As we continue to confront challenges in our daily work, I am fortified with the knowledge that Reading Recovery® has continued for more than 35 years, helped millions of struggling readers, shared knowledge with a new generation of educators, and spread our message of how well Reading Recovery professionals assist our schools and communities.

Our community has a lot to celebrate as we experience our 35th anniversary of Reading Recovery in North America. Our intervention continues to be impactful on our students, and we have data as a true evidence-based program to demonstrate it. Our community explores opportunities to enhance our work with different populations, from IPLÉ to DLL, to Literacy Lessons™ to continually improving our daily practice of Reading Recovery with students who need that extra enthusiasm and support. Our leadership structures are filled with strong, passionate, and dedicated professionals who truly believe in the work of the organization and Reading Recovery.

In February, I joined my first national conference in Columbus. Brought to you by RRCNA, the newly minted LitCon: National K-8 Literacy & Reading Recovery Conference is the largest homecoming of leaders in childhood literacy in North America, and will continue to advance our field, enhance our skills, and mobilize our community as we work to help struggling readers. The passion, energy, and commitment to literacy learning I saw and felt in our few days together in Columbus was especially important given the things that started happening just a month later. That time together in Columbus further energized me to do what I can to support you in your work over the coming months.

I continue to be impressed and inspired by the sincere dedication of our members as they work with struggling readers. Our communities are experiencing an unprecedented challenge with shelter-in-place and stay-at-home orders. Our school communities are especially impacted in fundamental ways that are different from other professions and fields of work. As educators, we each miss our daily connections with our students, and worry about how this time will impact our students — today, tomorrow, and next fall. The work it takes to help readers to improve their literacy skills is difficult, sometimes frustrating, but also so incredibly rewarding. I encourage each of us to support our students as best we are able and lean on each other for more than just problem-solving advice, but also for emotional connection and support. Together, we can and will get through this.