

**Spring 2023**

# MIDTESOL Matters

*The Mid-America  
TESOL Affiliate  
Newsletter*



## Inside This Issue

pages 3-4

*Letter from the President, VP*

---

pages 8-11

*MIDTESOL 2023 Conference  
and Student Contests*

---

page 12

*TESOL Advocacy Summit  
Travel Award*

---

page 14

*MIDTESOL Interest Section  
Spotlight*

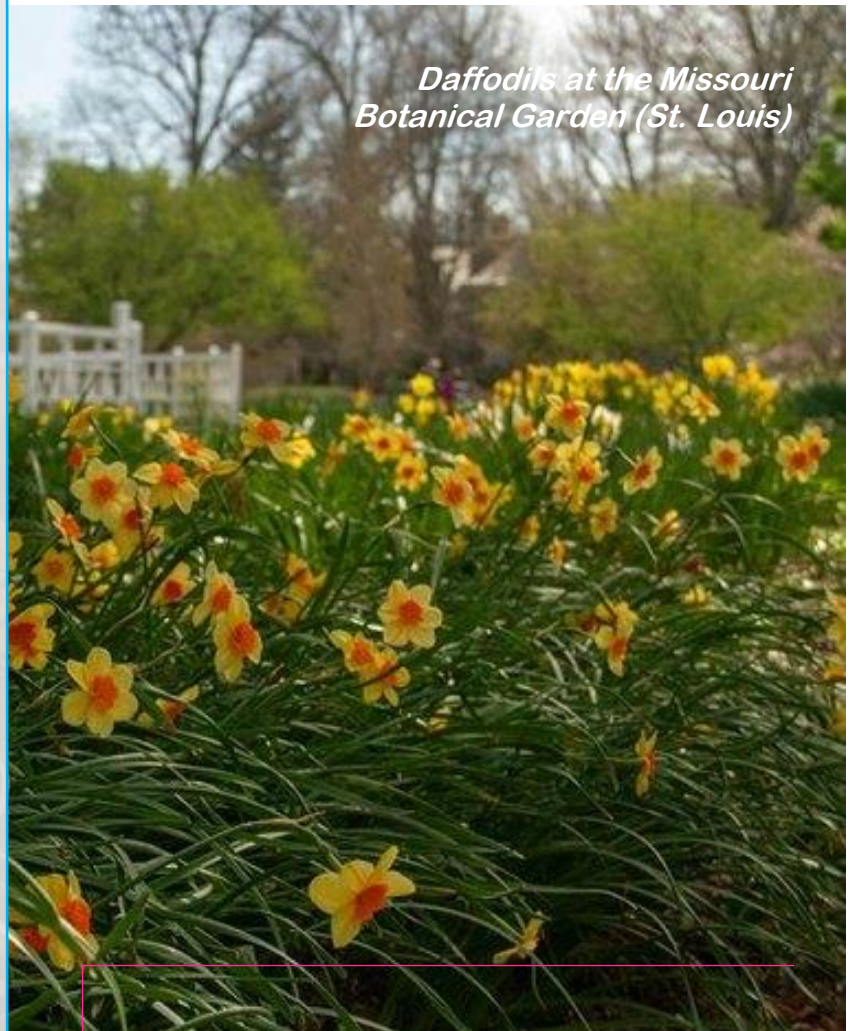
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page 25

*MIDTESOL Social Gathering  
at TESOL 2023*

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*Daffodils at the Missouri  
Botanical Garden (St. Louis)*



A note on this year's conference lead-up and how your students can participate:  
**"We will be having two contests this year- an essay contest and an art contest. We hope that this will help give many of you an opportunity to have your students' talents be displayed and stories shared."**  
*(See pages 9-11. Prizes!)*

Ben Vilkas  
MIDTESOL 2023  
Conference Chair



# MIDTESOL Matters

## Table of Contents

A Letter from the President .....	3
A Letter from the Vice President .....	4
Call for Open Communications Positions.....	7
MIDTESOL 2023 Conference Information .....	8
MIDTESOL 2023 Contests for English Learners.....	9
MIDTESOL Member Benefit: TESOL 2022 Advocacy Summit Travel Awards.....	12
Spotlight on MIDTESOL Interest Sections.....	14
MIDTESOL State Report: Iowa.....	22
MIDTESOL Social Gathering at TESOL 2023.....	25
About Our Organization .....	26

### Follow Us!



**MIDTESOL on Twitter:** Follow us [Twitter.com/MIDTESOL](https://twitter.com/MIDTESOL)



**MIDTESOL on Facebook:** Like us [Facebook.com/MIDTESOL](https://facebook.com/MIDTESOL)



**MIDTESOL on Instagram:** Like us [Instagram.com/MIDTESOL](https://instagram.com/MIDTESOL)

## A Letter from the President

**Zach Smith**  
**MIDTESOL President**  
*Des Moines School District*  
*Des Moines, Iowa*



My dear colleagues,

Hello, everyone! For those whom I have not had the pleasure of meeting before in person, my name is Zachary Smith and I am the MIDTESOL president. Here is a quick update of what we have been working on since the current board assumed our positions.

First, congratulations to the 2022 MIDTESOL Conference Committee for another successful conference. It was so nice being back in person and seeing friends and colleagues face-to-face. Although it was so wonderful being back to in-person conferences it is clear that much has changed within our professional roles. Between budget cuts, change in PD funding policies, changing job responsibilities, etc. it is clear that as we continue moving past this pandemic we are still trying to figure out what is our new “normal” moving forward.

The same is true for MIDTESOL. We have heard from membership that there is significant value in face-to-face learning and that there is an overwhelming majority that prefer face-to-face conferences compared to virtual conferences. However, many are experiencing significant cuts and tightened restrictions on funding and attending PD opportunities. Given this, the board has worked diligently and tirelessly to come up with options that work for all involved.

Since our 2022 conference, we have begun working on planning the locations of the 2024 and 2025 conferences. We have looked at every possibility thinkable from universities to zoos to conference centers. I am excited to say that after seeking out, speaking with and visiting over 37 conference venues in four different cities, we have narrowed it down to our top choices. Each of these choices allows for our conference attendees to have the same high-caliber, educational experience as previous conferences but at a reduced price as years past. We are confident that you will be pleased with the venues that will ultimately be chosen.

