

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 2011 ISSUE NO. 18



## TEACHING THE TEACHERS

### *FLL in Our Schools*

An essential mission of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is the training of new K-12 foreign language teachers who will equip their students to be global citizens prepared to meet the linguistic and cultural challenges of the 21st century. This mission entails careful pedagogical preparation for our future teachers—an important responsibility that falls to a small core of dedicated pedagogy faculty with highly developed expertise and longstanding professional connections throughout the state.

As Dr. Bonnie Robb, coordinator of the Foreign Language Education (FLE) program, says, the goal of the program is not only to affect student learning, but to effect it through the integration of theory with practice. The preparation of foreign language teachers involves the development of both foreign language and pedagogical knowledge and skill, a balance of theoretical training and clinical experience, and the nurturing of a reflective process that allows candidates to appreciate the complex relationship between student and teacher.

Students receive a firm grounding in theory and methodology long before venturing into the classroom as student teachers. Drs. Ali Alalou, Iris Busch, and Jorge Cubillos are responsible for training our students in methods and best practices. Methods courses introduce students to the body of theory and research on language learning and assessment.

*Group photo of professors, student teachers, and cooperating teachers at the Professional Development Day for student teachers*

These courses prove a theoretical base that students examine and apply in a progression of observations, practica, and clinical experiences. Reflecting on their experiences in discussions and written assignments, students explore the interrelationships between theory and practice and steadily develop their problem solving skills as teachers.

Alalou teaches Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages, which grounds students in current perspectives on foreign language instruction and provides hands-on experience in the implementation of effective language teaching strategies, lesson planning, and materials preparation, and the use of technologies for learning and teaching foreign languages. Alalou also teaches Syllabus Design and Materials Development for undergraduates, in which they complete a unit/lesson planning project for their teaching portfolio. In the graduate program, he teaches Theoretical and Practical Issues in Foreign Language Teaching, which is the course taken by all graduate students as they become TAs.

Dr. Tom McCone's course, Technology-Enhanced Language Learning, is instrumental in both the graduate and undergraduate programs, as it prepares students in the theory and practice of incorporating the use of technology into second-language learning.

Cubillos teaches one of the required courses for the undergraduate program (Second Language Testing), and three graduate courses in Foreign Language Pedagogy (Language Syllabus Design, Second

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Dr. Cynthia Schmidt-Cruz,  
Acting Chair

Greetings, Alumni and Friends!

Training foreign language teachers is a crucial aspect of our Department's mission and one which our pedagogy team takes very seriously. Students aspiring to become FL educators must acquire both foreign language and pedagogical knowledge and skills. Their classes in language, culture, and literature, their study abroad experience, and their theoretical and methodological studies are capped off with the all-important student teaching practicum. The cover story of this year's *Polyglot* focuses on what goes into the making of a future FL teacher.

There are numerous faculty achievements to note. Last spring, Dr. Meredith Ray received the American Association for Italian Studies Best Book Prize published in 2009 in the "Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque" category for her monograph *Writing Gender in Women's Letter Collections of the Italian Renaissance* (University of Toronto Press). Kudos to Dr. Jianguo Chen, who was named

Director of UD's new Confucius Institute. Dr. Chen also received, for the fourth year in a row, a grant from the US Department of State to host the National Security Language Initiative for Youth in China, a highly competitive summer program for academically talented high school students. Congratulations go to Dr. Susan McKenna, who was promoted to associate professor, and to Drs. Cristina Guardiola and Meredith Ray, who were promoted to associate professor with tenure. Our professors continue to receive recognition for their teaching: Dr. McKenna received the 2010 Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award, while Dr. Gabriella Finizio was accorded the University Excellence in Teaching Award for the second time!

In this year's *Polyglot* you will also read about transitions in our faculty. Dr. Mary Donaldson-Evans, our accomplished and beloved Elias Ahuja Professor of French, retired this year. And you will meet our new assistant professor of Latin American culture, Dr. Phillip Penix-Tadsen (PhD Colombia University). This year we also welcomed Dr. Giorgio Melloni as associate professor of Italian.

We continue to enhance and refine our curricular offerings. Our new majors in Chinese and Japanese and our revamped Spanish major became effective fall 2010 and are already attracting students. Thanks to Dr. Rachael Hutchinson, assistant professor of Japanese, Morris Library now sports a Games Lab, which was set up as part of her honors colloquium on Japanese visual culture. We are also pleased to report the establishment of a new Argentina semester program, which will send the first group of UD students to Buenos Aires in fall 2011.

Thanks are in order for those of you who made gifts to the Department or one of its memorial funds last year. We deeply appreciate your generosity, and need and rely on your financial support. Although we gave a large number of deserving students study abroad scholarships in 2010-2011, 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 beside 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. Cynthia Schmidt-Cruz  
Acting Chair

## the Polyglot

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**Editors-in-Chief:**  
Persephone Braham,  
Meghan McInnis-Domínguez

**Associate Editor:**  
Bonnie Robb

**Contributing Editors:**  
Iris Busch  
Jianguo Chen  
Annette Giesecke

Rachael Hutchinson  
Alexander Lehrman  
Laura Salsini  
Cynthia Schmidt-Cruz  
Deborah Steinberger

**Design:** Christina  
Jones, Connee  
McKinney; Office of  
Communications and  
Marketing

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Language Testing, and the Graduate Seminar on Second Language Acquisition). “The graduate program in Foreign Language Pedagogy,” explains Cubillos, “is designed to expand on the knowledge base acquired in the undergraduate program, and to encourage candidates to contribute to the field through original research. Students in the master’s program explore current developments in the field through their coursework, and develop the basic skills required to conduct original classroom research.”

As a result of this theoretical and practical training, many candidates take on the challenge of writing a master’s thesis, and their efforts often lead to successful application to doctoral programs in top research universities around the country. Master’s candidate Raychel Vasseur writes of this experience, “Over the course of the past two semesters I have been researching two different methods of second language vocabulary acquisition, one through reading, and one via PowerPoint, to see if one method is more effective than the other. I will be enrolling in a second language acquisition PhD program at the University of Iowa in the fall, where I hope to continue researching this and similar topics. Without this research experience at UD, I never would have applied for the program!”

Drs. Bonnie Robb and Cynthia Lees hold primary responsibility for our students’ activity in the field. Robb advises master’s students pursuing certification and oversees the organization and evolution of the curriculum, student teaching placements, as well as proficiency testing for all degree candidates (with Alalou). She communicates with other UD units involved in teacher training, provides assessment data to state and national accreditation agencies, and guides our program through the rigorous accreditation process that occurs every five years.

Lees advises all the undergraduate FLE majors. She also teaches a practicum, attached to Alalou’s course in syllabus design, that serves as the gateway to the student teaching placements. Candidates complete twenty-five hours of observation and teaching in their assigned schools, prepare and teach two lessons supported by technology for peer review, formulate a classroom management plan based upon several models of effective approaches to classroom discipline, engage in sample classroom activities adaptable for use during student teaching, discover the benefits of using technology in the foreign language classroom, and explore the integration of cultural materials and elements into the curriculum. They also learn about student teaching protocol and testing requirements for teacher certification. Students explore professional organizations and Robb arranges for them to attend the fall meeting of the Delaware Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (DECTFL), which generously extends free membership to our students while affording them their first opportunity to participate in a professional event.

Dr. Iris Busch has developed Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools (FLES), with a service learning component in the West Park Elementary School in Newark, which serves as clinical experience for the students (her course was featured in the 2010 *Polyglot* article on teaching and service, “Beyond the Classroom”). She is also charged with student teacher supervision for candidates in German and Spanish at elementary, middle, and high schools in Delaware.

The FLE major includes rigorous training in the foreign language, participation in a study abroad session and methods courses, professional studies in the School of Education, and the student teaching practicum. Students acquire a rigorous foundation in theories and methods, and a solid body of clinical and field experience. These two areas of endeavor, intertwined throughout their experience at UD, come together in Robb’s capstone course, which students take on campus during their student teaching placement. During this semester, students complete their teaching portfolio, which contains a professional résumé and cover letter; a model letter to parents of their future students; case studies on discipline;



*Student teacher Jamie Migliaro teaching Spanish at St. Elizabeth High School*

textbook use and classroom management; and projects on assessment and professional development.

The capstone course also offers a forum for students to share experiences and reflect on their work in collaboration with peers and supervisors. Along with Busch, student teaching supervisors Dr. Lee Glen, Ms. Barbara Toccafondi, and Ms. Myrna Zaetta work closely with students, observing them regularly in their high school classrooms. Successful training of a student teacher is a collaborative effort between FLE faculty and cooperating teachers in local high schools and middle schools. These cooperating teachers are invited to share their own professional development experiences at the annual Professional Development Day. Students also receive additional training at the UD Career Services center, participating in mock interviews to hone their job-seeking skills.

Reports teacher Andea Lacombe, who now teaches at the William Penn High School: “When I graduated from UD and entered the classroom, I felt well prepared for the challenges that I faced. In my opinion, the preparation has improved greatly over the years. I have found my student teachers to be knowledgeable, creative, and passionate. As a UD grad and a cooperating teacher, I have appreciated working with such talented young people. In the ideal situation, the mentor becomes also the collaborator. The student teacher comes to us with fresh, exciting ideas, and we the mentors help the student teacher tailor that idea to the classroom setting that he or she is working with. Working with student teachers from UD has been a huge pleasure, and, in most cases I have learned a great deal from them!”

The responsibility carried by the pedagogy team is weighty and also rewarding. Lees says of her engagement in teaching future teachers: “I enjoy bringing to the student teacher candidates the unique perspective of a veteran K-12 classroom teacher of French, Spanish, English, and drama (in public and private schools from Maine to Florida) and highlighting my experiences in writing curriculum, establishing a FLES program, directing plays, coaching sports, teaching Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate literature courses, and, in short, sharing the magic and wonder of teaching children with the next generation of professional educators.”

