Three Rivers TESOL Newsletter

Spring 2020

Who Do We Need? We Need ESL Teachers!

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The struggle is real! Educating English Learners (ELs) in the US is challenging for a variety of reasons! One of those reasons is the lack of teacher preparation programs for ESL teachers who want to be in the PreK-12 setting. Statistically, less than 1% of all teachers in the US are trained to teach ELs specifically, yet we know the EL student population is the fastest growing sub-group in the PreK-12. The National Education Association as well as NCELA estimate that by the year 2025 ELs will represent at least 25% of the public school PreK-12 population. The question becomes are we leaving them behind? Unfortunately, in many instances we are leaving them behind.

One way to assist is to develop and sustain teacher preparation programs that develop bilingual and monolingual ESL teachers. So why do teacher preparation programs matter, and specifically, why do ESL teacher preparation programs matter? Well, great teachers matter! And great teachers matter for our ELs! Research has shown that quality teacher prep programs are imperative to the success of students. A simple Google search will show the myriad of paths one can take to become an ESL specialist, but why? We must legitimize the pathway to ESL training and certification. My statement is nothing new or innovative, but it is an iteration of one direction we should travel in the field of TESOL: advocating for reliable, informed ESL teacher preparation programs that are sustainable and that put ESL specialists on a level playing field with their more traditionally trained classroom teacher counter parts.

Last summer, along with Megan Evangeliste and others from Pennsylvania, we had the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. for the TESOL Advocacy Summit. There we discussed the great challenges facing us when educating ELs in classroom environments across the US. The one concept that kept jumping out to me throughout this 3-day event was, what about ESL teacher preparation programs; where are they in this discussion; why are our voices not being heard loudly and proudly?! Inspiration struck me as I

listened to guest speakers discuss the *Reaching English Learners* Act. This act is meant to help us close the EL achievement gap by enabling a legitimate path to ESL teacher preparation and certification through the reauthorization for Higher Education Act. How wonderful is that?! A way to provide varied opportunities for higher education to provide programs that meet the needs of this ever-growing population. This inspiration then led me to reach out to former US Department of Education Secretary and OELA director, Jose Viana, who after several conversations, actually took time out of his schedule to visit one of my students, Angela Canche, to discuss teaching ELs and preparation programs.

Finally, a way for higher education ESL teacher preparation programs to have a seat at the table. I will be returning to the Advocacy summit this summer despite it being virtual. Our voices must be heard!

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When Thinking About the Future, the "S-C-I" is the Limit: Skills, Community, and Information

By Dawn E. McCormick

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Introduction

If anyone has access to a *Magic 8 Ball*, in-hand or online version, you may have already used it to ask the question, "Do I have a future in TESOL?" Maybe you received the answer, "Cannot predict now," and understandably so. Many of us are wondering about the future of our field and how to prepare for the unknown. Although we cannot easily predict the future of ESL education, we can take steps for our professional growth so that we are better-prepared for that future.

When thinking across teaching contexts, we need to identify key common denominators. For me, three ideas come to mind:

1. Skills: Take stock of your skillset and identify areas of improvement with an eye to educational trends; then, create a plan to improve these skills.
2. Community: Join or increase activity in professional communities.
3. Information: Seek out information to gain a broader perspective on our field.

Skills

Self-assessments can be challenging, but a good first step to thinking about the future. External benchmarks can help.

1. Review the *TESOL 6 Principle for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners* resources available on line or if possible, go a little deeper with one of the books on a more specific teaching context. As you read, identify areas where you may have gaps and where you can improve on existing skills.
2. Read over current job ads in the field (e.g., TESOL International Association's Career Center – Job Seeker, PA-Educator.net). Identify positions that are comparable to your current one and ones that interest you. What are the requirements and qualifications? Think about yourself as an applicant and again, identify gaps and areas for improvement.
3. Consider our schools' recent pivot to remote instruction. What was your response? Take stock of your strengths; what was successful for you and your learners? Examine areas for improvement; what do you need to learn to sustain effective online instruction?

After identifying a skill that you want to build, determine how to develop it.

1. Look for no or low-cost options.
   a. Check publisher and organization websites for free webinars, for example:
      i. Pearson ELT
      ii. Oxford University Press
      iii. IELTS USA
      iv. US Department of State American English
   b. Access resources available through your public or University library.
2. Consider taking a course or seminar through a professional organization like TESOL International Association or a local institute of higher education.
3. Create an Action Research Project in your current position to build your

skills while applying what you learn to your instructional context. TESOL as a field continues to develop, so we must continue to update our skills as well.