In the coming days, there will be a survey sent to membership. The survey results will help the board in solidifying the final decision on venues for the 2024 and 2025 conferences. We greatly appreciate you taking the time to complete this short survey when it comes out.

In the meantime, please make sure that you have marked October 13 and 14th on your calendar, as we look forward to seeing you at MIDTESOL 2023 in Kansas City. This conference, I am confident, will be our best yet.

Thank you for all that you are doing! It is an honor serving as the MIDTESOL President.

*Zachary Smith*  
*MIDTESOL President (2023)*



**Deany Goode**  
**MIDTESOL Vice President**  
Instructor, Intensive  
English Program  
Metropolitan Community College  
Kansas City, Missouri

## A Message from the Vice President

Dear MIDTESOL Readership,

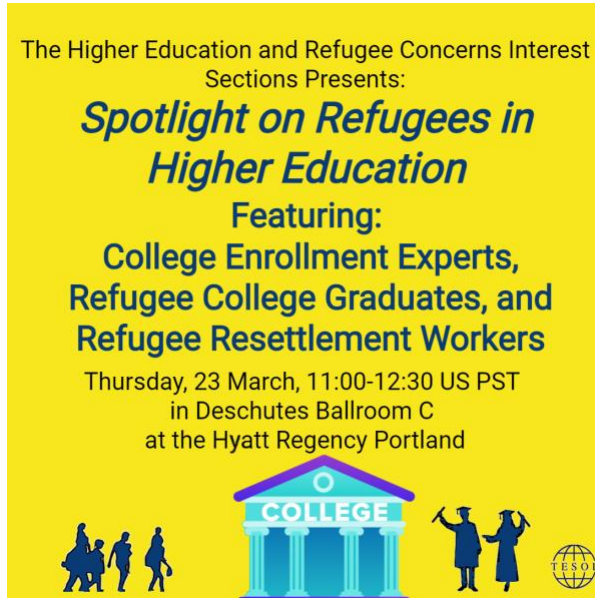
Hello! My name is Deany Goode and I'm your new Vice President! Let me tell you a little about myself. I have been teaching English for Academic Purposes for 14 years. It's my favorite thing to do. I have had many side hustles but ESL remains my favorite vocation. I have taught at various institutions, but I prefer urban community colleges because serving my community is important to me. It's also my love language, so I'm so happy to be here serving you.

I have been serving in TESOL International leadership for 2 years and am looking forward to focusing on serving those closer to home in MIDTESOL. I know many of us are frustrated with our administration and how ESL programs are treated as a whole. Some feel powerless to create change. Dear colleagues have left our profession for better pay and stability. Enrollment is low. It is that frustration that led me to pursue leadership.

While attending a leadership seminar, I expressed my feelings of powerlessness to the attendees, and a person named Zach responded, "Lead from where you are," and that was the butterfly that flapped its wings and caused the hurricane before you.

As a result, I have done radical acts such as volunteering, without permission, to help my student coordinator by making phone calls to students and setting up appointments for enrollment. Having shown the need for this, my division chair now sends the department administrative assistant to do this, because she can be paid to do it. When I occasionally volunteer with Jewish Vocational Services to help refugees, I wear a t-shirt I had custom-made with my student coordinator's phone number while I volunteer and leave her business cards. I'm a former ballroom and I love to go dancing. When I go salsa dancing, I know that there will be many people who don't speak English and I leave a stack of my student coordinators cards in the club. The result has led to full classes and jobs for my colleagues who remain.

I am also happy to be supporting and advocating for my students in this role. My students are a beautiful blend of refugees, and immigrants, with a pinch of international students. It is my honor to prepare them for success in higher education and make their dreams accessible. As a survivor of homelessness and abuse, I am particularly passionate about immigrants and refugees. In fact, I'm so passionate about it that as co-chair of the TESOL Higher Education Interest Section (HEIS), I have organized an intersection panel with Refugee Concerns Interest Section entitled *Spotlight on Refugees in Higher Education*. Consider yourself invited to attend if you will be at TESOL in Portland.



In addition, I am an ally, and I will also be part of the HEIS and Social Responsibility Interest Section panel.



As you can see, I believe in using my position of leadership and privilege to highlight and help others to rise up.

Finally, because I teach adults who have experienced trauma, I also have a special interest in incorporating Socio-Emotional Learning in adult classrooms. I believe that music and movement are medicine. I begin all of my classes with dancing because exercise and especially the act of spinning reduce stress and anxiety in the frontal lobe lowering the affective filter so students can learn. I also create parodies about grammar because music sticks in the brain longer than talking. I study neurology so I can better facilitate learning.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about me. I will also be hosting the MIDTESOL social event at TESOL especially for MIDTESOL members and to recruit more members, so please join me in supporting this local Ethiopian restaurant owned and operated by ELLs, eat, drink, be merry, network and bring a friend or colleague who is not a member but should be.



**MIDTESOL DINNER @ TESOL**  
Hosted by Vice President Deany Goode  
**Queen of Sheba  
Ethiopian Bar & Restaurant**  
2413 NE Martin Luther King  
Jr Blvd, Portland, OR 97208  
Do you teach in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, or  
Nebraska? Are you passionate about professional  
development? Do you want more?  
22-minute walk east from the convention  
center  
14 minute bus ride (bus 6, runs every 15  
minutes)  
5 minutes by car (Uber, Lyft)



Sincerely yours,

*Deany Goode*  
*MIDTESOL Vice President (2023)*



**TESOL 2023**  
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION  
& ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPO  
PORTLAND, OR, USA | 21 - 24 MARCH  
[www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)  
#TESOL2023

## Join the MIDTESOL Team!

### Open Positions

*Are you looking for a way to make an impact while gaining experience, serving the profession, building your C.V., and expanding your network by collaborating with a diverse group of English language teaching professionals? MIDTESOL has several open board positions to be filled yet this year. Please reach out to Kaylene Sasse ([kaylenesasse@midtesol.org](mailto:kaylenesasse@midtesol.org)) to indicate your interest or with any questions.*

#### Conference Planning Position: 2023 Conference Program Chair [URGENT]

The individual in this very important position assists the Conference Chair in planning the conference but is also specifically responsible for...