Perhaps the most definitive testament to the effectiveness of our pedagogy programs is the number of students who go on to become not only successful foreign-language teachers, but mentors to future student teachers. Says 1990 graduate Patricia Buzby of the William Penn High School, “Working with UD student teachers has always been an enjoyable experience for me as a UD graduate. It’s fantastic to have an opportunity to give back to the program and I always look forward to the strong connections that are made throughout the process.” Loretta Lantolf, now chair of the World Languages Department at Saint Elizabeth High School, echoes: “My experiences with student teachers have been simply wonderful. They have been creative, professional and highly motivated. I’ve watched with pleasure their enthusiasm and joy in teaching. It has renewed me in spirit and given me great hope for the future of language education.”



## FOCUS ON FACULTY

### *Interview with Dr. Meredith Ray*

Dr. Meredith Ray, Associate Professor of Italian, received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 2002 and joined the faculty at UD in 2003. She has authored and edited two books and published numerous articles on Renaissance women writers, early modern letter collections, and convent culture in seventeenth-century Venice. She received a 2010-2011 National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship for her research on early modern women and alchemy.

#### **When did you become interested in Italian studies and why did you choose to pursue a PhD in this field?**

I studied Italian in college and spent my junior year in Florence. I just fell in love with Italy and with the idea of mastering a new language and immersing myself in another culture. I moved back to Florence after college and worked there as a writer and translator before deciding to pursue a master's in Italian literature at Middlebury College's program in Florence. I wrote my thesis on a Renaissance topic and I was hooked... I knew I wanted to study for my PhD and go on to write and teach at the university level. The thing about working in academia is that your work is constantly evolving—you are always challenged and engaged.

**You were awarded the 2009 American Association for Italian Studies Best Book Prize in the “Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque” category for your first monograph, *Writing Gender in Women's Letter Collections of the Italian Renaissance* (University of Toronto Press, 2009). Could you comment on the significance of this work?**

Letter collections were enormously popular as a literary genre during the Renaissance—the equivalent of novels today. Letter writing offered writers a unique, first-person outlet for self-fashioning, self-promotion, social critique, and even religious dissent. Women writers in particular made fascinating use of this genre, using it to confront issues ranging from marriage and motherhood to women's education and the challenges of being a woman writer. Women's letters were in high demand among sixteenth-century readers: so much so that even some male writers put out collections of letters under female pseudonyms. *Writing Gender* is the first study to place such epistolary representations of women into literary, cultural, and historical context. My goal in *Writing Gender* was to demonstrate that letter collections, far from being collections of spontaneous, off-the-cuff missives, were always a studied, literary performance of early modern ideas about gender and genre, about femininity and masculinity.

**You are currently working on another book project, “Prescriptions for Women: Alchemy, Medicine, and the Renaissance Debate over Women,” for which you received a \$50,400 National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship. What will this study contribute to your field?**

*Prescriptions for Women* adds an important new facet to our understanding of women in Renaissance Italy by examining their presence as, variously, the producers of and audience for medical and alchemical literature. Early modern women were “doing science” in their everyday lives as well as in the laboratory, using methods of alchemical experimentation to create medicines, cosmetics, soaps, and fragrances: historians just haven't always recognized this. My book integrates an investigation



*Dr. Meredith Ray*

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*For me, medieval and Renaissance Italian literature is exciting, beautiful, and full of meaning even in today's world, and I never tire of seeing the way students respond to it once they learn how to approach it.*

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of early modern women's scientific practice with the ways in which this activity was perceived in Renaissance culture, particularly in didactic and polemical literature dealing with sex and gender roles.

#### **How have these research projects influenced the Italian program at UD?**

One of my goals for the Italian program at UD is to make sure we have strong offerings in the medieval and Renaissance areas so that our students can obtain a comprehensive understanding of Italian literature and culture from its origins to the present. For me, medieval and Renaissance Italian literature is exciting, beautiful, and full of meaning even in today's world, and I never tire of seeing the way students respond to it once they learn how to approach it. I also see the classroom as a place to challenge canonical approaches to early modern literature, which for so long excluded women writers and other figures considered “marginal” for reasons of religious or political beliefs.

**You have advised a number of undergraduates who participated in summer research programs. What is the most fulfilling aspect of this work?**

I love this part of my job! Mentoring students who want to learn about the research process is immensely rewarding. I really enjoy helping students explore their own interests and develop their critical and analytical voices in an in-depth way that is not always possible within a traditional classroom setting. It also allows me to work with undergraduates one-on-one and really get to know them. It is fulfilling for me to be able to transmit some of my own excitement about the research process to—I hope!—future generations of Italianists.

## Interview with Dr. Susan McKenna

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Dr. Susan McKenna, Associate Professor of Spanish, received her BA from Bucknell University and her MA and PhD in Hispanic literature from Indiana University. She joined the Department in 1993 and teaches courses in Spanish language and literature. Her areas of specialization include nineteenth-century narrative and the short fiction of Emilia Pardo Bazán. Her most recent publications include *Crafting the Female Subject* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2009) and a critical introduction to a new translation of Juan Valera's *Commander Mendoza* (Oxbow Books, 2010).

### What brought you to Delaware and how has your career evolved?

I first came to Delaware in 1992 when my husband, Dr. James Brophy, accepted a position in the Department of History. I was working on my dissertation at the time, and I began teaching several courses as an instructor for FLL. I defended my dissertation in 1996 and started teaching full time as an Assistant Professor. I was promoted to Associate Professor last year.

### You published a book, *Crafting the Female Subject: Narrative Innovation in the Short Fiction of Emilia Pardo Bazán* on the short fiction of this nineteenth-century author. How did you become interested in Pardo Bazán, and what is the importance of your study?

My real interest in Pardo Bazán stems from an independent study on Hispanic women authors that I took with Dr. Maryellen Bieder when I was living abroad in the former East Berlin. I read several of her short stories that year (there are more than 500 of them) and I was hooked. My book examines how the structure of the stories themselves creates an alternative ending to the one we perceive as part of the plot. Pardo Bazán appropriates the narrative conventions of the short story to allow for the development of authentic female subjectivity. This study provides a valuable resource not only to Hispanists but also to all nineteenth-century scholars interested in narrative theory, feminist narratology, and the development of this nascent genre.

### In spring 2010 you received the College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award. What pedagogical strategies do you use in your advanced Spanish classes?

Each level of instruction presents its own challenges, and I continue to hone my methods to meet the needs of my students and my own intellectual standards. That said, there are three basic components in my upper level courses: an emphasis on writing and rewriting throughout the entire course; the contextualization of the works within the historical, social, or literary framework; and the desire to personally engage every student in my classroom regardless of individual linguistic abilities or interest level. The themes we discuss and the skills we acquire are transferable to many different situations. My students learn to recognize the inter-connectedness of all people regardless of the cultural, geographical, or generational spaces that divide us.

### Please tell us about your next scholarly project.

Last spring I taught an Honors colloquium on "Art and Literature of the Spanish Civil War" for the first time. As we were reading Hemingway's *The Fifth Column*, we visited Morris Library where Timothy Murray, Head of Special Collections, gave a presentation on the library's vast Hemingway collection. At that time, I also learned of the library's recent acquisition of the literary archive of the American playwright Barrie Stavis. Like Hemingway, Stavis traveled to Spain during the Civil War to work as a journalist. His experiences there provided the themes for several of his short stories, his one-act play *Refuge*, and the full-length drama *The International Brigade*. Of particular in-



Dr. Susan McKenna

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*The themes we discuss and the skills we acquire are transferable to many different situations. My students learn to recognize the inter-connectedness of all people regardless of the cultural, geographical, or generational spaces that divide us.*

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terest to me are the more than thirty small notebooks written during this period containing ideas for plays and stories and commentary on what he witnessed during his stay. This exciting and entirely new set of source materials has fostered an interdisciplinary research project which captures the intellectual vitality of Spanish cultural studies.

### You have many hobbies and interests outside UD. Could you tell us about them?

I'm an avid gardener and look forward to spring each year when I can plant my small but productive flower and vegetable gardens. I like to walk in the White Clay Creek State Park and I practice yoga a couple of times a week just so that I can keep up with my two very active teenagers. Nonetheless my favorite hobby remains reading the fattest novel I can find on the living room couch!

## Meet Our New Professor:

**Dr. Phillip Penix-Tadsen,**  
Spanish and Latin American/  
Iberian Studies



*Dr. Phillip Penix-Tadsen*

Though my relationships with Latin American culture and the Spanish language are now defining traits of my personality, I started down these paths in the way many UD students do: to fulfill a language requirement as a high school student in my home state of Ohio. A transformative opportunity came when I spent the summer after my sophomore year in Costa Rica as a community health volunteer with the organization *Amigos de las Américas*. That summer in the small town of Filadelfia opened my eyes to the diversity of our world, sparked my fascination for Latin American cultures, and allowed the travel bug to take a powerful hold over me.

Since that first experience abroad, I have worked, studied, or pursued research in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Cuba, Venezuela, and several areas of Mexico and Spain, as well as experiencing the impact of Latin American cultures in diverse areas of the United States. The people I have met and the experiences I have had in each of these places have impacted me immensely, helping to define my professional direction and profoundly affecting me as an individual.

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*I am delighted to have found a place in the collegial and intellectually stimulating environment of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at the University of Delaware*

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After majoring in Spanish and Women's Studies at Ohio Wesleyan University, I spent a few years teaching English in Mexico and tutoring children of the largely Mexican migrant population in the public schools of Rogers, Arkansas, before going on to graduate school. I earned my master's in Hispanic Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, then completed my PhD at Columbia University, focusing on Latin American literature and culture. It was during this time that I came to appreciate the wonder of another region: the East Coast of the United States.

