Message from the President

Let me tell you about Lydia, an ESL instructor in Iowa, and her husband, a recent immigrant from the Middle East whose English is very good but he is not always confident about it. One day in January Lydia’s husband, who recently had undergone surgery on his knee, fell and severely hurt his back. The back spasms were so great, he could barely move. (If you are like me and have done this, please feel free to pause and wince in sympathy.) As anyone would, he went to the doctor and got medicine to help with the pain and spasms. The next morning, which of course was the day in which he had a job interview, he woke up and couldn’t move. Unfortunately, Lydia had left early for work that morning so she wasn’t around to help him, so he called her to ask for help because he didn’t want to go to the emergency room.

Lydia’s first thought was to call the chiropractor’s office that was in her apartment building. Although Lydia was not a patient, the doctor agreed to go upstairs to check on the husband. Wonderful, but he couldn’t get up to open the door. Lydia called the apartment managers, and they agreed to hustle over and unlock the apartment door so the doctor could get in. Lydia, still stressed because she couldn’t get home because the next bus wouldn’t pick her up for another hour, ran into a co-worker who offered to drive her home immediately.

It was an incredibly stressful day, but everyone’s support overwhelmed Lydia. She was incredibly grateful to everyone who went above and beyond. Each extra effort, no matter how small, added up to making a big difference to her and her husband. (Oh, and just in case you are interested, he got that job.)

In our country’s current climate, it is reassuring to hear a story like this. And I know that it isn’t the only story out there about people helping immigrants, refugees, members from other cultures, etc. But for me, it demonstrates some of the best Midwest values. People coming together and contributing to help someone in need.

If your students, colleagues, friends and/or community members are like mine, they have been uncertain and bewildered in the past few months. It’s important for us as ESL professionals to provide support or to help them find the resources they need. I have witnessed MIDTESOLers call family members who are lawyers to connect them to organizations like KIND after hearing Sonia Nazario speak. I have learned about MIDTESOLers at brunch overhear a conversation about a local refugee assistance organization leader’s need for tutoring help and offer to help with training. I have observed another MIDTESOL member simply sit down with some college students from a variety of cultures and ask how they were doing and if anyone had been mistreating them recently. Not only did those students have nothing bad to report, they expressed how welcome and supported the entire community was making them feel.

I applaud these individuals who did not sit on the sidelines. They stepped forward and acted. No one who values diversity and inclusivity can afford to do less. MIDTESOL, as a regional affiliate of TESOL, is here for you if you need tools, resources, ideas, or a simply a welcoming community.

Sincerely,

Melissa Meisterheim

-Melissa Meisterheim, MIDTESOL President

-Roberta Morgan, MIDTESOL Past-President
Thank you to everyone who attended the **MIDTESOL 2017 Winter Workshop**

In This Issue

- #TESOL17 Social
- MIDTESOL Essay Contests
- Review: TESOL Summit
- State and Interest Section Updates
- Top Posts in TESOL
MIDTESOL Gathering at #TESOL17

MIDTESOL members are coming together again at #TESOL17 in Seattle. If you are a MIDTESOL member and are heading to the annual conference this year, please join us after breakout sessions on **Wednesday, March 22, 2017** for an evening of appetizers, ideas, and friends old and new.

MIDTESOL has reserved the Café Room in the Palomino from 5pm to 7pm. MIDTESOL will provide appetizers including smoked salmon crostini. For beverages, there will be a cash bar where participants can buy their own beverages. There is an ATM next to the restaurant in case you need a cash infusion that evening.

The Palomino is a 2-minute walk from the Convention Center. Once you arrive, ask for MIDTESOL or the organizer Melissa Meisterheim to locate our party. We hope to see you in March.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the organizer for this event, Melissa Meisterheim, the current President of MIDTESOL. You can email her at melissa-meisterheim@uiowa.edu.
Congratulations to our latest

MIDTESOL Member Award Winners!

Congratulations to Amy Roither from Webster University - winner of MIDTESOL's $500 award to attend the #TESOL17 conference in Seattle!

Amy Roither has been an adjunct professor of ESL at Webster University since 2007. She will present her latest work, "Beyond Paper: Creating Online Editing Guides," on March 24th at the #TESOL17 convention in Seattle. Her previous presentations on methods for incorporating technology into traditional classrooms have been at several TESOL and regional conferences.

