



By Susan Matthews
2022 NAI National Conference
Scholarship Award Winner

I'd first like to thank the scholarship award committee and all the hard-working NAI volunteers who helped make this award possible. I'd also like to thank the NAI staff members for their help with the conference registration process. My goals in attending this year's NAI national conference were to participate in inspirational talks, connect with amazing new contacts, who would inspire me as I write my very first book. When I walked out into the hotel lobby wondering if I'd see anyone I knew, I looked over and saw a friendly face. Yvonne Johnson gave me a warm smile and welcomed me to join her and her friends for dinner that night. I have volunteered with Yvonne on our Region 2's board for over a year and never had the opportunity to meet her in person. Yvonne has done an incredible job serving as our NAI Region 2 Director. It's truly been a pleasure volunteering with her and all our Region 2 board. Unfortunately due to the pandemic and financial reasons I have not had the chance to attend an in-person conference in several years. I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to attend this national conference in person and meet so many passionate & enthusiastic interpreters.

I attended a pre-conference session called "Inspire with PIE and TALK" presented by Jacquie Gilson. We learned about the PIE model- Participation. Information. Engagement. The PIE model helps interpreters plan and deliver engaging interpretation programs. I loved the concept of starting your program with a hands-on-engaging activity. Then once your audience is hooked on your topic you can share some interesting

information with them about that topic. Finally, you wrap up your program by allowing your audience to reflect on ways they too can help the natural resource they learned about during your program. I am inspired to think how I can make my book more participatory and interactive.

It's hard to choose from so many incredible talks! Lucas Hernandez led a captivating talk called "Pop Culture: An Interpreters Best Friend in a Connected World." It was wonderful to see an interpreter so passionate about a topic! His enthusiasm was contagious. It wasn't long before the audience was connecting with him and his topic. It was truly a fabulous presentation. I also really enjoyed attending an interactive session which discussed tips for getting youth interested in pursuing the interpretation field. This conference fulfilled all my expectations and more! Thank you so much for making it possible for me to attend this phenomenal conference.