



KRISTIN PHEONIX'S WANDA GRAY ELEMENTARY FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ART PROJECT



FEBRUARY 2020

Welcome to our new iELT-Ozarks Project newsletter. We publish a newsletter twice annually. Here you can find updates on our program and learn what is happening with the students, faculty, and staff at Missouri State University.



## Vocabulary Improvement Program

One stipulation of our grant project was to evaluate the efficacy of a research-supported intervention for English Learners. We chose the Vocabulary Improvement Program and we call this element of our project the VIP study. We are conducting this evaluation at the Monett Intermediate School spring 2020-winter 2021. Students participate either in a control group or in an intervention group. With students in the intervention group, the teachers use a specific vocabulary curriculum, Word Generation from the SERP Institute. Our participants are introduced to vocabulary instruction and to this curriculum specifically during the TESOL coursework. We are hoping to find out what the student outcomes are of participating in these cross-curricular lessons that build academic vocabulary systematically. Stay tuned to find out. We are grateful for all the participants and supporters of the VIP study.

## OELA

Office of English Language Acquisition

The iELT-Ozarks Project is a National Professional Development (NPD) grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA).



Be our Facebook friend to stay up-to-date with the iELT-Ozarks Project! We often feature student highlights as well as relevant materials and stories from the TESOL field. You can friend IELT Ozarks and follow our page Engagement with English Learners' Families.

## Call for Proposals

We invite all cohort teachers currently in the iELT-Ozarks Project to consider submitting a proposal to present at a conference in 2020 or 2021. If accepted, cohort members may submit a mini travel grant application to iELT-Ozarks Project to assist with funding for attending and presenting at a regional or national professional development conference. Upcoming conferences to consider include MIDTESOL in Des Moines, Iowa on October 2-3, 2020 and TESOL International in Houston, Texas on March 23-26, 2021. Both conferences will have proposals due early this summer, and our iELT team can advise you through the proposal process.



## Family Engagement Projects

All cohort members create and implement family engagement projects in their schools as part of the course curriculum for the iELT-Ozarks Project.

# Cohort 1 Updates

Cohort 1 of the iELT-Ozarks Project includes thirty K-12 in-service teachers from the McDonald County R-1, Monett R-1, Neosho R-5, and Springfield R-XII public school districts. Here is a look at what the first cohort accomplished over the last semesters:

- The cohort has now completed all of the core TESOL courses. The last group of cohort 1 students completed ENG 797: Advanced Practicum in TESOL in a small group this fall where they learned to implement SIOP techniques into the classroom and family engagement projects in their buildings. The advanced section is for students completing the MSIS degree.
- All 30 cohort 1 members earned their Graduate Certificates in TESOL from MSU.
- Four additional students are on track to graduate in spring 2020 and meet the requirements to earn the Missouri K-12 ELL Endorsement.
- All four students are also completing their Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies (MSIS) program in English Language Teaching and Literacy Education this spring. They will earn this in conjunction with the Missouri K-12 ELL Endorsement and the TESOL Graduate Certificate.\*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR COHORT 1  
UPCOMING 2020 GRADUATES**

Spring 2020

- **Jayme Carabello**, Horace Mann Elementary, Springfield R-XII\*
- **Maria Kaufman**, Wilder Elementary, Springfield R-XII\*
- **Kristin Pheonix**, Wanda Gray Elementary, Springfield R-XII\*
- **Hope Wilson**, Goodman and Central Elementary, Neosho R-5\*



Carabello



Kaufman



Pheonix



Wilson

*"After seeing the beautiful struggle that is inherent in learning in two languages, I can never go back to "regular" teaching. Even if I go back to the "regular" classroom, I will not think the same and do the same things."*

**– Hope Wilson, Goodman and Central Elementary ELD teacher in Neosho R-5 and spring 2020 graduate (cohort 1)**



¡Hola! My name is Alexis González, and I am the iELT-Ozarks Project Coordinator. I serve as the advisor for all of our online TESOL graduate students who are earning the TESOL Graduate Certificate, the MO K-12 ELL Endorsement, or the MSIS – English Language Teaching and Literacy Education.

I have a strong passion for language and culture, which is what set me on my current path when I began taking TESOL classes during my undergraduate studies. I also studied Spanish in high school and throughout my college years and am continually working to improve my language skills. A major highlight for me was having the opportunity to study abroad in Chile during my undergraduate degree. Living with

## iELT-Ozarks Team Spotlight

a host family who spoke no English forced me to practice Spanish. This experience also pushed me to take risks with my language skills for everyday necessities and so I could build a relationship with my host family. It was very frustrating at times, but my summer in Chile helped me grow and gave me some insight into how ELs may feel as students in English-medium American schools.

