered it an honor to serve on the Board of Directors over the past four years as a Councilor-At-Large. I have learned so much from my fellow Board members and the members of NATCO over the past decade of my involvement with NATCO. In addition, I have been allotted the opportunity to share my 22 years of transplant experience with the membership by helping develop annual meetings in the past, by serving as a Board liaison for the NATCO newsletter, *In-Touch*, and serving as a faculty member of NATCO's CCTC review course. It has been exciting to see how much NATCO has evolved and I look forward to continuing to be an integral part in NATCO's continued growth and success in the years to come. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my candidacy.