

# IATE NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English

## NEWS & FEATURES

A Letter From the New  
Executive Secretary

**PAGE 1**

Out of the Fog

**PAGE 2**

Illinois Author of the  
Year 2021: Mikki Kendall

**PAGE 3**

IATE Lifetime  
Achievement Award

**PAGE 4**

2021 Fall Conference  
Wrap-Up

**PAGE 5**

Intellectual Freedom  
Committee

**PAGE 7**

Poetry and Prose Contest

**PAGE 8**

Rationale Corner

**PAGE 9**

Celebrating a New Chapter

**PAGE 10**



## A Letter From the New Executive Secretary

**BY KAITLIN GLAUSE**

It is my great pleasure to announce that I have been elected as the next Executive Secretary of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English and that my institution, Millikin University, has taken up the charge of home institution for the organization.

When I moved to Illinois during the summer of 2020 to start my new position as Assistant Professor of Secondary English Education at Millikin University, I knew I wanted to be an active participant within IATE. As a former public school English teacher and an active participant in various teacher-led organizations, I recognize the importance and value of the strong networking, access to resources, professional growth, and community-oriented scholarship afforded by organizations like IATE.

(continued on page 2)

# Executive Secretary's Message, Cont.

Because of my experiences within these organizations, I deeply understand the responsibility and privilege of acting as Executive Secretary for IATE.

As I take on the responsibilities of Executive Secretary, I bring with me a range of experience and expertise. Prior to my move to Illinois, I worked as a public-school teacher in central Nebraska for five years, spanning grades 7-12, teaching classes in reading, language arts, creative writing, speech, and drama. I then moved to Michigan, where I completed my PhD in Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education with an emphasis in language, literacy, and English as an additional language at Michigan State University. While in Michigan, I also worked closely with the Michigan Council of Teachers of English as a co-editor for their NCTE affiliate journal, the Language Arts Journal of Michigan. Most recently, I moved to Decatur, Illinois to work as a faculty member and coordinator for the secondary English Education program at Millikin University, where I have had the great pleasure of connecting with members of IATE.

My vision for IATE is that we leverage our considerable skills and resources to build upon our shared commitment to the well-being of teachers and students in English/language arts classrooms across the state of Illinois.

My goal is to support the organization in developing strong collegial relationships with Millikin University, in providing high-quality professional learning and networking opportunities for organization members, in recruiting, supporting, and retaining English educators, and in maintaining strong scholarly resources, such as the Illinois English Bulletin and annual fall conference, where educators from across the state can learn and grow together. Through these partnerships, we have a bright and sustainable future.

I am honored to have the opportunity to bring these commitments to my work at IATE, and I look forward to working closely with each of you as we enact the mission of the organization.

With gratitude,  
Kaitlin Glause, PhD

---

## Out of the Fog

BY DEB WILL

Like many of you, I've been in a fog for the past two years: waiting for better days and grasping at anything resembling normal life. Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic has been hard on all of us, and I think it's important to acknowledge the difficulty that we continue to face every day.

During the past few months, however, I've been fortunate to work with members of the IATE Executive Council who have shown me strategies and provided me with hope as we attempt to return to a somewhat normal school life. Yet when I returned to school, I found that the work, the school, the students and I had all changed. Nothing seemed normal.  
(continued on page 6)



## Illinois Author of the Year 2021: Mikki Kendall

BY GENEVIEVE SHERMAN

This year's fall conference proved to be a wonderful entrance back into the world of in-person events! Mikki Kendall, the author of *Hood Feminism*, addressed the dinner crowd and told stories about her own experience in school.

She gave us hope for the those kids who don't quite fit the mold of what people might envision as the future successful writer. She told the story of Ms. Longly, who found a place for young Mikki to be surrounded by others who "think like her" because Mikki was bored with the regular material in the class. Mikki then found herself in a gifted and talented class where she would borrow books from the classroom, books from the school library, and books from the local library... and still daydream. She assured the audience that there is a place for everyone, even those who "color outside of the lines," and each will find the way, eventually.

