

the Polyglot

Ciao Buongiorno Wie geht's? Hallo! Salut
 ¿Qué tal? ¡Hola! أهلاً وسهلاً Buenos días SALVE
 BONJOUR Wie geht's? Salut 你好
 こんにちは! χαίρε ΠΡΙΒΕΤ! שלום

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE SPRING 2009 ISSUE NO. 16

FLL STUDY ABROAD TRANSFORMS YOUNG LIVES

IN TIMES OF GREAT CHANGE throughout the world, FLL students are learning first-hand the benefits of becoming global citizens. Study abroad at the University of Delaware offers young people an unparalleled opportunity to develop the self-knowledge and self-reliance, the intellectual awareness and flexibility, and the linguistic and cultural skills they will need as they go forward into globalized professional environments. FLL offers more than twenty-five study abroad options each year: from intensive five-week winter and summer sessions to semester-long programs, our students have the opportunity to study, to live with host families of vastly different backgrounds and traditions, and to make lasting connections across oceans and continents from the Andes to Tiananmen Square. They return deeply changed, and their stories share a common thread: study abroad fuels a life-long love of learning, fellowship, and personal transformation. Here are some of those stories in their own words.

Andrew Byrd (Mexico, Argentina)

I participated in my first study abroad experience between high school and college, when I joined a year-long program in Sweden. There, I not only gained knowledge of a new language,



Andrew with his host brother in Puebla, Mexico

"I signed up to study abroad for a semester in Puebla, Mexico. To this day I am still humbled by the experiences I had there."

a new set of friends, and international experiences, but I was truly bitten by the travel bug. Two years later I signed up to study abroad for a semester in Puebla, Mexico. To this day I am still humbled by the experiences I had there. Witnessing first-hand the enduring poverty of that country reminded me that not everyone leads as privileged a life as my own, and I became increasingly grateful for my blessings as the semester went on. Mexico truly is a land of contrasts, from dry, scorched deserts in the north, to lush tropical jungles in the south, from impoverished families without running water in the east, to gated communities with all the modern amenities to the west.

Looking back at my time abroad, I realize now that many of my experiences revealed a truth about the world that continues to speak volumes, and although these memories are a part of my past, they will surely shape my future endeavors. Next fall I will be participating in another new study abroad experience, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. And although I have become a professional at pre-departure packing, and adjusting to new cultures seems routine, I never tire of exploring new locations and meeting new people.

Alex Kirik (Spain, Tunisia, Chile)

I am a three-language major studying Spanish, Russian, and Arabic, and I have studied abroad every year since I was a freshman. Each trip has not only been an indispensable educational opportunity, but has provided me with a new view on different cultures around the world and unforgettable



Alex and friends in Tunisia

"I had a conversation with a local man in Arabic, and the fact that I was able to communicate with him in his native language, and hear about his way of life, just blew me away."

life experiences.

The Granada program was my second trip to Spain, but I little suspected when I arrived how much I would come to grow and learn about myself. Tunisia, my second FLL program, was completely uncharted waters for me, but I quickly realized that I could embrace this wonderful culture. It was odd at first to be woken up every day at five a.m. by the Muslim call to prayer, projected over loudspeakers throughout my neighborhood. I lived with the most amazing family, and learned all about their daily lives, religion, and culture; we are still in touch. The people of Tunisia were very welcoming: in a restaurant once, we were served a dish with the words "We love USA" written out in sauce.

My most rewarding moment was during our eight-day road trip, when we stopped at a remote southern village where the people lived just as they had for centuries, with very few modern things except electricity

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Dr. Richard Zipser

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Hello Alumni and Friends!

In the winter session of 1988, our department launched its first study abroad programs in France (Caen), Germany (Bayreuth), and Spain (Granada). Our goal then was to offer a new transformative educational experience to undergraduates, one that we hoped would help convert them into global citizens. Over the years we added many more programs—full-semester as well as five-week winter and summer programs—, offering language learners the opportunity to study in various countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe. Thousands of undergraduates have participated in these programs over the past twenty-two years, and their lives have been transformed in very positive and often unpredictable ways. In the lead article of this year's *Polyglot*, five of our majors will tell you how studying abroad influenced their lives and career paths. Their stories are remarkably interesting.

You will also read about three new programs abroad we helped develop and co-sponsored in the 2009 winter session: in Ghana, with Political Science and International Relations; in Paris, with Women's Studies; and in Merida, Mexico, with Nursing, for students in health care disciplines. In addition, you will be introduced to Dr. Ikram Masmoudi (PhD, Université Stendhal, Grenoble), our new assistant professor of Arabic. And, I am sure you will enjoy reading the reports from three Fulbright scholars: Suzanne Tierney, Instructor of Spanish, who is training English teachers in Panama; Emily Helmeid (BA '07), who spent much of 2008 working as an English teaching assistant in Rio de Janeiro; and Thérèse McKinny-Wood (BA '04), who reports in the Alumni Column on her research project in rural Honduras.

Congratulations to two faculty members who were promoted in 2008 to the rank of associate professor with tenure, Jianguo Chen (Chinese) and Gladys Ilarregui (Spanish). Several members of our faculty received major external grants and awards for various projects and accomplishments last year. Dr. Chen was co-recipient of the largest award, a \$250,000 grant from the US Department of State to conduct a six-week Governor's School for Excellence in Chinese Language and Culture in Beijing over the summer. Dr. Rachael Hutchinson, who joined our faculty in 2007, received the Toshiba International Foundation Prize for Best Essay in the journal *Japan Forum*. And Dr. Tom Lathrop, retired Professor of Spanish, was named Editor of the Cervantes Society of America's journal, *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*. We are proud of their achievements as well as those of other FLL faculty cited in the Faculty/Staff Notes section of this issue.

I want to thank those of you who made gifts to the Department or one of its memorial funds last year. We need and rely upon your financial support, and we deeply appreciate your generosity. Although we gave a large number of deserving students study abroad scholarships in 2008-2009, on the basis of need and merit, this is an area where we can **always** use additional funds. Please continue to help our students as they strive to become citizens of the world!

If you are in the vicinity of Jastak-Burgess Hall, which is located on East Main Street right behind Elliott Hall, feel free to drop in and say hello. The main entrance to the building is open until 5:00 p.m. on weekdays, and you are always welcome to tour the building. You may also wish to explore our Web site at <http://www.fllt.udel.edu>. One way or another, be sure to pay us a visit!

Dr. Richard Zipser

the Polyglot

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FLL STUDY ABROAD TRANSFORMS YOUNG LIVES continued from page 1

and running water. I had a conversation with a local man in Arabic, and the fact that I was able to communicate with him in his native language, and hear about his way of life, just blew me away.

After my experience in Tunisia, I decided to head to South America. I arrived in Chile last January confident in my ability to speak, but a little unsure about the culture. While in Chile I was lucky enough to be able to spend five days in the Andean region of Peru, which couldn't contrast more sharply with the modernity of Santiago. I had heard and seen pictures of the poverty that many people live in, but there is nothing like experiencing it firsthand. It gave me a whole new perspective on my life here in America. On the day of President Obama's inauguration, everything in the town stopped so that anyone who had a TV could watch.

Our university has some incredible opportunities available to the students, and I only wish that every student could take advantage of at least one of those journeys into the rest of the world.

Caroline Meliones (Costa Rica, Panama, Spain, Argentina)

Study abroad has influenced my academic choices, guided my career path, helped me to develop as a person, and forever changed my life. My first FLL study abroad experience was the Costa Rica program in winter 2006. I was fascinated by the food, the culture, the music, the landscape, everything. I remember sitting on a beach with my roommate, watching the sunset, and we began talking



Caroline in front of the waterfalls of Iguazú, Argentina

Study abroad has made me an ambassador of the United States, and I have learned that the future and my life are my own to shape.

to two young surfers from Sardinia, the small island off the coast of Italy. They spoke Italian and Portuguese, and I spoke English and Spanish. But somehow, through romance language roots, drawings in the sand and hand gestures, the four of us managed to communicate our life stories, traveling tales and future ambitions. It was one of the most incredible experiences of my life and it was then that I realized how big the world actually was, and how much I wanted to explore as much of it as possible.

One of the most important things I have gained from study abroad is self-reliance and awareness. After studying in Costa Rica, Panama, Spain, and Argentina, I am capable of maneuvering through unknown places and feel confident in building life-long friendships wherever I go. This is something you cannot learn in school. Study abroad has made me an ambassador of the United States, and I have learned that the future and my life are my own to shape.

Studying abroad has also drawn me closer to my Italian roots. I am now fluent in Italian and have been to Italy and Sicily to visit my many relatives there. Tears stream down my grandfather's face as he hears me communicating with family in his native tongue. I have taught English in Panama City and Spanish here in the United States,

and I dream of becoming a professor of foreign languages. None of this would have been possible without my study abroad experiences.

Soleil Sabalja (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, China, France, Greece, Spain, Italy)

I would not be who I am today if it were not for the FLL study abroad programs that shaped my academic career. Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, China, France, Greece, Spain, Italy, England, Denmark, Croatia, and Switzerland are among the countries I was able to visit (some twice or even three times) while studying abroad in my past four years at the University of Delaware. I spent four full semesters and three winter sessions abroad through FLL programs.



