

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

Our *WAESOL Educator* Summer issue has arrived, and we have also finished another school year of teaching. As you might know, I'm a fan of the *Cult of Pedagogy* by Jennifer Gonzalez and she just posted a podcast which I have been compelled to listen as teachers dedicate a lot of time to the field and questions of longevity in the field are on the rise: [Why So Many Teachers Are Leaving, and Why Others Stay | Cult of Pedagogy](#). In her podcast, she shares statistics from a survey conducted in 2021-2022 by the NEA which discovered 55% of currently employed teachers were seriously thinking of leaving their positions, and that number was even higher for teachers of color. That's an alarming number. In the episode, teachers share narratives of both sides; please listen, take notes, reflect, and share your stories with one another. Get the support you need and make the changes that help you be all you can be. Mostly, I wanted to share appreciation for the teachers who gave their time and had to leave, and I want to thank the teachers who have decided to stay. To both, thank you for giving your all, and making big and small differences. A poem by Maya Angelou, "Still I Rise", rings radiantly as a reminder that no matter the route you take, you matter and rise.

Our work is not done, and we trod along. Thankfully, summer is here, and I hope replenishing and rejuvenation are at the top of your checklist. While it has been a trying year for teachers and students due to global headlines—from the Taliban regaining power in Afghanistan, the war in Ukraine, to racist shootings in Buffalo and the tragic loss of the 19 schoolchildren and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas—we must take time to heal. We must take time to process the injustices that impact our communities. We can reconnect with *panchamama* ("Earth mother" in Quechua) and honor the sacred indigenous lands we inhabit as nature helps with restoration. As we teach to immigrant and refugee populations, we are reminded of these tragedies and how they intersect with some of our student populations in different ways. Oppression and violence may be why we work gently through curriculum and may also drive our high expectations to help our students attain literacy to empower them as they navigate and rebuild their lives in the US, where equity and opportunity are not assumed.

This fall our WAESOL Conference theme is Where the World Meets. I hope at this conference you can gain more insight into the intersections that exist, that you can bring your teaching ideas that offer more inclusivity, and that you can learn more pedagogical strategies that can assist you to forge through the facets and difficulties of being a teacher. Also, please enjoy our Summer WAESOL Educator edition: invigorating, professional, this edition of voices will propel you to new places.

Sincerely,

Christina Mitma Momono

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2022 WAESOL President

CHRISTINA MITMA MOMONO has been teaching at the Community Colleges of Spokane and Gonzaga University for 15 years working with international students, immigrant, and refugee students. She is currently full time in the ABE ESL Division at Spokane Community College. You can contact her at christina@waesol.org.

