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Photo Available

TESOL International Association Names 2026 TESOL Teacher of the Year

Alexandria, Va. (February 19, 2026) – TESOL International Association (TESOL) is pleased to announce Rashad Ahmed as the recipient of the 2026 TESOL Teacher of the Year Award, which recognizes exceptional English language teaching at all levels. Ahmed will be formally honored at the TESOL 2026 International Convention & Expo, March 24-27, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Ahmed, an associate professor of TESOL and linguistics at Jacksonville State University and a Fulbright alumnus, earned his doctorate from the University of Memphis. His teaching, research, and professional development leadership have been recognized through prestigious awards at local, regional, and international levels. In addition to these accomplishments, Ahmed contributes to the profession through editorial and scholarly service, including his role as senior editor of the International Journal of Language and Literary Studies, his numerous peer-reviewed articles, and a scholarly volume on ICT-based informal language learning.

Ahmed reimagined traditional composition pedagogy with his multimodal argumentation project, which integrates collaborative digital planning, ethical technology use, and culturally responsive assessment within a cohesive learning experience. For example, students begin by analyzing published opinion pieces to identify audience awareness strategies and evidence selection techniques. They then work in small groups using Lucid Whiteboard to create visual blueprints for individual arguments

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"I am honored beyond words. This award belongs to my students, whose resilience continually reshapes my understanding of language and humanity, and to the teachers who quietly change lives by believing in voices the world too often overlooks," said Ahmed.

As the 2026 TESOL Teacher of the Year Award recipient, Ahmed receives a one-year membership in TESOL International Association, a selection of TESOL publications, a complimentary registration, hotel, and airfare to attend the TESOL 2026 International Convention & Expo, and a \$1,000 cash award. He will also deliver an invited-speaker session at the convention titled "Sustaining Teacher and Student Agency in AI-Assisted ESL Writing."

About TESOL International Association

TESOL International Association is the trusted global community for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching. TESOL advances the professional expertise in English language teaching to speakers of other languages in multilingual contexts worldwide through professional learning, research, standards, and advocacy. In principle and in practice, TESOL values professionalism, respect, integrity, and lifelong learning and seeks diverse and inclusive participation within the field of English language teaching. TESOL promotes equitable representation, engagement, and broad access to professional opportunities for all and works to eliminate any kind of discrimination. TESOL is a professional community of more than 8,000 English language professionals representing more than 100 countries. For more information, please visit www.tesol.org.

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