

One thing I haven't told you about the General Service Conference is that this year there was a new thing called the "Delegate Sharing Session," where 12 randomly selected delegates (from a pool of those who made themselves available), could share for five minutes on either "an innovative Area service implemented," or "a significant Area challenge that was overcome."

I put my name in the pool and was not selected, so I didn't get to speak to our experience. But I wanted to be sure you know how much I appreciate the work we do, together, here in CNCA. I had all sorts of ideas rolling around in my mind, mostly about how we have been expanding our interpretation and translation services for years, supporting the annual Hispanic Women's Workshop (which has led to greater participation by this remote community locally), and how well we have been able to keep doing our business virtually in the pandemic.

The pandemic highlighted our digital divide, but also helped us overcome it. The interest in learning about technology has never been so strong, for many of us, but especially in our five linguistic districts. Members worked with each other one on one to get people on Zoom, and we see a lot of hybrid situations. Spanish and English districts are co-hosting events even more than before.

Did you know that Panel 71 is the first time we have had members from our Spanish linguistic districts make themselves available for all of our Area standing committees? I'm almost certain that this is the first time the Interpretation and Translation committee has ever needed to use its own services. Most importantly, all four (including Finance, Website, and Technology) now have representation and are better able to serve the Area as a result. And this happened in a pandemic year!

Last summer, when we were continuing the discussion of the two-year-old assembly motion to create our new Technology committee, it was Spanish-speaking women who were suddenly among the most outspoken for the need. Feeling the conscience of the area shift in response was truly a spiritual experience.

And when I logged into our Pre-Conference Assembly this April and saw our bilingual Tech committee and host district working together seamlessly, I was struck by how all these things had come together: interpretation, translation, supporting our Spanish-speaking women, electing and appointing diverse members into service, and bridging our tech divide.

This probably would have been more eloquent in a full five-minute share, but hopefully you too can appreciate how far we have come over the years. I know we will continue our efforts to overcome all sorts of barriers and keep growing in awesomeness and effectiveness as an Area... one alcoholic talking to another, and participating in all of AA.

In service and gratitude, Jennifer B., Panel 71 Delegate