Attendees of the Spring Workshop on February 9 show their love for teaching English and being part of NM TESOL. Read more about the workshop on p. 2.

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Spring Workshop

On February 9, 2019 NM TESOL held its Spring Workshop in Smith Brasher Hall on the Main Campus of Central NM Community College. 46 colleagues from around the state attended the half-day event. Read more about the sessions below.

Xiaofei Rao and Wenjie Wang from the College of Education at NMSU presented a session on Cultivating Information Literate ELLs in the University EAP Classroom: A Project-Based Approach. They described a four-week research project that used English medium instruction (EMI) with a focus on cultivating information literate students. The presenters shared and discussed the students’ written responses from reflective journals and findings that recorded their academic English learning.

Laura McIndoo from CNM presented a session titled: The Color Vowel Chart Basics: A Sound Approach to Pronunciation. The Color Vowel Chart is a pronunciation tool which enables teachers and learners to talk easily and accurately about the key sounds of English. The workshop presented the effective use of the Chart. Participants left with photocopiable resources to use in their classes to support their learners’ English pronunciation.

David Williams from CNM presented a workshop on teaching The Elements of a Paragraph. The workshop offered a hands-on approach to teaching the concepts of topic sentences, major and minor details, and transition words.

CNM tutors Katrina Crespin, Taffy Epler, and Miles Kulas presented a session on Facilitating ESL Conversation Groups in 2019. In their workshop they presented strategies for ESL conversation facilitators to support and increase ESL students’ sense of acceptance during a time of social uncertainty for immigrants.

Claire Schneider from Santa Fe Community College presented a session on Reading Resources and Activities for Lower-Level ESL Students. The session included printed and online resources that promote engaging and interactive strategies such as word games to warm up and review previous vocabulary, dictation, reading activities, and a self-assessment chart to encourage independent vocabulary learning and evaluation.

Amy Christensen from CNM presented a workshop on Teaching Critical Thinking Skills More Creatively. She used Edward de Bono’s “Six Thinking Hats” tool to critically analyze a problem and come up with solutions. Participants experienced the approach in an engaging demonstration session.

Workshop attendees had fun learning about de Bono’s thinking hats.
Meet the NM TESOL Board Members

Amy Christensen, NM TESOL Co-President

Amy Christensen has been teaching ESL and ESOL at Central New Mexico Community College for 17 years. She was a U.S. State Department English Language Fellow in China in 2011-12 and an English Language Specialist in India in 2015 and in Vietnam in 2017. She taught for the Economics Institute in Boulder, Colorado where she worked on short and long-term business English teaching assignments in Indonesia, Korea, and Vietnam.

Prior to Colorado, Amy spent a year teaching at a university in Mexico and a year teaching in a private language school in Spain. She has a B.S. in Business Administration with a major in Finance and a M.A. in TESOL. She is currently experimenting in making soap, and she firmly believes that green chili should accompany every meal.

Laura McIndoo, NM TESOL Co-President

After receiving her BA in Spanish from the University of Vermont and MA in TESOL from St. Michael’s College in Vermont, Laura started her teaching career in Kraków, Poland. She taught English and Pedagogy at Gama Bell Teacher Training College for four years. She and her husband moved to Albuquerque in 2002, where she started teaching ESL at Central New Mexico Community College. She taught part time for ten years while starting a family, and in 2012 she started teaching full time.

At CNM, Laura has the opportunity to teach all levels of ESL to immigrants and refugees from all over the world. In addition to her classes at CNM, Laura is a Master Trainer and graphic designer for The Color Vowel Chart. In 2013, Laura created Color it out!, a pronunciation literacy card game based on the Color Vowel Approach. Since 2016, Laura has been collaborating with Blue Canoe in Seattle as an ESL consultant, working to bring her card game to life as an app. Laura currently lives at the base of the Sandias in Albuquerque with her husband and two teenagers. In her free time, she enjoys working in her pottery studio.

Claire Schneider, NM TESOL Secretary

Claire holds degrees in Multiculturalism and Human Services, and a TESOL certificate from the School for International Training. She grew up in South Africa, and has also lived in Europe and Asia. Attracted by the cultural diversity, history, and natural beauty of Santa Fe, she and her family moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 2001.

Claire is an ESL instructor at the Santa Fe Community College. She also worked as a community connections liaison, organizing activities outside the classroom to increase students' English learning opportunities and connect them to the broader local community. Claire is the director of a small, private language school in Santa Fe, Language Matters that focuses on classroom and experiential learning.

