In these times of “social distancing” the lyrics of La barca, a popular Latin American bolero, come to my mind: “Dicen que la distancia es el olvido / pero yo no concibo esa razón…” (They say distance means forgetting, but I do not conceive this reason…). By this time last year, I would have seen many of you in person –and even would have met new colleagues- either at the AATSP annual conference in July, at ACTFL, or at the myriad of other events –big or small- that we cherish so much in our profession. But this has been a truly challenging year. The unfortunate but inevitable cancellation of the Puerto Rico conference scheduled for July, as well as other events have either gone virtual or postponed. For many of us, zoom has become a household word. It has invaded our lives in ways that we could not have anticipated just some months ago: professional meetings, teaching, and often the only way to see the faces of our families and close friends. It fails to capture the camaraderie, small talk and abrazos we are accustomed to in our face-to-face encounters, but it is communication nonetheless.

Teachers at all levels have had to reinvent themselves in record time. Remote teaching and learning suddenly came upon us. No one asked whether we were prepared, or even if we or our students had the access and the technologies for such a drastic and monumental change. Issues of social justice and differences among those who have or do not have the economic resources to take advantage of these latest –but expensive—technological marvels have become more prominent. But as always, teachers at all levels have risen to the occasion to the best of their abilities. During my many years of teaching, and frequent contacts with teachers from all levels, I always have had a lot of faith in the resilience of our profession, its creativity, and its ability to work hard and prevail. As President of the AATSP I would like to congratulate and thank you. I am extremely proud of all of you!

As the lyrics of La barca proclaim, distance no es el olvido. The National Office of the AATSP, its Board of Directors, and the many services and publications provided by our organization, have continued. Behind the scenes, we have been meeting (virtually, of course), communicating via e-mail and phone and planning for the future, to insure we continue providing you with services and materials that are so vital to our professional lives. We are optimistic about the future. At this time, we are planning our next (hopefully in person) national conference for July, 2021, in Atlanta, GA. These plans include careful safety measures and adequate social distance, should it still be necessary at that time. I encourage you to consider submitting a proposal for the conference. Still there is time, and information is available in our website. For more than a century, the AATSP has succeeded in bringing together the very diverse cultures representing the Spanish and Portuguese speaking worlds. We are used to bridge distances, establish connections where none existed, and fostering life-long relationships. It has been an honor for me to serve as your President. I am most grateful for your trust. Our organization is what we make it. Make your voice heard! I urge you to participate: spread the word about the work we all do, run for office at the local or national levels. Recruit your colleagues. I can assure you it will be a very enjoyable and rewarding experience.

¡Todos a una! Todos a Um!
Biography

I am currently President of the AATSP. I have also served on its Board of Directors, as College/University Representative, in 2013-2015, and for many years was Editor of Enlace.

Education:
University of Wisconsin, B.A; New York University, M.A. (French); M.A. (Spanish); Ph.D (Spanish)1979. N.E.H. Fellow at Yale University. Title of Seminar: "The Concept of Culture and the Idea of Literature in Modern Latin America," (Summer, 1979); N.E.H Fellow at Princeton University. Title of seminar: "Literary History in Conception and Practice." (Summer, 1994).

Teaching Experience:
• Drew University: (taught Spanish culture, language & literature, all undergraduate levels, and some occasional Graduate School Humanities courses). 1973- Retired June 30, 2017. Professor of Spanish (Emerita).

Scholarly Research & Sample of Recent Publications:
Current Research: 1) Diasporas and migrations in literature and film in the Hispanic world; 2) Latinas/os in the United States; Memories and Migrations; 3) Film in the contemporary Hispanic world (Spain, Latin America, Hispanics in the US).

Work on assessment and program evaluation, and use of technologies in teaching and learning.

Sample of Recent Publications:

Frequent book reviewer in Hispania.

Administrative Experience, Program Evaluation & Assessment:
Drew University: Three terms as Spanish Department Chair, One term as Director of Latin American Studies, One Term Member of Dean’s Council.

Program Assessment and Accreditation:
• MSCE (Middle States Commission on Higher Education: Member of evaluation teams leading to accreditation in mid-Atlantic region, since 1992. Latest visit: Hartwick College, Oneonta, NY, (2019).
• Program Reviewer (outside evaluator) of Modern Language Departments since 1998. Latest evaluation: Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw, MI (2014).
• Program reviewer of Undergraduate and Master foreign language teaching education programs for NCATE (later CAEP), applying ACTFL’s National Standards leading to program certification. (2007-2018).

Spanish Language Assessment:
• ACTFL/LTI: Assessed AAPPL (ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages) oral and written proficiency in Spanish.