

TNTESOL Board of Directors—Slate of Nominees



President: Christine Tennyson has a BA from Hope College in Holland, MI, an MAEd from Austin Peay, and a doctorate from Trevecca. She spent one year studying in Germany and earned her ESL endorsement from TSU. Her first teaching job was in preschool and she also taught adult ESL students. For the last 16 years, she has taught in Rutherford County. She currently teaches at Smyrna Middle School where she is the ESL department head. She has presented many times at TNTESOL and won several travel grants including the Best of Tennessee three times. As a result, she has presented at the Southeast Regional TESOL many times as well. She is married, lives in Murfreesboro, and has two children, 23 and 17. She and her husband enjoy spending time with their grandchild.



1st Vice President: Abasi McKinzie has a BA from Rhodes College, an MA from the University of Memphis and both an Ed.S and an Ed.D from Union University. He has been with Shelby County Schools for 16 years, half of them being spent in the field of ESL. The majority of those years have been within the middle school setting, but he also has worked in elementary schools. He is currently an ESL teacher at Lowrance Elementary Schools and has also served as an immigrant facilitator and an instructional facilitator. Additionally, he is an adjunct professor for the ESL department of Trevecca University. He has presented at several TNTESOL conferences, at SETESOL and for MSERA. He is currently serving as the second vice president and is the chair for the 2017 TNTESOL conference.



2nd Vice President: Joseph Whinery is the ESL Supervisor for Williamson County Schools. Together with 30 full-time ESL teachers and two teacher assistants, about 700 English Learners from a wide range of heritage language and country backgrounds receive support in the program. He has served on the TNTESOL Board as an elected member since 2014 as well as the non-voting position of www.tntesol.org webmaster. Joseph is the Conference Chair for TNTESOL 2018 which will be co-hosted by the Williamson County Schools and Franklin Special Schools District in Franklin, TN. He is one of eight ESL Regional Advisors assisting the Director of English Learner, Immigrant, and Migrant Programs to organize and conduct area PLCs and other professional development opportunities for both ESL and general education teachers.

In an effort to achieve board equalization across the state with the member-at-large seats, there will be one seat open for East TN, one seat for Central TN and one seat for West TN.

East Tennessee Member-at-Large



Becky Young, Dayton City School

I received my M.S. in Education/ESL Emphasis from the University of Tennessee – Knoxville in 2003 and have worked at Dayton City School for the past 14 years. I serve as ESL Teacher, ESL Coordinator, Title III Director, and Migrant Director. There was no ESL program at DCS at the time I began teaching, so I began the program. We now have two full-time ESL teachers and about 70 students. I work to ensure that our program is the best it can be and that administrators and classroom teachers are trained in the needs of EL students. I have also served as an adjunct instructor for Bryan College. I taught "Introduction to TESL" there multiple times. I have also taught "Methods and Assessment in TESL" for them, and have hosted student interns. In addition, I taught one summer for Migrant School in Rhea County and another summer, I taught TEFL in Romania with a mission group. I served one term (2012-2015) as a Member-at-Large for the TNTESOL board, during which time I headed up the project to establish the Edie Barry Memorial Scholarship. I have maintained membership in TNTESOL and TESOL throughout my career.

My goals include excellence in teaching, encouraging other ESL professionals, and advocacy for my students. I believe it is important for ESL professionals to work together and for teachers in isolated settings to find the support and encouragement they need. I have served as a resource for other ESL teachers and small system ESL Coordinators in my region to the best of my ability.



Leigh Anne Sheppard, Kingsport City Schools

Leigh Anne Sheppard is originally from Knoxville, TN, and returned to East Tennessee her second year of teaching after graduating with a B.A. in Art Education from Winthrop University and teaching in South Carolina. In 2014 she worked to gain her ESL endorsement and an M.A. in Instructional Leadership from Lincoln Memorial University. Leigh Anne is currently back at L.M.U. pursuing an Ed. S. in Instructional Leadership. After teaching Art for twenty-one years, Leigh Anne followed another long-held passion introduced to her by Beth Lee, a veteran ESL teacher who shared her classroom, to serve some of the most vulnerable students in our educational system. She currently teaches secondary ELs at both middle schools and the high school in the Kingsport City School System. She regularly attends regional ESL collaborative PLCs and conferences, as well as seeks out leadership opportunities including serving on leadership teams, a grading and assessment task-force, the RTI implementation team and the global education committee in order to advocate for EL students within her system and throughout our state. Leigh Anne is the proud mother of Carter, a sophomore at U.T., and Hannah, a senior headed to M.T.S.U. in the fall.

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East Tennessee Member-at-Large *continued*



Christy Duncan - Cleveland City Schools

Christy Duncan currently serves as the ESL Coordinator for the Cleveland City School system. She received her B.A. in Modern Foreign Languages from Lee University, her M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and her Ed.S. in Administration and Supervision from Lincoln Memorial University. Her ESL certification is from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Christy was selected as Teacher of the Year for Mayfield Elementary School for the 2010-2011 and the 2013-14 school year. She was one of nine finalists for Tennessee Teacher of the Year in 2013-2014 and was the recipient of the 2013-2014 Lillie F. Fitzgerald Excellence in Teaching Award. She assisted newly certified ESL teachers in developing their skills in teaching English Language Learners.

