

## 2016 CSCTFL Founders Award

### Anne Grundstrom Nerenz



Anne is a dedicated and committed language professional. She has been and still is a role model and mentor to many world language teachers in Michigan, the Central States region and across the country. She was elected to the Executive Board of the MIWLA, acting as President in 1994. Anne has served the CSCTFL in many capacities, including: Local Chair in 1992, Program Chair in 2004, active on the Board from 2000-2010 serving as Board Chair 2007-2008, Report Editor in 1999, and ACTFL Board Representative for CSCTFL from 2011-2013. In her role as CSCTFL rep to the ACTFL Board, she was a positive voice for the regional organizations and was instrumental in helping to develop a more collaborative relationship between ACTFL and the regionals.

Along with her other responsibilities at Eastern Michigan University, she is currently the Editor of ACTFL's *Foreign Language Annals*. In this capacity Ann has turned a tedious review process into an efficient and effective procedure and shortened review time for the authors.

Anne has taken the idea of service to new heights as she worked in the state of Michigan to implement language requirements for high school graduation, state standards, and other initiatives with limited resources. She helped develop the ACTFL/CAEP standards and shape the direction of the New Visions in Action initiative. Anne has written numerous articles and shared her expertise in myriad professional association workshops and sessions.

Anne is a nurturing professional who takes mentoring seriously. Mentoring comes naturally to Anne whether it is expressing concern for a colleague, offering to assist a young teacher, or helping a budding author organize and present his or her research. Anne always takes the time to ensure that those coming into our profession are welcomed and encouraged to contribute their expertise. A colleague sums it up: "*whether she is mentoring junior researchers for FLA, or*

*contributing her ideas to any one of many national and regional endeavors, Anne's enthusiasm motivates all of us!"*

She has worked tirelessly in promoting the value of becoming a teacher of world languages within her university where she is employed, within her state, within her region, and nationally. A cooperating teacher comments that *"Dr. Nerenz gives a gift to each teacher by demystifying the way to incorporate the ACTFL standards ....and by encouraging teachers to teach for proficiency/performance... This gift that she gives to hundreds of teachers/student-teachers each year translates into a gift given to thousands of their students.... It's staggering to think of all the lives Dr. Nerenz has touched and the ways in which she has promoted language learning and excellence in teaching."*

It is clear that Anne Nerenz exemplifies all that is embodied in the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Excerpts from Anne's acceptance speech at the Awards Presentation in Columbus, Ohio, March 11, 2016:

*"This conference has had a place in my heart for many years. It was a privilege to spend considerable time with one of the 14 original founders, Frank Grittner from Wisconsin, to have met Founder Barbara Ort Smith, from Michigan, and to work in a language department whose former chair was Founder J. Henry Owens. They would be proud to see how this conference has prospered.*

*Since then (the time that the Founders drew up the charter), our profession has evolved in truly amazing ways. In the 1960s, the grammar-translation approach was slowly giving way to the audio-lingual method and the first wide-spread use of technology -- the language lab. Ideas and technologies that we now take for granted were just being considered -- things like teaching 90% in the target language, emphasizing real and meaningful communication, and measuring not what students know about the language, but in what culturally-appropriate situations they can actually use the language. These ideas set the stage for the standards- and proficiency-based understanding of teaching and learning that we embrace today. As this 48<sup>th</sup> annual conference unfolds, I would like to challenge you to embrace what current research tells us and to consider the ways in which standard-based and proficiency-oriented teaching are reflected in your work. Some of these ideas may take you out of your professional comfort zone and that's a wonderful thing. Stretching our thinking is why conferences exist!*

*In the words of another, much more recent songwriter (Mariah Carey): "There's a hero ... if you look inside your heart." Our founders were "regular" people whom we celebrate each year because they let their inner "hero" come to life --like each of us, they had full-time jobs, family commitments, and recreational interests beyond the classroom, but they also made time to promote the teaching and learning of languages by creating the conference that we continue to enjoy. I challenge you to follow in our founders' footsteps by making your own commitment to*

*professional service. Look inside your heart and find your “inner hero” -- join with colleagues to share your best ideas; take on a leadership role in your local or state organization; give of your talents and your time so that future generations of language teachers can enjoy a lifetime of professional learning here at “the friendly conference.”*

*In closing, I accept this award with great pleasure, in memory of our founders, in honor of the students, colleagues and dear friends with whom I’ve shared many memorable moments, and with profound thanks for the loving heroes in my life.”*