NEWS

TESOL TO HOLD FIRST SYMPOSIUM IN EGYPT, JANUARY 2014

Alexandria, VA (13 December 2013) — TESOL International Association will hold its first international symposium in Egypt in January 2014 to talk about ways in which teachers and students can unplug from classroom technology.

The symposium, aptly titled “TESOL Unplugged: Back to Basics,” will take place at the American University of Cairo, New Cairo Campus, on 27 January 2014. Attendees are expected from throughout the Middle East.

Participants will discuss the tension between media- and technology-rich classroom environments and building on emergent language in a natural (or unplugged) environment. This topic is especially appropriate in the Egyptian context, where many teachers operate in contexts with few resources, large classes, and students who have competing demands on their time (jobs, families, etc.).

"Every context is unique," notes TESOL President Deena Boraie. "Whether and how to use technology in the classroom depends not only on what resources are available, but also on the students' needs."

The theme also brings to light a broader debate about whether an approach focusing on emergent language with few classroom materials can work in a context like Egypt, where students might have more specific needs and expectations.

"As teachers in well-resourced contexts face the temptation to adopt the latest technology, it's crucial to ask how plugging in will help meet students' needs and whether it's necessary to plug in at all,” concludes Boraie.

TESOL holds a variety of different events all over the world each year, but as TESOL Executive Director Rosa Aronson acknowledges, “The Cairo symposium is particularly unique because it represents two significant firsts. This event is the first TESOL symposium to be held in Egypt, and it will be opened by the first Egyptian president of TESOL International Association."

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TESOL is pleased to announce that this event is being organized in partnership with NileTESOL and the American University in Cairo with support from the Office of English Language Programs in Egypt, US Department of State and the British Council. The symposium will precede the NileTESOL Conference, which will take place 28–29 January 2014. The theme of the conference is “Navigating a Way Forward: Innovating & E-nnovating in TESOL.”

About TESOL International Association
Founded in 1966, TESOL International Association is a professional community of educators, researchers, administrators, and students committed to advancing excellence in English language teaching for speakers of other languages worldwide. With more than 13,000 members representing over 150 countries, TESOL fosters the exchange of ideas, research, and peer-to-peer knowledge, and provides expertise, resources, and a powerful voice on issues affecting the profession. Through professional development programs, its international conference, special interest groups, and publications, TESOL engages tens of thousands of professionals to collaborate globally and create a world of opportunity for millions of people of all ages who want to learn English. For more information, please visit www.tesol.org

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