In addition to language and culture, my husband Juan Carlos and I love to travel. We have been to many countries across the Americas (North, Central, and South), Europe, and Africa. We are foodies, so we enjoy taking part in the unique cuisines offered by local cultures. Our most recent favorite was chivito, a regional delicacy in Malargüe, Argentina made of goat.

I fully enjoy teaching ESL/EFL and working with ELs. Over the years I have taught English at an elementary school, at universities, in local community classes, and

through online programs. One of my favorite parts is getting to know the students and their cultures. Culture is entwined with identity, so to really know a person, we need to learn and care about his or her culture.



*Juan Carlos and Alexis in the Swiss Alps.*

I love being part of the iELT-Ozarks Project grant team and getting to witness teachers in their classrooms building capacity for ELs while learning to better advocate for ELs and their families. I especially love seeing family engagement projects come to fruition.

# Implementing Family Engagement Projects

As part of the iELT-Ozarks Project grant, all cohort students implement a family engagement project in their schools. Students work on their project proposals over multiple semesters, collecting data and analyzing the gaps in their school programs to plan a project that will engage ELLs and their families. This project is carried out in Practicum, which six of our cohort 1 participants completed in fall 2019. Their projects included multicultural reading materials, bilingual communication projects, family-teacher partnerships, parent volunteer opportunities, a family culture quilt, and literacy events.



Cohort 1 completer Maria Kaufman reads aloud with Chin Hakha translator. Photo credit: Heather LeCureux, iELT-Ozarks Project Practicum Supervisor

Participants also have the opportunity to apply for mini grants from the iELT-Ozarks Project to help fund their projects. The photo above is from Wilder Elementary in Springfield R-XII schools where Kaufman planned a family engagement event. She partnered with a school parent to read aloud a multicultural story *Feeling Thankful* in English and Chin Hakha. Families then worked together on projects to benefit local non-profits and spent time reflecting on what they are thankful for. Food was also provided for families during this event. The cover photo on page 1 shows the family culture quilt art project Kristin Pheonix from Wanda Gray Elementary in Springfield R-XII schools planned and designed to help engage families and support cultural diversity. Families contributed culture squares, and Pheonix put it all together as a school display.



Cohort 1 students Heather Sides and Sean Wilson at their literacy event.

The photo above shows Sides and Wilson, Benton Elementary teachers in Neosho R-5 schools, posing at their family engagement project event. They chose to partner with a school-wide program held in December to capitalize on family attendance and boost literacy. They selected a variety of multicultural, bilingual, and Spanish books to allow all students at the event to be able to select a book for reading at home. There was also dinner, haircuts, and nail painting, which drew a large crowd of families. The night allowed for teachers to have meaningful conversations with families and supplied books for 200 students to be able to read with friends and families at home.

# Cohort 1 Fall 2019 PD Presentations

iELT-Ozarks Project students are encouraged to participate in at least one professional development conference in the TESOL field during their time at Missouri State. This fall semester two cohort 1 students presented at conferences. These presentations helped fulfill a graduation requirement for the MSIS degree program, which both are completing.

Jayme Carabello from Horace Mann Elementary in Springfield R-XII schools led a session at the Missouri Federal Programs Conference's pre-conference day, A Focus on ELs, in Osage Beach, Missouri with a presentation entitled, *Connecting with Non-English Speaking and Limited English Speaking Parents – Class Dojo*. She showcased what she has learned about her EL families and their communication barriers. She then introduced practitioners to the features and use of the Classroom Dojo application that make it possible to communicate with multilingual families in their preferred languages. Reflecting on her time in the program and her conference presentation, Carabello said, "The knowledge I have gained from the iELT-Ozarks program has put a fire in my belly to advocate and collaborate with other educators and decision makers for my ELs and their families within my building, my district, and at the state level. I recognize that my voice and passion carry beyond my classroom."



Carabello (left) and Pheonix (right) presenting at fall 2019 conferences.

