

Our Mission is to Advance the Teaching of Languages and Cultures in Minnesota

Letter from the President



Greetings MCTLC members:

New year, new adventures! We are still beaming over one of our most successful conferences to date, our 2019 Fall Conference. What an amazing experience to connect with over 400 passionate language educators, celebrate and honor the multitude of Minnesota voices with our esteemed award winners, and pamper our attendees with food, drinks, and a fabulous new venue. We look forward to carrying forward many of our new conference features to our 2020 conference, as well as take into account your feedback to make needed changes so that all feel welcome, valued, and celebrated.

Read on to hear exciting news about our 2020 Fall Conference, November 6-7 at the Crowne Plaza in Plymouth, Minnesota. This year's theme is Proficiency Possible, and our keynote speaker is the well-renowned Leslie Grahn. We hope we can continue to be your "destination conference" this fall!

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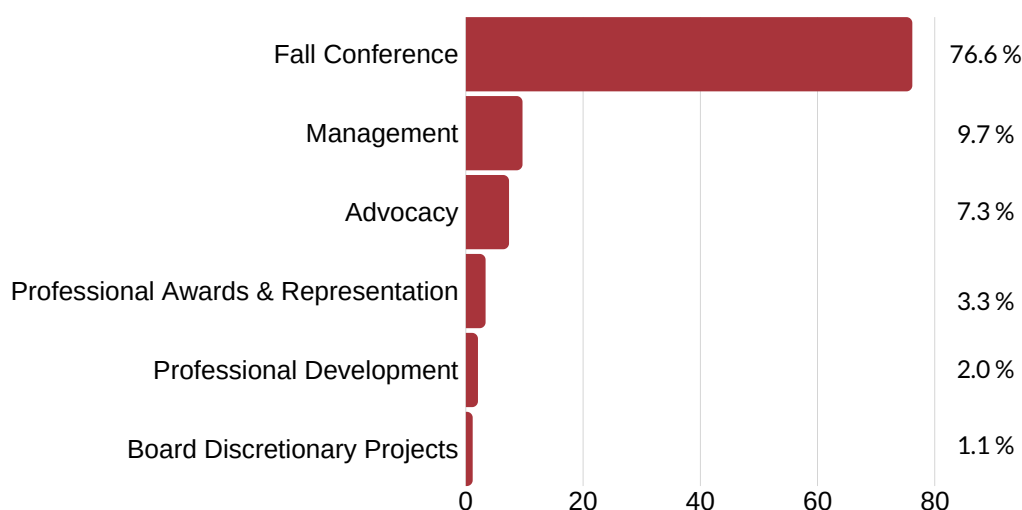
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Letter from the President, cont'd

As we look forward to a great year, I want to recognize the time and talent that our executive board members have selflessly volunteered to run this organization and our annual state conference. We also wish to share more about how we manage our treasures: see our proposed budget for 2020. While some finances are needed to cover and maintain board expenses, we clearly dedicate our largest portion to our membership in offering an annual conference where we can connect, collaborate, and learn together.



As the year progresses, we hope to reconnect with you through one of our many upcoming professional development opportunities - join us at the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSCTFL) this March, here in Minneapolis, or register for a workshop, Summer Institute course, or scholarship opportunity with our new partner, the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). We look forward to connecting and collaborating with you all!

Yours truly,
Megan Budke
2020 MCTLC President



2020 CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE

MARCH 12 – 14, 2020
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

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more information!



Join us for: Keynote Speaker Dr. Katy Arnett



250 + workshops from nationally recognized and regionally respected presenters!



Grand Central: Tech tips, informal discussions, meet & greets with TOY & Keynote Speaker



Thursday evening Exhibit Hall Gala – Friday TGIF (5-6:30)



Click here for a competitive nightly room rate at the Conference Hotel (Free wifi & excellent fitness facilities)!



Convention App available to all registered attendees

Register online via credit card up until **March 10**.
On-site registration will be available.

An interview with MN TOY Pang Yang

We caught up with the MCTLC 2019 Teacher of the Year (TOY), Pang Yang. Pang is an inspiring, dedicated teacher who ignites her students' interest with cross curricular partnerships, teaches the complicated Hmong history with care, and has her sights set on closing the achievement gap. Read more about Minnesota's highly deserving candidate for Central States Teacher of the Year here!

Heather Cholat - Editor, MCTLC



MCTLC: *First of all, congratulations on being honored as MCTLC Teacher of the Year!*

Pang Yang (PY): Thank you! I am very happy and this award means so much to me.

