

IATE NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English

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IATE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Check out our amazing lineup of speakers!



**KYLE
LUKOFF**



**ANDREA
WANG**



**SONA
CHARAIPOTRA**

**ENJOY THIS SNEAK
PEEK AT WHAT'S IN
STORE AT IATE THIS
FALL! COME JOIN US!**

OCTOBER 21-22, 2022

**MILLIKIN UNIVERSITY
DECATUR, ILLINOIS**

Call for Nominations - IATE Author of the Year

BY GENEVIEVE SHERMAN

Each year, IATE awards one lucky author to be the Illinois Association Teachers of English Author of the Year. The nominated author should be someone who was born in Illinois, has lived in Illinois, is currently living in Illinois, or whose work has a significant Illinois connection.

Luckily, we have some wonderful writers in this state. Mikki Kendall, the 2021 winner built up a room full of English teachers when she reminisced about her own education that was fueled by teachers and family. Lake Cook Publishers gifted conference attendees with Ms. Kendall's eye-opening book, *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women that a Movement Forgot*. The gifting of this work has the potential to move a society forward.

Similarly, Erika L. Sánchez spent the weekend at the Fall Conference with us in 2019 and spoke of teachers, writing, and inspiring. She encouraged teachers to care and months later, the field of teaching would be changed so dramatically and caring looked much different than it ever had.

As you think about who to nominate, ponder the field of education, the students we teach, and the impression you want to leave on the world. Then, when the right author comes to mind, fill out [THIS](#) form to nominate that person.

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. 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

Honoring Our Retirees

BY ELIZABETH JORGENSEN & KATE VAN HAREN

Rambo Retires After Illustrious Teaching Career

English and literature Professor Randy Rambo retires this June after teaching at Illinois Valley Community College for thirty years. During his career, he has earned the respect of hundreds of students as well as his colleagues (who already lament how much they will miss his presence at the college!). Rambo earned his A.A. from Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, Illinois, and his bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Illinois, before beginning his teaching career at Belleville Area College (now Southwestern Illinois College) and St. Louis Community College. He joined the full-time faculty at IVCC in 1992. Rambo was recognized at IVCC with the Stephen Charry Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence in 2002.



Professor Randy Rambo

Rambo, who has served on many committees and teams at the college including the Technology Committee and Distance Learning Committee, was the chair of the college's annual Day of Writing for several years and has served as a prose judge for many years for the Illinois Association of Teachers of English writing competition. He developed the college's first online English courses and has won recognition for his beautifully organized website.

On that website, Rambo offers words of advice for his students: "As just about anyone who has earned a college degree can tell you, there will be moments when you don't think you can do it, moments when you doubt your ability to succeed. [. . .] I remember vividly such moments myself, when a course seemed too hard, when the work ahead of me seemed like too much, but then I decided that if I was going to be 'defeated' by something, I was at least going to give it my best effort. [. . .] I did not want to live with the lingering idea that I did not succeed at something because I did not even give myself a fair chance to succeed."

All his IVCC colleagues appreciate Randy, but English and Women's Studies professor, Dr. Kimberly Radek-Hall, has worked with Rambo for nearly his entire tenure having joined the faculty soon after Rambo began.

(continued page 4)

She says of Rambo, “Randy has proved himself a mentor, a leader, and a good friend, demonstrating his intelligence, professionalism, and caring for others every day, in the classroom and out of it, on campus and off. The department will be diminished by his absence.”

She continues, “Randy is a teacher to his core, always sharing stories of history or science that he has gleaned from his own personal reading or research—he never goes a day without learning something new—at lunch, before meetings, or over a drink after work. His talent, wisdom, and experience—and his incessant optimism for education's promise—cannot be replaced. My life next year will be different and quieter without having my colleague, often champion, and exceptional friend of more than the past quarter century not in the office next to mine when I come to work in the fall.”

Rambo, who is an accomplished nature photographer, looks forward to having more time in retirement to travel and practice this avocation as well as to having more time to read, the enjoyment of which brought him to teaching in the first place more than 30 years ago.



Creative Writing Camp is a summer writing program for writers 12 and older. To develop their technique, campers will participate in writing exercises, readings, discussions, group writing workshops, and one-on-one critiques with the instructor. They will research and identify their own models for the type of writing they want to do. They will learn layout and design strategies and will work in a vintage 19th century letterpress print shop. By the program's end, students will have written and revised new work, designed a short pamphlet, and they will present their work in an ensemble reading.

Register here: [Creative Writing Camp](#)

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 become a member by clicking here: 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.

Recurring columns:

Technology in the Classroom (250-500 words) - Submissions for this column could include reviews of devices, programs, and/or apps for the classroom, as well as lesson ideas utilizing technology in the classroom. Submissions should include the name of the technology, as well as any cost associated with it.

