

## **Surprised?**

*Cory Alvarado (TX), NEAFCS Diversity Subcommittee Member*

When you see my name, you may already have some pre-conceived ideas about who I am or what I may look like. Many people think Cory is a man's name. Surprise, I was born a woman (60+ years ago). Many people think that with the last name of Alvarado, I am Hispanic. Surprise, I am a blond(ish) white woman. When you see me, without even knowing my name, you may have other preconceived ideas about me.



The assumptions we make can impact how we treat the community we serve. By looking at me, you may not know that my late husband (with whom I was very deeply in love with) was a black man and yet many people have tried throwing the racist word at me without even knowing me. My present husband is Hispanic (100% Mayan from Guatemala). We need to be vigilant about uncovering our own assumptions.

You may not know that the person next to you even speaks another language or not. Revealing biases are crucial to us successfully accomplishing our missions to serve all our communities. Many people, when they see this white woman, they say things in Spanish not knowing that I understand every word that they say. Insults to this "white woman" because she is "white" or doesn't understand is wrong.

My Lord says love our neighbor as ourselves but who is our neighbor? ANY human being is a neighbor! Treat others as you would have yourself be treated is ALWAYS the best!

All should be treated with dignity and respect! Others will do likewise if they see you start!