

REGION 5 OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS  
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Region Delegate Report from World Service Business Conference

First of all, thank you to the Region for allowing me to serve as a Region Delegate this year. I have attended World Service Business Conference before as a volunteer but never as a delegate. It was a whole different experience!

The theme of this year's conference was "We All Belong: Welcome to OA". The focus on belonging and many different things that people bring to the Fellowship was present from my first day. I loved meeting people from ALL OVER THE WORLD!!! The accents were different, the ways people named foods and places might be different, but the language of the Program was the same everywhere. There were meetings with leads by OA members from many backgrounds, including different countries and ethnicities, LGBTQ+, those with mental illness, and those who live in war-torn countries like Ukraine and Israel. There was a workshop on how to welcome people different from ourselves to OA including under-represented populations such as youth, racial minorities/people of color, and those with chronic mental illness.

Hopefully most of you have heard about the Conference from your Intergroup Delegate. You can the "wrap up" document here if you are interested: [World Service Business Conference - Overeaters Anonymous \(oa.org\)](#). From my perspective the biggest discussions at the Conference focused on two things: how we include those from parts of the world outside of the United States (a growing portion of our membership) and those who are differently abled; and how we promote service and leadership among members.

It is always good to remember that World Service Business Conference represents the group conscience of our members. While I may have gone to the Conference with one firm belief that reflects what many members seemed to be saying, I found that conversation and the discussions at the conference itself sometimes changed my mind. For example, there were several efforts to amend the timing of the World Service Business Conference to avoid major holidays celebrated in different countries as well as to account for the fact that some delegates have to travel for 2-3 days to get to the conference. I started with one opinion and settled on another, and ultimately we adopted a broader policy giving the staff of the World Service Office more leeway. The same was true regarding the location of the World Service Business Conference – when it was online, when it was in person, and whether it was hybrid. The final Bylaw amendment called for a two year rotation of online versus in-person but left the timing and hybrid elements up to the Board of Trustees.

The controversy around leadership and service was directed at the requirements for service at the delegate and Trustee level and the length of time. Because these issues often get wrapped up in Personalities instead of Principles, this was difficult to understand. Not enough people have been running for the position of World Service Trustee. In order to fill the

Board of Trustees, the Board has had to draft members to fill empty positions. As a result, several Trustees have either served for many years or have left the Board and come back again to serve for many years. The same issue applied to some delegates. Several amendments were adopted to limit the Terms of both trustees and delegates as well as better define the expectations regarding service at the Intergroup and Region levels. This amendments and policies are in line with the Traditions of the Program and the commitment to rotation of service, but were difficult to accept when so few people have been willing to step up to do service at the Region and Board levels. The closing of Region 4 is a good example of this problem.

One of the requirements of service as a Delegate at World Service is a commitment to serve on a committee for one year (until the next World Service Business Conference). I am serving on the 12 Step Within Committee and will continue to serve until next year or until the goals of the Committee for this year are complete. Currently I am engaged in reviewing documents on the OA website but after that is finished the Committee is working on a 24 hour marathon program for 12 Step Within Day on December 12<sup>th</sup> – watch for more information about this online event in the fall!

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