Community

This is no time to go solo. Tap into the professional communities in which you are already involved, and if you have been waiting to join, now is the time. I recently attended the EnglishUSA/UCIEP Townhall entitled "The Future of English Language Programs," and Marc Algren, current Director of the University of Missouri Center for English Language Learning, recommended the same strategy: become involved. In addition to our own Three Rivers TESOL, consider:

1. TESOL International Association
2. NAFSA: Association of International Educators
3. EnglishUSA

In addition to learning opportunities and support, professional organizations often have active advocacy teams. By participating in these organizations, your voice can be amplified, so your participation benefits you and others.

Information

In addition to building skills and communities, we have to seek out information in a wider scope. Many of us focus on adding to our information stores on teaching, assessment, administrative skills, and recently remote instruction, but we also need to learn about the variables impacting our field at local, national, and international levels. For adult teaching contexts, consider reading:

1. The PIE News
2. ICEF Monitor
3. The Chronicle of Higher Education

For K-12 contexts, check out:

1. The Pennsylvania Department of Education
2. The Pennsylvania State Education Association
3. NEA

In some cases, tapping into these sources necessitates joining to gain access to all levels of information and can also become additional communities for learning.

Conclusion

When thinking about our future, we need to be prepared for change. What that will be, we do not know, but we can prepare ourselves by learning new skills, connecting to our professional communities, and tapping into information sources. Perhaps then, when we ask the *Magic 8 Ball*, "Do I have a future in TESOL?," the answer will be "It is certain."

Meet the 3RT 2020-2021 Executive Board

Kathy Lipecky, 3RT President

Kathy Lipecky joined the ESL Program at Duquesne University in 2014. As the program's ESL Specialist, she coordinates the peer tutoring program, student activities and placement/benchmark testing among other administrative responsibilities. She received her Bachelor's in English and Journalism at Duquesne University, where she later completed her TESOL certification. She also has a Master of

Business Administration degree from South University. Her interest areas are in curriculum design, content-based instruction and assessment.

Mariana Syrotiak, 3RT Vice President

Mariana Syrotiak is the director of the Office of English Language and Global Training at Gannon University. She has been in the ESL field for about eight years. Before ESL, she managed a program in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, and before that she was the coordinator of a graduate program at SIT Graduate Institute, a program of World Learning. A unifying thread among her several positions is her work with international learners. As a lifelong learner, she has two masters' degrees, a TESOL teacher trainer certificate, and is currently finishing doctoral coursework. Mariana's credentials include: MA in Intercultural Service, Leadership, and Management; MA in Teaching English to Learners of Other Languages; and, PhD (abd) in Organizational Learning and Leadership.

Soyoung Burke, 3RT Past President

Soyoung Burke, Ph.D. is the ESL program coordinator at Lord Fairfax Community College, Middletown, VA where most of her ESL students are US residents. She previously taught ESL to international students at the American Language Institute at IUP and worked as the IEP program coordinator at Saint Francis University, Loretta, PA. She is particularly interested in second language writing, teacher education, identity, and cross-cultural communication.

Michael Burke, 3RT Treasurer

Michael Burke joined Duquesne University in 2013. He currently holds the position of Director of International Student Services in the University's Center for Global Engagement. He earned his M.Ed. and TESOL certification from the University of Pittsburgh. In addition to his experience in the US, he worked and lived in the United Arab Emirates for more than a decade. His professional interests include sociolinguistics, second language assessment, program administration, and educational leadership.

Megan Reiley, 3RT Webmaster

Megan Reiley has a Master's in linguistics and has taught English as a Second Language at the university level for most of her career, including in intensive English programs at the University of Pittsburgh and at schools in Philadelphia. Currently, she is working for an EdTech company, Peerceptiv, that facilitates online peer assessment and review. Her ESL interests are in English for Academic Purposes and assessment.

Megan Evangeliste, 3RT Secretary

Megan Evangeliste currently serves as the International Admissions Coordinator and Adjunct Professor, School of Education, M.S.Ed. ESL/TESOL, at Duquesne University. Megan obtained her M.S. Ed. degrees in Early Childhood Education and ESL/TESOL and will be a PhD student in Special Education at Duquesne University in Fall 2020. Her research interests include identification of learning needs in K-12 ELs, ESL co-teaching methods, and progress-monitoring and assessment tools for linguistically diverse learners.

