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## Message from the President

Greetings! I write this article for the newsletter with mixed feelings, as it is my last article as your President. I have so enjoyed serving on the board! I have been privileged to work with many outstanding teachers, professors, and district leaders over the years. I look forward to continuing to meet and work with the great ESL teachers of Tennessee!

If you are an ESL teacher, I hope you have been able to learn and grow from the evaluation process. Each day I find new ways to adapt the common-core state standards to meet the needs of ELLs. It is definitely a process! I find it helpful to focus on one area of the ELA (English/Language Arts) curriculum for a period of time,

perhaps across a grade span, and reflect on the success of those lessons and what the students gained. I find it most helpful when I can collaborate with other ESL teachers about their successes and struggles with the common core.

Please continue to share and stay connected with other ESL teachers, even if you are isolated. That will make the difference when you are frustrated and think you are tackling this situation on your own. Face time and social media are wonderful ways to stay connected and maintain lasting friendships.

Also, if you have good ideas and enjoy talking about them, consider presenting. There are always opportunities at the building and district level. TNTESOL welcomes the privilege of fielding new presenters.

I look forward to our gathering at the Conference in Memphis in March. It promises to be one to remember!

**Sunita Watson**  
Rutherford County Schools  
TNTESOL President



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## A Best of TATESOL Presentation

### The Missing Ingredient for Academic Success: Writing to Learn with Intermediate ELs

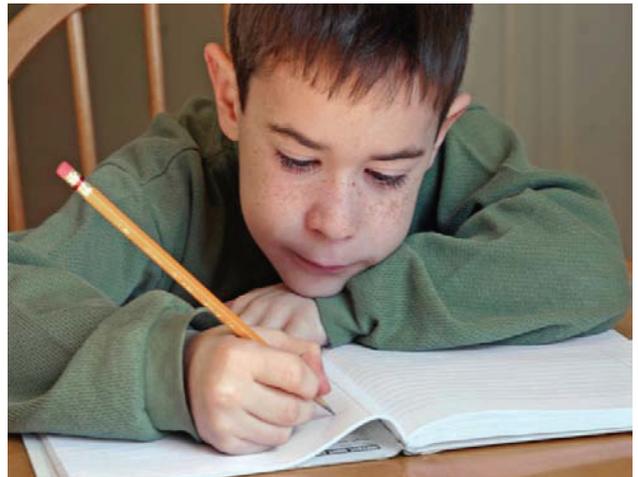
Janna McClain  
Murfreesboro City Schools

I recently got into a rather intense discussion about whether or not “good teaching” was enough for English learners (ELs), or if they need something different from their native English-speaking peers. I highly respect the teacher who approached me; with more than 25 years of elementary-classroom experience, she was certainly knowledgeable about what is or is not “good teaching.” Her point was that strategies that benefit ELs benefit other populations, and vice versa. Certainly that is the truth. What concerns me, though, is those intermediate-level or transitional students who are excellent at faking it. They may be sliding by with mediocre grades, sitting quietly in the corner of the room, their social English strong enough to allow them to blend in. Their “good teachers,” assuming that best practices for the general population will meet the needs of these students, then blame the kids for the glass ceiling we have imposed upon them with insufficient instruction.

The heart of the matter, though, is that “good teaching” is differentiated teaching, and educators who work with ELs need to be equipped with strategies to meet their specific needs. In their book *Side by Side Learning: Exemplary Literacy Practices for English Language Learners and English Speakers in the Mainstream Classroom* (2008), Edelsky, Faltis, and Smith assert that teachers must supplement strong curriculum with practices that “stretch and support” ELs. The researchers recommend writing to learn (WTL) as a means for simultaneously scaffolding students’ comprehension and pushing them to the next level in their language acquisition.

According to *Content Area Writing* (2007), by Daniels, Zemelman, and Steineke, WTL is short, spontaneous, unedited, and unpublished. This writing is done for the writer, to help him or her process ideas rather than create a product to share with the world. Real-world examples include journaling to identify the source of an emotion, mapping the pros and cons of a big life decision, or simply making a grocery list. Rarely is this work revised, edited, and published; more often it is written on the back of a napkin and tossed once it has served its purpose. This writing, though seemingly unimportant, is an essential part of most successful adults’ lives. Daniels tells the story of the women in his family who, when asked for the recipe for their best dish, intentionally omit an essential ingredient, thereby sabotaging any effort to duplicate their masterpieces. He posits that many teachers unintentionally inhibit student success by omitting daily WTL; WTL is the missing ingredient that makes all the difference.

