

2017 CAMWS Regional Vice-President's Report Ohio Valley Region

State of Ohio

Submitted by Gwen Compton-Engle (John Carroll University), Regional VP; and Garrett Jacobsen (Denison University), State VP

Ohio has a new State Vice President, Garrett Jacobsen of Denison University. Garrett has contacted all Ohio CAMWS members by email to introduce himself, promote CAMWS membership, and call attention to the opportunities available through the CPL. As he settles into the State VP role, he will be looking for ways to make better contacts within the state and glean more information for CAMWS; we hope for a more richly detailed Ohio report next year.

The two major state-wide Classics organizations are the Ohio Classical Conference (OCC) and the Ohio Junior Classical League (OJCL). The OCC is going through a multi-year revitalization process. It has several highly committed members who recognize its value in bringing together K-12 and college faculty to support the state's classics programs; nevertheless, in recent years the OCC has had difficulty drawing the numbers of attendees that it did a decade or two ago. At the annual meeting in Columbus in October, hosted by President Franz Gruber of the Columbus Academy, several steps were taken to revitalize the organization. First, the group decided to hold its 2017 OCC meeting in conjunction with a fall OJCL meeting, to create better attendance, synergy and networking among members of the two organizations. Second, a revived *Humanitas* newsletter will be distributed electronically to enhance communication among members. (Jeff Kolo of Medina High School already maintains an OCC email list through which he can send out announcements to the membership.) CAMWS promotional materials were distributed at this fall's OCC meeting, but a joint OCC/OJCL meeting in 2017 holds promise of better opportunities for CAMWS to connect with the state's Latin teachers.

For secondary teachers and their students, the OJCL Convention in Columbus each February remains the high point of Ohio classical collectivity. Although a few chapters have dropped out of the OJCL, others are being added, so the organization remains very vibrant. Close to one thousand high school Latin students each year compete in various academic and creative contests, run for state-wide offices, and generally geek out on Latin during the convention. There are also smaller-scale regional *certamina* held in various parts of the state throughout the school year.

Ohio is also fortunate to have the American Classical League headquartered in Hamilton, OH, headed by Sherwin Little (formerly of Indian Hill High School in the Cincinnati area). As one perk of having the ACL in our state, Sherwin presented a preview of the Revised Standards for Classical Language Learning at the OCC meeting in October.

Ohio contains quite a number of strong liberal arts colleges, some of whose faculty (Garrett Jacobsen of Denison and Bill Owens of Ohio University) have been involved with the Society for

Classical Studies' Liberal Arts Chairs group, which is preparing a Handbook for Undergraduate Classics Programs. This group's work can help support smaller college classics programs in their efforts to maintain strong programs within a national higher-education environment that is not always supportive of humanities.

We are aware of only one program closure in the state, Olmsted Falls High School, which closed its Latin program when the long-time teacher retired. However, it is difficult for us to be well-informed about program closures, because the weaker, more endangered programs are also those least likely to be in touch with CAMWS or the OCC. We would be interested to know how other large states are addressing this communication challenge.

State of West Virginia

E. Del Chrol (Marshall University), State VP

Classics in West Virginia continues to be stable. Despite pressures from the state to cut costs and do practical things, the state's numbers are roughly the same as last year. Marshall University is the only institution of higher learning to offer degrees in Latin at the BA and MA level, and the only institution to have professional classicists on staff. The flagship school, West Virginia University, will occasionally bring in a radiologist to teach Latin when there is need, but Latin is not currently listed anywhere on the Languages, Literatures and Linguistics webpage. WVU Parkersburg has an adjunct who will on occasion teach Latin and Greek, but has not done so in a while.

Based on the applicants to the Maier Latin Scholarships, most of which are for the high school level, the number of students taking Latin is the same as it has been for the last few years after the most recent round of retirements. There seems to be an increase in home-schooled students, but this may be as small as three more students overall. Retaining qualified teachers at the high school level is difficult; a few of the schools currently teaching Latin are BAs in Latin who have had no graduate work. It is difficult to fill positions in the state for secondary language teachers, and administrators seem to like the option of students in virtual schools as the costs are lower.

West Virginia has been seeing the same amount of events, including WVFLTA, events at Marshall, the Maier scholarships, and public lectures. Membership is the same, even with reminders to HS teachers that there is money for the taking. Next year the State VP hopes to personally increase CAMWS membership by moving to an all-Loeb online set of course materials, and telling students that access to the Loeb through CAMWS is the cheapest option.