#TESOL17 Recognition: Mark Algren

MIDTESOL member Mark Algren was announced in Nov. 2016 as the recipient of 2017 James E. Alatis Award for Service to TESOL. Algren serves as the executive director at the Center for English Language Learning at the University of Missouri in Columbia. (See more at: http://www.tesol.org/about-tesol/press-room/2016/11/10/tesol-announces-2017-james-e.-alatis-award-for-service-to-tesol#sthash.4GJP0JC1.dpuf)

TESOL President Dudley Reynolds will give Mark the award during the #TESOL17 convention in Seattle. Join us in congratulating Mark as the recipient of this award!
SAVE THE DATE! "MIDTESOL 2017: Crossroads of Cultures" will take place at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown on September 29 and 30, 2017, this year in the historic Muehlebach tower of the hotel where MIDTESOL began its mission of serving ESL professionals 39 years ago. The two full days of the conference will feature Friday and Saturday keynote speakers, workshop presentations by notable authors in the field of ESL, MIDTESOL member presentations, poster sessions, technology demos, networking opportunities, and more! Conference registration, hotel room reservations, and the call for presentation proposals will open in April 2017. Check in at the MIDTESOL Website often as more details become available.

-Vicki Anderson, Ph.D.; Conference Chair
ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

MIDTESOL Best K-12 ESL Student Essay Award and Best ESL Student Essay Award

MIDTESOL is pleased to invite teachers to announce and submit student essays for the Best K-12 ESL Student Essay Award and Best ESL Student Award. Topics reflect this year’s conference theme: Crossroads of Cultures.

Eligibility

**Best K-12 Essay Award** – The student must be a K-12 school student in good standing who is enrolled—or was enrolled formerly—in an ESOL/ELL program in a K-12 school in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, or Nebraska.

**Best ESL Student Essay Award** – The student must be an adult ESL learner enrolled in a higher education ESL/EAP program, intensive English program, or adult education program in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, or Nebraska.

**Essay Topic:**

Choose one of the following topics related to this year’s MIDTESOL Conference theme of Crossroads of Cultures:

1. Compare and contrast an aspect of your culture to that of the United States. It may include a tradition, value, or even communication style. In which ways is it similar and different to how people practice it here? Perhaps add how or why is it valuable to people. Provide explanations and examples.

2. Describe a gathering or event in which a diverse group of people, a “crossroads of cultures”, was present. What was the event? How did the mix of people benefit the event? What did everyone learn about and from each other?

3. Narrate an example of a misunderstanding due to a cultural difference in language, value, or even nonverbal communication. What happened? What were the intentions of the people involved? How was it resolved? What did you learn from this experience?
MIDTESOL Best K-12 ESL Student Essay Award and Best ESL Student Award

Rules and Format
Each student may submit only one essay and must be an ELL/ESL student in good academic standing who is enrolled in an ESOL/ELL/ESL program in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, or Missouri.

The essay must be submitted with a cover page, including the following
• student name and contact information (phone number, address, email)
• school (name, address, phone number)
• grade level, for High School Essay Award
• sponsoring teacher and teacher’s phone number, address, and email address.

The essay must be solely the work of the student with limited guidance from others.

The essay must be 500 to 700 words in length; typed (12-point Times New Roman font) and double-spaced.

There should be no identifying information listed on any pages of the essay, just the cover page. This includes any mention of name or school.

Failure to abide by any of the above conditions will result in immediate disqualification.

Judging
Essays undergo blind peer review.

Scoring Criteria: Essays are scored on ideas/content, organization, conventions, voice, sentence fluency, and word choice/voice. In short, judges look for writing that is clear, creative, articulate, and logically organized.

Awards: The selected recipient of each contest will be awarded $100. His/her name, photo, and school affiliation will be published in the ensuing 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 Denise Mussman (denise@umsl.edu), MIDTESOL Awards Chair, by April 27, 2017. The subject line of the email should read “MIDTESOL 2017: Best Essay Award.” You will receive confirmation from the Awards Chair that your submission has been received and a notification if you are an award recipient in early May. All applicant information will be kept confidential. Decisions made by reviewers are final.
ATHENS, 2017- We met in the cradle of Western civilization: 200 delegates from 64 countries- teachers, teacher trainers, NGO managers and employees, government officials, RELOs from the State Department, representatives from the British Council, TESOL (national and regional), IATEFL, and CEA, IEP administrators, and publisher’s reps.