Soleil in Tiananmen Square

When I came to college four years ago, there was nothing special about me. Now, thanks to the FLL study abroad programs I participated in, I can speak French, Spanish, and even conversational Chinese.

I was hesitant to go away for my freshman spring semester. I had just made friends at UD and I was afraid that when I got back no one would remember me. But, I reason, how many other students can say they have climbed the great Aztec pyramids in Mexico and the Great Wall of China, or even rappelled down waterfalls in Argentina? In the end, the world has been my classroom.

Studying abroad has transformed me into the student I am today. When I came to college four years ago, there was nothing special about me. Now, thanks to the FLL study abroad programs I participated in, I can speak French, Spanish, and even conversational Chinese. I have also seen many things that people only dream about seeing in their lifetime. I was taken out of a small bubble and saw what the real world is like first hand. While people were reading about the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires ending their forty years of protest, I was there witnessing it. And when archeologists were digging out bones from an Aztec sacrificial altar in Mexico, my class was there watching. I have no regrets about studying abroad, only that maybe I didn't do it enough.



Soleil with friends on a pyramid in Teopoztlán, Mexico

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A fountain is activated in Bordeaux, France.



Looking through the century-old windows of the Bibliothèque Schoelcher, Fort-de-France, Martinique.

*(Above right)
A boy in the Muslim Quarter, Xi'an, China*

Photos by Dean Carter



FLL STUDY ABROAD TRANSFORMS YOUNG LIVES
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Dean Carter *(Martinique, France, Japan, China)*

As a polyglot in training, it didn't take me long to realize that with the pursuit of language comes the pursuit of culture. Every chance encounter, be it on the sizzling beaches of Martinique or in the passenger seat of a treacherous Beijing taxi, is a test of both my linguistic knowledge and my ability to adapt to and understand new cultures and experiences. How has study abroad changed me as a person? I can't answer this question very clearly, because it is that changed person speaking right now, unable to imagine himself without the vestiges of people and culture appropriated from abroad. Yet images and memories, many reinforced and changed through the ritualistic storytelling that accompanies any return from a foreign place, trickle into my mind when I try to imagine where I was forged as a person. Ironically, the moments when spoken language fails are often the moments when the most incredible leaps of communication occur, like when my roommate and I had to demonstrate salsa dancing to our host mother be-



The massive portrait of Mao Zedong reflected in a young soldier's face, in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, China.



cause we couldn't explain in French that we had learned salsa that day (fortunately, I got to be the male lead). And as I pushed outside of the comfortable bubble of my American group, I would find these moments in the oddest places, like the smoky alleyways in Tokyo filled with *yakitori* restaurants and businessmen nursing beers, out of the touristic comfort zone but infinitely rewarding to anyone willing to try their hand at engaging the tough-looking chefs in small talk. So, the Chinese Muslim quarter in Xi'an, China, filled with the aroma of home-cooked meals and laughing children enthralled at my snapping camera, or the flavorful bursts of bitter grapes snatched from the vines of Saint-Émilion, France: these experiences come to mind as I contemplate who I am, driven by a desire to understand other cultures and other languages.



(Top) The Chinese New Year in Tianjin, China.

The lantern bears the character for 'luck.'

(Bottom) Lost in the middle of Osaka, Japan, signs contain hidden meaning.



City Walls, Xi'an, China. The streaming lights of modernity blurred behind classical Chinese architecture.

STUDY ABROAD

NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS GHANA WITH POLITICAL SCIENCE, PARIS WITH WOMEN'S STUDIES, AND MERIDA WITH NURSING

Last year the Department played an integral, collaborative role in introducing three new study abroad opportunities to the University of Delaware's curriculum. Each program was uniquely designed to expose students to the culture of the host country through pertinent social issues. In Ghana, students learned about the country's tragic role in the transatlantic slave trade and many traditions of an ancient West African society. The program incorporated a service component that gave the study abroad participants an opportunity to get involved in a community improvement project. In Paris, students immersed themselves in French culture and language, focusing on the lives of French women through meetings with feminists, and the study of women in Western art from antiquity to the twenty-first century. After a one year hiatus, FLL teamed up with the Nursing school to reshape a longstanding program in Merida, the largest city on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. The course offerings ranged from Spanish for Healthcare Providers and Cross-cultural Healthcare to Mexican Culture through Conversation and Contemporary Latin America.

FOCUS ON FACULTY

INTERVIEW WITH DR. RICCARDA SAGGESE

"As a foreign language teacher I feel responsible for what the students learn about the country they study. I put a lot of enthusiasm into showing them Italian everyday life as well as the fantastic memories of the past."

Dr. Riccarda Saggese graduated in Philosophy from the University of Naples, Italy in 1973. She specialized in Paleography and Diplomatic Archiving at the Federal Archives in Milan in 1977. Saggese joined FLL in 1992 as an instructor of Italian, and received her PhD in Italian language and literature from The Johns Hopkins University in 2000. Her recent publications include *The Easy Italian Reader*, the CD-ROM for *The Big Green Book of Italian Verbs*, and the teaching program and companion website for the textbook *Percorsi*.

What brought you and your family to the United States, and how did you come to the University of Delaware?

After earning my degree in Naples, I taught Italian, Latin, History, and Geography in Novara, in the Piemonte region of Italy. In 1977 I specialized in Paleography and Diplomatic Archiving at the Federal Archives Office in Milan, in order to be able to study ancient documents in the Federal Archives. The following year I participated



Dr. Riccarda Saggese

in a national competition and won a tenured position there. I moved to the United States in 1987, when my husband came here to develop his petrochemical company. We lived in New York for two years before relocating to Wilmington, Delaware. There I met an Italian woman who was also an instructor at UD; she introduced me to Dr. Theodore Braun, who was then chair of the French program. After an interview, Dr. Braun presented my name to Dr. Zipser as a possible instructor of Italian. I began teaching for the Department in 1992.

What influenced your decision to pursue a doctoral degree in Italian Literature at The Johns Hopkins University?

When I started teaching for the Department, I taught beginning Italian language. I really felt that if I had a doctoral degree, I could better share the Italian language, literature, culture and civilization, and also continue my research. So, I started over again. I applied to Johns Hopkins and was awarded a scholarship, which encouraged me to pursue my goal. It was not easy to combine the job of teacher with the student's homework, essays and exams, and family life as a mother of three—I am grateful to my children, who were always exemplary. My motto is "never give up." I am very tough on myself and this attitude helps me to persevere in every task I undertake.

You have published a number of pedagogical materials in recent years. Which publication do you consider the most important, and why?

There is a saying, "You never forget your first love." It's true for me. Although other publications came out after the first book, I still remember the emotional feeling that caught me when I opened the box with the copies of the *Easy Italian Reader*, now in its second edition. I had put so much time and effort into it. I wanted to create something good for the readers, to give them the opportunity to improve their language and have a better understanding of Italian culture, history, and literature while having fun at the same time. Considering the response, I think I achieved my goal.

The Delaware Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages named you Foreign Language Teacher of the Year in 2007. What attributes have made you such a successful teacher of Italian?

I consider it a great honor to be recognized as Foreign Language Teacher of the Year. There is not a secret formula for how to be a good teacher. It is a combination of listening, love, experience, and professionalism. A good teacher should listen to the students and meet their needs, love the job, have a good background, and update oneself continuously.

As a foreign language teacher, I feel responsible for what the students learn about the country they study. I put a lot of enthusiasm into showing them Italian everyday life as well as the glorious history and artifacts of the past. Students are involved in all kinds of activities in different ways, using different approaches and different tools, from books to slides, from CDs to computers, from songs to videos. The reading of methodology, psychology, literature, and history books helps me stay current, and enhances my teaching approach as well as my research.

You have directed many winter and summer study abroad programs in Italy. How does a five-week program influence a student's educational development?

Study abroad is an experience that remains with the students all their lives. On all these trips, I saw how students really changed. They benefit from full immersion in the Italian language. The contact with the new culture, the history, the daily lives of others, opens their minds and makes them appreciate their own culture. It transforms them into more mature young men and women.



Dr. Alexander Selimov

INTERVIEW WITH DR. ALEXANDER SELIMOV

“I am an international person, and I truly enjoy helping students acquire cross-cultural skills and global knowledge.”

Dr. Alexander Selimov received his BA/MA in French/Spanish as a Second Language, Translation, and World Literatures from Lenin University in 1986, and his PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures from the University of Pennsylvania in 1996. His

recent publications include *De la Ilustración al modernismo: el arte narrativo de Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda* and a critical edition of Avellaneda’s letters, *Autobiografía y Epistolarios de Amor*. He teaches courses on Hispanic prose, poetry, and theater of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

What is your background and training with languages, and how did this bring you to Delaware in the 1980s?

As an undergraduate in the Soviet Union (today’s Russia) I studied French, Spanish, sociolinguistics, and literature, and taught French to students in the fifth and sixth grades. At that time the degree program was five years long, six days a week, ten months a year. Male students did military training in the summers, so I also graduated as an army officer. My training took me to different parts of the world, and I spent several years in Cuba. When I came to the US, I saw Delaware as a good place to start a new life close to major cities and universities, yet unspoiled by city life. I also felt drawn here because when I was a twelve or thirteen years old I loved reading James Fenimore Cooper novels, in which Delaware is an important setting. In a way, that early experience shaped my career as a specialist in the literature of romanticism.

