

CAMWS 2017 Annual Report
Gulf States Region (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas)
T. Davina McClain, Vice President

1. Information on the activities of the state/provincial Classical association

While there is no provincial association beyond CAMWS and CAMWS-Southern Section, most state organizations make their presence known in different ways. Mississippi and Texas do very well at holding a variety of events. Louisiana and Alabama strongly support their JCL conventions. I admit that I have not been able to attend either my state meeting or state JCL because of scheduling conflicts.

2. Promotional activities in the state or province

The promotion of classics tends to take place on an individual or local level, rather than a state level. Teachers/professor reach out to students in their institutions. Larger state events are more difficult to create and promote. Mississippi seems to be making the greatest strides at innovation.

3. CAMWS membership (efforts at promotion and results)

As much as we all value CAMWS, it is difficult to promote membership because of costs and the sense that the meeting is the main benefit – something many teachers cannot afford to attend. The value of CPL funds for helping programs with projects does help. But we are all also stretched very thin in terms of time and energy.

4. Efforts in the state or province to meet the CPL annual goals

Mississippi continues to make the best use of CPL funds. Other institutions do not reach out or apply for the grants which is a shame because the process is very easy and the funds are there to help. I, as Regional VP, need to do a better job of encouraging applications.

5. Use of CPL monies, interest in CAMWS scholarships, etc.;

Mississippi applied for and received a \$500 Bridge Grant. Texas Tech did as well. More programs should because the application is very easy and only requires reasonable documentation.

6. Problems and challenges in the state or province

Both Louisiana (Episcopal) and Alabama (UMS-Wright Preparatory School) are losing the Latin programs. In both instances, notice of the loss has come after the decision has been made. In the case of Episcopal, the teacher has specifically asked that no action be taken because of fear of retribution. This is more often the case than we realize. As much as we, CAMWS, want to try to stop such measures, we cannot always do so, nor should we, if our actions could hurt the faculty involved.

Last year the Latin program at University of North Texas was in danger, but it seems to be thriving now. It is important that there be action and continued support when a program

asks for help. Perhaps a saved program could be awarded a small CPL grant for a couple of years to strengthen its position.

Conclusions/Thoughts/Questions

The world is not a great place right now. We, as students of history and language, have a deep responsibility to challenge the forces that continue to reject the value of the past and of learning Latin and Greek. When Law School and Vet/Med school students write to us and express their gratitude for how their language student has made their professional studies so much easier, we need a way to advertise these sorts of successes as much as we do placement of students in graduate programs and in high school teaching positions.

Better communication needs to occur from this Regional VP to the state VPs throughout the year. Other responsibilities have made that difficult, but those responsibilities are now being handed over to others, so this situation should improve.

Would it be possible to schedule a meeting time at CAMWS, so that the regions (regional vp and state vps) could meet? Just a half hour face-to-face meeting might give us a better connection on which we can then build throughout the year.

CAMWS 2017 Annual Report The State of Alabama Submitted by P. Andrew Montgomery

1. Information on the activities of the state/provincial Classical association

The membership of the Alabama Classical Association is open to any interested individuals but is composed primarily of secondary and post-secondary teachers throughout the state. There are two primary meetings of the association each year. In October there is a day-long colloquium that usually attracts about 15-20 teachers who meet and share pedagogical ideas and participate in a workshop. A formal business meeting is usually held in late January and is frequently accompanied by a reading of papers and presentations. An informal meeting of the ACA is also held during the annual Alabama Junior Classical League meetings each spring.

This past summer, Troy University in Troy, Alabama hosted the annual National Junior Classical League Convention from July 24–29 with almost 2,000 students in attendance from all over the country.

The Alabama Junior Classical League has eighteen active school chapters. Joint AJCL activities include certamen tournaments and an annual meeting hosted by a participating chapter. The 2017 meeting was held at Samford University with around 500 middle and high school students in attendance. The 2018 meeting will be hosted by Oak Mountain High School in Shelby County, Alabama.

Birmingham, and Samford University look forward to hosting the annual CAMWS meeting in the Spring of 2020.

2. Promotional activities in the state or province

Nothing to report.

3. CAMWS membership (efforts at promotion and results)

Direct pitches for CAMWS membership continues to be made at meetings of the ACA and amongst those who attend other events such as the AJCL meetings. CAMWS does offer substantial practical benefits to its members, including access to the Loeb Classical Library, but most K-12 teachers with limited funds for professional memberships choose other options that they feel are more helpful to them and offer them more tangible benefits, such as active engagement in the ACA.

Our immediate challenge in Alabama CAMWS membership is to recruit with a view toward participation in the 2020 CAMWS meeting in Birmingham. Not only is the meeting very accessible to most Alabama teachers, but CAMWS' presence in our state is an opportunity for individual Latin programs around the area to promote the importance of Latin in their own schools and to their administrators.

4. Efforts in the state or province to meet the CPL annual goals

Efforts at increased CAMWS membership is needed in order to promote an interest in CPL monies. Although it seems natural that the availability of CPL monies should attract CAMWS membership, the cost of CAMWS membership has actually been a deterrent.