IATE Reads (400-600 words) - This column is devoted to building our libraries, both professionally and for our students. You might consider sharing books that are great for read-alouds or First Chapter Fridays, books that speak to our students and their experiences, or books for our professional libraries. Submissions might also include ideas for teaching specific books, places to find affordable books, discipline specific books to create cross-discipline connections, and other ideas for creating lifelong readers. When sharing recommendations and ideas, please include the text title, author, and publisher, as well as a "recommended for." (cont. page 6)

Publish Your Work in the IATE Newsletter

Job Corner (100-200 words) - Do you know of any English openings that you can share? Please include any details about the job and district, as well as contact information.

Brag Book (100-200 words) - Tell us something good! Pat yourself on the back or pat someone else on the back. Let's celebrate the good things happening around us.

Honoring Our Retirees (100-200 words) - Our veteran teachers deserve recognition for their contributions to our profession. If you know someone retiring from the English classroom, tell us! Let us give them a "cheers for all their years!"

A Tribute to Meaningful Educators (100-200 words) - We all have someone who inspired us or inspires us as an English educator. This column is devoted to your favorite English teacher. Be sure to share who they are, where they are, and why they hold a special place in your heart. Pictures of your honoree are welcomed for this column.

But What About? (100 words) - This column is devoted to all of those questions we have as educators, whether we are new or veterans. Send in your questions and we'll provide the platform for sharing ideas and answers to your most pressing issues, even if it's as simple as maintaining your classroom library or how to make time for that bathroom break. (cont. page 9)

Teacher Creators - We teach in the English classroom, but we also have passions and talents outside of those four walls. Share your work with us. We invite submissions of original poetry and prose, photography, cartoons, art. You name it. Your submission should include your name, affiliation, and a brief statement accompanying your piece.

Please send inquiries or submissions via e-mail to Michelle Ryan at iatenctonline@gmail.com.

Invitation to Review for Illinois English Bulletin

One of the best ways to get ready to write is by being a reviewer. When you review, you have the opportunity to see and learn from others' feedback. Likewise, being a reviewer helps you develop a critical lens when examining your own work. If you're interested in reviewing (even if you haven't done it before), please reach out to us to learn more. Contact Michelle Ryan or Kaitlin Glause.

Writing for the Illinois English Bulletin: Tips for Publication

Michelle Ryan, Editor (mryan@lchsrailers.org or iatencteonline@gmail.com)
Kaitlin Glause, Executive Secretary (kglause@millikin.edu)

1 – Write about what you know and experience as an educator.

Your daily life as an educator or researcher provides great fodder for writing. For instance, you could write about a home-run lesson, professional development session you led, or conference presentation you recently gave.

Here are some steps you can take to move your professional life into a manuscript:

- Carve out 30 minutes after that lesson or presentation to reflect on what went well.
- Free write about any telling anecdotes that illustrate what you want to share.
- Outline the moves you made during a lesson, both visible and invisible to your students.
- Consider what language moves you can incorporate to “coach” someone else who wants to try out what you’re so excited to share.
- Take the bulleted points from a presentation (i.e., professional development session or conference presentation) and expand each of to tell the “story” you want to share.
- Review recent literature that connects to your writing to better situate your writing.
- Remember: Even writing 15-30 minutes a day will eventually lead to a finished manuscript.

2 – Keep your intended journal in mind as you write.

Get to know the journal. Carefully review the aim, scope and guidelines on the journal’s website. Skim the last 2-3 issues of a journal. (For members, an archive of issues is available on the IATE website.) Does the writing resonate with your own work? If so, this journal might be a good fit for your scholarship. Then, reread any articles relevant to your scholarship to consider how you can situate your work in relation to them while also moving the conversation forward. Finally, take note of articles that inspire you (even if the topic is dissimilar from your own). You could map out the rhetorical moves authors use to get a sense of what the audience would expect and consider what writing moves you could adapt for your own purposes. (Continued page 8)

Writing for the IEB: Tips for Publication, Cont.

The Illinois English Bulletin accepts manuscripts written in a range of genres, including:

- Methods (i.e. practical strategies for preparing ELA pre-service teachers)
- Practice (i.e. successful teaching practices, professional development)
- Research (i.e. original qualitative, classroom-based studies)
- Critical Pedagogy (i.e. political essay exposing a social injustice)
- Narrative (i.e. first-person account of a compelling teaching/classroom story)
- Criticism (i.e. in depth critique of literary text(s) or author(s))
- Review (i.e. evaluate current texts related to English education)
- Essay, Fiction, Memoir, and other original creative work

3 – Reach out to professional colleagues for writing and publication support.

Journal editors, reviewers, and others invested in the world of English language arts want you to succeed in sharing your story as a language arts educator. If you're unsure if your work fits the journal, are wondering about the expected timeline for reviews, or want to check on the status of a manuscript you submitted, don't hesitate to email the journal editors. Here's how the process works: After journal editors have received all manuscripts for an issue deadline, they read them all carefully; they will then seek out 2-3 reviewers for pieces they identify as being a good fit for the journal. The reviewers will carefully read your manuscript to provide questions and suggestions for revision, which will be returned to you, the author, with a decision about publication in the journal. If your manuscript is moving forward with the journal, you'll be asked to make revisions using the reviewer's feedback. Remember that rejection is also a regular part of writing. It doesn't necessarily mean that your work is not important to the greater language arts educational community; it just means that it's not ready yet. If you do get rejected, keep at it. You can take the feedback from the editors and reviewers to keep building upon and refining your work.

