Dear ORTESOL Member,

We hope your fall has been as busy and as exciting as ours has been! In our most recent ORTESOL Board Meeting, we voted to approve a brand new position on the board: Advocacy Chair. The Advocacy Chair will be responsible for overseeing all activities related to advocating for ORTESOL members to improve working conditions and employment standards with the ultimate purpose of ensuring that all English language learners are provided optimal learning experiences throughout the state. We are very excited for this new position and we look forward to this fall’s application and election process to fill this position, which will start in January 2017.

If you are interested in meeting educators from other contexts around the state, advancing your own professional experience, and contributing your skills in communication and planning, consider applying for a position with the ORTESOL board. There are over a dozen different roles on the board (though not all of them will be open this year). Chances are, you can find a role that fits your talents and interests. Whether you want to advocate for working conditions in the field, represent teachers in adult education programs, or plan our next workshop, there is a role for you. Watch for elections information in your inbox. If you have questions before then, feel free to send an email to info@ortesol.org or read more about the different positions at ortesol.org/about.html. You can also attend the session at the ORTESOL Fall Conference called “Serving on the ORTESOL Board” to meet current ORTESOL leadership and ask more questions. We also highly encourage all board members to attend our annual Open Board Meeting, which will be held immediately following the last conference sessions.

We are very much looking forward to this year’s Fall Conference, November 18th and 19th at PCC Sylvania. We hope to see you there!

Jen Sacklin
ORTESOL Vice President

Jen Sacklin teaches ESL at Lane Community College. She has an MA-TESOL from PSU and is interested in how identity and social justice intersect in the classroom.
Hey, ORTESOL Members! (That's you reading this!)

Summer in Oregon is one of the most beautiful times of year--so it's no wonder the newsletter received fewer submissions than in past quarters of 2016. Everyone was hanging out in the sunshine! Here's a reminder that we want to hear what you are doing with your students or with your colleagues--and it takes only 250 to 500 words to do it (that's only like 30 minutes of work)! Plus, photos and graphics are always welcome--they make this publication fulfill its goal of reflecting ESOL in all of Oregon.

--The Newsletter Editor

Summer Recap: ESL in Oregon

Something to talk about: Witnessing US Track and Field History

STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON’S AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE ATTEND THE USA TRACK & FIELD OLYMPIC TRIALS IN THEIR ELECTIVE COURSE, "CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSION"

The USA Track & Field Olympic Trials were held this summer in Eugene, Oregon on the University of Oregon campus at historic Hayward Field. The Fan Festival was free to all who wanted to enter as long as you went through the security gates. It was held from June 30th to July 10th and hosted by TrackTown USA.

This summer the American English Institute Intensive English Program began a new elective class called Current Events Discussion. In the class, which meets twice a week for two hours each time, we discuss current events happening in the news and high interest topics to the community. On July 6, 2016, we took a small field trip outside of the classroom to the Fan Festival and were able to watch the finals of the Women's Hammer Throw at about 3:30 pm. It was a free day, so it worked out really well. Students collected free samples from the booths, took pictures and bought Nike merchandise. Then, we returned to the classroom to discuss what we saw and the benefits of sports to all of the companies at this event. It was a great experience for all of us.

Contributed by Robin Rogers, UO AEI

STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON'S AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE ATTEND THE USA TRACK & FIELD OLYMPIC TRIALS IN THEIR ELECTIVE COURSE, "CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSION"
Twenty-three international Fulbright scholars from around the globe called Portland home this summer as participants in the Fulbright Pre-Academic English Program in the IELP at Portland State University. This is the second summer that the IELP and PSU have hosted this group.

The scholars sharpened their graduate-level reading, writing, research, and oral communication skills over the six weeks before heading to masters and doctoral programs at universities around the United States. Fulbright program instructors were Phoebe Daurio, Rebekah Disbrow, Julia MacRae, Linnea Spitzer, and Gwen Heller Program. They were supported by three excellent graduate program assistants: Tara Anderson, Nader Beltiaf, and Rima El Abdali. Anderson and El Abdali are in the MA: TESOL program at PSU.

In addition to their coursework, the scholars had many opportunities to explore the Pacific Northwest with trips to Seattle and the Oregon coast with Kristi Kang, the IELP Student Development Manager, in the lead. They also visited Camas, Washington, to experience small-town American life, and several of the students gave culture presentations at a senior living complex in downtown Portland.

