

## **Presentation of Bizi Emankorra Award to Valerie Etcharren Arrechea by Annie Gavica 18 February 2018**

Eskerrik asko zure denborgaitik. Eskerrik asko San Francisco zure ostalaritzagatik! Ospakisun zoragarria da! Benetan!  
Thank you for your time and thank you for San Francisco Clubs for such hospitality - this is truly a great celebration.

I would like to take a quick moment to say some very important words.

NABO's Bizi Emankorra is awarded to a person who has made significant contributions to NABO or extraordinary commitment to Basque culture in the United States.

I am happy to award the first 2018 Bizi Emankorra here today.

To say Valerie Arrechea is involved in promoting Basque culture and heritage is a huge understatement.

Udaleku camper for many years.  
Udaleku instructor 9 different times.  
Udaleku chairperson/co-chair for 26 years.  
NABO delegate for 27 years.  
NABO President for 8 years.  
Dance instructor for 31 years.  
Txistu instructor for 27 years.

That alone is more than enough to earn her any lifetime achievement award in the Basque community.

But that isn't all.

Valerie Arrechea has chosen to not only be part of the Basque community of San Francisco and surrounding areas, she has chosen to teach her children the culture and traditions, and many of your children here today! Her passion is unmarked by any other, taking on such tasks as organizing a hybrid dance group from various NABO clubs to perform in Argentina, working with music and dance groups within NABO and her home clubs to teach others the traditions at a higher level, representing the United States Basque Community at 2 World Congress sessions in the Basque Country. She lives every day working to perpetuate Basque culture not only to her family but those around her.

Valerie does it all - moves chairs and tables, costumes, music, organization, dance, building and grounds committee, entertainment, and so much more.

And she is not done yet.

She continues to serve vital roles both locally, nationally and globally and we thank her for her hard work, dedication, and most importantly passion for the culture. We are all truly impressed and grateful for all you have done, and look forward to the work you continue to contribute.

On behalf of the North American Basque Organizations, I would like to say Merci Beaucoup, Eskerrik asko! As we present you with the 2018 NABO Bizi Emankorra lifetime achievement award.