How do your linguistic and cultural experiences influence your teaching?

I think it’s very important to contextualize literature in culture and history. I use literature to stimulate linguistic interest in my students: the plots get them interested, and then I use writing and other tools to enable them to reflect on and apply their new knowledge. I believe students can learn from the great writers—even a personal letter from the nineteenth century—and extend these skills to the social sciences, professions, grant-writing and other areas.

Can you tell us about your interest in music?

I studied classical guitar starting at age twelve in school: in Russia, music was promoted as part of the universal education tradition. In college I took up the bass guitar. My family was also a big influence. My mother is a retired theatrical director; my sister was a playwright (she passed away at age forty-nine); my grandfather was an opera singer and painter; and my father was an actor and linguist. When I joined the FLL faculty, Dr. Alexander Lehrman suggested we form a band with Dr. Tom Lathrop. We played at Department events and once at the Eighteenth Century conference held at UD. Tom Lathrop named us “The Rock-and-Roll Committee” and Dr. Joan Brown, our Undergraduate Studies chair then, surprised us with a set of t-shirts for the band. Our repertoire ranged from the Beatles to Santana, and

included original songs by Dr. Lehrman that were later recorded in Russia and released in Germany.

You developed our study abroad program in St. Petersburg, Russia, and have directed many other programs. Do you have a favorite destination, and if so, what makes it special?

I don’t have an attachment to any particular destination. I am an international person, and I truly enjoy helping students acquire cross-cultural skills and global knowledge. I enjoy challenges, and the destinations that offer them. For example, in Russia, there are no contracts, set rules or procedures, and everything depends on interpersonal communication and negotiation. In that case finding host families was difficult, because not all houses are suitable for our students in terms of basic necessities: some of the plumbing is antiquated; privacy is looked at differently, etc. So we arranged for other kinds of housing. In the end, that study abroad program was a transformational experience for many students. Two ended up doing semester programs on their own, at the same institution: David Schwartz is in St. Petersburg right now and Krystina Syvarth will be going this summer.

Please tell us about your current research interests. How does your current research relate to your previous work?

I just finished a book on the Cuban-Spanish dramatist/poet/novelist Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, and I am working on my next project, a book on neoclassical theater in Spain. It is both connected to my previous work and a departure, because now I am concentrating on theater.

What special knowledge do you need to understand theater as a whole, different from other literature?

I worked as an actor in Russian theater for a year between high school and college. I think I realized that understanding drama as performance and interaction with the spectator is very important. We do not always pay attention to this crucial element. Drama participates in two worlds—written art and visual art—and that’s what attracts me to it. As a person with a multiple background in the arts, performance, and literature, I see drama as a combination of these different arts.

MEET OUR NEW PROFESSOR



Dr. Ikram Masmoudi

DR. IKRAM MASMOUDI, ARABIC STUDIES

Even though I knew I was destined for a teaching career from the time I was in elementary school in Tunisia, I never dreamed, when I was studying linguistics and finishing my doctoral dissertation on Francophone literature at the Université Stendhal in Grenoble, that I would end up teaching my native language to students so far away from

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my country of origin. In 2000 I started teaching Arabic language and literature at the Université de Provence, juggling teaching and studying to prepare for my exams in *l'Agrégation d'Arabe* (the certification for the teaching of Arabic).

I came to the US in 2002. My transition from the old continent to the new world and its new teaching styles and methodologies was facilitated by my passage through Middlebury College and its famous summer program. There I not only had the chance to teach with some of the best-known experts in the field of Arabic language, but I immersed myself for a few summers, and then two full academic years, in the teaching of the language and the literature of my heritage. This full-time immersion softened my double exile in rural Vermont, in what seemed to me one of the smallest villages of America.

I think that my coming to UD happened at the right time in my career. I have grown and developed as a teacher and researcher through teaching at Duke University, Princeton University, and Middlebury College. I'm hoping that UD students will benefit from my experience and that I will be able to help them embrace the Arabic language and culture, not just as a course they may take out of curiosity, but as a language in which they will soon be able to minor—and as a culture whose riches they can explore through our study abroad program in Tunisia.

Developing a minor in Arabic is at the top of the agenda for our program; for that reason, I'm looking forward to working with colleagues teaching Chinese and Japanese and with colleagues from others languages and other departments for guidance and inspiration as we build the minor. In the future I hope to introduce students to the multiple voices of Arabic literature today, and to the concerns of Arabic-speaking people across the Middle East and North Africa. One of the main focuses of my research at present is Iraqi literature, and I hope to be able to help my students develop new perspectives on the rich culture and history of that country.

I'm only in my second semester here and it's really a joy to see our program growing from one semester to another. I'm very happy to be at the University of Delaware, with its collegial faculty and engaging students, and I look forward to exciting years in my career here as a professor of Arabic.

FACULTY/STAFF NOTES

GRANTS

Dr. Persephone Braham received a \$10,000 grant from the Center for Teaching Effectiveness to develop the Latin American Studies Program's capstone experience.

Dr. Jianguo Chen, Associate Professor of Chinese, working with George Irvine of the Center for International Studies, received a \$250,000 grant from the US State Department to conduct UD's Governor's School for Excellence, a summer institute for gifted Delaware high-school students.

Dr. Laura Salsini received a \$3,000 Summer Research Grant from the Women's Studies Program for her project "From Fascism to Feminism: The Experience of Women Writers in Italy."

Ms. Suzanne Tierney received a Fulbright scholar grant for a yearlong English language project, "Enhancing the Instruction of English," at the Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá in Panama City, Panama.

PROMOTIONS

Dr. Jianguo Chen (Chinese) and **Dr. Gladys Ilarregui** (Spanish) were promoted to the rank of associate professor with tenure.

AWARDS

Dr. Persephone Braham was named an Exemplary Assessment Fellow by the Office of Educational Assessment for assessment in the multi-disciplinary Latin American Studies program.

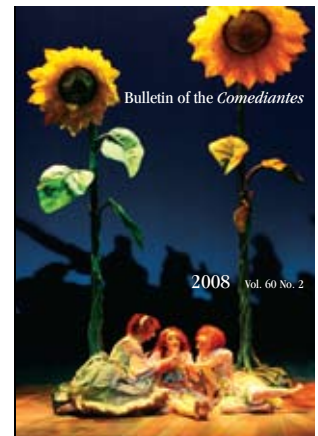
Dr. Gary Ferguson was elected to the Executive Council, and subsequently named Vice President, of the *Société Française d'Étude du Seizième Siècle* (French Society for Sixteenth-Century Studies).

Dr. Rachael Hutchinson received the Toshiba International Foundation Prize for Best Essay in the peer-reviewed journal *Japan Forum* for 2007, for her article "Kurosawa Akira's One Wonderful Sunday: Context, censorship and counter-discursive film." She received the prize and gave the annual Toshiba Foundation address at the British Association for Japanese Studies conference in Manchester, England.

Dr. Tom Lathrop (retired) was named Editor of the Cervantes Society of America's journal *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*.

Dr. Vincent Martin was named to the Editorial Board of the journal *Cervantes*, and Managing Editor of the *Bulletin of the Comediantes*.

Dr. Meredith Ray was named 2008-2009 Regional Faculty Fellow at the Penn Humanities Forum/Mellon Research Seminar for her project "The Alchemy of Gender: Female Bodies, Women's Voices, and Early Modern Italian Texts."



FACULTY/STUDENT EXCHANGES



*Dr. Antonio
González Martínez
of the Universidad de
Granada*



*Ms. Laura Torres Zúñiga
of the Universidad
de Granada*

CURRICULAR NEWS/SPECIAL EVENTS

CHINESE PROGRAM WINS SECOND MAJOR GRANT FOR SUMMER INSTITUTE

Dr. Jianguo Chen and George Irvine of the Center for International Studies were again awarded a State Department grant of \$250,000 to conduct the Governor's School for Excellence in Beijing, China, in summer 2008. Co-directed by Chen and Dr. Maria Tu, the program accepted twenty-four academically talented Delaware high school students for its six-week summer institute. Participants received more than 100 hours of intensive Mandarin Chinese instruction and tutoring at the intermediate and advanced levels. Placed with Chinese host families, the students attended lectures on Chinese culture, history and film, created e-journals, and volunteered in the community. Excursions included a trip to Xian and Shanghai (where UD President Pat Harker and other colleagues visited the program) to observe the cultural and economic transformations taking place in China. Returning students reported on their experiences to peers, community groups, and at UD.

A highlight of the summer program was a gathering organized for forty-five young orphans from the Sichuan earthquake, who were visiting Beijing as part of a counseling process to recover from the trauma of losing their parents. Our students hosted a diverse program of performance, stories, and games, and gave the children 1,000 paper cranes to express their sympathy and support. The gathering was televised nationwide.