Said one of the scholars, “I was expecting the program will be only academically concentrated principally--it is--but there is also a whole introduction to the American culture and values through social activities that made the experience more exciting. After this I cannot imagining starting the Graduate Program at Penn State without the IELP, and I feel very lucky.”

This activity is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by the Institute of International Education as part of its Fulbright Program, the U.S. government’s flagship international exchange program supported by the people of the United States and partner countries around the world.

Photos from the 2016 Fulbright Program by Gwen Heller Tuason
Summer Recap: ESL in Oregon

Lewis & Clark College Selected to Offer EducationUSA Academy

JULY 11-29, 2016: INAUGURAL ACADEMY HELD FOR NINE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN PORTLAND

EducationUSA, a U.S. Department of State network, connects with over 400 advising centers for students in over 170 countries. It encourages international students ages 15-17 to pursue higher education opportunities in the United States.

Academy students take classes in English language, prepare for the application process and their future studies at universities in the United States, and participate in cross-cultural experiences as they learn about American culture and other Academy students’ cultures. EducationUSA Academy is administered by World Learning as part of their Exchange and Training focus.

The Academic English Studies (AES) Department at Lewis & Clark College was the only program in the Pacific Northwest and one of ten colleges and universities nationwide selected to offer an EducationUSA Academy. Nine students participated in the inaugural program, held from July 11-29. They came from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Japan, Russia, and Thailand.

Students were active and productive during the three-week program. They studied English language in courses taught through content-based instruction. In addition, they worked on the Common Application, which is now used by approximately 700 colleges and universities worldwide. They also learned more about a wide range of topics that are connected to university success, such as test preparation, time management, and internships.

Although students have not yet committed to specific undergraduate majors, their interests covered a wide range of disciplines. English, pre-medicine, sociology, aerospace engineering, and world religions were some of their prospective fields of study.

Outside of the classroom, students participated in service learning, campus tours, and day trips. They were an enthusiastic group who enjoyed experiencing life in Oregon firsthand. As one student wrote at the program’s end, “When I came to Portland, I wasn’t sure what to expect. This was my first time in the United States. Now, I know that I can come here to study and I’ll be happy.”

-Contributed by Julie Vorholt, AES Instructor

The End of 37 Year Program: Volunteer Literacy Tutoring at PCC

Portland Community College (PCC) has terminated the Volunteer Literacy Tutoring Program (VLT) as of June 30th, 2016. Limited support for volunteer tutors working with ESOL Levels 1-5 (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and ABE/GED students (Adult Basic Education and high school completion) will continue at the college’s four campuses. However, much will be lost at PCC, in the community and the program, which was first funded at the college in 1979, will not continue.

PCC has played a large and essential role in providing a full spectrum of instruction and support to this marginalized sector of our community. Community agencies do not have the capacity nor are they equipped to offer comparable services. Virtually no new ESOL/ABE/GED classroom sections at college campuses have been added and Community Education “Survival English” courses are not on a par with the professional level of instruction offered in these departments.

PCC could have fulfilled its responsibility to the community by seeking funds and budgeting in advance for the small, annual budget needed to run VLT and at the same time prioritize adequate classroom instruction for all levels in ESOL and ABE. The cutting of services for this population calls into question PCC’s true commitment to the community. Ironically, PCC will soon ask voters for approval of bond projects to pay for construction of new facilities. It’s generally agreed that adequate funding for staff, services and programs should come before the renovation and construction of new buildings, however.

In these times of rising anti-immigrant sentiment, the de-funding of programs for basic skills students including the gutting of the VLT program at PCC are unfortunate steps in the dismantling of services that have created a life-line for metro area residents for many decades.

Editor’s Note: The author asked to remain anonymous.
You have meticulously organized your curriculum, enthusiastically developed course projects, and thoroughly planned your lessons. However, a carefully structured course doesn’t assure 100% student attendance; sometimes it takes just one student who frequently saunters in late or skips class to throw off the ambiance of an entire course. When inadequate attendance occurs, even the most experienced teachers may feel that they are spending more time reprimanding their students than teaching course content. Fortunately, there are some vital strategies you can incorporate into your classes for improved student attendance.