My research focuses on a wide array of cultural production from contemporary Latin America, including literature, film, online media, visual arts, graffiti, and video games. I am fascinated by the intersections between politics and culture, media and commerce. Here at UD, in addition to my research, I am concentrating on developing courses for the new Language and Culture major in Spanish. I have already taught one new course—Media-Savvy Populism from Che to Chávez—and I am developing two new upper-level courses for next year: Graphic Transgressions, on breakthrough movements in modern Latin American visual arts and culture; and Resurrecting Mexico's Dead, on the subjects of death and rebirth in the country's cultural production.

I am delighted to have found a place in the collegial and intellectually stimulating environment of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at the University of Delaware, and I greatly look forward to taking part in the Department's continual development as we travel down UD's much-publicized Path to Prominence.

## FACULTY/STAFF NOTES

### *Faculty/Student Exchanges*



▲ *Dr. Ángel Esteban of the Universidad de Granada*

► *Makhmouh Dia of the Université de Caen and Miguel Cano Díaz of the Universidad de Granada*



### *Awards/Recognitions*

**Dr. Joan Brown** delivered the keynote address at a conference on "Carmen Martín Gaité Ten Years On: Revisiting Her Textual and Visual Legacy" held at the University of London in December 2010.

**Dr. Jianguo Chen** was named director of the UD Confucius Institute.

**Dr. Ángel Esteban** was one of ten top scholars invited to honor Mario Vargas Llosa, the winner of the 2010 Nobel Prize in Literature, by the Casa de la Literatura in Lima, Peru.

**Dr. Gary Ferguson** served as visiting professor at the Université Rennes 2-Haute Bretagne in France in winter 2010; in November 2010 he was a visiting fellow at Trinity College, Dublin.

**Dr. Gabriella Finizio** received the 2010 University Excellence in Teaching Award. She also received this award in 1992.

**Dr. Eynat Gutman** participated by invitation in the Schusterman Summer Institute for Israel Studies held at Brandeis University and in Israel in summer 2010.

**Dr. Susan McKenna** received the 2010 Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award.

**Dr. Meredith Ray** received the 2009 American Association for

Italian Studies Best Book Prize in the "Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque" category for her monograph *Writing Gender in Women's Letter Collections of the Italian Renaissance* (University of Toronto Press, 2009).

The late **Dr. Judy McInnis** was remembered for her service to MACLAS (the Mid-Atlantic Council for Latin American Studies) and the field of Latin American Studies through the inauguration of the Judy B. McInnis Distinguished Service Award. The first award was given by MACLAS to Barbara Tenenbaum of the Library of Congress in March, 2010.



*Dr. Gabriella Finizio*



## Promotions

Dr. Susan McKenna was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor and Drs. Cristina Guardiola-Griffiths and Meredith Ray were promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.

## Grants

**Dr. Persephone Braham** received a \$10,000 faculty fellowship from the Institute of Global Studies to design and pilot the Global at Home program for Latin American and Iberian Studies and Area Studies.

**Drs. Persephone Braham and Phillip Penix-Tadsen** received a combined grant of \$15,000 from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the College of Arts and Sciences to develop an electronic portfolio for the Latin American and Iberian Studies program.

**Dr. Jianguo Chen** received a \$237,423 grant from the U.S. Department of State for UD to host the 2010 summer National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) in Shanghai.

**Dr. Gary Ferguson** received a \$6,050 UD GUR grant for summer research.

**Dr. Bonnie Robb** received a combined grant of \$15,000 from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the College of Arts and Sciences to develop an electronic portfolio for FLL pedagogy programs.

## Books Published by Faculty in 2010

**Dr. Joan L. Brown**, *Confronting Our Canons: Spanish and Latin American Studies in the 21st Century* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press). "Confident and authoritative, well-written and balanced, provocative and controversial: this is an excellent book, a call to arms and action, that all shapers and readers of literary canons should study with care."—David T. Gies, University of Virginia. "Joan L. Brown shows that a canon has the power to define a field and determine what is taught. She argues that it is both productive and necessary to confront our canons, to see what is actually in them and how these works and authors got there. She encourages the field of Hispanic studies—curators of the cultural patrimony of our country's second language—to take the lead in developing a diverse, flexible, shared foundational canon at the graduate level, before the arbiters of 'best practices' do this for us." (Fragment reprinted with permission from Bucknell University Press.)



Dr. Joan L. Brown

**Dr. Jianguo Chen**, *Teaching and Learning Chinese: Issues and Perspectives* (Information Age Publishing, Inc.). Chen's edited volume examines the American context of Chinese language



Dr. Jianguo Chen

education policy making, pedagogical approaches to teaching Chinese as a second language, Chinese literacy acquisition, Chinese curriculum design, program development, and students' attitudes toward learning Chinese.

**Dr. Cristina Guardiola-Griffiths**, *Legitimizing the Queen: Propaganda and Ideology in the Reign of Isabel la Católica I* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2011). This book shows how literature was a forum for political propaganda at the close of Spain's Middle Ages. It focuses on the ways works dedicated to the queen were used to promote certain political ideals and agendas, and discusses the importance of literature and gender in the reign of Isabel I of Castile through a systematic analysis of "mirror of prince" texts dedicated specifically to her.



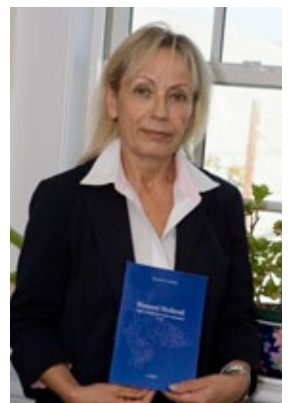
Dr. Cristina Guardiola-Griffiths

**Dr. Asima Saad-Maura**, *Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, critical edition (Doral, FL: Stockcero, 2011). Saad-Maura's critical introduction argues that events on the high seas between the Catholic Ramírez and the Protestant (mostly English) pirates invite a reevaluation of the subtle lines distinguishing truth, falsehood, and creative invention. The edition includes a full transcription of the original text, bibliographical appendix, and extensive footnotes, many of which are on the innumerable nautical terms that appear throughout the novel.



Dr. Asima Saad-Maura

**Dr. Riccarda Saggese**, *Momenti medievali: Puglia e Basilicata tra storia e documenti (sec. XV)*. (Salerno, Italy: Brunolibri). Through the analysis of original documents found in the Neapolitan Archives, Saggese traces the development of medieval cities in Southern Italy in the fifteenth century, demonstrating how specific economic and historical events contributed to their expansion.



Dr. Riccarda Saggese

**Dr. Laura Salsini**, *Addressing the Letter: Italian Women Writers' Epistolary Fiction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press). Salsini examines how Italian women writers reinvigorated the modern epistolary novel by refashioning the genre as a tool for examining women's roles and experiences. The authors purposely tie the letter structure to thematic content, creating in the process powerful texts that reflect and challenge literary and socio-cultural norms.



Dr. Laura Salsini

## Retirement

**Dr. Mary Donaldson-Evans**, Elias Ahuja Professor of French, was recently granted emeritus status for her forty-one years of service as a French instructor, professor, researcher, and colleague. During her career, Donaldson-Evans earned world-wide recognition for her research, particularly on the nineteenth-century authors Guy de Maupassant and Gustave Flaubert. In addition to co-authoring four books, publishing eighty-seven articles and two bibliographies, Donaldson-Evans penned three scholarly texts: *A Woman's Revenge: The Chronology of Dispossession in Maupassant's Fiction* (French Forum Monographs, 1986), *Medical Examinations: Dissecting the Doctor in French Narrative Prose* (University of Nebraska Press, 2000), and *Madame Bovary at the Movies: Adaptation, Culture, Ideology* (Rodopi, 2009). Donaldson-Evans's scholarly achievements earned her the Nineteenth-Century French Studies Appreciation Award in 1996.

Donaldson-Evans's students remember her fondly as one of their most passionate and engaging professors. She received the University's



Dr. Mary Donaldson-Evans

Excellence in Teaching Award in 1983 and was named Outstanding Teacher in the College of Arts and Sciences in 1995 for her commitment to her students. Donaldson-Evans was instrumental in shaping the French program over her forty-one year tenure at UD, directing numerous honors, master's, and doctoral theses, serving as an evaluator for French Forum, Modern Language Journal, PMLA and other top journals, and directing FLL graduate studies from 1994-2000. Her service to the university and the profession will have a lasting effect on the direction of French studies.

In his tribute to Donaldson-Evans, FLL Chair Richard Zipser noted that her many achievements have earned her the admiration of her colleagues and generations of students. Dr. Zipser's concluding thoughts are shared by everyone in the Department: "Mary, I want you to know how pleased I am and all of us in the Foreign Languages and Literatures department are that you have spent your entire career at UD. We all will miss you very much."

## CURRICULAR NEWS

### *Distinguished Scholars Molloy and Met*

Dr. Sylvia Molloy, Albert Schweitzer Professor of Humanities at New York University, gave the spring 2010 FLL Distinguished Scholar presentation. Molloy spoke on Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges's narratives on alienation, nostalgia, and return, showing how memory



Dr. Alexander Lehrman

## ETYMOLOGY: FREEDOM

*Education* was going to be my topic this year. It will have to wait.

