



APPALACHIANSTUDIES.ORG

APPALINK



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President's Message

Dear ASA Members,

Saludos from Durham, North Carolina!

As our annual conference approaches, I feel much gratitude for the conference planning team at Marshall for the thought and labor they've poured into planning this year's gathering. I sense this will be one of our strongest conferences yet, and I am excited to be together again and to learn from the work so many of you are bringing into our community.

As we approach 50 years of the Appalachian Studies Association, we're called in to think about who we are as an organization— and who we want to be next. ASA has always been more than a professional organization. It has been a gathering space, a site of argument and care, scholarship and song, critical analysis and action. However, we currently don't have any anchoring language on our website or elsewhere that reflects the depth and urgency of the work our members are doing. This year, the Steering Committee is initiating a community-guided process to clarify our vision, mission, and values as an organization.

As the communities many of us work alongside face real pressures — economic, political, environmental— it becomes especially important to articulate who we are accountable to, what work is essential, and what principles guide us. I believe that this clarity is not about narrowing our scope as an organization; it's about strengthening our collective direction. In times of crisis, it allows us to respond creatively rather than reactively, to recalibrate rather than retreat.

At the conference, you'll see a simple interactive display near registration inviting your reflections on ASA's vision, mission, and values. I invite you to take a moment to stop by, add your voice to the mix, and help us name what should never be lost, what needs to grow, and what kind of organization we want to steward into the next fifty years. The Steering Committee will take the feedback collected at this year's conference to draft separate vision, mission, and value statements which will be shared with the ASA membership for discussion and a vote and once approved, added to the ASA website. ASA has always been shaped by its members—this next chapter will be no different. I look forward to connecting in West Virginia very soon!

Sophia Enriquez,
President, Appalachian Studies Association



Mission Statement



The mission of the Appalachian Studies Association is to promote and engage dialogue, research, scholarship, education, creative expression, and action among a diverse and inclusive group of scholars, educators, practitioners, grassroots activists, students, individuals, groups and institutions. Our mission is driven by our commitment to foster quality of life, democratic participation and appreciation of Appalachian experiences regionally, nationally, and internationally.

49th Annual Appalachian Studies

Conference

March 19-21, 2026



“Power of a Place, Power of Its People”

Good Monday, Friends and Neighbors,

We are delighted to welcome you to Marshall University and the “Jewel City” of Huntington, WV to celebrate the 49th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference! We are excited to share that, in addition to selling over 80 exhibition tables, Marshall will host the largest number of sessions (257!) and the largest number of participants in the 49-year history of the Conference! This is a testament to your support, faith, and trust in us to animate and amplify the Appalachian Studies Association mission.

In addition to providing a bevy of sessions to educate and inspire, we are offering a veritable cornucopia of activities, events, and tours, including:

1. Opening remarks from “the boy from Kenova,” businessman, and philanthropist Brad D. Smith, Marshall’s visionary and dynamic 38th President
2. Lynch, Kentucky-born, noted Black Appalachian scholar and author, Dr. William H. Turner, delivering his keynote speech, “Been to the Mountaintop”
3. Marshall Memorial Tour of the Marshall Crash Site, Springhill Cemetery, the Memorial Fountain, and MU athletic facilities
4. Underground Railroad Tours of Tri-state area sites recently added to the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom
5. Black Huntington History Trolley Tours of notable African American sites
6. Marshall University Special Collections Open Reading Room Hours and Tour, Morrow Library, Marshall University
7. Artisan Tour of the Huntington Museum of Art and Blenko Glass
8. Mothman Museum and Pt. Pleasant River Museum and Learning Center Tour
9. A Good Old Fashioned Square Dance
10. Appalachian Film Festival, Joan C. Stephenson Auditorium, Huntington City Hall
11. Drag Show Benefit-Branches: Domestic Violence Shelter

Look forward to seeing you soon!

Best Regards,

Cicero, Paul, Marianna, Mary, and Ann, and our wonderful supporting team!