MCTLC: *How many levels of Heritage Hmong do you teach?*

PY: Our Heritage programs are not by levels, but rather by years of experience with each co-hort. I teach 5 Heritage Hmong classes (3 sections of Heritage Hmong 1, 2 sections of Heritage Hmong 2 and one section of Heritage Hmong 3). This is my 3rd year teaching Hmong heritage speakers and I have added a level each year. Next year we will offer Hmong 4 and we are averaging between 32-36 students per class.

MCTLC: *I read a quote from you saying that sometimes Hmong students in other classes are so quiet as to be forgotten. Do you think your Heritage Hmong class is starting to change how Hmong students act in other classes or settings?*

PY: I hope so! My students all have a voice, but many of them are still figuring out how to express it. Some Hmong students are lagging behind in reading and speaking, but often it is more because they are shy and quiet, and the lack of culturally relevant reading curriculum through their educational experiences. My class makes a difference in driving home important skills like speaking up in class, volunteering one's ideas and opinions to reading novels that are relevant to being Hmong. I have seen some of my students absolutely transformed which is so gratifying to witness. I'm so proud of their accomplishments.

MCTLC: *Do you have advice for teachers with Hmong students in their classroom as to how to better understand and connect with them?*

PY: I encourage educators to not hesitate to reach out to Hmong students. Sometimes Hmong students may be hesitant to ask for help because they are shy, but opening up to them and connecting will allow them to see teachers as more approachable, leading to success in the classroom.

MCTLC: *I also read that one of your tips for increasing cross cultural understanding is to recruit the assistance of other teachers to incorporate diverse cultural references in their classes (for example a math teacher asking students to calculate the area of a Hmong house in Laos). How have you been successful in encouraging colleagues to support your work? I would love for you to share some examples of cross curricular success stories.*

PY: I collaborated with the cooking teacher, Katherine Hutchinson, to bring in the rising Hmong chef Yia Vang to work with our students. He came in and did both a motivational speech and a cooking session. It was a great way to bring my Hmong heritage speakers and my colleague's cooking classes together around common interests. This cooking experience inspired my Hmong students to write the story around their favorite Hmong food dish which we later published into a book called The Cultural Dish: Behind Every Dish Is A Story. We are in the process of writing more stories that we're looking to publish such as the The Authentic Hmong Dish and Stories of US.

An interview with MN TOY Pang Yang, cont'd

PY: Another example of collaborating across disciplines is through music. We started a partnership with MacPhail that involves an artist coming to work with my classes to create music in both Hmong and English. Infusing Hmong into other content areas is key to creating relevant curriculum that not only fulfills class goals of teaching the language, history and culture, but keeps students engaged, utilizes their talents and excited to come back for more.

MCTLC: *Students in your class are learning about not only the Hmong language, but also it's history and culture. Are history and culture typically taught in Hmong households? If not, is this due to a concerted effort to assimilate into mainstream American culture or is it just a question of busy lives that don't find time for it? Outside of your classroom and students' home lives, what are other opportunities afforded to Hmong people to learn about their history and culture?*

PY: Hmmm, great question. The history piece is complicated because it was just in the last several decades that historians were able to trace Hmong history back 5,000 years, and there are still so many unknowns. In addition, every Hmong household is different as to when and how they talk about Hmong history, as some of these topics can bring up painful memories of trauma for families that are not easy to share. Some Hmong families talk about their history with their children and some may shy away from it like my own parents. It wasn't until 30 years later that I finally asked my father about his involvement in the Secret War and he was ready to share. More importantly, I'm also learning that more Hmong parents now want to make sure their children know our Hmong history because many didn't have the opportunity to take a Heritage Hmong class in high school because it didn't exist. As a result, some Hmong parents have a missing link to their own identity that was unmet in the school system and want better for their children.

“

Learning our family's histories can help us understand where we have come, who we are and where we are headed.

Lastly, finding the right time is key to discovering the past, but we do not want to wait too long because our Hmong elders who experienced the Secret War are passing away daily. So by teaching Hmong history within my Heritage Hmong classes, it allows me to be neutral and matter-of-fact in recounting the information. With this, in some cases, newfound information, the hope is that students can then go home and have more fruitful conversations with their families having a baseline of events and background knowledge from which to start the dialogue. Learning our family's histories can help us understand where we have come, who we are and where we are headed.

Weaving our history into Hmong literacy allows us to publish our stories before they are long forgotten.