1. Get buy-in from your students
   You know that regular attendance is important for your students to gain the necessary knowledge for your classes; convincing your students of this, however, is not always an easy task. Begin each term by discussing the importance of attendance with your students. Ask students to express what they hope to gain from the course and how they hope to accomplish their goals. Create a class contract with your students focusing on the rules for the course, including attendance policies, which will allow the students to actively participate in their own learning.

2. Provide Consistency
   Provide consistency for your students by presenting them with a clear policy that details the attendance rules. For example, in defining what will be marked as a tardy in your class and being consistent with that policy, there is less opportunity for later conflict or confusion. Be a role model for your students by arriving to class early and starting class on time. Establish a habit of taking attendance, orally if possible, making everyone aware that attendance matters and, at the same time, helping you and your students to learn everyone’s names.

3. Provide a Rationale
   Give your students a reason to not only attend class, but also be there on time. This doesn’t mean you have to start every class with a pop quiz, but try to begin class with some sort of low-stakes activity that your students will not want to miss, such as a unique warm-up activity or opportunity to check homework or have important questions addressed.

4. Communication
   Have a system for communicating with your students by collecting students’ contact information. Provide early interventions with students who have sporadic attendance by identifying and addressing issues of absenteeism. Whenever possible, speak privately with these students, being ready to refer them to program resources for additional support if necessary. Keep academic advisors or other administrators in the loop regarding attendance issues, so students may be contacted in multiple ways.

5. Create a Community of Learners
   Most importantly, since the language classroom may be viewed by some as an intimidating and sometimes fearful place, work to create a community of learners in your classroom who want to work with you and each other to meet their language-learning goals. Get to know your students early on and help your students to acquire knowledge about each other as well, learning the names, backgrounds, and interests of class members. Encourage your students to work together and trust each other as a means of professional and personal support, so that they will want to attend and be an active participant of your class.

Angela Dornbusch is the Head Academic Advisor at the American English Institute at the University of Oregon. Angela has been teaching English for over 18 years in has been professionally advising students for over 5 years.
ORTESOL is looking for dedicated ESOL professionals willing to commit time and energy to fulfilling our mission as board members starting in January 2017. Serving on the ORTESOL board offers opportunities for networking, CV building, gaining valuable experience and, especially, doing important work in education. We are also pleased to announce that the board will be led by Jen Sacklin as president in 2017, followed by Alexis Terrell in 2018. Alexis has served as the Higher Education SIG Chair for the past two years, and had unanimous support in taking this new position. These positions will be for two years beginning January 2017. Board members attend a base of four board meetings a year (held on Saturdays) and our annual Fall Conference. ORTESOL reimburses meeting travel costs.

In order to apply, answer the following questions in 300-800 words in an email with the subject line “Attn. Election Committee” to info@ortesol.org no later than 6 pm, November 30, 2016. Answer the following questions: 1. What position are you applying for? 2. Are there other positions you might be interested in? 3. Why are you interested in serving on the ORTESOL board? 4. What skills do you have that qualify you for this position (please reference duties listed for the position)? 5. What other qualities or abilities can you bring to the board? 6. How much time can you realistically donate to board activities, including timely communication with fellow board members and follow up on duties?

Please attach your résumé/CV, and include in your email contact information for yourself and two references we can contact immediately (please include phone and email contact information).

- The ORTESOL Election Committee
As you may have noticed, our SIG feature did not materialize this fall, unfortunately. However, this special feature of the OR-TESOL Newsletter will highlight technology in the ESOL classroom, as well as important principles of online learning.

If you are going to the Fall Conference and you are interested in learning more about technology in education, note that Friday's plenary speaker, Kaela Parks, will be presenting on Universal Design as a framework for approaching teaching and learning that honors diversity and uses flexibility to ensure robust and perceivable connection points. Her presentation will highlight the use of practical techniques such as interactive transcripts and accessible electronic text, and will speak to the importance of considering barriers at the planning stage.

Other CALL-focused sessions include a demo on Friday by Sean McClelland (University of Oregon) on using Periscope in the classroom, as well as another on Saturday on using Peardeck as a presentation tool. Rima El Abdali (Portland State University) will present a multiple case study Saturday afternoon on using wikis for collaborative writing, and Dan Sloan (English Language Fellow) will demo approaches for engaging students in a flipped classroom.

On October 20th and 21st, Eugene's Hilton hosted the eleventh annual Northwest eLearning Conference. Sessions focused on a variety of topics, from Learning Management Systems (LMSs) like Canvas and Blackboard, to accessibility, open source software, gamification, flipped classrooms, and giving useful feedback online.

