

Carter Travel Award, Spring 2025

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### Summary

In the last three days I was in Denver to attend the AAAL Conference to present preliminary findings of my dissertation research. Presenting my work for the first time in front of an audience of scholars and young researchers that were genuinely interested in learning more about GTAs' practices in the language classroom has strengthened my confidence, motivation, and sense of direction to keep working on my dissertation. I received precious feedback from a variety of perspectives that I wouldn't have considered otherwise. Even more than the opportunity to present and also attend a few contributions on important and urgent topics - such as those related to the use of AI in language teaching and learning settings - that I hadn't had the chance to truly explore in the past year, it was the unexpected encounters that made this experience enriching and memorable to me. I met a couple of scholars (i.e. Dr. Cori Crane and Dr. James Coda) that have informed my previous research and had the precious chance to truly connect in person. I also had the chance to gather with my colleagues from SLAT who also attended my presentation and found a renewed sense of community and belonging, outside the walls of the University of Arizona, which is so crucial during this last stretch of my PhD studies, as oftentimes dissertation work feels isolating. I feel grateful to the GIDP for providing me with funding to attend this wonderful conference and I look forward to applying to other conferences this year to disseminate my findings and voice as a researcher and language educator. Thank you for your incredible support.

