

## **Claudia Rubio Samulowitz, USCCI**

Dear colleagues,

We might have met and exchanged anecdotes during some of the previous conferences, while we rushed from one workshop to the next or we may have shared the mic during an interpreting assignment but many more of you may not know who I am or what I have to offer to our association. I have been an interpreter and translator for over 30 years and a member of NAJIT for a long time as well.

I was born and raised in Mexico City. I am the proud mother of three sons and my 95-year-old mom lives with me in Indiana. I spent the first 15 years of my life in the United States in the San Francisco Bay Area, where I was introduced to Court Interpreting, which became the main focus of my career. I joined CCIA and NAJIT and started studying to become a Court Certified Interpreter. Before moving to the United States, I was training to become a translator and conference interpreter at the Instituto de Intérpretes y Traductores in Mexico City, but I never imagined I would end up practicing in this beautiful country.

In a nutshell, a two-month stay turned into a lifetime - 30 plus years and counting. Life has a way to steer us in new directions when we least expect it. I got my first credentials in California, then in Indiana and finally in 2005, I got my certified by the AO of the United States Federal Courts. It has been an exciting and challenging journey, which has allowed me to meet great colleagues, many of whom have become good friends and mentors - my very best sources of knowledge and support, which brings me to my next point.

I believe that our organization's strength is not only in its numbers, but in our love for the profession and I believe in paying forward. I would not be where I am today, without my colleagues' help and encouragement, that is why I do my best do the same for others, to open doors for the younger generations of Interpreters and Translators. That is the reason why I am asking for your vote, because I would like to make a difference from within. I have always believed in leading by example. An example of hard work and transparency. Those of you who know me, have seen me fight in favor of all the members of our profession, mentoring new colleagues, educating administrators as well as the Bench and Bar so all of us can have better work conditions, rejecting low-paying jobs to prevent our profession from being pulled down (often suffering the consequences,) and being a good steward of our profession.

If I am elected as a member of the Board, I will do my best to continue my quest to educate everyone who will listen and to promote the ethical practice of our profession. I will strive to be worthy of the honor to represent our members interests, invigorate our association and strengthen its image. Having said that, I will also ask for your support, because it is true, any organization is as strong as its weakest link. All of us can do something to help our profession and promote our association on a daily basis. Paying our dues and attending our conference once a year is not enough. I would encourage you not to be NAJIT secret agents, but active participants in our profession's growth and improvement. I would encourage you to help your colleagues, to educate the users of our services to keep honing your skills, to stay informed, to hold your board and administrators accountable and to recognize their accomplishments.

Thank you for honoring me with your consideration.