Jeff Magoto, director of the University of Oregon's Yamada Language Center, presented with Helen Chu, Director of Academic Technology and Elly Vandergrift, Educational Technology Support & LMS Manager at the UO, on "Space and Technology as Catalysts for Pedagogical Transformation." The trio discussed ways that their "Learn Lab" program has tested university classroom set-ups in order to encourage student engagement and achieving of learning objectives.

They argued that in order to move away from the poor design of lecture-hall classes and desks in rows, the teacher must be at the center of the classroom, with technology like multiple projections, infographic posters, and mini portable whiteboards hung around the periphery of the room. Put differently, the presenters showed that universities should be imitating the spaces of K-12 classrooms: they should have movable furniture, tables or groupwork spaces, and walls full of information--projected or erasable.

I had the opportunity to co-present a project called "From Collaboration to Innovation: Learner Generated Web-based Web Design" with ORTESOL board member Alexis Terrell. We wanted to show how instructors could transform projects and assessments to incorporate 21st century digital literacy skills by giving their students the option to design their own website. We evaluated three web-based web design tools (Wix, Weebly, and Wordpress.com) and showed how each compared on criteria of user-friendliness, features, responsiveness, and support.

We concluded that all three web design tools offered appropriate services for educational objectives, for free. We provided sample lessons that suggested giving students the opportunity to create their own websites in lieu of research papers, business scenarios, and language journals. As both presenters and attendees, we found a wealth of new ideas for engaging students using technology in both traditional and online learning environments.

-Contributed by the Editor
Tech Tip: Tools for Segmental Pronunciation

Apps for Vowel and Consonant Production and Perception

BY BETH SHEPPARD, AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

I’d like to tell you about two tech tools for segmental pronunciation, the vowel and consonant sounds. Now, I know many of you focus on suprasegmental features like stress and intonation in the classroom. With multicultural student groups, that is probably the best choice. Segmental pronunciation issues are harder to change, and they are more individual to each student or each L1. But segmentals do make a difference in comprehensibility, and students can learn to pronounce them more clearly through dedicated individual practice.

English Accent Coach

English Accent Coach is a website and iOS app that students can use outside of class to improve their perception of English vowels and consonants. Improved perception can contribute to better production, although of course perception practice alone is not enough. I think English Accent Coach makes a great supplement to in-class pronunciation instruction and real life speaking practice.

If you visit http://www.englishaccentcoach.com/, you will find vowel and consonant games that are extremely customizable to each user. Basically, a wide variety of voices read words, syllables, and individual phonemes, and the user clicks to identify the target vowel or consonant. The user can choose which and how many different sounds to hear and in what context they would like to hear them. In the case of vowels, the user can also choose to click on IPA symbols or color blocks as found in the Color Vowel Chart (http://elts.solutions/color-vowel-chart/explore/).

As the teacher, you could assign a given student to work with just two or three troublesome consonants until they reach a certain level of accuracy, or let students explore for themselves. The program can display graphs of student progress over time.

Vowel Cat

VowelCat could be a good complement to English Accent coach, because it allows students to produce the vowel sounds and shows where their productions fall on the vowel chart by mapping the F1 and F2 formants in real time. It’s really neat!

Unfortunately the program doesn’t live up to its full potential, in two ways. First, it doesn’t take fundamental frequency (F0) into account, with the result that it works a lot better for deep voices than higher voices. Second, the program is designed to allow placing vowel symbols onto the chart as targets, but there is a bug in this system. The program works fine to show where your production falls on a blank chart, but you can’t add the symbols. I was able to reach the VowelCat developers, but they have moved on to other projects. Maybe one of you out there can finish it!

Even “as is,” I found VowelCat useful to play around with, and would use it for a demonstration in class. Check it out! https://sourceforge.net/projects/vowelcat/.

Although technology can never replace pronunciation teachers, it can support them and supplement their efforts.

Although technology can never replace pronunciation teachers, it can support them and supplement their efforts. VowelCat is a fun program for teachers to explore, and has potential to be further developed into a useful tool for students, while English Accent Coach is already recommendable as an easy-to-use and effective program to develop students’ phoneme perception outside of class time.

