

**President's Message**  
**January 2018**  
**Bill VanPatten**

On behalf of everyone at the AATSP national office and on the Board of Directors, let me wish you a very happy and successful 2018.

As you know, the AATSP has just turned 100 years old. We kicked off the celebration with a great annual meeting in Chicago in July 2017. Many panels, plenaries, and papers celebrated the organization's achievements and it was our first time featuring a presentation by the president of FIAPE, Javier Serrano. It was an eye-opening look at the millions of students around the world studying Spanish as a second language. Also as part of our celebration is the Centennial issue of *Hispania*, published in December 2017. If you have not checked it out, I urge you to do so: it is a gem of a publication and has something for everyone in it. Our celebration will continue with the annual meeting in Salamanca, Spain, at the end of June 2018. We had a record number of proposals submitted and like the Centennial issue of our organization's journal, the meeting will surely offer something for everyone: literary studies, film studies, linguistics, language teaching, the teaching of culture, language acquisition, heritage language, social justice, and the list goes on.

But the annual meeting will be bittersweet. It will be our time to say goodbye and offer our many thanks to Emily Spinelli, whose term as Executive Director ends on June 30. Emily has done so much for the organization and we will properly fete her as the year progresses; so no goodbyes just yet. And be sure to attend the banquet at the annual meeting in Salamanca where will formally (and with much fun!) celebrate all that Emily has done. Yet, as the saying goes, one door closes and another opens. On July 1, we will welcome Sheri Spaine Long as the new Executive Director. During this time, we are working on the transition as the national office moves to a new location. I am confident that all will proceed smoothly.

It is an exciting time for the AATSP. A centenary is a milestone by any definition of the term. It is a point at which an organization examines its past, considers its present state, and ponders the future. It is a time to let creativity, imagination, wish lists, and brainstorming coalesce as its members and leaders consider where the organization is headed and what it can do. And so I ask you—all members of the AATSP—to think about our mission and what the next 100 years might bring. Where is our profession headed? Where does it need to go? And how can the AATSP get ahead of the curve and provide the needed leadership and resources as we anticipate the changes that await us? Speculation is not an easy task. But informed speculation and careful thinking is a welcome endeavor for an organization such as ours. And sometimes we ourselves are the agents of change. We don't always have to respond to change. We can initiate it and we can shape it. We are the AATSP!

So I ask you to put on your thinking caps. Bring your best ideas to Salamanca and share them with us. Consider writing “thought pieces” for *Hispania* to encourage dialogue. Consider how we might network outside of the annual meeting to effect change. Work locally with your state and regional chapters of the AATSP to brainstorm. The future is full of possibilities.

With best wishes,

Bill VanPatten