**Candidates’ responses to the Q&A are presented in their entirety without changes, edits, or corrections.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

M Tracey H. Penaloza, MSN, RN, CNOR

1. **Describe what makes you the most qualified candidate for the office of Board of Directors.**

I see myself as a good steward of resources, a quality that has served me well. I understand resources to be more than just financial assets, but also assets of trust and reputation. I understand that people’s trust and reputations are limited resources not freely given. By helping to develop long-lasting strategies, I will work with my colleagues to maintain AORN’s reputation of excellence during my term. As a prospective member of the Board, I will strive to foster the trust that the membership has in AORN’s continued resilience through thoughtful strategic planning.

1. **Describe a time when you had to make a difficult and unpopular decision that would affect your staff or colleagues. How did you handle the situation?**

I made the decision to not advocate for the use of travelers as a solution for the acute personnel shortage that my department was experiencing. Without travelers, the staff felt that they would not receive the immediate relief needed to meet increasing case volumes. As director of the department, I worked with executive leaders to create bonus structures that provided both nurses and surgical techs with travel-competitive rates for increased shift commitments. This opt-in solution provided the necessary increased departmental coverage while rewarding those who participated with increased financial incentives. Those who took advantage of the opportunity shared their successes in being able to pay off major debts, buy houses, and acquire other life-changing assets. Since that time, this solution has maintained the stability of the department's culture while also reinvesting in the permanent staff.

1. **Share one life experience, hobby, or fact about you that most people don't know and would be surprised to learn about you.**

Believe it or not, I’m a huge Pokémon nerd! I played my first Pokémon game in 1999, and I have been a fan of the cloyingly sweet aesthetics and surprisingly technical tactics of this kids’ game ever since. It was magical discovering a world of made up monsters, and thrilling to develop successful teams with which to play against friends and rivals. That was 23 years ago, and the franchise still gives me great joy when I am given the opportunity to indulge. I look forward to every game release, even if reviews are critical, because I cherish that sense of joy I had when I was a twelve-year old snot. I do not share my hobbies with others often, but finding another Pokémon nerd in the tall grass makes for an instant connection and a fast friend. My starter was Totodile.