CHINESE PROGRAM RECEIVES FIVE PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIPS

In recognition of the successful efforts UD has made to promote Chinese language and culture, the Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC offered three full scholarships for study in China for the academic year 2008-2009. This was the second consecutive year that the Chinese program was awarded these prestigious scholarships. Additionally, our partner institution in China, Beijing Normal University, awarded the Chinese program two high-profile scholarships for 2008-2009.

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS DISCUSS APPROPRIATION, TRANSLATION

The 2008 Distinguished Scholars Series hosted Dr. Liliane Weissberg, Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor in Arts and Sciences and Professor of German and Comparative Literature at the University of Pennsylvania, in the spring. Professor Weissberg spoke of Hannah Arendt's curious appropriation of a distinctly non-Jewish figure, Charlie Chaplin, as an exemplar of an alternative political tradition that might have helped Jews avoid their tragic persecution.

The fall lecture was given by Dr. Howard Goldblatt, Research Professor of Chinese Literature and Director of Asian Studies at Notre Dame University. Professor Goldblatt's talk "Two Writers, One Text: Mo Yan in Chinese and English" was a close examination of the translation process and the challenges attendant on making Eastern traditions accessible to a Western audience. Translation may be an imperfect medium, but it is crucial to creating this cultural bridge.

—continued on page 10



Drs. Saggese, Ferguson, and Robb

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY FACULTY IN 2008

Dr. Gary Ferguson (French). *Queer (Re)Readings in the French Renaissance: Homosexuality, Gender, Culture* (Ashgate) and *L'Homme en tous genres: Masculinités, textes et contextes*, edited volume (L'Harmattan).

Dr. Bonnie Robb (French). *Félicité de Genlis: Motherhood in the Margins* (University of Delaware).

Dr. Riccarda Saggese (Italian). Co-author, Instructor Resource Manual with Testing Program and Companion Website for the *Percorsi* textbook (Prentice-Hall).

Dr. Monika Shafi (German). Editor, *Approaches to Teaching Grass's The Tin Drum* (MLA).

RETIREMENTS

Dr. Nicolas Gross (Associate Professor of Classics) retired in spring 2008; **Ms. Stella Hall** (Instructor of Spanish) retired in spring 2008; and **Dr. Willy Reimer** (Associate Professor of German) retired in fall 2008.

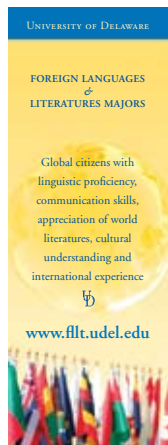
STAFF NEWS

Senior Secretary Ms. Deandra Batts joined our staff in July.



NEW FLL BOOKMARK

Speak to the World is the message of our department bookmark that celebrates the many languages offered at UD.



FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS REPORT



Tierney and her students at the UTP

FLL INSTRUCTOR TEACHING TEACHERS IN PANAMA

Fulbright committee members tell me that I am a perfect fit for the position here in Panama. I am honored, because I think my entire life path has been leading me here. As a child, I loved languages and travel. However, it wasn't until joining the UD faculty in 1992 that I realized language and travel programs were my life calling.

I have been active in study abroad programs since my first experience in Spain in summer 1993. I established the FLL program in Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands in January 2004, around the time I began to learn about the service-learning pedagogy. When I included service learning in the 2005 Ecuador program, I was thrilled with the results. It strengthened my bond with my students, and greatly improved both their spoken Spanish and civic engagement.

In fall 2007, I was teaching an Honors Spanish class that included a service-learning component on campus, while preparing to direct a new program in Chile. In Chile, our students completed a small service learning project. Many of them brought their enthusiasm for service learning back to campus, and Monica Trobagis joined Honors students Rina Binder-Macleod, Connie Saltzman, and me in a service project teaching English in the community. We often met at my house to plan lessons; one day in March we were all there when the mail arrived, and I found out I had been awarded a Fulbright grant to work in Panama. I wondered if this, too, could bring more learning opportunities to my students...

The UD Alumni Association Board of Directors generously awarded us three Alumni Enrichment Awards, which enabled Rina, Connie, and Monica to spend winter session 2009 as teaching assis-



Tierney with Trobagis, Binder-Macleod, Saltzman, and others at Abriendo Horizontes

tants at my host institution, the Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá (UTP). We also collaborated with Fundación ProEd on two projects, *Estudiantes apoyando estudiantes* (Students Supporting Students) and *Abriendo Horizontes* (Opening Horizons), also supported by the US Department of State.

My year here in Panama has been busy and extremely rewarding. My colleague at UTP, Professor Edith Espino (who was a Fulbright scholar in Maryland), is very supportive and together we are finding ways to enhance English language programs here. Some of my projects include teaching foreign language pedagogy courses to teachers at UTP in Panama City and other provinces; organizing school clean-ups with students and training sessions for teachers; working with the Panama Peace Corps' Tourism and English Advising Program; and collaborating with the Panama Ministry of Education on pedagogy workshops for language teachers. Edith and I also traveled to Guatemala in March to give a conference paper at the *Congreso Latinoamericano del College Board* in Guatemala City.

The experience has truly enriched my career and personal life. I believe that *el conocimiento nos hace responsables*, which roughly translates to "once we know, we should do." Thanks to UD and the Fulbright scholars program, I am doing what I know.

Ms. Suzanne Tierney received a Fulbright scholar grant for a yearlong English language project, "Enhancing the Instruction of English," at the Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá (UTP) in Panama City, Panama.

FLL ALUMNA '07 REACHES BRAZIL'S POOREST CHILDREN

March 2008

Just a month ago, I arrived in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a torrid city of over six million inhabitants nestled among the emerald spackled, granite bluffs of Brazil's coastline. The city's affluent rest easily along the shore, while the impoverished many dwell in structures that cling dizzily to the hillsides. It is among these bluffs and beside this coast that I will work for the next nine months as an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) with the US Fulbright program. I will be working with The Sequoia Foundation, a small non-profit organization dedicated to helping teachers and improving the educational opportunities of young English language learners in over a dozen public schools in Rio.

The teachers, many of whom know about as much English as I do Portuguese, are in a very difficult situation. When class is just one hour, twice a week, each lesson must be meticulously organized because every minute counts—two class periods to learn about each letter and sound in the English language, five class periods for each subject unit, etc. Together the teachers and I develop the plan, but progress comes slowly for we converse in English. The reality is that students majoring in English Education in a small public university in Brazil are unlikely to hear English in the classroom, and even less likely to be asked to speak it.

Despite low pay, little encouragement from the government, and my colleagues' frustrating lack of English, we continue our preparation for the coming semester. Sequoia has given these teachers renewed purpose; for the first time they are seeing real and measurable progress in their classroom. I can't wait for the first day of school!

October 2008

Cariocas (Brazilians from the city of Rio de Janeiro) claim that the beach—a crowded stretch of sand wedged between the sparkling Atlantic and the chaotic city streets—is the most democratic representation of their society. I, however, believe that public transportation would be the more appropriate depiction. The common city bus truly manages to traverse the deep societal chasm that exists between the residents of luxury condominiums of Zona Sul and the aluminum

shacks of Zona Norte.

I crisscrossed the city of Rio de Janeiro by bus each week for nine months as a Fulbright ETA. Through the Sequoia Foundation at a public school in a Rio suburb, I taught first-grade students who were products of a public education system that fails to provide even the most basic tools for learning. In the ill-equipped Community in Action house situated in one

of Rio's largest and most violent favelas (shantytowns), I taught two beginning English courses to students whose access to and success with public education is erratic at best. In a country like Brazil, non-governmental organizations are often the stones filling the potholes of a road desperately in need of resurfacing.

Every child is entitled to schooling that provides the necessary tools for intellectual development and fosters the growth of independent, socially responsible thinkers. To be fully immersed in the pursuit



Emily and the teachers hard at work



Emily with public-school children in Rio de Janeiro

of this goal is to open a Pandora's Box filled with frustrating obstacles and ugly truths, countered by a little enduring hope. Hope (and caffeine) got me up and into the classroom each morning. And hope is what inspires me to a career in international education policy—a path which the Fulbright has helped to solidify.

Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Emily Helmeid taught English in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from March to December 2008.

ETYMOLOGY: CREDIT

Credit. One metaphor stands out in the crisis discourse that buffets us these days: credit has to “flow freely,” or else the economy will asphyxiate. “Credit is like oxygen,” one of the greatest lucre-makers of all time is credited with saying; “you don’t notice it when it’s around.” The Mammon-man uttered these words some years ago, as a warning not to put our trust, giddily, in things of perishable worth, and now he is hailed as a great prophet.

