

The West Australian Modern Greek Language Teachers' Association Inc.



WAMGLTA Annual Report 2019

At the conclusion of my third year as Chair of the West Australian Modern Greek Language Teachers' Association Inc. (WAMGLTA), I am proud to be writing this year's Annual Report.

2019 has seen WAMGLTA take slow but steady steps towards becoming a better-known professional organisation within the local Greek community but also in the wider education circles of WA, as well as nationally. This has been as a result of active efforts from the Executive and members of WAMGLTA but also through the support and recognition offered by the Honourable Consul of Greece, Mr Antonios Koliadis, who ensured that WAMGLTA's activities throughout the year were promoted via his regular online newsletter and through the Consular website, as well as through an official invitation for WAMGLTA to lay a wreath at the OXI Day Wreath-laying Ceremony of 2019. The Consul also invited me as Chair of WAMGLTA to attend various functions during the year for presidents of Greek-Australian Associations to meet Greek politicians and other dignitaries at the Consulate. These important gestures of recognition of the important role that WAMGLTA has to play in our community were greatly appreciated and, as such, a formal letter of thanks and farewell was sent to Mr Koliadis before his departure from WA.

Likewise, we also owe our growing reputation to the online promotion of WAMGLTA activities through the HCWA Bulletin, the online news of the churches of Sts Constantine and Helene, The Annunciation of the Theotokos, and St Nektarios. Other supporters of our activities include St Andrew's Grammar, Immaculate Heart College, The Evangelismos Greek Language School, and the Professional Teaching Council of WA. To all our supporters, we say "Thank you!"

This year, our membership was at a 21, with five new members having joined our Association; Mary Chatziioannidou, Kalliope Kiosses, Maria Svarnou, Eleni Dwyer-Kotsileou and Nina Battalis. WAMGLTA held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday 9 March at The Evangelismos Greek Language

School at 1.30pm. Membership fees were paid and the election of Office Holders and other Committee members took place with the following results:

- Chairperson: Nominated by WAMGLTA members and being uncontested for the position - Dr Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis
- Deputy Chairperson: The position was not filled and has remained vacant throughout 2019
- Secretary: Mrs Christina Panovrakou
- Treasurer: Nominated by WAMGLTA members and being uncontested for the position - Mr Nick Gile
- Committee Members: Ms Betty Parissis, Mrs Catherine Papanastasiou, and Ms Maria Svarnou

All members of the WAMGLTA Executive were congratulated and warmly received to their post.

WAMGLTA initiatives for the year were also discussed at the AGM and these included the possibility of official WAMGLTA representation at the three Wreath-laying ceremonies held during the year, support of the annual ‘Speak Greek in March Campaign’, the offer of Professional Learning to WAMGLTA members but also to wider community members who may be interested in the topic on offer, and WAMGLTA’s own ‘Speak Greek in June Competition’.

Two other important matters that were discussed were the nomination of a member of WAMGLTA for the Annual Professional Teaching Council of WA (PTCWA) Outstanding Professional Service Awards 2019 and the re-introduction of Modern Greek at tertiary level. Both matters were pursued throughout the course of the year with the following results:

- Ms Irene Starr was WAMGLTA’s nominee and subsequent recipient of the PTCWA Outstanding Professional Service Award 2019; and
- Discussions are underway between Charles Darwin University and The University of Western Australia regarding the introduction of an online Modern Greek course at UWA.

One of the highlights of 2019 was the initiative of the ‘WAMGLTA Speak Greek in June Competition’, which supported the ‘Speak Greek in March Campaign’ that has been in place for five years now. Our initiative was targeted at students from Pre-primary to Year 12 who are formally studying the Greek language. After the competition details were refined by the Executive and other members, the competition was launched on 1 June with an extended deadline of 6 July, taking in the final week of Term Three. The competition invited students to speak in Greek on one of 9 topics for a maximum of 3 minutes whilst being filmed. Students could work alone, in pairs or in groups of no more than 4 persons.

The success of the competition took even WAMGLTA by surprise! There was a total of 40 participants from three educational providers; namely, St. Andrew's Grammar, Immaculate Heart College, and The Evangelismos Greek Language School. The content of the presentations was varied and interesting, providing great delight to the judges! All participants received a Certificate of Participation in this inaugural competition, and the winners of each category received a Dymocks Book Voucher. There was a total of 13 winning entries, spread across the three education providers.

The other highlight of course was the PTCWA Outstanding Professional Service Awards Ceremony, held on 23 October, where Ms Irene Starr received her award for her outstanding contributions to WAMGLTA. Once again, as in the previous two ceremonies of 2017 and 2018 where WAMGLTA had a recipient for the Award (Dr Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis), our logo was on show and our Association was promoted in the best possible way to the distinguished audience members of education and professional circles. Such promotion is invaluable!

I take this opportunity to thank the members of the Executive Committee:

- Mrs Christina Panovrakou for her thorough notetaking skills as Secretary
- Mr Nick Gile for his efficient treasury work and ideas offered to the Committee
- Ms Betty Parissis for her ongoing support of WAMGLTA
- Mrs Catherine Papanastasiou for being a co-judge of the WAMGLTA Speak Greek in June Competition and for her wonderful contributions to the Committee
- Ms Maria Svarnou for her enthusiastic attendance and contribution at all WAMGLTA meetings, and for being a co-judge of the WAMGLTA Speak Greek in June Competition

I would also like to thank Mr George Anastassiadis, Ms Irene Starr, Mr Peter Vlachou, Dr John Yiannakis, Ms Mary Chatziioannidou, Ms Kalliope Kiosses and Ms Nina Battalis for their regular attendance at WAMGLTA Committee meetings and also for their individual contributions to WAMGLTA. In particular, Nina has developed a WAMGLTA website to be refined and ratified in 2020; thanks Nina! Thanks are also extended to the members of WAMGLTA who helped prepare students for their entry into the competition, including Mrs Katerina Reklitis, Mrs Eleni Dwyer-Kotsileou, Mr George Anastassiadis, Ms Mary Chatziioannidou and Ms Kalliope Kiosses. Finally, I acknowledge the moral support offered by WAMGLTA members who are living outside of WA or even abroad. Your ongoing membership and email contributions of support mean a great deal to the Association; thank you!

In 2020, WAMGLTA will hold its AGM on Saturday 7 March at The Evangelismos Greek Language School at 1.30pm. All existing members and new members are welcome! The Membership Fee is still only \$20 and payment will be accepted on the day. Goals for 2020 include:

- Conducting a more aggressive membership drive;
- Offering the WAMGLTA Speak Greek in June Competition once again to all Greek Language providers;
- Offering Professional Learning to WAMGLTA members and also other interested parties;
- Pursuing the offer of an online Modern Greek course at tertiary level through Charles Darwin University;
- Pursuing formal recognition of hours of study of the Modern Greek language at after-hours providers, such as Saturday Schools;
- Investigating the possibility of the Centre for the Greek Language Examinations to be formally recognised in WA/Australia;
- Pursuing MLTAWA membership for the Chair of WAMGLTA; and
- Nominating a WAMGLTA member for the PTCWA Outstanding Professional Services Award 2020.

In closing, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the members of the Executive Committee and all WAMGLTA members for demonstrating their support of my personal efforts to continue to promote the objectives of the WAMGLTA Rules (Constitution) through our regular meetings and for the professional and personal collegiality offered to me in my role as Chair of WAMGLTA. It has continued to be my honour to serve WAMGLTA in this way!

Dr Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis
WAMGLTA Chairperson

29 December 2019