Because of my inconsistent schedule and inexperience as a teacher, any of my early attempts at WTL could be described as slipshod at best. This past year, though, I had a new curriculum, a new schedule, and that same group of students who had been perpetually stuck at the intermediate level, so I decided to implement daily WTL in their 45-minute reading-intervention block. It was rough going at first. Students required thorough modeling and consistent feedback, but eventually I began to see some results.



Let me clarify an important point: the purpose of WTL is not to improve students’ writing, rather to engage students in the content and allow them to become active participants in the learning. Because of this, the area where I first saw improvement was NOT writing, but in student listening and reading comprehension. I serve both ELs and mainstream students side by side, and in the past some of my ELs were content to let their native English-speaking peers do all the talking (and thinking) for them. When I implemented daily WTL, students realized that each individual would be required to produce a response to what they read or heard in discussion. In addition, I saw improvement in oral participation. Giving students time to write allowed them the opportunity to clearly formulate their thoughts before being called on to respond verbally. I had always championed extended think time as the most important instructional strategy for ELs, but had never recognized the power of WTL as a participation tool. With WTL, everyone is involved. No one can hide.

As I mentioned before, the purpose of WTL is not to teach students how to write. However, daily writing

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practice in an informal environment did have an incredible effect on students' writing skills. The first area of writing I saw improve was writing fluency. I had one particularly perfectionistic student who could write no more than three words in three minutes at the beginning of the year. By the end of the year, she was writing multiple paragraphs in that amount of time. Without fear of the red pen, students' affective filter was lowered, and they were better able to express their thoughts. However, lack of editing does not mean lack of rigor. WTL required students to reflect on the material they have learned, use vocabulary in context, and practice language structures they were learning elsewhere. By the end of the year, students had improved their writing organization, spelling, and grammar, even though I never directly assessed those components of writing during our WTL time.

Something changed my students' learning this year. All but one of my upper-grade-level intermediate students exited ESL. Of those who took the writing assessment, all passed. Most were proficient on the reading and language-arts standardized test. Certainly my experience with WTL would not withstand the scrutiny of the scientific method. Did the new schedule affect their performance the most? Or was it the new reading curriculum? Could it be that those kids were simply more mature and ready to learn? Or was it their experience with daily WTL? It's hard to isolate which single strategy was responsible, but as I work to perfect my recipe for student success, I know I do not want to omit any essential ingredients.

*For a more thorough description of WTL, including specific strategies for implementation, I recommend reading Side by Side Learning: Exemplary Literacy Practices for English Language Learners and English Speakers in the Mainstream Classroom (2008) by Edelsky, Smith, and Faltis, and Content Area Writing (2007), by Daniels, Zemelman, and Steineke. ◀*

## International TESOL 2013 Convention

# DALLAS

## March 20-23

**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 e-mail, an attachment, and your personal information by the issue deadline to Lee Martin:  
[lee.martin@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:lee.martin@vanderbilt.edu).



**2013**  
Deadlines

**April 1**  
July 1  
December 1

Issues

**Spring**  
Summer-Fall  
Winter '14

## Collaboration in the School: A Reflective Analysis

Andrea Bontempi  
ESL Instructional Facilitator  
Rutherford County Schools

There is always room for improvement. This attitude has been both my personal and professional approach for as long as I can remember. Through reflection and research, I have gained tremendous insight and affirmation regarding my own years of teaching, collaboration, and professional development; and I look forward to continued improvement and growth as an effective educator.

I count myself blessed to be in a position where I am encouraged to grow professionally and where I work with a team open to collaboration. It was not always this way. Years ago, when I began teaching at School X, it did not take long for me to realize that my ESL department had a horrible reputation and lacked anything resembling a team. I shared a room with the other ESL teacher who admitted that she preferred to work independently. She shared neither ideas nor resources. In fact, one Monday in early September, I arrived at school to find that over the weekend she had moved to another room in the building and had taken all of *her* things with her. The following year when she had moved on to another assignment, I gained all *her* materials (which I then learned had belonged to the ESL department all along). I also gained a wonderful new co-teacher. I share all this detail to demonstrate that I have had first-hand experience with what collaboration is *not*.

What is collaboration? Although this topic has been in the educational literature since the 1960s and is discussed more frequently today, Friend (2000) stated that there has been little evidence of true collaborative understanding and growth and that many of the same questions and issues regarding professional collaboration still exist. However, in the last decade, research about this topic has skyrocketed. Voltz, Sims, and Nelson (2010) refer to Marilyn Friend and Lynn Cook as acclaimed authors in the educational field who define collaboration as a voluntary activity among equal participants that is based on mutual goals; further, it requires sharing resources, decision making, and accountability for outcomes.

