

NEWS

For Immediate Release

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International Rescue Committee to Receive 2021 TESOL Presidents' Award

Alexandria, VA (16 March 2021) – [TESOL International Association](#) (TESOL) is pleased to announce that the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Education team will be honored with the 2021 TESOL Presidents' Award. Honorees of the award are individuals or organizations outside the field of English language teaching that have demonstrated a commitment to English language education or complement TESOL's mission and core values. The IRC will be recognized by TESOL President Dr. Deborah Short during the President's Keynote Session at the virtual [2021 TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo](#).

With its earliest roots dating back to 1933, the IRC has been strongly committed to responding to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helping people impacted by conflicts around the world. Currently operating in 40 countries and in 20 cities within the United States, the IRC and its teams on the ground help provide clean water, shelter, health care, education, and empowerment support to refugees and displaced people. In response to the ongoing global struggle with the COVID-19 pandemic, the IRC has implemented broad, bold programs to integrate support services while helping learners develop a wide range of critical skills.

"On behalf of our members, I'm delighted to honor the International Rescue Committee Education team with the 2021 TESOL Presidents' Award," Short said after selecting the IRC to receive the award. "We admire the work that the IRC does in refugee camps and in communities where refugees resettle, especially its approach to integrating social, health, and education services—an approach made all the more urgent in this past pandemic year. We share the IRC Education team's goals for developing literacy, numeracy, and socioemotional skills and for recognizing the role of play with young learners. The team's efforts enrich the work our TESOL members do around the world." Short concluded.

In response to receiving this honor, Jennifer Sklar, Director of Education for the IRC, commented,

We are grateful for and humbled by this recognition from TESOL and remain thankful to them for all the work they do to support education and cross-cultural connection worldwide. Although our team members are familiar with daunting circumstances, COVID-19 has challenged the IRC's Education team like never before. Whether it was producing classroom lessons for radio broadcast in places like Pakistan and Colombia, training Ministry of Education officials in Yemen via Zoom rather than in person, or converting school-based lesson plans and activity guides into paper packets and distributing them door-to-door to refugee families in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda—our team has showcased the resourcefulness and grit that define it in the face of this pandemic.

Ms. Sklar will accept the award during the [keynote on 27 March](#).

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For more information about the TESOL Presidents' Award, including a list of previous recipients, [please visit TESOL's website](#).

About TESOL International Association

TESOL International Association is the trusted global authority for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching. A professional community of more than 11,000 educators representing over 150 countries, TESOL fosters the exchange of ideas to advance the expertise of those teaching English while supporting equity, diversity, and multilingualism. For over 50 years, TESOL has strived to advance its mission with programs, publications, and services to expand its global presence and connectivity throughout the field, share its knowledge and expertise, and amplify its voice through advocacy. For more information, please visit www.tesol.org.

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