

**I**t was my great honor to begin my term as President of the Appalachian Studies Association in March. My career in higher education includes more than two decades of living and working in rural landscapes both in the continental United States and abroad. Many of those years have been spent in Central Appalachia, where I have built professional and personal lifelong friendships. I have watched, and hopefully helped with, the tremendous growth we have experienced in the last couple of years.

The Appalachian Studies Association is an esteemed organization of scholars and practitioners representing a diverse cross-section of Appalachian Culture and Life. The Association feels a calling to function as a leading proactive organization with agency to address the issues that impact the region and its people.

It is an exciting time to be in a leadership role with the Appalachian Studies Association. Ideas imagined years ago have gained momentum, and there has been growth in many organizational areas: educational programs, staff, and most importantly, the benefits to members.

In 2022, the Appalachian Studies Association's Steering Committee began evaluating the organization to set a strategic direction for the future by defining organizational objectives. We will expand our ability to be a conduit of information to the members, explore innovative topics with our programming, and continue to amplify our resources. In addition, we look to convene regional and national conversations to share knowledge and foster unity and collective action. And we will continue to expand our support of a new generation of scholars and practitioners, promoting the voice of local organizations on issues important to Appalachia. Ensuring the value of member benefits, enhancing member satisfaction, and increasing diversity in our membership base will always be an underlying goal of our daily operations.

The Appalachian Studies Association has to use all the available strengths to achieve results, as these are genuine opportunities. Each organization has a unique purpose; to make strengths productive. As president, I am delighted to work with a dedicated National Headquarters staff and a committed group of leaders in the Steering Committee. These individuals possess exceptional strength and a bounty of dedication. Together we seek to build results. I believe that we have the vision of what we are capable of becoming as a membership organization, and my goal as board president is to keep us loyal to that vision. Thank you for your part in our vision for the Appalachian Studies Association, and I can't wait to see what we will achieve together.

*Ricardo Nazario y Colón*, E.d.D.  
President