TESOL 2022 in Pittsburgh!

By Soyoung Burke, PhD

We are very excited to share news about TESOL 2022 International Convention & English Language Expo. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, March 22-25, 2022!

Here is a summary of how the TESOL annual convention is organized and prepared. By reading this, 3RT can host TESOL 2022 with you! This information is based on the 2018-2019 TESOL Team Leader Handbook. Due to uncertainty with the Coronavirus pandemic and cancelation of TESOL 2020, there might be some changes in the 2020-2021 Handbook and future conventions might be organized differently in the future.

It is important to understand different departments and many staff and volunteers working together for TESOL Annual Conventions. Some positions are previously nominated and selected: Conferences Professional Council Chair (CPCC) and Conferences Professional Council (CPC). Besides, other staff joins to work together. They include Executive Director (CEO), Director of Finance, Director of Marketing, Professional Development Manager, and

Conferences Services Department. The director and the staff from Conferences Services Department will be responsible for logistical, contractual, and financial aspects of the annual convention.

Conferences Professional Council (CPC) is responsible for developing a convention program theme and academic program, and recruiting local planning committees, inviting speakers, evaluating proposals and more.

Local Co-Chairs (LCC) will be appointed (with recommendations from the local affiliate) by the CPCC and work with CPC. LCC are responsible for recruiting, supporting, and working with volunteers for the upcoming convention. LCC position typically can be 18 months long.

The duties and responsibilities of the Local Co-Chairs (LCC) include:

- The duties and responsibilities of the LCC may change as technology and convention management methods and techniques evolve and improve. All members of the LCC group will be active members of TESOL.

Current duties and responsibilities for LCC include:

- Shape the goals and activities of the local teams
- Develop leadership and communication procedures within the team and CO.
- Attend planning meetings or participate in conference calls
- Make oral and/or written reports at convention planning meetings, when appropriate
- Meet deadlines, especially with printing materials
- Recruit volunteers as needed

- Collaborate with next year's Local Co-Chairs, as needed
- Submit an evaluation and outline of activities to the CO, along with copies of correspondence, in a written report after the convention, ensure all team leaders also submit a written report after the convention
- Serve, if needed, as back-up proposal readers
- Recruitment of local area speakers
- Serve as liaison to local education authorities and establishments
- Monitor the convention team listserv for their assigned team's activities

There are 8 teams, all of which need 1 team leader. There are usually 2 co-chairs.

8 Team Leaders are needed by the end of 2020! More detailed information and application form will be shared as we get an updated manual from the TESOL International Association.

Volunteers are needed by the end of 2021!

A recruitment form for volunteers will be on the convention website. Volunteers are from local, national and international sources to work at the convention.

Team Leaders work with volunteers. The number of volunteers and hours will be determined based on their needs.

8 areas in Team Leaders include:

1) Bag and Program Distribution
2) Hospitality
3) Educational Visits
4) Tea with Distinguished TESOLers

5) Poster Sessions
6) PreK-12 Day
7) Pre-and Postconvention Institutes (PCIs)
8) Networking Sessions/Teaching Tip Theater

Team Leader Responsibilities are:

1) Shape the goals and activities of the teams
2) Familiarize themselves with the team reports of previous conventions
3) Attend local team leader meetings as scheduled
4) Keep the Local Co-Chairs informed of plans, activities, and concerns
5) Communicate with TESOL Central Office and/or the CO
6) Meet deadlines
7) Recruit, train, supervise volunteers
8) Keep copies of all convention-related correspondence
9) Write and submit a report of team activities to Central Office: Reimbursement for convention related expenses
10) Support for volunteers

Support for Team Leaders and Local Co-Chairs:

1) Waiver of registration fees for prior year convention for shadowing and for hosting year
2) Reimbursement for mileage, parking, supplies, copying, phone, and fax during the planning stage
3) Morning coffee and snack during the convention
4) Listing in the program book
5) Invitation to the Team Leader Appreciate Party

6) Certificates, letters, or nominal gifts of appreciation as determined by the CPC and DCS.

Suggested Time Line

Each team leader will receive its timeline in detail.