The concept of *credit* has been around for so long and we depend on it so much—from academic credits to credit cards—that we forget its original meaning and true value. The word *credit*, from Latin *crēditum* “that which is believed or taken on faith,” spells out a deep truth. When a commercial bank lets us accumulate debt on a credit card, it has faith that we will repay the debt in the future, just as we have done in the past. The bank’s leap of faith—nothing less than that, because the past (gone forever) has, logically and objectively, nothing to do with the future (hasn’t happened yet and may never happen)—allows us to take whatever we like from participating dispensers with just a small downpayment or with no money at all, just because the bank trusts us to do what we have promised: that is, what the bank has projected. This leap of faith or, more accurately, this bridge of trust, reveals the most fundamental truth of our existence: we live on faith. This truth contrasts starkly with our knowledge-based, consciously planned, confidently graphed lives. But it is faith, and faith alone, that makes our planning at all possible: we trust that the implicit promise will be fulfilled. When we go to sleep at night, we really don’t know if we’re going to wake



Dr. Alexander Lehrman

up in the morning, but we still make plans because we believe—we have faith—we trust that we will. When we see the sun set at nightfall, we trust, we are confident (from Lat. *cōnfīdō* “I have complete faith”)—but we actually have no knowledge—that we will see it rise again the next day: we expect the implicit promise to be kept. When a centuries-old bank crumbles amid the toxic fumes of its dealings, our faith in all banks crumbles. Or has our faith in such institutions, as things of perishable worth, been fatally misplaced?

Unlike even the most respectable of old banks, the concept of *credit* has a sterling, millennia-tested history. The Latin verb *crēdō* ‘I believe’ (whence also English *creed* and the inherited Romance forms, It. *credo*, Sp. *creo*, Fr. [*je*] *crois*, Rom. [*eu*] *cred*) is related to Sanskrit *ṛad-dhā-* ‘have faith, trust,’ and ultimately goes back to the Proto-Indo-European compound **ḱred-dʰē-* ‘to place in (one’s) heart.’ The first half of this compound in its independent lexical form **ḱerd-* is the same word as the English *heart* and German *Herz*, Greek *kēr*, *kardia* ‘heart’ (as in *cardiology*), Latin *cor*, *cordis* (English borrowed *cordial*) with its numerous Romance heirs (Old Spanish *cuer* and Modern Sp. suffixed *corazón*, originally “big heart,” It. *cuore*, Fr. *cœur*), Irish *críde* (Modern Irish *croidhe*), Russian suffixed *serd-ce* (originally “dear heart”), Lithuanian *širdis*, Latvian *sirds*, and Armenian *sirt*. In the wisdom revealed through the texture of words, the heart—contrasted with the head or brain where the mind is, as cognitive science still believes—is the seat of faith. This is the heart that never skips a beat, the heart that never fails, the heart where faith—the air of our being—flows ever freely. This is where our trust has already been invested and where our confidence always is. On that we can bank.

NEWS FROM THE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

À LA FRANÇAISE

Our spring Francophone Day celebration, organized by Ms. Donna Coulet du Gard and Ms. Judy Celli, attracted over 400 students from area high schools. Mme Catherine Pétillon from the French Cultural Services in Washington addressed the attendees; Ms. Flora Poindexter demonstrated musical instruments from Martinique; and graduate students Vanessa Borilot, Sabrina Ensfielder, Loïc Marie-Magdeleine, and Earl Victor demonstrated Martiniquais dance.

At our May Awards Ceremony, fourteen outstanding students were initiated into Pi Delta Phi, the French honor society, and another thirteen students were recognized for their fine work at the intermediate level. Beloved retired instructor Ms. Alice Cataldi was recognized as French Advocate of the Year, and senior Bob Mason received the Theodore E.D. Braun Undergraduate Award for his distinguished academic performance. At the May Convocation, Sabrina Ensfielder was awarded the Theodore E.D. Braun Graduate prize for her excellent work at the MA level.

The French Club was very active this year, holding weekly coffees for all experience levels and hosting two evening *fêtes* to share stories of trips abroad, meet new friends, and taste French cheeses and other dishes. In May, the Club collaborated with Professor Robert Brandt (Music) when the students in his French Diction course gave a recital of French songs. French Club members, French faculty members, and Francophiles from the community attended. The group organized trips to the Newark Film Festival's showing of the French thriller *Tell No One*, and a dance performance at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. This ultra-modern performance, choreographed by Jérôme Bel, shocked



French Club members at the Jérôme Bel performance of the Philadelphia Fringe Festival



French Club members outside the Grand Opera House in Wilmington



Paris students biked to the Louvre

students with its innovative integration of the audience. In October, Club members attended the Song and Dance Ensemble of West Africa at the Grand Opera House in Wilmington. This performance took us to a new world of pounding rhythms, soulful chanting, and exhilarating dance.

Ms. Lysette Hall took seventeen students to Paris for the summer session, where outings included a nature walk at the base of the Mont Saint Michel, a talk by a former French Resistance fighter, a touching ceremony at the American cemetery at Omaha Beach, and a splendid ballet performance at the Opéra Garnier. Hall returned to Paris in January 2009 to co-direct a new program with the Women's Studies Program; the group visited a family-planning clinic, met with a representative of a French feminist organization, and toured Chartres Cathedral.

Ms. Flora Poindexter led the January 2009 program in Martinique with graduate student Loïc Marie-Magdeleine. The twenty-six students made traditional clay carnival masks in the southern town of Trois-Ilets, and learned Bèlè, the traditional music and dance brought to the island by African slaves. Ms. Veronica Eid led sixteen enthusiastic students on the 2009 Caen winter program. Excursions included medieval fortress Le Gaillard, the scenic cliffs of Etretat, the Tapestry of Bayeux, Mont Saint Michel, Rouen, Honfleur, Fontaine Henry and the D-Day beaches. Our students' celebration, in a local pub, of President Obama's inauguration was covered with vivid interest by the French press!



Martinique students learn tak-tak pi-tak



Medusa from a
7th century BC
terra cotta from
Syracuse

Artwork: Annette Giesecke

ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN STUDIES

“Is ancient Greek really offered at the University of Delaware?” is a question posed with increasing regularity. The importance of the Classics (the study of ancient Greek and Roman language, literature, and culture more generally) to the Humanities and the university experience cannot be overstated. The origins

of Western philosophy, history, anthropology, political science, ecology, astronomy, art, architecture, and literature, for example, all reside in ancient Greece and Rome. If those equipped to read the literature of ancient Greece and Rome in the original languages—thereby acquiring a clear understanding of the foundations of Western culture and civilization—are no longer produced by universities, we will lack the necessary perspective to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing modern world. We are committed to bringing students these perspectives, and delighted that we will be searching for an additional faculty member to replace the retired Dr. Nicolas Gross in the coming year. Another piece of good news: the Classics faculty was pleased to award the first annual Richards Prize for a graduating senior majoring in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies. The recipients were Joel Rudnick and Michael Curran.

The second summer program to Athens attracted twenty-five participants interested in both ancient and modern Greece. Classes included the newly created Contemporary Greece, taught by Director Dr. América Martínez, and Art and Architecture in Context, covering Greek art from ancient to modern times. Ancient Greek history came to life in visits to the Acropolis, Kerameikos, the Olympieion, the Roman Agora, the Greek Agora, and the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, Mycenaean and Epidaurus in the Argolid, Knossos, Gornya and Tyllissos in Crete, Kolonna and the Temple of Aphaia on the island of Aegina, and Delphi. The students were amazed by all the history that surrounded them no matter where they went, and seemed not to tire of their discoveries. They planned a few excursions on their own, including one to Agios Georgios on Lycabettus Hill. Undaunted by the 200 plus steps they climbed before getting to the “teleferico”



Athens students at the Temple of Aphaia on the island of Aegina



A Byzantine church in Athens

that would take them the last 200 meters up the hill, a number of the students continued the climb on foot. All agreed that the view was well worth the climb. In January 2009 Dr. Colin Pilney and Emeritus Associate Professor Gerald Culley took another group to Athens, where they studied Ancient Greek Theater, Modern Greek, and the art and architecture of the region. For more information on these programs and Classics at UD, see <http://www.udel.edu/flt/lang/classics>.

AUF DEUTSCH

Many Things Done Well describes this year of impressive student achievements. In January 2009, Mr. Bill McNabb (Center for International Studies) led a group to Bayreuth, the beautiful town in southern Germany famous for its annual *Richard Wagner Festspiele* (Richard Wagner Festival). For students taking classes, exploring German culture, and visiting Munich and Berlin as well as Bamberg, Würzburg and Nürnberg, the time flew by and at the traditional *Abschiedsabend* (farewell evening) more than one was sad to leave.

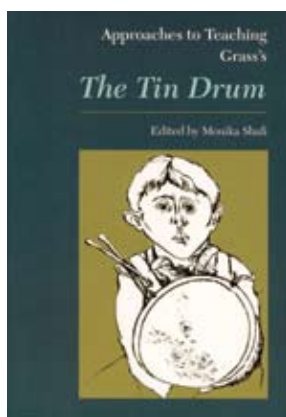
Fortunately, under the guidance of Dr. Iris Busch, the German Club offered many opportunities to continue learning more about German culture throughout the year. To honor the Day of German Unity on October 2, the German Club and German Society of Pennsylvania hosted a theater group from Krefeld, Germany, which presented a dramatic adaptation of Peter Michael’s short story *Amerika gibt es nicht* (“America does not exist”) at the INNternationale house on campus. November’s movie night showing “The Counterfeiters,” an Austrian film that won the 2008 Oscar for best foreign film, was followed in December by a *Nikolausabend* (St. Nikolaus evening), where students made music, played games, and decorated gingerbread hearts, while enjoying a wonderful spread of traditional German holiday sweets.

