

## Framing the Issue - Spring 2018

We are pleased to bring you the 2018 Volume 34 (Spring) issue of MinneTESOL Journal. This issue focuses on advocacy and instructional practice resting on the strengths and unique identities of English Language Learners (ELLs) of all ages, and offers two unique practice-oriented pieces for K-12 and higher education.

As will be made clear in these articles, strengths-focused advocacy of ELLs requires precision and the distinguishing of unique learning needs from linguistic deficits. In their article, *Labels as Limitations*, 2017 Minnesota English Learner Education Conference (MELEd) keynote Tatyana Kleyn and colleague Nancy Stern examine the unintended negative consequences of teachers using common labels in English language education; the authors propose more accurate labels that can highlight a learner's linguistic assets. Harold B. Allen award Winner Kristi Herman Hill, in her article, *Education and Advocacy for Secondary English Learners with Limited Formal Education (SLIFE)*, describes the unique educational and cultural backgrounds of SLIFE and proposes a multi-tiered approach to improving their educational experiences in their new communities. Finally, in *Language Difference or Disorder?* authors Kelyn Gress and Elizabeth Hill explain how this critical distinction can best be assessed among ELLs, through the lens of speech language pathology.

Bringing strengths-focused advocacy into practice, the multi-media annotated bibliography *Sankofa Literature* by Rebecca Lauer and Camille Primoli features poetry, narrative, and short stories that reflect the rich and diverse identities and cultures of multi-lingual learners in their classrooms. In a second practice-oriented piece, *Developing Critical Thinking: Framing Wolcott and Lynch's 5-Stage Method for Argumentative Essay Writing*, 2017 MELEd presenter Matt Delaini describes a scaffolded process for guiding ELLs, whose past learning experiences may ill-equip them for academic writing in the US, toward successful evidence-based argumentation.

This journal issue features a few "firsts". As editors, we congratulate Gress and Hill and also Lauer and Primoli, MA students at the University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human Development, on their publications here – their first publications in an academic journal. This work, shared with you in the same issue featuring work of more experienced scholars and practitioners, illustrates the journal's commitment to simultaneously mentoring new authors and ensuring quality and relevant literature to support the work of English language educators. Finally, the Spring 2018 issue welcomes Dr. Jenifer Vanek, MinneTESOL Journal's Technical Editor, into the expanded role of Senior Co-Editor. As her co-editor, I (Jen Ouellette-Schramm) am delighted with the energy, experience, and expertise that she brings to co-leading and developing the journal. Below is a short bio of Dr. Vanek:

*Jen Vanek is a teacher educator whose research, publications, and presentations support teachers in the areas of language education, digital literacy, and online learning. She received her PhD from the Second Languages Education program at the University of Minnesota. She has taught ESOL to adolescents and adults in secondary schools, community based organizations, factories, and university-based intensive English language programs.*

Please read, enjoy, share and "like" the excellent pieces in this issue!

Jen Ouellette-Schramm and Jen Vanek