The culture piece can be tricky, too. Most Hmong cultural offerings in the Twin Cities are centered around St. Paul which, for families up in the Osseo area, is not very accessible. Therefore, it's important to find additional funding to support the cultural aspect of the Hmong culture in class. Bringing in cultural experts not only answers students' curious questions, but also provides a professional platform for Hmong language teachers, as culture can be very complicated and deep to understand.

Continue reading on page 5.

Students are hungry to learn what they do not know, as they all have an invested interest in keeping the culture alive that's why 99% of Hmong Heritage learners take the class. Through language, the culture can survive for many generations to come. In addition, culture and religion are often linked for the Hmong. So I strive to find that fine balance of linking culture to language and not necessarily religion when possible.

MCTLC: *How many other schools in the Twin Cities (and throughout the country) offer a similar class? Are there Hmong Heritage programs in elementary and middle schools?*

PY: There are about 7 other high schools in the Twin Cities that offer Hmong programs, schools in Sacramento and a handful in Fresno, CA and I believe some after school programs in Wisconsin. There are talks of hopefully expanding Hmong for heritage speakers to middle schools in my district, but nothing concrete yet. In the Twin Cities, Concordia University in St. Paul offers a Hmong Culture and Language summer program along with weekend Saturday classes for families to build on their cultural and language proficiencies. In addition, summer schools in a number of different districts may also offer Hmong language and cultural classes in the summer as well.

MCTLC: *You started Heritage Hmong 3 years ago. Are you starting to see results yet of your classes' influence in regards to helping close the achievement gap?*

PY: I am encouraged by the results I am seeing since strategies that my students learn transfer across curriculum. Spanish classes for heritage speakers have been around longer than Hmong ones and have plentiful research, but I base a lot of hope on the encouraging information available on the positive effects of heritage Spanish classes to close the achievement gap for their targeted population. Since there isn't much data out there yet for Heritage Hmong classes, I am doing a lot of my own research and gathering my own data. A benchmark in getting Hmong students on par with their peers is when they exit the EL (English Language) program...in other words, when they reach a level of proficiency where they no longer need additional English support.

Last year there were 19 or so Hmong students who exited the EL program at Park Center High School and the majority of those students were in my Heritage Hmong class. Heritage classes also connect with students on a deep level: **when students get in touch with their identities, behavior issues are reduced and this can sometimes reveal others issues that have been previously masked by academic or behavior concerns: mental health needs.** I have come to identify mental health concerns with some of my students and I then can act as a facilitator between the student, school, counselor, and family. Forming good alliances and seeing the **whole** student (academically, socially, emotionally/mentally), makes a huge difference and really contributes to the student's overall success.

MCTLC: *Thank you, Pang, for your inspiring work and for being our MCTLC Teacher of the Year. You make us proud and we are rooting for you as you represent us at Central States soon. Good luck!*

L: Pang celebrates Teacher of the Year award with fellow Park Center educators at MCTLC's 2019 Fall Conference.

R: 2018 MN TOY Maureen Peltier passes on the torch.



Proficiency Possible



MCTLC 
Minnesota Council on the Teaching of Languages and Cultures

NOVEMBER 6-7, 2020

**CROWNE PLAZA
MINNEAPOLIS WEST**



**BOOK YOUR HOTEL
ROOM TODAY WITH
OUR MCTLC GROUP
RATE!**

MCTLC 2020 Keynote Speaker



Proficiency Possible: A Mission Possible

Fully embracing proficiency-based instruction is a “Mission Possible.” During this keynote you will acquire strategies for deepening your understanding of how the proficiency-based approach impacts teaching and learning and how to communicate about it to students, other educators, administrators, and parents.

Leslie Grahn puts the professional in Professional Development. With over twenty seven years of teaching experience, 12 years experience serving as a district coordinator, and an ACTFL published author for her book with Dave McAlpine, *The Keys to Strategies for Language Instruction*, Leslie has seen it all.

We are excited to learn from her expertise in student engagement, differentiation, proficiency-based approaches, and teacher leadership at our 2020 Fall Conference.

