

This is my personal statement to run for Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter Vice President.

Hello Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter!

I think most of you know me, Maria Lisak, from chapter meetings, conferences and from the morning Reflective Practice workshops we've had in Gwangju. This year marks my 22<sup>nd</sup> year living and teaching in South Korea. Since 2003 I have lived in Jeolla, working at universities such as Chonnam National, Kunsan National, Gwangju and Chosun. I'm a lifetime member and am happy to support from the side as a member. As a co-chair for the Social Justice SIG and my newly elected position as the Nominations & Elections Chair, I am acting as a volunteer leader in our KOTESOL community.

I am running for the vice presidency because I believe that we need to have a collegial, competitive spirit for running for office that has been missing for many years in all levels of KOTESOL nominations and elections. Serving as a volunteer leader is a gift, but it is also a burden. We often 'reward' good leaders by giving them more work to do, instead of stepping up to do it ourselves. Volunteering at any level is a time commitment, and some hesitate because they lack the confidence to do the work. You and I have already done many of the duties required of chapter vice president, but in other contexts.

We have all had a time where we had to step up because of illness, accident or just natural attrition as people move on to their next adventure. The Gwangju-Jeonnam Vice President (GJ-VP) would ascend to the presidency if the position becomes vacant. That is the same kind of "I've got your back" attitude and action that we can expect from most educators throughout the world, and definitely what I've seen in our own chapter.

As educators we plan, teach and follow up with our classes. We represent our schools in our communities and neighborhoods. So, too, would the GJ-VP facilitate workshops and represent the chapter at National Council meetings when the president is unable to attend.

We also assist many leaders in our life. Whether at church, school, a social club or an online virtual community, we have all taken on duties to help the leader and the organization as a whole. The GJ-VP will assist the president as needed.

One of the specific duties of the GJ-VP is to serve as webmaster. That may sound intimidating, but the VP is joining a network of chapter and SIG webmasters who will be there to mentor learning this job. The KOTESOL system is not the usual system that I use for my own professional development blog, but there are many similarities that I can draw upon to serve as the webmaster. In the Gwangju-Jeonnam chapter website, the VP creates event pages for workshops in a timely fashion and advertises workshops and the regional conference. Have you ever hosted a party or a wedding? Then you've got event planning experience! I've planned events for many organizations and for the Gwangju community. I'm stepping up again. How about you stepping up for an event in 2019?

Serving as co-chair of the regional conference is a time-consuming and network-savvy job. I helped organize some of the earliest Gwangju-Jeonnam conferences and know how much love and attention as well as critical and academic expertise go into one. I'm sure you, too, could chair a conference. Educators have several hats that they have to wear at work. Many times you may have to organize field trips, expert speakers, or even give a workshop to peers. All of these are similar projects to that of a conference.

One of the other duties that the GJ-VP needs to accomplish is to create and print the *Gwangju Communicator* for meetings. Again, our experiences as teachers make this a task that is familiar to us. We often make our own hand-outs, some of us make our own books, for class. Design, content, and attention to detail for resource creation and printing are not new to the repertoire of skills that we bring to our classroom.

In closing, I want to say that the other VP candidates are all good candidates. KOTESOL vets our leadership candidates to make sure that the everyday business of running a nonprofit like KOTESOL is not left to incompetents. However, as a long time member and sometimes leader, I'd like to point out that we need people to run for chapter and national office that are strong on passion. I can't say I know of a KOTESOL member that wouldn't also make a great KOTESOL leader. Teachers are already leaders!

The KOTESOL leadership community is a space of mentorship if you are willing to learn and lead. We need you to step up. I've stepped up in the past and am stepping up again, not because the competition for this position can't do the job, but because the competitor for this position is someone, like myself, who is holding many official hats already. Isn't time for you to share your skills with the community that has been there for you monthly? Or, perhaps, you stay away from things KOTESOL because you think it doesn't serve you. As a member you can change that, get involved. If you are ready to dip your toe into the volunteer leadership pond, KOTESOL is a supportive network to build your professional organization skills in leadership for educators. I hope to see you 'compete' against me, maybe next year in the chapter, or even for national office in KOTESOL.

