

## President's Message

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."

--Phil Jackson

We are coming to the end of the 2016/17 school year. For some districts, the end may be a bit later this year due to the challenging weather conditions. However, whenever that last day of school comes, the end of the year brings excitement and anticipation for the "next step" . . . a new routine of summer activities, the move for students to a new grade level and for me . . . the upcoming end of my tenure as your State president. As I reflect, it has been a busy year that included numerous workshops including a Leadership Summit, increased interest in membership and Professional Standards, and the adaptation to a new Board structure with fewer board positions with new responsibilities.

Four Fall Regional Workshops were organized and brought training opportunities closer to home to our members. Programs were planned based on feedback, availability, and the needs for each region. Paula Gualtieri, our President Elect, worked with each of four Regional Leads (Samantha Slipper, Pam Milleson, Rose Mattich and Kim Klapel) for this new regional plan for workshops. Our Spring Workshop was held in Leavenworth and offered numerous choices of educational topics for each breakout session plus a demonstration of tips and trick to use in the kitchen. Vickie Ayers, our Vice President, was the lead on this and it was a well received event. The Professional Standard hours were tallied for each workshop. Members have made it clear that they hope each general session and breakout can help them meet their Professional Standards. WSNA and local chapters are now considering this as one of their guiding principles when they offer training.

This principle will also be applied in planning our Annual WSNA Conference, July 24-26 in Kennewick. There will be a General Session each day of Conference this year. Our featured speakers are Jeff Joiner, Matt Upton, and Dayle Hayes. They are each recognized as outstanding national speakers, and they are three of my favorites. Please review the pre-conference classes and the educational breakout sessions being offered. You will see that this is going to be a jam-packed conference. Paula Gualtieri, your President Elect, has planned a wonderful conference line-up based on member feedback and training opportunities available. This will be our first WSNA conference in Kennewick. You will not want to miss this program, connecting with old friends and making new ones. The Kennewick Conference Center is spacious and comfortable. The hotels are close, and the exhibit hall is convenient. This location may end up being added to your list of favorites.

Please note that WSNA will be offering the School Nutrition Specialist (SNS) Credentialing Exam on Sunday, July 23, before Conference. Please see page 8 of this issue of the *Apple Press* for instructions to prepare and register for this exam. Also note that *we have no plan to hold a delegate assembly (HOD) in 2017* which has been scheduled on the first day of conference in the past. The reasons for this are explained by our past president Trish Dela Cruz in her article on page 14 of this issue of the *Apple Press*.

I want to share that I have had the opportunity to work with an amazing group of people on the board of directors this year. They have been dedicated, committed, open, enthusiastic and willing

to stretch as we moved into a new board structure. As Association volunteers, board members and, in some cases also, committee chairs have attended meetings to discuss hot topics, make suggestions for training and instruction, organize training and workshops, participate in the workshops, rally individuals to lobby at state and federal levels, update our website, educate individuals on membership, market and promote WSNA, plan and advise with an Industry perspective, guide the meetings within parliamentary rules, and advise to bring balance between our Child Nutrition Programs and Association. All this was done in an effort to make our Association one of which you can be proud to be a part. I have been honored to be part of this team. A special thank you also goes to Trish Dela Cruz, our WSNA past president, in leading both the Bylaws and Nominating Committee this year.

We are also gifted as an Association to have two individuals who are our “team managers.” Those two people are Peggy Rieper, our Executive Director, and Kathy Buchanan, Executive assistant. They have blended their talents and expertise to make our State Association stand out as one of the best. They both put members first, promote programs, and are always there to help. Thank you both for all that you have done and do every day for WSNA .

It has been an honor to be your Washington School Nutrition Association President this year. I am humbled to lead this group of dedicated and giving child nutrition professionals. You are a great group that is *Teaming Up for Child Nutrition*. See you in July.