

PRESIDENT MESSAGE

Cheryl Fuentes-Wagner

January 2017

Greetings! Saludos! Saudações!

What a wonderful year 2017 will be for the AATSP! I am excited to be your new President, and to kick off the beginning of our AATSP Centennial Celebration this summer. This remarkable milestone shows the value and strength of our incredible organization.

I would like to begin by welcoming new members to the AATSP, and welcoming back continuing members. I look forward to working with all of you!

I would also like to introduce to you the members of the AATSP Board of Directors.

NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Elect

Bill VanPatten; Michigan State University; East Lansing, MI

College / University Representative

John Maddox; University of Alabama at Birmingham; Birmingham, AL

Secondary (9-12) Representative

Cynthia Flax; Retired; Clifton Park, NY

Community College Representative

Irma Bjerre; Clackamas Community College; Oregon City, OR

CONTINUING MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Cheryl Fuentes-Wagner

Past President

Anne Fountain

Executive Director

Emily Spinelli

Director of National Spanish Examinations

Kevin Cessna-Buscemi

Director of Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica

Kelly Scheetz

Editor of Hispania

Sheri Spaine Long

Secondary (9-12) Representatives

Parthena Draggett

Martha Vásquez

College/University Representatives

Mark Del Mastro

Ron Leow

K-8 Representative

Megan Villanueva
Portuguese Representative
Mary Risner

Be sure to get to know your representatives on the Board. Please feel free to contact me, the National Office, or any of the Board members with your questions, comments, and suggestions. We welcome your input!

I encourage you to be active in your local / state chapter, as well as the national organization. Attend events, contribute ideas, and take leadership roles. Your voice is important to our organization. Our strength comes from the membership, as we support each other. Be sure to submit your chapter's news, so that your activities inspire others. If you know teachers that would benefit by our many programs, resources, conference, and opportunities, please invite them to our website, and encourage them to join!

MY CHALLENGE FOR YOU

As we ponder the changes that await the world in 2017, I challenge you to be an advocate for languages and our profession. Be active, interactive, and productive! Offer opportunities to your students -- register your students for the National Spanish Exams / National Portuguese Exams (Deadline is January 31), the poster contest, and membership in one of the student organizations. Encourage them to travel and learn firsthand about the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian world. Bring your community and the world into your classroom. It is our task as language teachers to connect our students' language learning to their future careers. Please look at all the opportunities AATSP provides for you and your students for travel, professional development, and recognition! APPLY! Nominate your students, colleagues, and / or yourself!

I also challenge you to share. We are part of the world community. Language is integral to other disciplines. Connect with colleagues, help establish interdisciplinary programs in your school. Our conference this year focuses on adding STEAM (Sciences, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) to world language instruction, to make what is started in the classroom enhance students' careers and lives. Make your class memorable, about acquiring language skills, not just grades. Spark passion for language and culture! If you are an experienced teacher, please share your expertise by mentoring someone with less experience. If you are a newer teacher, seek out colleagues to mentor you, get feedback, and then share your successes. As your experience increases, increase your involvement, look for interdisciplinary connections, and of course attend the conference in Chicago this summer! Our conferences provide many outstanding opportunities for learning, sharing, experiencing, and networking.

2017 CONFERENCE

We will be kicking off the Centennial year of our outstanding organization with our 99th annual conference to be held July 6 – 9, 2017 at the Chicago Hilton Hotel. The conference theme is , *Building a Pipeline from Classroom to Career*. As your new president, I am so excited to be involved with the planning, activities, and people in AATSP as we celebrate learning the varieties of Spanish and Portuguese, and their beautiful cultures. Don't miss it! I look forward to meeting and working with many of you, and hope that you take advantage of the many opportunities AATSP provides for members, such

as travel stipends, awards, and credit hours. Several deserving colleagues are recognized every year at the banquet for their outstanding teaching, contributions to the profession, and to AATSP. Look for complete information about the conference strands, proposal types and proposal forms on our website. The AATSP Poster Contest aligns with the conference theme. This year K-12 students of AATSP members can compete with their interpretation of *Creando vínculos entre el aula y la carrera / Criando vínculos entre a aula e a carreira*. Check state Chapter deadlines and requirements. National Guidelines can be found on the website. The deadline at the National level is April 1, so get your students started now!

As we reviewed session proposals this fall I got more and more excited at the variety and content we will be offering conference attendees this summer, from sessions on language use, to deepen cultural understanding, to drama techniques, to current trends and issues, and our role as it relates to all of this. It will be so enriching for everyone! The conference also provides opportunities for new experiences—Chicago has so much to offer! The conference this summer coincides with *Taste of Chicago*, the *Millennium Art Festival*, and the *African Art Festival*. You may want to plan to spend some extra time before or after the conference to explore this fascinating city! While in Chicago you will want to visit the National Museum of Mexican Art, the Institute of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, the Pilsen murals, the International Latino Cultural Center, and the Latino commercial district. All of these interesting places have free admission!

THANK YOU!

I would like to conclude by thanking you, and those who have made a difference for our organization. Many thanks to retiring board members Elaine Davis, Sergio Guzmán, Pam Ottenheimer, and Ana Sánchez-Muñoz who have made valuable contributions for the past three years on our board and will continue to serve AATSP through committees, programs, and advocacy. Thanks to David Wiseman, director of Communications, who contributes in so many capacities.

Special thanks to our Executive Director Emily Spinelli, and her staff. Without Emily's guidance, our task would be so much more challenging. She goes above and beyond as our advocate, as an advocate for our profession, and as an energy that keeps us going!

AATSP has so many opportunities for members and students of members in addition to the conference and teaching awards I have mentioned. Please watch for announcements of upcoming opportunities and deadlines.

I feel so privileged to serve you as President of AATSP, especially in this year that is historic for our organization. Visit our website often! Watch for the announcements of opportunities, news, and updates. Please accept my challenges, connect with colleagues, let us know your thoughts and ideas, send in your chapter news, and advocate for our profession, and your students.

I look forward to all this year holds for us! Best wishes for 2017!

Cheryl Fuentes-Wagner