

Candidate Statement:

I am once again running for the NAJIT Board because I feel like there is a lot of work that needs to be done to help elevate our profession and to look out for our colleagues throughout the United States. When I reread my previous statement, I felt proud of the fact that I was able to accomplish many of the things I set out to do. By listening to members and their concerns on the listserv and on social media, I spearheaded the effort to provide the additional member benefit of the Healthcare Program. We have seen other smaller associations follow our example and that benefit is helping our freelance colleagues have even more options in their search for affordable healthcare. While I served as Chair, we worked to advocate for our colleagues in Texas when we heard the Chief of Police was asking for untrained volunteers to interpret for police encounters. We worked with the Advocacy Committee to issue a letter against the lowering of certification standards in Texas, and together the Board drafted and sent a letter regarding AB5 in California as it posed a serious threat to the livelihoods of translators and interpreters across the State. All of those efforts were a result of the joint efforts of the Board as I brought these issues to their attention, as the role of the Chair is to be the spokesperson for the entire Board.

In serving on the Board as a director and for the time I served as Chair, I made great efforts to help provide information to incoming directors so they would have direct access to the bylaws and NAJIT policies in place. I provided all directors with their own binder with all of that information available without the need to access it via technology. Serving on the Board requires more than just being a good interpreter or translator, it requires taking on a huge responsibility both in overseeing the association's finances as well as acting properly within the ethical duties. No one Board member can do anything on their own. The only way to have a productive Board is to have individuals who are willing to work as a team; discuss and debate issues, and ultimately respect the votes of their fellow members without jumping to conclusions or imputing motives. Being on the Board requires diligence in keeping up with emails and responding promptly to members. Again those responses require the buy-in from the entire Board. I would like to continue to strengthen Board policies to ensure that future Boards come in knowing what to expect, what their duties are, and how to fulfill them harmoniously as the foundation to being productive and working to strengthen our profession.

As a Board member, I have learned a great deal from my fellow board members. I appreciate Teresa Salazar's insight into ASTM, ISO Standards, and the importance of being aware of ILR (Interagency Language Roundtable) standards. Now, as I serve as Vice-Chair of the F43 Committee in ASTM, and in serving on the Board, I can help with the exchange of information necessary to uphold proper standards in certification and quality standards for both interpreting and translation. My one goal, that has not wavered, is to help members be aware of outside influences that can shape our profession and to help the profession as a whole be more alert to efforts to degrade our certification standards, quality standards, testing standards, and educational standards. I firmly believe that we should have a seat at the table wherever and whenever our profession is being discussed. Instead of being reactionary to changes that are imposed by outsiders, we should be at the forefront setting our own course.

One of the recurring themes we've heard from members during our virtual townhalls which I instituted as Chair, is the fact that not everyone can attend the annual conference due to the cost. I have been in conversation with various regional associations to discuss the possibility of co-sponsored regional workshops. The annual conference is a great experience, but that shouldn't be the only opportunity we have to meet face to face as colleagues to network and learn from each other. If elected, I will work to

not only expand the offerings of webinars in the NAJIT Academy but also work to put together affordable regional workshops. In hearing estimates that there are roughly 35,000 court interpreters in the United States, the Board needs to work on reaching out to all of those colleagues to see what NAJIT needs to do to be their association of choice and support the work we love to do.

I am once again asking for your vote so that I can work to demonstrate all that NAJIT can be for members and for the profession as a whole.