



TENNESSEE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Spring 2015

Newsletter

Vol. 36, Issue 2



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Cover photo: Spring is finally here!

Message from the President

Spring 2015

TNTESOL Members:

I want to start by thanking you all for giving me the opportunity to serve as your president. I am very honored!

What a great time we had at the 2015 TNTESOL Annual Meeting and Conference in Kingsport. It is always a wonderful experience to reconnect with friends and colleagues. A big thank you goes to Tammy Hutchinson-Harosky and her planning team for organizing such a fantastic conference. The presentations and invited speakers were top-notch, and the Friday Night Event at Bristol Motor Speedway was terrific! With 300 members in attendance at this beautiful East TN location, we will surely treasure memories of this successful conference.

I would also like to welcome our new members-at-large: Dana Payne, Barbara Finney, and Angela Rood. Angela was re-elected for a new term, and will continue her outstanding work as Teacher of the Year Committee Chair. I also want to welcome back Christine Tennyson. She had previously served as member-at-large, and this time she will be serving as our Second Vice-President and Conference Chair. Christine and her Rutherford County Schools' team are already busy planning our 2016 Annual Meeting and Conference in Murfreesboro.

Some other members rotated off the board this year. I want to thank Lee Ann Kelly, our Past President, for providing leadership to our organization last year, and also to Becky Young and Nina Morel, for their service and commitment during their 3-year term as members-at-large. This past year Becky put a lot of work into the establishment of the Edie Barry Scholarship, and she will continue assisting us this year, too.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to congratulate Debbie Vaughn on a well-deserved retirement. Debbie has served on our board for many years and has been involved in several committees as well. For the past years, she had been doing an amazing job representing our affiliate at the TESOL Summer Advocacy Summit. We hope she enjoys redirecting her energies into her other special interests as she starts this new stage in her life.

On another note, we have created a Social Media Committee, with Dr. Abasi McKinzie as Committee Chair, to help us in promoting our events, scholarships and programs. Please join our Facebook group and follow us on Twitter so you are informed of the latest TNTESOL news. I encourage you to help us promote our organization to the fullest at your workplace. Also, I challenge you to send in newsletter and journal submissions. During the TESOL International Convention, affiliates had the opportunity to

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Communication



Linked In — Search for and join Tennessee Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TNTESOL).

TennesseeESL@Yahoogroups.com — moderator Deborah Sams



Facebook has a private TNTESOL group with closed membership. If you would like to join, please contact the TNTESOL webmaster.

Follow TNTESOL on Twitter



Advocacy Day — Do you know of issues that need to be brought to the attention of political leaders? The TNTESOL Advocacy Representative, Byron Booker will listen and bring your concerns to Washington. Contact him at parliamentarian@tntesol.org



Conference Memories:

Participants were greeted for every meal.

TNTESOL is an active and vital organization and we encourage and promote all TESOL professionals. If you know someone who would be interested, please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you.

The **TNTESOL Newsletter** is published three times a year. Submissions are accepted on a variety of topics. We welcome book reviews, issues in the fields of K-12, Refugee ESL, Adult Ed, Higher Ed and more, as well as articles on teaching strategies, news related to TNTESOL or the field, jokes, classroom anecdotes, even recipes.

The style for submissions can be informal and articles are typically 500-1000 words. Of course, exceptions can be made! A bibliography is not necessary unless the article is research-based.

Send your ideas via **email attachment** along with your personal information by the issue deadline to:

Andrea Bontempi, Newsletter Editor
newsletter@tntesol.org

<u>Deadlines</u>	<u>Issue</u>
August 1, 2015	Summer/Fall 2015
December 1, 2015	Winter 2016
April 1, 2016	Spring 2016

TNTESOL Newsletter
c/o ESL Instructional Facilitator
Instruction Department,
Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Blvd.,
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

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showcase their publications, and I can attest that our TNTESOL publications were amongst the finest in terms of quality and content. Thank you to Dr. Johnna Paraiso, Journal Editor, and Andrea Bontempi, Newsletter Editor, for the fantastic job they both do!

