



In this issue of NYSAFLT News, you'll get to know Maureen Geagan and catch up with Ken Hughes. You'll also find regional news along with updates from the Public Advocacy committee and more!

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The President's Corner



As the winter months grow closer I find myself looking back on the year. It has certainly been an interesting one. In March I was still looking forward to attending regional conferences, but it was not to be— COVID and our new reality made that impossible. So, looking ahead to March 2021 and given the continued uncertainties, NYSAFLT will be offering a virtual spring conference on **March 6, 2021**. **Marissa Coulehan** and **Françoise Piron** will be chairing the conference and have already begun working out the details for the online experience.

I hope to see you there — it's still on my bucket list to attend each regional conference, and virtual conferences certainly make the travel easier!

Thank you to everyone involved in putting on a successful online Annual Conference, and to all our attendees for signing on! **Sally Barnes**, president elect and conference chair, the conference planning committee, the presenters, and the executive committee all did an extraordinary amount of work and gave many hours to provide outstanding professional development to world language teachers across the state and beyond.

Congratulations to our new second vice president **Françoise Piron** and new members of the board of directors **Melanie Thomas**, **Cristina Santiago-Campbell** and **Katie Inhelder**. NYSAFLT is a strong, energetic organization because of dedicated members willing to serve.

In September we were all first year teachers. COVID gave us as many reopening models as there are school districts. You are all meeting the challenges on a daily basis and you are doing an amazing job, even when it doesn't feel like it! Now, as we enter December and with the holidays around the corner, I hope it has grown easier for all of you and that you can continue to meet (and overcome) any obstacles that arise.

NYSAFLT has long been a cornerstone of my teaching career. I am indebted to NYSAFLT for always providing exemplary professional development, timely resources and everything else I could have wanted to make me the teacher I am. I joined the executive committee hoping to give back to the profession and to the organization a portion of what I have gotten over the years. I can honestly say that my contribution has been overwhelmed by the expertise and support of the executive committee and executive director. I am honored to have been president with this amazing group and in such a year.

Annual Conference

This year's Conference was originally scheduled for **October 23–24** in Syracuse NY - and then came COVID-19! I am proud to say that with the help of **John Carlino**, the NYSAFLT Executive Committee, the NYSAFLT Annual Conference Planning Committee, and our numerous presenters and exhibitors, we successfully pivoted to a virtual format.

Our theme was ***Looking to the Future: Recruitment, Leadership and Advocacy for World Languages***. This was taken directly from our five year Strategic Plan. I am grateful to our presenters and exhibitors for being leaders and giving us so much of their time and expertise.



As teachers returned to school in either hybrid, online, or in person learning this fall, the conference was a great "go-to" of ideas, strategies and resources for this exceptional academic year. Here is what over 100 conference attendees were treated to:

- Four pre-conference workshops on **Saturday, October 17** featuring **Candace Black** of OBEWL-NYSED, **Dr. Joanne O'Toole** and **Bill Heller**, reviewing the new world language standards being presented to the Board of Regents this fall, "Sneak Reading" with **Mary Holmes**, and "Sustaining a Culturally Responsive Classroom" with **Diana Clark Perez** and **Ingrid Hatt**.
- 20 live-streamed sessions were presented throughout the week
- 24 pre-recorded sessions were released throughout the week for participants to watch at a time convenient to them.

There was also a virtual exhibit hall with NYSAFLT exhibitors who were available to discuss and demonstrate their products.

Our awards ceremony and reception were on **Friday, October 23**, honoring 10 outstanding leaders in our field.

The Annual Business Meeting and Keynote with Rebecca Aubrey, ACTFL 2019 Teacher of the Year, were on **Saturday, October 24**.

While we naturally missed the experience of sharing and learning in person, it was reassuring and reaffirming to "see" each other online and to work together. Co-hosts helped presenters facilitate discussion and work through use of the Zoom breakout rooms and always dynamic chats. Award winners and their guests were able to visit with ceremony attendees and board members to celebrate their honor via breakout rooms.

We certainly hope to be in person in Syracuse next **October 22–23** with Chair **Jenny Delfini**.

Kudos to ALL for an informative, engaging and much needed week of professional development!