In reflecting on how to improve collaboration in School X, I noticed two key factors affecting growth since that first year, both in my department and throughout the school. Abandoned and isolated by my former co-teacher, I used my initiative and personality to build a collaborative relationship with the homeroom teachers of my students, as well as with the other teachers in my hall. Trust and open communication (Roberts and Pruitt, 2009) were developed during conversations pertaining to student progress, test data, and school procedures. While this type of informal collaboration was randomly born out of a sincere desire to improve both my program and the students' academic growth (Friend 2000), it served as a

foundation in building the ESL program at my school. As a result, the students' test scores were the highest they had been in years, and the administration and faculty recognized the growth. I was affirmed as an effective teacher (Wong, 2009) simply by struggling to survive using my knowledge and skills.

During my first year at School X, I participated in the Professional Learning Community (PLC). Although my personal experience was less than inspiring, it proved to be enlightening. Because I was assigned to serve the fourth and fifth graders, I was required to alternately visit each grade level PLC meeting and participate as the ESL teacher representative. The dynamics of the groups could not have been further apart. The fourth-grade group attempted to follow the agenda using a PLC protocol while the fifth-grade group persisted in arguing over every detail. The teachers were reluctant to share their successful lessons and displayed a competitive attitude regarding student achievement, seemingly foreshadowing the latest trends in teacher evaluation. As a result, the latter group remained closed to change, was unable to cooperate, and was ineffective in accomplishing goals (Donaldson and Sanderson, 1996). The following year, the ESL department grew in cohesiveness; I worked with all the grade levels at my school and had the opportunity also to spend time with the second- and third-grade PLCs. The differences in the levels of trust, openness, and cooperation (Roberts and Pruitt, 2009) were "significantly drastic". The younger-grade-level PLCs demonstrated more of a commitment to shared goals. They maintained respect and positively used their communication skills with the members of the group (Friend, 2000). As a result, these PLCs were more productive and successful. The teachers analyzed their data, shared ideas, and prepared their common assessments as a team. They provided ESL and other support teachers with curricula aligned with the state standards and divided into Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) by marking period.

In the late 1970s, the early days of federally-mandated ESL programs, it was common to serve students without the support of other teachers or even a sense of belonging to one school faculty. We were few and scattered among numerous buildings, doing our best to serve our students. As the programs evolved, the teachers in my suburban Long Island school district were afforded the opportunity to meet weekly in order to provide support to one another, develop curriculum, troubleshoot problems, and share lesson ideas (Donaldson and Sanderson, 1996; Roberts and Pruitt, 2009; Wong, 2009). Back then, we lacked not only ESL curricula and standards, but also textbooks and materials. We did, however, have a supervisor who encouraged our collaboration and development of the program. In my experience, ESL teachers working in a pull-out program have always embraced a collaborative attitude out of a necessity to function. After identifying our English Language Learners through a Home Language Survey and an appropriate language assessment, we attempt to work closely with the classroom or homeroom teacher to ensure student achievement. At times, the school psychologist,

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counselor, and related arts instructors are included in our conversations. We often provide assistance and professional development to our faculty regarding accommodations and strategies to use with ELLs. In the early days of ESL, it was also common for me to visit the homerooms of my students and teach a mini-lesson on cultural awareness.

Since that time, the ESL program has developed its own state-adopted textbooks and standards. In addition to meeting our own Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), we have been challenged to continue to build a collaborative relationship with the faculty members in our buildings and district. After a few years at School X, my principal had given the ESL team, then including three teachers and two educational assistants, permission to hold our own PLC meetings. At times, we visited the grade-level PLCs to gather data or share information, but as our department grew, we needed the common planning and reflecting time to maintain and further build our program. Occasionally, our ESL director would call a district-wide PLC. Although this gathering provided an opportunity to share on a larger scale and was tremendously helpful, it would pull us out of our buildings and we would often miss a piece of information that we would have appreciated knowing. In anticipation, we would ask our principal what we would miss, but somehow it was not the same as remaining in the building. Yet, when we would meet as a large ESL department, we were able to troubleshoot common problems, share ideas and solutions, develop curriculum alignments for the new standards, and build trusting relationships – all quite necessary.