Now please mark your calendars and get your proposals ready!

2015 SETESOL Regional Conference will be held in New Orleans, LA, October 22-24, at the Riverside Hilton. For questions concerning this conference, please visit the host site: <http://latesol.org/setesol2015/>

2016 TNTESOL Annual Meeting and Conference will be held in Murfreesboro, TN, March 15-17, 2016. Information will be posted on our website soon. <http://tntesol.org/Conferences>

2016 TESOL International Convention will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, April 5-8, 2016 at the Baltimore Convention Center. The Call for Proposals is already available at <http://www.tesol.org>

Cary Wright
TNTESOL President
Clarksville-Montgomery County Schools



WEBSITE FOR MEMBERS ONLY

TN-WIDA STANDARDS AND RESOURCES

TNTESOL strives to continue its effort to disseminate information, to strengthen instruction in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, and to support local, state, and national initiatives through its website. In this section we provide our membership with a forum where ESL professionals can share similar concerns about the WIDA Standards, WIDA-MODEL, WIDA ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

The feature we are most excited about is the forum dedicated to lesson plan sharing. Our members can upload and download, free of charge, lesson plans incorporating the WIDA Standards framework.

Create a topic or contribute to these discussions:

[Q&A Forums](#); [Lesson Plans: Primary](#), [Secondary](#); [Resource Links](#)

Help us populate this page with your contributions! Everyone benefits with the exchange of lesson plans and when sharing ideas and concerns.

A Message from the State

Dear Fellow TNTESOLers,

Happy spring! I appreciate all of your diligence in getting through more than two weeks of snow during our WIDA ACCESS assessment window. As always, I am awed by ESL educators in Tennessee. Thank you for helping us move forward with our new assessment.

Accolades to Tammy Harosky and her team for pulling together a wonderful TNTESOL Conference at the Meadowview Conference Center in lovely Kingsport, TN. The sessions were informative and encouraging and the trip to the Bristol Speedway was a once in a lifetime experience. Never did I think I'd be drag racing with a bus full of TNTESOLers on a national drag strip! Hats off to those brave few who drove all the way from Memphis to Kingsport when flights were expected to be canceled. That is dedication! We had a wonderful conference with more than 300 in attendance.

Some of the most exciting news disseminated was from Joseph Winery on the new website for TN's ESL teachers. Joseph has created a form that allows teachers to use drop down boxes to do lesson planning using the WIDA standards. This is posted in the members section of the www.tntesol.org website. The possibilities of sharing between teachers have grown exponentially with this tool. If you have not seen it yet, please visit the website.

As usual, the Tennessee Department of Education kicked off the conference on the first day. In spite of the icy and snowy roads, we had close to 200 in attendance by the close of the day. We heard remarks from Suzanne Keefe regarding the focus of the department for English Learners (ELs). Elizabeth Taylor, department Civil Rights attorney, presented a very well received portion of the program that highlighted the new guidance related to EL's from the U.S. Department of Education. I presented on the new focuses for English Learners and the process that will be followed for setting new Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). Joann Lucero helped me during a long question and answer period. RTI² and ESL programs are working to coordinate services in a meaningful way for all ELs. During concurrent sessions, Joann and I presented on RTI² and ESL services. I presented to pre-service teachers from local universities in the area regarding requirements and best practices and to a general audience on differentiation for English Learners.

By now administrators are in the process of filling in the Consolidated Application on ePlan for federal funds. If there are questions about narratives, please send them to me at Jan.Lanier@tn.gov, and I will be happy to pre-approve or help you with revisions before the first submission of this application. Please include details related to supplies

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and materials to guarantee no supplanting. Title III funds can be supplanted by local, state or other federal funds.

The process for setting new AMAOs begins with a crosswalk study by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) when our testing data is returned. The AMAOs will be set through a research process at the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research (WCER) in collaboration with the TDOE and CAL. This process will help us have more reasonable goals for districts and students.

You will soon be closing up the schools for the summer. Enjoy the time away and refresh for the most exciting ESL year ever in Tennessee.

