

Greetings from the 2018 PROGRAM CHAIR



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Welcome to Kansas City, the site of the 69th Annual Convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, a conference of the National Council of Teachers of English. We've had quite a ride this year, a ride that almost kept us from meeting. For good reasons, we have been doing some deep reflections about CCCC and our annual convention, and how we might change ourselves for the better. While many of us have already begun this long and difficult process, our first opportunity together is here in Kansas City. I welcome you and invite you to do this laboring and languaging together, especially with those you do not know, in order to transform CCCC and each other. Most of all, I call on all of us to be compassionate and caring to each other and ourselves as we do this hard but necessary reflective and transformative work.

Our theme this year, "Languaging, Laboring, and Transforming," is in many ways appropriate for the kind of language laboring toward structural and personal transforming that has become important for us to do since August 2017 (although we've needed to do this work for much longer). After the passage of Senate Bill 43 and the numerous instances of police violence against Black citizens in Missouri, the NAACP issued a travel advisory for the state. After several hard discussions and reaching out to local chapters of the NAACP, the executive committee of CCCC voted to continue with its plans to hold our annual convention here. You can read the statement on the decision to hold our convention, the update on the decision describing the factors that went into the decision, and the helpful joint caucus statement that urged us to action here: <http://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/sept-2017-cccc>.

I'm excited about the opportunity for change that the travel advisory offers us this year. It gives more of us reason to labor and transform CCCC for socially just reasons, for reasons that can make our organization and annual convention more equitable and less cloaked in its historical whiteness. This is a social justice move that I urge us all to be a part of, even if we disagree about what changes are needed or how we might make them. What we all can agree upon is our unified commitment to the health, prosperity, and success of each other and our students.

But CCCC is not new to such social justice work. Recent themes suggest this: 2017's "Cultivating Capacity, Creating Change," 2016's "Writing Strategies for Action," 2013's "The Public Work of Composition," and 2004's "Making Composition Matter: Students, Citizens, Institutions, Advocacy." The difference this year is that the structures of our annual convention are different, and we have an exigency created by the NAACP's travel advisory. Perhaps the biggest difference this year is that there are more of us who are coming to Kansas City with the explicit intention to labor for transformation, to do social justice work together at our convention. The

convention is also designed differently than in years past, designed in ways to help facilitate such social justice work together.

We shouldn't fool ourselves, though. CCCC has long been an organization that outwardly embraces diversity and believes in inclusion as a guiding principle. As an organization, however, we have not been equipped to work through change. The social justice work that we have often looked to do, for good reasons, has been external. We are the social justice agents in our communities, colleges, and universities. But this year, I am urging us to work on ourselves. If we believe that white supremacy historically infiltrates all of society's structures, including CCCC and NCTE, then CCCC must change structurally. To be an antiracist and anti-white supremacist organization, we must think past our intentions and dwell on consequences, as well as the parts we play ourselves in both the problem and the solution.

The difference in our work now is to understand the evidence of racism that we see around us as separate from our individual and the organization's expressed intentions or values. That is, a person or an organization can mean well, yet still do unjust things. Thus I urge us to use our time together and the new structures in place at this year's convention to examine and reflect upon the evidence of racism and white supremacy in CCCC and in our own professional lives and practices in order to change things for the better. We must do this work by putting aside our senses of guilt and pride. We all play a part, no matter who we are, but we all want what is best for our field, our students, our colleagues, and ourselves.

As my blog posts over the last seven months have demonstrated, the Social Justice and Activism at the Convention Task Force (or SJAC), chaired by Akua Duku Anokye, has been working very hard since October, along with the local arrangements committee, led by Jane Greer, to build some structural changes into this year's annual convention. These changes and additions to our convention are meant to help us engage in the social justice laboring and languaging that the membership, particularly the identity caucuses, the executive committee, and the executive officers, saw as vital. My hope is that this year will demonstrate a number of additional structural changes to the convention that can be made permanent.

