SETESOL Conference in Richmond!

VATESOL is delighted to be the host of the 25th Southeast TESOL conference in Richmond, Virginia: October 13-15, 2011. See messages from 1st VP and Conference Chair Lily Mirjahangiri and 2nd VP Laura Ray on page 2.

Message from the President

“An earthquake followed by a hurricane. I can’t think of a much more dramatic way to usher in the new school year!

As we settle into the 2011-2012 school year, I’d like to reflect on my past year’s experience serving as president of VATESOL. In this role, I have gotten to know TESOL educators of all levels from just about every corner of Virginia. As I look back on the past year, I see an organization that has grown in myriad ways, and we have much to be proud of. Among the highlights are the following. We had a record number of proposals submitted to, and outstanding attendance at, our fall conference at the University of Maryland last October. VATESOL member Elisa Tucker was selected as one of six individuals worldwide to be recognized as a Best of Affiliates. As such, she reprised her workshop on newcomers at the annual TESOL convention in New Orleans in March. Three of our board members, Tanya Gray, Ginny Clark, and Bob Faychak were nominated as teacher of the year in their respective schools, and Bob took home the honors at Rockhill Elementary School in Spotsylvania County. Under the leadership of Paul Phillips and VATESOL member Audrey Short, our Higher Education SIG sponsored the first annual state-wide writing contest, which

(continued on page 4)
Dear Colleagues and TESOLers!

VATESOL is delighted to be the host of the 25th Southeast TESOL conference in Richmond, Virginia: October 13-15, 2011. Registration is open until September 30 at the regular registration rate of $200. A late registration rate of $220 will be in effect from October 1 through October 14, 2011. Saturday only registration is $100. Registration information can be found on our website at http://www.vatesol.cloverpad.org/SETESOL_Conference_2011.

The conference site is located in the heart of the beautiful historic downtown Richmond with restaurants and shops minutes away. Also, the famous Richmond Folk Festival, which is a three-day free event with music, dance, and food from across America, is held at the same time of SETESOL 201, and it is only few blocks away from the conference site.

We look forward to seeing our TESOL colleagues at SETESOL 2011 in Richmond, Virginia!

Lily Mirjahangiri
SETESOL 2011 Conference Chair

The SETESOL Conference is quickly approaching, and we have some great sessions lined up!

Check out these sessions that follow the conference theme of “Celebrating Culture and Heritage through Language Teaching”:

- Teaching ESL Through Multiculturalism in Babel
- Celebrating Culture and Heritage by Cultivating Physical and Metaphorical Gardens
- Experience America: A Program Increasing Student Interaction and Fostering Interdepartmental Collaboration
- Writing Instruction that Shares Culture, Heritage, and Content: Learner-Created Books
- Celebrating Cultural Diversity Through Writing: A Class Book Project
- Writing from the Heart using Sounds and Sights from the World
- ...and more!

Are you interested in new ways to use technology in teaching and learning? Don’t miss these sessions:

- Wikis for Language Learning: Examining Wiki Use by ESL Teachers
- ESL Review App – Integrating New Technology
Using websites to help ESL students learn academic vocabulary
Using Blogs to Entice ESL Writing Students
If You Use It, They’ll Succeed: Effective Multimedia in ELL Classroom
...and more!

Are you an administrator? Be sure to attend these sessions:
• The Hole in Holistic Rating and Rater Agreement
• It’s the LAW: Accountability in Educating ESOL Learners
• Ban Bullying ELLs!
• Help! We Are Suddenly an ELL School!
• Adding a Low Beginning Level to a CEA Accredited IEP
• ...and more!

Interested in a particular skill area? Plan to attend these sessions:
• Best practices in ESL writing feedback
• Promoting Reading Fluency in Adult ESL learners: Extensive Reading
• Teaching the Four Domains across Content Areas through reading exploration
• The Write Stuff: Getting Students to Write and Read More!
• Increasing Comprehensible Input Through Vocabulary Instruction
• ...and more!

Do applied linguistic research and theory float your boat? Come to these sessions:
• Effects of culture on ESL student questioning
• SLA Impact on First Language Competence
• Language Learning Strategy Use by Colombian Adult English Language Learners
• Arab ESL Students and English Relative Clauses Difficulties: Pedagogic Guidelines
• Applying Brain Research to Develop Culturally and Personally Relevant Lesson Plans
• .....and more!

This is just a sampling of the 80+ presentations we have on the 2011 SETESOL Conference Schedule. Be sure to visit the VATESOL website for a complete list. See you at the conference!