Kristin Pheonix from Wanda Gray Elementary in Springfield R-XII schools led a presentation entitled, *Culturally Responsive Arts Integration Toolkit* at MIDTESOL in Omaha, Nebraska. Her presentation focused on introducing teachers to the integrative art process and showing creative ways to merge language, content, and art objectives in a SIOP lesson plan. She also shared her toolkit of resources to integrate art and language into the classroom. Looking back on her time in the program, Pheonix stated, "It has been a great honor, challenge, and rewarding experience to be part of the iELT-Ozarks Grant. Throughout the iELT-Ozarks program, I have radically changed my teaching practices to meet the needs of my ELLs. With the guidance of my professors, I was able to apply the knowledge and tools I gained from my courses to integrate literacy and art in each lesson and do so in a way that all students could understand and participate fully. After completing this program, I can confidently welcome and teach every student who walks through my classroom doors no matter where they might be in their academic or English language journey."

**UP NEXT FOR THE IELT TEAM AND COHORT STUDENTS**

**March/April 2020 – TESOL International, Denver, CO**  
**April 2020 – AERA, San Francisco, CA**  
**May 2020 – MSU Interdisciplinary Forum, Springfield, MO**

# Cohort 2 Updates

Cohort 2 of the iELT-Ozarks Project includes twenty-nine K-12 in-service teachers enrolled from McDonald County R-1, Monett R-1, Neosho R-5, and Springfield R-XII public school districts. Here is a look at what the second cohort has been up to recently:

- The majority of the cohort has now completed the following core TESOL classes: Second Language Acquisition, Sociolinguistics, Grammatical Analysis, Linguistic Theory, and Methods in TESOL.
- This spring, cohort 2 students are taking ENG 696/796: Materials and Assessment in TESOL.
- The first group of cohort 2 teachers has begun their ENG 697/796 TESOL Practicum course this spring. As a part of this course, they are working on implementing SIOP lesson plans in their classrooms and family engagement projects in their schools.
- Eight students are on track to graduate in spring or summer 2020 and meet the requirements to earn the Missouri K-12 ELL Endorsement.
- Two students are also completing their Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies (MSIS) program in English Language Teaching and Literacy Education this summer. They will earn this in conjunction with the Missouri K-12 ELL Endorsement and the TESOL Graduate Certificate.\*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR COHORT 2 UPCOMING 2020 GRADUATES**

Spring 2020

- **Emily Desauguste**, Cherokee Middle, Springfield R-XII
- **Michelle Guy**, Neosho Middle, Neosho R-5
- **Miranda Hagin-Schaefer**, Hickory Hills Elementary, Springfield R-XII
- **Susan Kinlock**, Monett High, Monett R-1
- **Melissa Sharpsteen**, Cherokee Middle, Springfield R-XII (not pictured)

Summer 2020

- **Shelly Asher**, Monett High, Monett R-1
- **Caitlin Larson**, Kickapoo High, Springfield R-XII\*
- **Alyssa Orr**, Monett High, Monett R-1\*



Desauguste



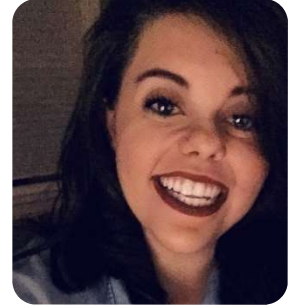
Guy



Hagin-Schaefer



Kinlock, Orr, and Asher



Larson

*"When this program first started, I had no idea how much I didn't even know I didn't know. I couldn't fathom how it could be possible to teach a new language with no basis for verbal communication. I'm realizing that it can be a slower process, but I see the evidence every day at my school that the process works."*

– Susie Kinlock, Monett High School Spanish teacher and spring 2020 graduate (cohort 2)

## Cohort 3 Begins in Summer/Fall 2020 Partner Districts

Cohort 3, the final grant-funded cohort of the iELT-Ozarks Project, will begin TESOL coursework in fall 2020. Students will also have the option to begin special education or reading courses needed for the MO K-12 ELL Endorsement early in summer 2020. Their orientation and kickoff will take place in August.

We have admitted 26 applicants, who come mainly from our four partner districts with a few seats reserved for teachers from other high-need areas of Missouri. Admitted applicants teach in the following 11 Missouri school districts: Marion C. Early R-V, McDonald County R-1, Monett R-1, Neosho R-5, Ozark R-VI, Reeds Spring R-IV, Sedalia 200, Springfield R-XII, Webb City R-7, Wheaton R-III, and Willow Springs R-IV. To be selected, cohort 3 applicants completed two rounds of applications, including creating videos for admission consideration showcasing their preparedness for a graduate program and their dispositions towards EL families. Students are currently in the process of completing grant intake data and will begin advising soon. Check for updates on cohort 3 in our fall 2020 *Network* newsletter!



Visit our website at <https://www.missouristate.edu/iELT-Ozarks/>

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