Scheduling is one of the challenges to building collaboration (Donaldson and Sanderson, 1996). Other obstacles include factors of space and time, leadership and a supportive collaborative culture, varying commitment levels to the collaborative process, and a lack of understanding of the benefits of collaboration. As I reflected on the growth of School X, I had observed each of these challenges at times either in individuals or at PLC meetings. Initially, I thought that the more experienced teachers were more reluctant to change and resisted the collaborative growth. After all, they had functioned independently for years. However, on further review, I noticed that some of the more experienced teachers were leaders in helping to build collaboration among the other teachers, while some of the less experienced teachers had demonstrated a cynical attitude. While we cannot generalize as we speak about this pattern, we must encourage each individual to get on board the collaboration wave and follow our school leaders as we learn to ride the “waves of change” (Wilhelm, 2008, p.31).

My principal had attempted to create a culture open to collaboration. During my years at School X, we had faculty retreats, key speakers, positive school-wide themes, and opportunities for the faculty members to build relationships with each other. It is interesting to note that

the teachers who participated seriously in these events also were open to collaboration and using differentiation, and they were the ones who were easier to work with when our ESL students were placed in their rooms. While the other teachers may have had good intentions, their attitudes and personalities were less than conducive to collaborative growth (Wilhelm, 2008).

How, then, do we build collaborative relationships and improve delivery of instruction? Obviously, such cannot be mandated (Voltz, Sims, and Nelson, 2010). Friend (2000) states that collaborative skills should be taught and that obstacles can be overcome. Teachers should observe others who are successfully collaborating. Wong (2009) instructs that student achievement will improve when teachers function in structured learning communities. Wilhelm (2008) encourages that although some still resist collaboration, when it becomes sophisticated and teachers share their successes and challenges, group planning actually makes the workload less overwhelming. Roberts and Pruitt (2009) provide self-evaluative checklists regarding collaborative attitudes, shared values, and trust. While we are occasionally required to complete such surveys, there is usually no follow-up. Small group meetings with a trained core team serving as facilitators could be used to improve collaborative awareness and help teachers to see the benefits of moving in this direction. Before we can implement structural change, however, attitudes must be adjusted.

Structurally, there are numerous models that can be used in collaborative delivery of instruction (Roberts and Pruitt, 2009). In ESL, we have had special thematic lessons where we rotated our students among the three teachers during the hour-long class. The students loved it, and it provided an opportunity for us to get to know some of the ESL students whom we did not personally serve. Inclusion teachers have used collaborative models of instructional delivery in recent years where the special education teachers work with their students in small groups while the regular education teacher works with other small groups. When I left School X, it had not yet attempted other models of collaborative instructional delivery (Voltz, Sims, Nelson, 2010). After providing training on how to use the ESL educational assistants in the mainstream classrooms, we often learned that they would stand in the background observing a large-group lesson and monitoring student behavior rather than offering instructional support or scaffolds. Further training, discussion, and perhaps modeling procedures were obviously indicated. Wong (2009) provides a detailed description of a PLC agenda that, when followed, would improve and inspire the teachers in the learning community and would improve student achievement as a result.

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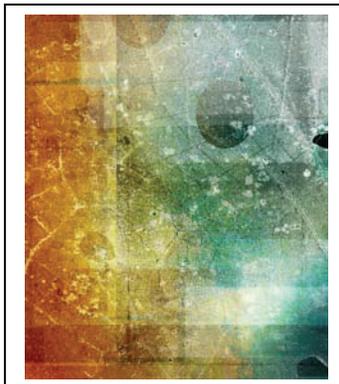
## Children's Literature: Key STEM Component in ELL Instruction

Cary McPherson  
ELL Teacher- Minglewood Elementary  
Clarksville-Montgomery County School System

As a year and a half of participation on the Austin Peay State University MOMENTUM grant comes to an end, I would like to share some of the highlights from this experience. This grant, funded through the state's Race to the Top Initiative, and led by Dr. Ann Assad and Dr. Lauren Wells, was based on a series of workshops that incorporated children's literature into elementary school math and science lessons. The objective was to obtain a deepened content knowledge of Common Core State Standards, and increase achievement in mathematics through better understanding of the core concepts of algebraic thinking, measurement, and data analysis.

The experience in my ELL classroom has been fantastic, especially because my students have been exposed to great literature with visual features that facilitated in the identification of connections between mathematics, science, technology, and literature. As our schools keep focusing more on STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) initiatives, it is important that we as ELL teachers get on board too. By incorporating more science and math-based children's literature into my ELL lessons, I was able to increase my ELLs' confidence in their ability to identify and solve problems. They loved reading stories like *One Hundred Hungry Ants*, *Counting on Frank*, *Two Ways to Count to Ten*, and *The King's Commissioners*. Then, it was easier to focus our instruction on the math or science concepts I wanted to reinforce from what was being taught in the regular classroom.