Laura Ray
2011 SETESOL Program Chair
VATESOL 2nd Vice President

Board changes slated – to be voted on at the VATESOL meeting at the SETESOL conference
New board members are in RED.

2011-2012 VATESOL Board
Slate of Proposed Officers and Board members

President: Lily Mirjahangiri
1st Vice President/Liaison to SETESOL: Laura Ray
2nd Vice President: Paul Phillips
Past President and Nominating Chair: Laurie Weinberg
Secretary: Virginia Clark
Treasurer: Kimberley Cossey
Special Interest Groups:
Adult Ed: Daniela Wagner-Loera
Higher Ed: Linda Sanford
Secondary Ed: Angelique Clarke
Elementary Ed: Carol Zurat
Teacher Ed/ Program Admin: Jo Tyler

Regional Contacts:
Eastern: Kathleen Cahoon-Newchok
Western: Pamela Smart Smith
Central: Elizabeth Sexton

Other Coordinators:
Membership Chair: Kay Gude
Legislative Liaison: Denise Ricks
Webmaster: Liz Bowles
Liaison to VESA: Jo Tyler
Newsletter Editors: Nancy Ball, Brendan Downey, Audrey Short
Parliamentarian: Liz Bowles

(Message from the President – continued from page 1)
attracted thirteen student essays from a variety of institutions. We clearly have a lot of shining stars!

I have been truly fortunate to be part of such a dedicated and energetic board and membership. Under the creative leadership of Leslie Bohon and Judy Snoke, our newsletter has provided articles of interest to ESOL providers at all levels of instruction. Webmaster Ross Retterer has worked tirelessly to keep our website up-to-date, and together with membership chair, Kay Gude, he has created a smooth registration process for our upcoming conference. Denise Ricks, our legislative liaison, represented us again at TESOL’s Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C. in June, returning completely charged up after having met with a variety of congressional representatives and TESOL leaders. This year’s board has brought a tremendous amount of energy and a number of new ideas to the organization.

I’d like to thank all of my fellow board members for their many hours of hard work both behind the scenes and at numerous board meetings to get us ready to host the SETESOL conference, Celebrating Culture and Heritage through Language Teaching, October 13-15, to be held at the Omni Hotel in Richmond. Incoming president, Lily Mirjahangiri, has devoted most of her free time over the past two years to preparing for this event, and under her leadership, I expect a dynamic conference that will make VATESOL shine. Details about the conference can be found in Lily’s article.

I am happy to introduce the slate of new board members and am delighted that a number of current board members will be continuing their service on the board. I encourage each of you to get involved in VATESOL in whatever capacity works for you. This is your organization and your contributions are so valuable to its continued success. Consider volunteering at this fall’s SETESOL regional conference or sharing your ideas with your SIG or regional representative. We have so much to learn from each other; it really does take a village! Thank you for such an enriching year. I look forward to seeing you in Richmond in October.

Laurie Weinberg, VATESOL President
Too Soon to Think About Burnout?
by Jo Tyler

“...burn out is so real. Even for my first teaching assignment in an inner city NJ high school, I felt so alone, so unsupported. My own inner strength to succeed in this system as an English teacher was what carried me through. I was told I’d be the last teacher to get books and that those with tenure would get classroom sets of books before I would. Every week I put together stacks of copies of stories, poems, news articles, etc. until November when I received my first set of books.” –Judith B. O’Loughlin, TEIS Community ListServe, August 2, 2011

This quote reflects a familiar story for many in the TESOL field, as posted by a colleague on the TESOL Teacher Interest Section ListServe. The thread contained several experiences like the one above. Several contributors remarked that there is little research in the field about burnout among ESOL teachers. I recently searched a database of all TESOL Quarterly journals published in the past 20 years and did not find a single article addressing this critical issue. A commonly quoted statistic is that about half of all K-12 teachers leave the profession within their first five years. Is this statistic greater or smaller for ESOL teachers?

As teacher educators we are aware of problems like those described in the quote above. But how often do we think about the relationship between teacher education and burnout? At a conference of language teacher educators a few years ago, I remember one presenter who argued that teacher education programs may bear part of the responsibility, because they can overwhelm pre-service teachers with all the things they should be doing in their future jobs—advocating for students, collaborating with and educating content area teachers, monitoring standardized tests and accommodations, preparing VGLE files, keeping up to date on new policies ... In addition, we emphasize the importance of understanding second language acquisition processes and cross-linguistic influences, learning about students’ cultures ... not to mention differentiating instruction using the best practices in the field.

