NAJIT’s primary goals as an association are to advance and promote the T&I professions and its standards, provide training programs to advance practitioner skills and keep members abreast of information about the profession. The board’s role is to ensure the fulfillment of these goals.

For a board to function as a representative of the members it serves, it needs to have individuals that represent determination, perseverance, tenacity, pursuit of excellence, and dedication. The past eight months have seen many changes in the way our association has been managed. I am proud to have served on a board which has accomplished so much in such a short time during such a turbulent time. Specifically, we have:

* Modified, edited, created, and implemented new policies and directives.
* Voted unanimously to conduct open board meetings for the first time in NAJIT’s history.
* Held two open board meetings and a successful town hall meeting open to non-members.
* Offered several free webinars with 15 possible CEUs.
* Met informally to work on letters, documents, policies, and other materials an average of three times per month.
* Met with committee chairs as a group, to welcome them and address important issues.
* Presided over the renaissance of Proetus and a new chapter on the NAJIT Observer.
* Offered parliamentarian training programs for all board members.
* Managed NAJIT’s finances in a highly responsible manner. Despite the cancellation of the annual conference and a challenging financial year, we achieved a similar income in 2020 as that of 2019.
* As part of its transparency efforts, created and shared with members our “Role of the Chair” policy requesting that future changes be shared with members.
* Written and distributed to AOCs, other institutions and members around the country the following statements and documents on behalf of members:
  1. Anti-Discrimination Statement.
  2. Letter in favor of the orientation program, as a first step in what should be a truly robust process of judiciary interpreters’ competency assessment, that in favor of the creation of certification program in Kansas in which the proposed orientation is only one element.
  3. Letter to clarify some misconceptions that may exist regarding the federal court interpreter certification.
  4. The Recommended Guidelines and Minimum Specifications for Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) for Spoken Language Interpreted Events.
  5. Call to action to courts regarding the importance of interpreter safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  6. Statement against reduction in minimum hours for remote interpreting.
  7. Comments in response to the California Judicial Council’s Recommended Guidelines and Minimum Specifications for Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) for Spoken Language Interpreted Events.

I have had the privilege of being an active part of this current board and look forward to continuing our positive momentum.

2020 was a tumultuous year and any long-term entity such as NAJIT needs continuity and stability. For our board to be successful, we must work collaboratively as a team. Specifically, what I bring to this board is a strong sense of commitment, passion, a true love of our professions, and a track record of having been part of five different NAJIT boards. As a part of each of these boards, I have been able to interact with different personalities and points of view. I believe in focusing on our similarities instead of our differences.

As conference committee chair, we are working on the possibility of a hybrid conference and dealing with the challenges and advantages that a virtual conference will entail. In addition, we plan to offer biannual sessions to provide members with a variety of ways to comply with CEU requirements.

I have worked as part of NAJIT’s board for several years almost in anonymity. The reason is simple. I am not volunteering for recognition. Many of you have probably never heard my name before. I am not here to promote myself. I am asking for your vote so I can continue participating in the work of this board as persistently and consistently as I have since 2015, a year after joining NAJIT.

I want to thank my board colleagues for all the support, help and friendship they have shown me over the last few years. Our common loyalty is to you as NAJIT members. Thank you for your time and attention to vote with conviction. That is what our association needs.

Hilda Zavala-Shymanik