

WITESOL NEWSLETTER



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UPCOMING EVENTS

* Summer Meet Up Your Choice!

If you're interested in hosting a meet up in your area, contact the board with a date and location. We will help you spread the word!

* TESOL Webinars

TESOL International Association is planning a webinar series on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in September, followed by a series on Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching in October. We look forward to sharing additional details for these events in the coming weeks.

* WITESOL Fall Conference

November, 14, 2026
WITESOL is excited to host it's annual conference in Verona, WI. More information is included on page 4 of the newsletter.

A Busy Board

In mid-April, board members traveled to Milwaukee from all corners of the the state (and joined virtually from Argentina!) to gather and partake in a Board Retreat. The team conducted their monthly meeting in person, discussing the results of the Writing & Art Contest, past and upcoming conferences, and future marketing strategies. The afternoon work session was split into two sessions; one subgroup began planning for the fall conference, while the other group reviewed the current constitution and discussed potential updates.

There are many moving parts in conference planning and preparation; it was nice to physically sit at the same table and talk through the logistics.



The committee made great headway in solidifying the conference theme, confirming keynote speakers, reviewing the schedule of the day, and more.

The constitution committee shared the updates that they'd like to make to the constitution, which will be presented to WITESOL members at the fall conference.

After seeing each other in tiny boxes on a screen for most of the year, meeting in person was a much-appreciated change of pace. Many thanks to Maria Hickman and Marcia Mihdawi for planning the retreat.

Message from the Editor

I'm pleased to hear the feedback that moving to a quarterly newsletter has been a positive change. I hope to collaborate with you to highlight the amazing work going on throughout our state to support multilingual students. As you reflect on the past year, please consider emailing a story or project to be featured in an upcoming newsletter. No story is too big or too small! I hope you take time this summer to slow down, rest, and relax! You deserve it!



Katie Worpel
Newsletter Editor

Wisconsin Representation at TESOL International

Story and photos submitted by Chelsea Olsen

Attending the TESOL International Convention was an incredibly joyful experience! The convention took place in Salt Lake City, Utah and I attended events from March 24-26. It was my first time attending in person and also my first time presenting. It had been a career goal to present at “big TESOL” and with the encouragement of the past-president, I submitted a proposal for a “Best Of Affiliates” presentation and was ecstatic when it was selected. Even better was getting to share about a year-long project I facilitated with my Newcomer multilingual learners from my rural school district in Northeast Wisconsin.

The presentation highlighted bulletin board displays created by students for each heritage month during the school year, including Latino Heritage Month, Indigenous Heritage Month, Women’s History Month, Black History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The project culminated in a showcase of their project in a Spotlight on Learning series in front of the Board of Directors of the school district and the students’ families. Students shared about the project in both English and their home languages (French Creole, Vietnamese, and Spanish from Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Ecuador).

Attending the TESOL conference with my fellow colleagues on the board of WITESOL was so special in that we were able to spend time together, support each other at our presentations, and learn and grow together as educators. It was also an incredible time to network with educators from around the globe. While attending the Affiliate Leader Workshop, working our Affiliate Booth, and attending the Affiliate Dinner, I was able to connect with colleagues from the US (NYTESOL, OhioTESOL, MITESOL, and New MexicoTESOL), as well as TESOL organizations from other countries (ArgentinaTESOL, ColombiaTESOL, PanamaTESOL, MexicoTESOL, UkraineTESOL).

In my unique case, I flew into the States from where I am living in Argentina and was accompanied by friends and colleagues from ArgentinaTESOL. In true cultural exchange fashion, I was representing both my Wisconsin roots and my new home of Argentina.

Adeline De Angelis and Jiahong Wang also attended TESOL International with Chelsea.



CHELSEA HAS KINDLY SHARED HER PRESENTATION WITH US. YOU MAY VIEW IT BY CLICKING THE LINK BELOW.
Resource: [Canva Presentation \(slides\)](#).



Meet the Board President Elect: Chelsea Olsen

Chelsea Olsen is our current President Elect and will follow in Natalija Krsteva's footsteps as President of WITESOL. Chelsea was first inspired to work with diverse learners through an internship at the Refugee Development Center in Lansing, MI, where she worked as a teaching assistant in adult literacy and language classes for recently settled refugees.

Chelsea is most passionate about culturally responsive teaching and bringing students' identities, cultures and languages into the classroom. Her favorite part about working with multilingual learners is the connections and community

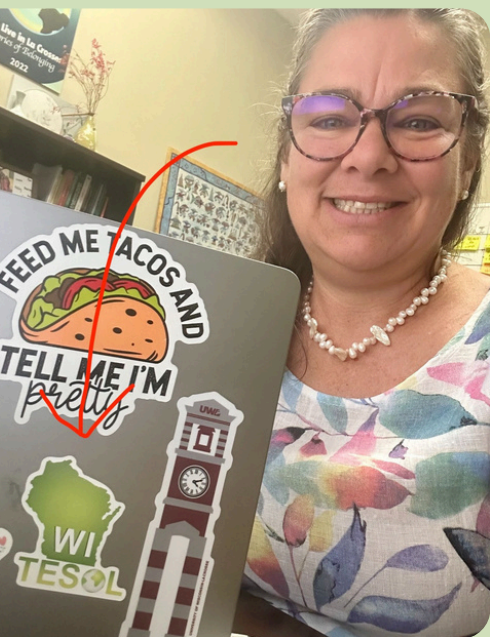
that is created with students and their families.

