



President's Message

2020: A Year in Review

There is no denying that 2020 will go down in history as a profoundly disastrous and disruptive year. The COVID-19 pandemic has defined a year of unprecedented human suffering and unleashed a set of cascading events that have obliterated many lives and livelihoods around the world, often touching disproportionately the frailest and most vulnerable members of our communities.

And yet, in the midst of all of the loss and homebound isolation, 2020 is also a year we will probably remember for the many unexpected joys we may have experienced from random and planned virtual connections with students and peers, and/or for the inspiring acts of human kindness and courage—large and small—that we may have witnessed from up-close and afar.

For us as Cumulus, COVID-19 has represented an inflection point. It has accelerated our resolve to build a more robust digital ecosystem to come together as a growing global community. It has inspired renewed conversations through our new [CumulusConnects](#) platform, and via the all-too-many Zoom meetings that our Secretariat team and my colleagues in our Executive Board have attended. Since our last face-to-face board meeting in NYC in February, we have come together often to check-in and participate in conferences and virtual events, to take care of one another, and to keep advancing the work all of you, our members, have charged us with. This is work we continue with a great sense of urgency and terrific momentum by following the roadmap of our strategic plan, [Cumulus at 30](#).

As we look forward to 2021, it is too soon to tell if some of the many transformations that we are contending with today will be here to stay as the pandemic gradually fades with the eagerly awaited roll-out of vaccines. I for one, do hope that the enormous trajectory of learning we have undergone, as well as the resilience we have shown, will, in fact, endure.

I wish you all a beautiful year ahead. May it be filled with the positive change that matters to you and your loved ones, and may it be animated by the creativity and talent of our global family.

Health & Peace!

Mariana

Mariana Amatullo, PhD

President, Cumulus

Vice Provost for Global Strategic Initiatives, The New School