

Welcome from the Program Chair

Welcome to the 49th annual Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in the beautiful Palmer House Hilton, Chicago March 9-11, 2017. With more than 350 sessions and workshops available, there is something for everyone's professional development needs. Hopefully *Performance + Proficiency = Possibilities* will turn into Reality for your students as it has for our Keynote Speaker, Nick Verderico, Business Development Manager, Latin America for The J.M. Smucker Company. No more "I took four years of a language and I can't say a word." With our push for proficiency, as can be noted by the amount of sessions devoted to IPAs and proficiency, I want to hear, "I am so glad my language teacher prepared me for my job."

We have an important job to do as educators: guide our students to become proficient in two or more languages. It is vital for them to become global citizens as they start their quest for university entrance and future employment. We also wear another hat—advocacy. We must speak up to our students, parents, administrators and legislators to promote language study. We must no longer accept the attitude that world languages are an elective easily cut when funds run short. We must be the last to be cut because of what we can offer our students beyond speaking a second language. We teach tolerance, acceptance, perspective, critical thinking and much more. We need to speak loudly.

I always find that the conference rejuvenates me for the end of the school year. We have so many talented teachers in our region willing to share ideas and friendships. I hope you connect with old friends and network as you attend sessions and develop your own Professional Learning Communities to be continued long after the conference is over. Our sessions end at 5:00 so you can take advantage of the wonderful city of Chicago.

Some highlights:

- The Delegate Assembly on Thursday
- The Leadership Workshop on Thursday
- The CW/EW Workshop on Thursday
- Keynote speaker: Nick Verderico, Business Development Manager, Latin America for The J.M. Smucker Company on Friday
- The CSCTFL Authors' Luncheon whose articles will be published in the 2017 CSCTFL Report on Friday
- Several exhibitors' breaks to peruse the newest resources—throughout the conference
- Presenters from over 20 states and 3 countries

We are happy to team with Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ICTFL) to bring you a quality conference. We hope you enjoy it!

Program Committee Members: Martha Halemba, Program Chair, Hudson (OH) City Schools; and David and Terri Marlow, Assistant Program Chairs, Marietta, OH