In honor of the momentous events pioneered in Tunisia, I will start with the Arabic expression for 'freedom': *hurriyya*. Some languages whose lexicon is as dependent on Arabic for abstract concepts as ours are on Latin and Greek have their words for 'freedom' on loan from Arabic: e.g., Turkish *hürriyet*. *Hurriyya* (stem *hurriyyat*-) is a feminine abstract noun derived from the adjective *hurr* 'free,' originally 'free from admixtures' as in Arabic *dahab hurr* 'pure gold.' The verb from which this adjective is derived is *harra* 'be heated' with its derivatives *harr* 'hot, sultry, ardent; spicy, hot (of food),' *aḥarr* 'very hot.' As is the custom in all Semitic languages including Arabic, the root—*ḥ*-

*r-r* in this instance—is a string, on which the beads of different vowels are strung to form related meanings, furnished as needed with the clasp of a prefix and the pendant of an ending. The concept of freedom in Arabic is based on the metaphor of applying heat until impurities are melted away: *hurriyya* is freedom from corruption, from being hindered, lied to, spied on, imprisoned, beaten, from being bound with the impurities which degrade the inherent worth—the dignity—of the human being. The whole range of the initial phases of the struggle for freedom in the Arab world, which we are witnessing, is perfectly defined by these conceptual connections. So it's not surprising that *hurr* 'free' in other contexts means metaphorically 'pure,' 'morally noble,' and 'liberal.' On *harra* 'be heated' is based the verb stem *harrara* 'set free, liberate, rid (someone of something)' and its derivative *taharrara* 'become free.' *Tahrīr* 'liberation,' the name of the newly famous square in Cairo, has the latter as its source. Of special interest to philologists is the fact that *harrara* 'set free' also means 'to edit, correct'—to liberate a text from errors. One of the words for 'writer, journalist' is *muḥarrir*, a derivative of *harrara*, whose primary meaning is 'liberator,' someone who liberates the minds—the resident hypertexts—of his readers from the errors of ignorance and lies.

The Arabic root has very ancient connections: in Biblical Hebrew, a cousin of Arabic within the Semitic family of languages, we have *ḥārî* 'heat' and *hôrîm* 'the free / noble'; and we also have the much older (third-millennium BC) Old Egyptian *hrj.t* [ḥarit] 'smelter,' based on the same Afrasiatic root *\*hr(r)-* 'to heat, melt' (Afrasiatic is the common ancestor of Semitic, Egyptian, Berber, and some other language families).

In the Indo-European family there are several molds of 'freedom.' English preserves the Germanic word, *freedom*, akin at the root to German *Freiheit*, but also borrows the Italic (Latin) *libertās*, which is of course reflected in the Romance repertoire of Italian, Spanish, and French. Slavic, too, sports two different expressions, represented in Russian by *воля* / *вольность* (*svoboda* and *volia*). Each of these shines a different light on the notion of freedom.

English *free*, on which *freedom* is based, comes from Old English *frēo* which, just like German *frei*, Dutch *vrij*, and Danish *fri*, goes



always constructs obstacles to a traveler's true homecoming. The fall lecture was given by Dr. Philippe Met, Professor of French at the University of Pennsylvania. Met's talk, "Semiotics of Gender: Singing Moments in Post-War French Noir Films," focused on wordplay and scenic *dédoublément* (doubling) in musical interludes in French film of the late 1940s.

## Three New Majors

New FLL majors were approved by the University this year in Chinese Studies, Japanese Studies, and Spanish Language and Culture. The new majors represent FLL's alignment with UD's Path to Prominence and the strategic goal of the College of Arts and Sciences to develop an ever more international and interdisciplinary curriculum.

## Japanese Professor Launches Games Lab

If you passed by the Morris Library Instructional Media Center last fall, you may have glimpsed some dynamic fight scenes under way: samurai battling ninja, soldiers fighting armored clones in the Middle East, or a mystic Summoner defending herself against evil with lightning strikes and healing powers. This is the Games Lab, an integral part



Students enjoying the games lab

of the Honors colloquium "Japanese Visual Culture: Manga, Anime and Games," where students must play Japanese videogames in order to answer observation worksheets on role-play, immersion, stereotypes, and the representation of race and gender in the game text. The course aims to engage students in thinking critically about Japanese texts—games that we play every day can give us deep insight into Japanese culture and society, while games developed in Japan show interesting

back to Germanic *\*frijaz* 'loved, not in bondage' with a derived verb *\*frijoṇan* 'to love,' both ultimately from Indo-European *\*prija-* 'to please' reflected in Sanskrit adjective *priyá-* 'pleasing, dear,' *prīti-* 'affection,' and the verb *prīṇāti* 'pleases, loves.' English *friend* is an old present active participle of this same verbal root, originally meaning 'loving, pleasing,' from OE *frīond*, originating from Germanic *\*fri-jand-*, also the source of German *Freund* and Dutch *vriend*. Russian *приятный* (*priiatnyi*) 'pleasant' and *приятель* (*priiatel'*) 'pal' (Polish *przyjaciel* 'friend') are based on a cognate stem. Another important witness for this root is *Friday*, from OE *Frīgedæg* (German *Freitag*), a day dedicated to the Germanic goddess *\*Frijjō* 'Lovey,' the Germanic equivalent of Venus—the wife of the supreme poet-god *\*Wōdenaz* (Old High German *Wōtan* and Old Norse *Óðinn*), to whom *Wednesday* is dedicated—the Old English *Frīgō*, the goddess of love and leisure, whose devotees hail her, wittingly or not, every time they proclaim "TGIF!" To sum up the Germanic approach: freedom is like love, it makes friends and lovers; bondage is loveless and friendless.

*Liberty* was borrowed into English, like so much else, from Middle French: in this instance, MF *liberte* (Modern French *liberté*) from Latin *libertāte(m)*, cf. the inherited forms from other Romance languages: Italian *libertà* (Old Florentine *libertade*), Spanish *libertad*, Portuguese *liberdade*. The base of this, Lat. *liber* 'free,' comes from Indo-European *\*léudheros* 'a free-born person' (not born in captivity). In the plural, Lat. *liberī* 'free persons' came to mean 'children,' free-born heirs, as against those who weren't (captives, serfs). The Greek form of this is *ἐλευθερος* [eleutheros] 'free,' attested in the most ancient form of Greek, the Mycenaean Greek written in a peculiar syllabary, as *e-re-u-te-ro* (fourteenth-century BC); from this the Greek for 'freedom' is derived: *ἐλευθερία* [eleutheria]. This lexical network is the most non-metaphorical of the lot: *\*léudheros* and its brood point directly to the condition of being born free, not bred in captivity.

In Balto-Slavic, the Indo-European root of this, *\*leudh-*, survives in Russian *люди* (*liudi*) 'people, humans' (Polish *ludzie*),

which originally meant 'free people,' and in Lithuanian *liaudis* (Latvian *laudis*) 'people, folk.' This word survives in German *Leute* 'people'; Old English used to have it (OE *lēod*) but replaced it with the French loan *people*. But the Slavic expressions for 'freedom'—Russian *свобода* (*svobóda*), Polish *swoboda*, and Russian *воля / вольность* (*vólia / vól'nost'*), Polish *wolność*—propose a different solution to the problem of 'freedom.' *Svoboda* is a compound of *svo-*, Indo-European *\*swo-* 'one's own,' familiar from Latin *suus* surviving in Italian *suo*, etc., and a verb root that means literally 'to dig, stab,' metaphorically 'to research, dig up, explore': Slavic *bod-* from Indo-European *\*bhodh-* surviving also in Latin *fodiō* 'dig' (English *fossil*, borrowed from Latin *fossile* 'dug up,' is the derivative most frequently met with). This expression for 'freedom,' then, is imaged as "digging around or lunging forth, exploring, on one's own," instead of at the prodding of someone else's will.

Now *воля* (*volia*) and *вольность* (*vol'nost'*) come precisely from the root that means 'will,' both the Russian and the English stemming from the Indo-European *\*wel-* / *\*wol-*, familiar also from Latin *volō* 'want' and its Romance heirs (such as Italian *volere*, French *vouloir*, etc.), to say nothing of the many loanwords in English (such as *volition*, *voluntary*, *volunteer*, *benevolence*), as well as *voluptas* 'pleasure' (English loans: *voluptuous*, *voluptuary*). Old English *wel* 'according to one's wish, well' is a derivative of this, as is Old English *weola* 'well-being, wealth,' seen obviously as a result of doing *well*, that is, doing what one wills. In this conception, 'freedom' is simply doing what one wants to do, with the implication that when one does as one wills one does well. One facet of this, the pleasure arising from doing according to one's will, brings this view of freedom closer to *freedom* itself. But the facet of will is not problem-free: one person's will may well conflict with the will of others, and if well enforced it may put an end to the freedom of all and to liberty as such. Russian history, among others, has seen all too many examples of this. "The Arab spring," now in progress, has sprung up against self-willed headmen and in favor of a purer commonwealth. May it do well.

differences from those developed in the West.

Dr. Rachael Hutchinson, who runs the course, set up the Games Lab in consultation with Francis Poole and Meghann Matwichuk from Morris Library Instructional Media. Procedures for shelving and cataloguing game texts, securing games consoles to desks, and lending wireless headphones and controllers had to be carefully thought out. Hardware and game texts were purchased using funds from a Title VI grant to the East Asian Studies program, while the FLL Media Center provided funding for memory cards for students to use and save their games. As a result, students were able to use game texts for homework assignments, and some elected to focus on Japanese games for their major research essay, investigating such topics as the representation of masculinity in Metal Gear Solid and the significance of religious allegory in Final Fantasy X. The Games Lab allows students to directly apply theoretical learning to their analysis of the in-game environment, and this resource greatly enhances the contemporary focus of our Japanese program.



UD's Dragonfly dance club performs the traditional Chinese dance "The Splendor of Dunhuang."

## Confucius Institute Dedicated, Chen Named Co-Director

The University of Delaware's Confucius Institute for the advancement of Chinese language and culture was inaugurated in October in an applause-filled ceremony capped by celebratory performances ranging from a violin virtuoso's serenade to a traditional Chinese lion dance.