Jan

Jan Lanier
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Conference Memories: State Day



Save the Date



Go for the Goal:
Empowering
Teachers and Students

SETESOL

2015 Regional
Conference



Thursday-Saturday,
October 22-24, 2015
Riverside Hilton
New Orleans, LA

SETESOL 2015

This year LaTESOL will be hosting the regional SETESOL Conference in October 2015. With the influx of English Language Learners, start off the school year right with like-minded individuals from eleven-states and teaching resources. Registration is now open, so take advantage of the Early Bird prices.

Make sure to also check out the add-on event, ***Dream Day***. It is aimed for all ELL stakeholders (mainstream teachers, administrations, counselors, social workers, ELL teachers, etc.) and will provide them with information about how to drive ELL success. Strands will be: Culture Matters, Administrators Can Make a Difference, Innovative Improvement, Advocating for our Students and Success in the Classroom.

Where: Riverside Hilton, New Orleans

When: Thursday October 22, 2015-Saturday October 24, 2015

Conference Plenary: Suresh Canagarajah
Thursday October 22, 2015

Areas of Specialization: Rhetoric and Composition; World Englishes; Multilingual writing; Post-colonial studies

Featured Speaker: Carol Reed

Friday October 23, 2015

Specialist in primary English language teaching, Award-winning author, teacher trainer and educational consultant.

Featured Speaker: Donald Freeman

Saturday October 24, 2015

Director of Teacher Education and Associate Professor of Education at the School of Education, University of Michigan.

<http://latesol.org/setesol2015/>

Gundi Ressin Memorial Scholarship Recipient

Border Reflections: Reconnecting with the Experiences of My Immigrant Students

Elizabeth Corbett
Lenoir City

As a recent recipient of a Gundi Ressin Scholarship, I participated in a co-led Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice/BorderLinks trip to Tucson to learn about immigration issues.

I have been a high school ESL teacher in Lenoir City for the last ten years, and we usually have three or four new students each year. In August 2014, I welcomed fifteen new students, mostly from Guatemala, and most of them crossed the border unaccompanied and made it to Lenoir City because of family members already here. Of my students who have been here more than these few months, about half of them are undocumented and entered the United States through Texas and by crossing the Rio Grande. It is with this personal connection to my students that I decided to participate in this trip; I wanted to learn about the experiences my students had before reaching Lenoir City so I could understand them better.

BorderLinks arranged for three full days of activities for trip participants, and each day gave me new realities and things to think about. The first day we observed a process called Operation Streamline at the Tucson Courthouse. We walked into the courtroom and sat to the right. Over to the left were about sixty immigrants. I looked at them and saw my students' brothers, fathers, grandfathers, and uncles (there were only three women in the group). They smelled of hard travel and worry; their faces were dirty and their clothes unkempt. About seven at a time, they were called to stand in front of the judge and to plead guilty to the charge of entering the United States unlawfully. They were sentenced to between 30 and 180 days (depending on whether this was the first time they were before a judge). But the shackles were the most upsetting to me; bound at the wrists and ankles, these men were dehumanized and processed in a way that we do not foist onto any other group of "criminals." About a third of my students report that they have family members who have been deported, and I think about the motives to be here in the United States: the simple desires to provide for one's family and to be with one's family.



The second day we traveled to Nogales, Sonora, and helped serve breakfast at a *comedor* (restaurant) that serves only deportees. Run by the Catholic Church, the *comedor* provides two meals a day to people who are returned to Mexico. A "bouncer" stands at the door; this person checks that only people with deportation papers enter because the drug traffickers have become a huge problem. In the past, drug traffickers have entered the dining room and threatened deportees with knives because they want deportees to carry drugs across the border. I also learned a rather sad fact: DHS (Department of Homeland

Security) gives deportees a cashier's check for any dollars they had upon capture. The cashier's check is in US dollars, and (irony of ironies), the only place for deportees to cash it is back in the US! I did have the opportunity to speak with several deportees (I speak Spanish) and most are resolute in their determination to try to cross the border again. Again, most of the population in the *comedor* that morning were men. They travelled with few belongings: a backpack, a plastic *Walmart* bag, a hat, an extra

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pair of shoes. The men I spoke with were mostly from the Chiapas area of Mexico, and they told stories of not being able to provide for their families. They had sold most of their belongings to try to get food. They also spoke of the violence from drug lords and the fear of living with the constant presence of drug traffickers. I thought constantly of my students and the conditions that forced them to leave their homeland. The decision to cross the border is fraught with tension and anxiety, but I cannot deny the problems that push my students and their families out of their countries and to the hope that the United States holds.