Beth Sheppard is an instructor at the American English Institute at the University of Oregon.
Here are four tech tools that will refresh some of your teaching practices, especially if you are trying a flipped classroom in order to give students the opportunity to learn more content at home, and engage or interact with that content during face-to-face class time.

1. **Canva : Web-based graphic design**

   This tool makes presentations and posters, but what I think is best about it is that you can create great infographics from a variety of templates that you can post in .png/.jpeg format to your course management system. There are also a wide variety of elements you can add and customize like icons, charts, and illustrations. Condense a lesson into an image and you’ll give your students a better foundation of understanding. You could also have your students make their own infographics or captioned photos, building vocabulary and creativity.

2. **Screencastify: Screencasting**

   Many of us have probably used a screencast or screen capture app to record listening exercises and lectures. Jing and VLC have options to capture exactly what is on your screen plus audio, so that you can record yourself speaking over presentations or doing demos for using a particular tool. Screencast-o-matic allows you to limit the area of your screen recorded, and as long as you aren’t bothered by a watermark on the published video, it’s free. For those of you working with Chromebooks, Screencastify is a screen capture Chrome extension that lets you capture only what is going on inside a Chrome tab, or on your whole display, for up to 10 minutes. Videos are can be saved to your computer, directly to your Google Drive, or uploaded to Youtube.

3. **Amara: Video Captioning**

   If you are going to make video content for your students online, it is important for accessibility (and benefits their comprehension) that your videos be captioned. I tested out a few captioning tools, and decided that I liked the phases that Amara offers: a quick transcription, followed by lining up timings. Amara also will tell you if you’ve surpassed the ideal number of characters per second per line, and gives you a link if you are going to embed a video that you don’t own. Similarly, nomorecaptions.com gives you the silly voice reader version of Youtube video captions that you can edit yourself; because you are editing text already there, you can caption very quickly. If you are going to caption a video you do own and have uploaded to Youtube, you might as well use the Youtube captions app; it’s easy to use and already linked to your account.

4. **Nearpod: Device Presentation**

   Many of you may have used web-based presentation or quiz apps like Socratic and Peardeck. Nearpod is another interactive mobile presentation app that students download to their personal devices (smartphone or tablet). The app then generates a code that students input to allow them to see the materials the teacher has prepared. This works well for self-paced activities like scavenger hunts on websites, following along with presentations, and submitting answers for quizzes or polls. Nearpod allows you to generate a report with all of your students’ responses in order to input your grades. The most unique feature that I have found with Nearpod is that you can see which users are enrolled in the session (they are green icons); when a user checks out of Nearpod and goes to a different app (oh, say Facebook or email), their icon turns red. The only drawback I found is that students need headphones in order to simultaneously watch a video, because you cannot coordinate the timing of presentations among devices...yet. 

--- Newsletter Editor
Greetings, ORTESOL members! I hope you’ve enjoyed this late Fall 2016 Newsletter. Thank you to everyone who contributed—it’s been awhile since the call was put out, as it took some time to figure out the SIG feature replacement. I hope the winter newsletter is full of submissions from presenters and attendees to the Fall 2016 ORTESOL Conference!

Speaking of the ORTESOL Fall Conference, I’d like to draw your attention to two special items: one is our new Advocacy Chair, as you read about in the intro letter by Vice President Jen Sacklin. So many of us find ourselves at less than full-time employment, piecing together multiple jobs, getting paid an hourly wage with hardly any compensation for the time and effort we put into planning lessons, or working in institutions without faculty unions that strengthen and support our legitimization and qualifications as language teachers, or our right to fair contracts. If you feel strongly about these issues and want to be a voice for us, please consider applying for the Advocacy Chair.

Secondly, if you are going to the Fall Conference (and you should!), former ORTESOL president Eric Dodson will be holding a roundtable discussion during the first session Saturday morning called “>1.0 FTE: Teachers Dealing with Underemployment in ESOL in Oregon.” I encourage you to attend this session, and hope that you’ll share the ways you’ve overcome these challenges with all of us struggling to stay in the field.

The next issue of our quarterly newsletter will come out in early January. You’ll receive a call for contributions in early December, but if you have something in mind that you’d like to write (or that you’ve presented!), you don’t need to wait! I would love to hear your feedback, so feel free to email newsletter@ortesol.org with any comments or suggestions.

Stay Warm and Dry,

Erin Maloney
Publications Chair