

# Letter from the President



Dear Fellow Educators,

This year, I am even more grateful than ever to be an ESL teacher by training and trade and WAESOL President by selection. I work with some of the most dedicated and knowledgeable people in the teaching profession. We understand the struggles that impact students from diverse ethnic backgrounds because we spend time with them in our classrooms, listen to their stories, and have empathy for their experiences. The language teachers and students I have known over the past 24 years have taught me more about resilience and perseverance than any class or personal life experience I have personally encountered. With this in mind, I look forward to the WAESOL Conference on October 21 at Seattle Pacific University in Seattle with its opportunities for dialogue, engagement, and learning from each other.

This fall, the conference theme of Sharing, Reflecting, and Expanding Our Practice promises to allow for a wide range of knowledge and experiences to be shared. I encourage you to consider how you might share what you are doing in your classrooms and the lessons you are learning with the rest of us. I remember as a young ESL teacher going to a conference and learning so many simple to implement ideas that made so much sense but that I wouldn't have thought about if it hadn't been for that opportunity. We all have interests, ideas, and epiphanies that can benefit others in the profession if we will only share.

One such moment that I remember vividly was attending a presentation called "The Cultural Snapshot," which was a project used at Gonzaga in the early 2000s. The concept was so simple, but I hadn't really thought of it in the context of teaching. Essentially, the idea was that if you are new to a country/culture, you tend to take pictures of the things that are unique or different. These differences make excellent food for discussion and elaboration. That simple idea spurred on a plethora of fun and innovative activities for me over the years, being an enthusiast photographer myself. I simply had never thought of bringing that aspect of myself into the classroom, and I wouldn't have if not for attending the conference and engaging with other professionals about how it could be used for teaching.

Once again, I am excited and grateful for the profession that has brought so many challenges and joys to my life. I look forward to meeting and engaging in dialogue with all of you who are able to attend the Fall conference on October 21, 2023. Bring your stories, ideas, and concerns, and let's find ways to expand both our practice and our profession.

Best wishes,

*David Martin, PhD*

He/Him

**2023 WAESOL President**

Sharing,  
& REFLECTING,  
& EXPANDING  
Our Practice

WAESOL

**48<sup>th</sup> Annual WAESOL Conference • October 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> • Seattle Pacific University**