Sincerely,

Maria Lisak  
Chosun University Dept of Public Administration & Welfare  
Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter KOTEOL Lifetime Member

October 24, 2018

October 22, 2018

The Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter of Korea TESOL

Letter of Endorsement: Maria Lisak for Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter Vice-President

Dear Election Officers:

As a current member of the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter of Korea TESOL, I am writing this letter to endorse Maria Lisak for chapter vice president. The duties of the vice president include serving as webmaster, co-chairing regional conferences, and creating the *Gwangju Communicator*. Maria Lisak has the qualities and record to fulfill all these duties.

Maria is the type of person whose actions speak louder than her words, and thankfully, Maria keeps a current record of her professional development and lifelong learning activities available for anyone to view. Maria is fully qualified to serve as the webmaster as she maintains her own personal website. This site is dedicated to professional transparency as well as supporting fellow teachers and students with teacher/learner materials. Her success at maintaining her own website assures me that she is able to create event pages for workshops and advertise them along with regional conferences in an effective manner.

I am confident that Maria is fully capable to serve as co-chair of the regional conferences. As a lifetime member of KOTESOL (since 2003), Maria has been the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter President (2004-2006) and the Gwangju-Jeonnam Conference Chair (2004-2007). Her prior experiences demonstrate that she is familiar with the administrative duties necessary to continue the operations of the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter. Furthermore, I believe the time Maria has spent away from being an officer will help inject new ideas and energy to our local chapter.

In addition, there is no question that Maria can handle the duty of producing the *Gwangju Communicator* for each meeting. Maria produces instructional content on a regular bases and is proven to be reliable in generating unique and relevant materials.

Finally, I believe any organization deserves to have a fresh source of leadership. Maria hasn't held office since 2007, giving her plenty of time to observe how the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter has developed and prospered. Now is time for our chapter to welcome back Maria as the vice president and benefit from her passion and expertise.

Sincerely,

Kevin Dieter

October 25, 2018

To: The Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter of Korea TESOL

Re: Nomination of Maria Lisak for Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter Vice-President

Dear KOTESOL Election Committee,

It is my pleasure to recommend Maria Lisak for the position of Vice President of our Gwangju-Jeonnam Kotesol Chapter. There are numerous reasons why Maria Lisak, a natural organizer and facilitator, is a viable candidate for the position. I would like to draw your attention to three aspects of her character which make her an asset: namely her experience, her love of leadership and mentorship, and her heart for the community.

Maria, a long-time resident of Gwangju, has worked at several of the national universities in Jeolla since 2003, sharing her experience, materials, and process on her personal-development blog. As such, she has years of experience in web-presence, and will be able to cope with the demands of a webmaster, one of the duties of the Vice President.

Another of these duties, co-chairing the regional conferences, will not be new to her. Maria has helped organize such events in the past. In addition, she has attended numerous TESOL conferences in Asia and the United States, both as a regular attendee and a presenter. This has given her valuable perspective and networking experience.

As a leader, Maria uses collaboration to foster leadership skills in others. She is the co-chair of the Social Justice SIG and a regular attendee of the Reflective Practices SIG. There she demonstrates her interest and consistent practice in self-reflection by contributing as member and at times, a moderator. Along with building the quality of self-reflection, she works to build independence in others, both by active mentorship and by example.

This example is never more evident than in her involvement in the community. A lifetime member of KOTESOL, participating in meetings, and conferences and special interest groups, Maria also contributes to the larger Gwangju community. She writes articles for the *Gwangju News*, posts for her personal blog, and content for her classes, which she designs with care. With this expertise in her repertoire, she will be more than capable of fulfilling the vice president's duty of creating and printing the *Gwangju Communicator*.

Maria is an avid educator, learner and communicator with a heart for service. Her skills and experience render her a qualified and willing nominee. Furthermore, she will offer a fresh voice that will encourage the growth of future leaders in the Gwangju and KOTESOL community. Please consider Maria Lisak as a candidate for the office of Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter Vice-President.

Sincerely,

Lisa Casaus  
Gwangju-Jeonnam KOTESOL Membership Coordinator