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Ayanna Cooper, Ed.D., Providence University M.A. TESOL Student Selected by U.S. Department of State for Prestigious English Language Specialist Assignment

The U.S. Department of State announced the selection of Dr. Ayanna Cooper of ACooper Consulting for a 4-week English Language Specialist project focusing on secondary English language curriculum in Kuwait at the Ministry of Education. Dr. Cooper is part of a select group, as one of approximately 80 U.S. citizens each year selected to serve on an English Language Specialist assignment.

As an independent consultant, author and keynote speaker, Dr. Cooper serves as an advocate for culturally and linguistically diverse learners. She provides technical assistance to state departments of education, school districts and organizations with the goal of improving outcomes for students learning English as an additional language. She emphasizes the importance of building educator capacity to develop and sustain language programs, use English language proficiency data effectively to improved pedagogy. As an active TESOL International Association member, she writes a blog dedicated to the Civil Rights of students learning English. Her work with educators in Kuwait is focused on 10th–12th grade curriculum and facilitating professional learning for the curriculum committee members. The project assignment also includes a curriculum needs assessment, developing content, curriculum and materials design.

The English Language Specialist Program is the premier opportunity for leaders in the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) to enact meaningful and sustainable changes in the way that English is taught abroad. Through projects developed by U.S. Embassies in more than 80 countries, EL Specialists work directly with local teacher trainers, educational leaders, and ministry of education officials to exchange knowledge, build capacity, and establish partnerships benefiting participants, institutions, and communities in the United States and overseas.

Since 1991, the English Language Specialist Program has sent hundreds of TESOL scholars and educators abroad to promote English language learning, enhance English teaching capacity, and foster mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through cultural exchange. On assignment, EL Specialists may conduct intensive teacher training, advise ministries of education or participate in high-level educational consultations, and offer plenary presentations at regional, national or international TESOL conferences. These projects are challenging and those selected represent the best of the U.S. TESOL community. In return, the program provides professional development opportunities to help participants experience different cultures and build skills that can greatly enhance their TESOL careers back home.

English Language Specialists are counted among the more than 50,000 individuals participating in U.S. Department of State exchange programs each year. The Specialist Program is administered by the Center for Intercultural Education and Development at Georgetown University.

For further information about the [English Language Specialist Program](#) or the U.S. Department of State, please visit our elprograms.org/specialist, contact us by telephone at [202-632-6452](tel:202-632-6452), or e-mail ECA-Press@state.gov.