Learning math and science can be as much fun as reading a good story. When working with our ELLs, choosing the right text makes a huge difference in how engaged and delighted students are about the overall learning experience. In my case, the ultimate goal is for them to develop a love of books and reading. Integrating STEM into our ELL lessons is a great way of supporting our ELL students, and children's literature is most definitely a key element to its success. ▲



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In summary, the development of communication skills, trust, and respect are critical factors in building collaborative attitudes. We must home in on the strengths that already exist and remove possessive attitudes underlying teacher competition. We must be unified in our professional, school, and district goals to educate every child. Team teaching, while requiring additional planning time and organization, would ensure that students successfully learn the standards and meet the grade-level expectations. PLC meetings should be monitored carefully and provide opportunities for teacher growth that will enhance student learning. Ultimately, there is always room for improvement. This educator remains delighted and challenged to be part of the process.

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**The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual SETESOL Conference** settled in the shadows of the Smoky Mountains and at the base of the Knoxville Sunsphere on September 26-29, 2012. The conference provided approximately 500 educators, administrators, and students the opportunity to *connect* educational concepts, instructional strategies, research-based best practices, and collaborative paradigms in ESOL.

Wednesday brought a terrific foursome of presenters, Stephen Stoyhoff, Jan Lanier, Mark Littlefield, and Jennifer Canatsey, who challenged our thinking and encouraged us to draw upon relationships as we serve English learners. The evening concluded with our keynote speaker, **Dr. David Silva**, who encouraged us to reassess the *what, how, and why* we teach in the Age of the Jetsons.

Thursday was an exciting day as first-time conference participants delved into Conference Mapping 101 with Deborah Sams. All conference participants attended a full slate of teacher-led concurrent sessions that reflected educational change and reform, weaving itself through Common Core and Race to the Top. **Dr. Rebecca Oxford** offered a treasure trove of learning strategies. The conference exploded with art, music, and conversation at the Knoxville Museum of Art for **TNT**. Karaoke, Say Cheese Photo booth complete with props, dancing, food, and a mural painting of Knoxville's skyline entertained participants on a **Thursday Nite in Tennessee**.

Friday was a day of introspective lessons inspired by **Becky Guinn**, quadruple amputee and former Alabama Teacher of the Year. Her courage, tenacity, and devotion to overcome obstacles and return to the classroom were a contagion that infected our resolve to plant seeds in every life we encounter. **Dr. Luciana de Oliveira** from Purdue University facilitated a connection between language learning and the K-12 content-area classroom. Finally, we were honored to have three special invited presenters, Amber Warren from Indiana University, and Maria Dove and Andrea Honigsfeld from Malloy College, NY who shared researched-based practices in literacy and collaboration.

On Saturday **Dr. David Vawter** reminded us of the significance of differentiating instruction for the learners we serve. Each day concluded with door prizes in the Exhibitors' Concourse. Throughout the week, participants received letters written by local English learners who shared about themselves and what teachers mean to them. We look forward to continuing the conversation.

A **special word of thanks** to the conference planning team, Danny Hinson, Natalia Ward, Pattie Davis-Wiley, Heidi Stansell, Michelle Shory, and Mary Olivier, for their *commitment and excellence*, to TNTESOL President Sunita Watson for her *friendship, leadership, and constant support*, to webmaster Johnna Paraiso for keeping us *live and connected*, to Dan Schlafer for keeping us *accountable*, and the countless volunteers who faithfully served. ◀



More photos appear on p. 15...

Byron A. Booker  
Knox County Schools, TN  
Conference Chair

## TNTESOL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

In March 2013, TNTESOL will recognize an outstanding TNTESOL member at the 2013 Conference in Memphis. Nominees should be K-12 ESL teachers with distinguished careers in English-language teaching and a history of service to students, schools, and communities. We wish to honor an English-language educator who exemplifies the profession.

If you would like to nominate a candidate for selection, please send the following items to the contact person in your area:

1. The nomination information below.
2. A letter of recommendation with supporting information.

Please include examples from the criteria below to describe the exceptional work of the nominee, but limit supporting information to **no more than one page**.

Please email information to the contact person in your area:

**East Tennessee:** Paula Escobar, [pescobar@clevelandschools.org](mailto:pescobar@clevelandschools.org)

**Middle Tennessee:** Chris Tennyson, [tennysonc@rcschools.net](mailto:tennysonc@rcschools.net)

**West Tennessee:** Angela Rood, [arood@k12tn.net](mailto:arood@k12tn.net)

All nominations must be received by January 18, 2013.

