

## **TESL Ontario's 45th Annual Conference**

### **“Celebrating Success”**

#### **TESL Ontario 2017 Conference Report**

The 45<sup>th</sup> Annual TESL Ontario Conference, “Celebrating Success” acknowledged the success of our learners as they embrace a new language and culture; the successful settlement of the many new refugees to Canada, especially those from Syria; the successful implementation of year one of PBLA; and the success of TESL Ontario in supporting ESL professionals for 45 years.

Held on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Marriott Eaton Centre in Toronto, the new venue provided centrally located breakout rooms in close proximity to the exhibitors and the coffee stations.

Over 890 delegates attended, 250 of whom received conference assistance from Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, and 93 of whom participated in the Program Administrators meeting.

Sponsorship is important to the success of our conference. We are grateful to British Council / IELTS for providing the conference bags and complimentary Wi-Fi; ESL Coin for sponsoring the Welcome Reception; University of Saskatchewan for funding the Registration Area; and to FAST (Fighting Antisemitism Together) for the coffee breaks.

Our Keynote Speaker, Greg Kessler, is Associate Professor of Instructional Technology in Educational Studies at Ohio University. In his talk on the emergence of social media and the participatory culture that it promotes he shared numerous examples of how technology will inform future authentic, engaging global language learning.

A new addition to this year’s conference was the Career Connections session which was an opportunity for individuals to network with 12 employers and hear from 3 employers about the screening, interviewing and selection process for their respective organizations.

The focus of the 12th Annual Panel Discussion was “Creating Opportunities for Success”. The audience heard representatives from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Ontario Region, Ontario Ministry Citizenship and Immigration, and Ontario Ministry of Education, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

Best practices and innovative ideas were shared by 140 volunteer presenters through 105 workshops and presentations, many of which focused on PBLA. There were 9 poster presentations and five “22 Minutes” video sessions were aired.

Twenty-five exhibitors displayed their goods in the exhibitor hall, providing participants with the opportunity to peruse and purchase the latest ESL resources.

At Thursday’s Welcome Reception the Sparks of Excellence award for contributions to the field of ESL and two Distinguished Contribution Award were also presented.

The success of the conference depends largely on the volunteers who present, monitor doors or staff the registration desk. The conference could not exist without their commitment and effort; the conference committee is most appreciative of their dedication to our profession.

Barb Krukowski  
Conference Chair