

Letter from the President

Michelle Roth

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Greetings WAESOL friends,

In these last weeks of 2018, gratitude for this professional community is on my mind.

At her 2018 WAESOL Conference keynote, National Teacher of the Year, Mandy Manning, implored us to think about how educators can work together to help families navigate systemic barriers and to forge better systems for our students--systems that promote belonging and student success. The first step toward more welcoming systems is communication across institutional boundaries. Pre-K-12 teachers, paraeducators, teacher educators, adult basic skills instructors, administrators, researchers, and graduate students all have a home at WAESOL. All of us who serve English language learners have information others need to know, and WAESOL is a great place to share and support each other in the work we do. What a gift! I am inspired by the dedicated educators who come together to share ideas and connect with each other on topics ranging from practical teaching tips to the newest research to advocacy. In challenging times full of change, it seems we knit together more tightly than before, determined to serve our students and each other. As WAESOL members, we are committed to professional development as community service.

As I look forward to 2019, and my coming term as your new WAESOL President, there is so much to look forward to. I am so grateful for all of you who make WAESOL a valuable organization, sharing your passion and commitment--through your conference presentations, your attendance, your submissions to our publication, your nomination of esteemed colleagues for grants or awards, your proposals for project funding, your continued support of our mission, and your membership in WAESOL.

WAESOL board members volunteer to lead our grassroots efforts to advance the teaching of English to speakers of other languages in Washington State, and I am grateful to those who serve or have served. They come from all corners of the state and work at a wide variety of institutions with the common goal of service to our WAESOL community. Thank you to outgoing board members, Randi Freeman and Bryce Smedly. Welcome to new board members, Beth Ankcorn and Audra Lord. Welcome back, Dr. Martha Savage, Megan Nestor, Jeanne-Marie Wright, Nizar Sulaivany, Kerry Clark, Jessica Weimer, and Naomi Hagen. I am thrilled to work with each of you, and grateful for all that you do to make WAESOL possible. A special, personal thank you goes out to our 2018 President, Nasrin Nazemi, who has done a tremendous amount of work for our organization over the last two years, stepping into the role of president sooner than anticipated in 2017, learning on the job, and graciously agreeing to remain on the board as Past President in 2019. Her steady hand has been and will be a real help to all of us. Many thanks, also, to Ron Belisle for his tech support; Administrative Assistant, Maggie Diehl, for taking care of operational details; and to our Executive Director, Dr. Joan Johnston Nelson, for being our institutional memory and guiding star.

Together, we can do so much in 2019. I look forward to sharing it with you.

Happy New Year!

Michelle Roth
2019 WAESOL President

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