### TNTESOL ESL Educator of the Year Award -- Nomination Information

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

School District or Institution:

#### Person making the nomination

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

#### Teaching

List examples of commitment and dedication, creativity, and innovation in instructional strategies, and how the nominee demonstrates excellence in teaching in the ESL field.

#### Community Service

List examples of advocacy, service activities, and volunteer and civic work that have served students, colleagues, schools, and communities with regard to the ESL field.

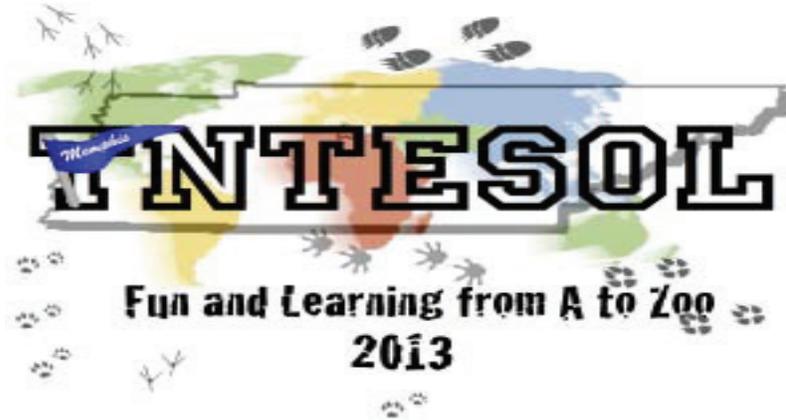
#### Leadership

List leadership activities, professional development, training, and other contributions by the nominee to the field of English as a Second Language.

#### Awards

List awards, special recognition, and remarkable accomplishments of the nominee in the ESL field.

# 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## PHOTOS NEEDED!

Abasi McKinzie  
Shelby County Schools

A slideshow of teachers and students will be shown at the TNTESOL 2013 Conference. We are in need of photos taken of ESL students and teachers. The photos of students may include them in the ESL classroom, regular classroom, or any outside activity (school plays, athletic event, choir, band, etc.) We strongly encourage photos of you and your students. Teachers may want to include group photographs of any special projects, significant events, conferences, or any well-known landmarks.

Please complete the form below and attach it to the email with your pictures. Send all photographs to the following address:

[tntesol13pics@gmail.com](mailto:tntesol13pics@gmail.com)

**Name:**

**Email address:**

**School(s) and School District:**

**Number of photos submitted:**

By submitting this form, you are indicating that you are certain of the following:

- \* You have followed all procedures dictated by your school district in regards to utilizing images of students.
- \* The parents/guardians of the students who are pictured in the submitted photographs have given permission for their children's images to be used in media.

# *Academic Strategies for All Students Integrating Standards for All Learners*

## *TNTESOL 2013 CONFERENCE 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



**MARCH 14-16, 2013 HILTON – MEMPHIS 939 Ridge Lake Blvd.**

Don't miss the 2013 TNTESOL Conference, conveniently located at the Hilton Memphis near I-240, just a short drive from Memphis' most popular attractions. Meet, learn, and tour the nation's #1 zoo!

### Keynote Speaker

**Eli Johnson**, nationally recognized consultant, specializing in adolescent literacy, school leadership, and achievement-gap issues.

### Workshops

- New classroom practices and applications of research in language learning and teaching
- Hands-on sessions that enrich extended-learning experiences
- Integrating the Common Core Standards
- Interactive training sessions

### Connections

Meet and exchange ideas with professionals from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

Friday Night Special Event

Join us for dinner and a tour of the Memphis Zoo, rated #1 in the nation!

[www.memphiszoo.org](http://www.memphiszoo.org)

For more information visit our website at: <http://tntesol.org>

Vendor registration contact: Shelly Misenheimer [smisenheimer@scsk12.org](mailto:smisenheimer@scsk12.org)

Hotel conference rate \$109 per night, use code TE0310, (901) 684-6664

## 2013 TNTESOL Board – Slate of Nominees



### PRESIDENT

**Dr. LaWanna Shelton** has been working in education, PreK-16, for over 25 years. She is currently working as the CELAC Director at Saint Peter's University and continues to teach adjunct for Trevecca University. She is currently developing and designing ESL Teacher Education courses St. Peter's which will be their first Master's in TESL with an emphasis in Special Needs. She received her Educational Doctorate from the University of California, Irvine and California State University, Los Angeles' joint-doctorate program in 2006. She received her BA and MA in Spanish and Pedagogy from Michigan State University and Eastern Michigan University in 1985 and 2001. LaWanna is fully certified in English Language Development and Bilingual Education in the State of California. As a former Bilingual

Leader, Program Specialist, Assistant Principal, and ELL Executive Director, she has developed, designed, and implemented a variety of Bilingual, ESL, and Heritage Spanish courses, curriculum, and programs across the U.S. She has been a TNTESOL Board member since 2007 and is hosting the TNTESOL 2012 conference in Nashville.



### FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

**Lee Ann Kelly** began her teaching profession at an inner-city school, where she taught math in a special- education environment. In 1997 she transferred to Houston High School and taught English and math to special-needs children. For the past seven years, she has been teaching English as a Second Language. Her students range in age from fourteen to nineteen and are in grades nine through twelve. Lee Ann is currently the International Club sponsor at Houston High School and an ESL-mentor teacher. Last year, Lee Ann was selected as part of the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program through IREX. This teacher-exchange program gave her the opportunity to travel to Warsaw, Poland, where she worked in a secondary school. In 2010, Lee Ann received the TNTESOL West Tennessee Educator of

The Year award. She recently served on the Tennessee Textbook Adoption Committee as well as the Tennessee Diploma Project. Lee Ann received her Special Education BS, Curriculum and Instruction MEd, and her ESL endorsement from the University of Memphis. She is married with two daughters and lives in Fisherville, Tennessee.



### SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

**Cary McPherson** has been an ELL teacher in the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System since 2007, and also provides Spanish translation services to the school district. She is a Puerto Rico native, who also lived in Stuttgart, Germany from 2004 to 2006 before relocating in the Fort Campbell area. She obtained a B.A. in Public Communications in 1998 from the University of Puerto Rico. After serving four years as Marketing and Communications Director in the American Cancer Society of Puerto Rico, she returned to school to earn her MA in Elementary Education from University of Phoenix. Driven by community service and the desire to help the diverse student populations, she later obtained an ESL Endorsement from TSU. She is a proud mother of two preteen daughters and a two-year-old boy.

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## MEMBERS-AT-LARGE



**Shelley Archuleta Smith** is currently the Literacy Coach at Eakin Elementary. She has been a Literacy Coach and Consulting Teacher at Andrew Jackson Elementary. Before working at Andrew Jackson Elementary she was the Elementary ELD Curriculum Coordinator for the Office of English Language Learners, in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. After earning her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Special Education from Metropolitan State College in Denver, Colorado she taught five years in the Dallas Public School System. She earned her Master's degree from Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas in Special Education with a minor in Severely and Profoundly Handicapped. In 1996, she moved to Nashville, Tennessee and attended Tennessee State University where she earned her certification in English as a Second Language and her endorsement in Administration and Supervision K-12. She began teaching English as a Second Language at Cameron Middle School in 1996. In 1997, she opened the ESL center at J.E. Moss Elementary

where she provided ELL services for K-4 students for 10 years. Shelley has experience with the following models: Pull-Out, Push-In, Co-Teaching, and self-contained classrooms. She taught third and first grade in self-contained classrooms. She will begin her 22nd year in education, 16 of which have been in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.



**Daiva Berzinskas** has been working in the field of ESL for the last 10 years. Early on in her teaching career, she worked as a Social Studies teacher. In 2003, she moved to Rome, Italy for a teaching position at the American British International School. It was there that she first became introduced to the field of ESL. She developed a passion for language instruction, and when she returned stateside, began working as an English-language instructor at Northwestern Education Center, in Chicago. She also worked at ELS Language Centers at Case Western Reserve University, in Cleveland, OH. Upon moving to Tennessee, she became the Senior Instructor based at the Belmont University and MTSU branches. She also opened the Nashville IELTS testing center in 2008. She is one of four certified IELTS testing examiners in the state of Tennessee. Currently, I am the Director of ELL at The Webb School, in Bell Buckle. Daiva holds a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in TESOL from MTSU. She won the Scholar's Week award for her research on Sustained Silent Reading. This work was also published in the *TNTESOL Journal*.

Her goal is to continue and advance in her work in the field of ESL. She loves working with students and collaborating as a professional. In the future, she plans to pursue her PhD in this field.



**Deana Conn** has a Master's degree in Teaching English Learners and has been a teaching language for 15 years. Deana was instrumental in unifying the high school ESL at Glenclyff in Nashville. Currently, she continues to work for Metro Nashville Public Schools as an English Language Development Specialist. She is highly trained in professional development as a Kagan Dynamic Trainer, Think Maps Trainer, and in SIOP. Deana feels that her secondary experience and perspective would be a good addition to the TNTESOL Board.

