

Welcome and Acknowledgments

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to ATA's 43rd Annual Conference, and to Atlanta. This year we have an outstanding lineup of preconference seminars and conference sessions. I'm sure I speak for us all in thanking this year's speakers, who have given their time and energy to share their knowledge and expertise. The educational sessions are the core of our conference.

I also want to thank the following division and committee volunteers for their advice and input on the scheduling of conference sessions in their languages and areas of special expertise: Gertrud Champe, Helen Cole, Tereza d'Avila Braga, Nora Favorov, Rudy Heller, Steven Iverson, Cliff Landers, Alan Melby, Ann Macfarlane, Frank Mou, Dorothee Racette, Izumi Suzuki, Monique-Paule Tubb and Sue Ellen Wright.

Our local chapter, the Atlanta Association of Interpreters & Translators (AAIT), has put a lot of thought and energy into making us feel welcome in their hometown. Please take a moment during the conference to stop by their Welcome Table and thank AAIT President Jack Nowicki, board member Sandra Bravo, Treasurer Carol Spencer, and Liaison Committee volunteers Adria Davenport, Debbie Fung-a-Wing, Lucia Holliday, Jorge Lucero, Jorge Martín, Catherine McCabe, Ana Morrison and M'Balia Thomas. Another Atlanta local, Barbara Bell, ably organized this year's High School Outreach Program.

The conference also offers a variety of resources and activities including the Exhibitors' Hall and Job Exchange, the Literary Division's Book Splash and After Hours Café, and the many other social gatherings organized by ATA's division volunteers. Rosalie Wells coordinated this year's Networking Session, and music for the ATA-Folia World Dance Party and Closing Night Dance was arranged by ATA board member Tim Yuan and Atlanta local Erik Voss. ATA board member Rob Croese has organized a round-robin tennis tournament. Please check the program for locations and details on these and other exciting events.

Translation and Terrorism: a Town Hall Meeting represents the first time senior representatives of US law enforcement and intelligence agencies have appeared before the professional T&I community to address issues of language and national security, discuss current programs and propose solutions. Thank you to panelists Margaret Gulotta, Glenn Nordin, Richard Brecht and Ronald Wolfe, as well as to the event's principal organizer, Kevin Hendzel, and the other volunteers on ATA's Public Relations Committee.

A number of new initiatives are being explored at this year's conference, including a Regional Network for North America, an ATA Medical Division and ATA accreditation for South Slavic languages. Of special interest to medical interpreters is the Medical Interpreter Network of Georgia's Fall Forum on Saturday afternoon, co-hosted with ATA's Interpreters Division, AAIT and the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care.

And if it all gets to be too much, take a break and visit the Exhibitors' Hall for a massage, provided compliments of ATA by the staff at Bodyworks, or check your e-mail at the new CyberCafé.

My first year as conference organizer has been much easier with the help and guidance of ATA President Thomas L. West III, our immediate past-president Ann Macfarlane and our energetic Board of Directors. We have an outstanding headquarters staff, who do the real 'heavy lifting' of the conference: Walter Bacak, Orson Carter, Mary David, Terry Hanlen, Teresa Kelly, Teresa Ly, Roshan Pokharel, Maggie Rowe, and Jeff Sanfacon. I'd also like to thank Nancy Wise and Kellyann Bright of Conferon; and Lorie Simpson, Bob Williams, and Brian Wallace of the McNeill Group.

One of my favorite things about ATA has always been the generosity and sharing among colleagues, and this group effort is a great example. For me, the Annual Conference is what ATA is all about.

Scott Brennan
ATA President-Elect and Conference Organizer