49th Annual Conference Events

JOIN US FOR THE OPENING CEREMONY!
THURSDAY, MARCH 19TH
JOAN C. EDWARDS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER,
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

William H. Turner
“Been to the Mountaintop”

Friday, 6:00 PM - 8:45 PM
Joan C. Edwards Performing Arts Center



PLENARY 1

**“Appalachia’s Powerful Literature
of Place and Its People”**
*Jacinda Townsend and Willie Carver,
moderated by Cat Pleska*

Friday, 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM



PLENARY 2

**“Soulful and Gothic: Appalachian
Musical Traditions Returned,
Reclaimed, and Re-Imagined”**
*Aristotle Jones and Clover-Lynn,
moderated by Paul Robertson*

Saturday, 1:00 PM - 2:15 PM



49th Annual Conference Events

TOUR

The Underground Railroad in the Tri-State (1 of 2)

Thursday, March 19
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Memorial Student Center



DANCE

Circle Up Four: Kentucky "Big Set" Square Dance

Saturday, March 21, 2:30 pm -
3:45 pm



TOUR

One Room School House Tours with Neil Arneson

Friday, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Friday, 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM



NETWORKING

Y'ALL Meaningful Networking and Embracing Our Appalachian Backgrounds and Cultures

Friday, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Marcos, Basement, Memorial Student Center



RECEPTION

Publishers' Reception and Book Signing

Saturday, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
Memorial Student Center, first & second floor Atrium



APPALACHIAN FILM FESTIVAL



Kickoff Night

FRIDAY

Friday, March 20
6:00 PM
Foundry Theater

Start the weekend with a fun, social opening night that's a great way to meet filmmakers and festival-goers! Events include a film screening, film party, and trivial night.

Films and Vendors All Day

SATURDAY

Saturday, March 21
10:00 AM - 9:00 PM
City Hall & Foundry Theater

Events include film screenings throughout the day and local vendors on the 1st floor of City Hall. Come and go all day, discover new Appalachian voices, and support local artists and businesses.

Professional Development

SUNDAY

Sunday, March 22
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Foundry Theater

Events include a professional development session with author Ed Ashton (Mickey7/Mickey 17), a panel discussion and audience Q&A moderated by WSAZ's Tim Irr. Free for festival submitters and \$5 general admission.

Memorial Student Center, Recreation Area

Free pool and ping pong will be available to all conference attendees and guests. Located on the lower level of the Memorial Student Center, the Recreation Area features five championship-size pool tables, two table tennis tables, and a lounge area.



Committee Reports



Communications

Communications Committee Members: Krystal Carter, Kendra Winchester, and Jordan Lovejoy, chair.

The Communications Committee continues to work to expand ASA's reach on social media and grow our online networks as they help us share the work of our larger Appalachian studies community. We encourage anyone who may be interested in serving on the Communications Committee, especially emerging scholars, artists, and advocates who might like to become more involved with ASA, to reach out and express your interest to Communications Committee Chair and [Appalink](#) editor, Jordan Lovejoy at jelovejoy@holycross.edu.

We encourage all conference attendees to share your ASA thoughts and images by including our official conference hashtags on your social media posts: #AppStudies2026 #AppalachianStudies #Appalachia #Appalachian #AppStudies #ASA #ASAinAction #ASAawards



Committee Report

JAS

Editors: Christina Fisanick and David Powers Corwin

Christina Fisanick and David Powers Corwin are the new co-editors of the “Journal of Appalachian Studies”. They are the first co-editors in the journal's thirty-year history. They replace Meredith McCarroll, who served as JAS editor from 2024 to 2025.



Committee Report

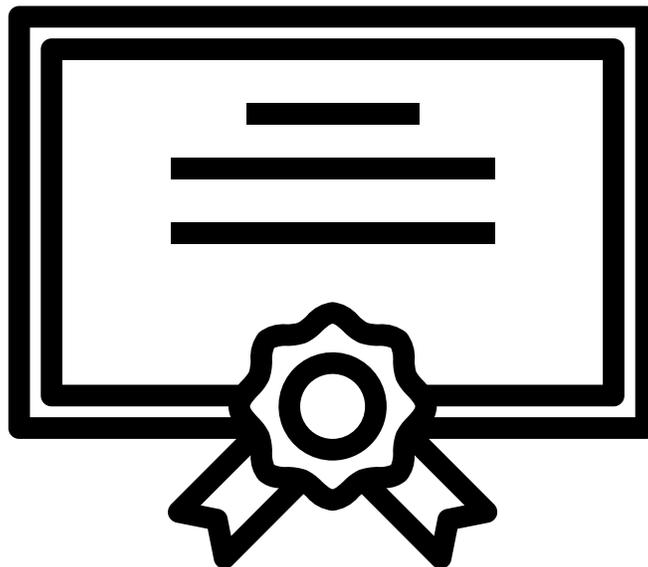
Awards

ASA Membership,

As we prepare to gather together to celebrate the wonderful achievements of our awards members at the upcoming conference, we would like to gather the names of those who have passed this year.