*Congratulations to our 2020 Annual Conference award winners!
(pictured above from left to right)*

Dorothy S. Ludwig Memorial Award for Service to the Profession: **Marie Campanaro**

Senator Paul Simon Friend of Foreign Language Award: **Tanya Rosado-Barringer**

Sister Rose Aquin Caimano Distinguished Administrator Award: Dr. LaQuita Outlaw

Remunda Cadoux Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Supervision: **Alba Gallegos**

Ruth E. Wasley Distinguished Teacher Award: **Dr. Victoria Gilbert**

Anthony J. Papalia Award: **Ling Zhai**

Outstanding Journalist/Media Presenter Award: Thom Hallock

Robert J. Ludwig Distinguished Leadership Award: Rebecca Aubrey

NYS AFLT President's Award: **Dr. Jennifer Eddy**

Ferdinand DiBartolo Distinguished NYS Leadership Award: **Leslie Kudlack**

Member Spotlight

*In this issue, **Maureen Geagan** shares her NYS AFLT story!*

NYS AFLT became a part of my life in 2002 when I began working as a French teacher in the Mohonasen District in Rotterdam. I teach mainly at the middle school level but teach high school levels 1, 2, and 3 at various times and am currently the Instructional Leader for World Languages.

I was one of those kids who played school on the first day of summer vacation, although teaching is my second career. I have loved French since I began learning it in seventh grade. The Québécois were a large presence in Vermont at that time. I considered myself very lucky because my French teacher was also the junior choir director at my church – we sang in French all the time.



My undergraduate degree is in Fashion Design and Merchandising. I took advantage of the Junior Year Abroad program at Marist College and spent the year studying design and French in Paris. I worked for a number of years in New York City's garment center while continuing to study French simply because I enjoyed it. I realized that I wanted to become a French teacher and earned my M.A. in French and Secondary Education at Hunter College. I was awarded the René Taupin Prize by the French Department and spent three months in France furthering my language skills and teaching methods.

The first NYS AFLT Annual Conference I attended was in 2002 — the last time it was held in the Catskills. I learned a lot from the workshops and collegial atmosphere of the conference. Several years later I joined the NYS AFLT and COLT (Capital Organization of Language Teachers) Regional Meeting Planning Committee. **Colleen Sheehan** and **Jill Dugan**, NYS AFLT Capital District directors at the time, and **Mike Mitchell** were my first language leadership mentors. They welcomed me and started me on the road to greater involvement in both organizations. I have served on various NYS AFLT committees including Travel Scholarships, Fulvi Awards, the Virtual Video Contest, and most recently, the Nominations Committee. I am a past vice president and president of COLT. I followed Colleen and Jill and then Mike as a regional director for Capital-East and served two terms as NYS AFLT secretary-treasurer. I have presented workshops at the Annual Conference and the Summer Institute. NYS AFLT has also contributed to my professional development through scholarships: I received the 2011 Québec-UQAM scholarship and a NYS AFLT Summer Institute scholarship for first-time attendees.

In my leisure time I enjoy traveling, hiking and backpacking, and quilting. I have visited over forty U.S. national parks including the farthest in American Samoa. I have had opportunities to use my language skills in Alaska to persuade a French family to pack up their picnic and leave the area since there was a bear coming down the lakeshore and to inform a French family in a California national park that the nearest showers were three miles away. I have twice participated in international volunteer projects in France and loved spending time in remote areas and working with people from many countries as well as the locals. Working outside is a nice change of pace after spending ten months in a classroom. The first project, in 2006, was a two-week environmental project in a village near Verdun. The work was to restore a riverbed to its original course after many rivers were straightened in the 1970s to accommodate large-scale farm machinery and agri-business. I had the pleasure of working with François, the only logger left in the region who still worked with draft horses instead of a tractor. His horses were named Fred and Scooby Doo. In 2018, I spent two weeks volunteering on a restoration project at a mountain lodge in the Maritime Alps near the Mercantour National Park and the Italian border. The work was to re-mortar the exteriors of two buildings at the site of a medieval silver mine. I became known as "La Reine de la Bétonnière" (the Queen of the Cement Mixer) by the end of the first week and still dream about the proper ratios of lime, sand, and water needed to mix the mortar we used. Since becoming past NYS AFLT secretary-treasurer, I have finished a number of quilts that were in the works for a while and have made several from start to finish.

I cannot overstate the importance of NYS AFLT in my professional life and in developing leadership and advocacy skills. The quality of the professional development, the willingness of so many to volunteer their time and many talents, and the relationships built with members all over the state are invaluable. The number of NYS AFLT members, current and past directors and officers on the World Language Standards Regional Review Committees comes as no surprise – it's what we do. I look forward to staying involved in NYS AFLT!

