



2025 Board Election: Candidate Q&A

Candidate Name: Julius Jackson KHS, NREMT, FAWM

1. How would you describe your leadership style, and how has it shaped your work in EMS?

- My leadership style has been shaped by farming, Scouting, and military culture.
- I was raised on a farm in Texas. One of my earliest projects was carrying the staples for my great-grandfather to repair barbed-wire fences. I discovered the value of paying attention to the small details that could become signs of bigger problems. I am not shy to take on a hard or unpopular task and I am offended at the idea that someone can work harder than me.
- As a young leader in the scouts, I thought I could simply order people around. One day some of my closest friends laughed in my face and walked away. In that moment, I realized that ruling by decree didn't work very well with my peers, and probably isn't the best model of the time. In college, I "rushed" a service fraternity with historic ties to Scouting. When I learned that they didn't engage at all with the local Scouting community, I gathered up some fellow cadets and helped establish a chapter of the National Eagle Scout Association at Texas A&M University.
- The pinnacle of young adult life was getting accepted to the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University, Aggie Band, the largest military band in the United States. We practiced hours on end in all kinds of weather nearly 7 days a week for one purpose - to deliver 7 1/2 minutes of precision military ceremonial drill during halftime. The rigors of regimented life taught me a profound lesson in perseverance and how to fail without giving up on myself. I enlisted in the Texas State Guard in 2000. After the 9/11 attacks, I would be given responsibility to help rewrite the entire mission and scope of my company oriented to accomplish new Homeland security missions. I was a Senior NCO when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast and devastated New Orleans and Hurricane Rita landed on Texas. Over the years I was activated for at least 3 additional hurricane responses and three missions on the US Mexico border.
- These experiences gave rise to my career in EMS. I still can remember thumbing through "Orange books" laying around my Scoutmaster's house. Scouting taught me first aid and my first patient was probably in 5th grade, a neighbor. As an NCO and Commissioned Officer, I lived the mantra "Mission First, People Always." No matter how high I rise in rank, I'm always trying to check the fences of my organizations for small problems I can fix now to avoid bigger problems in the future. Whatever the task, I'm always ready to roll up my sleeves and work in the heat, in the rain, in the cold, and spend the long days right alongside everybody else. I will never be too important to take the time to talk to some of our newest members, nor too smart to respect the perspectives of members who have served decades.

2. In what ways do you advocate for EMS? What strategies would you recommend for NAEMT to strengthen its advocacy efforts and gain recognition for EMS as an essential service?

- If we don't tell our story, someone else will!
- I advocate for EMS by serving as a member of the NAEMT Advocacy Committee, as Advocacy Coordinator for the District of Columbia. Through this Committee, we help inform, educate, and cultivate support from elected officials for laws that help our profession better serve the community. I advocate for EMS on a local level by continuing to work with the state superintendent's office to offer EMS education to high school students and explore ways to expand those offerings. I also participate regularly in the EMS Stakeholders meetings held by DC Health. In recent years, I have worked with local elected leaders to research an initiative to lower the age for EMT licensure to 16 in DC. I am honored to serve on an advisory committee to the University of the District of Columbia as they work to establish an accredited paramedic program, this will return EMS training to our "state" university after a 30-year

hiatus. I designed a Facebook group to promote our DC advocacy efforts. I also attend the annual EMS on the Hill Day and where possible I bring high school students studying in the EMS pathway. Last year, they joined EMS Caucus Breakfast. I advocate for our profession every day by wearing an EMS uniform to the school where I teach.

- Expanding and increasing our Advocacy Coordinator roles is a major step in strengthening our efforts, we cannot have too many. I also think continued engagement with state associations is the right way to make NAEMT the premier source for information about our industry, especially to elected leader leaders. I think we have the capability to become indispensable to civil authorities who want to make decisions about our industry. The key is making sure we have more and more people speaking our message in their offices and in their ears

3. How can NAEMT better support and develop the EMS workforce, particularly newer generations? How would you convey the value of membership to both current and future members?

- I serve on NAEMT Workforce committee. I had the pleasure to help champion our "I AM EMS" campaign, and to contribute to our publications: "Innovative Recruitment Strategies for EMS Agencies." One of our greatest workforce challenges is navigating the number of generations working within EMS. NAEMT can meet the challenges of younger generations by directly and engaging with them through student memberships, institutional memberships, social media, and by organizing events specifically for younger members. There are times when our paramilitary culture can stifle the opinions of younger members, who has stakeholders and employees in our profession should have just as much right to express their concerns as anyone else. Their lived experience bears no resemblance to the generations ahead of them for a variety of reasons which deserve attention and action in its own context. NAEMT can also help developing formal or informal training for the older generations to become able to understand how the younger generations approach the entire idea of work and careers. Much of the data is available from the career and technical education sector and secondary education communities whose primary student population will always be the next generation. NAEMT must be the conduit by which younger parts of our workforce become appreciated as the future of our organization and respected for what they can bring to the workforce without disparaging the contributions and vital places that institutional memory held by senior practitioners brings to our organization. There is also room for NAEMT to develop some policy statements around issues of concern to younger people entering the workforce. This can include certain social issues, tools about understanding payroll and economic issues despite our industry challenges, and helping agencies begin to think differently about what they offer to the younger generations for whom money may not be the primary concern. We might consider some of the practices found within the US military oriented to provide direct inputs to young people entering that profession designed around helping them make the transition successfully. The workforce committees research should also continue. Our members and broader stakeholder communities need reliable sources of information on our industry and we are uniquely placed to provide that information based on the experiences of our members and our partner organizations.

4. What is a pressing issue currently facing EMS and how could NAEMT help address it?

- In recent years there have been heated conversations around EMS education requirements, naming conventions of our profession, levels of clinicians, and parity of paramedicine within the medical community. If there is a move in this country to make strategic and industry wide changes in these areas NAEMT should do everything possible to be positioned as the go to source for how this is going to impact our workforce. The place of NAEMT in these conversations is to continue to share their consensus opinions and data reflecting our membership. We need to monitor the trends and the data that is beginning to come out about this and be the place that our members and community leaders look to for information to inform their decisions. I think we have a moral imperative to do whatever we can to address concerns that have their origins in outsized anxieties and fears. I think this is also an area where NAEMT would do well to deliberately engage with EMS organizations in countries that may have made some of these decisions or changes many decades ago and seen the results over time.