



Greetings AILACTE members,

I trust that you were able to have some restful and reflective time over the summer months to rejuvenate as well as refill your personal and professional cups with energy and vitality. Come September, I hope you will be recharged for the challenges and opportunities that are before you.

Over the past year, our nation has continued to struggle and be on a bumpy and somewhat destructive political road that has pressed all of us to reassess and reaffirm our commitments as we prepare future educators. It is of paramount importance to boldly continue equipping prospective teachers to exercise their minds and hearts, be intellectually curious and socially just in thought and action, inclusive in providing equitable opportunities for all learners, and active contributors in classrooms, schools, and communities they are serving.

As I compare the comments made in the Views and News newsletter a year ago with current federal policies, practices, and rhetoric our nation has encountered, the issues and challenges teachers and their students are experiencing continue to escalate. Vulnerable groups in our schools are facing and experiencing even more challenges, adversity, and discrimination. The imperative to advocate and press for healthy opportunities and spaces for teachers and their diverse students has only intensified.

**Conference Context:** Over the past year, our nation has continued to struggle and be on a bumpy and somewhat destructive political road that has pressed all of us to reassess and reaffirm our commitments as we prepare future educators. It is of paramount importance to boldly continue equipping prospective teachers to exercise their minds and hearts, be intellectually curious and socially just in thought and action, inclusive in providing equitable opportunities for all learners, and active contributors in classrooms, schools and communities they are serving.

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AILACTE joins with AACTE in heightening the efforts to revisit, redefine and advocate for teachers and the diverse students they serve during this civil and social era of the marginalization of diverse groups.

These groups include race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, students with disabilities, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. We must intentionally equip teacher candidates to be informed, wise, inclusive, and advocates. Many AILACTE members have conducted research or been engaged significantly in the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the preparation of their teacher candidates. In an effort to support, acknowledge, and recognize their commitment to advancing equity and inclusion, a new award has been established and will be presented at the upcoming conference in Atlanta. The award is titled, "AILACTE Diversity and Inclusion Change Agent Award." Please see details for applying for this award in this Newsletter's section regarding Scholar Awards.

Social emotional learning and addressing complex student trauma continue to be realities in schools. Teacher preparation programs have been proactive in equipping teacher candidates to successfully navigate and accommodate the social and emotional trauma of students entering classrooms and school buildings. What innovations and strategies are programs successfully using to prepare their teachers to be effective in meeting the needs of growing numbers of students with such challenging realities? An adverse artifact of the complex social-emotional trauma and challenges facing teachers and students is the compounded stress and strains affecting teachers. Many educators across the nation are reporting struggles with their own well-being and self-care including chronic stress, fatigue, burnout, and declines in physical and mental health. The challenge is how to equip teacher candidates to understand and proactively manage and preserve their mental and physical health and well-being to sustain their vitality and joy in the profession throughout their careers.

Recruiting, supporting, and retaining teacher candidates from diverse backgrounds continues to be challenging. What new information and creative solutions are emerging that assist diverse teacher candidates as many of them face mounting challenges such as testing barriers to certification? What kinds of creative financial supports and incentives are in place that assist in retaining our diverse teacher candidates? Disseminating successful strategies programs are using to recruit and retain diverse teachers can be vital resources in our efforts to diversify the teacher workforce.

Assessment, accountability, and accreditation have greatly impacted the profession of teacher education over the last four decades. National legislation such as Goals 2000, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) have shaped an agenda in which teachers are ever-mindful of student scores on outcome measures. To some degree, this extends to test scores of the P-12 students of their alumni following program completion. Teacher education programs are judged by their teacher candidate scores on state and national assessments. Many institutions who use these high stakes performance assessments such as the edTPA are finding that it is driving how programs are framed, the structure and content of courses, and influencing cooperating teachers' willingness to accommodate the instructional spaces needed for teacher candidate lessons planning and videotaping. Learning about how teacher educators continue to navigate this with teacher candidates in their field placements is of interest and concern. Quality assurance and data-driven decision-making guide the daily efforts of teacher education faculty. This along with concerns about the reliability and validity of

assessment measures have a tendency to compete with the values and experiences of teacher educators who appreciate the goals of a liberal arts education of the whole person. As can be seen, programs are constantly challenged with integrating assessment, accountability, and accreditation requirements while working to achieve the goals of their liberal arts institutions.

The efficacy and success of teacher candidate preparation is dependent upon articulations that are coordinated and nurtured through partnerships and internships in P-12 schools and districts. There are innovative and collaborative models that provide real world experiences for effectively preparing and supporting new teachers for the diverse schools they will be entering. We are always interested in learning more about how these efforts are yielding culturally relevant learning opportunities for teacher candidates, their cooperating teachers and the diverse students in today's classrooms.

Finally, we look forward to celebrating AILACTE's 40th anniversary. We have formed a committee planning that celebration! If you have comments or suggestions, please contact Alyssa Haarer ([admin@ailacte.org](mailto:admin@ailacte.org)) or Jacqueline McDowell [publications@ailacte.org](mailto:publications@ailacte.org).

The theme of the conference is "Celebrating 40 years of AILACTE: Continuing to Advance, Adapt, and Advocate for Teacher Education in Independent Liberal Arts Institutions." Please review the Call for Conference Proposals for AILACTE's 2020 meeting and conference. AILACTE institutions have traditionally prepared effective teachers who have been grounded in a liberal arts education. As we continue to train the next generation of culturally responsive teachers, a constant in sustaining this effort is continuously adapting, advocating, and advancing quality teacher preparation in our liberal arts institutions.

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