Here are the most important things on the program that the SJAC, the local arrangements committee, and I have designed for your convention experience:

- Preconvention workshops that focus on social justice and activist issues;
- An all-convention event that will be the focal point for internal reflections on the organization and our own social justice activism at our local sites;
- Various tables and booths in the Action Hub that focus on local activists, fundraising for local and national activist organizations (e.g., Literacy KC, The Center for American Indian Community Health, and Black Lives Matter), and gathering knowledge and info about activism and other social justice projects;
- Welcoming Companions project, which is meant to help folks feel safer as they travel from the airport to the convention site, and while they are at the convention;
- Enhanced technological access and live streaming of some sessions as a pilot that we are assessing for future possibilities.

While I encourage you to participate in as many of the above opportunities as possible, I will call your attention most especially to the all-convention event. You've already received the statements on social justice and activism by a number of CCCC

members and international activist scholars (thank you to Tiane Donahue, Brice Nordquist, and Steve Parks for help in gathering those), that I hope you have a chance to read before this event, which will run more like a workshop. During and after the event, we'll use those statements to help us reflect upon the organization and our own work in order to plan the social justice transformations we want to realize. Additionally, at the event, we'll hear from local activists—namely, Gillian Helms from Literacy KC, Alvin Brooks from the Ad Hoc Group Against Crime, and Glenn North, the Poet Laureate at the 18th and Vine Historic Jazz District—about their work in the Kansas City area and be encouraged to continue our reflective work after the event by engaging in the activities and tables in the Action Hub that are designed for this follow-up work.

There are other activities and structural changes to this year's convention that were in the works before the SJAC was formed. These are changes I felt would not only help make a more embodied experience at the convention but help us all engage with the theme of languaging and laboring toward (social justice) transformation. Several are pilot projects that, if successful this year, can be annual inclusions in conventions. Many of these new additions to the convention you may participate in directly. The main additions:

- An Action Hub where more interactive activities and tables will be located for you to stop by, engage, and transform (all of the previous years' Action Hub tables will be here);
- A convention podcast and soundtrack, led by our New Media Producer, Matt Gomes, and his team, which many of you may already be listening to, as it has started before the convention and extends with episodes just after our convention—in fact, there will be an episode each day of our convention;
- Teaching demonstrations in the Exhibit Hall that focus on embodied and mindfulness-based pedagogies, which includes presentations from Jackie Hoermann-Elliott, Sarah Moseley, Christy Wenger, Molly Daniel, and Barry Kroll;
- An Escape Room (space) with another room for reflections on the experience that focus on laboring, languaging, access, and privilege, which have been developed by Shane Wood and his team from the Local Arrangements Committee;
- Early-morning yoga sessions, which will be facilitated by Sarah Mosely, an experienced yoga instructor;
- “Rhyme, Riddim, and Prose,” a series of spoken-word events in the Exhibit Hall meant to be participatory and organized by Neisha-Anne Green—all are encouraged to come, listen, and participate;
- Special mentoring events for the Scholars for the Dream Travel Award winners and past winners, which have been organized by Rhea Estelle Lathan—there is a separate schedule of these events;
- Kansas City Cultural Event, which includes a lecture on local jazz and social justice movements in the area by Chuck Haddix, accompanied by the Vine Street Rumble Jazz Orchestra—this is a catered dinner event.

Of special note in the list of additions this year is the convention podcast, which I hope will expand access to the convention by not only making it more accessible to those unable to join us this year, both domestically and in other countries. I've asked the Transnational Composition Standing Group to work with Matt in developing content in the podcasts to illustrate and open possible connections with scholars

from around the world (thank you to Shyam Sharma for help here). The podcast will also feature a soundtrack that Matt developed just for us. The Local Arrangements Committee also has developed an extensive hospitality website (<https://4cskc.weebly.com/>) that offers more information on most of the listed structural changes and opportunities at our convention

Another cool gathering will be the Kansas City Cultural Event, which will have good food, wine, great discussion about local culture by Chuck Haddix, and, I'm sure, a great performance by the Vine Street Rumble Jazz Orchestra that augments the lecture. This exciting event is one I think will allow us to wind down, relax, learn, and have fun. In the same vein, I hope that the escape rooms, the spoken-word events, and the early-morning yoga will offer folks similar chances to have fun, unwind, and engage in embodied ways.

Beyond the above, this year I've tried to more explicitly connect the good folks working in the 4C4Equality and Cs the Day groups to help us gamify our convention experiences and bend that reflective work toward questions of equity. This means that at registration, you should get some materials to help you gamify your convention. I hope you'll try it out. I hear there could be a sparkle unicorn in addition to sparkle ponies!