Mikki's tales of her classes, daydreaming, early writing, military, and eventual award-winning writing entertained her audience. These stories inspired us to continue on with purpose in this challenging year of teaching during a pandemic and reminded us that we are the ones who step in for students, who see students, and who let students blossom.

(continued on page 4)

Mikki, as well as other speakers, such as Tiffany D. Jackson (pictured with Mikki Kendall to the left) filled my bucket enough to help me see the bigger picture of our jobs as educators.





# Author of the Year, Cont.

To keep it personal, local, and immediate, Ms. Kendall's words proved to be exactly what this English teacher needed to press on with this school year while leaving space for students to grow at their own pace. The pace of student behaviors hits different in a pandemic. I was struggling to find inspiration. Mikki, as well as other speakers, such as Tiffany D. Jackson (pictured with Mikki Kendall here) filled my bucket enough to help me see the bigger picture of our jobs as educators.

Thank you, Mikki, for your stories, your words, your research, and your kindness this weekend. It is just what we needed when we needed it.

## IATE Lifetime Achievement Award

BY JENNIFER GOVIN

IATE is proud to announce that this year's recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award is Michelle Ryan. Michelle has been an integral part of IATE and the Executive Council for nearly two decades, having held several roles including president, conference chair twice, and treasurer, which is her current role.

She has been a strong advocate for English teachers throughout the state of Illinois, bringing many opportunities for growth and professional development to our membership, including the annual spring event "4th Quarter Matters."

In the past year, she spearheaded and accomplished a monumental task: finding our new institutional home, Millikin University, while simultaneously taking on the role of Bulletin and newsletter editor and being a full-time teacher during a pandemic. Her hard work and dedication to our organization are much appreciated, and we are honored to give her this much deserved award.

## Membership

IATE membership works toward maintaining and advancing the professionalism of the English/Language Arts field. Your membership benefits you through:

- Providing a means to make your concerns heard by state officials
- Expanding your network of educational contacts across the state
- Keeping you up-to-date through the annual IATE Fall Conference and IATE publications like the Illinois English Bulletin and the IATE Newsletter
- Promotion the recognition of outstanding members of our profession

Did you know that we offer a free, one-year membership to all teachers who have not previously been a member of IATE and to students?

You can find out more information, join, or renew by heading to [iateonline.org/membership-form-2/](https://iateonline.org/membership-form-2/)





# IATE Conference Wrap-Up

BY JENNIFER GOUIN

We're so glad that many of you could join us as we returned to in-person conferencing on October 15-16 at the Chicago Marriott Northwest in Hoffman Estates. In keeping with the conference theme "Honoring Our Past and Looking Toward Our Future," we melded our past traditions with new leaders, partnerships, and ideas moving us forward.

We welcomed our attendees with "goody bags" of snacks, along with a copy of our IATE Illinois Author of the Year Mikki Kendall's book *Hood Feminism*, compliments of Lake-Cook Distributors, a long-time sponsor and supporter of our organization. Please consider Lake-Cook for your classroom book purchases.

At our annual business meeting on Friday, President Carrie Thomas introduced our new slate of officers: President Deborah Will, 1st Vice President Jennifer Gouin, 2nd Vice President Betsy Geiselman, Secretary Norm Boyer, and Treasurer Michelle Ryan. We are sure that our leaders will continue to move us forward as we transition to a new institutional home: Millikin University. We were thrilled to introduce our new home, along with our new Executive Secretary Kaitlin Clause. We are so very excited for the new relationship we are forming with Millikin, and we will continue to keep our membership updated about our new adventure.

Following our business meeting, we were honored to listen to our featured luncheon speaker Tiffany D Jackson, author of bestselling YA books including *Allegedly*, *Monday's Not Coming*, *Grown*, *Let Me Hear a Rhyme*, *White Smoke*, and the co-authored *Blackout*. Her experiences with school and the writing process were insightful and thought-provoking.