On the third day we met a woman who works with the Samaritans, a group that goes out into the desert surrounding Tucson and provides water and first aid. She showed us some of the artifacts she has collected from the desert: shoes, clothing, tortilla cloths, necklaces and key chains with images of the *Virgen de Guadalupe*, and water bottles. Also among the artifacts were all sorts of parcels and riggings to carry drugs, mostly things to carry marijuana blocks. She spoke of how ruthless the drug lords were in finding people to carry for them and the tactics they use to get their drugs across the border. We also spent about thirty minutes on a walk in the desert, and I did see backpacks, sneakers, water bottles, and jackets that had all been discarded by immigrants. These things I saw were weather beaten and not recently left behind, but testimony, nevertheless, of people traveling through the land. I could have spent another hour or so in the desert, imagining my students moving among the cacti and the unforgiving heat, being chased by Border Patrol and abandoning their backpacks, and keeping the idea of hope alive in their minds. I told my students about my trip before I left, and one of them said to me that I should feel the sand. "Touch the sand," he told me, "touch the sand and look for my red bag." It takes a good five or six days to travel from Nogales, Mexico, to Tucson, and I am sure the sand is a constant companion.

"Touch the sand," he told me, "touch the sand and look for my red bag."

I'm stuck now on how to be the teacher that my students need. Going back to one of my principal reasons for going on this trip, I ask myself, *What do I now understand about what so many of my students experienced before landing in my classroom?* In no way did I experience the whole gamut of "crossing the border" that they did, but this trip forced me to open my heart again and put myself in their shoes. I want to go back to feeling more and empathizing more. As a teacher, I feel frustrated with being a part of the machine and educational institution that doesn't serve my immigrant students in the way they need. I understand the need for standards and goals, but to have my students go through the required tests (EOC's, writing tests, etc.) and to be subject to the same graduation requirements is absurd. I know among my students that a small group has enough schooling in their home country, enough drive to learn enough English in three or four years, and the fortune of being documented, and I do not want to deny them any chance of further schooling and the American Dream. But for the majority of my students, the reality of taking chemistry and passing the Algebra II EOC is not what is best for them. I need the courage now to focus on their complicated past and create a present that meets their needs.

I am really thankful for the support the Gundi-Ressin Scholarship gave me. If you are interested in learning more about the Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice and their trips, see <http://uucsj.org/>. If you want more information about BorderLinks, see <http://www.borderlinks.org/>.

I thought constantly of my students and the conditions that forced them to leave their homeland.

English Learners Participate in the Political Process

Tuition Equality Day

Lori Foutch
Rutherford County Schools

Tuition Equality Day was held on March 25, 2015 at the state capitol. The day was an opportunity for students, teachers, and other members of the community to rally around the idea that legal status should not prevent a student from achieving the dream of higher education in Tennessee. Unfortunately, the fact remains that in Tennessee undocumented high school graduates will pay almost three times the price of tuition for college. For most immigrant families, that makes college a goal that is nearly unreachable.

Thankfully, progress is slowly being made with the introduction of a bill from Sen. Gardenhire (R) of Chattanooga and Rep. White (R) of Memphis. This bill proposes that undocumented students who have lived in Tennessee for three years and have a GPA of 3.0 would be able to attend institutions of higher learning at an in-state tuition rate. If this bill becomes law, the possibility of college for undocumented learners becomes possible.

