

## NCOLCTL 2016 Conference Report

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the National Council of less Commonly Taught Languages was held at Atlanta G.A. on April 21- 24 2016 with the theme; ***“Positioning the LCTLs with Paradigm Shifts in U.S. Education”*** The Conference was held as usual in conjunction with her sister’s Association; African Language Teachers Association which marked her 20<sup>th</sup> annual Conference.

There were participants from Universities, Language Center’s, Government Agencies, Private Agencies around the U.S. and other part of the world i.e. Bangladesh, China, France, Nigeria, South Africa to mention but few. These participants includes Professors, Directors, Foreign students all those who are passionate about the importance of LCTLs development around the world.

There were presentations from different LCTLs scholars, graduate students, government agencies representatives etc. Many of those who have sent in their abstracts before the commencements of the Conference.

There were also exhibitors like; NALRC, World of Reading, Avant Assessment, Centre for Language Excellence, IU CIBER, Concordance Language Village, National Language Service Corps, Institute of International Education, Central Intelligence Agency, who were all at the Conference to display their supportive materials and to give out souvenirs.

The Pre-Conference Workshop took place on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>. The first session was anchored by **Dr Esther Ham** of the Indiana University, Bloomington with the title; ***‘Motivating, engaging and assessing Students in an online class’***. While the second session was anchored by **Dr Antonia Folarin Schleicher** of the same Indiana University Bloomington, with the title; ***‘Using Scola Authentic Videos for Teaching Foreign Language at Any Level of Language Instruction’***. The sessions were successfully attended by participants who craved for more.

The Colloquium Sessions one and two opened the floor for the Friday activities. These were titled; ***‘Training Novice Starters to High Linguistics Proficiencies’*** and ***‘Multiple Language Acquisition (MLA) in Africa and SLA Theories’*** Several parallel sessions followed this where different topics of great academic interest were presented.

The first Plenary Session featured **Mohamed Abdel-Kader**, the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the International and Foreign Language Education (IFLE). He spoke convincingly on the theme; ***‘LCTLs and Global Competency in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’*** His emphasis was on the importance of having the global competency and linguistic ability to understand the challenges ahead and solve the world’s most pressing issues.

The Colloquium Session three came up later in the afternoon with the title; ***‘Unlocking the intricacies of a foreign Language through Music’*** this was also followed by several parallel sessions with topics of similar interests that were presented by different scholars.

The second Plenary Session was a presentation given by **Christine M. Campbell**, and Associate Provost and Directorate of Continuing Education of the Defense Language Institute, who made a precise presentation on; *'Enhancing Language Learning through Collaboration'* Her emphasis was towards encouraging the government and private sector to unite in promoting research and development in the areas of pedagogy and technology that will positively impart language learning.

The Saturday activities was preceded by a 3 hour Special Session Presentation with the title; *'Intercultural Language Instruction: Teacher Training LCTLs'*. It was a six man team presentation, one for each topic that caught the attention of every participants at the Conference. The presentation emphasis on training the trainer for effective result in the field of LCTLs.

A colloquium session titled; *'Planning for Growth Using TELL'* was followed by a parallel session of several presentations. A one hour of the plenary session three followed with the theme; *'Leadership and the Language Profession'*. This session was anchored by a veteran in the teaching profession, **David Brecht**, a co- founder of Global Professional Search LLC. He spoke with a passion and challenged all leaders in the field of languages to make mentoring the younger generation to maturity a mission that must be accomplished. Several Parallel Sessions of various topics of interest followed this.

The Plenary Session four came up in the evening with **Pete Swanson**, an Associate Professor of Language at Georgia State University. His theme was; *'Building Your Core: Effective Practices for Language Learners and Educators'* He emphasized that learners must demonstrate real application of the language.

The Awards Ceremony and Banquet Dinner took the night of Saturday. It was an amazing moment for all participants to get together in a relaxed mood of wining and dining. There was a surprise award presented to one of longest serving member of NCOLCTL Executives, **Dr Alwiya Omar**. Also, there were five NFMLTA Award Winners; **Myriam Abdel-Malek, Miachun Wei, Xin Zhang, Hendryanti Retno** and **Shinsuke Tsuchiya** who were awarded respectively the same night. An ALTA Research Award Winner, **Peter Mwangi**, a Doctoral candidate at Ohio University was glad to have received the award. He dedicated this to God and to the effort of the system, NCOLCTL/ALTA that gave him the privilege to be trained and thereby became resourceful to be able to make a befitting research. **Dr. Scott McGinnis**, the Academic Advisor for the Washington Office of the Defense Language Institute (DLI) was announced the 2016 Walton Award Winner amidst a lot of applause the same night. He was more than grateful to be counted worthy of such an honor.

The NCOLCTL Secretariat wishes to thank our numerous donors, sponsors, supporters, exhibitors and all participants, you are the reason we exist, without you there is no NCOLCTL. The Secretariat will continue to do her best to be sure that the annual Conference is improving through your creative and constructive ideas.

The Secretariat will never forget the effort of each Executives of NCOLCTL/ALTA in planning this year's Conference. Also grateful to the secretariat staff; **John O Adeika, Nana Amoah, Joseph A Lijofi** and volunteers; **Shwethambari Surrendran, Karthik Sreenivas, Betty Dlamani, Duha Mohammad Shams Ud, Kadirova Dilnoza, Alpysbayeva Saulet**, those who have sacrificed their time, energy and put in all creativity required to make the 2106 Conference a successful story.