- managing the conference call for papers and related publicity
- coordinating the review of proposals
- communicating with invited keynote speakers and accepted presenters
- building the conference schedule

*If you are interested in helping out MIDTESOL in this role, please contact Kaylene as soon as possible, since conference preparations for 2023 have already begun. This year's conference will be held again (per terms of our contract) at the Intercontinental Hotel on the Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri.*

#### Future Conference Planning Positions: 2024 Conference Chair, Conference Program Chair

The 2024 MIDTESOL Conference will be held in Omaha, Nebraska. We invite you to be a part of planning for this event! On the MIDTESOL board, the "future conference planning position" holders take part in the Conference Planning Committee for the year before, in order to build up knowledge and experience and to get a sense of current needs of the various facets of our MIDTESOL membership.

#### State Member-at-Large Positions: Nebraska and Kansas

Individuals in these state representative positions provide important information to the MIDTESOL board about current developments in the field of English language teaching in their states and work to coordinate communication and efforts between MIDTESOL members who live and work in their states.



## MIDTESOL 2023 (October 13-14) in Kansas City! #MIDTESOL23 Conference

The 2023 MIDTESOL Conference planning has begun! Remember to “Save the Date” and plan to join us at the InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza on Friday, October 13 and Saturday, October 14. This year’s theme is “**Weaving Hope in the Heart of America.**” Kansas City has often seen itself as the heart of America, and we hope that by coming together in this vibrant city, that we can build professional connections and offer a positive environment to share out best practices, strategies, and suggestions for helping our English learners. We will be having a “Call for Proposals” begin in **April**, so start to think about the various topics you would be interested in sharing. Your knowledge, expertise, and personal experiences help to form the amazing tapestry that can only be formed when we are able to weave our unique strands together. In addition, we will be having two contests this year- an essay contest and an art contest. We hope that this will help give many of you an opportunity to have your students’ talents be displayed and stories shared. Finally, if you have any suggestions for this year’s conference or would like to volunteer in any capacity, please contact this year’s conference chair, Ben Vilkas, at [ben.vilkas@midtesol.org](mailto:ben.vilkas@midtesol.org)

*(See information on English learner conference-connected contests and awards on the next page!)*



### Join us for #MIDTESOL23! (Info at a Glance)

**Theme:** **Weaving Hope in the Heart of America**

**Dates:** Friday-Saturday, October 13-14, 2023

**Location:** InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza, 401 Ward Pkwy,  
Kansas City, MO

#### Session Types:

The conference will offer presentations on practical and research-oriented topics as well as workshops, round-table discussions, and poster sessions. In addition, many opportunities for networking will be included and exhibitors will be onsite so you can connect with them face-to-face and learn about available resources.

*Stay tuned for more detailed information on featured speakers, call for proposals, registration fees and deadlines, and much more in upcoming communications from MIDTESOL.*



# MIDTESOL 2023 Student Conference Art & Essay Contests

*MIDTESOL is pleased to announce two contests for the 2023 MIDTESOL Conference, which will be held at the InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza on Friday, October 13 and Saturday, October 14.*

*This year's theme is "Weaving Hope in the Heart of America." Our hope is that the conference is a chance for English Language Teaching professionals to come together to provide positive encouragement and support to each other while learning best practices and strategies. All contest winners will be featured at this event.*

The two contests for ESL students to participate in are the:

- MIDTESOL 2023 Conference Art Contest
- MIDTESOL 2023 Student Essay Contest

Below are the rules and regulations for both contests. Students can participate in either category or both. An individual student is eligible to win a prize for both contests. However, each contest is judged separately.

## MIDTESOL 2023 Conference Art Contest

*MIDTESOL is pleased to invite current or former English as a Second Language students (K-12) to submit original artwork that can be used in publicity for the MIDTESOL 2023 Conference. The artwork will be featured on the MIDTESOL website, e-mails, and at the conference itself. One winner will be selected from all entries. The winner will receive a prize of **\$200**.*

The artwork can be in any format (drawing, painting, photography, mixed media, etc.) but will be judged as a submitted image. The artwork must be an original piece, titled, related to the theme ("Weaving Hope in the Heart of America"), and come with a short explanation (200 words or less).

Entries can be submitted to MIDTESOL Awards Committee Chair [andriassusanto@midtesol.org](mailto:andriassusanto@midtesol.org) beginning March 1. The subject line of the email should read "MIDTESOL Art Contest 2023." The final deadline for accepted entries will be **Friday, April 28** at 11:59 p.m.

### Requirements for artwork:

- Artwork will be submitted as an image. The image must be a Hi-Res PSN and PNG image file.
- The artwork must have a simple background so MIDTESOL can place text as needed on top of it.
- The artwork must be easy to scale as MIDTESOL will change the image size for various uses such as social media, website graphic, newsletter, etc. For example, when used as an e-mail header, it will be 600x150 pixels.

## MIDTESOL 2023 Student Essay Contest

*MIDTESOL is also pleased to invite current or former English as a Second Language students to participate in this year's Student Essay Contest. There are two categories with prizes for first, second, and third place in each category.*

**The first category** is for K-12 ESL Student Essays. Any student qualifies who is currently in grades K-12 and has participated in an ESL/EAP program or intensive English program in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, or Nebraska.

**The second category** is for Adult ESL Students. This category is open for any adult that has participated in an ESL/EAP program, intensive English program, or adult education program at any time (including K-12) in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, or Nebraska.