5. Use of CPL monies, interest in CAMWS scholarships, etc.;

No known requests of CPL monies in the State of Alabama

6. Problems and challenges in the state or province

While Classics programs, and specifically Latin programs at the K-12 levels, have remained remarkably stable over a period longer than a decade, the Latin program at UMS-Wright Preparatory School in Mobile under the direction of Christian Fantoni will be shut down after this year.

Conclusion:

Although the state of classics has been healthy, in the state of Alabama for at least a decade, this report indicates that there is much work to be done in raising the awareness of the value of CAMWS membership and participation. In the past, CPL money has not seemed to be a sufficient incentive to participate. Long distances to meetings and available funds for travel and cost of meetings is a strong deterrent, especially when more readily available opportunities are at hand for encouragement and development. The forthcoming CAMWS 2020 meeting in Birmingham is likely to generate much local interest in membership. The challenge will then be to retain that membership.

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Louisiana

State Vice-President Wilfred E. Major (wmajor@lsu.edu)

The state government of Louisiana in general continues to struggle to attain fiscal stability, and the effect on funding levels for education cannot be predicted at this point.

Colleges and Universities

For Louisiana students, reductions in state scholarships implemented in 2017 played out in enrollments this academic year. What will happen with funding levels this year and in the future is unclear, but as Classics programs in general compete for resources and students, such cuts can affect Classics disproportionately. Courses taught online and hybrid via distance learning with other institutions may thus become critical for the future of some programs.

K-12

JCL had another successful state convention but it was evident that the tumult of recent years (floods, hurricanes, state financial crisis) is taking a toll on some schools and their Latin programs. Worse yet, one of largest and most prominent Latin programs in the state, at Episcopal High School in Baton Rouge, is now slated for elimination.

In brighter news, the Louisiana Classical Association held a vigorous and successful meeting at Tulane University, with a program and audience that brought together teachers, scholars and others from a range of institutions to discuss the state of Classics in Louisiana in general, archaeology (both in the field and via texts like Frontinus), Star Wars and more.

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Mississippi

Jonathan Fenno

Last February around 300 persons attended the Mississippi JCL convention at Mississippi State in Starkville. This year the JCL will meet at the University of Mississippi in Oxford at the beginning of March.

Starting in January of 2018, the Department of Classics at the University of Mississippi, under the leadership of some of our faculty and with the help of around ten of our undergraduate Latin students, has implemented an after-school Latin program at Oxford Intermediate School, using the resources of the *Aequora* program, which is sponsored by the Paideia Institute (<http://www.paideiainstitute.org/aequora>).

In October of 2017, Latin students from regional schools visited Ole Miss for Archaeology Day to learn about ancient graffiti and to view the Robinson Collection in our University Museum.

A CAMWS Bridge Initiative Grant helped defray some of the costs for a September 2017 production of Plautus' *Pot of Gold* by Honors Students at Mississippi State University in Starkville. The two performances of the play were part of Classical Week at MSU, which includes an annual Latin Day. Though this is meant primarily for their undergraduates, I believe some students from local schools may make it to campus for certain events.

And some local Latin students visited Millsaps College in Jackson for a demonstration on Roman arms and armor.

I have heard from various Latin teachers in the schools and even in a home-school program about their annual Roman Feast Day featuring adaptations of ancient recipes, learning about ancient politics and society, and of course dressing up in toga-like outfits. Some MS Latin teachers have their students take the National Latin Exam and the Medusa Classical Mythology Exam.

CAMWS 2017 Annual Report

Texas

Deborah Beck

Doings around the state:

- Last spring, UT Arlington hosted both its usual Homerathon and an “Adventures in Antiquity” symposium.
- Certamina and regular gatherings of various sorts occur on a regular basis around the state.
- Things in the Austin area are lively as usual. Ginny Lindsey, a well-known name to CAMWS members, received an award for Meritorious service from TCA. She has also been profiled in the local paper. Good work Ginny!
- TCA met this year in Austin and received a record number of applications for its fellowships (some aimed at teachers and some at students). Keep those applications coming!
- Job ads for both high school and college-level teaching, and even for some pre-high school positions, indicate healthy programs operating around the state
- The UNT Latin program is continuing to do well, aiming to offer a Latin minor soon.
- Texas Tech received a CPL grant to revive the defunct tradition of a “Classics Day” for the north-central part of Texas.

Reflections on being the TX VP, after not doing it very well:

- Relevant to all state VPs: incoming VPs should be appointed a year before the term of the outgoing VP expires. This would enable people to have an opportunity to learn from the experience of their predecessor before taking on full responsibility for their state, both about the nature of the CAMWS VP jobs and about the best ways to do that in their

particular state. I'm on an SCS committee right now that has recently shifted to this mode of administration and it works really well.

In my particular case, it turned out that for personal reasons, I actually did not make a suitable VP at all because I'm not free to attend one-day professional events on Saturdays. As a result, it's basically impossible for me to attend the kinds of events at which I would have wanted to be networking with other CAMWS members. If I had known this before my term began, I probably would have refused the appointment.

- Specific to TX: it is TOO BIG for one person to be the VP for the whole state. My recommendation would be to split it into a northern region (whose center of gravity is Dallas) and a southern region (anchored around Houston/Austin).