Please send the names of anyone you would like recognized during our In Memoriam part of the ceremony to bnardella@hsc.wvu.edu.

If you could include a link to an obituary or a photograph, we would be extremely grateful.



Silent Auction

SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS

We are still seeking donations for the silent auction!

Join us at the annual Silent Auction—a celebration of community generosity and a chance to empower students and local leaders to attend ASA conferences through scholarship support.

Our Legacy:

Since Howard Dorgan launched this event in the late 1990s, your contributions have fueled opportunities and inspired change.

How It Works:

Check in your donations early to ignite lively bidding wars. Donations may be taken to the John Marshall Room beginning at 10:00 am on Thursday, March 19, 2026.

The auction runs on:

Friday, March 20, 2026: 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Saturday, March 21, 2026: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Bidding concludes at noon on Saturday. Winning bidders must be present with cash or checks.

Please pick up your items by 5:30 PM on Saturday.

Be part of this impactful event. Your support helps shape the future by making educational opportunities possible. We look forward to seeing you there!



Treasurer/Finance

Finance Committee Chair: Danielle Quales

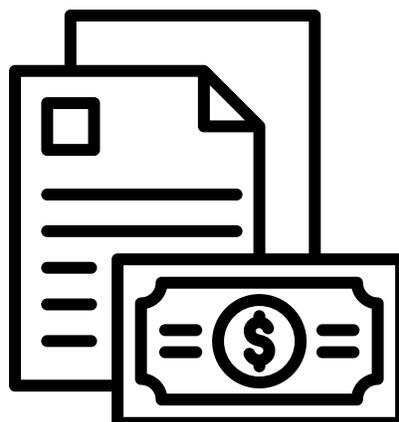
Greetings from the Finance Committee! Along with the rest of the Steering Committee, we are looking forward to our annual conference in just a few weeks.

In terms of financial updates, we have transferred the \$3,730 in membership funds from the '24-'25 fiscal year earmarked for the endowment fund to the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio. No match was provided.

At our October 2025 Steering Committee meeting, members voted to increase ASA rates.

The Finance Committee is actively accepting new members and would welcome your contribution. Please contact me if you are interested in getting involved.

Kindly,
Danielle Quales
ASA Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair
Danielle.quales@gmail.com



Special Collections

Special Collections Committee Members: Savannah Bennett, Tim Binkley, Mark Coltrain, Anna Curvin, Helen Davies, Jeff Dey, Katherine Everhart, Julie Fox-Horton, Michael Hatch, Chad Hunter, Gene Hyde, Sarah Insalaco, Jacob Johnson, Emily Kader, Kimberly Larmee, Scott Sikes, Leo Shannon, Jeremy Smith, Jack Swab, Kopana Terry, Shane Terry, Jinny Turman, Ashley Whittle, and Jed DeBruin, chair.

The SCC met for our Fall Meeting on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, via Teams. The major meeting items included:

- Discussion and updates on IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) funding and the impacts on members' projects/ research/ work
- The hiring of a new archivist, Peter Mophew, at Berea College who will be collaborating with SCC members on the ASA archives retention schedule
- The Archives in Appalachia survey continues to make strong progress, with a call sent out in the fall for other interns to join the project
- Former colleagues of Stewart Plein wrote a tribute article about her for the *Appalachian Curator* – please see this article and the [full issue here](#).
- Members Chad Hunter, Julie Fox-Horton, Savannah Bennett, and Kim Laramie will be hosting and presenting in a SCC sponsored session at ASA 2026 at Marshall University on handling sensitive archival materials
- The Clemons Award Committee is still soliciting applications for this year's award. Applications will be open December 1, 2025, through January 31, 2026.
- Please send nomination materials to: Jed DeBruin, ASA Special Collections Committee Chair, jdebruin@jsu.edu, with the subject line "Clemons Award Nomination"

The SCC is also pleased to announce that we are growing, and since the FA25 progress report the following members have joined: Mark Coltrain (Appalachian State University) and Helen Davies (University of North Carolina – Charlotte). Many thanks to the current SCC members for their tireless recruitment efforts!

