

# LETTER FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT

***Hello fellow educators,***

It's a new year, and we find ourselves still struggling with the longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, wars in Europe, teacher shortages, new immigrant populations, amongst other international crises. It is easy to get distracted and pessimistic about where it is all leading. However, I have hope for a more prosperous year.

This year's face-to-face and hybrid conference Where The World Meets was a step in the right direction, although not without hiccups. While there were awkward moments with technology not cooperating and other concerns to address for 2023, we had a chance to interact with colleagues in a face-to-face (and online) professional setting to learn from each other and feel a sense of solidarity. I enjoyed meeting some of you in the sessions I attended, at the check-in counter, and in the informal conversations in the hallway. It truly did give me hope that we will be okay.

One area I hope to focus on this year is increasing the number of new members, especially those who are students looking to enter the ESL/ELL profession. Learning from each other is essential, and students learning from more seasoned professionals helps build continuity and consistency. Therefore, I will be talking to undergraduate and graduate students and the teachers who work with them to encourage them to share their research through presentations at the Spokane Regional conference, at the Fall WAESOL conference, and in the WAESOL Educator. I hope you will also consider sharing your ideas and research in the Educator.

I also see hope in the opportunities such as WAESOL Online for ongoing professional development. Therefore, I ask for your input into the professional development experiences you would like to see and the ideal timing for such training. In fact, feel free to email your ideas to me at [david@waesol.org](mailto:david@waesol.org). During the pandemic, online trainings drew larger crowds as we adapted to the "new" learning environment and the needs associated with this daunting task. The challenge now is the many directions we are being pulled, which takes us away from our computers and the potential for low-cost training opportunities. Nonetheless, it is an option that will allow us to help support each other.

Maybe the most important hopeful sign is the number of people who put their names in the mix for the WAESOL board this election period. While many states are struggling to get anyone to volunteer, we have a strong contingency of like-minded individuals willing to give back to the English Language Teaching community. This bodes well for the future, and I encourage all of you to consider how you might contribute to the effort.

While we face an abundance of challenges, we have much potential for overcoming the bumps in the road we will inevitably face. Therefore, I remain hopeful for a strong future as a profession and as an organization dedicated to fostering growth for all members.

***Best wishes,***

**David Martin, PhD**

*He/Him*

**2023 WAESOL President**



**DAVID MARTIN** has been teaching for over 23 years in a mix of K-12, adult ESL, and higher education contexts. He is currently a teaching associate professor at Washington State University, focusing primarily on composition. His research interests include teacher/student identities in transition and visual literacy/rhetoric.