Ten bright students from Smyrna High School in Rutherford County had the opportunity to be part of Tuition Equality Day. After attending an informational meeting and training session with Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, the students climbed the steps of the Capitol and met with legislators to discuss the bill. Each student had prepared to tell the legislators their personal story and how the passage of the bill would impact their futures. They spoke with eloquence and passion as they engaged with lawmakers. The lawmakers listened and asked questions ranging from immigration issues to prospective college majors, and the students responded beautifully.

As a teacher, my hope is to inspire my students to actively, relentlessly pursue their futures. On this day, it was an absolute joy to watch them engage in the political process and to see them realize that they don't have to be passive as the future unfolds around them. Please, contact your local representatives and encourage them to vote "yes" on SB 612/HB 675.

Editor's Note: The bill passed in the Senate but missed passing in the House by one vote. On hearing the news, the students, teachers and community were devastated but not defeated. They remain hopeful that the bill will be revisited and pass in the future.



TNTESOL Annual Conference Awards



Congratulations!

Travel Grant Winners

(Left to Right)

Christine Tennyson — Building Language Capacity for Writing Through Modeling and Mentor Texts (Overall Winner)

Rachel Patterson and Jennifer Tenace — Teaching the Four Language Skills Through Debate

Andrea Bontempi — Who Me? Give an In-Service Training to General Education Teachers?



Charles Gillon Professional Service Award

Ken Oster

Presented by
Tammy Harosky,
Conference Chair

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TNTESOL 2015 Teacher of the Year



Margaret Yoder has been teaching ESL students in California and Tennessee public schools for 17 years. She has been the ESL Peer Coach for Shelby County Schools for three years and is a PhD student at the University of Memphis, focusing on a PhD in Applied Linguistics/ESL. She is a frequent presenter at the TNTESOL and TXTESOL conferences and Shelby County schools professional development sessions. She enjoys supporting adult ESL literacy and supporting ESL pedagogical practices by mentoring new teachers and assisting veteran ESL teachers in honing their craft. In her free time she enjoys scuba diving, reading, gardening, and tending her flock of chickens.

TNTESOL Teachers of the Year

(Left to Right)

Eastern Region—Betty Thomason

Central Region (Overall Winner)—
Claudia Thorndike

Western Region—Margaret Yoder



Claudia Thorndike would like to thank TNTESOL for this recognition: “I would like to thank TNTESOL for this recognition. I feel so honored and humbled to receive this award. There are many great teachers out there—many on my own WCS ESL team—and I feel they ALL deserve to be recognized. I was honored to be nominated by my teammates, all colleagues and friends for whom I have so much respect.

I am proud of the ESL field. It is full of creative and intelligent teachers who love their students and work hard to help them learn English. It is not always an easy job, but it is always incredibly rewarding. It’s the best job I’ve ever had!”

Claudia has been teaching English as a Second Language for about 18 years. This is her 14th year with Williamson County. She has taught K-12, has been itinerant (traveling between 2 – 6 schools), and has worked at about 11 of the Williamson County schools. Ms. Thorndike began teaching ESL in Wisconsin, where she worked in the Even Start Family Literacy program in Sheboygan. The majority of her families there were Hmong refugees.

Claudia’s priority has always been her students. She thinks her students are wonderful and they make her smile every day. Other accomplishments she is proud of include doing presentations at local, regional, and national conferences, publishing a chapter on *authenticity in the classroom* in the TESOL book series, working with colleagues on standards and curriculum development for WCS, developing and/or participating in international celebration events at three different schools, and working with classroom teachers to improve collaboration that benefits students.

Ms. Thorndike is thankful for her ESL team, her supervisor, her principals, Williamson County Schools for their support, and for them entrusting her with the privilege of teaching ESL in WCS. She is also thankful to WCS for supporting and believing in our international students. “These students are beautiful, hard working, thankful, and full of hope. They are the reason we all do what we do.”

