¡Saludos! Saudações! Greetings, I am thrilled and honored to welcome you to the 104th AATSP Annual Conference in beautiful San Juan, Puerto Rico. We were supposed to be here in 2020, but alas the pandemic had other plans. Fortunately, we are able to return this year. The past few years have taught me to take nothing for granted, and I am truly grateful that you all have come here to be a part of our Annual Conference.

Our conference theme this year is **Valorando nuestras raíces y construyendo nuestro futuro / Valorizando nossas raízes e construindo nosso futuro.** This theme was chosen to celebrate our heritage language learners and recognize the importance of honoring one’s roots while we build our future. And while this theme was inspired by heritage language learners, it can be extended to all language learners. As language educators, we should always recognize, honor, respect, and affirm the identities of all learners. The conference theme is reflected in our rich and varied program that includes sessions, workshops, e-posters, plenaries, and special events. In particular, I would like to encourage you to attend our Keynote, *Teaching with Vitality in Mind: Aligning Instruction to the State of Spanish in the United States*, by Dr. Maria Carreira on Monday, July 11 at 11:30 AM. Also, don’t miss our Opening Plenary, *A Tropical Journey: Bringing Afro-Latino Travels to Television*, by Kim Haas on Saturday, July 9 at 11:30 AM, our Portuguese Plenary, *A relevância da gramática na opinião de aprendizes de português: foco em língua de herança*, by Dr. Gláucia Silva also on Saturday at 1:30 PM. I also recommend the Language and Linguistic Plenary by Florencia Henshaw, Moderator, Richard Bueno Hudson, Jesús Fernández González, and José Luis Vega on Sunday, July 10 at 11:30 AM.

Turning to my own roots, in Hawaiian culture there is the concept of *mana* which is the healing life force or energy that permeates our universe. Certain places can be imbued with a particularly powerful *mana*, and I believe that Borinquen, the island of Puerto Rico, is one of them. While we have faced many challenges over the past few years, let’s embrace the energy of this special place. I encourage you to take time to engage with your colleagues, share research, best practices, innovations, inspiration, and ideas. Learn from this place, learn from one another, and connect and reconnect with colleagues old and new. Savor these special moments of togetherness. And last, but not least, don’t forget to go out and enjoy the wonders of *La Isla del Encanto*!

Thank you all for coming and being a part of this conference!

*Abrazos, abraços, and aloha* to you all,

Rachel Mamiya Hernández  
2022 AATSP President  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa