

WAESOL Professional Development Grant Recipient Report

By Lorrae Fox

In October of last year, I was fortunate to receive a WAESOL professional development grant. It was a long 5 months as I excitedly prepared to attend the CCCCs in Portland and TESOL in Seattle this year. As an M.A. TESL graduate and composition teacher with a primary research interest in L2 writing, these conferences were the ideal combination for me to develop professionally as a teacher.

The CCCCs was my first national conference attendance and presentation, which was an incredible experience. My panel presentation was a nerve-racking highlight! Other stand out moments were meeting and talking with Peter Elbow, a composition scholar I've admired for years, and attending several sessions on using technology in the classroom, and teaching online, two topics I had little knowledge on previously. The smaller size of the CCCCs made this an ideal chance to network with many other teachers from around the country, share classroom suggestions, and research ideas. It's a few weeks later and I'm still flipping through my notebook and emailing with follow ups.

After 7 days in Portland, I headed to Seattle for TESOL for a further week. I thought I was prepared with what to expect but the conference was so utterly vast. The Graduate Student Forum was incredibly valuable as I got to see a broad overview of many interesting research studies on a variety of topics. Other memorable presentations included Corpus-Based Learning of Reporting Verbs in L2 Academic Writing given by speakers from Purdue and University of Arizona: this inspired me to create activities in my composition class based on corpus, and Applying Research Findings to L2 Writing Instruction: this presentation helped me understand how to move research to practice in my own classroom. Overall, the two-week experience was intense but incredible. I am so thankful to WAESOL for allowing me the opportunity to attend both CCCCs and TESOL this year with their professional development grant. Since returning, I have felt enriched by the experience and invigorated to use the knowledge I gained in my own classrooms.