

REFLECTIONS OF A FUTURE LEADER

When my chapter president asked if I were interested in applying for the Future Leaders Fellowship Program, I was hesitant. I wondered if that meant she was going to ask me to take on more responsibility or even take over as president one day. As a relatively new teacher, I wasn't convinced that I had the leadership qualities or experience that our organization is looking for. However, after a few days in Saint Louis, under the guidance of Janel Lafond-Paquin, and a great cohort of other future leaders, I can confidently say that my opinions have changed. I am excited about the opportunities the AATF offers and am looking forward to taking a more active role in my chapter.

I initially joined the AATF because my colleague told me about the *Grand Concours*, and as a new teacher, I was looking for a space where I could learn from more experienced colleagues. I joined the committee for National French Week a few years ago, and have since become the secretary of our chapter. I admire the work of the individuals on our board and have enjoyed meeting other teachers at our events.

Participating in the Future Leaders training taught me so much about the AATF and introduced me to a network of other members all working to promote French and Francophone cultures in their classrooms and communities. We spent two days looking at the guidelines that lead us, meeting the executive council and administrative personnel that make everything happen, and sharing both our successes and challenges at the local and regional levels. I felt comforted in knowing that I am not alone and that I have a strong and supportive group of engaged and talented members that would be willing to offer advice or a helping hand. I can't wait to see all of my new friends in Martinique and am looking forward to meeting the next cohort of future leaders.

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