



Member National Council of Negotiation Associations

WESTERN STATES HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS' ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT SAMANTHA 'SAM' ROBINSON DEPARTING ADDRESS

Hello everyone. I am sorry I am unable to be here for the 40th annual WSHNA conference. I want to start by thanking the Spokane Team for pulling off a great conference. A year's worth of hard work to get all this put together is a big accomplishment. Don't worry, all those emails will soon end and then it will be 2027s turn. I hope everyone here can take in all the courses as well as going to see what Spokane has to offer after classes.

I would like to address all of you in attendance. I want to thank each of you. Not just for being here, but for the work you do every day, work that often goes unseen, but never unimportant. You save lives. You give people a second chance in moments when they may feel like they have none.

Crisis negotiators are asked to step into moments where tension is high and outcomes are uncertain—and somehow, you bring calm, clarity, and humanity into chaos. At the heart of every successful negotiation is not just technique, but the ability to truly listen, to understand, and to care.

Serving as your president over the past four years has been one of the greatest privileges of my career. When I first stepped into this role, I knew I was joining a community of highly skilled professionals. What I didn't fully appreciate until I experienced it firsthand was the depth of commitment, the willingness to share knowledge, and the unwavering support you offer one another.

To my board: Leadership, as I've come to learn, is never about one person. It's about the people you serve alongside. And I have been incredibly fortunate to serve alongside all of you. You've challenged me, supported me, and inspired me in ways I will carry with me long after this chapter ends.

As I step away from this role, I do so with confidence in the future of this organization and in each of you. The challenges ahead will continue to test us, but if the past four years have proven anything, it's that this group is more than ready.

Bruce, you are now officially rid of me and all my questions, emails and phone calls. A big thank you to you for helping me grow as a leader, negotiator and human being. I truly appreciate your friendship.

To all of you, Thank you for your trust. Thank you for your dedication. And thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as your president.

Stay safe, stay connected, and never forget the difference you make, every single day.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'S-R', with a stylized, cursive flourish extending to the right.

Samantha Robinson
President, WSHNA