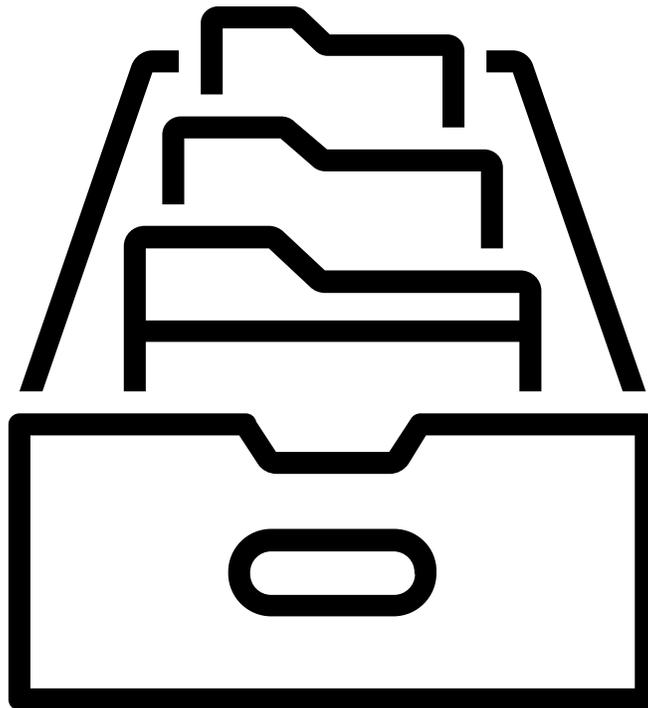
The SCC's Winter 2025-2026 meeting will take place on Thursday, January 22 from 11-12 am Eastern/ 10-11 am Central via Microsoft Teams, with our Spring 2026 meeting to take place on Friday, March 20 from 7-8 am Eastern/ 6-7 am Central in a hybrid format at the 2026 Annual ASA conference. Please email Jed DeBruin (jdebruin@jsu.edu) if you are interested in attending a meeting and are not already a member of the SCC.

Special Collections (con't)

The SCC is always looking towards recruiting new members, especially students, early career researchers, and institutionally unaffiliated members. Please direct any interested parties to Jed DeBruin (jdebruin@jsu.edu).

Respectfully submitted by:

Jed DeBruin



SEE YOU SOON!



ATRASACHTAN
STUDIES
ASSOCIATION
CONFERENCE

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY
HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA

50th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference

Bucknell University and Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

March 4-7, 2027

Where Do We Go from Here?

For more information, please contact:

Kenton Butcher
Conference Chair
kb052@bucknell.edu

Mayor Kendy Alvarez
Local Events Coordinator
kalvarez@lewisburgborough.org



In 1978, the first Appalachian Studies Conference gathered at Berea College in Kentucky under the theme “Appalachian Studies: Where Do We Go from Here?” In 2027, for the 50th annual meeting, Bucknell University and the town of Lewisburg welcome the Appalachian Studies Association to Pennsylvania for only the second time. As ASA prepares to celebrate this milestone at an atypical site, we will revisit the original conference theme to encourage both retrospection and theorization.

“Appalachian Studies: Where Do We Go from Here?” invites submissions that critically evaluate the state of Appalachian studies; advance new directions for our field; and explore the past, present, and future struggles and successes of our region and its diverse communities. We invite research, performances, and art installations as well as political, economic, and cultural analysis that explore the following questions: How has our discipline dealt with challenges and shifts in higher education in the past? How can we adapt to face present and future challenges confronting our discipline, the academy, and Appalachia itself? How are current political, economic, and environmental crises (at local, national, and global scales) manifesting within the Appalachian region? And, from our unique regional perspectives, what alternative futures can we imagine?

To enact our call for exploring new directions in Appalachian studies, Bucknell University and Lewisburg will serve as co-hosts for the 2027 conference. We recognize this will present new challenges, but it will also create new opportunities, experiences, and partnerships. In that spirit, we welcome all participants, approaches, and perspectives—from community members, activists, artists, scholars of all disciplines, teachers, students, and anyone interested in Appalachian studies—to gather and celebrate our growth and accomplishments, to evaluate our history, and to consider the future of our discipline, our organization, our region, and our collective existence.



Follow Us!

@appalachstudies



Appalink Statement

Appalink is published twice a year. We welcome submissions, announcements, and news. Subjects may include upcoming conferences, lectures, meetings, fellowships, award nominations, or other events of interest to the membership of ASA. Space is limited and all submissions are subject to editing. Paid advertisements will be considered for inclusion. Contact the managing editor, Mary K. Thomas at mthomas@marshall.edu for rates. Email submissions to Jordan Lovejoy at jlovejoy@unc.edu. Submissions for the fall issue are due August 1. Submissions for the spring issue are due December 1.

Editors: Jordan Lovejoy, Mary Kay Thomas, Ann E. Bryant, and Haley Elkins



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