

## **1. Why are you interested in being TESOL President?**

Hi everyone,

My name is Misty Adoniou and I am running for the position of President elect of TESOL International. I am running for President-elect position because I want to lead this association so that it proudly tells the world about its extraordinary membership – you - TESOL educators and, of course, all the students you represent.

I live in Canberra, the capital city of Australia where I write, research and teach in the areas of language, literacy and TESOL.

I have always been a TESOL teacher, first in early childhood and elementary schools in Australia and then in Greece where I taught both children and adults. And whilst in Greece I became the mum of three bilingual children of my own – Ria, Dimitri and Andreas.

I've also been a TESOL Leader for the past 2 decades. I was the Chairperson of TESOL Greece, and then the President of the Australian Council of TESOL Associations, I've been on TESOL's Affiliate Council for 5 years, and I have recently finished my time on the Board of Directors of TESOL. What can I say - I LOVE TESOL!

## **2. While respecting institutional memory, what vision do you have for the future of TESOL? What would your role be in that vision?**

Our job as TESOL educators around the globe isn't always easy, but we do it with passion. Sometimes we can feel isolated, sometimes we can feel undervalued, and under resourced.

But we know the work we do can change lives, and it fulfils us. So I want to lead an association that helps us find our kindred spirits, helps to raise our spirits, works to raise our profile in the communities we work in, and with the policy makers whose decisions affect us. I want to lead an association that supports us with the resources we need to do our important work.

TESOL's strengths are its people. We are the strength of the organization and 'we' are all over the globe – we have members all over the world and more than 100 affiliates.

I want to lead TESOL into a truly international future by working more actively to tap into our international membership.

We sit proudly within a global context. When we act for English language teachers and their students, we do so knowing they live in diverse contexts which need different resources and responses.

We sit proudly within this multilingual multicultural landscape. When we speak for the English language learning rights of our students, we speak also for their mother tongue rights.

The President of TESOL is the 'face' and the 'voice' of TESOL – it's a big responsibility that I am excited to take on. I can communicate the association's mission and values with clarity and confidence. As a recent Board member, I was on the committee that shaped the new Strategic Plan that TESOL will now work towards. I know where we have been, and where we want to go.

### **3. What do you think are some of the biggest challenges facing the association, and what do you think the association should do to meet those challenges?**

All teachers' associations face challenges in maintaining membership, and thus maintaining financial health. TESOL's role moving forward is to better understand the contexts and needs of potential members so that it can provide resources they want and which they can't find elsewhere.

Beyond better serving the needs of current members, I believe we are well-positioned to meet the needs of those who will never be members but who will benefit from TESOL's expertise.

We can provide professional learning resources to mainstream teachers who actually see our ELLs for the bulk of the academic year, both in school and higher education.

We can provide professional learning resources to the many thousands of social and aid workers who work with refugee-background learners.

We can provide professional learning resources to businesses and corporations and government departments seeking to better fulfil their missions of cultural diversity and cross-cultural communication.

We can do all of this to both generate finances that support our membership, and build our profile as a globally recognised source of expertise.

My own personal passion is advocacy, and giving voice to TESOL teachers. I believe in the power of teachers' voices both as a vehicle for change in education, and a channel of communication to the public about what schooling is, and what it could be.

The feature theme of my Presidency will be singing the praises of teachers from the rooftops, and explaining our important work to the public, the media and the politicians.

Beyond being the voice and face of TESOL, the President must also be the 'heart and soul' of TESOL, a visionary who can not only respond to what presents itself today, but project into the future, and guide the association to be proactive and ahead of the game so it can continue to be a financially healthy association.

I have that vision – and I have the time and commitment to achieve that vision. I can be the leader who guides the association to be big, bold and ambitious. And I think we are in a point in world history, where that is exactly what is needed.

I hope to get your support in this election and look forward to commencing a new journey together – hand in hand, and with the strength of our combined voices, speaking truth to power.