

National Asthma Educator Certification Board

# ANNUAL REPORT 2004



*National Asthma Educator Certification Board*

## Reflections

It has been my privilege to serve as the chairman of the board for the NAECB over the past two years. As I reflect on the many accomplishments of the NAECB, my deepest appreciation goes to the board members, their contributions, and our certificants for their many hours of dedication to our mission.

I would like to share just a few of the highlights:

- Two abstracts were presented at the 2003 National Asthma Conference
- Initial examination statistics were presented at the 2004 CDC Asthma Conference
- The Linda B. Ford Scholarship Program for Asthma Educators was established
- Certificants elected the first group of new directors in 2003
- A strategic plan and vision matrix was completed with goals and action plans for 2004-2006
- A reimbursement website was launched at [www.naecb.org](http://www.naecb.org)
- The admissions committee added two new professions to the eligibility requirements
- The first NAECB newsletter was published
- The marketing committee completed a PSA for release in 2005

The presence and value of the certified asthma educator is continuing to expand. In the fall of 2004, the number of AE-C<sup>®</sup>s grew to over 1000! Those who struggle with asthma each day and their families will reap the rewards of this milestone.

As you read this, we are in the process of developing a Self-Assessment Examination (SAE) that many of you have requested over the past couple of years. It is amazing what can be accomplished through a shared mission and vision by a group of passionate individuals. I extend my personal thanks to each of you and especially the executive committee who have volunteered countless hours behind the scenes.

Looking forward, two years seems like a long period of time, but as I reflect now on this extraordinary time in my career, it now seems like a "moment in time" that I was privileged to share with so many of you.

*Susan Blonkine RRT, RPFT, FAARC, AE-C*

Board Chair 2003-04

**2004 Board of Directors**

Susan B. Blonshine, BS, RRT, RPFT, FAARC, AE-C (Chair)  
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Papillion, NE

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Katonah, NY

Gregory J. Redding, MD, AE-C  
Children's Hospital and Medical Center  
Seattle, WA

**History**

In January 1999, representatives from more than 50 stakeholder groups met to discuss the need for an asthma educator certification process. The American Lung Association served as initial catalyst and convener. A nominating committee was selected, a slate of Board members proposed, and the stakeholders elected the first volunteer Board of Directors. The Board held its first meeting in September 2000, selected its officers and approved bylaws. The bylaws were approved early 2001 after several revisions. The board is comprised of 17 individuals representing the multiple disciplines involved in asthma education, including allergy/immunology, behavioral science, emergency medicine, nursing, patient advocacy, environmental health, health education, medicine, pediatrics, pharmacy, public health, pulmonary and respiratory therapy. The Board also includes a Public member and an At-Large member.

**Background**

The role of the asthma educator has increased over the past decade as research has shown the importance of a well-educated, informed patient. Currently, there are multiple "certificate" programs offered by various sources, including local American Lung Associations. There is no regulation of these programs and no means to measure outcomes. By providing a certification process, patients, providers and healthcare payers will be assured that information provided by a Certified Asthma Educator (AE-C®) is based upon scientifically sound concepts. The NAECEB is the only organization in the United States with a national certification process for asthma educators. Asthma specialists recognize the need for a standardized process to certify asthma educators and to evaluate their effectiveness in disease management. Another goal of the Board is to support third-party reimbursement for asthma counseling.

**Examination**

The examination was offered for the first time on September 19, 2002 with 32 candidates sitting for the examination. As of December 31, 2004, 1073 certificants had been awarded the certified asthma educator (AE-C®) credential. The national pass rate for all candidates is approximately 70%. The 1,000<sup>th</sup> certificants passed the examination on November 19, 2004. Physical and occupational therapists were also approved in 2004 as healthcare professionals eligible to sit for the examination.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The National Asthma Educator Certification Board (NAECB) has developed and implemented qualifications/standards, as well as a certification examination for Asthma Educators on a national level. The NAECB is interested in outcome studies to evaluate the effectiveness of education by an Certified Asthma Educator (AE-C®). The NAECB process follows the successful models and standards of the Canadian Network for Asthma Care and its Certified Asthma Educator (CAE); the National Certification Board of Diabetes Educators and its Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE); The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), Standards for Certification Programs and the National Organization for Competence Assurance (NOCA).

The NAECB has:

- Developed certification examination including content areas, specific questions and validation
- Developed Asthma Educator job description (including role delineation and work analysis)
- Developed standards for Asthma Educator certification
- Determined eligibility for admission to examination (assure accessibility to a broad spectrum of health professionals)
- Ensured that all groups concerned with asthma education are represented directly or indirectly in the Board's membership and actions
- Assured that exam content is updated in an on-going and systematic manner
- Monitor/ensured validity of AE-C® process
- Determine requirements for certification and re-certification

The NAECB is committed to:

- Advocating for reimbursement of asthma education services by AE-C®s
- Achieving NCCA accreditation
- Communicating effectively with candidates and certificants
- A quality examination consistent with state of the art asthma management
- Recruiting, developing, and retaining item writers
- Quality research highlighting the effectiveness of quality asthma management
- Utilizing a marketing plan that increases brand recognition and promotes AE-C®s
- Maintaining the quality and diversity of the board through rigorous nominations
- Developing sustainable partnerships regionally and nationally
- Implementing data management strategies

### **Linda B. Ford, MD Scholarship for Asthma Educators**

In order to recognize Linda B. Ford, M.D., the first Chair and a founding member of the NAECB, the Linda B. Ford Scholarship for Asthma Educators was established. This scholarship was created to provide assistance for individuals pursuing their national asthma educator certification. The NAECB is the first and only U.S. organization to provide a national certification examination for asthma educators.

