

I attended my 1<sup>st</sup> AAMA convention in 2001. It was an event to remember for many reasons but primarily because 9/11 occurred during the convention. It was a time that we all had to pull together to get through and the remainder of convention to get everyone home safe and sound.

As a result of 9/11 there was a renewed sense of patriotism and an increase in flying the American flag. As a Girl Scout, Boy Scout and the daughter of a former serviceman in the Navy I already had a respect for the flag but 9/11 caused me to respect the flag and what it stands for even more.

One response to 9/11 was an immediate willingness to volunteer to do whatever one could. At the time I was grateful that my son who is a volunteer firefighter and was an Explorer Scout at the time was only 17 yrs old and could not go to New York City to help. But I knew and understood how much he wanted to be there. Everyone did whatever they could to help.

The flag to me continues to represent all those who prior to 9/11 and since then have volunteered to serve this country and protect our freedom and safety.

This volunteerism is the theme for my term as President of NYSSMA. No one of us can do everything but we can each do something. We can all volunteer to do something to keep our organization going. We can volunteer to chair a committee

or serve on one or two. We can volunteer to mentor to our local chapters and newer members. We can all do something.

I know that I am somewhat preaching to the choir here. But, there are some of us who can step up. Some of us are ready to be committee chairs and then become NYSSMA officers.

I would like to challenge each of us to go back to our local chapters and get 1 member to volunteer to help NYSSMA in some way, shape or form. We can all do something.

I get upset when I hear people say they don't have the time to volunteer. Everyone has a little time they can give in some way. I am as busy as the next person. My family can tell you that between Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, the fire department auxiliary and working full time there isn't much time left but I am committed to this profession and I make the time for monthly chapter board meetings, chapter meetings and NYSSMA board meetings and conventions. Again, everyone can do something.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jan Caplan and Ivy Reade Relkin for being mentors to me during my early years attending NYSSMA meetings. They took the time to explain bylaws and proper procedures and encouraged me to speak up. I want to thank Marie Levine for pushing me along to get involved on

the local and state level and I truly appreciate her belief in me and the support I have always received from Erie Chapter. I hope I can live up to their expectations.

I also want to thank my family. Without their support through the years I couldn't do this and wouldn't be here. My children have helped stuffing envelopes and getting out meeting notices, helped with centerpieces for seminars and conventions, solved my many computer problems and mostly doing without me while I was away at meetings.

I think by my example I have instilled in them some sense of volunteerism. Both are still involved in scouts and active in our local fire department as is my son's fiancé. I am proud of what they each have become.

I am thankful that I could count on my husband to take care of things at home while I was away at meetings or conventions. It was not always easy with all the activities my children were involved in.

Lastly, I want thank all of you present here this evening for your support and your willingness to work to keep NYSSMA going.

Remember, no one can do everything but everyone can do something.