

WINTER EDITION 2023

AZTESOL NEWSLETTER

AZTESOL News is the official publication of Arizona Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. The newsletter is a place for teaching tips, conference news, legislative updates, reviews of books/journals/websites/apps, and articles on all manner of topics relevant to ESL teachers in every setting.



CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:

160 TESOL
professionals across
Arizona



WINTER 2023:

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Dr. Francheska Figueroa is a postdoctoral research scholar at Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at ASU. The focus of her research is equitable education for all students through teacher preparation and professional development. She has a background in second language acquisition with an emphasis on sheltered instruction. As a former high school ELD instructor she has worked with diverse learners and has also worked in the private sector as national faculty for the SIOP Model. She continues to advocate for teachers and learners through ongoing research in a culturally and linguistically diverse context.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dr. Francheska Figueroa, AZTESOL President

Dear AZTESOL Members,

As I reflect on the past few years with the multitude of changes that have taken place and the challenges we have faced globally, I choose to face the new year with optimism. Optimism that we will rise above the challenges and continue to educate all students, specifically multilingual learners to achieve their highest calling. As advocates, AZTESOL is committed to provide the latest updates, resources, support, and collaboration with its members so we can continue to build a strong community of learners. An additional goal that we have this year is to keep AZTESOL members engaged so we can continue to be a supportive community. Therefore, we are excited to announce upcoming additions to the website which will include a professional development library where we will ask you to submit presentations to upload. The library will be housed on the AZTESOL website, and you will have opportunities to learn asynchronously from other members. We will also invite you to engage with members in your area of Arizona during quarterly activities with opportunities to collaborate which we will also add to the website.

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"I choose to face the new year with optimism. Optimism that we will rise above the challenges and continue to educate all students, specifically multilingual learners to achieve their highest calling."

-Dr. Francheska Figueroa

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, CONTINUED

Dr. Francheska Figueroa, AZTESOL President

We are in the very early stages of planning our AZTESOL State Conference and we have reviewed your evaluations from last year's conference with consideration and we will plan accordingly. Once we have decided upon a theme for this year's conference, we will ask you to save the date and consider adding submissions for presentations. Again, we need you to make this year's conference exceptional and we will work very hard to do all we can to support, engage, and deliver dynamic workshops! We will send updates for you to submit proposals so we can begin this new journey together. Our intention will be to include workshops to ensure that you are receiving relevant information to build your repertoire as we continue to support multilingual learners.

Lastly, as we navigate this socio-political milieu where we are often challenged to think about how to effectively support our diverse communities, I think of my favorite quote from a great leader "preservation of one's own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures" ~ Cesar Chavez. Let's work together and strive to be the best example for one another

and our students. And I will do the same for you to be the best example of what it means to be a teacher, learner, advocate, and empathetic listener.

Kindest regards,

Francheska Figueroa, PhD
AZTEOL President



ADVOCACY UPDATE

Brandon Yuhas, AZTESOL Advocacy Chair



The New Year has brought with it some big changes to Arizona's political landscape, and these changes, in turn, bring the potential for big state-level policy changes—some welcome, some not—for the state's English language learners. Most notably, we have a new governor, of course—Katie Hobbs—and Tom Horne has replaced Kathy Hoffman as Superintendent of Public Instruction. After another tough year for students and educators in Arizona, Governor Hobbs has released her executive budget priorities, which include investing in public education (Yay!). Among her budget proposals are the repeal of the universal voucher program (Empowerment Scholarship Accounts) that was signed into law in 2022, which is projected to save taxpayers \$1.5 billion over 10 years; addressing school infrastructure and new school construction; and establishing a new tuition scholarship for "Dreamers," or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) eligible students (for a complete list, see <https://azgovernor.gov/office-arizona-governor/news/2023/01/governor-hobbs-plans-major-investments-build-resilient?emci=f943e837-5790-ed11-9d7b-00224832e811&emdi=09e9eb21-e194-ed11-9d7b-00224832e811&ceid=2157817>).

Among the issues that Superintendent Tom Horne campaigned on, perhaps the most worrisome for k-12 educators who work with English language learners in Arizona's public schools—that is, potentially all k-12 teachers—is the possible return to structured English immersion. Despite what seems to make intuitive sense to many people, that is, teaching students English in English, structured English immersion has been found, over and over again, to be an ineffective and inefficient approach to teaching English language to children of any age. Research has even found evidence of this approach causing students emotional and psychological harm. In 2019, Senate Bill 1014 was sponsored by Senator Paul Boyer (R-Phoenix), passed unanimously in the Arizona Senate and House, and was signed into law by Governor Ducey. SB1014 provided for revisions to Arizona's educational language policy that included several different, research-based approaches to teaching English language learners that school districts and their communities could choose from based on their needs, including dual-language immersion programs. Structured English immersion is in fact still an option that schools can choose. However, mandating English immersion as the sole instructional approach and taking away other options from parents, educators, and students would prove disastrous again.

#INVESTinAZNOW

ADVOCACY UPDATE, CONTINUED

Brandon Yuhas, AZTESOL Advocacy Chair

Finally, importantly, if you are interested in joining AZTESOL's Advocacy Committee, please let us know! One of my goals is to consider ways that busy people might be able to get involved. Although making phone calls and collecting signatures is certainly important and necessary in advocacy work, not all advocacy work needs to look like this. Advocacy can happen in much smaller, less time-intensive ways. More to come on this, but please consider joining us!