"We thank you for making the long journey to the US for this wonderful celebration and for your extraordinary dedication to the cause that's brought us together tonight," said UD President Patrick Harker to Xiamen University President Zhu Chongshi and his delegation. One of more than 300 around the world, the Confucius Institute at UD will advance several of the University of Delaware's most important goals, Harker said, including expanding UD's international reach and amplifying its impact, strengthening global partnerships, and developing collaborative initiatives in international and transnational issues.

Congratulatory letters were read by First Secretary Shen Yiling on behalf of Zhang Yesui, ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the US, and by Dr. Jianguo Chen, co-director of UD's Confucius Institute, on behalf of Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters. Joining Chen in the leadership of the Confucius Institute is co-director Huang Jiangjun, deputy dean of the Overseas Education College and The International College at Xiamen University.

Capping the celebration, the University of Pennsylvania Lions

performed an energetic Chinese lion dance; New York musician Judy Yeh presented "The Sparkling Galaxy" on the Chinese guzheng or horizontal harp; violin virtuoso Xiang Gao, Professor of Music at UD, accompanied by Marian Lee, played the "Fisherman's Serenade;" and UD's Dragonfly dance club performed a traditional Chinese dance.

## New State Department Grant for Chinese-American Council

Dr. Jianguo Chen received another federal grant from the State Department (\$237,000), in cooperation with American Councils for International Education, to establish a NSLI-Y (National Security Language Initiative for Youth) summer institute in China. This amount is in addition to the \$217,000 in 2007, \$250,000 in 2008, and \$225,300 that he received in 2009. The Summer Institute was conducted in collaboration with East China Normal University, a UD partner institution in Shanghai, China, in summer 2010. The Institute provided an immersion learning environment in which high school students were able to improve their language proficiency and enhance cross-cultural competence and communicative skills.

The theme of the Summer Institute was *Understanding Modern China: Tradition and Transformation*, with a special emphasis on China's emerging popular culture. It incorporated guest lectures from well-known directors, film stars, musicians, and cultural figures. Activities centered on this theme enabled the participants to gain insight into important social forces in contemporary China, and build bridges between their own interests in American popular culture and the popular cultural interests of typical high school students in China.

The Summer Institute was acclaimed by the participants and their parents. A participating student remarked: "I have benefitted tremendously from this program. Not only have the language and culture classes been incredibly interesting and informative, but the opportunity to live and experience China firsthand will be something I will remember for the rest of my life."

## French Theater Workshop

In May 2010, the fourteen students of the French Theater Workshop, under the direction of Dr. Deborah Steinberger, presented Eugene Ionesco's *Exercices de conversation*. A series of skits in which college foreign-language textbook dialogues meet the theater of the absurd, the play was performed before an appreciative public made up of the performers' fellow students, friends, parents, and professors. Mrs. Jinah Oh, a professional make-up artist visiting UD from Korea, treated the student actors to expertly-applied stage faces. Musical accompaniment was graciously provided by Ms. Katie Dill, a member of the popular local band Diego Paulo.

Steinberger has been offering the French Theater Workshop since 1995. Over the years, her students have presented works by Molière, Marivaux, Labiche, and Ionesco. During the first part of the semester, students engage in theater games and improvisation in order to work on pronunciation, diction, fluency, movement, and character development. At the same time, they study classic plays and learn the language of dramatic criticism; whenever possible, they attend French-language theatrical productions. The second half of the course is devoted to staging the play, with rehearsals taking up most of the class time. One of the student actors summed up her experience in the course: "Studying French theater is a fantastic way to enjoy the language, speak with a better accent, and bond with your fellow classmates."





*Group photo of the participants of the French Theater Workshop*



*ELI language partners. Photo by Lowell Riethmuller*

## ***New Buenos Aires Semester Program***

Beginning in fall 2011, UD students will have an exciting new study abroad semester option in Argentina. Participants will study at the University of Belgrano, located in a pleasant residential neighborhood in the northern sector of Buenos Aires, and will live with local families. The program includes cultural excursions within the city and a weekend excursion to the spectacular Iguazú Falls and other places of interest in Argentina. Students will be able to choose from a wide range of courses—in addition to classes in advanced Spanish language and Hispanic literature and culture, they can study anthropology, art history, economics, history, political science, translation, and sociology in Spanish or English. Beginning Portuguese is also available.



*View of Buenos Aires from the University of Belgrano's observation deck*

## ***Language Partner Initiative***

One Spanish professor has made partnering with an ELI student an optional “requirement” for his course.

Assistant Professor Hans-Joerg Busch has incorporated conversing with an ELI student whose native language is Spanish into his fall courses, making it one of several options for a required final project. Out of sixty students enrolled in his three sections of Advanced Spanish Grammar and Spanish Phonetics and Phonology, twenty-seven have partnered with twenty-five Spanish speakers enrolled in the English Language Institute.

“It’s such an easy thing to learn a language. All you have to do is practice it,” said Busch. “We have such a great opportunity here.”

Busch’s students are required to meet, email or call their partners regularly, to keep a diary of what they discussed and learned, and to put together a final written project, such as a report on their partner’s country.

“The students from the ELI always try their English with my students,” said Busch. “My students are more shy.”

Helping organize the exchange was ELI instructor Mary Beth Worrirow, a former colleague of Busch’s who previously taught Spanish courses in the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department. “Mary Beth had a big part in this,” Busch said. “Without her, I couldn’t have done it.”

Worrirow organized meetings between American and Spanish-speaking students at the ELI in the beginning of the fall semester to get to know each other and to compile a list of students who were interested in the language partner project. Later Worrirow and Busch set up mixed groups of four to eight students

“We wanted to make this happen primarily for the students but also as a serendipitous way to increase interdepartmental cooperation,” said Worrirow.

“Spanish is by far the most popular foreign language studied at UD (2667 students in the fall of 2010), followed by French (632) and Italian (432). A total of 149 UD students studied Chinese in the fall of 2010,” Busch said. Both Busch and Worrirow hope to see the activity expand among other languages in the near future.

“This type of program only works if colleagues in the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department are behind it,” Busch said.

*This article, by Dr. Barbara Morris, appeared in its original form in the English Language Institute’s 2010 newsletter.*





*Students at work at Halte Junior*

## **Graduate Student Column: Summer Service Learning in Martinique**

BY CHLOE OBANDO, MAFLP

With the support of a FLL Summer Study grant, I taught English conversation last summer to students ranging from eleven to sixteen years old at Halte Junior, a summer youth center located in Sainte-Marie, Martinique. As an English teacher, I felt like I had a valuable job, providing students with the opportunity to learn an important international language. Teaching English to a large class with few resources can be challenging, as I learned quickly during my experience in Sainte-Marie. Although I knew conceptually that there are many different ways of teaching and learning language, in this setting I quickly began to understand that the effectiveness of each teaching method depends on the specific situation and the needs of the students. By remaining flexible instead of trying to fit things into traditional expectations, I gained the kind of knowledge that I can use to better contribute to the possibilities for a student's success.

In addition to teaching young students at Halte Junior, I worked with adults at L'ADIIE (L'Association de Développement d'Insertion et d'Initiatives Economiques), located in Morne des Esses. L'ADIIE is dedicated to helping economically disadvantaged and homeless individuals become self-sufficient through employment opportunities. The program helps adults create resumes and learn interviewing and work skills.

Traveling alone and trying to integrate myself into the culture, although daunting at times, helped me build a confidence that I simply could not have gotten any other way. The first-hand experience of teaching abroad in an unfamiliar setting allowed me to look at teaching from a new perspective, enriching my personal experience while giving me new ways of understanding and interpreting the world. I was able to make positive contributions in the bigger scheme of things while developing a sense of social responsibility. This new-found sense of purpose and achievement came as I met and made friends with different people from all walks of life, whom I will never forget.

## **NEWS FROM THE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS**

### *À la française*

There's no telling where a UD degree in French will take you! We recently learned that one of our graduates, Ms. Louise Mushikiwabo (MAFLP '88), is the Foreign Minister of Rwanda, a post she has occupied since 2009. In 2006 she published *Rwanda Means the Universe* (St. Martin's Press), a memoir about the Rwandan genocide. As a government official, she has worked for the restoration of diplomatic relations between her country and France, and she has been an advocate for women's rights and gender equality in developing nations and worldwide.

Virtual travel was the order of the day at our annual *Fête de la Francophonie* in March. Students prepared posters about French-speaking countries, and faculty members shared their knowledge of different Francophone regions. Olga Furaha, a candidate in our MAFLP program, talked about the history and attractions of her home city, Caen, France. Drs. Ali Alalou and Cynthia Lees and Ms. Flora Poindexter acquainted the students with the cultural traditions of North Africa, Quebec, and Martinique, respectively, while Dr. Edgar Sankara spoke about the literature of Haiti.

In May, we celebrated our students' accomplishments at our annual honors event. Forty-one intermediate-level students received prizes for their outstanding work in French. Ten students were inducted into Pi Delta Phi, the French national honor society. Chapter President Theresa Brock led the initiation ceremony. Ms. Veronica Eid, a beloved UD instructor, now retired and current President of the local chapter of the Alliance Française, was named French Advocate of the Year for her lifelong commitment to French language and culture. Seniors Suzanne Di Iorio and Bess Davis read poems, and French club President Rachel Pomeranz treated the attendees to a lively Offenbach aria. Two seniors were recognized for their distinguished performance in French Studies: Katie Head, now a student in our Master's program, accepted the Theodore E.D. Braun Undergraduate Prize, and Bess Davis, currently studying in Scotland, received the French Faculty Prize. At Commencement, MAFLP recipient Arl Anselm received a prize for his outstanding work as a teaching assistant.