In her role as ESL Coordinator for the Cleveland City School system, she works both with her team of 15 ESL teachers and classroom teachers throughout the district to promote best practices for ESL instruction through modeling lessons and coordinating various professional development opportunities. She assists the ESL teachers and other system faculty and staff in planning before and after school tutoring opportunities for ESL students as well as Parent Night programs for ESL families. In addition, she has partnered with the TESOL Department at Lee University to coordinate opportunities for student observation and teaching and to promote community classes for adults. Last fall, she joined with the Southeast CORE Office to plan and host a "Ready, Set, Grow Your ESL Program" mini-conference for ESL teachers from around the region.



Caitlin Lunsford -Knox County Schools.

Caitlin is a graduate student at the University of Tennessee pursuing a degree in Cultural Studies in Educational Foundations with a specialization in TESOL. The goal of her academic studies is to better serve minority and immigrant students and to teach with a social justice perspective. She has taught adult ESL for UT's University Assisted Community Schools, and has worked with Bridge Refugee Services in their summer ESL program. She was also involved in advocating for tuition equality for DACA students, which would have given undocumented students the opportunity to apply for in-state tuition. Caitlin is particularly interested in serving refugee students and newcomer students, both in the school and in the community.

Middle Tennessee Member-at-Large



DeAnna DeBow Osborne — Rutherford County Schools

Originally cultivated in Kentucky, DeAnna has enjoyed teaching student populations ranging from Pre-K through Adult Education in rural, urban, and suburban contexts for nearly two decades. DeAnna currently serves as an ESL teacher for Rutherford County and holds both Masters and Educational Specialist degrees with certification in several areas from PK—12.

She is deeply involved with facilitating the evolution of district-wide PLCs for ESL teachers, support and training for mainstream teachers, and work with Newcomer students. On the state level, DeAnna has been connected with TNTESOL workings, presentations, and a State-wide PLC effort for ESL.

Having made her home in various locations around the globe, Dagupan City to DFW, she is thankful to reside in the heart of Tennessee. DeAnna enjoys exploring places, ideas and cultures, dancing, writing, and rearranging her creative space.

With exceptional skills in the areas of communication, teamwork, analysis, and coordination, DeAnna is committed to lifelong learning, ESOL, and is dedicated to the common enterprise of public education. Her experiences as an educator and leader in various capacities present a candidate who possesses a depth of competence that combines integrity, vision, and adaptability which will yield positive results for our organization.



Tiffany Wilson-Mobley - Williamson County Schools

Tiffany Wilson-Mobley's enrichment of the lives of students and their families in Williamson County Schools runs an impressive range: concurrent instruction at all three divisions (elementary, middle, and high school); Family Literacy program for parents of ELs to improve their literacy skills; school-wide international club and events; school and district professional development sessions for general education teachers who instruct ELs in their classrooms.

Tiffany's dedication to the field of English Language education is apparent in her own accomplishments and peer recognition. She holds a Masters Degree and is a National Board Certified Teacher. She has been chosen as the Williamson County Teacher of the Year and TNTESOL Teacher of the Year (Middle TN and overall TN). She has attended and presented at state, regional and national conferences (TNTESOL, SETESOL, TESOL). She has served as the Site-Based Mentor Leader at Fairview Elementary School for several years.

Personally approachable and always an advocate for the best that education can offer, Tiffany Wilson-Mobley will bring her sense of fairness, balance, and commitment to continuing the vital work and future directions of the TNTESOL Board.

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West Tennessee Member-at-Large *continued*



Michelle Sluder, Arlington Community Schools

Michelle has been an ESL teacher for 12 years, and is currently an ESL teacher at both Arlington Middle and High School. She provides community outreach by teaching weekly English classes to parents of students and other adults in the local community, as well as offering a tutoring program in writing. She has spent past summers teaching students from Mexico that attended the Lasillan Language Camp hosted by Christian Brothers University and at an ESL summer school.

Recognition for her many accomplishments include being awarded TESOL's Virginia French Allen award for Scholarship and Community, the 2013 Arlington High Teacher of the Year, and the 2009 West Tennessee ESL Teacher of the Year.



Susan Smith, Lauderdale County Schools

Susan has been in the education field for nineteen years. She taught high school and middle school English and Language Arts for ten years, and for the past four years she has been the K-12 ESL teacher in Lauderdale County, serving between 35-50 students at 5 schools per day. She has a Bachelor's degree in English from Union University in Jackson, TN and received her ESL endorsement from the University of Memphis.

Before her tenure began as an ESL teacher, Susan was the Center Director and Director of Education for Sylvan Learning Centers in Dyersburg and Jackson, TN. While there, she wrote and received a state grant that allowed Sylvan teachers to tutor in local schools, with a focus on at-risk students including ELL's. Susan then moved on to become the coordinator of a tutoring program during the school year for Lauderdale County Schools, which also served at-risk students and included many ELL's. She later coordinated the summer school program for these students, funded by a three-year state grant. For the past three years, she has assisted with the coordination of the West TN ESL Mini-Conference held each year in Dyersburg, TN.

Susan is a strong advocate for her students and stays in constant communication with the parents to keep them involved as much as possible. She has a heart for these students and found these last few years of teaching ELL's as the most rewarding. Susan would be honored to serve as member-at-large to continue to grow professionally and would love to assist others achieve success with their ESL students.

