

## **President's Message**

### **Winter 2018**

Where do the superheroes acquire their strength? Is it from a can of spinach . . . a spider bite . . . a nuclear accident . . . or maybe just born with it? Now the more important question: where do school nutrition professionals acquire their superhero strength? WSNA has the important mission of educating and empowering our members to provide healthy meals to foster an environment where children achieve overall wellness and lifelong success. Empowering our members with education is our challenge. I believe that the source of our strength lies in accepting challenges. Everyday nutrition professionals (managers, cook assistants, servers, directors, industry, OSPI staff, agency and council members) take the challenge to provide healthy nutritious meals for the children in Washington State. The more challenges we meet, the stronger we become as individuals and as an organization. There have been challenges this year for me in my profession, and I have had the wonderful opportunity to see #Everyday Heroes come to my aid. Thank you all for being willing to face challenges and become stronger.

WSNA is a wonderful organization of which to be a part. We have many #Every day Heroes and #Fearless Leaders in our organization. The past few months have been busy for WSNA as we have accepted the challenge of education for our members. Activities this fall have included four regional Fall Workshops, an Industry Seminar, a USDA Foods Tasting Show, and our WSNA Executive Board Meeting. In October, WSNA sponsored Taste Washington which featured locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. Many districts in the state participated and shared the message of our rich and plentiful agriculture with fun activities and guests and a menu featuring Washington-grown products.

President-elect Vickie Ayers took on the challenge to put together four outstanding Fall Workshops, one held in each region of the state. These workshops provided educational and networking opportunities for members in their regions. WSNA's regional leaders took on the leadership role in each of their regions to host and organize each of the workshops. These #Nutrition Heroes are Eastern Region Lead Mindy Cass, Northwest Region Lead Melissa Erwin, Western Region Lead Rose Mattich, and Southeast Region Lead Cheryl Caldwell.

Industry Seminar Chair Heather Mann and the Seminar committee, which includes industry members and district directors, planned a seminar with educational and networking opportunities. On the first day of the two-day event the USDA Food Tasting show was also held with vendors showing products that can be made from commodities.

The 2018 Conference committee met in Tacoma in early October to start planning for WSNA's Annual State Conference that will be held there in August. Conference Chair Kathy McKibbin-Manuel organized the first planning committee meeting for the 2018 Conference Kathy has organized a team of #Nutrition Heroes to form the conference committee. This will be an event you will not want to miss.

The WSNA Executive Board met in early November with an agenda packed full of reports and conducting planning for our Association.

So many challenges have strengthened all of us to continue to serve the children of Washington State. I hope during the months in winter that you take time to rest, live, laugh and enjoy friends and family. These are also sources of strength.