She is the co-author of a book chapter in Teaching the Pronunciation of English: Focus on Whole Courses published in 2017.
Dean Sundberg, NM TESOL Treasurer

Dean is from Oakland, California from a family that loved traveling the western United States. During his childhood he became intrigued with other cultures and languages, most particularly Native American. After graduating from California State University with a degree in Anthropology and Elementary Education in 1974, he began an 18 year teaching career of teaching elementary school on the Navajo Nation. During this time, he strongly endorsed the Navajo language, culture, and history in the classroom and learned quite a bit of Navajo. Dean studied Navajo Bilingual Education, which included English as a Second Language at Northern Arizona University.

He earned a master’s degree in 1990 while studying in the doctorate program of Educational Linguistics at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Dean left teaching in 1994 and worked in the private sector in Phoenix and later in Albuquerque, Dean is the author of two books Dinétah: An Early History of the Navajo People and Red Shirt, the Life and Times of Henry Lafayette Dodge. Dean has taught ESL to refugees and immigrants at Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado Springs and at Catholic Charities of New Mexico. Presently he works for Albuquerque Public Schools.

Judith Balazs Tomasson, NM TESOL Newsletter Editor

Judith grew up in Romania in an ethnic Hungarian community and moved to New Mexico in 2001. She is fluent in four languages: English, Hungarian, Romanian, and Spanish. Judith holds a BA in Secondary Education with TESOL Endorsement and an MA in Organizational Learning and Instructional Technologies with an emphasis in Distance Education from the University of New Mexico. Currently she is pursuing a Ph.D. in organizational learning. Her research interests include the learning organization, quality systems, and faculty development in higher education.

Judith has taught English as a second language, integrated reading-writing, and college success experience courses at CNM since 2006. In the addition to teaching, she serves on institutional assessment and strategic initiative teams and has served as a Baldrige Examiner for Quality New Mexico since 2015. Judith loves spending time with her two daughters, being a soccer mom, dancing, and designing.

Join It’s easy to become a member of NM TESOL!
Questions? Contact us at nmtesol@gmail.com
By Amy Christensen

I attended the TESOL conference in Atlanta, Georgia along with over 6,500 teachers from around the world. It was difficult to choose which workshops to attend, given that over 1,000 were offered. I chose to participate in several workshops on using drama in the classroom because I have limited experience in this arena — unless you count the drama of raising two teenagers!

My top three take-aways from the drama workshops were:

**Using drama is fun.** You can really inject some humor into your teaching by incorporating some theatre improvisation games into your lessons. One game is to stand across from a partner and start with a generic statement. The partner responds with “Yes, and…” to continue the improvisational conversation. For example, Partner A says, “It sure is windy in New Mexico”. Partner B might say, “Yes, and it is also very dry” to which Partner A might reply, “Yes, and it is still the best place to live because we have green chile”, etc.

Another entertaining game using the same format was the **exaggeration game** where Partner A makes an outrageous claim. Partner B must respond with “Really? Well, I…” in an attempt to top the original claim. For example, Partner A might claim, “I have a million dollars”. Partner B might reply, “Really? Well I have ten million dollars and 53 cats.” and so on.

Check out Richard Silberg’s website for many more terrific drama lessons.

**Using drama forces students to take risks with language in the classroom.** One workshop showed how to use a “Happily Ever After” project to practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The project starts with reading a traditional rendition of Little Red Riding Hood. Then, the class read and analyzed Robert Dahl’s poem “Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf”. Next, groups took turns practicing reading the poem aloud with each person assigned a stanza. Next, they watched Monty Python’s video on Little Red Riding Hood. They acted out both stories and finally wrote an alternative ending to a fairy tale of their choice in small groups. The students performed these alternative fairy tales in front of their classmates.

**Even simple drama techniques can enliven your classroom.** In one workshop, we practiced reading a short paragraph aloud using different voices like whispering at the beginning of the paragraph and then getting louder and louder by the end. We also used a high voice, a low voice, a baby voice, a fast pace, a slow pace, and a robot voice to read the same paragraph. Granted, this is not how people generally speak, but the value in this activity seemed to be that we were all laughing and having fun with the language. I think we all want to lower the affective filters that our students bring to the classroom and encourage them to have fun with their language learning.
NM TESOL envisions bringing together and supporting English language educators throughout New Mexico, strengthening instruction for English language learners at all levels, and providing leadership and advocacy for both.

The mission of NM TESOL is to:
- promote networking and collaboration among NM TESOL members and colleagues
- provide professional development opportunities for English language teachers, tutors, and administrators
- represent our teaching and learning community to policy makers and the general public.

Keep in touch with us at [https://nmtesol.org/](https://nmtesol.org/) or follow the updates on the [NM TESOL Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/NMTESOL).