

Public Relations and Advocacy Report, 2012

Respectfully Submitted by Sarah Shackelford

The Board position relating to Public Relations and Advocacy was newly created by By-Law changes last spring, and in-coming President Carol Eiber appointed me to the vacant position. While Advocacy was very familiar to me, Public Relations was an altogether new situation, and I am deeply grateful to Roz Terek (who had been Vice President, Public Relations for several years prior) for the large amount of assistance she provided me in learning what to do and in setting up hospitality for the conference.

I spent much time keeping abreast of current happenings and pertinent articles related to advocacy and foreign language education, and posted frequently to the listserv and to the OFLA Facebook page during the past year. In addition, I set up an OFLA Twitter account and used it to disseminate OFLA related news as rapidly as possible. I also wrote several letters of support for Ohio language programs in jeopardy, contributed articles to the Cardinal newsletter, and will attend the JNCL-NCLIS Delegate Assembly and Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in May. Serving as a member of the JNCL Committee for the Future, I participated in conference call meetings and helped collect information as needed throughout the past year.

In June 2012 I travelled to Milwaukee with Jane Rauschenberg to attend a planning meeting (with Patrick Raven and various other Central States Conference members) for the 2013 Central States Conference, which OFLA will be hosting in Columbus in March 2013. Continuing on as Chair of the Local Planning Committee (with Roz Terek as Co-Chair), I organized a booth at the 2012 Central States Conference to advertise for next year, and disseminated information about this conference whenever appropriate. I continued to participate, as well, in several out of state conferences and foreign language teacher networks, including via Twitter, making connections and obtaining a variety of information and teaching tips that I have been able to pass along to OFLA members.

ACTFL has become increasingly active in advocacy issues as well as its more traditional promotional role, and recently, on March 12th, I was able to participate in a conference call concerning efforts to form a network of states for purposes of advocacy. This will also tie in somehow with JNCL (which will soon be re-organized, as a new director is being sought), and I will pass along details as I receive them.

We have a long way to go in fighting “the good fight” for foreign language education in our state and our nation; let’s take a deep breath and keep at it !