



The International Research Foundation  
for English Language Education

Dear TIRF Supporter,

December 2014

It seems that the world grows smaller and smaller every day. Of course, there has been no reverse Pangea effect, nor has there been a shrinking of our borders, yet people are more connected now than ever before. Our potential to exchange ideas and communicate with one another is undoubtedly more seamless than in years past. Certainly advances in technology and rapid international travel account for these possibilities. However, there is still a problem with how well we are able to communicate with one another and express our ideas across cultures, languages, and geographic boundaries. At TIRF, we believe that one solution for reaching greater understanding is through language education. And while the teaching and learning of English is not the panacea for the world's language barriers, through TIRF's efforts, together we can positively affect the language education field and strive for greater understanding in our world.

Won't you please join us in helping people communicate more effectively? Think of Mr. Jaehan Park, a 2013 Doctoral Dissertation Grant awardee, who said that his life changed instantly upon receiving notification that he would receive a TIRF grant. Mr. Park had been not only looking for funding for his doctoral studies, but also for confirmation that his chosen life's path was the right one. He had been contemplating whether securing funding for his doctoral studies would add value to his family life as well. Through receiving a TIRF grant, he felt justified staying in the field of English language education. Mr. Park is now nearing the completion of his doctorate.

We also encourage you to reflect on the story of Dr. Fatima Esseili, a 2009 Sheikh Nahayan Fellow. Her doctoral research provides a sociolinguistic profile of English in Lebanon. She grappled with issues related to language, national identity, and language policy. Her research pointed out many contentious areas of inequality that are common in Lebanon and beyond. She believes that true peace is possible when people can focus on similarities while acknowledging differences and through creating equal opportunities for all. When we mention breaking down geographic boundaries to reach greater understanding across cultures, we cannot think of a more deserving young scholar than Dr. Esseili. Her life's work will certainly make a difference, not just in language education but in the lives of many of her students.

Many other peoples' lives are influenced by TIRF. Consider Dr. Steven Talmy's situation. When he was completing his doctorate, his study was sound and his findings important, but his topic and approach were not gaining much recognition in his program. He shared with us that receiving his TIRF grant in 2003 was as much about the legitimization his study received from TIRF and its external reviewers as it was about the funding he was awarded. Dr. Talmy is now a tenured associate professor at the University of British Columbia. He has influenced many aspiring language educators who are now building language bridges to improve our world's understanding of different cultures and points of view.

While we are eternally grateful for the support of Cambridge English Language Assessment, Educational Testing Service, the Instituto Guatemalteco Americano, Anaheim University, National Geographic/Cengage Learning, and for our partnership with the British Council, TIRF still has unmet financial needs. We are constantly searching for new partnering opportunities, and we hope to forge more in the future. But in the meantime, we sincerely need the help of individual donors like you.



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To put things in perspective, if every person who received this letter donated \$5 to the Foundation, we would meet our expectations for gifts from individual donors for one year. Another way to look at our fundraising needs is to say that if every person who received our annual appeal letter donated \$25 to TIRF, we would have enough money to fund an entire year of TIRF activities. We are cautiously optimistic that we will reach such levels of support.

We could write to you about TIRF's many accomplishments over the past several months and the plans we have in store for 2015. We have tried such an approach in the past and now we feel that it is time for something different. Therefore, we hope you will appreciate the tone we are taking in this letter.

As we are learning, it can be very difficult to pitch TIRF's mission in a way that can gain support from the public in the form of financial donations. There are many charities competing for your gifts, and all we can ask is that you keep TIRF in mind as you make your charitable donation decisions.

At this time of the year, we rely on our donors to help fund our programs and our administrative fees. We do keep our costs to a minimum, but we still have expenses to manage. Please will you consider making a donation to TIRF? Gifts may be transmitted online via credit card by [clicking here](#). Checks drawn on a US-based bank account and made out to "TIRF" may be sent to the Foundation at the address shown below. Your gift will help aspiring young researchers like Fatima, Jaehan, and Steven.

If you have any questions about the work of the Foundation, please do not hesitate to contact us via email at [kbailey@miis.edu](mailto:kbailey@miis.edu) and/or [rdamerow@miis.edu](mailto:rdamerow@miis.edu). Thank you very much for your support of TIRF, our programs, and the doctoral candidates whose work we hope to fund.

Best wishes,

*Kathi Bailey*

President & Chairman of the Board of Trustees, TIRF

*Ryan Damerow*

Executive Assistant, TIRF