On Friday afternoon and all day on Saturday, attendees had the opportunity to choose from over thirty different sessions focusing on a variety of topics, including writing, literature, technology, assessment, and social justice. Our presenters held lively discussions of their topics, and many uploaded their materials to our website ([iateonline.org](http://iateonline.org)) that are still accessible for conference attendees. Our district leaders met to discuss upcoming events and opportunities. We are fortunate to have many dedicated leaders.

We ended our fun and productive Friday with a cocktail reception, followed by dinner and featured speaker Mikki Kendall, our IATE Illinois Author of the Year. Her thoughts on the value of educators and the need for English education today were refreshing and inspiring. We were also delighted to recognize our 2021 IATE Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Michelle Ryan. Afterwards, President Carrie Thomas had us laughing hysterically at the BYOB (Bring Your Own BOOK) game - imagine a room full of English teachers frantically trying to find the funniest line in a book to respond to various situations such as "what NOT to say on a first date!"

We started our Saturday with a 30 minute HIGH Fitness class with certified instructor Michelle Ryan of Level Up Fitness at 7:30 a.m., followed by a full day of invigorating sessions. Our luncheon speaker was David Bowles, an award-winning Mexican American author and translator whose titles include *They Call Me Güero*, which has earned many awards, including the NCTE 2019 Notable Verse Novels. The story of his life and activism through writing enlightened and inspired us.

Throughout the conference, attendees were able to purchase from Brain Lair Books, an independent bookstore owned by Kathy Burnette. Please support Kathy's store as well as other independent booksellers in your area.

We were thrilled to be together again after such a long time, and we hope that our attendees left feeling reenergized and ready to take on the rest of this (still) unusual school year. Please plan to join us next fall (dates to be announced) as we "Celebrate a New Chapter" with 2nd Vice President Betsy Geiselman, the 2022 conference chair.

# Out of the Fog, Cont.

Nothing was routine. And I crave routine and order. I felt out of place and out of sorts. And then I attended the IATE Conference in Hoffman Estates led by the unstoppable Jennifer Gouin. Not even a global pandemic could stop her from producing an amazing conference with guest authors like Tiffany Jackson, Mikki Kendall and David Bowles.

During the conference, I was fortunate to go to a session with Dr. Angelo Bonadonna whose constant dedication to his students and his craft inspired me to move from a foggy state of unrest into a moment of clarity: it's time for action, and we can do some amazing things as an organization.

In just a few short weeks following the conference, we've done a lot of work to ensure that IATE begins to thrive again. Here are just a few of the things we've been working on:

- We are connecting with our new institutional home at Millkin University and our new IATE Executive Secretary, Dr. Kaitlin Glause.
- Kim Kotty, Western Suburban District Leader and District Leader Coordinator, has planned a virtual session for all members on Tuesday, November 9th, entitled Processing the Pandemic. Our guest speaker is Sandra Montes, LCSW. I encourage you to give yourself the gift of this session.
- Kim Musolf, our Special Projects Chair, is reinstating the IATE Speaker's Bureau.
- Moira Bonnadonna has accepted the role as our IATE Publicity Chair and is updating our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter Accounts. (Follow us @IATENow.)
- We have added district leaders in the Eastern and East Central Districts and are thrilled to welcome Kristin Runyon, Alyssa Staley and Brooke Poeschel to the Executive Council.
- Michelle Ryan, our IATE Treasurer, has taken the role of Newsletter Editor and will be publishing a monthly newsletter for all members.
- We are moving our IATE Bulletin online, and we are forming an editorial board for this journal. We hope that some of you will share your talents and work on this publication. We will also be posting past issues of the IATE Bulletin on our website for members.
- Dr. Angelo Bonadonna, our webmaster, has been hard at work to streamline registrations, processes, and membership reminders.
- Our minority scholarship for college seniors has been funded thanks to the generosity of those of you at the conference as well as a gift from AP Business Solutions.

We are currently examining our processes and increasing opportunities for members, and these items are just a starting point. There's more to come, and it's reaffirming to know that we are emerging from the haze of the pandemic a stronger, more connected organization.

