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JoLLE 2024 Winter Conference Reflection

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Co-Conference Chairs**

This year's 2024 JoLLE Winter Conference took place on Saturday, February 3rd and brought together an incredible group of scholars from all over the world. It was made picture perfect through a captivating keynote address given by Dr. Suresh Canagarajah from Penn State University. We had the pleasure of engaging in insightful discussions and connecting from afar via Zoom. As scholars, educators, and learners living in a post-pandemic world, coming together to share our passion for connecting, advocating, and resisting through multiliteracies as pedagogy was a beautiful reminder that the world of academia continues to reach for positive social change.

In preparation for the conference, JoLLE partnered with the Language and Literacy Education Graduate Organization (LLEGO) to host a day of pre-conference workshops on Friday, February 2nd. These workshops were prepared and delivered by UGA staff, professors and students. They centered on focused writing groups, linguistic equity for students with disabilities, AI to support multiliteracies and time to create personal teaching philosophies. It was a fruitful time for both hosts and attendees and an excellent beginning to the conference weekend. We extend our gratitude to Kelly Ford (Ph.D.), Allison Nealy (Ph.D.), Ryan Schey (Ph.D.), and Julia Duncanson (Ed.S.) for taking the time to facilitate our pre-conference workshops.

During the conference, our Keynote Speaker, Dr. Suresh Canagarajah expounded upon the need for challenging language and rhetorical norms of privileged social groups in relation to the way we define ability. In his presentation titled "Crip Writing: Embracing Nonnormal Communication", he argued for a shift towards adopting the ways that education can embrace "non normal language practices" as inspired by his own fight against cancer and respective impairments affecting his own writing practice.

In addition to our keynote speaker, conference presenters covered a variety of topics related to the conference theme of Connecting, Advocating and Resisting through Multiliteracies as Pedagogy. We were honored to have presenters and attendees from affiliates all over the world, including the United States, Canada, Australia, India, Colombia, Brazil and more. We participated in an exchange of knowledge and experience through individual paper presentations, as well as panels and round table discussions. The resulting collaborations and networking opportunities proved to be as invaluable as the content presented in each session.

As the 2024 Co-Conference Chairs, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to our faculty sponsor, Dr. Usree Bhattacharya, whose compassion and tenacity gave us the confidence to plan this conference well. We would also like to thank the 2023-2024 JoLLE Editorial Board: Cris Barabas, Faith Thompson, Seon Ja Chang, Michael Gray, Yuxiang “Nina” Liao, Maki Shinzato, Zihan “Sandra” Lin, Shuzhen Zhuang, Jiaze Li (Max), Dan Kong, Chi Chun Chiu, and Michel Soares Do Carmo, for their well-timed comedic relief and unwavering support. We are honored to continue the legacy of previous JoLLE conferences and look forward to future conferences planned by UGA graduate students. Thank you!

Your 2024 Conference Co-Chairs,

Ngoc My (Michelle) & Taylor
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