

REPORT ON WORLD SERVICE BUSINESS CONFERENCE, Albuquerque NM, May 7-11, 2024

Prepared by Sima M., delegate representing CJIOA of Region 7

This is a summary of my overall experience as a first-time delegate, aka green dot. Lee Ann was my assigned mentor and I am eternally grateful for her support and guidance.

I arrived on Monday and, unfortunately, I developed a cold on the trip out there. This persisted for the entire trip. Each day it let up some and I did not let it interfere with any official conference business. I did limit my contact with other delegates as much as possible to keep my germs to myself. My roommate and I got along quite well and we shared our experiences from each of the sessions we attended. She was the delegate representing the Bridge Intergroup of Virtual Region.

On Tuesday evening, I attended the 90-minute workshop, All About Conference. All of the procedures were reviewed and we received a brief schooling about parliamentary procedure.

On Wednesday morning, I attended a 2-hour forum on Building Bridges to Recovery: Growing the Fellowship of OA and Breaking Down Barriers.

Wednesday afternoon we all had a 3-hour session with our assigned committees. I am on the Young People's Committee. A young person is defined as someone who entered OA between the ages of 18 and 30. The committee is focusing on how to get information to students on college campuses, who would fall into that category. We also discussed how we could get to people even younger than 18 and we discussed the fact that it would require parental involvement in order to approach the very young. During the meeting, we elected a Chair and a Vice Chair and we discussed in detail what the committee would like to focus on. We broke up the committee into 3 sub-committees, and we voted on a chair for each subcommittee.

That evening, I attended another workshop, Everything You Ever Wanted to Learn About Our Service Structure. We were schooled in the workings of Intergroups, National Service Boards, Language Service Boards and Regions. I had no idea how complex our organization is until I attended this workshop. Outside of the U.S. countries may be part of numbered regions, but quite a few countries also have national service boards who work with their respective government authorities that govern laws pertaining to non-profit organizations. There are also language service boards that deal with assuring that appropriate program literature be available and that live translations are provided at virtual workshops whenever possible. Specific focus service boards are modeled the same way our specific focus meetings are. Much interest was expressed in a new specific focus service board that is now being formed called Rainbow. The first meeting of that board was scheduled during the conference but was cancelled due to the illness that began infiltrating the delegation. It will be held at a future date via Zoom.

Thursday, we began our first business meeting. There were five business meetings of 3 or 4 hours each. Two were on Thursday, two on Friday and the final one on Saturday. Each session began with Adoption of Credentials Report which certifies how many voting delegates are present and that we have a quorum. Before we could begin discussion and voting on the proposals, we needed to approve Standing Rules and Procedures. Delegates were briefed on the procedures for motions and floor debates. We did vote to accept the previously-approved Consent Agenda at that first session. Also, Delegates granted the Conference Seal of Approval to revise the *OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies: Recovery Opportunities* (#120).

At the second session, we heard from trustee nominees and had Q&A's with each of them.

The next day at the third session, we elected the trustees and began working on the proposed Bylaw Amendments. This is where the action began. And I stress the word action. It was exhilarating to witness and participate in the workings of how the actual proposals are discussed, amended, contested and ultimately pass or fail.

During the course of the conference, the Reference Committee had to meet multiple times. If 3 amendments are brought to a proposal, the proposal must go to the Reference Committee for recommendations after which it is brought back to the floor for further discussion or referred elsewhere. One proposal was sent to the board to address legal matters that arose around the proposal.

A proposal can pass, fail or be withdrawn if it is deemed not suitable to be voted on in its current state. Proposals may be brought back by makers at subsequent conferences in a new suitable form.

I was able to give input as a delegate both on the conference floor and at two reference committee meetings that I attended as a delegate observer.

I am happy to say that the motions which concerned me most did not pass. Specifically,

- The motion to remove the word "weight" from the definition of abstinence, did not pass.
- The motion to remove all pronouns from the steps and traditions referring to God and replace each pronoun with God, did not pass.

I was surprised that the motion to have the conference scheduled to avoid conflict with specific religious holidays was highly contested by delegates representing that the mention of specific holidays marginalizes atheists and secular members. The final motion which passed gave the board the discretion to set the WSBC at the most convenient time without mentioning consideration for any specific religious holidays.

The pace of the week was hectic for me. Quite a few times during the business sessions, individual delegates would request time out for all to say the serenity prayer and on one

occasion a request was made for all to say the third step prayer. This practice is what makes OA business meetings so special. We recognize that God is the ultimate authority in our group conscience and that our leaders do not govern.

Regular OA meetings were offered several times a day. And I was able to attend one OA meeting which was immensely helpful for me to re-center myself. I felt quite strongly about some of the issues, as I mentioned, and I needed to work my program to get my emotions in check.

I appreciate the opportunity I was given to be a delegate for CJIOA at my first WSBC. I believe I did my best to represent the wishes of our members.

Thank you for your trust and support.

Sima M.