In the summer, Ms. Flora Poindexter led a group of eighteen students on our Paris program. The students explored some of the city's hidden gems, including the passages, shopping arcades built in the nineteenth century to protect pedestrians from the elements and the dangers of the busy city streets. This year, our group also had the op-



*The summer Paris group in front of the Azay-le Rideau chateau*



Student Ben Carlin with bass player Alex Théodose

portunity to meet French students their age. Together they visited the Opéra Garnier, had a picnic near the Eiffel Tower, and participated in the Fête de la Musique, an annual festival held throughout France to commemorate the arrival of summer.

Two of our MAFLP candidates also spent the summer abroad: Chloe Obando conducted a service learning project in Martinique, funded by a FLL Summer Grant. Jennifer Holup received a Global Research Internship and Performance Grant from the graduate office, enabling her to participate in a program for French teachers in Grenoble, France.

In January, while Delaware was buried under two feet of snow, fifteen UD students, accompanied by faculty director Ms. Flora Poindexter and teaching assistant Olga Furaha, were crossing the Tombolo of Sainte-Marie in Martinique. A *tombolo* is a thin sandbar which connects a small island to the mainland. Just as the *tombolo* provides a passage between two lands, a new cultural immersion program created a bridge connecting students from Delaware with the people and culture of Martinique. Students were paired with local experts who shared their interests. Ben Carlin, for example, met bass player Alex Théodose, and jammed with a local band. Another student, Anna Ogunnaike, met the Martinican writer Patrick Chamoiseau, winner of the Goncourt Prize in French Literature. Lauren Rizzi learned the art of French pastry at a local pâtisserie. Other projects included participating in local carnival traditions, visiting area schools, working in health care, and conducting research in history and local politics. The regional newspaper *France-Antilles* lauded our students' involvement with the local community, citing our program as a perfect example of cultural exchange.

## Ancient Greek And Roman Studies

*Salvete, amici!* 2010 has been a year of exciting events and renewed growth for the Ancient Greek and Roman Studies program.

The biggest news of the year is the revival of Eta Sigma Phi, the national Classics honor society. Way back in 1968, the University of Delaware was awarded the Delta Tau chapter of Eta Sigma Phi, but the local group fell dormant for nearly thirty years. On November 17, 2010 Eta Sigma Phi came back to life in a big way on the UD campus: the officers of the Zeta Beta chapter at Temple University, accompanied by their advisor



Medusa from a 7th century BC terracotta from Syracuse  
Artwork: Annette Giesecke



Eta Sigma Phi initiation

Professor Martha Davis of the Temple Classics Department, traveled from Philadelphia to Newark to perform a special initiation ceremony for the seventeen new members of the reborn Delta Tau chapter. For 2011 we look forward to an active year of speakers, trips, and community events, as Eta Sigma Phi works to foster a renewed sense of Classical fellowship at UD under the leadership of new chapter president Alexandra Armusewicz, a junior major in AGRS.

But that's not all. In May something new came out of something very old in Professor Lynn Sawlivich's Intermediate Latin class: students staged an original Latin play in the Perkins Student Center's Bacchus Theatre with stagehands, musicians, costumers, writers, and actors all drawn from members of the class. The play, a free adaptation from the love poetry of Catullus, was entitled *Odi et Amo*.

In off-campus news, one of our majors, Meg Galindo, spent the fall semester on the prestigious College Year in Athens program. In Meg's words: "It was an amazing experience, especially since the program was focused on Classics." Among sites Meg visited and studied while in Greece were Crete (including Gortyn, Knossos, Lato, Gornia, Malia), Isthmia, Nemea, Corinth, Mycenae, Olympia, Delphi, Tiryns, and Epidaurus. Something she particularly enjoyed about being in this archaeologically focused program was that students "guided by



Meg Galindo at the Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi

our professors, were able to understand the context in which structures at these sites were built and how different objects functioned and were representative of their society." On her own, Meg undertook other expeditions, hiking up to Ancient Thera in Santorini; visiting the "School of Aristotle," Thermopylae and royal tombs in Thessaloniki; and climbing Mt. Olympus. "There was so much that I loved in Greece," she said. "I am definitely going back."

On the academic front, a major milestone was achieved with the re-establishment, after many years, of permanent regular offerings of Latin classes at the advanced level. In the fall term fourteen students read the Histories of Sallust with Professor Emeritus Gerald Culley, who came out of retirement to teach for us while Professor Annette Giesecke is on leave. This course appeals not only to our undergraduate



students at UD; teachers from across New Castle County are finding this advanced offering a valuable resource, with faculty from the Charter School of Wilmington and Tall Oaks Classical Academy attending.

## Auf Deutsch



*Christine Mohr-Benfer greets students at the Eberswalde Museum*

Students who traveled to Bayreuth in January recount their experiences with smiles and tears. The comment, “The best five weeks of my life” is sure to be followed by a sincerely nostalgic “I miss my host family.” Sixteen students led by Dr. Ester Riehl spent five weeks studying German in Bayreuth, the town in Bavaria famous for its Richard Wagner Festival. A highlight of the trip was a visit to Eberswalde, a town near Berlin, where UD graduate Christine Mohr-Benfer organized a walking tour and a panel discussion with a group of local retirees. The program participants were fascinated and moved as the panel shared memories of life in the former East Germany, and how their lives had changed since German Reunification in 1990.

German events were available to all students last year, thanks to the German club and its faculty mentor, Dr. Iris Busch. September brought the Oktoberfest to Newark, and students organized carpools to enjoy Bavarian dancing, German foods, and rides. Other events included the Day of German Unity, a celebration of this important historical event; and the *Niklausparty*, where students were treated to traditional Christmas songs and baked goods. The popular *Stammtisch* brought together students at all levels of German language skills to converse with teachers and native speakers.

This year was marked by many successful student endeavors. Tiffany Fischer and Matthew Jokers both earned the MA degree. The German faculty conferred its German Graduate Student award to Tiffany Fischer for her all-around excellence. Danielle Pisechko received a travel grant to study in the teacher training program at the University of Freiburg. Simone Willnath traveled to a conference for foreign language teaching assistants in Boston held by the German Academic Exchange Service, and Courtney Petchel re-



*Dr. Nancy Nobile hands Dr. Marion Wiley award-winner Theresa Brock her plaque*

ceived a stipend to study at the University of Tübingen this summer.

The German honor society Delta Phi Alpha welcomed eighteen new members at its initiation ceremony at the Delaware Saengerbund in May. Organized by Busch, and attended by students, families, friends, and faculty members, the event featured a talk by Ms. Jessica Litts, a recent UD graduate who is now a German teacher. Student accomplishments were recognized in a festive program that included student recitalists and a buffet dinner. The Dr. Marion Wiley award went to Theresa Brock for superior performance by a non-major in courses beyond the intermediate level. Kimberly Frederick received the Sepp Hilsenrad Memorial award for outstanding performance by an advanced student. Colleen Kent, Jacqueline Wooddell, and Claire Greilich won competitive fellowships for the international summer course at the *Fachhochschule Fulda*, generously funded by the Department, the Wilmington Sister Cities Committee, the Delaware Saengerbund, and the German-American Women's Club of Fulda. Karyn Noll and Robert McGinnis received German American Federation scholarships allowing them to study at a German university for one year. At the ceremony the faculty presented Dr. Lisa Chieffo, Associate Director of UD's Institute for Global Studies, with the German Advocate award for her longstanding efforts supporting our programs, exchanges, and fellowships.

## Italianissimo



*The summer Italian program in the Colosseum*

Students had many opportunities to deepen their knowledge of Italy and the Italian language this past year. Many chose to go abroad. Over the 2010 winter session, Dr. Riccarda Saggese and Ms. Vincenza Pastecchi led a group in Siena, where students' exposure to local culture was fostered through their home-stays. A favorite excursion during their sojourn was a tutorial in glass-blowing given by an expert Venetian glass-blower. This year's summer program in southern Italy was also a hit. Students perfected their language skills under the direction of Ms. Giuseppina Fazzone while attending classes at the Sorrento Lingue International Language Center. Excursions included visits to Rome, Naples, Capri, Pompeii, and to the ancient city of Paestum, near Salerno, where the students learned about the importance of early Greek settlements in the Campania region.

We welcomed two new faculty members this past year, allowing us to broaden our course offerings. Associate Professor Giorgio Melloni comes to us from Bologna following an appointment at the State University of New York at New Paltz. Danielle Rossi, a graduate of our program and former Italian teacher at St. Mark's High School in Newark, has also joined our team of teachers. We celebrated two pro-



motions: Dr. Meredith Ray to associate professor and Ms. Roberta Morrione to instructor.

Students enjoyed new courses this year, including Dr. Ray's class on Italian detective literature and film and Dr. Melloni's course on Italian language, history, and society through film. *The Circolo Italiano*, UD's student Italian club, sponsored several events, including a bocce tournament, language practice sessions, and a visit from one of Italy's most famous proponents of the "Slow Food" movement.



*Giorgio Melloni*

We celebrated our students' academic excellence at our annual Honors Day ceremony and banquet last May. Fourteen students were inducted into Gamma Kappa Alpha, the national Italian Honor Society; Lily Jaffie-Shupe was awarded the top prize for her outstanding academic achievements. Dr. David Stone, Professor of Art History, spoke about Caravaggio's artistic legacy.

Our alumni continue to thrill us with their accomplishments. Amanda (Alicia) Leto (BAFL '08), who married her Sicilian boyfriend in 2010, is now teaching Italian at West Chester University. Francesco Bosi (BAFL '09) is a sales coordinator for Trump Soho in New York City. Eccellente!