It may seem too soon to be talking about burnout at the opening of a new school year. But it is not too early to be talking about burnout with future teachers in our TESOL courses as they prepare for careers in our field.

Jo Tyler is chair of the Teacher Education/Program Administration SIG of VATESOL and professor of linguistics and education at the University of Mary Washington.
diversity in the college classroom, holistic rating, academic dishonesty, peer reviewing, content reading, and multiculturalism through film (a presentation I look forward to!). These are topics from which we can all benefit. In addition, there are several vendors who will be on hand to discuss products and services that will enhance your classroom environment and help your students achieve English language success. If you are like me, you are constantly looking for tools and tips that will make you a more effective teacher. Where else will you find so much in one place?

Be thinking about what you’d like to discuss during our conference roundtable. There are many issues, challenges, and triumphs we experience in the classroom. Let’s share ideas, techniques, concerns, and victories with each other.

Finally, I have been nominated for VATESOL Second Vice President. This means that we are looking for someone to chair the Higher Ed. special interest group. It is a wonderful way to serve VATESOL and benefit your colleagues. If interested in filling the position, please contact our president, Laurie Weinberg or me quickly. We want to vote on officers in October.

I look forward to seeing you at SETESOL in October!

Paul Phillips has been on the faculty of VCU’s English Language Program since 2008. Paul began his career in ESL/ESOL in 2002 with adult education programs and private tutoring. He holds a master’s degree in Curriculum/Instruction/ESL.

Secondary Education SIG, Angelique Clarke
Angelique_Clarke@ccpsnet.net

Please email me at angelique_clarke@ccpsnet.net or angeliqueclarke@gmail.com with websites that you use in your classrooms, and I will be glad to review them (or submit your review) for the next newsletter. Happy Teaching!

Angelique Clarke is Social Studies and ESL teacher at Meadowbrook High School in Chesterfield. She is also a NCBT.

Elementary Education SIG, Melinda Leitner, Chair
mjleiter@henrico.k12.va.us

Please look for the upcoming Elementary ESOL link and webpage on the VATESOL website! This will be a place where Elementary ESOL Teachers can share lessons, ideas and resources with each other.

We are just beginning this new endeavor.

Adult Ed SIG, Daniela C. Wagner-Loera, Chair
daniela.loera@gmail.com

Teaching Tip Adult ED
Daniela C. Wagner-Loera, Adult Ed SIG Chair

Many students spend hours and hours on their phones; however, they are barely able to spell words correctly. So, why not trick them in combining their interest with skills? There are free apps as well as websites that offer spelling games. You will be provided with up to 9 random letters and you have a certain time frame, usually 2 minutes, to use these 9 letters to make words. Two to three students can play on one phone or computer to make it more fun. Create teams and have them find as many words as possible. Some of these games even offer definitions of the words found.
If a word is spelled incorrectly or if a word doesn’t exist, the computer will not accept it. It is a wonderful icebreaker for any class as students will practice spelling, reading, writing, listening and speaking. One of the most popular applications my students enjoy is Chicktionary (Apple; Bing) which provides chicken and eggs as background of the game. It is a free download and also can be accessed on the computer. Give it a try; but be careful: it is addictive.

Daniela C. Wagner-Loera is an instructor at the English Language Institute at the University of Maryland.

Treasurer’s Report, Bob Faychak
Balance as of 8/3/11 = $27,321.62
Deposits = $19,339.99
Expenditures= $2,150.00
Thank you, Bob, for keeping VATESOL’s finances organized!

Articles by our members

Teaching English Abroad – A Beginner’s Guide

By Jennifer Kuchno
VATESOL Past-President and ESL Instructor,
Zayed University, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Email: jkuchno@gmail.com
Many ESL teachers dream of teaching overseas and are unsure of what is available, but opportunities are available for all ages, experience levels, and degrees/credentials in K-12 education and colleges and universities. In this article, I will offer suggestions for teachers considering overseas opportunities.

Note from Editors: Jennifer Kuchno’s full article can be found on our VATESOL website at: http://www.vatesol.cloverpad.org/. Log in at the members’ login to see her 11-page article with advice and words of wisdom from her own and current living abroad experience. Sections include:

• REFLECTING
• SMALL STEPS
• QUALIFICATIONS
• EXPERIENCE
• MONEY MATTERS
• K-12 JOB TIPS
• HIGHER ED JOB TIPS
• AN INSIDER’S VIEW
• CLOSING

Note: Do you have experience teaching overseas? If so, your VATESOL colleagues would love to hear from you! Write up your experience and submit it to the VATESOL newsletter. VATESOL always welcomes new contributors!