



## 2023 Questions to NAEMT Board Candidates

*Please include your response below each question. Please limit each answer to 500 words or less. Thanks.*

**Candidate: Joshua G. Corsa**

### Questions for 2023 Election Candidates

1. Define what you believe are the key characteristics of good leadership and describe the leadership qualities that you will bring to the position for which you are running.

Leadership isn't about me, it's about the people I serve. When I frame actions through that lens, everything else is easy. My leadership style is based on mentorship, education, and advocacy. I strive to foster an open and transparent dialog between myself, our staff, and volunteers. By being able to admit to the team when I was wrong, or could have done better, it gives everyone permission to do the same, without fear of judgment. It's amazing how transformative it is for an agency when people aren't afraid to admit mistakes and ask for help preventing future ones.

Sometimes leaders underestimate the value of a cup of coffee. How often has your chief come down to the station at shift change just to say hi and listen. I'm sure we can all remember seeing chiefs on codes, MVCs, or other critical calls. But when was the last time the leaders showed up on a BLS call? We need to remember we serve everyone on our team, and make sure we devote equal amounts of time to each role on the team and learning about their unique successes and challenges.

We need to empower our people with the tools they need. This means equipment and staffing, but it is also giving them the mental tools they need. Mentorship and education are key components of leadership. As a leader we should always strive to be replaceable, because eventually we all retire. Find good people and train your people to be good leaders. Lastly, I minimize how often I say no. In my agency, my answer always starts with yes. The question is how we do it. Imagine what that does for morale, and for patient care, when

intelligent, caring, and passionate practitioners present ideas we may never have even considered.

All of this comes down to remembering why I'm here and who I serve and I try to remind myself of that every day. I continue to have the same enthusiasm for the job, and the people, as the day I started.

2. With additional stress on an already overburdened workforce, what steps can NAEMT take to support the health, wellbeing, and resilience of our EMS practitioners?

Many EMS practitioners are tired, stressed, on the brink. The ever-shrinking pool is being asked to shoulder more and more of an increasing burden. It's not something we can solve with just an in-service. We need a holistic approach to EMS wellness that includes mental and physical health, as well as addressing the working conditions that precipitate these issues.

Our approach should be two-fold. The first priority is to strengthen and expand existing programs, including the Mental Health Resilience Officer course (MHRO). This crucial education needs to be shared throughout the country. A quick scan of the remaining 2023 course list shows four instructors teaching seven classes in three locations nationwide. We can do better. The NAEMT should take the lead in reaching out to EMS leadership to emphasize the importance of each department having someone responsible for practitioner health. The NAEMT should also remove as many barriers to attendance as possible, including geographic and financial, so departments of all sizes and locations can attend.

Numerous studies have shown that the EMS profession, especially night shift, is an independent risk factor for poor health outcomes. But few EMS practitioners have ever been taught how to mitigate the ill effects of our work. The second priority should be to expand the scope of resilience and wellbeing. The NAEMT should lead the way in educating, advocating, and partnering with other organizations for better physical health in our EMS practitioners. We should explore developing a partner course to the MHRO, or expanding the existing MHRO program, to encompass physical health as well. This class should integrate function fitness, diet choices, sleep hygiene, and other healthy choices that support resilience.

Only by addressing wellbeing through an approach that addresses all aspects of health, as well as the root causes, can we help our workforce to not only survive, but thrive in the current EMS environment.

3. What do you believe EMS practitioners from younger generations are seeking from membership in a professional association, and how can NAEMT best respond to their needs?

Younger EMS practitioners bring a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds to the profession. They, like many young professionals, aren't content with just following orders. And they shouldn't be. They demand the "why" behind decisions and practices. This is a good thing, and a culture that should be fostered at all levels. Many EMS practices and procedures suffer from the same syndrome – "that's how we've always done it." Engaging younger generations and harnessing that "why" is good for all of us, and the profession. It allows us to adapt, update, and refine our practices so they are responsive, inclusive, and based on research.

They are seeking, quite simply, a place where they can make a difference. A place where they can help steer the future of their chosen profession. A place where their voices are heard and valued. And the NAEMT should be that organization. We should take advantage of their passion and drive by engaging promising young professionals in all levels of NAEMT leadership, from course development to committee and board membership. As the largest EMS organization in the country, the NAEMT should also explore forming and funding a research arm, that can provide grants and mentorship for young EMS professionals that want to help answer the many "whys" left to be answered.

4. Explain how you communicate the value of NAEMT membership to existing and potential members.

I communicate the value of NAEMT membership through results. Most NAEMT members aren't aware of even half of what the NAEMT does for the profession. While many are aware of its extensive list of educational offerings, few realize how powerful the NAEMT functions as an advocacy organization. It truly speaks for all of us, large and small, military and civilian. Through this, it has been able to accomplish multiple objectives that would be unattainable without such an organization.

I'm a firm believer in active engagement. When somebody asks me about an issue, I respond with - "If you don't like something, stop complaining and start trying to change it." Due to its size and diversity, the NAEMT is the organization to effect that change at the local, state, and national level. But it can't properly represent our myriad of viewpoints and experiences without members. The NAEMT needs members that are engaged, active, and are vocal about sharing their concerns, viewpoints, and ideas on how we can improve as a profession.