Eighteen new members were inducted at our May initiation ceremony for the German Honor Society, Delta Phi Alpha, held at the Delaware Saengerbund, and families and friends joined the faculty in celebrating their achievements. Dr. Busch created a festive program of musical interludes and student awards. Anja Jones and William Judd Hower shared the Sepp Hilsenrad Memorial Award given annually by the Saengerbund for outstanding achievement by one or more advanced students, and Christina Antonopoulos and Yianna Antonopoulos received the Marion E. Wiley Memorial Prize recognizing non-majors’ superior performance in courses beyond the intermediate level. Mary Douglas, Danielle Pisechko, and graduate student Kyle Blank won competitive fellowships for the international summer course held

—continued on page 14

at the *Fachhochschule Fulda*. Now in their eleventh year, these all-inclusive fellowships are funded through the generous support of the Department, the Wilmington Sister Cities Committee, the Delaware Saengerbund, and the *Fulda Deutsch-Amerikanischer Frauenclub* (German-American Women's Club).

German graduate students also celebrated many achievements. In the fall, Claudia Biester and Darina Stamova received their MA degree with distinction, and both also completed a Master's thesis. Claudia wrote on "Geteilte Charaktere: Die Spaltung des Ichs in Goethes Eheroman *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*" (Divided Characters: The Split Self in Goethe's Novel *Elective Affinities*, advised by Dr. Nancy Nobile). Darina's thesis was entitled "Melancholie in W. G. Sebalds *Die Ringe des Saturn* (Melancholy in W.G. Sebalds' *The Rings*



Dr. Shafi's book on teaching
The Tin Drum

of Saturn, advised by Dr. Monika Shafi), and her research was supported by a competitive UD graduate award. Alexei Wilhelm also received one of these new summer research awards. Recent graduate students Melda Baysal and Victoria Simoshina were accepted into the PhD program in German at the University of Maryland, and after a year spent teaching in Austria, Jocelyn McDaniel joined the PhD program at North Carolina/Duke Universities. Last but not least, we say good-bye to Dr. Willy Riemer, who retired in December 2008 and whom faculty and students thank for his many years of dedicated service.

ITALIANISSIMO

The Italian program at UD continues to grow as more students than ever enroll in Italian. They amaze us with their passion for the language and culture of *la bella Italia*. At our Honors Day ceremony last May, we inducted twenty-one new members into Gamma Kappa Alpha, the national Italian Honor Society. Senior Krista D'Eleuterio received the top award for her outstanding work in Italian studies. Graduate Angela Trani presented her work establishing an Italian curriculum at Concord High School in Wilmington, followed by a convivial dinner in Clayton Hall complete with a raffle of great prizes. This year the *Circolo Italiano* offered conversation tables, bocce games, and even a trip to New York City.

Study abroad remains a high point for students in the Italian program. This past winter, thirty students traveled to Siena, Italy, with Dr.



On the canal in Venice, Italy



Students at the Trevi fountain in Rome

Riccarda Saggese and Ms. Vincenza Pastecchi and UD senior Italian major Amanda Zlatkus serving as the student assistant. They attended classes at the Università per Stranieri while exploring all that this beautiful medieval city has to offer. Saggese and Pastecchi gave this report of their trip, which included a special weekend in Venice: "Most students recognize the visit to Venice—a city unique in all the world—as the highlight of the tour. When the party boarded a *vaporetto* boat for Venice everything was enveloped in a thick fog and nothing could be seen. Suddenly, the sun's rays broke through and the beautiful Saint Mark's basilica and square appeared as if it had just emerged from the water. The students could hardly express their amazement!"

UD Italian faculty was active this year inside and outside the classroom. In spring 2008, Dr. Meredith Ray taught Italian Autobiographies: Writing the Self from Dante to the Modern Age, which culminated in students writing their own autobiographies. In Dr. Gabriella Finizio's innovative Italian Radio Production class, upper-level students designed and produced a podcast program for Intermediate Italian students. Dr. Saggese co-authored a new Italian textbook, and Drs. Ray and Laura Salsini attended a symposium at the University of Palermo. Dr. Finizio continues working with the Delaware Commission on Italian Heritage and Culture to establish an Italian language immersion summer camp for children and—good news!—all the teachers for the camp will be UD Italian majors. Alas, we were all sorry to say good-bye to Dr. Roxane Petit-Rasselle, now Visiting Assistant Professor of French at Franklin & Marshall College, but we are all thrilled about her exciting new opportunity.

Recent graduates Krista D'Eleuterio and Amanda Alicea were both accepted to the Middlebury College MA program and are currently working toward degrees in Italian Studies in Florence, Italy. Three alumni are now teaching Italian in area high schools: Holland Schnittger at Thomas McKean High School in Wilmington; Adriana Marini-Cossetti at both Nehaunsey Middle School in Gibbstown, New Jersey, and West Chester University in Pennsylvania; and Gina Zanella has initiated an Italian curriculum at Middletown High School in Middletown, Delaware. Congratulations to all our students, past and present, on their accomplishments!

日本語

The most exciting and inspiring moment of this exciting year was our first ever Japanese National Honor Society event, held in May 2008. While other languages have had honor societies for many years, this was the first opportunity for Japanese language students to be publically acknowledged for their efforts. Eight students were inducted into the Society at an evening event co-hosted by the Nihongo Table Japanese Club. Inductees were Michael Bartley, Dean Carter, DiNisha Guy, Ben Lenoir, Nathan Kiracofe, Marisa Porgraputson, Timothy

Wilder, and Sarah Woody. These students were further honored in the national Association for Teachers of Japanese newsletter.

We also took the opportunity to award two of our seniors, Robert Uhler and Michael Bartley, the Yotsukura Prize for excellence in Japanese. Michael has since gone on to win a MEXT (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) government scholarship for graduate work in Japan. He will be studying language at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies followed by Master's work at Sofia University. We wish him and all our graduates every success in their scholarship and future careers.



Some of the inductees at UD's first Japanese National Honor Society event

Strong enrollments in Japanese this year have meant a solid base from which to offer new advanced language courses in reading and translation theory, as well as two new courses taught in English, "Twentieth-Century Japanese Literature" and "Representing Japanese Culture."

Once again Mark Miller and Mutsuko Shoge took a large group to study in Kobe. Cultural trips to temples and shrines were balanced by intensive language study, and our thirty-three students also experienced some excellent shopping in Osaka and the Sannomiya district! Osaka Castle and baseball at the Osaka Dome were highlights of the trip. After the Kobe program, Chris Lowder was our final Miyagi Exchange award recipient and spent the month of August in Sendai.

This year we were proud to send James Weaver and Carolyn Flaherty on exchange to Seinan University in Fukuoka, while Eunji Kim and Sarah Dworken received the Soka scholarship for a year's study in Tokyo. James and Sarah have now graduated from our program, but Carolyn and Eunji are back on campus using their enhanced language skills in our advanced Japanese courses.

Strong enrollments in Japanese this year have meant a solid base from which to offer new advanced language courses in reading and translation theory, as well as two new courses taught in English, "Twentieth-Century Japanese Literature" and "Representing Japanese Culture." This last was taught as a freshman Honors colloquium, reaching many students outside the core Japanese-language student body.

Interest in Japanese language and culture draws students from all over campus to the Nihongo Table and Anime and Kendo Clubs. The Anime Club held a Japanese-style matsuri festival in the spring and gathers to watch animated films every Thursday. President Tara Levin has some exciting plans for the coming year, including taking the group to "Katsucon," an annual anime convention. UD Japanese alum Matt Herman has established the off-campus Delaware Kendo Club, open to the community as well as students and faculty. This enterprising

club, consisting mainly of beginners to the sport, is training hard with Lan Sensei in order to pass their exams and gain higher-level rankings, and is planning the first Delaware kendo tournament this spring. We look forward to many more events and learning opportunities in the coming year, and will be telling you more about our activities here next spring!

NOTICIERO ESPAÑOL

"I think that to fully understand a language, you must really be immersed in the culture. Living with my [host] family has been such a fun time and has changed my views of Mexico drastically. [...] Studying in Mexico has really shown me so much and made me want to learn even more about other cultures."—Jordan Berner

This blog quote from a student who participated on the Puebla winter session program for first-year students, directed by Ms. Doris Manzano, captures the transformative effect of study abroad in the Spanish group this year. In Merida, Mexico, Drs. América Martínez and Larry Purnell (Nursing) brought together nineteen Spanish and Nursing students in a newly designed program intended to prepare nursing students to do a complete preliminary assessment of Spanish speaking patients in US hospitals. Students spent a full week in Merida clinics, shadowing nurses, and sometimes even lending a hand with medical procedures. Under the direction of Ms. Krystyna Musik, students on the Chile program had a chance to learn how to cook traditional Chilean dishes and practiced the traditional dances of several regions. Visiting the northern part of Chile, they learned about the boom and wealth of the nitrate mines, the War of the Pacific, and the Aymara culture, with its famous geoglyphs. Other successful programs went to Spain, Costa Rica, Argentina, Ecuador, Panama, and Brazil. Many of the students who studied abroad also participated in the second year of the *Tertulia española*, meeting monthly to practice their Spanish, discuss Hispanic themes, and view films.

