



Better Together

Working as a team



BY JUDY JONES, SR/WA

Cleveland rocked! From the Opening Ceremony to the Closing Gala, the 68th Annual International Education Conference couldn't have been better. There were so many member volunteers, as well as our amazing staff, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to keep everything going — and that doesn't even include all the pre-conference hours put in by our host Chapter, Buckeye Chapter 13, and our conference co-chairs, Tina Breeding, SR/WA, and Dan Bucan, SR/WA. Thank you ALL for an amazing conference!

Now that conference is over, we must remain focused on the tasks ahead. The challenge I made to each of you at the Board of Directors meeting was to bring in one new member this year. Let's go back to where we all started — our home Chapter. If each of us accepts this challenge, just think of how it would transform our Chapters by year's end. We would be back to having vibrant Chapters with local events, which would create a ripple effect across the Association and increase membership engagement, networking opportunities and in-person classes. How gratifying that would feel, knowing we all worked together to bring IRWA back to where it needs to be. Remember, it just takes one!

Having just returned from the International Executive Committee's annual in-person planning meeting, I am very excited with the momentum of our team. We have established key initiatives that will keep us focused on our strategic goals and objectives. As we each stated our goals for the coming year, it was clear to see we are all on the same page; it was also great to hear that we are in alignment with the objectives set by our staff leadership. It's going to be a good year!

Plans and meetings are under way to work on the Federal Agency Update. Studies are being conducted to bring forth new leadership development programs, which we have lacked for too long. New marketing efforts are being developed, and new webinars are in the works. The International Governing Council will be meeting this month to build upon these initiatives and continue to elevate the Association.

As I stated earlier, we are a team — there is no "I" in "team." None of us can accomplish all that needs to be done alone, but as a team, we can. That team includes each and every one of us. Thank you for letting me be a part of it. And remember, we will always be better together. 🌟