PNW Virtual Forum April 9 2021
Report to Chapter 99, Santa Clara
By: Laura Grabar, 2020-2021 President

Attendees for Santa Clara Chapter 99: Kayla Alvarado, Shawna Alvarado, Tracy Cheffer, Laura Grabar, Marlene O'Donnell, Donna Serrano, April Vicchrilli

The one-day virtual conference began with NAWIC business and was followed by the first speaker of the day Jessica Bonar with her presentation on "Both/And". We live in a world of categories usually with the idea of either/or. You can have this or that, you can be this or that. You can win or lose, succeed, or fail, it is easy or hard. Her concept is that you can be both. I am not one or the other I am both. Perfection should be in the middle because one allows the other. I am strong because I allow myself weakness or to break then pick myself up. This helps build leadership skills as we learn through our failures as well as our success. You also need to pursue both being a leader and a follower. Conscious choice to be in service and of service at the same time.

We then heard from the three candidates for PNW Region Director.

The second speaker Chris Wheatly's Presentation was on "Creating a Culture of Feedback".
It is just as important to learn how to give feedback as well as how to receive. Feedback should be constructive but not mean spirited or negative. There should always be an action plan created along with any feedback with what actions (if any are necessary) and the timeline for these actions.

The last speaker of the day was Skyler Oberst with his presentation on "Meet Your Neighbors" and why you should talk to strangers. The main reasons that we stick to our own is afraid of offending someone and do not want to look ignorant. This is living in an echo chamber an environment in which a person encounters only beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own so that existing views are reinforced, and alternative ideas are not considered.

You can hear an opinion without watering down your own. It's okay to not agree with someone and still be friends. Find what you have in common not your difference. Find common ground. Our differences make us special while our common ground makes us a community. It is important to have differing ideas to make a well-rounded environment.

The conference concluded with the closing followed by a virtual happy hour with a Jeopardy style game. It was a fun way to end the one-day conference.