

From the Programs Director

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A Look at IALLT Programs and Services

A question is often asked by first-time IALLT conference attendees: "Why is such an enjoyable and informative conference held only every other year?" Besides making IALLT conferences just a bit more special, the answer is that many of our members have a difficult time finding travel funds, and a biennial conference is a little easier to budget for. So what about the 24 months in between? Of course there is the *IALLT Journal* you are holding in your hand, and the newly revised Website, www.iallt.org with its new "members only" services. In addition, IALLT programs try to bridge the gap with regional groups, on-line resources, and periodic training activities.

Regional Groups

Although independently organized, IALLT supports and promotes the regional groups set up around the country to bring together local IALLT members and others interested language and technology. Each group typically holds one or two meetings per year where issues and trends can be presented with a local focus. Because those involved in managing, teaching, or creating technology-based language programs and facilities are often "lone rangers" on their campus, the regional group meetings allow for person-to-person interactions that develop into a network of support among colleagues, especially with those in K-12. A regional meeting also provides the members a chance to see a neighboring facility, see similar problems from a different viewpoint, and understand how solutions have evolved. Regional groups also publish newsletters and host Web sites where information can be shared. Some groups have set up lists and forums as well. See the IALLT Web site for more information.

LLTI

For those everyday questions and technology issues, a rich resource is the Language Learning and Technology International list server, moderated by Otmar Foelsche at Dartmouth College. Here one can turn for answers to almost any question that arises in the course of the day. Subscribers from around the world respond with experience and practical suggestions. If you are not familiar with LLTI, take a look at the LLTI Highlights Column in this issue, or go to www.iallt.org and follow the IALLT Services & Resources link for more information and instructions on how to subscribe.

Affiliations

Many of our members belong to related national and international organizations. IALLT is affiliated with several: CALICO, ACTFL, NECTFL, TESOL, EuroCALL, and LET. At most of the conferences held by these affiliate organizations, IALLT is invited to present sponsored sessions and hold an interest meeting where IALLT members may meet, discuss issues, and invite others to join. Our affiliation with the Japanese Association of Language Education and Technology (JET) includes co-hosting the international FLEAT conference every five years, alternating between Japan and North America. Both the FLEAT and EuroCALL conferences provide a stimulating exchange of ideas.

IALLT is also a member of the Joint National Committee for Languages, a "forum for discussion and cooperation among language professionals to identify needs of the communities and to chart new directions in national policies." Membership in JNCL gives IALLT members a voice in government processes.

Workshops

Two very important programs are the technology training workshop series IALLT developed in conjunction with ACTFL and the Houghton Mifflin Company.

The Houghton Mifflin "Teaching with Technology" workshop is a two-day workshop held periodically throughout the year and facilitated by veteran IALLT members. The sessions teach participants how to select, evaluate, design and create technology-based activities within the framework of the national standards for foreign language learning. For information on this workshop and the schedule for 2002-2003, see http://college.hmco.com/instructors/ins_techtech_fdp_fl.html

The ACTFL "Integrating Internet Resources into the Language Curriculum" is a full-day workshop which focuses on connecting the potential of Internet technology to the principles of good language teaching. Participants examine and evaluate several Internet-based activities for language instruction, analyzing the characteristics necessary for activity success. Later, working individually or in small groups, participants design and develop an activity. The workshop discussion includes ways to modify and adapt various activities to lab (many computers) or classroom (few computers) contexts.

Even though we only meet as a conference every two years, IALLT provides support every day of the year. All this is accomplished by diligent, selfless volunteers. If you would like to assist your colleagues with their efforts to integrate technology, contact me or one of the IALLT board members and join with us. ♦