Where Are They Now?



In this issue, we check in with past NYS AFLT webmaster Ken Hughes.

In the spring of 1998, as a senior at St. Lawrence University fresh off a semester of studying in France, I was fully immersed in my student teaching experience at Canton High School. The handful of foreign language student teachers that semester had the terrific fortune of having **Janine Manley**, who would serve as NYS AFLT president a year later, as our LOTE methods instructor. Janine was instrumental in connecting me with NYS AFLT and encouraged me and a friend, **Lela Dunbar**, to present a workshop at the Nevele that next fall focused on helping brand new teachers. We presented our very first workshop with rave reviews and I was hooked on NYS AFLT.

As a hobby HTML coder and amateur web designer, I thought I might be able to lend my expertise to NYS AFLT with a newly designed and more “modern” website. An email to then president **Marie Guillet** introducing myself and making my pitch for the opportunity to design the NYS AFLT website would circulate amongst the executive committee and board of directors. A reply sometime later informed me of my acceptance as the NYS AFLT webmaster and nysaflt.org was born.

In order to create the best website possible, I requested attendance at as many meetings as possible to learn about the initiatives of the organization and figure out what exactly NYS AFLT wanted to share with the world. Early work with **Bob Ludwig** and then with his successor, **John Carlino**, developed deep camaraderie and trust as we went to work developing and integrating new technologies and ideas to support foreign language educators all across New York State: online archives of publications, a members only area, on-line membership renewal, on-line conference registration, webinars and virtual meetings (started in 2009!), podcasts, the NYS AFLT app, plus a slew of other great ideas from NYS AFLT leaders such as the Annual Conference CD, membership videos, Where Are They Now? and Leaders of Tomorrow.

The Annual Meeting became the Annual Conference and I was tapped to create the cover pages for the Annual Conference program, which challenged me the most, creatively. Never to shy away from a challenge, I was asked to emcee the raffles which left many in the audience rolling in the aisles with laughter and certainly, DJ Webmaster Ken Hughes was a moniker I’ll never forget as I brought my DJ skills to the NYS AFLT dance floor. Those were amazing times for sure.

I decided to leave NYS AFLT in 2015 after not having been in the language classroom since 2006 and out of public education as a K–12 Principal since 2011. I felt disconnected with what I was advocating for and felt others could do the work better. Despite all this, I have never forgotten about my NYSA-colleagues and how they helped me to be a better person and educator. Learning so many different methods and approaches that instill a deep, long lasting love for language and culture was my biggest take away as a NYS AFLT member. Deep and long-lasting bonds with so many wicked-smart and insanely wonderful NYS AFLT colleagues remain with me to this very day, even though that chapter of my life is behind me.

In 2020 with COVID and closed schools, I don’t know how any of you have been able to do what you do. I’m so glad NYS AFLT was so well prepared to shift to a virtual world, having done so with ease and intelligence for 13 years prior. Who would have known that those early days of webinars would prepare NYS AFLT for such success today. I understand you have held a virtual Summer Institute and a virtual Annual Conference this year– simply amazing. My kudos to those who organized and executed them to support world language educators who needed it most!

Since my departure from NYS AFLT in 2015, I took a few years off from any web design. In 2017, I ran for and was elected as a councilman for the town where I live, Essex, NY. In 2019, I was elected to serve as the Town Supervisor which also affords me the opportunity to serve as a member of the Essex County Board of Supervisors. I work at Town Hall on a daily basis handling all manners of public service responsibilities, including hosting virtual Town Board meetings with GoToMeeting (which I learned how to use from NYS AFLT) each month. I supplement my time serving the public with my nearly decade old small business of traveling to people’s home and fixing their computers as an Apple-certified consultant. I’ve even restarted designing websites for local businesses.

Don’t forget to apply for the Fulvi Scholarships and take advantage of those conference scholarships. Take a chance and present a workshop on something you’re passionate about in the classroom. Get involved in the leadership of NYS AFLT and volunteer your time on a committee. It changed my life in innumerable ways and I count my blessings for every moment I was a NYS AFLT member and for every person I met along the way. Bonne continuation à vous tous!

Member Spotlight



NYS Long Island

On **Saturday, November 7**, more than 60 world language teachers from New York City attended the New York City Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYCAFLT) Fall 2020 Annual Conference via Zoom.

The highlight of the conference were the sessions led by **Candace Black**, World Language Associate, OBEWL-NYSED, and **Jill Schimmel**, Senior Director at the Division of Multilingual Learners in NYCDOE.

