

WAESOL Excellence in Teaching Award - Donna Aase

I am delighted to honor the exemplary work of Donna Aase; when I heard about the WAESOL Excellence in Teaching award, she sprang to mind immediately as an excellent candidate for this recognition. When I joined the Clark College ESL faculty, in 2007, I quickly became familiar with Donna's teaching talents and stellar reputation. Often described by colleagues as one who goes "above and beyond," Donna exhibits particular distinction in mentoring, technology in instruction, and curriculum design.

Donna serves as a mentor in various ways. First, she is a popular, frequent mentor to student teachers from TESOL MA programs, whom she is well equipped to supervise thanks to her interpersonal finesse and breadth of knowledge. Having worked in Morocco for five years before joining Clark in 1996, Donna has taught all levels and abilities in her career, making her an ideal tour guide for student teachers. Second, per the request of Clark division chairs, administrators, and colleagues, she has showcased her lessons and other innovations at faculty meetings and campus events. Finally, she often attends and presents at conferences such as WAESOL, ORTESOL, and ATL. I have presented with her and can vouch for her meticulous preparation and poised delivery, including her strong technology skills.

We count Donna among the most tech-savvy instructors in our department. Her students are not the only beneficiaries of her vast knowledge of the features and nuances of Canvas. Teachers and support staff, too, appreciate the log-in shortcut handouts, password reminder cards, and computer checklists she has created and generously shared. She has also led the way in innovative scaffolding of presentation preparation for ESL students at all levels of proficiency. In fact, technology development was a significant part of her role in our recent curriculum re-vamping.

Donna has been directly involved in the curriculum design and/or refinement of nearly all of our ESL offerings. She independently designed and piloted an On-Ramp to Business class for ESL students. Also, she was one of four faculty members, and the only adjunct, selected to design and pilot ESL Foundations, a team-taught multi-level class including technology and problem-solving. She created the Canvas content and computer checklists and contributed interactive in-class activities and assessments. She also designed, piloted, and/or improved other courses, such as Explorations, Fast Track 1, and classes in IELP.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of all of Donna's achievements and contributions is that she does all of it with such quiet pride. She is somehow calm yet enthusiastic, organized yet flexible, and self-confident yet receptive. Her

dedication to her students, colleagues, and profession is unsurpassed. I am fortunate to have Donna as an outstanding colleague, and I am enthusiastic in nominating her for the WAESOL Excellence in Teaching award.