Report of the Zone VII Director
Anjee Whitnah

What a whirlwind of a year this has been! So many changes have taken place since the last Conference. We scored big when HB 2016 passed allowing union members the right to discuss union business and recruit new hires during work hours. Then everything started changing in late February. The nation was watching close to the epidemic in China and started making preparations in March. It was then declared a pandemic when it started spreading to surrounding countries and others in close proximity. Then everything started shutting down, including schools. Life as we knew it changed drastically. But, because we love the students we work with, we as members have adapted to the changes as we do with any directive given to us.

Despite the nation closing down, I was able to attend my first AACSE in Washington, D.C. Speaking with our senator and representative at our nation’s Capital was like our Legislative Education Day, but on a much grander scale. Some of us were able to walk from one building to another in underground tunnels below the buildings. We were able to lobby for education funding and other educational issues that are important to OSEA and its members.

We held a zone meeting in Ontario and we had a fairly good turnout. We had a Worksite Organizer training which helped many who attended on how to speak with nonmembers about our union, help those who have questions and relay any information from the Board to their building sites. It was well received by all who were in attendance.

This year’s theme for OSEA’s 82nd Conference was “2020 Vision for Success.” Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, Conference is cancelled for the first time in 82 years. The theme was meant to echo the successes we’ve had this year and many more we hope to have. I look forward to seeing all of you in the future.