Find Leslie online at <http://www.grahnforlang.com>

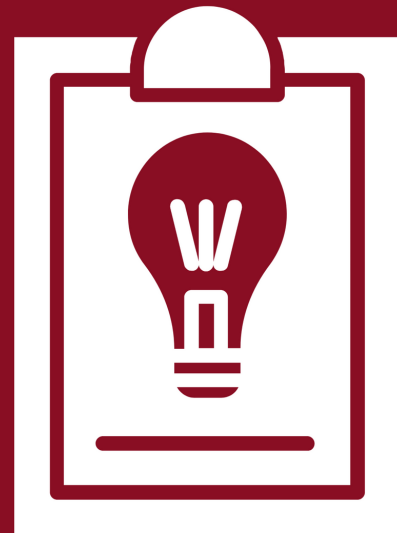
MCTLC 2020

We would love for YOU to present at our 2020 Fall Conference. Our theme is Proficiency Possible, and the success of every MCTLC conference depends on the innovation, quality, and excitement of our presenters. We thank you for your willingness to share your ideas and expertise with Minnesota (& beyond!) language professionals.

Take a few moments to fill out the session proposal form at <http://bit.ly/2020ConfProposal>, or by clicking on the image to the right. »

Submissions are due **Thursday, April 1st**.

Call for Proposals Due April 1st



Call for Awards Due June 15



MCTLC invites you to nominate an extraordinary language teacher or advocate!

Nominate a student, organization or business, pre-service, beginning, or veteran teacher, or administrator for one of our many deserving awards!

Nominations are due **June 15**. More information and nomination forms can be found at mctlc.org/Awards.

Please contact Karen Nickel, MCTLC Vice President and Awards Chair, at awards@mctlc.org with any questions.

We look forward to receiving your nominations!

Advocacy

MCTLC President Megan Budke and MCTLC Secretary Allison Spenader represented MCTLC at the 2019 ACTFL Assembly of Advocates, where they advocated for world language policies & funding, including the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Programs Reauthorization Act, a grant program administered by the Administration for Native Americans at the Department of Health and Human Services to preserve Native American languages.

Thanks to advocacy from ACTFL delegates, this program was reauthorized until 2024.



AMERICA'S LANGUAGES CAUCUS IN CONGRESS

ASK YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO JOIN THE NEW NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY FORUM!

Dear colleagues and language advocates,

We're announcing a big win for the community:

After several years of continuous advocacy on Capitol Hill, we are proud to announce the formation of a Congressional Caucus dedicated to advancing language learning in the United States: **The America's Languages Caucus!**

On Nov. 12, 2019, Congressman David Price (D-NC) and Congressman Don Young (R-AK) announced the creation of the Congressional Caucus on American Languages, a bipartisan effort to support and enhance foreign language competency and international education among students and professionals across the United States. For more information on the Caucus and its legislative priorities, please visit JNCL-NCLIS's website at www.languagepolicy.org/americaslanguages.

NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE ACTION! Using this positive momentum, we are asking that you ask your representatives in the House and Senate to join this bipartisan effort to raise awareness about the positive benefits of multilingualism and create real policy change in Washington, DC and nationally!

Language Advocacy Day 2020

“
When a person
can speak to you
in their own
language, they
can reach your
heart.”

Language Advocacy Day 2020 took place in Washington D.C. February 6-7.

"Organized by the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL), Language Advocacy Day (or LAD for short) is part "lobby-day" and part full-day policy forum that brings together national representatives of the Language Enterprise concerned about the state of language learning in this country.

JNCL sets you up for success: we schedule meetings on Capitol Hill with your representatives, prepare briefing materials for you and Congressional staffers to discuss, and provide the coaching and insight to help you navigate the halls of power. LAD also connects you with language leaders in the fields of education and business for roundtable policy discussions on issues affecting the field today."

(Description from the [JNCL Website](#))

VINCENT MAKORI
(VOICE OF AMERICA)
CLOSING ADDRESS AT LAD20



Jen Bouchard
@LuciditeWriting

Thank you to Maria Martirosyan, Legislative Assistant to Rep. @Ilhan for engaging with us on key issues including increasing teacher diversity in world languages programs, Seal of Biliteracy support, and multilingual programs at community colleges. @JNCLInfo #LAD20



Pictured are more of our delegates who attended LAD2020 to represent Minnesota and advocate for the key issues we face as Minnesota language educators.

Professional Reading

Are you a member of ACTFL? Access your full copy of the [Language Educator](#) online through your ACTFL account [here](#). Not yet a member? Join today! ACTFL members receive 4 full editions of the Language Educator each year! Click [here](#) to become a member.