Black’s “Preparing to Implement the Revised NYS World Language Standards” and Schimmel’s “Standards Implementation Update,” were followed by a highly interactive Q&A session. Feedback from attendees suggests that the conference was well received.



Language teachers enjoy NYACFLT’s Fall 2020 Annual Conference via Zoom.

Long Island Language Teachers held their annual conference virtually this year on **November 13–14**. The theme was **Explore a Language: The World Needs You!** The keynote speaker was **Candace Black** from NYSED-OBEWL. Her keynote address was entitled “The State of World Languages in NYS - Our Path Forward.” Attendees had the choice of 16 additional sessions. There was also time to visit and chat with vendors and exhibitors along with

opportunities to network and meet fellow language teachers. Many NYSAFLT members presented sessions, including: [William Anderson](#), [Tina DeFalco](#), [Valérie Greer](#), [Wendy Mercado](#), [Elvira Morse](#), [Alexis Porcelli](#), [Jennifer Schwester](#) and [Cheryl Sosa](#). Sessions included a wide variety of topics from mindfulness, social justice, engaging all learners both in person and virtually, surviving the first year of teaching, and working with student teachers to implementing the new language standards. Attendees were encouraged to share their own experiences and concerns via chat throughout this conference, making it as interactive as possible despite not meeting in person this year. LILT did an amazing job to help meet the needs of their members throughout this conference!

We would like to acknowledge [Michele Sennon-Britton](#) for her time serving as regional director for NYC/LI. Thank you for everything that you did for NYSAFLT during your term as director. You will be missed!

As we thank Michele for her service, we are also happy to welcome [Cristina Santiago-Campbell](#) to the NYSAFLT board of directors. She is the newly-elected co-director for NYC-LI region. Her two-year term begins on [January 1, 2021](#). Cristina is currently the Assistant Principal of World Languages and ENL at Brooklyn Technical High School, in Brooklyn.

Mid-Hudson Westchester

PWRFL and ALOUD are happy to welcome you back to a new school year! We know that this year will have its own challenges but we are confident our members will persevere and enjoy being back with students no matter where we are teaching from!

ALOUD conducted its first virtual conference in October. The event was a success! ALOUD is currently in the process of planning its spring conference and will be releasing updates via Facebook and the website. Stay tuned for more information!

PWRFL has set up a series of virtual meetings to start the year and give members a chance to share ideas for our hybrid/virtual situations! We held our first meeting on [October 8](#) with president [Alexis Thornton](#) presenting "Establishing the Seal of Biliteracy." Our next meeting, on [November 5](#) was "Communicating with All Students" followed by "How to Incorporate Speaking" on [December 3](#).

PWRFL membership is now open (with a reduced rate for this year). Anyone who is a member can participate in the webinars and earn CTLE credits. Please look for our flyers with information on logging into webinars and we hope to "see" you soon!



Western New York

WNYFLEC Virtual Fall Meeting

The WNYFLEC Board hosted their annual Fall Meeting a little early this year.

Hindsight is 2020: The Lessons Learned During COVID-19 took place virtually on [August 26](#). Over 20 educators (members and non-members) tuned in to take advantage of this free professional development opportunity. It was such a success!

Each member of the board shared activities or ideas that "worked" during distance learning, or a quick takeaway. In addition, [Michele Roberts](#), [Martha Horohoe](#) and Carrie Bartholomew contributed ideas. All in all, it was a great way for everyone to connect and get ready to start the school year.

WNY Teacher Spotlight

[Anna Cartwright](#) is a high school French teacher in Orchard Park CSD. As a past participant of NYSAFLT's Leaders of Tomorrow program, Anna has been concentrating on what she calls "everyday advocacy." She explains that it is easy to fold advocacy into our daily routines. Due to budget cuts and student enrollment, Anna was laid off from OPCSD in 2011. She worked in a different district for a short period of time before returning to Orchard Park. She gained perspective as she was able to compare the climate of the 2 districts and how they relate to world languages. Anna says that what it boils down to is that "multilingualism is a skill that must be valued by society." She adds that oftentimes there is a lack of value put on it by the community or kids just don't have the desire to communicate in a new language.

Anna has developed a three-pronged approach which includes: promoting the program, growing the program, and celebrating the program. The communication must be open among students, parents, teachers, and administration. She has also developed lessons at all levels that highlight the value of multilingualism and promote global mindedness.

