

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT

A Letter from the New President

November 28, 2006

Dear CLTA Members,

Greetings! 2007 is around the corner and it is my distinct honor and pleasure to serve as president this year. It is indeed an exciting time for those of us involved with Chinese language teaching, for never before has there been greater international interest in the study of our subject than there is right now. The growing interest in Chinese is manifest in all sectors of society, including education, government, and business. In 2007 Advanced Placement Chinese exams will be offered for the first time in the United States. New and expanded programs from kindergarten through university and into the workforce are popping up everywhere and highlighted in the media. The number of Americans learning Chinese will continue to increase as the Bush administration plans to spend \$114 million in 2007 to fund its National Security Language Initiative (NSLI). The Chinese government is also helping to expand Americans' opportunities by establishing Confucius Institutes in the United States, bringing school administrators and principals to China, and offering teacher training during the summer. "Chinese fervor" was certainly evident at this year's conference in Nashville. Crowds gathered around the numerous booths featuring a wide array of Chinese texts and materials. We had the largest CLTA conference in our history, totaling 36 panels, 126 papers, and 145 presenters. At age 44, CLTA can be proud to say we have reached maturity and joined the mainstream of the foreign language academy in the United States. The time is ripe for us and our prospects look great.

Given this unprecedented momentum and the heightened interest in our profession, it is critical

that CLTA continues to build and strengthen the field, define standards for teaching and learning, and promote research in areas such as Chinese language acquisition, linguistic analysis, instructional design, technological advancement, and program assessment. Specifically, we plan to accomplish the following objectives:

- 1. Encourage research on important issues in the field and disseminate new knowledge and best practices.** To this end, I am pleased to report that our fourth monograph—*Understanding the Learning and Teaching of CFL: New Empirical Findings*—spearheaded by our 2006 CLTA President Mien-hwa Chiang and now led by Professor Michael Everson, is well underway. At the conference, a workshop on Research Proposal Writing was organized by Professor Songren Cui and conducted by Professor Michael Everson. To deepen our understanding of classroom issues in pre-college settings, I encourage interested members and colleagues at various K-16 programs to collaborate and conduct research.
- 2. Enhance K-16 articulation and coordinate efforts to bring out the potential of students at different stages of learning.** The first step to articulation is to initiate dialogues among teachers of all levels. This has been achieved by the Second CLTA-CLASS joint forum organized at this year's conference. The minutes of the forum are included in this newsletter. The CLTA Board of Directors will discuss other measures to encourage communication at regional levels. With this in mind, I urge you to contact your nearby colleagues, whether they are teaching in college or pre-college settings. Give them a call today and arrange visits to each other's classroom to share ideas and experience. First-hand exposure to different cur-