We inducted thirty-two new members into the Spanish Honor Society, Sigma Delta Pi, in 2008. Sisters Jessica and Shannon Marshall shared the Sigma Delta Pi book award; Sara Zilberfein received the Janet Murdock prize for study abroad; Holly Ungerbuehler got the



Brazil students hike in Chapada Diamantina in the state of Bahia

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Panama students at the ruins of a Spanish fortress on the Caribbean coast

award for best graduate student essay; Daniel Ettinger and Brian Reece shared the award for best essay in an upper-division Hispanic literature course; and Lauren Streisfeld was recognized for her outstanding work in a Hispanic literary survey course. This fall, the UD Alumni Association Board of Directors gave Alumni Enrichment Awards to four outstanding FLL students for international projects: Eileen Helmeid received \$1,000 for volunteer work in Brazil, and Monica Trobagis, Rina Binder-MacLeod, and Connie Saltzman each received grants to teach in Panama.

This fall, the UD Alumni Association Board of Directors gave Alumni Enrichment Awards to four outstanding FLL students for international projects: Eileen Helmeid received \$1,000 for volunteer work in Brazil, and Monica Trobagis, Rina Binder-MacLeod, and Connie Saltzman each received grants to teach in Panama.

Spanish students enjoyed two lecture series in the fall. Dr. Gladys Ibarregui organized the series “Outside/Inside: Migration and Cultural Practices in Latin America.” Students were impressed with the lecture given by Dr. Ana María Huerta Jaramillo on “cleanliness” (both physical and social) in Latin America from colonial times to the present. Dr. Carla Guerrón-Montero (Anthropology) organized *Saberes alternativos* (Other Wisdoms), for the Latin American Studies program, on the role of music as a vehicle for transmitting knowledge among enslaved and displaced Africans. The program featured a lecture and performance by Afro-Brazilian singer/composer Dão, entitled “Negra Música Urbana.”

Many recent graduates have continued their Hispanic studies at prestigious universities. Among those pursuing PhDs, Alondra Pacheco is studying at Ohio State, Maleni Romero at NYU-Cuny, and Ashley McKay at NY State-Albany. Rosie Seagraves and Andrew Larason are studying at Vanderbilt, and John Fuja is working toward his MA in Madrid with Middlebury College. Graduate Katie Feeley has been doing outstanding work at Fundación Esquel in Ecuador. She is currently working on a project funded by the United Nations

High Council for Refugees to protect refugee rights and support small entrepreneurs. Graduates, please continue keep us up to date on your career and scholarly activities!

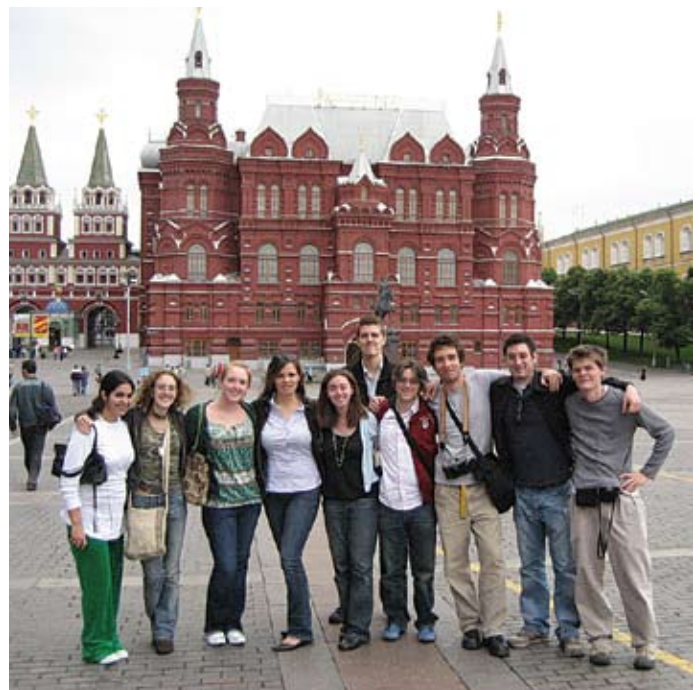
Past faculty note: Dr. Bennett Cole (Spanish faculty, 1962-78) has recently published two novels. *The Artemas Link*, the story of a young pastor’s search for a “missing” book of the Bible, is now available from www.redleadbooks.com and Amazon.com. *Footsteps in the Treetops*, the story of a boy’s adventures in a small Virginia mountain town during WWII, will be released this spring by www.whiskeycreekpress.com.

РУССКИЕ ИЗВЕСТИЯ

In 2008 our vibrant Slavic Club, now in its second year, organized another kaleidoscopic round of activities, including two well-attended talks on current events in Russia. Political scientist Dr. Stuart Kaufman and FLL’s Dr. Alexander Lehrman held a spring discussion on the Russian parliamentary and presidential elections, and national and global implications of the end of Vladimir Putin’s tenure as president. The second event was a November round table on Russia’s August invasion of the Republic of Georgia. Drs. Kaufman and Lehrman were joined by historian Dr. David Shearer and FLL’s Dr. Alexander Selimov to discuss the invasion’s underlying causes and its consequences. The speakers offered four strikingly different perspectives on this “hot” war, richly illuminating its larger significance.

In addition to regular Slavic Club activities such as the weekly study groups and Tuesday night Russian Table at Brew-Ha-Ha, the Club organized memorable field trips to Wilmington for a performance of the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* by the St. Petersburg Ballet Company, and New York’s Brighton Beach for a day-long immersion experience in the local Russian community. The Club also continued its monthly service excursions to Philadelphia to distribute food to elderly Russian speakers for the Jewish Relief Agency.

In summer 2008, Dr. Alexander Selimov took ten students to study Russian language and culture at St. Petersburg State University. The program included a stay in Moscow and a field trip to the ancient city of Novgorod, the cradle of Russian democracy. One evening during St. Petersburg’s magical White Nights, Dr. Selimov took the



Russia students in front of the History Museum in Moscow



In St. Petersburg with the Hermitage in the background

students and his guitar to the banks of the Neva River, where they sat for hours singing songs in many different languages.

Nine new members were inducted at the May initiation ceremony of Dobro Slovo, the National Slavic Honor Society. The Eugenia Slavov award for excellence in the study of Russian was awarded to Kathleen Gauthier, a Russian minor majoring in International Relations. The Pushkin prize for outstanding achievement in the study of Russian language, literature, and culture was awarded to Carol Ann Edie, a senior graduating with a BA in Russian Studies and Communications and a joint MA in Linguistics and Cognitive Science. The Fire-Bird award, a cash prize recognizing the promotion of the study of Russian and Slavic languages and cultures on campus, was bestowed on the Slavic Club. Much loved folk musicians John and Dorothy Matulis presented a soulful program, followed by participants' inspired adventures in Slavic folk dancing.

On the faculty front, Dr. Alexander Lehrman was invited to Moscow in March to attend the Third International Conference on the Problems of Distant Genetic Relationships of Languages in Honor of S.A. Starostin, sponsored by the Russian State University for the Humanities. Lehrman presented concrete evidence of a genetic affinity between the Afro-Asiatic language family and North America's Algonic language family. The paper was received with great interest and is currently being prepared for publication.

中文

The year 2008 witnessed more growth in the Chinese program through the concerted efforts of the Chinese faculty, Dr. Jianguo Chen, Dr. Maria Tu, and Ms. Renée Dong, and our enthusiastic and talented students. This year we were able to offer three new courses: The Art of Chinese Calligraphy, Chinese Civilization, and Themes in Chinese Literature. In response to the growing need both to expand our course offerings and to respond to global trends, a new course in business Chinese for advanced intermediate students is in the making.

The winter 2008 study abroad program in China, directed by Dong, continued to be enormously popular. Twenty-four students followed an adventurous itinerary and an exciting academic agenda that included the intensive study of Chinese language, culture, and history. Students were thrilled to meet local people and visit the ancient city of

Xian and the metropolitan city of Shanghai; you can read some of their reflections in this year's lead story.

Dong also supervised the Chinese Conversation Partnership, which pairs our students with native Chinese speakers on- and off-campus, as language partners. As of this writing, most of our students have a language partner—some even have more than one—and have greatly benefitted from this activity. We also organized a second annual Chinese speech contest at the end of the spring semester. More than eighty students participated in this activity to showcase their progress in Chinese language studies.

Tu spent much of her time this year building and supervising the Chinese Table. To further engage students, she divided the Chinese table into mini-clubs that meet weekly, each focusing on an aspect of Chinese culture: calligraphy, spoken Chinese, cuisine, and martial arts. The Table is very popular with our students and we benefit greatly from the participation of Chinese students from the English Language Institute and elsewhere on campus.

In April 2008, the Chinese program was invited, for the first time, to join the Mid-Atlantic Chinese Speech Contest, which is part of the world-wide Chinese Bridge Contest. Participants included candidates from Georgetown University, the University of Maryland, the University of Virginia, George Mason University, and Brigham Young University. Although this was the first time that our students participated, Clifford Prisament distinguished himself by winning third place, accompanied by a monetary award of \$350. This was a great



Chinese students flanked by faculty at the speech contest

honor for UD's Chinese program.

