



Greetings from 2018 Skål International USA President Burcin Turkkan



Dear Fellow Skålleagues,

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to our membership for electing me as your Skål International USA President for 2018. I am honored and humbled that you have placed your trust and confidence in me and in our new Skål USA Executive Committee. We, as your new Skål USA Executive Committee, will always be at your disposal; welcoming your ideas, proposals and constructive criticism.

In 2018, your Executive Committee will work hard to build on top of what has been constructed in the past two years to grow our organization further. Our priority will be to continue the momentum of growth in membership and starting new clubs. Since communication is the key to retain membership, we will benefit from technology to improve our level of communications and channels with our membership and potential members in the travel and tourism industry. Being

the largest national committee in the Skål International world and being able to demonstrate the positive changes Skål USA has made, we will continue to be a national committee that sets the trends and gives the courage to the other national committees in the Skål world to go through the changes.

Some of the new initiatives to improve communication will be to hold thirty-minute webinars with our Skål USA Club Presidents and Skål USA Representatives every other month. The schedule will be posted in advance on the Skål USA website with set dates and times for the entire year, so all can plan for participation. We will hold Membership orientations on quarterly basis via webinar. We will enrich our website with highlighting membership benefits for Skål USA members.

While taking our communication level with membership to highest level we will also improve our communication channels reaching out to the industry; we will be strategically more active in public relations, using different media-channels and will work on increasing our visibility within the industry by increasing our contacts and collaboration with current and additional NGOs (non-government organizations) across the nation. We will focus on advocacy and on strengthening our position in being relevant and 'the trusted voice in tourism'.

The Winter Executive Committee Meeting is scheduled for January 18 - 20 in Raleigh, NC hosted by SI Raleigh Durham. We invite you to attend and offer your ideas. Our Executive Committee meeting will be brief, and the rest of the time will be spent on creating the strategic action plan on how to implement the goals set for 2018.

The North American Skål Congress (NASC) will be held in Playa Mujeres, Mexico, between May 3-6, 2018. We urge every club to not only send their President and/or Skål USA Representative, but encourage all your members to attend. We have been working with Skål Canada and Skål Mexico for the past year to make the Congress more interesting to the membership in the hope that many will participate not only in the Annual General Meeting (AGM), but the open forum, guest speakers, sightseeing, special meals and Gala, too. With the \$500 credit each club will receive for attending the AGM, this saving will make it more affordable for clubs and the general membership to be there and enjoy this fabulous Mexican resort and our gathering of Skålleagues at this North American event. Please review the Congress details at our website and start promoting participation to your members. Please remember this is a mandatory meeting.

Our National Committee Meeting (NCM) will be held on Friday, September 14th via GoToWebinar. As you know our first NCM-Webinar in 2017 has been very successful with 100% participation from all US Skål clubs. We would like to continue with the same format this year as it saves the clubs the cost of sending a delegate to another meeting and gets our business done efficiently from a time commitment standpoint, too. We will need your President, Skål USA Rep, or both to participate to make it a remarkable success again.

After the Winter Executive Committee meeting, we will share with you the outcome of the meeting and the road map for achieving our goals in 2018 to grow Skål USA further together.

Thank you again for the honor of serving as your President. Your Skål USA Executive Committee will be at your disposal welcoming your ideas, proposals, and constructive criticism.

Yours in Friendship & Skål!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Burcin Turkkau". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a long, sweeping tail.

Burcin Turkkau

President