Together we listened, discussed, asked questions, and exchanged ideas about the future of our profession. 27 tables in total held a mix of delegates of different nationalities/positions. For example, at Table 20 (my table), I sat with a teacher trainer from Indonesia, an Iranian head of the department of English at his university in Kuwait, a British Council rep stationed in Nairobi, an NGO manager from the Ukraine, a Czech teacher educator/consultant who was also a member of the Steering Committee for the Summit, and a RELO stationed in the Ukraine. It was an amazing group of people in an extraordinary circumstance. While it’s safe to say that we haven’t solved the challenges facing our profession, the first Summit – for, as many said, this initiative ought to continue - began the conversation, and aired many areas of concern, as well as possible strategies and actions to address them.
The Summit had four themes: Futurology, English in Multilingualism, Reimagining English Competence, and The Profession as a Change Agent. The sessions on each theme lasted about 3 hours; at two sessions per day during the two days of the conference (not counting conversations over lunch and dinner), it was an intense experience. Three speakers per session in 15-minute presentations addressed the theme through three lenses (called “Guiding Principles”): Equity (essentially, the “social justice” aspect), Professionalism (how it impacts the practitioner), and Inquiry (research implications). Presentations were followed by an hour-long discussion at the individual tables, and then a Q&A session. The speakers came from the U.K., Australia, Pakistan, China, Greece, the U.S., Uganda, Peru, Nicaragua, and Palestine: thus, a wide array of perspectives.

To learn more about the four themes, check out two follow up articles in the MIDTESOL Weekly Feature!
MIDTESOL’s records are now archived at the State Historical Society of Missouri and are available for viewing by request at any of their Research Centers. The lovely blue tub full of the MIDTESOL files has been safely delivered! This was truly a team effort dating back through the years of dedicated historians, including Peggy Anderson and most recently, Birdie Morgan, who did the lion’s share of organizing. Everything has been digitized and backed up--well done, all!

Our Webmaster, Melissa Lowery, will be working to make electronic versions of materials available via the web, too.
Iowa News:

It has been a very busy winter here in Iowa for MIDTESOL. On February 3, University of Iowa hosted the MIDTESOL Winter Workshop, where one dozen presenters gave their presentations that were proposed and/or accepted for the TESOL conference in Seattle. Nearly 60 attendees from the state attended this free workshop and participated in productive conversations and collaboration to follow. More information regarding the event will be posted to MIDTESOL.ORG soon. Also, in February, EDCAMP Iowa held their UNCONFERENCE which is also a great event each year.

Many members have expressed concern with budgets in regards to professional development opportunities; it is my goal to continue to address these issues. We did offer the winter workshop, as stated above, and are in the works for planning other events throughout the state. Also, I will be creating a posting board for carpooling to MIDTESOL conference in the fall. Please remember to propose a presentation for the MIDTESOL conference and apply for a travel scholarship. This is a great opportunity to be involved in the conference, too!

Here’s to hoping that the spring semester is a productive, successful and rewarding one for each of us. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to me at any time.

Zachary Smith – Iowa Member at Large
Follow me on Twitter: @zas85
E-mail me at: zach.smith@kirkwood.edu
A warm hello to all reading this! Allow me the opportunity to introduce myself, I'm Melanie Stuart-Campbell, the newly-elected Member-At-Large for the great state of Kansas. A brief profile about me: I'm currently serving ELLs and migrant kids, grades Pre-K to 12, for Greenbush Educational Service Center. In this capacity, I do educator professional development (PD) regarding "All Things ELL" and also coordinate and provide services for migrant students. The photograph you see is a newly arrived kindergarten migrant student from Guatemala, and her teacher, Ms. King. The six-year-old is now attending Holton Elementary school in Jackson County. Her native language is Chuj, a Mayan dialect, and she's joined a growing Guatemalan community in this northeastern Kansas hamlet. My job is to assist children like her to be academically successful. Prior to this position, I've worked in various jobs, all pertaining to the education of English Language Learners. I've taught ELL grades K-5, in Kansas, New York, and the Republic of Congo, grades 6-8 in Ecuador, and international students at both the University of Kansas in Lawrence and Washburn University in Topeka. I also directed the Kansas Migrant and ELL Academy for Emporia State University, developing and delivering summer PD for teachers of migrant students and ELLs. And once upon a time, I served as Kansas' ELL consultant for the Kansas State Department of Education.

I bring great passion to this position. My goals are to inform you all of Kansas news regarding our English learning students, and also to spread the good word across the state about MIDTESOL and all the benefits of membership. In my next article, I will have news for you about happenings across the state. I am honored to serve and assist on behalf of the advancement of all our English learners.