	Team Leaders
18 months before: September/October 2020	Accept application form for volunteer Team Leader for TESOL 2022
16 months before November/December 2020	Determine 8 Team Leaders
14 months before	Consult with CPC on themes. Begin compiling information and list for table hosts (distinguished TESOLers)
13 months before	Discuss possible hosts Suggest possible local speakers
12 months before TESOL 2021 (March 23-26)	Determine the duties of team volunteers Shadow counterpart TL at the TESOL 2021 convention in Houston
10 months before	Finalize invitations and confirmation of table hosts; Review the previous year's Team Leader Report for recommendations
6 months before	Consult with Volunteers Coordinator on the number of volunteers needed; Determine procedures for volunteers; **Begin to recruit volunteers** and direct them to each team; Volunteer coordinator for scheduling; Contact all presenters with details; Recruit hosts for the escorted dinners through the 3RT
3 months before	Set up mechanism for Team Leaders for update Volunteer Team about needs
Ongoing	Confirm participation for table hosts; Continue recruiting volunteers if necessary
1-2 months before	Schedule and match volunteers with Team needs
At the convention (March 22-25, 2022)	Oversee all arrangements; keep track of the presenters, no-shows, and volunteers each day. Keep notes of successes and recommendations for the future; Assign tasks for the volunteers and work closely with the next year's team leader
1 month after	File Team report, send a copy to the next year's team leader; Write thank-you notes

If you are interested in becoming one of eight team leaders for TESOL 2022, please share your enthusiasm and interest with one of the 3RT board members. Further announcements will be made as updates from TESOL arrive.

Three Rivers TESOL Report 2019-2020

A. Three Rivers Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages (3RT or Three Rivers TESOL)
1. An affiliate of International TESOL
2. Serving the Central and Western Pennsylvania area
3. Governed by Three Rivers TESOL Constitution (2012)
4. Goals: stimulating professional development, encouraging and improving teaching of ESOL within this area, establishing national contacts through affiliation with TESOL, and providing opportunities for group study and discussion of

problems with confront ESL teachers of this area

B. 3RT Executive Board 2019-2020

	Name	Affiliation
President	Soyoung Burke	Lord Fairfax Community College
Vice President	Kathy Lipecky	Duquesne University
Past President	Suzanne Meyer	University of Pittsburgh
Secretary	Megan Evangeliste	Duquesne University
Treasurer	Michael Burke	Duquesne University
Webmaster	Megan Reiley	Peerceptive

C. Membership 2019-2020

119 members: Student members (21%); individual members (26 %); Institutional members (52%); publisher members (1%)

Institutional members (IEP programs from Chatham Univ., Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne Univ., Gannon Univ., La Roche Univ., Penn State University, and Univ. of Pittsburgh

Publisher member: Townsend Press

D. Newsletters Published 2019-2020

Spring-May, 2019

Summer-August, 2019

Winter-January, 2020

Spring-May, 2020 (current)

E. 3RT Professional Development Activities
1. Professional Development Grant 2019-2020

- Recipient: Sandy Giaella-ESL K-12
2. TESOL Advocacy and Policy Summit, Arlington, VA, June 17-19, 2019
    - Participant: Megan Evangelist (3RT secretary)
3. Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (LESLLA) Annual Symposium, Pittsburgh, PA, Aug. 28-30, 2019
    - Participants: Kathy Lipecky (3RT vice president) and Mariana Syrotiak (Lottery Winner)

F. 3RT Fall Conference

Duquesne University, October 19, 2019

Theme: Reflection in Teaching and Professional Development

Plenary Talk: Reflecting on Our Practice by Dr. Thomas Farrell, Brock University, Canada

25 concurrent sessions and 10 poster sessions

G. 3RT Spring Seminar scheduled (cancelled due to COVID-19)

Chatham University, April 18th, 2020

Theme: Future Directions of ESL Education

Presenters and panelists: Dr. Katharine Burns, Dr. Laura Mahalingappa, Dr. Dawn McCormick, Dr. Susan Rutledge, and Dr. Lilian Savova

H. 2019-2020 3RT Membership and Fees

Membership Type	Membership Fee, Rolling membership, join at any time!	Fall Conference Fee Pay when registering for the Fall Conference
Institutional Member	$150	Early: $15/person Late: $20
Individual Member	$20	Early: $20 Late: $25
Student Member	$15	Early: $15 Late: $20
Publisher Membership	$75	No additional cost to attend

THREE RIVERS TESOL

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Did you miss an opportunity to present at a conference this year?
Do you have interesting research to share with colleagues in the field?

We want to highlight your work in our summer newsletter!

Please consider contributing an article for the 3RT Summer Newsletter. This is an important opportunity to stay connected with our professional community after a time of physical separation.

Please contact secretary@threeriverstesol.org for more information