For both categories, the essay will reflect this year's conference theme of *"Weaving Hope in the Heart of America"* and should be chosen from the list of essay topics below:

**Essay Topics:** Choose one of the following topics related to this year's MIDTESOL Conference theme of

*"Weaving Hope in the Heart of America."*

1. Teachers are highly encouraged to work together to support student learning. *How have some of your ESL teachers in the past worked together with other teachers to provide you with a quality education and a sense of hope in successfully learning in America?*
2. Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri are four states located in the "heart" of America. *In terms of this region in the country, what are you most hopeful about in the future? What positive changes would you like to see happen to make this area even better for those who are moving here from outside the United States?*
3. Weaving is a valuable skill in most cultures around the globe. *What are your own cultural traditions that relate to weaving? How does learning about your culture help others to better understand who you are and your unique background?*
4. Your own story is likely full of different people who have come into your life to provide support and encouragement. Like different strands in a tapestry, your life is full of unique individuals. *Who are some people who have most influenced your life and helped you to learn?*

**Rules and Format:** Each participant may submit only one essay and must meet the outlined qualifications above. The essay must reflect **their own individual work** and should have limited guidance from others. The use of normal educational practices (drafting, revising/editing, publishing) is allowed. The final essay should be a minimum of 400 words and not exceed 750 words. The format must be typed, using 12-point Times New Roman font, and double-spaced.

The essay must be submitted with a cover page, which includes the following:

- Participant name and best contact information (phone number, address, and email). [Note: K-12 students can provide contact information for a teacher if desired.]
- Category (K-12 or Adult)
- Related School (name, address, phone number)

**Notes:**

There should be no identifying information listed on any pages of the essay, only the cover page. This includes any mention of person's name or school. Teacher's names in essays are acceptable. Failure to abide by any of the above conditions may result in immediate disqualification.

• Judging: Essays undergo blind peer review by the MIDTESOL Awards Committee.

• Scoring Criteria: Essay submissions will be scored based on ideas/content, organization, conventions, voice, sentence fluency, and word choice. In short, judges look for writing that is clear, creative, articulate, and logically organized.

**Essay Awards:** The selected recipient of each contest will be awarded a plaque and/or \$100. The name of the recipient, photo, and school affiliation will be published in an upcoming issue of *MIDTESOL Matters*, the organization's electronic newsletter. Additional awards include one (1) second place award of \$50 and one (1) third place award of \$25.

**How to Apply:** To apply, submit essay, including cover page, to MIDTESOL Awards Committee Chair Andrias Susanto at [andriassusanto@midteol.org](mailto:andriassusanto@midteol.org). The submission dates start on March 1 and end no later than April 28, 2023, at 11:59 PM. The subject line of the email should read "MIDTESOL Essay Contest 2023."

You will receive confirmation from the Awards Chair that your submission has been received and a notification if you are an award recipient by the end of April. All applicant information will be kept confidential. Decisions made by reviewers will be final.



## A Message from the Socio-Political Concerns Chair

**Adrienne Johnson**  
**MIDTESOL Socio-Political Concerns & Professional Standards Chair**

Associate Professor of Education  
Missouri Western State University  
St. Joseph, Missouri



### Announcing!

## Applications for the 2023 MIDTESOL Member Advocacy Award are now being accepted!

**Description:** Up to *three* MIDTESOL members will receive up to a \$750 stipend each to be used toward expenses related to attending the TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit in Washington, D.C., June 20-22, 2023. Winners will attend the summit with an experienced MIDTESOL attendee who will serve as a guide and resource. Winners will attend the summit with an experienced MIDTESOL attendee who will serve as a guide and resource.

**Applications DUE Mar 31, 2023**

**Send Applications to Adrienne Johnson, Sociopolitical & Professional Standards Chair:**  
[adriennejohnson@midtesol.org](mailto:adriennejohnson@midtesol.org)

### Criteria for application:

- Active member in MIDTESOL for *three or more years*
  - Evidence of active membership: attendance/presentation at annual MIDTESOL conference and/or Mid-Winter conference, service to MIDTESOL, contributions to MIDTESOL Weekly Features or MT Matters publications, organization of professional development opportunities for MIDTESOL members, etc.
- Commitment to attend and fully participate in the entirety of the annual TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit, including in person visits with elected officials.
- Ability to assist in pre-summit planning for elected official visits, particularly with gathering and organizing information to share with elected officials.
- Commitment to write a MIDTESOL Weekly Feature Post and/or a *MIDTESOL Matters* Article **by July 31, 2023**, based on experiences and learning at the summit.
- Winners will be encouraged to also share experiences via social media.

### Submission requirements:

- 500-word essay including, but not limited to
  - interest in MIDTESOL advocacy work,
  - how MIDTESOL advocacy training will benefit personal and professional goals,
  - understanding of the MIDTESOL Advocacy Goal Statement (see website),
  - stories to share with policy makers on how policies impact students and educators
  - assurance of ability to meet the time-commitment required to fully participate in the virtual TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit.

- Current résumé or C.V.

Selection criteria:

- Qualified applicants will demonstrate a strong level of commitment to MIDTESOL mission, a passion for advocacy, extensive experience in language education, and communication skills.
- Applicants **do not** have to have had prior formal training in advocacy, nor do they have to have previously visited offices of their elected officials.
- Among qualified candidates, preference will be given to MIDTESOL members from states and fields (K-12, higher education, community college, IEP) that have been under-represented at previous summits.

From the TESOL website:

“The only event of its kind in the world, the TESOL Virtual Advocacy & Policy Summit is an unparalleled professional development opportunity for educators to learn about U.S. federal and international education issues and advocate for policies that support English learners and the field of English language education. By attending the TESOL Virtual Advocacy & Policy Summit, you will:

- learn from experts and insiders about the latest federal and international education policies and issues
- share a powerful message with your members of Congress through the TESOL Advocacy Action Center
- share information about the issues and policies impacting your work locally and internationally
- join your colleagues from around the world and across the United States to make a difference
- receive over 16 hours of professional development

**Tentative Schedule**

6 June - *Hill Training Webinar (recorded for those who miss the live event)*

20 June - *Evening Keynote Speaker (includes reception)*

21 June - *Full Day with Invited Speakers (includes breakfast and lunch)*

22 June - *Meet with Representatives on the Hill (optional ticketed dinner)*

The full agenda for the 2023 TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit is will be available in May.

