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Hello CLA Family,

In roughly 5 weeks, CLA will gather in Vancouver, Washington around the theme “Redefining Expansion and Explorations: Black Diasporic Literatures, Cultures, and Pedagogies.” Washington State University is excited to host the 83rd Annual College Language Association (CLA) Convention in downtown Vancouver, WA at the Hilton Vancouver Washington. We cannot wait to welcome you. This is my 24th year as a member of CLA, and I am personally excited to have the organization visit the Pacific Northwest.

The CLA program committee and the Washington State University host committee have so many wonderful activities for you, including a film screening most evenings, a wellness session, a robust reception, and a keynote from the author/poet Camille Dungy whose recent book, *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden*, encourages readers to recognize the relationship between the peoples of the African diaspora and the land on which they live.

In addition to the Convention proceedings, there are many activities available to you in the Vancouver, Washington/Portland, Oregon region. I suggest you visit one of the many wine rooms in downtown Washington or walk along the Vancouver Waterfront. If you have time, you might venture out to a winery, check out the Farmers Market, or venture to Powell’s City of Books in Portland, which is the largest used and new bookstore in the world! We have compiled a list of jazz clubs, local activities, and restaurants for you to consider exploring. Perhaps arrive a day early or stay an extra day and enjoy all the beauty that the Pacific Northwest has to offer.

As chair for the host committee for the CLA Convention 2025, it is truly an honor to be able to bring CLA to the Pacific Northwest for the first time. If you have not registered, please do it now before it is too late.

Sincerely,

Thabiti Lewis

Professor of English

Washington State University Vancouver