



# AATSP

American Association of Teachers  
of Spanish & Portuguese • Est. 1917

## Announcements and Reminders

August 7, 2024

### SALUDOS DE MARIA

#### Meet our new AATSP Exams Director: Claudia Kechkian

A native of Argentina, Claudia holds a Master's degree from the University of Alcalá in Spain, where she is pursuing her doctoral degree. She also holds a B.A. in ESL, and is a published author. She has been an ESL and Spanish teacher for more than thirty years, from elementary school to postgraduate levels. She brings a wealth of experience from her role as President and Communications Coordinator of the AATSP-TX Brazos Chapter, where she facilitated professional development workshops, expanded the chapter, and provided support to members during the NSE transition to Lingco. In 2023, her leadership led to the chapter receiving the Chapter of the Year Award and recognition as Best Chapter Website Finalist.

In this interview, Claudia shares her passion for education and her vision for the AATSP.

**Maria Carreira (MC):** First of all, Claudia, on behalf of our organization, I want to extend a warm welcome to you. We are very excited to have you with us.

**Claudia Kechkian (CK):** Thank you, María. It is a pleasure to work with you. I feel honored to have been appointed AATSP Exams Director, and I am excited to work with our AATSP team and Board of Directors, Spanish and Portuguese teachers and administrators who are offering the program and those willing to learn more about them, our partners, and collaborators. I look forward to taking the AATSP Exams to the next level, which is planned to be done in phases. I am already highly satisfied by the meaningful and positive changes introduced for the 2024-2025 AATSP Exams, which comprehend the National Spanish Exam, The National Spanish Assessments, The National Spanish Challenge, and the National Portuguese Exam.

**MC:** Let's start with the core of what we are about: *Education*. What does educating mean to you?

**CK:** Educating is about enhancing lives. It goes beyond merely transmitting knowledge; it involves fostering critical and creative thinking and instilling values. As educators, our role is to equip students with the tools and resources they need to make connections, apply their knowledge and skills in real-life situations, and think critically. It is also essential for us to reflect on our own practices and, as 21<sup>st</sup> century educators, we need to continuously develop our skills, attending quality professional development workshops and events, reflecting on our practices, and actually learning to learn.

**Continued [here](#)**

**MC:** What words of motivation would you say to future generations of young people who wish to become teachers?

**CK:** Teaching is an art, and like all art, it brings happiness. Being a good teacher means instilling curiosity, encouraging questions, fostering doubt, and nurturing the desire to know and learn. It involves guiding the discovery process, and there is nothing more rewarding than witnessing that unique moment when a student takes ownership of new knowledge.

**Continued [here](#)**

**MC:** How would you encourage your colleagues and educators in general to continue spreading the love of languages and cultures?

**CK:** I once heard a phrase that has stayed with me: "To know is to appreciate, to love." This perspective guides my approach to sharing the love for Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian languages and cultures, as well as any other languages and cultures. My aim is to encourage genuine learning, even if it means stepping out of one's comfort zone to gain a deeper understanding of different cultures and communities. This includes exploring their roots, history, people, traditions, music, cuisine, geography, and challenges. With the possibilities offered by technology today, we can more easily reach and connect with people, accessing and engaging with authentic materials of great linguistic and cultural value.

**MC:** You are an expert on authentic materials: why they matter and how to use them. Could you expand on how authentic materials are used in the AATSP Exams?

**CK:** The exams are designed using authentic materials rich in cultural value. As the new director, I am committed to upholding high standards of linguistic quality and fostering interculturality.

Content standards are evaluated based on the use of vocabulary and the natural application of grammar in real-world communication contexts at various proficiency levels. This approach allows learners to integrate linguistic competence into meaningful communication. Performance standards assess students' ability to understand spoken and written language, process information, and infer meaning within real-life contexts using authentic materials. We recognize that reading comprehension and interpretive communication are crucial indicators of language competency and proficiency. As we will learn in an upcoming webinar, they are the very foundations of speaking and writing.

**MC:** How can our teachers make the most of the AATSP Exams and learn about innovations?

**CK:** We will have a recurring special feature in our A&R in which we will be sharing important information and tips on AATSP Exams, Teacher and Student Scholarships and Awards, Webinars, Practice Activities and Assessments, Useful Resources on the Lingco Platform, and the possibility of Personalized Meetings with your Language Departments by request. I would like to encourage our members to visit our [AATSP Exams website](#), and follow us on our social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram). We look forward to a highly successful year for our members and their students!

**MC:** And we look forward to working with you and learning from you! Thanks so much.



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## **VIRTUAL PROGRAMS FAIR ANNOUNCEMENT**

This groundbreaking event is designed to showcase programs in Spanish and Portuguese at the college level (2- and 4-year institutions), to create opportunities for students to explore options of study, and to allow college representatives to share information on innovations in curriculum and program design.