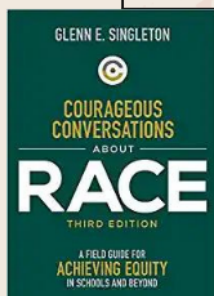
**IATE Intellectual Freedom Committee  
Zoom Series**

**2022**

*Book Study*

**COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS  
ABOUT RACE  
BY GLENN E. SINGLETON**

**Beginning in January 2022, IATE will host a book study for *Courageous Conversations About Race* by Glenn E. Singleton. We will divide the book into three parts and meet once in January, February, and March. First five IATE members to register will receive a free copy of the book.**



**Members: \$0    Non-members: \$35**

**Register by January 5th at: [iateonline.org](https://iateonline.org)**

## PUBLISH YOUR WORK IN THE IATE NEWSLETTER

The IATE Newsletter welcomes articles, reviews, reports, announcements, brief teaching narratives, calls for papers, and other material important to the professional lives of English teachers in the state of Illinois. IATE district leaders are especially encouraged to send reports of district events. For any timely information, the deadline for submitting for the next month's newsletter is the second week of the previous month. All other submissions will be taken on a rolling basis. If you would like to contribute to our technology column, please send submissions focused on technology in the English classroom, which could include reviews of new programs and/or application of programs in the classroom.

Please send inquiries or submissions via e-mail to Michelle Ryan at [iatenctonline@gmail.com](mailto:iatenctonline@gmail.com).



# CALL FOR STUDENT WRITING FROM ALL LEVELS FOR IATE'S BEST ILLINOIS POETRY AND PROSE CONTEST

BY DELORES ROBINSON

**DEADLINE:** Submit all contest entries electronically through the IATE submission manager found on the website no later than January 31, 2022. Visit <https://iateonline.org/best-illinois-poetry-and-prose-contest/> to submit poetry and prose student work.

**FORMAT:** Accepted file types include .doc, .docx, and .rtf.

**COVER LETTER:** The "Cover Letter" field must include:

- Full name of student
- Title of student's work
- Student's grade level at time piece was written
- Full name of school
- School's complete mailing address
- Full name of teacher and teacher's IATE district
- E-mail address of teacher

**IMPORTANT:** The student's name, the school's name, and the teacher's name must not appear anywhere other than in the "Cover Letter" field.

**LIMITS:**

- 1.) Five prose and ten poetry entries per teacher
- 2.) One thousand words of prose per entry; forty lines of poetry per entry.

**SOME SUGGESTIONS FROM THE JUDGES:**

- 1.) Please see that students abide by the line and word limits. Have them revise and shorten pieces that exceed these limits since submissions that surpass the limits are eliminated from consideration.
- 2.) Please emphasize to students that prose and fiction are not synonymous. While fiction submissions continue to be accepted, encourage students to explore the possibilities of expository essays, personal narratives, arguments, and creative non-fiction pieces, along with other genres.

**CONTEST COORDINATORS:**

Elizabeth E. Tacke and Melissa Ames  
Eastern Illinois University  
IATE Poetry Contest

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Visit <https://iateonline.org>

Coming to the IATE Newsletter starting in January

# Rationale Corner



BY JENNIFER GOUIN

## Monthly Book Rationales

Beginning in January, the Intellectual Freedom Committee will host RATIONALE CORNER, a monthly, full book rationale for our members to use. Rationales will be linked documents that you can edit to fit your needs. If you have a book suggestion you would like us to tackle, please email: [amystrong1308@gmail.com](mailto:amystrong1308@gmail.com)

# Celebrating a New Chapter

BY BETSY GEISELMAN

The theme of the 2022 Annual Conference is “Celebrating a New Chapter.” In considering possible themes with the Executive Council, we thought about how these last couple of years have been rough ones for educators as we have all survived (and are still surviving) the strain of pandemic teaching, challenges to books and to culturally responsive teaching, and general devaluation of our expertise. It’s easy and natural in this climate to feel defeated. To shut down and tune out. And yet... in spite of these challenges, when we gather together as a community of teachers and share ideas, we feel energized. In that spirit of revitalization, and in recognition of some positive changes that are happening in IATE, including revamping the newsletter, renewing the English Bulletin and writing competitions, and relocating our institutional home to Millikin University, we wanted to share the excitement and hope we feel in moving forward.