Our students' excellence and the strength of our program are again being recognized at a national level. Christopher Lowder, William Toppin, and Katie Sirolly were selected to receive full scholarships from the Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC, to enable them to study in China for a year. Ben Choi and Michael Winkler also received full scholarships for a year of study, awarded to the FLL Chinese program by our partner institution, the Beijing Normal University.

The Chinese faculty members are grateful to Dr. Zipser and other Department faculty for their strong support. Encouraged by the healthy development of the program, we are now building a major in Chinese and are looking forward to a full-fledged language program in the near future.

DANIELLE PISECHKO: EMBRACING CHALLENGES

This May Danielle Pisechko will graduate with a Three Languages major in German, Latin, and Russian. As for many of our students, her love of learning foreign languages began early. While in middle school, she decided to take German “because everyone said it was hard” and, greatly enjoying her German classes, she later added Latin. Studying languages fueled her fascination with history, culture, and literature, and enrolling as a language major at UD was an obvious choice. Danielle selected Russian



Ms. Danielle Pisechko

as her third language because it connected to her family’s Eastern European heritage. Always a focused student, Danielle particularly appreciated the enthusiasm of her professors: “The FLL faculty was amazing. Professors here have such respect for the language and they want to give this to their students.”

For this Honors student, the hardest part of studying three languages was choosing her study abroad programs. Since German is her first language, Danielle spent the fall of 2006 in Salzburg, Austria. In summer 2008, she won a competitive scholarship for a five-week summer program in Fulda, Germany. Danielle regards the four months spent in Austria as “possibly the best experience of my life,” but adds how surprising it was that after years of studying German she had to work to get used to the local Austrian accent. Danielle treasures the many excursions offered by the Salzburg and the Fulda program, which took her to Vienna, Berlin, and Munich, where she could see first-hand the streets and buildings she had so far only read about.

Danielle’s academic achievements have won her quite a few awards and prizes. She was inducted both into Delta Phi Alpha, the National German Honor Society, and into Dobro Slovo, the National Slavic Honor Society; she consistently makes the Dean’s List; and she was a UD Distinguished Scholar. In spring 2007, she received the Sepp Hilsenrad Memorial Award given by the Delaware Saengerbund; in fall 2007 she won a General Honors Award; and in fall 2008 she was nominated as a “Woman of Promise.”

In addition to her studies, Danielle has been very involved with the E-52 Student Theatre, and in 2008 directed both *An Ideal Husband* and *Alice in Wonderland*. Danielle describes her work in theater as “so much fun because the people involved really enjoy theater and want others to enjoy it as much.” As director, she learned to appreciate the complexities of the characters and the challenge of actors to portray figures and make them come alive for the audience.

The question every graduating senior faces—“What’s next?”—is an easy one to answer for Danielle. She has applied to our Master’s Program, which may eventually lead her to pursue a PhD in German. Already passionate about teaching, Danielle would want to teach lower-level language classes in order to show students early on how much fun hides behind these foreign words. “Students can lack appreciation of foreign languages,” she observes “but they need to understand them before they write them off. You need teachers who inspire.” Danielle is poised to become one of those inspiring teachers able to convey the excitement and importance of learning a foreign language.

VANESSA BORILOT: FRANCOPHONE PHENOMENON

Vanessa Borilot came to the University of Delaware from Guadeloupe, via Martinique and London. A prize for top honors in her high school class in Baie-Mahault, Guadeloupe, funded her undergraduate studies at the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, where this native speaker of French and Créole chose to major in English literatures and civilization. Upon graduation, she began a MA program in English literature, and then traveled to London for a year to teach French to British high



Vanessa Borilot

school students. During that time, as she found herself explaining her background and the culture of her native Guadeloupe to other young people, her fascination with the question of identity was born. Since her arrival at UD she has made it a major focus of her academic studies. Dr. Edgard Sankara’s course on Francophone autobiographies and Dr. Mary Donaldson-Evans’s course on French Romanticism particularly shaped her thinking. She began to examine the relationship between nineteenth-century French women’s resistance to patriarchal authority and the resistance of black women during and after slavery in the French Caribbean, and completed a MA thesis on Claire de Duras, Sophie Doin, Maryse Condé, and Simone Schwarz-Bart under the supervision of Drs. Sankara and Donaldson-Evans.

Vanessa’s thesis advisors are lavish in their praise. Says Dr. Donaldson-Evans, “I discovered when I had Vanessa in my course on French Romanticism that she was a creative thinker, but it was only when she wrote a thesis partly under my direction that I became aware of her truly impressive analytical ability. Her study of feminine resistance in fiction by women published in France and the West Indies is carefully contextualized and richly insightful.” Dr. Sankara also stresses the excellence of Vanessa’s work in his classes and her capacity for textual analysis in the French explication de texte. “Her 100-page thesis is a great accomplishment, since few graduate students take on the challenging endeavor of writing a thesis in addition to their teaching and course requirements. Vanessa is on her way to a successful career as a teacher and researcher.”

Vanessa is quick to say that she has been enriched by all aspects of her work as a graduate student for the past two years. A semester as a teaching assistant, followed by a stint as coordinator of the French section of FLL’s Writing Center, afforded her many opportunities for interaction with students. She loved tutoring one-on-one, and coordinating with the course instructor on each student’s progress.

Two semesters as a research assistant have given Vanessa valuable experience as she prepares to become a professor of Francophone Studies. In addition to her training in French literature and British/American literatures, she has taken Spanish courses and plans to pursue the study of Spanish literature. Next September she will begin doctoral studies at the University of Iowa where, along with her appointment as a teaching assistant in French, she has been awarded the Benhamou Fellowship in recognition of her academic excellence and promise as a scholar. Vanessa is, indeed, on her way to what will surely be an exciting and fulfilling career.

ALUMNI COLUMN

TRAVEL AND SERVICE: ESCAPING THE COMFORT ZONE

Thérèse McKinny-Wood '04

Last week, a new school year began in Honduras. My once-quiet morning walks are now punctuated with the sound of children shouting to their friends as they clamor to get to school. It should be a hopeful sound, but I know that there are many young faces absent from the blue and white uniform clad masses this year. Some are in the fields, working to help feed their families; others, after years of overcrowded classrooms and insufficient attention from teachers, have simply given up, resigned at age ten to years working in the fields under the hot sun...

(Excerpt from an editorial that Thérèse wrote for Honduras This Week, an English-language weekly newspaper in Honduras)

While leading student trips to Copán Ruinas, Honduras, I visited several rural Honduran schools. Even after teaching in an impoverished Mississippi district, I was amazed by the lack of resources available in the schools that I saw. As I would come to find out, educational opportunities for children in the villages that surround Copán are limited and most of them never receive schooling beyond the sixth grade. Anxious to better understand the educational situation in these rural villages, I applied for a Fulbright grant. As a Fulbright Fellow in Honduras, I am now conducting research in Copán, Honduras, on the determinants of academic success among rural students from economically disadvantaged families.

Copán is a special place. Nestled in the mountains of Honduras just a few miles from the Guatemalan border, it is the home of one of the most well-preserved Mayan cities in Central America. Each year thousands of tourists from all over the world visit the ruins, fueling the local economy and creating an oasis of modernity in an extremely underdeveloped part of the country. Despite its prosperous appearance, the municipality of Copán is the third poorest in Honduras, largely due to the extreme poverty of the indigenous Maya Chortí who live in the hills between the town center and the Guatemalan border.

I have been lucky enough to experience Copán from many different perspectives over the past three years. The more time



*McKinny-Wood with Honduras Bound students
in Copán, Honduras*

I spend here, the more amazed I am by the many layers that exist in the community. During my first visit, I saw Copán as many do, as a quaint tourist town, the perfect antidote to a difficult first year teaching high-school Spanish in the Mississippi Delta. Almost as soon as I arrived, I felt a special connection to the community and the people I met there. I left Copán excited to share my renewed energy for Spanish language and Latin culture with my students.

When I returned a year later, I was accompanied by four brave high school students. They were the first participants of Honduras Bound, the fledgling service and language immersion program that I created for my students in the Mississippi Delta. Most of my students had rarely, if ever, traveled beyond state lines and, within their largely segregated school district, they had little exposure to cultural diversity. Troubled by the intolerance many of my students seemed to have for culturally different communities, I wanted to give them an opportunity to experience another culture first hand. As I had learned while studying abroad in Costa Rica, cultural immersion forces you to step outside of your comfort zone and to be flexible, a skill many of my students were lacking. After two successful trips, the program is still growing. I'm looking forward to meeting the third cohort of Honduras Bound students when they come to Copán this June.

I firmly believe that quality education is the best tool for lifting communities out of poverty, both in the United States and internationally. The educational opportunities and experiences I had at the University of Delaware cemented my faith in the power of education. When I graduated from UD, I could never have imagined how important a role foreign language would come to play in my life. Now, with the benefit of hindsight, I understand how instrumental my Spanish coursework and study abroad experiences at the University of Delaware were in preparing me for the great adventure I've been on for the past four years.



With students at La Estanzuela, Honduras



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