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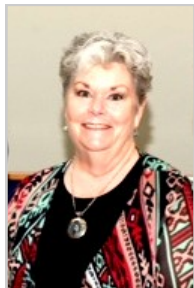
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Betty Thomason has taught ESL for over 18 years. She began teaching ESL at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College where she taught adult learners. In 1999 she moved to Maryville, TN, and began teaching K-12 ESL for Maryville College. While at Maryville College, she wrote a grant to fund adult language classes and helped organize and teach the classes. She also taught ESL classes to international students at Maryville College and wrote "Best Practices" for the TNTESOL magazine. She has mentored several student teachers from Maryville College and the University of Tennessee, presented on first and second language acquisition at Foreign Language Teachers Association classes at Maryville High School, presented on teaching high school ESL students at Blount County Literacy Day, and presented on teaching kindergarten, cognitive learning strategies, close reading, independent reading, and text complexity at TNTESOL. She has presented on effective math strategies for ELLs at Tennessee Mathematics Teachers Association and worked on TCAP item review committees for four years. In 2010, Betty joined the faculty at Maryville City Schools where she is currently teaching ESL at Maryville Junior High School and Maryville High School. She has co-written two grants for her school district for substantial monetary funds. In 2010, Betty helped organize a district-wide fundraiser to benefit the victims of the Japanese tsunami and has helped organize and teach summer school programs for her school district. Betty earned a B. S. from the University of Tennessee in elementary education, a B. A. from the University of Tennessee in political science, an M. A. from Tennessee State University in educational leadership, and Ed.S. from Tennessee Technological University in educational leadership and is currently working on a doctorate at the University of Tennessee in ESL. She is highly qualified to teach ESL, K-12; grades 1-8; English 9-12; U.S. history, government, and political science. Betty has a daughter, Katie, who is an attorney; a son, Alex, who is a law student at UT; and a son, Michael, who is an engineering student at UT. She is a member of TNTESOL, Phi Beta Kappa, and Alpha Delta Kappa, a teacher's sorority.

Presidential Award

Debbie Vaughn



Dear Friends,

Please accept my deep gratitude for the President's Award and the beautiful plaque. Receiving the President's Award caps a time where I gained warm friends and professional growth. I don't know what I will do in retirement (it has something to do with a fishing pole, I think!), but I will carry you all in my heart.

Debbie

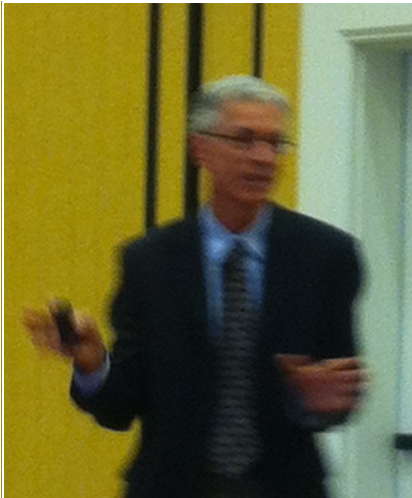
Election Results

Members at Large:

Barbara Finney
Dana Payne
Angela Rood



Conference Memories



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Crossing Borders...Building Bridges: From Tennessee to Canada

Cary Wright
TNTESOL President

I had the privilege to represent our affiliate at the TESOL 2015 International Convention and English Language Expo held March 24-28 at the Metro Toronto Convention Center in Ontario, Canada. This was the first time TESOL International had crossed the U.S. border to host its largest annual event. International ideas and innovations from over 6,500 attendees fused in a city characterized by 140 different languages, where more than half of their residents were born outside of Canada.

The conference scheduled was packed with daily offerings, for educators at all levels to choose from: Pre- and Postconvention Institutes, K-12 Dream Day, Adult Ed Day, Interest Section Meetings and Assembly, Affiliate Workshop and Luncheon, Keynote Speakers, Concurrent and Poster Presentations, TESOL Annual Business Meeting, Educational Site Visits, Electronic Village, English Language Expo, and Job Marketplace. Another highlight from the convention was having the honor of representing TNTESOL at the Affiliate Booth, with the showcasing of our publications, events, and promotional merchandise. Networking with other affiliate representatives was such a rewarding experience.

In addition, one of our very own TNTESOL members was recognized during the Affiliate Business Meeting. Dr. Teresa Dalle presented the TESOL Virginia French Allen Award for Scholarship and Service to Michelle Sluder, for the positive impact her work continues to have in the ESL community from the Memphis area. Congratulations!