Our convention will also have many of the things you have come to rely on while communing together annually. We received many wonderful proposals this year. For more, check out my biweekly blog posts (<http://asaobinoue.blogspot.com/>) leading up to the convention. We have over 2,740 speaking roles offered on our program. I eliminated the cluster system for organizing sessions and proposal readers and tried a hashtag system, which, with some modifications, I think can be more useful to us in the coming years, should future chairs choose to use it. Mostly what I hope for is a convention experience where we mingle more, hence the broader-in-scope hashtags. I will suggest this change to Vershawn Young, our next Program Chair, with the addition of a keyword index, an idea that came out of discussions in the Stage Two readings (thank you, Stage Two readers). Regardless of the way you navigate the program, you'll find many wonderful and engaging sessions, roundtables, workshops, and poster sessions.

Finally, let me again thank the members of CCCC, especially the identity caucuses, for their participation in important discussions as the convention took shape over last summer. Thank you to the members of the SJAC for their willingness to volunteer in this unique year of convention preparation. Thank you to the Local Arrangements Committee, who took on extra work and collaborated with the SJAC, with a special thanks to Jane Greer. Our convention was truly a collaborative effort to put together. I'm deeply humbled and grateful for all the hands and minds that went into it.

Now, I ask us to labor forth, to language as we may, and transform ourselves, others, and CCCC in compassionate ways that make for a more equitable and just tomorrow. Enjoy the convention!

Peace to you all,
Asao B. Inoue

Welcome from the Local Arrangements Committee

Welcome to Kansas City! Your Local Arrangements Committee has worked hard to prepare for your visit, and we're thrilled to share our town with you. Renowned for barbecue, jazz, and so much more, our river city sits on the banks of the Muddy MO, whose brown swirling waters are "too thick to drink, too thin to plow," as residents commonly say. Beyond the river's edge, you'll find a lively community with a vibrant arts

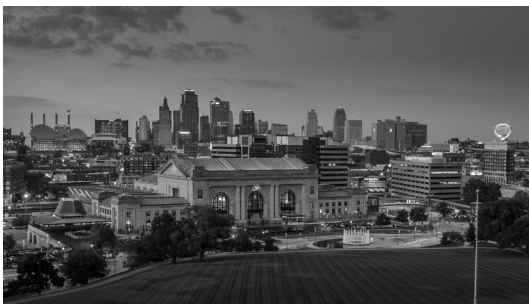


Photo credit: Jonathan Tasler



Photo credit: Visit KC

scene and terrific spots to eat and drink with friends, old and new. You can travel from Union Station to River Market on the free streetcar line or walk/bike/run as you explore the bustling downtown area that surrounds Bartle Hall (the convention center) and the Marriott Hotel, headquarters for CCCC 2018.

Just a few highlights:

Our Museums & the Stories They Tell. Located in the 18th and Vine Historic District, the American Jazz Museum and Negro Leagues Baseball Museum showcase vital components of KC's cultural heritage. Visitors to the Nelson-Atkins Art Museum should check out "Through the Eyes of Picasso," which brings many of Picasso's masterpieces together with the African and Oceanic art that inspired them. KC is proud to be the exhibit's only US stop on its international tour. If you're feeling playful, the National Museum of Toys and Miniatures (T/m) highlights the history and cultural significance of toys, alongside its renowned art collection of fine-scale miniatures. The National World War I Museum and Memorial offers powerful insights on the causes and consequences of "The Great War," and you can catch an elevator to the top of the memorial for the best view of the city.



Photo credit: Visit KC

The Music & Entertainment Scene.

During the CCCC Convention, the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, just south of Bartle Hall, will host a range of musical artists—opera, country, and Irish dance. Check the Kauffman Center’s website for details and tickets. For jazz aficionados, the Blue Room at 18th and Vine is a wonderfully intimate venue. And BB’s Lawnside BBQ offers an old-school roadhouse experience for folks who love the blues. Grab a free copy of *The Pitch* for a comprehensive listing of entertainment options around town.



