California Society of Medical Assistants

Southwest Regional Meeting

July 21-23, 2023

This CSMA member was offered the 2nd representative position to attend the South West Regional (SWR) Meeting in Houston, Texas from July 21-23, 2023 by the CSMA Executive Committee. The SWR was held at the Embassy Suites. This representative met President Nakano at the airport and traveled together to the hotel. Texas had opened registration first to SW state leaders and then to other interested attendees. It was a good mixture of new and returning members. This will be the representative's 5th SWR meeting and was excited to attend and reconnect with friends and make new connections. The SW states are: AZ (not active), CA, CO, HI (does not participate), NM, OK, TX and UT. The SWR meetings are more relaxed, it is a good mixture of fun and games, socializing with the benefits of CEUs.

The SWR meeting was originally established as a “Leadership” conference. It gave members/ state chapter presidents the opportunity to meet others from their region, discuss topics relating to this medical assisting organization, review the upcoming AAMA Bylaws for the Fall Nationals, and to build a support network. The SW states have a total of 5 AAMA presidents. That is an impressive amount of knowledge. This year 3 past AAMA presidents were in attendance. Our current AAMA president – Deborah Novak, CMA (AAMA) was invited by Texas and made a presentation and stayed the whole weekend. It was a nice touch to have her there to discuss topics in person with our current leader.

This year's theme was “WONDERS OF OZ. FOLLOW THE LEADERSHIP ROAD”. “The goal was to provide tools to our current leaders and inspire upcoming leaders to follow the Yellow Brick Road...” The conference started on Friday, July 21 with a luncheon to get re-connected and to meet the new attendees. This weekend’s meeting would be a hybrid with in-person attendees and Webex participants. Topics would focus on mindfulness, burnout, finding the courage to speak up/ finding your voice, verbal de-escalation, stress, mentorship, and mental awareness. An ongoing theme was to take care of ourselves and to be an example to our patients. You can’t pour from an empty cup, which some of us need to be reminded to do so in our personal and professional lives.

As mentioned by President Nakano’s report, our dear friend and mentor Ann Naegele passed away that Sunday morning. The SWR meeting was dedicated to her. The Texas Committee encourage everyone to take time and have an ice cream sundae in Ann’s honor as they would be gathering to do that. Apparently, she taught them the proper and correct way to eat ice cream!

It was a pleasure representing CSMA at the SWR and appreciate the opportunity to participate. Mark your calendars for July 19-21, 2024 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Virginia Marquette, CMA (AAMA)

SWR- Representative