Sincerely,

Melanie Stuart-Campbell
Viability and Value of Online Conferences
While online tech conferences have been around for years, they are becoming an increasingly more common way for teachers to seek out professional development opportunities. Once such virtual conference space is http://k12onlineconference.org/ . Here you can find recordings of past conference presentations and find information about attending upcoming conferences. Another opportunity takes place during the months leading up to the annual TESOL conference, through the Electronic Village Online (to access previous sessions, click here). The focus of this pre-conference conference is to allow teachers to participate in sessions related to the use of technology in English language teaching.

These virtual conferences are viable ways for teachers to gain some training and professional development opportunities. As most teachers can attest, time is a valuable yet rare commodity, so being able to learn about new ideas and approaches for using technology without having to travel to a physical location is a huge benefit. In addition, the fact that these sessions can be recorded and accessed at a later date possibly make them even more valuable than attending a conference in person.

To learn more about online conferences, watch for more details in the MIDTESOL Weekly Feature!
I am Amanda Emerson, currently an ELL building leader at an Elementary School in Lincoln, Nebraska. It is my great pleasure to serve as the MidTESOL K-12 Interest Section Chair to continue professional growth and pursue interests at the grade level through the Midwest plains. I am an advocate for ELL learners, parents of ELL students, and professionals who daily aspire to facilitate language accessible learning. Living in Lincoln, Nebraska I have had the unique experience of working with many refugee families from various backgrounds. I am currently enrolled at University Nebraska Omaha in the EdD program to continue leading and learning in the field of education.

The K-12 Interest section has been booming with ideas on how to promote best strategy teaching, communication, assessment, and a variety of other topics. Our goal is to arrange meetings and create plans to effectively make a difference in districts who are meeting ELP standards and performance indicators. We believe that each child has the right to every content discussed in the classroom. The K-12 interest section will continue to investigate and promote through their buildings and district best practiced strategies that will unlock instruction and knowledge.
Top Posts in TESOL:
The most inspiring TESOL and Education conversations happening on the web.

#ELLchat
Claudia Franks @SWMOELL
International students find refuge, opportunity in Ritenour’s English school fb.me/MrjKMvQxA

11:51 AM - 5 Feb 2017

Alison Barrett @a.barrett09
Importance of alignment between teacher education and learner needs is a hot topic today at #tesolsummit

1:01 AM - 10 Feb 2017 from Athens, Greece

We'll be representing #ELT professionals from Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, & Kansas at #TESOL17!

1:01 AM - 10 Feb 2017 from Athens, Greece

TESOL 2017 @TESOLConv
Will you be joining us for #TESOL17? Don't delay & register today! Registration rates go up 2 Feb! ow.ly/ysjXU80686c5

6:53 PM - 24 Jan 2017
Top Posts in TESOL:

The most inspiring TESOL and Education conversations happening on the web.

Arabic Words Illustrated Based On Their Literal Meaning
I have always been fascinated by word manipulation, so I started this project as a personal challenge. I manipulate Arabic words and transform them into their...
BOREDPANDA.COM

40 Idioms for you to ponder!
Iowa World Language Association (IWLA)
January 30 at 12:34pm

40 brilliant idioms that simply can't be translated literally
It's a piece of cake. You can't put lipstick on a pig. Why add fuel to the fire?
Idioms are those phrases that mean more than the sum of their words. As...
BLOG.TED.COM

My Name, My Identity Initiative
February 5 at 6:47pm

Did you say your name correctly? Strategies for creating a culture of respect
https://www.scdpsystem.com/.../NPIP_Vol40_Issue1_2016_R5.pdf Santa Clara County Office of Education. NASE
Are you interested in getting involved with an IS?

Here’s what to do:

1. Edit your profile setting in your membership file accessible form the midtesol.org site, or at https://www.cvent.com/Events/ContactPortal/Login.aspx?cwstub=19255e93-37d9-4d38-ac7d-2ac8779a50d1

2. Choose Interest Sections to get involved with:

   - Adult Ed Interest Section
   - Educational Technology Interest Section
   - Higher Ed Interest Section
   - IEP Interest Section
   - K-12 Interest Section

3. Start receiving and sharing great info about the field!
About our Organization

MIDTESOL is a professional organization, an affiliate of International TESOL, 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

Contact Us

Reach us with any questions about MIDTESOL
Visit us on the web at www.midtesol.org