If you have never attended the International Convention, I encourage you to mark your calendar for next year. Maryland TESOL will be hosting the 2016 TESOL International Convention during April 5-8, 2016. With the theme "Reflecting Forward", along with celebrations associated with TESOL's 50th Anniversary, this promises to be an event not to be missed. The deadline for submitting proposals is June 1, 2015. All proposals must be submitted online through the TESOL Convention website.



Cary Wright, Michelle Sluder, and Dr. Teresa Dalle

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Cary Wright in the TNTESOL Affiliate Booth



TESOL Affiliate Luncheon (left to right): Cary Wright, TNTESOL President; Vivian Maysonet Rivera, Puerto Rico TESOL President; and Andy Curtis, TESOL International Association President-Elect

TESOL 2015
 International Convention
 & English Language Expo
 25-28 MARCH 2015 • TORONTO, CANADA



LATESOL President, TNTESOL President and 2015 SETESOL Conference Chair



Canada, eh?

Jennifer Meyer
Bedford County Schools

About a year ago, I decided to submit a proposal to present at International TESOL. The submission process is very well explained on the TESOL website, and they provide a rubric to guide you in the development of your ideas into a presentation. I used this rubric to write my proposal; and it was pretty good, I thought. I like to plan ahead and the conference this year was in Toronto. I was getting nervous by October and wanted to start making plans. It was the end of November before I got the bad news. My proposal had not been accepted. The email was very polite and positive, but a rejection letter is still a rejection letter. They did, however, give some excellent feedback on the reasons my proposal was not selected. I really appreciated this because it will help me improve any future proposals, and it showed me exactly the standard of excellence that presenting at an international conference requires.

I was very disappointed and just wanted a chance to improve my proposal and resubmit it, but the deadline was long gone. Luckily, around the beginning of December, a new call for proposals was issued. This time, TESOL was looking for presenters to speak on technology topics. I submitted several proposals. Finally, at the end of January, the good news arrived! One of my proposals had been accepted. I was going to be presenting a session in the Classroom of the Future at International TESOL! I felt so



honored and humbled to have my presentation selected. I am glad I persevered and tried again, using the suggestions from my first failed attempt to improve my proposal.

The trip to Toronto was an exciting one. While everyone in Tennessee was already celebrating spring, Harriet Strahlman, from Cumberland County, and I got stuck in a blizzard in Ohio and experienced piles of left over snow and a frozen Lake Ontario in Toronto.



Continued on page 19

Continued from page 18

Another thing about Canada that we weren't expecting, even though each of us is a seasoned international traveler, is that Canada is, indeed, a foreign country. The thought of needing to add an international calling and data plan to our cell phones didn't cross our minds. And while we were told we didn't need to change money because US dollars were accepted everywhere, no one mentioned that some places used a 1-1 exchange rate, instead of the official exchange rate, so a visit to a bank was also one of the first things on our list after arriving in Toronto.



The TESOL conference was a little overwhelming. With over 6000 attendees, it was amazing to be among so many ESL professionals from all over the world. My presentation was in the exposition hall where all the vendors were set up. As always, technology was challenging, even in the Classroom of the Future, where no Wi-Fi was available, so a last minute change to my presentation that didn't require audience participation with their mobile devices was necessary. The TESOL organizing committee and the Convention Center staff provided excellent tech support, including a technician dedicated to the presentation venue, who helped me with everything, including advancing my PowerPoint slides. My presentation was very successful, in spite of the last minute changes; and I am glad to be able to add this to my growing list of professional development experiences in the field of teaching ESL.