FOCUS TOPIC

Diversifying Language Educators and Learners

BY UJU ANYA AND L. J. RANDOLPH, JR.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

In this issue we present articles on the Focus Topic "Diversifying Language Educators and Learners." The submissions for this issue were blind reviewed by three education experts, in addition to staff from *The Language Educator* and ACTFL. We thank Uju Anya, Assistant Professor of Second Language Learning and Research Affiliate with the Center for the Study of Higher Education at The Pennsylvania State University College of Education, University Park, PA, and L. J. Randolph Jr., Associate Chair of the Department of World Languages and Cultures and Associate Professor of Spanish and Education at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, for writing an introduction to this important topic.

The word "diversity" is both necessary and challenging. It is necessary, because to ignore diversity is to reinforce legacies of inequity and exclusion upon which our educational institutions were built. However, if we set forth the goal of focusing on diversity, we put ourselves in the difficult position of defining what exactly diversity is, and, as Thomas (2016, p. 19) noted, "In a world where people self-identify on multiple levels—from race and religion to gender, sexuality, and even dietary choices—the word has become as muddled as it is mandatory."

Since diversity covers a range of intersectional social identities, the various definitions of diversity are fluid, nuanced,



Want to discuss this topic further? Log on and head over to *The Language Educator* Magazine group in the ACTFL Online Community (community.actfl.org).

[Click here to read more!](#)

Along with not limiting the definition of diversity to a single meaning, we also resist defining it as the mere presence of individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities. Such an approach amounts to little more than tokenism, because it focuses on counting people from different social categories without much thought to their inclusion, impact, interactions, and contributions. Instead, we think of diversity in terms of equitable, meaningful representation and participation. This notion of diversity, as described by Fosslien and West Duffy (2019), is the difference between saying that everyone has a seat at the table, versus saying that everyone has a seat, a voice, opportunity, and enough time to speak. Thus, any discussion of diversity must include considerations of power, agency, and equity that are all implicated in meaningful representation and participation.

Representation Matters

Diversity among language educators and learners can refer

Professional Learning: Local Opportunities

CARLA

CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION



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2020 CARLA Immersion Workshop

Saturday, April 18, 2020

9:00 am - 12:00 noon

After this workshop presented by Cory Mathieu, a PhD candidate in the Second Language Education Program at the University of Minnesota, you will be able to:

- explain why DLI students develop persistent inaccuracies in the target language
- describe research-based strategies for enhancing student language production within content instruction
- understand the second language acquisition research that supports these strategies
- identify and plan for 1-2 strategies that you can incorporate into your upcoming instruction

This workshop is designed *specifically* for secondary immersion teachers.

Cost: \$30- includes morning coffee and workshop materials

Register for the workshop [here](#).



Mark your calendars for
July 20-24, 2020.

The 2020 National TPRS
Conference is coming to
Minneapolis!

Register for "the most
informative, thought-
provoking, and rewarding four-
and-a-half days you'll ever
spend on second-language
professional development!"

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2020 CARLA Summer Institutes for Language Teachers

CARLA offers a wide range of institutes targeted at foreign language and ESL teachers from a variety of teaching levels and contexts. **We are thrilled to be partnering with CARLA to provide scholarships to current language educators interested in attending. Apply for the scholarship [here](#).**

Each institute is highly interactive and includes discussion, hands-on activities, and plenty of networking opportunities. Check out the full line-up of CARLA summer institutes at: carla.umn.edu/institutes/

ONLINE ONLY

[Transitioning to Teaching Languages Online](#)

June 22–July 20, 2020

[Using the Web for Communicative Language Learning](#)

June 29–August 2, 2020

JUNE INSTITUTE (3-DAY)

[Secondary Dual Language and Immersion: Achieving the Promise of Continuation Programs](#)—*New!*

June 22–24, 2020 **WEEK ONE**

[Assessing Language Learners' Communication Skills with Communicative Performance Tasks](#)

July 13–17, 2020

[Creativity in the Language Classroom](#)

July 13–17, 2020

[Foreign Language Literacies: Using Target Language Texts to Improve Communication](#)

July 13–17, 2020

WEEK TWO

[Using Technology in Second Language Teaching—Online Option!](#)

July 20–24, 2020

[Meaningful Portfolio Implementation—New!](#)

July 20–24, 2020

[Critical Approaches to Heritage Language Education](#)

July 20–24, 2020

WEEK THREE

[Teaching Language Through the Lens of Social Justice](#)

July 27–31, 2020

[Culture as the Core in the Second Language Classroom](#)

July 27–31, 2020

[Teaching World Languages and Cultures in Elementary Settings](#)

July 27–31, 2020