

Dear Colleagues,

Some of you may be familiar with me already; we may have met at a conference, through Social Media, where I administer a group for federally certified interpreters, or as a former Chair of the Bench and Bar Committee. If that is the case, you already know I keep a low profile. I am firmly involved in promoting our profession but I do it quietly for I am not one to seek the limelight. In this, I reflect a large part of NAJIT's members, the silent majority that sees matters in their association unfold from afar, with an opinion seldom expressed out loud.

Two years ago, I was honored to be elected to the NAJIT Board of Directors, there I became aware of the way our organization works; it has been an amazing, educational and challenging tenure. I experienced first-hand how people act and react under pressure. I have seen how people respond when a fellow Director goes through tough times and confirmed that true leadership is always accompanied by kindness, support and respect despite differences of opinion, because sadly, I have also lived through the opposite.

Amid sometimes heated discussions I have done my best to keep NAJIT my priority, working to lead it towards a better future, fighting to empower our committees and promoting an even stronger and independent Board. NAJIT needs to continue growing in numbers, but as we all know, growing up without maturing is a recipe for disaster. It is time to strengthen NAJIT from within, that is with the engagement of its members to oversee the well-being of their association.

Within the Board, we have gone through a rocky time of transition; a change in the Board's leadership was followed by some unpleasant and even unprofessional comments and actions. I supported the change based on what I saw was best for NAJIT, with the intention to fulfill my fiduciary duties which are to benefit NAJIT first and foremost. Not talking about this would go against my own promise and call for transparency in governance; Disrespecting my fellow Board members by going into greater detail would go against who I am, so I will stop here, but not before acknowledging Director Armando Ezquerra Hasbun, in whom I found not only a dedicated colleague, but a true friend and a brave leader, who put his reputation on the line to support NAJIT's best interests over private ones, and who has graciously continued working hard to make the 2020 conference a success and our association a source of pride for all of us.

I am a staunch proponent of respectful dialogue and always keep an open mind when listening to solid arguments, but I don't change my stance unless I am proven wrong, and never on a whim. If I am elected again, I will strive to continue representing the silent majority within NAJIT. My goal for this term is to help attract and mentor young colleagues, encouraging them to hone their professional and personal skills so they can foster solid and respectful relationships -that alone will turn them into good stewards of our professions when their turn comes to pay it forward by taking on positions of leadership. Until then, I hope to inspire and enable them to be good professionals and good colleagues. I invite each of you to stay informed about the business of your association by holding the Board and its administrators accountable without forgetting to recognize their accomplishments; I invite you to become true active stakeholders in the destiny of our association and in the future of our professions.

Thanks in advance for your consideration.