As English teachers, we always remember to turn the page and look ahead to the next chapter. We turn the page because we innately look to possibility. To the horizon. To a vision of something better and richer. This next year offers us a new chapter, one that is informed by the previous chapter, a moment that taught us that we can do hard things, that we can innovate and adapt. This new chapter is also informed by the previous one, the dark chapter of isolation and separation, because it taught us how deeply our relationships matter: our relationships with our students, our families, and with our fellow teachers. We carry each other closer to our hearts now, and we remember that when we come together, we are unstoppable.

As we celebrate a new chapter together, we must walk forward courageously and confidently, knowing that our voices can empower and embolden, and that when united, they can amplify and bring necessary change. As IATE undergoes some exciting changes, and as the profession of teaching continues to evolve, we should heed these words from Socrates: “the secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old but on building the new.” Let’s spend our energy wisely as we compose the next pages of our story and imagine all that a community of teachers can accomplish. We hope you come celebrate with us!

## IATE OFFERS SCHOLARSHIP FOR MINORITY TEACHER EDUCATION

BY SHANNON RADCLIFFE

IATE understands the importance of diversity in education and that both our schools and our organization would be enhanced by the addition of more diverse voices.

We will be offering two \$500 scholarships for graduating seniors (December or May) who identify with a minority group and will be entering the English Education profession. These scholarships can be used for professional clothing, moving expenses, graduation expenses, or anything the new educator will need as they start their career.

We will be accepting nominations for this scholarship from English Education professors. To nominate a student, please draft a letter of recommendation and send it to [sradcliffe@lchsraiders.org](mailto:sradcliffe@lchsraiders.org). In your letter, please include how you believe this student will impact their educational communities as they begin their career.

Please send in your letters by February 15, 2021. Thank you for your help in this.



# Publish Your Work in the Illinois English Bulletin

Spring 2022: Open Issue  
Deadline: March 01, 2022

The spring 2022 issue of the Illinois English Bulletin will feature scholarly articles across a range of contexts and genres with relevance to our audience of literacy teachers, middle and high school English language arts instructors, and collegiate English educators. The past two years have resulted in personal and professional upheaval for educators across the state - from a global pandemic to the ongoing national response to social and economic injustices. With this upheaval, we recognize the particular challenges of preparing scholarly work for publication. To that end, we leave this call open for educators and scholars to engage with the work that is most pressing to them at this time - especially as we imagine a new age for literacy and ELA education. Authors may consider, but are not limited to, questions such as:

- What inquiry and scholarship have you done that expands our understanding of literacy, language arts, and English?
- How have your practices and pedagogies changed and shifted in response to the ongoing tensions of the past two years?
- What do readers of IEB need to explore and consider?
- How do you engage with the intersections of literature, literacy, language, culture, social justice, and/or collective wellness?
- What are the practices and pedagogies that you hope to take with you into the future to facilitate student and community language, literacy, and learning?

Please submit manuscripts to Michelle Ryan ([iateonline@gmail.com](mailto:iateonline@gmail.com)).

Additional information can be found at: <https://iateonline.org/iate-publications/illinois-english-bulletin/>

---

## District Leaders Wanted

The IATE Executive Board and District Leader Coordinator Kim Kotty are excited to find leaders for our open districts. If you would be interested in serving as a district leader or co-leader, please email [kkotty@fenwickfriars.com](mailto:kkotty@fenwickfriars.com). Next to each open district, you will see the counties it encompasses.

Open districts are as follows:

- East Central: Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, Kankakee, Piatt, Vermillion
- Illinois Valley: Bureau, Grundy, LaSalle, Marshall, Putnam
- Kaskaskia Valley: Clinton, Monroe, St. Claire, Washington
- Northeastern: Boone, Carroll, JoDaviess, Stephenson, Winnebago
- Rock River: DeKalb, Lee, Ogle, Whiteside
- Wabash Valley: Clay, Crawford, Edwards, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne, White
- Western: Fulton, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, Stark, Warren