Currently, Chelsea is out of the country for her second year as an English Language Fellow through the US Department of State. As a teacher trainer in Salta, Argentina, Chelsea designs and facilitates workshops to support teachers in their professional development. She also leads cultural events and co-creates projects with teachers.

Upon reflecting on her journey, Olsen writes, "It feels like a full circle moment. I went into my first WITESOL conference not knowing anyone. I was looking for community and felt inspired to pursue a dream. And now, here I am!"



Past President: Heather Linville



As Past President, Dr. Heather Linville assists the current President as she transitions into the new role. Dr. Linville also updates the WITESOL website, facilitated the Writing & Art Contest, and takes the lead on many other tasks, all while balancing teaching TESOL Methods courses at UW La Crosse.

From an early age, Heather knew the value of learning other languages due to her mom's upbringing. She has always enjoyed interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. These values encouraged Heather to become a Spanish teacher.

Later on, Linville transitioned to supporting migrants when they moved to the US. Now, Linville shares, "As a teacher educator, I love opening up that world for my students."

For as interesting and rewarding as it is to work with multilingual students, Heather also recognizes the difficult side. She writes, "the hardest part is knowing that the journey of a migrant and language learner is tough. We can only prepare them the best we can for all their learning."

While Linville has done a lot of research on advocacy of MLs, an area where she's looking to learn more is how teachers can use AI responsibly and effectively.



2026 Fall Conference

The WITESOL Board is pleased to announce the theme for the 53rd annual conference is **Practice with Purpose: Multilingual Educators Pushing Back and Moving Forward**.

If you are interested in presenting at this year's conference, please [view the guidelines and submit your proposal with this link](#). The deadline to submit a proposal is **June 30, 2026**. If you have other questions, please contact Adeline De Angelis at wisconsintesolconference@gmail.com.

We are also thrilled to announce our two **speakers: Jo Napolitano** is our keynote speaker, and the author of one of the Advocacy Book Club book studies, *The School I Deserve: Six Young Refugees and Their Fight for Equality in America*. **Alondra Garcia**, President of WIABE, is our plenary speaker.

If you know of others who would be interested in attending our conference but are not yet members of WITESOL, please pass the information about this opportunity along! We look forward to seeing you on **Saturday, November 14** at **Verona Area High School!**

Purposeful Pedagogy: A Series by UW Green Bay Students

In collaboration with Jiahong Wang, a WITESOL Member at Large and professor at UW Green Bay, we are excited to use this corner of the newsletter to feature projects created by students in both undergraduate and graduate-level teacher preparation courses.

The first project we would like to share is a digital Strategy Notebook created by Mazda Noorzad, which provides 25 strategies related to disciplinary language and literacy. We hope you might find new strategies to add to your own teaching practice.

Resource: [PDF of Digital Strategy Notebook slides](#)

The second project feels a bit more personal, as Mazda presents an autoethnographic reflection on several incidents from her own life experience, discusses the concept of cultural and linguistic capital, and shares implications for her personal teaching practice.

Resource: [Canva presentation link with slides and video](#)

We would like to extend our thanks to Mazda Noorzad for allowing us to share her work with you all. Mazda, we appreciate your willingness to share your experiences with us. We all have something to learn from you! Thank you!

Advocacy Corner

Advocacy Action Days

Natalija Krsteva will be attending Advocacy Action Days in Washington, D.C. later this month. The event is hosted by both TESOL International and NABE. If you are interested in learning more about the priorities and the work in which Natalija will engage, please visit the [2026 TESOL-NABE Advocacy Action Days website](#).

Book Club

The advocacy book club has paused for the summer. More information will be available at the beginning of next school year.

If you are interested in joining in the Advocacy efforts, please contact the Advocacy Chair, Melanie Schneider.

Email: schneidm@uww.edu

What's on Deck?



NEW FOR 2026-2027: Instead of taking place in the winter, the WITESOL Writing & Art Contest will be moved to the fall next year. You will receive more information at the beginning of next school year with the theme and submission information. We hope to highlight winners at our conference in November.





Congratulations to our Writing and Art Contest Winners!

We would like to congratulate the 30 students who entered the Writing & Art Contest this year. The theme this year was “Hope! Joy! Dreams!” There were 13 art submissions and 17 writing submissions from students in Fort Atkinson, Racine, and Rice Lake.

If you haven't yet seen the Facebook post highlighting the winners, you can view them here:

[Art Contest Facebook Post](#)

[Writing Contest Facebook Post](#)

The booklet is also posted on the WITESOL website. It is also linked here:

[2026 Writing & Art Contest Booklet](#)

We would like to extend our gratitude to the judges and to Heather Linville for facilitating the contest!

WITESOL

Wisconsin Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

The WITESOL Board will break for the month of July and may not respond immediately to email inquiries due to domestic and international travel commitments.

Please note: the deadline to submit a **conference proposal** is June 30th. The information and proposal submission form are linked on page 4 of this newsletter.

We also look forward to sharing more information with you regarding the change to the **Writing and Art Contest** in the fall. We hope you will leverage this opportunity to build community amongst your class(es) at the beginning of the new school year.

Contact the Board

President: Natalija Krsteva

Past President: Heather Linville

President Elect: Chelsea Olsen

Secretary: Matt McParker

Treasurer: Marcia Mihdawi

Advocacy Chair: Melanie Schneider

Member at Large: Adeline De Angelis

Member at Large: Maria Hickman

Member at Large: Jiahong Wang

Member at Large: Katie Worple

To contact any board member directly, please send an email to witesolboard@gmail.com. Thank you!

Send us a Story!

Would you like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter? Share a project, teacher tip, or other ideas! Submit your story and a photo to witesolboard@gmail.com.

