



There are so many things to look forward to at the 2019 AASL National Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, and this issue of Knowledge Quest is packed with ideas to help you prepare.

Educate, Advocate, and Rejuvenate at the 2019 AASL National Conference

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I don't think I was fully prepared for my first AASL National Conference in 2009 in Charlotte, North Carolina. I was not prepared for a conference center full of people like me—comfortable shoes and library-themed or fall-themed sweaters all around—people who live and love school libraries and who are constantly looking for new ideas to help improve learning for their learners and educators. I attended alone, but quickly found rooms full of people sharing ideas and stories. What a rush!

I am fortunate to live in a state with a very active state association and our state conferences are great, but nothing can compare to the national level. I found myself next to big names in the field, such as David Loertscher and Joyce Valenza; people whose work I had followed were in sessions beside me and presenting sessions in front of me. Children's and young adult authors were just walking around with the rest of the attendees, signing books and posing for pictures. And then there was the exhibit hall. And books...lots and lots of books.

There are so many things to look forward to at the 2019 AASL National Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, and this issue of *Knowledge Quest* is packed with ideas to help you prepare. You will read articles from first-time conference attendees and seasoned conference goers and members of the conference planning committee. Whether you are already getting your conference plans together, think

you might attend, or need proof of the value of the conference to share with your stakeholders, this issue is for you!

If you are new to national conference you won't want to miss Alice Bryant's article written as a letter to Rachel, a first-time AASL National Conference attendee. In Alice's article you will find many ideas of things to do at conference. As you read this article you might want to keep a notepad handy! There will be many things you will want to remember for your

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conference days. Alice talks about some new things that will be part of the 2019 conference, so even if you are a seasoned attendee you will want to read her article!

Once you have a general plan for your conference, it is time to find out about some specifics about the conference. How can you not be excited once you read Heather Jankowski's article about the General Session speakers? Ellen Oh, Dr. Adolph Brown, III, and Jarrett J. Krosoczka offer something for everyone and are sure to inspire, motivate, and make you think. Heather provides additional background on each speaker.

Laura Graves Massey and Karen Haggard share their experiences attending national conference with their administrators. AASL offers free registration to administrators who attend with their school librarians—don't miss that opportunity! Laura and Karen both stress the importance of planning your conference strategy and for reflecting on what you have learned during and after the conference. Along with ideas for making a conference work for the administrator-school librarian team, Karen shares some great ideas for what to do with what you learned once you get home. Our jobs are all about building relationships, and sharing a conference with an administrator is a great way to do this!

Louisville is packed with great things to see and do. Don't miss "Why Louisville?" to make the most of your time in Louisville outside of conference. Since we will be in Kentucky, Sam Northern and Melissa Gardner share information about the state of school libraries in Kentucky. There are great things going on! You will be inspired by the involvement and activities of the Kentucky Association of School Librarians.

As we prepare for Louisville, we look forward to coming together as school librarians to educate, advocate, and rejuvenate.

Special thanks to *KQ* Editorial Board member Susan Zana who worked diligently to pull together many of the articles for this conference issue of *Knowledge Quest*.

Karla Collins, PhD, is an associate professor at Longwood University in the School Librarianship Program. Before teaching at Longwood, Karla was a classroom teacher and school librarian in Virginia. She considers it a privilege to be able to work alongside a great team to prepare others to be amazing school librarians. Karla also serves as the chair of the Knowledge Quest Editorial Board.