Yours for a brighter future for Arizona's students and educators,

Brandon Yuhas
brandon.yuhas@asu.edu

Take action on these issues and more in
[TESOL's Advocacy Center](#)



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-Brandon Yuhas

MEET THE BOARD



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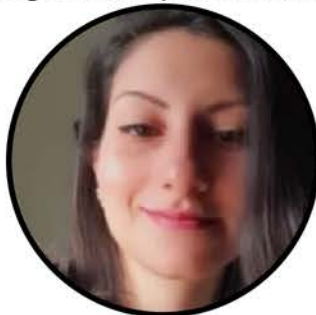
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Visit
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board members
and apply to
join the board!

AZTESOL 2023 CONFERENCE

The **AZTESOL 2023 conference** was held in-person in Tucson for the first time since the onset of the COVID19 pandemic. Participants were thrilled to be back together to reconnect with old friends and make brand new networking connections! The conference theme was **Integrating Language-Literacies in a Multimodal World**.

BY THE NUMBERS

98 attendees

15 Global Attendees
61 Full-Time Professionals
6 Part-Time professionals
2 Retired Professionals
14 Student Attendees

27 presentations

8 vendors



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"Learning as a group with other educators "

"Listening to different perspectives."

"Sharing experiences with teachers and learning about new strategies."

"Networking is always so helpful! The main speaker was excellent."

"I enjoyed Dr. Riek's presentation. I think I will be able to use what she presented in a future ESL writing class "

"Reassessing my beliefs."

What was most valuable about the conference?

MEMBER SUBMISSION: ENGLISH LANGUAGE FELLOWSHIP

Erin Watters
English Language Fellow

“In honor Native American Heritage Month, the Fellow incorporated a special focus on the Hopi culture from her home state of Arizona”

On the weekend of November 5th, 2022, English Language Fellow, Erin Watters of Third Spaces LLC in Tucson, AZ, joined Ugandan Access students, Access teachers, and UNELTA (Ugandan National English Language Teaching Association) representatives for two days of critical thinking about cultural values at the Mutai Secondary School in Jinja, Uganda. During this time, students and teachers discussed and analyzed a variety of American cultural values, making comparisons between the diversity in American values and the variety of traditions and values across Uganda. In honor Native American Heritage Month, the Fellow incorporated a special focus on the Hopi culture from her home state of Arizona, sharing pictures and stories, and engaging students in a variety of traditional Native American games while also learning traditional Ugandan children's games in return. The final session closed with the participants recognizing how our values affect how we view and interact with others, and they developed strategies that can be used to understand alternative perspectives we encounter.



MEMBER SUBMISSION: ENGLISH LANGUAGE FELLOWSHIP

Erin Watters

English Language Fellow



Erin Watters is a professional educator and business coach. She has spoken at conferences worldwide on language assessment, curriculum design, building communities of practice, and techniques for effective teaching. Combining a business background with methods for EFL and intercultural competencies, Erin provides unique insights into professional development and community-building practices in the classroom. She has been a three-time English Language Fellow with the US Department of State English Language Programs and continues to participate as an English Language Specialist providing teacher training and mentoring globally.

Grants and Awards

Available to AZTESOL Members

In an effort to serve our members in the most fiscally responsible way, the AZTESOL board has approved the allocation of **25% of the organization's annual revenue** to scholarships, grants, and awards for members. At the moment, no awards are available, but please stay tuned for those! They will be published soon! Refer to our webpage <https://aztesol.org/develop/grants-awards/> and the links found there for more details.



Looking for something else?

Visit <https://www.tesol.org/enhance-your-career/tesol-awards-honors-grants> for more awards, honors, and grants available to TESOL professionals like yourself!



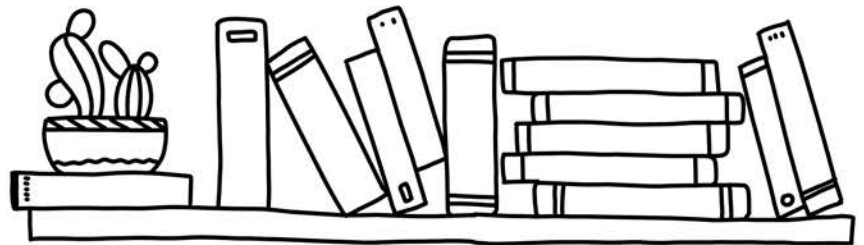
GRANTS AND AWARDS

COMING SOON!

AZTESOL Professional Development Library

We are excited to announce an upcoming PD library which will be housed on the AZTESOL website. We hope to host videos, materials, teaching tips, and other content by you, for you! Please consider uploading your presentations so we can all learn how to better support multilingual learners together.

Stay tuned via email and social media to learn more!



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Newsletter submissions are accepted on a continuous basis by filling out our [AZTESOL Newsletter Submission Form](#). Please visit AZTESOL.org to find out more information about how and what to submit.



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Open positions:

- Vice President
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See position descriptions and submit your CV & cover letter at

<https://aztesol.org/join/join-the-board/>