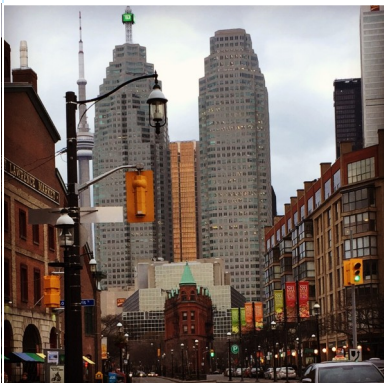


I can encourage everyone to have confidence and submit a proposal to present at TESOL 2016 in Baltimore. Go to www.tesol.org and download the Call for Participation for the 2016 conference in Baltimore. There you will find the rubric I mentioned earlier and all other things necessary to submit your proposal. You can choose from 8 different types of presentation formats and your proposal must contain the following criteria:

- Currency, importance, and appropriateness of topic to the field
- Purpose, participant outcomes, and session type
- Theory, practice, and/or research basis
- Support for practices, conclusions, and/or recommendations
- Clarity of proposal as indicator of presentation quality



The deadline for submission is June 1, 2015, so get your proposals in before you break for summer. If you have any questions about choosing a topic, writing the proposal or the process in general, feel free to contact me at: meyerj@bedfordk12tn.net.



ACCESS for ELLs Score Report Webinar

The first administration of ACCESS for ELLs has successfully concluded for the 2014-15 school year. We appreciate your patience and hard work in the face of challenging weather and overlapping test schedules. We have taken preventative measures to avoid such challenges during the 2015-16 school year. Additional information regarding ACCESS 2.0 for the 2015-16 school year is forthcoming.

The purpose of this communication is to inform you of a webinar which will identify the purposes and key features of ACCESS for ELLs score reports and explain how the scores connect to the English Language Development Framework. The webinar will include a resource packet available to download and print. An Interpretive Guide for Score Reports is also available for download as an additional resource.

The webinar is located at <https://www.wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx> under State/District Webinars > Tennessee Webinars. Educators will need to use their ACCESS training course log in to view the webinar.

For additional questions, please contact **Lori Nixon**, Special Populations Assessment Design, Division of Curriculum and Instruction at Lori.Nixon@tn.gov.

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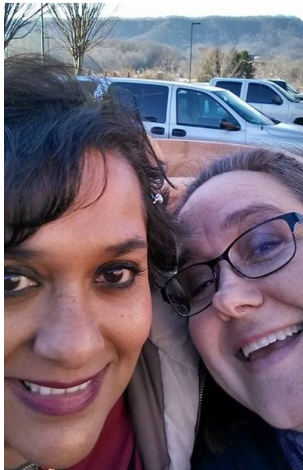
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Attention All Tweeters

We would like to invite you to come out and Chat with us Monday evenings at 7pm CST. Abasi McKinzie (@mckah01) and Christine Tennyson (@CBTennyson) moderate our new #tntesolchat

If you have not chatted on Twitter before or are not on Twitter, now is the perfect time to start. We are all learning how to create our own forum for learning and support. Just follow the hashtag #tntesolchat on Monday nights and you can gain new insight into teaching ELs. We are open to suggestions for topics. Email abasi.mck@gmail.com or smsteach12@gmail.com with suggestions. We will be sending out a “How to Chat on Twitter” email soon so if you are not sure, you can learn about using Twitter to engage in professional communities. Hope to see you next Monday.

Call for Papers

The Editorial Board of the **TNTESOL Journal** seeks articles of general interest on any aspect of the teaching of English as a second or foreign language in elementary, middle, high school, college/university, or adult/immigrant education. The topics can be varied and wide-ranging.

The submission deadline for the annual Journal is June 1st.

*Please see www.tntesol.org and click on the publications tab for the **Journal Submission Guidelines**.*



The Editor of the **TNTESOL Newsletter** requests your articles, anecdotes, book reviews, photos, etc. for inclusion in the next issue of this newsletter.

Send your attachment in an email to newsletter@tntesol.org

The next deadline for submission is August 1, 2015.

*Please see www.tntesol.org and click on the publications tab for the **Newsletter Submission Guidelines**.*



2016 Conference Host: Rutherford County Schools
 (Left to right): Dr. Johnna Paraiso, Sunita Watson,
 DeAnna Osborne, Sherri Dowdy,
 Dr. Christine Tennyson (Chair), and Andrea Bontempi



TNTESOL 2015 Memories

