

AATF 2017 FUTURE LEADERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The seventh AATF Future Leaders Fellowship Program took place in Saint Louis prior to the annual convention. Ten participants from across the country worked together to develop leadership skills and learn more about the national organization. This training is provided to enhance their skills as chapter leaders and to pique their interest in working on the national level.

Past-President Ann Sunderland envisioned this program because she saw the need to build leadership capacity at the chapter level. Her vision has become a carefully articulated series of sessions over two days that bring leaders together.

The Future Leader Fellows represented ten chapters: Katrina Carey (Kansas), Sandrine Collomb (Washington/Alaska), Rosemary Courville (Louisiana), Heather Dravk (Susquehanna Valley), Christine Goulet (Eastern Massachusetts), Sandra Valnes Quammen (North Carolina), Allison Ramey (Alabama), Lori Rezek (Iowa), Jennifer Tadsen (Greater Saint Louis), and Ashley Wodzinski (Western New York). Janel Lafond-Paquin led the program for the fourth year.

The program focuses on member recruitment and retention, reviewing chapter guidelines and the duties and responsibilities of elected officers. The cohesiveness of the group allows the sharing of ideas and strategies that they can, in turn, take back to their chapters.

Through presentations and discussions, this year's fellows learned about their own chapter through exploration of their chapter constitution. They also had the opportunity to explore the AATF website [www.frenchteachers.org] through an activity completed prior to their arrival. Furthermore, presentations by various speakers gave participants a wealth of information on the workings of the organization. AATF President Catherine Daniélou welcomed the leaders and inspired them with her words of wisdom and encouragement. Executive Director Jayne Abrate and Administrative Assistant Lindsey Gibson spoke about AATF operations at the national level and gave each leader a folder of resources. Justin Frieman Charles



Front Row L. to R.: Ashley Wodzinski, Katrina Carey, Allison Ramey, Lori Rezek;
Back Row: Sandrine Collomb, Sandra Valnes Quammen, Jennifer Tadsen,
Rosemary Courville, Heather Dravk, Christine Goulet

presented a video prepared by Catherine Ousselin who was not able to attend. The video provided a wealth of information on the technology and social media resources linked to the AATF website and which help keep the organization in the technological mainstream. Ann Sunderland reflected on her career that led to her election as president of the largest organization of French teachers in the world and spoke about the relationship between the AATF and various national, regional, and state organizations. Ann also discussed the *Société Honoraire de Français* and the new *Jeunes Amis du Français* middle school program and gave the leaders a summary of the *French Review*. National Bulletin Editor Megan Diercks described her plans for the publication and encouraged all to contribute. Lisa Narug summarized the results of *Le Grand Concours* since the implementation of electronic testing. Former Region I Representative Joyce Beckwith shared her expertise on the role of a regional representative, and newly-elected Region III Representative Katy Wheelock presented the Exemplary Program Awards. When the leaders were not listening to speakers, Janel Lafond-Paquin covered topics including leadership, chapters, and recruitment and retention of members. Leaders also were given the opportunity to participate in small group discussions.

Beyond their commitment to becoming

chapter officers or continuing in such a role, the Leaders were required to develop a project that they pledged to carry out at the chapter level in the coming year. Many chose to create more transparency for their chapter members through social media and updating their websites. Others are looking to increase membership and/or present sessions at state conferences that highlight the AATF and the benefits of membership.

All participants expressed that their own participation will help enormously when returning to their chapters, and they will use what they learned to make a difference. They highlighted the quality of the presenters, as well as the collegiality that united them as a group. They were amazed by all the ways that national supports chapters and the opportunity to network with other committed colleagues. In summary, the common recurring themes were “meeting the other leaders and learning more about the organization,” “connecting with others,” and “sharing ideas for programs.”

To the Class of 2017: we look forward to seeing you at many future AATF conventions and can't wait to see where your attendance in the program takes you. *Félicitations!*

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Future Leaders Fellowship Program
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