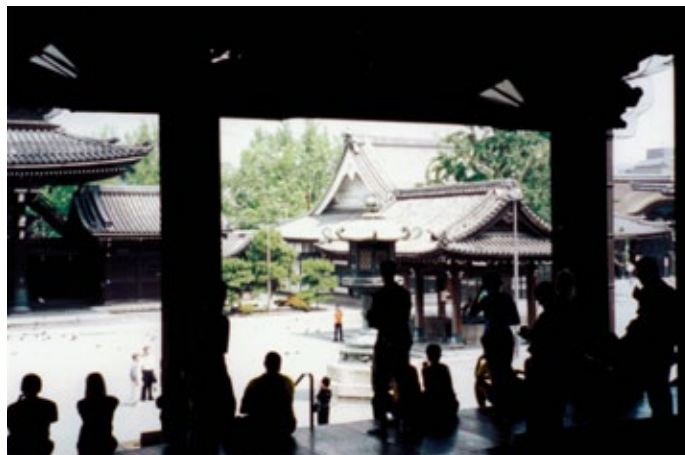
## 日本語

In Japan, spring is the season for viewing cherry blossoms, sipping tea outdoors and writing haiku. At UD, the Japanese section also appreciated a breather around spring break after an extremely busy few months. In fall 2010 we began accepting our first students for the new Japanese major. At this point in time we already have ten majors enrolled in the program, which requires intensive study in advanced Japanese language, literature, culture, and translation.

To celebrate the launch of the Japanese major we organized two exciting events on campus in the fall. An anime film series, organized by Dr. Rachael Hutchinson and running in conjunction with the course



*Nihongo Table language club*



*UD students at Higashi Honganji temple, Kyoto*

"Japanese Visual Culture: manga, anime and games," attracted a good crowd of UD students, members of the public, and area K-12 teachers. Tara Levin and Aliza Becker of the anime club Otaku 2 also organized a roundtable panel on "cosplay" open to students and members of the public. Cosplay is an increasingly popular hobby in North America, where people dress up as manga or anime characters and attend events, often acting in character throughout. The panel allowed the audience to appreciate the time, effort, and passion that goes into researching and creating the original handmade costumes, and we were treated to a stunning display of visual images and detailed explanations from the panelists. Students were still asking questions of the panelists an hour past the end of the event, attesting to the intrinsic interest of the subject and the engaging and open nature of the panelists and organizers.

Japan-related clubs on campus continue to thrive, and the Nihongo Table language club once again hosted the Japanese national honor society event in spring. Inductees for 2010 were Chris Domian, Young Kim, Shin-Ying Lin, Brian Minch, Paul Mussoni, Daniel Ruhlman, and Lisa Wisner.

The Kobe program in 2010 was led by Drs. Mark Miller and Mutsuko Sato, with James Weaver as their teaching assistant. Students were able to take language and culture courses at three levels, demonstrating the dedication of our teaching faculty. This was Miller's twelfth Kobe program. Japanese and FLL faculty were greatly saddened by the recent earthquakes and tsunami in Japan. As a precaution we have suspended our summer session program there for 2011. Japanese faculty are coordinating efforts to contribute to relief activities.

This year we were glad to send Paul Mussoni and Sara Winters to Tokyo for a year on the Soka program and Justin Weber and Adriel Andrade to Seinan University in Fukuoka for one semester each, while Brian Minch elected to spend a full year at Seinan. Brian Minch and Marisa Porgpraputson, now studying at Soka after deferring entry for a year, are the first students to undertake the capstone research thesis in Japanese. We look forward to a vibrant future as the program continues to grow!

## *Noticiero español*

The Spanish program diversified in 2010 to include a new cultural studies option for the Spanish studies major. In this new track, students are encouraged to take FLL literature and cultural studies courses and courses in Spanish in art history, history, political science, and anthropology. There are also options which allow students to include intensive Portuguese. We welcomed a new tenure-track assistant professor, Dr. Phillip Penix-Tadsen, who specializes in Hispanic cultural studies.



*The Chile winter group attends a special ceremony at a Mapuche community near Santiago*

The Spanish faculty enjoyed a number of achievements in 2010. Dr. Vincent Martin won a *Clásicos* 2010 award for his study abroad program in Almagro, Spain featuring the performance of sixteenth-century plays by his undergraduate student participants. Dr. Joan Brown, Elias Ahuja Professor of Spanish, delivered a keynote address at the University of London in December, 2010, at the conference “Carmen Martín Gaité Ten Years On: Revisiting Her Textual and Visual Legacy.” There Brown also participated in a roundtable discussion about the distinguished Spanish author. Carmen Martín Gaité (1925-2000) had longstanding ties to FLL. Her first talk in the Department was in 1978, and her final lecture—which would be her last in the United States—was delivered to an audience of over one hundred in 1996.



*The two Madrid groups in front of the Palacio Real*

Study abroad continued to thrive this year. In January forty students traveled to Granada, Spain, in two groups: the First Year Experience directed by Dr. Alfred Wedel, and a group of predominantly juniors and seniors directed by Ms. Krystyna Musik. Among other excursions, students had the opportunity to see Madrid during the Feast of the Three Kings, in addition to Toledo, Segovia and El Escorial before traveling to Granada where they settled in with their host families and started classes at the Centro de Lenguas Modernas.

We recognized the achievements of our students in the annual Sigma Delta Pi initiation ceremony in April 2010, where Lauren Woglom received the Sigma Delta Pi book award as the initiate with the highest GPA. The honor of best graduate student essay went to Anna Krishtal and Nicholas Wolters, and Genevieve Pannell received an award for the best essay in an upper-division Hispanic literature course. Katy Moriarty was named the outstanding student in a Hispanic literary survey course.

Several of our alumni have sent news of their successful graduate studies. Dr. Anna Hiller completed a PhD at UC Berkeley with a dissertation on twentieth-century Spanish literature; she is now a lecturer and the assistant director of Spanish language instruction at Berkeley. Ms. Alexandra Saum-Pascual is preparing to write her dissertation on contemporary Spanish literature at UC Riverside. Ms. Magdalena (Maleni) Romero Córdoba is nearing the dissertation phase of the doctoral program at CUNY. Ms. Dana Arschin is completing her master's degree in communications and is considering becoming a reporter and a documentary maker.

## РУССКИЕ ИЗВЕСТИЯ



*Slavic club Brighton Beach trip 2010*

Russian at UD now boasts a splendid new website, thanks to web wizard Thomas McCone, director of the FLL Media Center. The site, a delight for the eyes and a feast for the mind and soul, is a veritable treasure-trove of information on Russian language, history, and culture. A wide array of links to Russian media, including live Russian radio and TV, allows visitors instantaneous immersion into the world of all things Russian. The site brims with enthusiasm both for Russia and for the Russian language and culture, an enthusiasm sure to infect even the most casual visitor. You can enter this fascinating portal at <http://www.udel.edu/flt/lang/russian/index.html>.

When you visit the site, in the bottom right corner under the rubric “Other Resources,” you’ll see the heading “Russian Declension Songs.” Yes, eight of Dr. Susan Amert’s original Russian declension songs have been published on the web with vocals by Amert and Dr. Alexander Lehrman, who also accompanies on the acoustic guitar. Anyone who has studied Russian at UD knows these songs, but for the uninitiated, they present basic paradigms of Russian adjective and noun phrases set to familiar melodies. The six case forms of «НОВЫЙ СТОЛ» (‘New Table’), for example, are set to the tune of “This old man, he played one...,” the phrase «Милая сестра» (‘Nice Sister’) is set somewhat ominously to the melody of “Three Blind Mice,” while «НОВЫЕ лампы» (‘New Lamps’) is paired with the upbeat “O When the Saints...” Some paradigms of Russian pronominal forms are also featured, as in the perennial favorite «У кого есть машина?» (‘Who Has a Car?’), set to the tune of “Give Me That Old Time Religion,” and the irresistible «О-о-о чём?» (‘A-a-bout what?’), set to Johann Strauss’s “Waltz of the Blue Danube.” Sounds funny, and it is, but the concept is pedagogically sound. Once learned, the songs are virtually impossible to forget, as more than a generation of UD students can attest. So listen at your own risk. If you want to visit the songs directly, go to <http://www.udel.edu/flt/lang/russian/RussianSongs/>.





*Slavic club final exam study session*

Our annual spring initiation ceremony for Dobro Slovo, the national Slavic honor society, saw ten new members inducted into the organization. The Eugenia Slavov award for excellence in the study of Russian went to David Mack '10, vice president of the Slavic Club and a double major in Russian and international relations. The Pushkin prize for outstanding achievements in the study of Russian language, literature, and culture was awarded to Russian major Jordan Hepler ('11). John Matulis and Dorothy Jacek-Matulis once again presented a diverse program of Russian, West Slavic, East Slavic, and Georgian folk songs, and the evening culminated as usual with Slavic folk dancing for all.

The Slavic club continued to thrive in 2010, hosting a popular weekly language table at Brew Ha Ha with free coffee and homework help for students of Russian at all levels. Other noteworthy events include a Russian party with homemade borscht and blinчики, a pizza party at Grotto's, and an excursion to the Russian community in Brighton Beach with dinner at the Primorskii Russian restaurant. Members also continued their service activity, making monthly trips to Philadelphia to distribute food to around two dozen Russian-speaking émigrés for the Jewish Relief Agency.

## 中文



*The winter session group visits the Great Wall*

2010 was another rewarding year for the Chinese faculty and students. The establishment of a major in Chinese Studies marks a new stage of development of the Chinese program, and we have already enrolled more than ten majors. Several new courses in Chinese literary

and cultural studies have been added, including Classical Chinese (a literary language used by the Chinese literati over the past thousand years), which attracted a dozen students in its fall class.

Once again, the Chinese program competed successfully with other major research institutions for the Chinese Embassy scholarship program. This year we received three full scholarships for the coming year. Students Wendy Jansson, Adam Laufman, and Thien-Chan Vu are now studying in China on the scholarship.

To enhance extracurricular activities in Chinese studies, the Chinese faculty has continued to organize the Chinese conversation partnership with native Chinese speakers in the area, and to form a spoken Chinese club with Chinese students from the English Language Institute. The Chinese club continues to grow, offering a variety of Chinese language and culture activities.