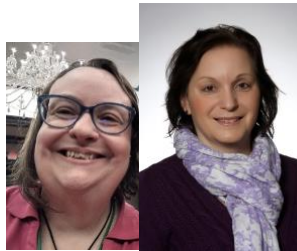


## Spotlight on MIDTESOL Interest Sections

MIDTESOL is currently graced with **six** different interest sections, each of which has been formed to enable MIDTESOL members to grow professionally and to find resources to meet the needs of their particular English learners. How many interest sections do you belong to? (MIDTESOL members can belong to more than one interest section!) The reports below come from this year's MIDTESOL interest section leaders and are intended to give you an update on the group and its activities, a look into the current state of affairs for an interest section's English learners, or whatever the interest section chair decided was most important to communicate. A huge thanks from MIDTESOL to these interest section leaders for all of their work!

### MIDTESOL Community College/Adult Ed Interest Section Co-Chairs

**Georgia Deming**  
ESL Program Manager  
Johnson County Comm. College  
Overland Park, Kansas  
**Lorraine Gardner**  
ESL Instructor  
Ozarks Technical Comm. College  
Springfield, Missouri



### From the Community College/Adult Education Interest Section

Hello, we would like to introduce ourselves. We are the new co-chairs of the Community College/Adult Ed Interest Section for MIDTESOL. We are looking forward to working with everyone and discovering what needs and interests the members of this group have. **We will be sending out a survey** within the next week asking for your ideas and contact preferences. If you do not receive the survey and would like to participate in the Community College/Adult Ed Interest Section, **please email** one of us to let us know.

I'm Georgia Deming. I am the ESL Program Manager for Johnson County Adult Education with Johnson County Community College. We are grant funded and under the umbrella of the Kansas Board of Regents. I have been with the College for 20 years, 15 of those years I have been the ESL Program Manager. I live with my husband Mark and my 2 dogs, Ivy & Lily, in Shawnee, Kansas. I have lived in the Kansas City area since 1988, but am originally from Lincoln, NE. You can contact me at [georgiademing@midtesol.org](mailto:georgiademing@midtesol.org)

Hi, I'm Lorraine Gardner! I'm an ESL instructor at Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) in Springfield, Missouri, where I have been teaching since 2007. I have taught English for over 30 years in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri (yes, three of the four MIDTESOL states!), and South Korea, as well as online. I first joined MIDTESOL in the mid-'90s. I am the current Past President of the Missouri Association for Adult Continuing and Community Education (MAACCE). In addition to teaching, I love music, technology, and travelling. I live with my husband Kevin (an IT whiz) and our two senior cats, Lucas (14) and Teej (17). I have lived in Springfield for almost 20 years, but I grew up in South Omaha and Bellevue, NE. Feel free to contact me at [lorrainegardner@midtesol.org](mailto:lorrainegardner@midtesol.org)

## From the Educational Technology Interest Section

### Carmen Durham MIDTESOL Educational Technology Interest Section Chair

Assistant Professor of  
TESOL/Applied Linguistics  
University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, Iowa









### What is the Educational Technology Interest Section? Who are we?

If you are an educator who wants to know more about technology, this group is for you! No matter if you are a novice or expert, we want you to join the conversation about equitable technology practices in the field of TESOL.

#### Join the conversation!

There are many ways to get involved.

 <b>Resource Library</b>	 <b>Twitter</b>	 <b>Facebook</b>
<p>Bookmark this website to find tips on using technology for speaking, writing, literacy, home-school communication, and much more. Let us know what topics you want to know more about!</p>	<p>Follow us on Twitter for up-to-date tech tips. Mention us in your posts and questions!</p>	<p>Join our NEW Facebook group to talk to one another, ask questions about technology, and receive up-to-date tips from everyone in our Educational Technology Interest Section. If you already follow our Facebook page, you will receive an invitation.</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><a href="https://tinyurl.com/EdTechLibrary">tinyurl.com/EdTechLibrary</a></p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><a href="https://twitter.com/Midtesol_EdTech">@Midtesol_EdTech</a></p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><a href="https://tinyurl.com/EdTechGroup">tinyurl.com/EdTechGroup</a></p> </div>



**Jacob Rigal**  
**MIDTESOL Higher**  
**Education / Teacher**  
**Training Interest Section**  
**Co-Chair**

Currently studying Linguistics at  
Université de Cité Paris  
(France)

**From the Higher**  
**Education/Teacher**  
**Training Interest Section**

## **MIDTESOL's Higher Education / Teacher Training Interest Section (HETTIS) Goes International and Technological**

This interest section is really phenomenal because it is made up of a dynamic group of applied linguistics professor-researchers, ESL/EFL practitioners, and teacher trainers, not to mention a graduate student or two. I, Interest section Co-chair Jacob Rigal, am one such long-time graduate student currently studying English linguistics at the Université de Cité Paris. Recently, I discovered a pronunciation training application that is used by all undergraduate learners of English at the University, and which also happened to be designed by phonetics/phonology professors in his department. Straightaway, I shared the tool in MIDTESOL Higher Ed's Facebook page!

SEPALE, a high variability phonetic training (HVPT) offline course—is designed as a plugin for the well-known phonetics software Praat (Sanvicente et al., 2022; Barriuso et al., 2018; Boersma & Weenink, 2015). This tool makes regular appearances in University-level linguistics classes, but is rarely used in actual instruction of learners, let alone self-guided training. Anecdotally, my private students love seeing the pitch and intensity contours of their own speech in Praat, which also provides visual representations that aid prosody awareness and feedback. In the case of the SEPALE software, the training is meant to be done outside of class, though it can easily be used as a group in a computer lab or in whole group/small group contexts.

Remember to join us on our Facebook page to stay current with all the latest HETTIS news, and to access SEPALE and other resources! Members also share research articles, research agendas, and answer each others questions about the job market, conference questions, or whatever!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/midtesolhighered>

### **References**

Barriuso, T., Anne, & Hayes-Harb, R. (2018). High Variability Phonetic Training as a bridge from research to practice. *The CATESOL Journal*, 31(1), 177–194.