This is our way of honoring Dr. Ford for the hard work, dedication, and passion she has shown in the support and creation of the first ever national asthma educator certification examination. By making this scholarship available to individuals who might not be able to afford the examination fee, NAECB hopes to advance the goal of promoting excellence in asthma education.

Tori Lynn Child, RRT, RCP of New Mexico and Mary Jane Foos, RN, MSN of Ohio were the first two individuals to be awarded the Linda B. Ford, MD Scholarship in the fall of 2004.

### **Reimbursement**

Reimbursement for asthma education remains an important focus of the NAECB. Under the direction of Dr Carlos Camargo and Shawn McCormick, BS, RRT, AE-C, the reimbursement section was first posted in October 2003 ([www.naecb.org/cbr](http://www.naecb.org/cbr)). It now includes data from 34 states! Several other states are almost ready for posting and we hope to complete all 50 states by the end of May 2005. A key person in this website project is Sabra Caldwell ([scaldwell@naecb.org](mailto:scaldwell@naecb.org)), a reimbursement specialist who welcomes your comments and participation! Dr. Linda Ford continues to work with the American Medical Association on a CPT code for reimbursement of asthma education.

### **e-Newsletter**

With the number of certificants increasing, the NAECB wanted to maintain contact and provide valuable information about the benefits and opportunities to those with the AE-C® credential. In March 2004, the first edition of the *Certificant Connection*, an e-newsletter sent by email, was launched. This quarterly publication contains articles about reimbursement, stakeholder and sponsor profiles, news events, and other items of interest to certificants and potential candidates. To receive the *Certificant Connection* or to read past issues, visit the website at [www.naecb.org](http://www.naecb.org) and click on Certificant Corner.

**Financial Statement – FY2004 (January-December)**

<b>FY2003 Net Assets</b>	<b>\$95,787.48</b>
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<b>FY2004 Assets</b>	
Testing Fees	123,009.76
Corporate Grants	15,000.00
Other Income	564.31
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$138,574.07</b>

<b>FY 2004 Liabilities</b>	
Exam Development & Fees	50,272.51
Reimbursement Project	60,311.93
Management & General	60,023.94
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$170,608.38</b>

<b>FY2004 Net Assets</b>	<b>\$63,753.17</b>
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**Sponsors and Stakeholders**

The National Asthma Educator Certification Board recognizes the important contributions provided by all of our sponsor and stakeholder organizations. The American Lung Association has consistently provided in-kind donation of office space and equipment and other valuable management services. A full listing of all our sponsors and stakeholders can be found on our website at [www.naecb.org](http://www.naecb.org).

American Lung Association      AstraZeneca  
 Genentech                      Gregory Redding                      Lynda O'Hanlon

**Presentations 2004**

**Susan Blonshine, BS, RRT, RPFT, FAARC, AE-C**

Coalition Summit  
 Lansing, Michigan Fall 2004  
 "Asthma Educator Certification- The First Year: What Have We Learned?"

Centers for Disease Control Conference  
 Atlanta, Georgia Spring 2004  
 "Asthma Educator Certification- The First Year: What Have We Learned?"

**Carol C. Costante, RN, MA, NCSN, FNASN**

National Association of School Nurses Conference  
 Seattle, WA June 2004  
 Award Received for Best in Clinical Practice

**Antoinette Gardner, RN, BSN, M.Ed., AE-C**

American Thoracic Society  
 Asthma Special Interest Group  
 Orlando, FL May 24, 2004  
 "Update on National Asthma Educator Certification"

St. Edward Mercy Annual Respiratory Symposium  
 Ft. Smith, Arkansas April 24, 2004  
 "Asthma Education and the National Asthma Educator"

**Kristin L. Homze, RN, BSN, AE-C**

American College of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology Annual Conference  
 Boston, MA November 2004  
 "Asthma Educator Certification: Why Is It Important?"

**Sindee Karpel, MPA, RRT, AE-C**

Naples Community Hospital  
 Naples, FL October 2004  
 "Asthma: Can RT's Make a Difference?"

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

1150 18<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Ste. 900                      Washington, DC 20036  
 Phone: 202-785-3355                              Fax: 202-452-1805  
 Email: [info@naecb.org](mailto:info@naecb.org)                              [www.naecb.org](http://www.naecb.org)