

THE COLLEGE LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION



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CLA President's Greetings

Grüße CLA Familie, ¡Saludos a la familia de CLA! Salutations CLA famille, Saudações CLA família:

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the College Language Association, I welcome you to our 80th convention and 83rd anniversary celebration. Please prepare yourselves for three exciting days of critical debate and social interactions with CLA family and friends. Please note: We are excited to announce that our 2021 convention will be virtual.

We are saddened by the death of our dearly departed Vice President Dr. Yvonne E. McIntosh.

The Program Committee, under the leadership of Dr. Jervette R. Ward, Vice President and Program Chair; Dr. McKinley Melton, English Area Representative, and Dr. José Manuel Batista, World Languages Area Representative, has been working closely with our local Host Committee Dr. Terrence Tucker and Dr. Shelby Crosby to prepare for our 80th convention. And we thank administrators, faculty, staff, and students at the University of Memphis for their support.

This year, because of the global pandemic, we cannot return physically to our birthplace of LeMoyne-Owen in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1937 President Emeritus Dr. Hugh M. Gloster and nine faculty members from historically Black institutions founded this great organization to improve the educational level of their students and to provide a forum for African American scholars of languages, literatures, and cultural studies. But there will be a virtual tour of the University of Memphis and a virtual tour of the National Civil Rights Museum.

This year's convention theme, "Afrofuturism: Diasporic Visions," generated many creative and engaging proposals and sessions. As Host Committee Chair Dr. Tucker noted in his letter to CLA members, "the theme of the convention comes at an ideal time for Memphis as we connect the crucial Black cultural traditions and experiences with the possibility of the future being imagined through the realms of science fiction, fantasy, and speculative fiction."

And so with apologies to Langston Hughes's short story *Home* and a song—"I'm coming home"—by one of my favorite groups the Spinners, we are coming home to Memphis virtually.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

Reginald A. Bess, Ph.D.
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