**Debra Frantz** has been in the field of education for 16 years, half of those as an ESL teacher. She has her Bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of TN at Martin, an endorsement credential in ESL from the University of Memphis, and her Masters degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Canyon University. She is currently serving as the ESL Instructional Facilitator for Shelby County Schools (SCS), and is this year's TNTESOL Registration Chair. Debra has presented at past TNTESOL. She also presented at the 2012 LEAD Conference sharing the successes of the SCS ESL program, and in January 2013 for Henderson County ESL teachers regarding ESL instructional



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**Shelley Misenheimer** earned her BA in Foreign Language & Literature with a concentration in Spanish at the University of Memphis. She went on to earn a Masters in Teaching in Curriculum & Instruction with a concentration in Elementary Education. She lived and studied Spanish abroad in Madrid, Spain at the University of St. Louis during college. In addition, she holds an ESL endorsement for K-12 and has completed an additional 30 hours above the Master's with a concentration in ESL. Shelley has worked for Shelby County Schools as a substitute, assistant, and teacher since 2000. In 2008, she transitioned from teaching elementary Spanish to ESL at the middle-school level and provides support services at the high-school level. She has received the Collierville Rotary Teacher of the Month award twice. Her philosophy for second- language acquisition is to teach in the target language through the use of immersion, active conversation, visuals, concrete props and technology using a variety of strategies with an emphasis on academic language. The more students hear and experience the language, the more they use the language! Fluency and increased vocabulary are also primary

objectives in learning to speak English. S h e l l e y believes in the teaching and learning of the four modalities of language as one – speaking, listening, reading and writing using academic content and strives to educate and provide resources for content-area teachers to help them achieve success with their ESL students. ◀

## TNTESOL Awards Criteria

For award nomination and application forms, as well as more details, please visit our website: [www.tntesol.org](http://www.tntesol.org), and click on “Development” in the left-side menu.

### Charles Gillon Professional Service Award

Each year TNTESOL presents a Charles Gillon Professional Service Award to a nonmember who has contributed significantly to or supported strongly the field of ESL/EFL and international education. Nominations are solicited from the membership by the Board and ultimately selected by the Board of Directors.

The annual recipient is recognized and presented a commemorative desk item or plaque at the TNTESOL spring conference.

### Gundi Ressin Award

The Gundi Ressin Memorial TNTESOL Scholarship was established by the TNTESOL Board of Directors to provide funds to affiliate members for activities such as special instructional projects, educational opportunities, and travel to educational meetings or conferences. The Gundi funds are provided by a yearly amount in the TNTESOL budget and by contributions from members and friends in Gundi's memory.

TNTESOL members may apply for a Gundi Fund award by sending an application letter to the First Vice-President at least one month before the award is to be granted. The application should state the amount requested (not to exceed \$400), the purpose for which the funds will be used, and an agreement to submit an article for publication in the TNTESOL newsletter upon receipt of an award. Donations may be made to the Gundi Fund when registering for the annual TNTESOL conference or by mailing directly to the TNTESOL Secretary-Treasurer.

### President's Award

The TNTESOL Board of Directors established the President's Award in January of 1999 to recognize individuals within TNTESOL who have contributed to the field of ESL and the TNTESOL organization. The award may be presented annually to a person selected at the discretion of the President with the approval of the Board. The President's Award is presented during the annual TNTESOL conference.

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## TNTESOL Educator of the Year

TNTESOL will recognize an outstanding TNTESOL member at the annual conference. Nominees should be K-12 ESL teachers with distinguished careers in English-language teaching and a history of service to students, schools, and communities. A winner from each state region will be announced, along with the state award winner. (See p. 10.)

## TNTESOL Travel Grants

### Guidelines

Every year, TNTESOL awards travel grants to send the three best sessions at the TNTESOL Conference to Southeast TESOL to represent our state professionals. Awarded sessions will each receive grants of four-hundred dollars (\$400). The goal behind the TNTESOL Travel Grants is to provide a means of financial support for dynamic presenters who may have no other means to go to the Southeast TESOL Conference and to boost morale, build professional interest, and encourage excellent conference presentations every year. ▶

## More photos from SETESOL...



Jennifer Meyer (left), Rutherford Co. Schools with Sunita Watson (right), TNTESOL President, 2012

TNTESOL Journal staff:

Dorothy Valcarcel Craig, Assistant Editor and past editor (left)

Johnna Paraiso, Editor (right)



**TNTESOL Newsletter**  
**c/o English Language Center**  
**Box 0595, Peabody College**  
**Vanderbilt University**  
**Nashville, TN 37203**