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I would like to offer my sincere thanks to FLENJ for selecting me as the recipient of the award for reimbursement to attend NECTFL. This March, I was fortunate to attend the conference in Boston with so many remarkable colleagues from across the country. The variety of sessions was incredible, making it difficult to choose which to attend. Years ago, as a teacher, I focused on French and ESL workshops; this year, as a District Supervisor, I had the opportunity to broaden my knowledge base and learn about Spanish, Dutch and more.

Of the ten sessions I attended, I was particularly inspired by one regarding arts integration. World language educators are well aware of how culture is represented through the arts but are often reluctant to use them in instruction as they are intimidated by lack of concrete knowledge of painters, composers, etc. In one session, Patricia Klos of Anne Arundel County (MD) Public Schools, walked us through her experience revamping the curriculum of a struggling middle school by use of a school-wide initiative to incorporate performance or fine arts into every subject area. Her vivid examples of activities that world language teachers can use to create meaningful opportunities for their students to use the target language were extraordinary. In my week back after the conference I shared various strategies with several teachers who already implemented the techniques into their instruction.

I was also inspired by a session provided by ACTFL in which Laura Terrill reminded us of the importance of creating real-life contexts in both instruction and assessment. She explicitly reviewed the differences between performance and proficiency: performance is based on instruction and practiced material that has been rehearsed, whereas proficiency is independent of what happens in the classroom and is unpredictable in a broader context. Her lesson, supported by the ACTFL guidelines, is a great message to teachers who can always benefit from a reminder of what our role as language educators truly is.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to connect and learn from colleagues from our region. I am refreshed and inspired and cannot wait to share all that I learned with my department and peers. Thank you again to FLENJ for your support throughout the year and for offering contests and raffles to enhance our membership experience.