

From Mary Richardson...

In April, 2013, a committee appointed by the Executive Council searched for a new Executive Treasurer and Executive Secretary.

I was asked to serve as Executive Treasurer. I let the chair know at that time that I was willing to serve one year as interim Executive Treasurer until there could be a search for a permanent treasurer.

During the 2013 summer workshop, Jennifer Akers (who was chosen as the new Executive Secretary) because of new responsibilities asked Executive Council if she and I could switch positions. This exchange was approved.

Based on our strategic plan, constitutional amendments were written based on our strategic planning during summer workshop 2012. The members expressed the importance of changing the title from Executive Secretary to Executive Director.

When we voted on the constitutional amendments in the fall, 2013 meeting, the title was changed. I now had the title of Executive Director.

Despite the title change, the job description did not change. Since July 2013, I have done this job as I always have done this job when I was Executive Secretary from 2001-2007. Title doesn't make a difference in the job description.

As I had told the committee when I took the Exec Treasurer position, the time period for serving as Executive Secretary and then Executive Director for me stayed the same.

I have extended my resignation from the Executive Director position as of April, 2015. It has been accepted.

President Strickland and the executive council have appointed an interim Executive Director to serve with me until that time so I can help the new interim Executive Director take over with great ease. This person will serve out my three years and then if asked will continue on for 3 more years at the very least.

It has been my pleasure to serve this organization over a 35 year period in many capacities. I am proud of the different programs/sites that I was able to start since rejoining executive council as president that included instituting a list serve and then the member management site. I leave this position with a happy heart and know that I am leaving Executive Council by next April in very good hands. Thanks for all you do for students and teachers across Arkansas. You made this job worthwhile for me.

President Strickland will send out an email with the interim Executive Director "winner" and other positions that have been filled very soon.

Thanks and take care, Mary

Mary Melekian Richardson
Instructor, Speech Communication
Theatre Arts and Dance Dept 1979 to present
Ark Communication and Theatre Arts Assoc,
Executive Director

From Helen Strickland...

Dear Arkansas Communication and Theatre Arts Association (ACTAA) Members,

It is with great pride and pleasure that I share with each of you the success of our ACTAA 2014 Summer Conference which was held at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock on Sunday, July 13, Monday, July 14, and Tuesday, July 15. We had 48 members who attended and participated in the conference which is phenomenal.

We have several new members who joined our organization and served us greatly too on various committees. Our Executive Council, Committee Chairs, Committee Members, and At Large Members all did their parts very effectively in order to help rebuild and restructure our committees so we can have an even more solid foundation on which to stand and grow both now and in the future. Please be on the lookout for important updates, committee reports, constitutional revisions, our ethical practices statement, and other relevant information on our website at www.actaa.net and you will also find some of these things on our Facebook page which you will find at www.facebook.com/actaa.ar and please like and share our Facebook page with others.

Please share the information with our members that did not get to attend the conference so they can voice their opinions, ask questions, and address their concerns as soon as possible with the appropriate executive council member and/or committee chair. A blog will be set up in the near future for everyone to share and express their concerns about any tournament related issues and concerns. Please be sure to be on the lookout for it and please share those concerns only on the blog. If you must or need to address someone privately; please e-mail them at their personal or school e-mail address and please be professional and polite as possible when communicating with them. That same respect and courtesy should also be extended when communicating in the blog too. Please contact our webmaster, Hannah Sawyer, with any questions and concerns on how to participate in the blog dialogue whenever you need assistance. Hannah will also archive the committee reports on our ACTAA website which everyone needs to read them in order to know what happened during our 2014 Summer Conference. You will also receive several e-mails from some of us regarding things you need to know about our Fall 2014 Conference, voting on/for our new incoming 1st Vice President Elect and our 2nd Vice President, our constitution, and other crucial matters.

I want to take this moment to give and express special thanks, gratitude, and appreciation to our Executive Director, Mary Richardson, Instructor of Speech at Hendrix College in Conway since 1979 and who has also served ACTAA for over 35 years of her life and career. She is a very dedicated and loyal educator who loves ACTAA with all of her heart. She has already sent a letter to us via the list serve and she also made a formal announcement during our summer conference regarding her official resignation as our Executive Director effective April 11, 2015. In her place serving as our new Interim Executive Director is Callie Ham, Forensics Coach from Bentonville High School. Since Callie Ham was serving in a few other capacities in our organization; we had to fill her positions as our Recording Secretary and our Recruitment and Mentoring Committee Chair.

Colton Gilbert, Debate Coach at Little Rock Hall High School is our new Recording Secretary and Mandy Taylor, Forensics Coach from Searcy High School is our new Recruitment and Mentoring Chair. I want to officially thank all three of these wonderful individuals for accepting their new positions in ACTAA.

Special thanks go out to ACTAA member, Kevin Baer who teaches Introduction to Theatre and Dance at UALR and Karen E. Harris, Administrative Specialist III at the University of Arkansas Little Rock Theatre Arts & Dance Department for their assistance in allowing and assisting us in the use of the UALR Center of the Performing Arts during our summer conference. Thanks to the entire faculty and staff of the UALR Theatre Arts & Dance Department for the use of their facilities and resources. Thanks also to Laura Dowling, UALR Lighting Director, for teaching a professional development workshop for our members on Sunday.

I dare not even attempt to mention all of the names of our new members and members who have been part of ACTAA for quite a length of time. To be honest, I would be typing for hours if I mentioned the names of every individual that worked so very hard both behind the scenes and out in the open to make our ACTAA 2014 Summer Conference such a grand accomplishment!!!

I leave you all with the quote which according to my research is by the great Greek philosopher, Plato. I also shared it during the opening of our summer conference and we all respectably, positively, and productively abided by it during the totality of our summer conference, "Wise men speak because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something." We were all definitely wise men and wise women as we worked so diligently and beyond the call of duty during the Summer 2014 Conference for our beloved ACTAA!!!

Sincerely and Respectfully Submitted by,
Helen Lashawn Leniear-Strickland
President of the Arkansas Communication and Theatre Arts Association (ACTAA)
Helen L. Strickland