Boersma, P. & Weenink, D. (2015) Praat: doing phonetics by computer. (Version 5.4.22). Retrieved from [www.praat.org](http://www.praat.org)

Sanvicente, F., Guyot-Talbot, A., Navarro, S., & Ferragne, E. (2022). The SEPALE project: High variability phonetic training for French students of English. In *7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on English Pronunciation: Issues & Practices Book of Abstracts*.



## From the Intensive English Program Interest Section

**Aimee Leisy**  
**MIDTESOL Intensive  
English Program Interest  
Section Chair**  
Associate Teaching Professor  
Wichita State University  
Wichita, Kansas



### Intercultural Conversations with the Intensive English Program Wichita State University

International students are a great resource for cultural learning on campus. Over the years, I've organized a number of intercultural events with Intensive English students and college classes dealing with global themes at Wichita State University. Intercultural dialogues are not difficult to organize, and they can be incorporated into the Intensive English writing or speaking curriculum with a response essay, discussion, or presentation.

At the beginning of this semester, I ran into Jennifer Musaji, a former Intensive English colleague, and we realized we were both teaching in Lindquist Hall. We chatted about a possible collaboration between Jennifer's "World Culture and Popular Media" freshman seminar course and my Intensive English class. Since Jennifer's seminar class has twenty-five students compared with the six students in my class, I invited my Intensive English colleagues to include their classes in the intercultural dialogue. Fortunately, all my colleagues had nearby classrooms on the first floor, which allowed us to spread out the students between three of our classrooms for the dialogue.



Prior to the event, all five instructors met on Zoom to plan the intercultural dialogue. Together, we decided to have students concoct their own questions. Intensive English students asked about American culture. For example, "What are some current slang words?" and "Why do Americans like ice so much?" to name a few. The freshman seminar students also came up with questions in advance. The day of the intercultural dialogue, we divided the students into five groups--each with five seminar students and two to three Intensive English students. In their small groups, they introduced themselves briefly and then asked questions of each other and conversed. After twenty minutes, we rotated groups.

An overwhelming majority of students rated the activity with a 10 or a 9 on a scale of one to ten. Only a handful rated the activity with an 8, and 1 student rated it as a 5. Written feedback on the post-activity survey was positive, overall:

“I enjoyed learning about all cultures and sharing mine. The different accents were beautiful. I had a lot of fun.”

“Interesting to view the difference in culture norms and what other cultures view as abnormal. I enjoyed getting to know people from diverse backgrounds.”

“Today, this is a interesting day, I knew more about American, and more new words.”

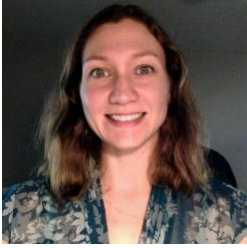
The main critical feedback was that students would have enjoyed even longer conversations. One student wrote, “Of course! I will be happy to do something like this. Is a good opportunity to meet new people. Probably more time for talk is a good idea.” Another student, who felt a connection with the other students, wrote: “I really enjoyed learning about different people who are having the same experience as us but come from different backgrounds. I would like to have more time to talk.”

After the dialogue, my writing class wrote a response essay about the experience. Furthermore, I asked my speaking and listening class about their reactions, and a comment from my El Salvadoran student stuck with me. He smiled as he told me that he was impressed that three of the freshman seminar students had Mexican parents. I sensed that he felt comforted knowing there are other students from Spanish-speaking households at Wichita State.

Cultural encounters, like this one, help to build a sense of community for international students and first year students, both groups just starting their college careers.

What kinds of cultural events have you organized in your Intensive English Program this year? Would you like to be featured in the next issue of MIDTESOL Matters? The Intensive English Programs Interest Section would love to hear how you are adding value to your university or community college. Please contact Aimee Leisy at [ameeleisy@midtesol.org](mailto:ameeleisy@midtesol.org) or [vickianderson@midtesol.org](mailto:vickianderson@midtesol.org).





**Elissa Jones**  
**MIDTESOL K-12 Interest  
Section Chair**  
ESOL Teacher  
Topeka West High School  
Topeka, Kansas

## From the K-12 Interest Section

*Elissa sends monthly e-mails to K-12 Interest Section members which are full of ideas and teaching tips. Greatly appreciated! The excerpt below is an example from the month of February. Enjoy! To sign up to receive Elissa's e-mails, you can contact her at [elissajones@midtesol.org](mailto:elissajones@midtesol.org).*

We are wrapping up African American Heritage Month and getting ready to start Women's History Month, and I imagine you have found wonderful ways to celebrate and elevate these themes in your curricula.

Here in Topeka, the secondary EL department uses thematic units to structure our English language development electives. My students are just finishing up a unit on money and will be spending Q4 on the theme of heroes. Along with these themes, we have been using a **Project Based Learning approach** to try to provide engaging, connected, relevant experiences for our students.

Our secondary EL consulting teacher and coach, (MIDTESOL member) **Dr. Roger Laubengayer** [former MIDTESOL board member! –editor's note] has been an amazing leader in this work. He is the one to ask about guest speakers (including international university ELs!), field trips, creative projects, and more. His approach has been featured in our local news media several times, bringing positive attention to our English learners along the way. I have appreciated his guidance as I try to move toward more student choice and self-direction. He has challenged us to provide trackers that let students guide their own progress toward meeting the learning goals.



In this unit, I am trying a combination of two great ideas I have learned from other teachers: wall trackers and printed post-its.