For more information, please visit the Virtual Programs Fair page on our website:

<https://www.aatsp.org/page/programsfair2024>

Attention presenters: Proposal submissions and registration for presenters from colleges and universities are now open. Visit [aatsp.org](https://www.aatsp.org) to learn more and [click here to register!](#)



An event designed to inform high school and post-secondary students about Spanish and Portuguese programs at the post-secondary level.

The Virtual Programs Fair will feature presentations from diverse institutions, giving attendees the opportunity to gather information and ask questions about their future academic paths.

#### EVENT DETAILS

-  Saturday, October 5th, 2024
-  From 10:00 am - 4:00 pm ET
-  Via Zoom Meeting



**MORE INFORMATION**  
Visit: [aatsp.org](https://aatsp.org)

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## AATSP ELECTION INFORMATION

We are pleased to announce our slate of candidates for the 2025 AATSP Election. Please look below to view our list of candidates. To view more information, please visit the Candidate Page on our website.

### President-Elect

1. Scott Alvord

### College/University Representative

1. Fernanda Ferreira
2. Crystal Marull

### 9-12 Representative

1. Lisa Stone
2. Sandra Delgado
3. Gonzalo del Real

## PreK-8 Representative

1. Valerie Shull
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## AATSP EXAMS (NSE) NEWS

Welcome back, teachers! Registration for the **National Spanish Assessment (NSA)** opens on August 15, 2024. Utilize this tool to evaluate and enhance your students' Spanish skills. Remember, participating in the NSA makes you eligible for our travel scholarships - Let's make this academic year outstanding!

For more information, visit: [www.nationalspanishexam.org](http://www.nationalspanishexam.org)

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## SHH CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica is seeking nominations for the Advisory Board positions of President-Elect and Region IV Director. In order to be eligible for the Region IV Director position, an AATSP member must be a current sponsor of the SHH, have at least three years of experience sponsoring a chapter, and live in one of the [states included in Region IV](#). To serve as President-Elect, a sponsor must have previously held a position on the SHH Advisory Board.

[Click here](#) for further information about nominating yourself or a colleague. Nominations are due Sunday, September 15, 2024.

## AVANT ASSESSMENT *SPONSORED CONTENT*

AATSP members receive exclusive benefits with Avant.

- **Discount on Avant STAMP Test Pricing** for teachers and their students in Spanish and Portuguese
- **FREE Avant STAMP Test** with purchase of 75 or more AATSP NSE tests
- **Discount on Professional Learning** Avant ADVANCE one-year licenses
- **And MORE** Free webinars and Avant MORE Learning sessions with a 10% discount

Visit [bit.ly/AATSPavant](http://bit.ly/AATSPavant) for more details.



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## KLETT WORLD LANGUAGES *SPONSORED* CONTENT

II Encuentro Práctico de Español L2 en Carolina del Norte

Join us next year at Duke University for an in-person event focused on transformative language learning, open to Spanish language educators across all levels, K-12 through higher education!

 Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

 February 7-8, 2025

We're thrilled to return as collaborators for the second annual Encuentro Práctico de Español L2 en Carolina del Norte (EPE NC), alongside Duke University, Davidson College, and AATSP.

[More Information and Call for Proposals](#)

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## VIEW POSTER CONTEST ART

Interested in looking at more art submissions from the 2024 Poster Contest? [View the Poster Contest page by clicking here.](#)



## INTRODUCING NEW SHH & SHA LOGOS

The Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica (SHH) and Sociedad Hispánica de Amistad (SHA) are pleased to introduce new logos. We feel these logos better embody what our organizations represent.

The new SHH logo is yellow, blue, and magenta and represents that those who speak Spanish and Portuguese are across oceans and under the same sun. The book signifies the academic aspect of the high school honor society.



The new SHA logo has yellow with two shades of blue and a sun rising from within a book to represent the journey of elementary

through high school students as they learn and grow in the Spanish and Portuguese languages.



Both logos include the AATSP motto in both Spanish and Portuguese.

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## RENEW YOUR AATSP MEMBERSHIP

You can now renew your AATSP membership for 2025. You won't want to lose your many [member benefits](#), which now also include free participation for non-presenters and their students at the Virtual Programs Fair. Visit [aatsp.org](https://aatsp.org) to renew now!

Please note our remittance address for payments:

**160 Rail Road, Suite 3  
Chesterton, IN 46304**

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## SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our 107th Annual Conference will be held in Panama City, Panama on June 26 - June 29, 2025! Save the date by visiting the [Google Calendar](#). For more information, visit our [2025 Conference Page](#) on the AATSP website.



## SHOP AT THE AATSP STORE

"This license plate frame is one of my all-time favorite gifts!

What is your favorite [AATSP Store](#) item? Email us a picture or tell us about it for a chance to be included in our next Announcements & Reminders email!"

Maria C.



### Visit the AATSP Store!

The AATSP Store has begun carrying license plate frames! This is one of my all-time favorite gifts!

**Don't miss your chance to grab a  
license plate frame!  
1 for \$10.90, or 5 for a deal of \$39.40!**



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