Photo credit: Brandon Cummins

Hungry? Thirsty? If you like to get to know a city through its cuisine, KC can certainly satisfy your appetites. Legendary BBQ joints range from the original Arthur Bryant’s on 18th Street (order your meat at the counter, sit at communal tables,



Photo credit: Jason Dailey

and sop up sauce with white sandwich bread) to the upscale—Jack Stack or Q39 (reservations recommended). The city is also the home of many award-winning restaurants, including Port Fonda, a Mexican cantina in Westport; Rye on the Plaza, where the creative comfort food includes fried chicken and lemon meringue pie; and Blue-stem, which offers the finest in locally sourced cuisine and Midwestern hospitality. (Just a note: Westport will be

more than bustling with St. Patrick’s Day revelries. If Westport destinations are on your must-do list in KC, you may want to get there before Saturday, March 17.)

For adult beverages, check out Manifesto, a speakeasy in the basement of the Rieger on Main Street, where talented bartenders serve up craft cocktails. Or sample our hometown Boulevard beers at the brewery’s beer hall on Southwest Blvd. Five-dollar tickets for brewery tours are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Several micro-breweries and distilleries are equally eager to share their unique libations with you, including Brewery Empelial and Tom’s Town Distillery—both accessible from the streetcar line.



Photo credit: Visit KC

And please know that you don't have to drop serious cash to eat and drink well in KC. Diners and coffee shops abound, and many upscale spots offer happy hour deals. Stop by the local booth in the registration area, and we'll share our favorites with you.

Wanting to Exercise after All That Eating and Drinking? Included in *Outdoor Magazine's* top 25 liveable cities, KC offers numerous opportunities to get moving.



Photo credit: Visit KC

Hop on a B-cycle docked at Barney Allis Plaza or other nearby stations and head for the Riverfront Heritage Trail, a 15-mile, urban route winding through some of KC's historic neighborhoods. On the KC Public Library website, you'll find an architectural walking tour of the Library District, just north of Bartle Hall. (The library's parking garage, which looks like a three-story bookshelf, is a great photo spot.) And Glenn Lester

has planned Saturday's James Berlin Fun Run so folks can lace up their running shoes and experience KC's hills.

More Than Museums, Music, Restaurants, and Fun. The Local Planning Committee certainly wants to share with you the best that KC offers to its visitors, but we also hope you'll ask us about our city's complex, often divisive history and the social justice work that has shaped our past and continues to shape our future. The land on which KC sits was originally the home of Hopewell and then Kansa and Osage communities of Native Americans prior to the incursion of European American settlers. During the Civil War, such bloody raiding occurred across the Missouri-Kansas border that Union military leaders ordered the burning of nearly 3,000 homes and over 2,200 square miles of farmland owned by Confederate sympathizers, causing this area to be dubbed the "Burnt District." During the Jim Crow Era, red-lining emerged as a key tactic of real estate developers who maximized their profits by encouraging white residents to move to suburbs where property deeds featured racial covenants to exclude Blacks. Today, Kansas City, like the rest of Missouri, struggles to address the violence perpetrated against people of color and members of other minority communities.



Photo credit: David Arbogast

But these are not the only stories to be told of our town. Those of us with roots here marvel at the creativity of Nikoles Aleshi, a grocer who expanded educational

opportunities for immigrants by creating and distributing pedagogical materials that simplified the spelling of the English language in the early 20th century. We take inspiration from Lucile Bluford, who edited Kansas City's Black newspaper, *The Call*, for five decades and was a powerful voice in the Civil Rights Movement. We take pride in gay rights activist Drew Shaffer, who founded the Phoenix Society for Individual Freedom and helped organize the national meeting that led to the creation of NACHO—the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations—in 1966.

Today in KC, activists continue the work begun by Aleshi, Bluford, Shaffer, and countless others, and we're proud you'll hear from some of them at the all-convention event on Thursday. We also hope that during the convention you'll engage with the many local writing teachers who labor every day—in K–12 classrooms, at community colleges, at regional and research universities, in community literacy organizations and nonprofits—to make KC a better homeplace for everyone who lives here.

We welcome you to our city, we thank you for coming, and we look forward to sharing our work and our lives with you.

Most sincerely,

Jane Greer

Chair, 2018 Local Arrangements Committee

Professor of English and Women's & Gender Studies

University of Missouri, Kansas City



Jane Greer

University of Missouri;
Chair, 2018 Local
Arrangements Committee

Local Arrangements Committee

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