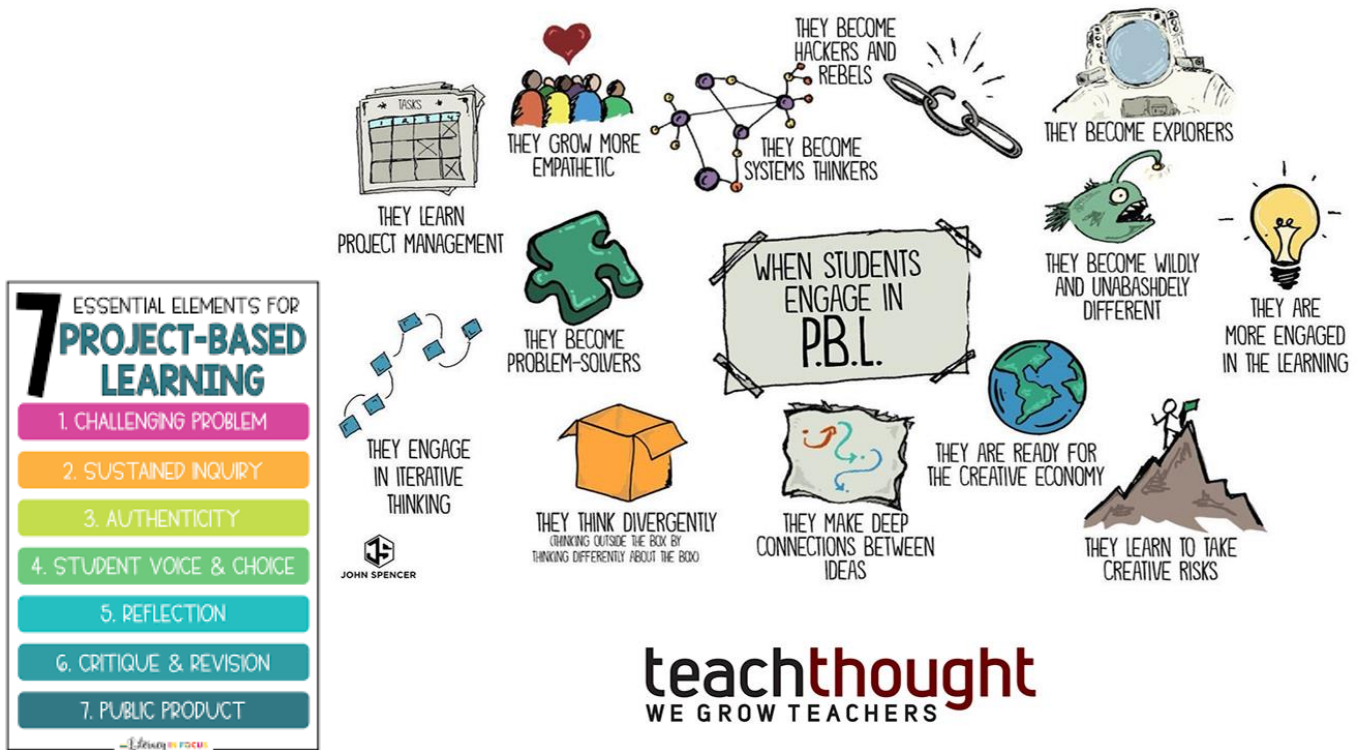
**Wall Trackers:** I put the big stages of the project on poster paper along the wall, and students visually track their own progress by moving their sticky note as they move through tasks or decide what to work on today. It gives me a quick visual and helps students see their trajectory too.

**Printed Post-its:** Put the sticky notes on plain paper and run it through the printer: voila! For this project, each sticky note has a few check-boxes to indicate students' choices within the project. It lets me see at a glance what each student should be working on. Unbelievably, it works just fine through the Xerox!

I hope these ideas spark something creative for you, and I hope you'll reply to this thread if you have other great ideas for PBL to share!

Peace,

**Elissa Jones**  
**MIDTESOL K-12 Interest Section**



**From the Program  
Administrators Interest  
Section (PAIS)**

**Kelly McClendon**  
**MIDTESOL Program**  
**Administrators Interest**  
**Section Chair**  
Coordinator, Intensive English  
Program  
Washburn University  
Topeka, Kansas



Greetings from the Program Administrators Interest Section Chair at MIDTESOL! I'm Kelly and am the Intensive English Program (IEP) Coordinator at Washburn University in Topeka, KS. Currently, I'm working on advocating for credit for the IEP courses at Washburn University. Our Level 3 classes are all General Education Humanities Credit now! Also, I'm in the process of working on dual credit classes for area high school ELLs and the WU IEP classes. I am eager to gather MIDTESOL administrators in some way so that we can call on each other when we need ideas or support or to ask questions. So, I hope to schedule a themed "Coffee Hour" Zoom session that is really just come as you are and connect and ask questions. Feel free to contact me at [kellymcclendon@midtesol.org](mailto:kellymcclendon@midtesol.org) if you have ideas of how to connect or if you want to ask me questions about the Interest Section, Washburn University IEP, or about getting involved in MIDTESOL.

Sincerely,

**Kelly McClendon**  
**MIDTESOL 2023 Program Administrators Interest Section Chair**



## MIDTESOL State News

*MIDTESOL wants to give a hearty shout-out to all the state representatives that serve as members-at-large on the MIDTESOL Board! These representatives are the most direct link between the MIDTESOL organization and the particular needs of your state, working hard to make connections between people and resources in a way that builds us up as professionals and helps our students. Way to go, State Reps! And if you are interested in serving as a State Rep, remember that we are currently seeking to fill those positions for Kansas and for Nebraska. Don't leave any of our states without representation!*



### State Report: Iowa by Cindra Porter

**Some notes from developments in work with English learners in Iowa!**

IOWA

#### K-12 News

**Need for More ESL Teachers:** Iowa is experiencing a teacher shortage in both content areas and ESL classrooms. This shortage of endorsed teachers is felt acutely in rural areas where schools also receive increased numbers of new English Learners. Recruiting practices by meat-packing plants and other industrial businesses have resulted in increased numbers of new community residents who may arrive while still working to acquire English.

School districts that have not previously received newcomer English Learners experience the additional challenges of recruiting ESL-endorsed teachers. As one principal in a rural NW Iowa school district commented, "People don't typically seek out jobs in small towns. Our community is too remote for many people, so we have to recruit from within our community or ask existing teachers to consider adding an ESL endorsement to their teaching licenses." Several school districts are currently relying on long-term substitute teachers to help fill faculty gaps as schools work to attract new teachers to their districts.

