



After about 15 years away, I found myself back with the Council of State Association Presidents (CSAP) at the spring meeting in Little Rock, AR, May 17 & 18. I was honored to represent SDSLHA in Londa's place as she had more important matters (her son's and daughter's high school graduation celebration) to attend to. (Congratulations, Londa and family!) This trip evoked so many memories for me. It was at CSAP in Omaha, NE in the early 2000s that I connected with our current ASHA President, Shari Robertson, for the first time. Through that meeting many years ago, I made a life-long friend. SDSLHA has benefitted from Shari's convention presentations and vendor support over the years, too. Connections like this are one of the many benefits of our participation as an association in CSAP.

In two full days of workshops, I took in sessions addressing association membership recruitment and retention, ASHA Governance change recommendations, the power of communication, social media strategies for state associations, cultivating leadership, micro-volunteering, ASHA grants for state association, and more. Lest I bore you with a lengthy list of details, I'll share my top three take-homes with you here and look forward to hearing directly from anyone who wants to know more about the topics addressed at the meeting.

**Take-Home #1:** State association volunteers are not just the people who hold executive board positions or chair committees. All association members can participate through **micro-volunteering opportunities**. These are bite-sized, no commitment actions that support the association. Our association is filled with people who volunteer their time to contact legislators, share ideas, supervise students, and more! The [ASHA Leadership Academy](#) has a variety of resources to assist members to build volunteer and leadership skills. A series of FREE webinars is available on the site (think CEUs!).

**Take-Home #2:** SDSLHA is a fantastic community. We want to be a **powerful community**. Kiki L'Italian shared 5 elements of powerful communities: 1) People, 2) Shared Experiences, 3) Shared Purpose, 4) Resources, 5) Trust. I know that SDSLHA has great people with a shared purpose. We have some shared experiences (convention, legislative efforts, etc.) but I think we can grow in this area. Our greatest resources are our members. No one else knows as much about speech-language pathology and audiology practice issues in SD than SDSLHA members! I'd like to see us sharing our collective resources (ideas, questions, challenges, etc.) with each other more. I think as we grow in our shared experiences and sharing of resources, trust will build within our association. (Follow Kiki on Instagram @kikitalien, visit her [website](#), or listen to her podcast, Association Chat.)

**Take-Home #3:** Social media isn't just social. **Social Media and digital communication are tools** that we can use to build our SDSLHA community. This links back to my 2nd take home from CSAP. In my first go-around on the SDSLHA Board, we had a newsletter to communicate with our members. Convention

announcements were mailed to members via the good old USPS. Today, my physical mailbox on the side of the highway is a junk receptacle most days, with the occasional (maybe frequent!) Amazon package to brighten my day. No SDSLHA (or other organization) newsletters. How do we as members of the same group share experiences and resources now? Social media and internet resources are likely the tools we will use. In my opinion (just my opinion – I haven't gotten board approval for this!), we are improving on our communication efforts through email announcements, SDSLHA website updates, and SDSLHA Facebook posts, but we have used these tools primarily to "push" information out to our members and potential members. How can we encourage sharing between members in our group? As we move forward, the conversation about social media, the SDSLHA website, and member engagement will continue. Do you have ideas about how we can build a stronger SDSLHA? We'd love to hear them! You can contact me at [slpatwork@gmail.com](mailto:slpatwork@gmail.com) to share your questions and ideas, or communicate with us through the [SDSLHA website](#).

**The Leave-Behind:** I left one item behind at CSAP. Thank You to Joe and Shirley Hauge who micro-volunteered for SDSLHA with their donation of [Dove Creek Pottery](#) for the CSAP live auction fundraiser. The vase they donated received the highest bid of any item on the auction that evening. The pottery pieces, which are created by people with and without disabilities through Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, are beautiful. I was proud to share this piece of SD with CSAP.

So...CSAP was just as fantastic in 2019 as it was "back then." I learned so much and hope to put that information to use for SDSLHA over the next 3 years and beyond.

Thanks for reading!

Jennifer