We would like to congratulate Anna on her work in advocacy and look forward to learning more about how to advocate for our programs. If you want to learn more, you can contact Anna via email at acartwright@opschools.org.

Welcome to our new Board Member

Congratulations to [Melanie Thomas](#), a Spanish teacher at Spencerport Central Schools, for her election to the position of Regional Co-Director of Western NY for 2021–2023. A popular presenter, active committee chair, and friendly colleague, we look forward to the connections Melanie can make with our colleagues in Western NY.

AATF of WNY

The only AATF-WNY item that has not been postponed due to the pandemic is our Festival Virtuel Padlet which was included in an AATF-WNY National French Week 2020 Newsletter with ideas for celebrating National French Week, [November 4–10 2020](#).

Public Advocacy

Exciting progress is being made on behalf of world language education in New York State. After a lengthy and in-depth process, involving hundreds of world language educators across the state, the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) has officially proposed to the Board of Regents two crucial items: the name change from Languages Other Than English (LOTE) to World Languages (WL), and the revised World Language Standards.

The second presentation to the Board of Regents will be in January or February of 2021. This is the most critical for us because it is when they will vote to adopt these revisions.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

We are asking everyone to take a few minutes to send a letter, postcard or email to your Regent. Express your support for the name change from LOTE to WL as well as the new World Language Standards. You can also add a request for the future funding of world language state assessments. The roughly 300 postcards previously written to Board of Regent members requesting funding for these state assessments have been mailed. We are not requesting funding for 2021 assessments at this time because our timeline has shifted due to complications resulting from COVID. However, because of the sudden cancellation of most NYSAFLT regional conferences, many Regent members have received few or no postcards. We need your voices!

IT'S EASY! Send a letter, postcard or email to your [Regent](#). Express your support for the name change from LOTE to WL as well as the new World Language Standards and add a request for the future funding of WL state assessments OR use the sample letter at this [link](#).

When mailing a card or letter, please email Marie Campanaro (mcampanaro@aol.com) with your name and the name of your Regent. When sending an email, please cc Marie at the same address. We wish to ensure that all Regents are receiving communication from us.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY – NEW FOCUS

The shift in our original timeline and postcard campaign has led us to examine new directions for our world language advocacy.

You can view our Annual Conference presentation which details our Board of Regents campaign for world languages, the ACTFL Strategic Plan and NYSAFLT Advocacy, as well as a NYSUT update by clicking [here](#).

Announcements

Language Association Journal

Want to share ideas or research with your colleagues but prefer the written word? Then it is time to think about submitting to the Language Association Journal! We welcome a range of topics, generally following the formats of teacher to teacher articles, scholarly research, and reports. The Language Association Journal is published two times per year with the next deadline being **February 1**. Find full details and submit your work through the NYSAFLT publications page and share all the best with your colleagues

NYSAFLT Cards

Are there people whom you would like to recognize or honor? You can now send greetings, words of comfort, or any other sentiment with a NYSAFLT card. For a minimum of \$5.00 per card, we will print your message to indicate that a donation has been made. These will be published in the *NYSAFLT News* and will benefit the teacher travel scholarship.

Cards may be obtained by going to the donations page or by sending a check (made payable to NYSAFLT) to:

NYSAFLT Headquarters
2400 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14214-2364

Mark Your Calendar

December

Executive Committee (Buffalo), **December 5**
Webinar: Michelle Walpole, 7 p.m., **December 8**
Annual Conference Planning (online), **December 10**
Board of Regents Meeting, **December 14–15**
Deadline: Expense Vouchers to Headquarters, **December 15**
Deadline: Final Standing Committee Reports to President, **December 15**
Membership Year Ends, **December 31**

January

Membership Year Begins, **January 1**
Nominations Committee Kick-off Meeting, **January 5**
Executive Committee and Financial Management Committee (online), **January 9**
Board of Regents Meeting, **January 11–12**
Webinar: Bill Heller, 4p.m., **January 14**
Regents Examination Period, **January 26–29**
Board of Directors (online), **January 21**
Deadline: [Vito Marcello Rochester-area Fund an Idea Grant](#), **January 31**

February

Deadline: March Newsletter Submissions, **February 1**
Deadline: Journal Issue #1 Submissions, **February 1**
JNCL-NCLIS Language Advocacy Day & Delegate Assembly (Washington, DC), **February 4–5**
Board of Regents Meeting, **February 8–9**
Webinar: Joanne O'Toole, 4p.m., **February 25**

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