## Higher Education News

### ***UNI receives grant:***

Aliza Fones and Carmen Durham, assistant professors of TESOL, were awarded a \$1.48 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to launch a new project to improve English as a second language (ESL) instruction for both pre-service and in-service teachers. Project UNITED (University of Northern Iowa Teacher Education for Diverse Learners) will provide ESL teacher preparation and professional development to preservice and in-service teachers.

### ***ESL Programs for International Students Changing***

**Iowa State University:** According to the [Iowa State University website](#), Iowa State University of Science and Technology has made the decision to suspend its Intensive English Orientation Program (IEOP) at the end of the summer 2022 session.

**The University of Iowa:** The role of the Intensive English Program at the University of Iowa is under review, with a current reduction in staff. Consideration for reorganizing the program is currently underway, with decisions projected for the fall of 2023.

### ***Community College ELL Program Increases Enrollment***

DMACC: Non-credit ELL enrollment in the DMACC ELL Program has doubled since last year at this time. To meet that need, DMACC has expanded to offer 60+ sections of class at 9 different locations across the district and also added online classes.

Additionally, DMACC has hired three part-time ELL Advisors to help students plan their pathway through the program and find (and connect with) their next step. These ELL Advisors help students find solutions to barriers they face and assist in all aspects of job search (creating a resume, exploring different careers, completing applications, interview prep, etc. Enrollment in the Credit ELL program has also increased significantly over the previous several years.

While class enrollment has experienced success, building programming in partnership with local businesses has struggled due to current staffing. Increased staff would support more on-site collaboration with local employers. DMACC is currently working to develop a position that would spearhead efforts to build IET programming with local employers.

If you would like to connect with the DMACC ELL Program, please contact the program coordinator, John Windheuser, at [jwindheuser@dmacc.edu](mailto:jwindheuser@dmacc.edu)

Connect with MIDTESOL on social media



## Welcome to our newest board member!

Like any organization made up of volunteers, MIDTESOL occasionally finds it difficult to fill vacancies in positions that arise when board members finish their terms and need to move on to other professional projects. We'd like to introduce you to our newest board member who has agreed to step into the gap to help us out, Dr. Jim Granada, MIDTESOL's new **TREASURER!**



Dr. Jim Granada is the Department Chair, Associate Teaching Professor and Director of the Transition to Teaching Program at Wichita State University. He earned his B.S.E in Elementary Education from Emporia State University, his M.Ed. in Educational Psychology from Wichita State University, and his Ed.D. in Curriculum & Instruction from Northern Arizona University. He has been serving as the Department Chair at the school of Education at Wichita State since 2021. He holds active certifications in Kansas (Elementary (K-9), Early Childhood Gifted (K-12), Building Leadership (PRK-12). He also has extensive experience serving as the Director at the Dept. of Advanced Academic Services in Austin Independent School District, and as an Educational Specialist - Gifted Education at Education Service Center, Region 20. A very late nominee for the MIDTESOL Treasurer position, he was elected by the membership in February 2023 as MIDTESOL's Treasurer for 2023-2024. Thanks, Dr. Granada!



## MIDTESOL Social Gathering at TESOL 2023!



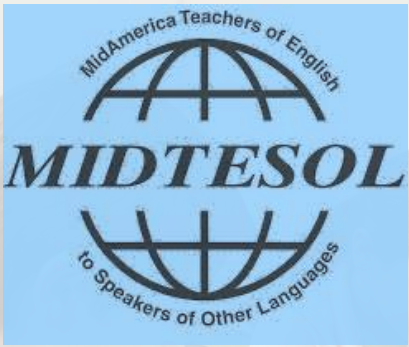
Traditionally MIDTESOL hosts a social hour for TESOL participants for our region at the annual TESOL conference, and 2023 is no different! MIDTESOL Vice President Deany Goode will be hosting our MIDTESOL Social Gathering at the Queen of Sheba Restaurant on Thursday, March 23, at 5:30 pm (PDT). Please contact Deany directly ([deanygoode@midtesol.org](mailto:deanygoode@midtesol.org)) if you have questions or special dietary requests.

A flyer for the MIDTESOL Dinner @ TESOL. It has a green top section with a globe icon and the text 'MIDTESOL DINNER @ TESOL'. The middle section is yellow and contains the restaurant name 'Queen of Sheba Ethiopian Bar & Restaurant', the address '2413 NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Portland, OR 97208', and the date 'Thursday, March 23rd at 5:30 pm PDT'. The bottom section is red and contains the heading 'Directions' and three lines of directions: '22-minute walk east from the convention center', '14 minute bus ride (bus 6, runs every 15 mintues)', and '5 minutes by car (Uber, Lyft)'.

**MIDTESOL**  
DINNER @ TESOL

**Queen of Sheba**  
**Ethiopian Bar & Restaurant**  
2413 NE Martin Luther King  
Jr Blvd, Portland, OR 97208  
Thursday, March 23rd at 5:30 pm PDT

**Directions**  
22-minute walk east from the convention  
center  
14 minute bus ride (bus 6, runs every 15  
mintues)  
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## About our Organization

Contact us at  
[www.midtesol.org](http://www.midtesol.org)

**MIDTESOL** is a professional organization, an affiliate of TESOL International Association, whose goal is to support teachers and enhance the teaching of **English to Speakers of Other Languages**.

**MIDTESOL Matters** is a quarterly publication and is distributed to subscribers and dues-paying members of **MIDTESOL**. Articles, Teaching Tips, and Reviews are welcome from all members. The editor reserves the right to edit for space, clarity, or editorial balance. Materials published in **MIDTESOL Matters** become the property of MIDTESOL and could be shared with other TESOL affiliate organizations.

Expressed opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of MIDTESOL, TESOL, or the MIDTESOL Executive Board.



## Our Mission

The mission of **Mid-America Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages** is to foster excellence in English language learning in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska to people whose native language is a language other than English while respecting their individual language rights.

**As a regional affiliate of TESOL and a professional organization, MIDTESOL:**

- *supports those involved with English language teaching, teacher education, administration and management, curriculum and materials design, and research*
- *provides leadership and direction through the dissemination and exchange of information and resources*
- *encourages access to the standards for English language instruction, professional preparation, and employment*