4 – Ask for critical feedback and use it to shape your writing.

A critical step in the writing process is asking for, receiving, and utilizing critical feedback from colleagues to help shape your writing. During the publication process, reviewers are responsible for critiquing your writing and scholarship to meet or exceed the level of academic quality for the journal. Therefore, in submitting your work to the journal, you are seeking their feedback in hopes of moving your work forward. (Continued page 9)

Writing for the Illinois English Bulletin: Tips for Publication, Cont.

Carefully attend to feedback you get from reviewers and colleagues. Don't just say, "They don't get it," but ask yourself why reviewers don't get it and use that to move forward.

When receiving critical feedback, here are some suggestions to guide your revision process:

- Think about why you received that feedback. How did your audience understand your work? How do you want them to understand your work?
- Think about the revisions you're making. How is this revision improving the quality of your manuscript? How is this revision addressing the needs of your reader?
- Create a table with feedback from colleagues or reviewers and use it to keep track of your revisions and your rationale for those revisions.
- If you're confused by feedback, seek advice from more experienced scholars (even the editors) or a critical writer's group with colleagues to talk through the reviewer's comments.

5 - Keep your audience in mind. What are you contributing to the ongoing conversation?

Our writing never feels ready for an outside audience, but sometimes it's a matter of it being ready enough. When you submit your manuscript to IEB, we ask that you also submit a cover letter. Use the cover letter to speak directly to editors and reviewers; use this space to explain how your work is situated within the scope of the journal as well as to explain how your work makes a unique contribution. This is the goal: we want our writing to get the reader thinking in new ways.

Here are some guiding questions to help you think about your contributions to the field:

- How does your manuscript help further an ongoing scholarly conversation?
- How are you drawing upon your own experiences and knowledge to further the conversation?
- How are you drawing upon the experiences and knowledge of the broader scholarly community to further the conversation?
- What new perspectives, strategies, and/or practices will other educators learn or be able to think about after reading your manuscript?

Brag Corner

We love to hear about people doing great things! These "brag book" submissions were received about our illustrious members.

Samantha Murphy (pictured to the right), a 10-year member of the Lincoln Community High School English department, was awarded the Fund My Classroom grant from Western Governors University. She will use this \$1200 grant to purchase nonfiction graphic novels for her Accelerated English II classes.

Ms. Murphy saw a need for more nonfiction, specifically in graphic novel form, in her classroom this winter. Murphy states, "This idea started when we were working on A Separate Peace pre-reading material and the students expressed that they didn't know anything about the Japanese internment camps. Fast-forward a few weeks and one of my freshmen came to me to ask for a book recommendation because they needed to read something for their SSR project....which was due the following day. Instead of getting frustrated with the student, I

took him over to my graphic novel section in my classroom library to show him what I had. As I was doing this, I heard gasps and whispers from others in his class stating, 'We can read picture books?!' After this, I dug through my research from my master's degree about how graphic novels are valuable tools in the classroom because they require more critical thinking and analysis skills...and started to build a unit." She then had students tell her what historical events they felt they needed to learn about in school, and she got to work searching for books related to these topics. With the help of librarian Abby Curry and interlibrary loans, she was able to acquire enough books to have literature circles with six different titles.

When she saw the grant opportunity in the ROE newsletter, Murphy jumped at the chance to add high-interest nonfiction graphic novels to her classroom library. This exciting award will provide 10 copies of each title she used so she can continue this unit and its student choice literature circles, in addition to giving other students the opportunity to borrow these books as well. Congratulations to Ms. Murphy and her students!

Marcy Winkelmann was recently published in a book about pandemic teaching. The book *Those Who Can, Do: Teaching During a Global Pandemic, Political Unrest, and Paramount Change* is a collection of reflections about teaching during the pandemic.



Ms. Alyssa Staley has done amazing things for her students this year, ie: giving a signed copies of books for students, opening her own classroom library, expanding the diversity of authors in Minority literature" (a senior English elective offered at Danville High School).

-Nikia McGlory

IATE Reads

BY JULIE DEVAUD, Ed. D.

I recommend this book for high school seniors. Teachers can read this book in one afternoon. This is the perfect book for a science fiction course or just literature. Warning: this book is full of profanity. Predecessors, us, are called “Fuckwits.”

This is a short dystopian novel based on the planet Earth in the future. We have trashed literally the planet, and citizens are living on top of garbage. This is a love story about Tetley Abednego, named after the tea bag, who lives in Garbagetown. The book is full of technology and a sly sense of humour. Parts will make you laugh outloud to yourself.

As this book deals with the climate crisis, it could be taught in tandem with a science or environmental class. This book also could be part of a social studies curriculum.

The Past is Red is published by Tordotcom. You can learn more about Catherynne M. Valente and check out her blog by visiting her online at <https://www.catherynnemvalente.com/>.