In collaboration with the Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Confucius Institute, the Chinese faculty helped organize the first UD-Peking University Distinguished Scholar Lecture. Dr. Kebin Liao of Peking University spoke on "China Seen through a Province: Traditional Culture, Economic Development, and Social Changes in Zhejiang Province."



*Students in a painting class at Beijing Normal University*

An important component of the Chinese program is study abroad in China. In winter 2011, a group of twenty-three students studied in Beijing for four weeks, during which time they took courses in Chinese language, contemporary Chinese society and politics, and international business. In addition, they took culture trips to Xian to experience its rich cultural tradition, and to Shanghai to savor its metropolitan development.

As the Chinese program continues to grow, we look forward to the addition of a new faculty member and to our continued progress on the Path to Prominence.



### *Simone Willnath: Riding to Success*

Simone Willnath (MAFL, German) has a special relationship with bicycles. She was born and raised in Münster, Germany's bicycle capital. When she was a child, Simone used to bike through this city with her mother, who pointed out architectural and historical monuments. A fateful bicycle accident would lead Simone to change her major from physical education to theology and German linguistics and literature, ultimately bringing her to UD.

After graduating from high school, Simone spent a year in England. During her stay in Tunbridge Wells (South Kent), she realized how much she enjoyed the challenge of communicating in a second language and the opportunity "to get to know other people and customs through a foreign language." Back in Germany, Simone decided that she wanted to become a high school teacher. She started her career with a double major in German linguistics and literature (Germanistik) and physical education at the Westfälische Wilhelms University of Münster. A serious crash on her bicycle on her way to a seminar in 2005 forced her to rethink her education and future plans. Fascinated by how many theological topics could be found in literary texts, she applied for a major in theology to gain a deeper understanding of both fields.

Falling down and getting back up again reflects Simone's energy and determination. In her third semester of her undergraduate studies, she became a teaching assistant in the Linguistics department, conducted independent research, and wrote a thesis on children's language skills.

During her last semester of undergraduate work she looked for opportunities to study abroad in an English-speaking country and to continue her academic career with a master's program in foreign languages and literatures. As it happened, one of her childhood friends had moved to Delaware and she took advantage of the opportunity to visit him, volunteering at an elementary school and knocking on some doors on campus. "I spoke to Professor Zipser about my wish to study in a foreign language and literature program and he encouraged me to apply. This program seemed perfect for me due to its opportunity for an extended study abroad and the combined coursework in literature and foreign language pedagogy. I always enjoyed studying German literature and discovering new ideas in texts with the help of literary research and in combination with other disciplines. In 2009 I started the German master's program at UD."

Simone is still thrilled with her decision to study German literature. "German literature," she explains, "does not always describe terrible things. It is also entertaining. I really enjoy reading pop literature and that is also why I chose to write a thesis on this genre. I like reading pop novels just as much as I find pleasure in reading



*Ms. Simone Willnath*

Kleist." Dr. Monika Shafi, Simone's thesis advisor, describes her as driven, motivated, and not afraid of new challenges. She especially appreciates that Simone "also tolerates criticism, which few are able to do. I extensively critique her drafts but this doesn't discourage her. Quite the opposite—she'll try harder. She is self-reliant and confident, a strong young woman who is determined to shape the future according to her goals and values." It is not surprising, then, in light of Simone's drive and resilience, to learn that she still enjoys cycling in her free time.

### *Theresa Brock: Caen-Do*

Ms. Theresa Brock (BAFL, French) started her UD career as an English major, but after an unforgettable freshman-year study abroad experience in UD's program in Caen, France, she decided to add a second major in French education. "My Caen host mother, a Lebanese immigrant to France, was inspirational," Theresa says. "She shared stories and life lessons of hope and perseverance." Theresa reunited with her host family when she returned to France on the FLL summer study abroad program in Paris in 2009.

Throughout her college years, Theresa's work in French and pedagogy has been outstanding. According to her advisor and professor Dr. Cynthia Lees, "Not only is Theresa remarkable for her exceptional scholarly achievement, but also for her self-directed approach to learning. She truly demonstrates a zest for academic work!"

Theresa is adept at communicating her love of French language and culture to others. She is currently completing a semester of student teaching at the Charter School of Wilmington, where she enjoys the highly motivated students and savors the opportunity to put her theoretical knowledge to use. "The pedagogical training I received at UD has prepared me well for this experience," she says. Dr. Bonnie Robb, coordinator of the Foreign Language Education program, praises Theresa's "effervescent enthusiasm," and adds, "Theresa is one of those amazing individuals who seem to be effortlessly organized. She arrives in class with every assignment meticulously prepared and participates insightfully in discussions. She always seems a step ahead."

Student teaching is a full-time commitment, but Theresa still finds time for her favorite extracurricular activities. An avid dancer, she is a member of the UD swing dance club. Reading is another of her passions: travel writing is her preferred genre these days, especially works by Bill Bryson.

Theresa plans to begin a doctoral program in French next fall in order to realize her career goal: to become a college professor. We wish Theresa all the best as she embarks upon this new phase in her education.



*Ms. Theresa Brock*

## ALUMNI COLUMN

### *Alumna Camille Pouliot Combines Travel, Teaching*

I graduated from UD in 2008 with a double major in Spanish and Art History and a minor in French. While at UD, I studied abroad in Granada, Spain, for a semester, which opened my eyes to a large part of the world and instilled in me a deep passion for traveling. Since graduating, I have been traveling as much as possible while pursuing my interests in art and languages. Immediately after graduating, I traveled around Australia for a month. I moved to Philadelphia upon my return and began teaching Spanish in a public high school. After my teaching assignment was up, I translated and catalogued various foreign language folios and exhibition catalogues at the library at Moore College of Art. I then took a short trip to Costa Rica with my sister, acting as her personal translator. I spent this past summer interning in the registration and cataloguing department of a small museum on the North coast of Peru. While there, I took the opportunity to travel as much as possible on weekends and extended my stay an additional month to travel around the country. Currently, I am teaching English as a Second Language at Kaplan International Colleges in Philadelphia. I love the international environment and teaching students who are extremely motivated to learn.



*Camille at work in Peru*

Overall, my professional experiences since college have proved that perhaps my interests are not as discordant as I had imagined. As far as my general plans for the future, I want to keep traveling and plan on returning to school for a graduate degree. In the more immediate future, I plan on continuing to teach English as a Second Language, although I may be taking my work abroad to Spain.

### *Shanghai Student Ambassadors: the USA (and its Expo 2010 pavilion) at its very best.*

By ADAM MINTER

*My first visit to the USA pavilion happened a few days after it officially opened. It was a quiet evening, and the large crowds of recent weeks hadn't yet materialized. I didn't have to wait long in line, and after only a few minutes I was ushered into the lobby where I watched two young Americans make announcements—and joke—to a Chinese audience transfixed by their linguistic and cultural fluency. A few minutes later we were ushered into a movie theater where a stocky young American, no more than twenty-three, I think, worked the five-hundred audience members like a stand-up comedian. After the film, the Chinese audience rushed up to him with cameras, questions, and curiosity.*

*As I left the pavilion, I raved to my companion about how the young Americans I'd just seen—officially, they are members of the USA pavilion's Student Ambassador program—are precisely who and how I would want the USA to represent itself at Expo 2010 (the Shanghai World's Fair). Entrepreneurial. Optimistic. Well-educated. Young. Open to China and other cultures. Sense of humor. Sense of integrity.*

*And so, without further ado, allow me introduce Shanghai Scrap's readers to Ryan Lovdahl, 23 and Katie Sirolly, 22, two members of the first class of eighty student ambassadors selected to work at the US pavilion until mid-July (a second class of eighty ambassadors will overlap them by a week or two and serve until the end of the Expo on October 31).*

Katie and Ryan are both recent University of Delaware graduates. They showed an aptitude for the Chinese language that resulted in both being selected for year-long scholarships at Beijing Language and Culture University, paid for by the Chinese government. Ryan spent two years at BLCU; Katie spent one. Afterward, both sought out additional opportunities to study, travel, and work



*Student ambassadors Ryan Lovdahl and Katie Sirolly*

in China. And so, in 2009, when the Student Ambassador program was announced, both jumped at the opportunity to apply.

Last week, when I sat down with Ryan and Katie at the café outside of the US pavilion, I was expecting to gather info for a relatively short blog post describing the program and some of the "routines" or "acts" that they do to warm-up the crowd. But they turned out to be so well-spoken, and so thoughtful, that I changed my mind mid-interview, and decided that I'd instead let them speak for themselves about what they do at the pavilion. Just by way of introduction to the first excerpt: The application process for the student ambassador program was rigorous. Among other requirements, successful applicants had to have a minimum of 2.5 years of Chinese study, and a recommendation from a language professor attesting to their fluency. And yet, after all this, Ryan was struck by the disconnect between how his American friends and Chinese friends viewed the program.



**Ryan:** I was a little surprised when I went back to America and told all of my friends, oh I've got this amazing opportunity at the Expo and they don't necessarily know ... they know what it is, but they don't know—

I think that Katie and I both were in the unique situation where we really understood how important it was to the Chinese. And that's how I feel. I don't necessarily even care how people in America perceive it—it's important to the Chinese and we're here because it's important to the Chinese.

The student ambassadors arrived in Shanghai two weeks before the opening of the Expo and were divided into different groups based upon resumes and interest. Ryan and Katie—both obvious extroverts—were assigned to “Operations,” the group that manages/warms up the lines and audiences inside of the pavilion (other groups include VIP services and office support).



Expo 2010

We first talked about what happens in the pavilion's lobby in advance of the Overture, the first short film. At this point, the student ambassadors are facing five-hundred Chinese guests who have spent hours in line.

**Shanghai Scrap:** Let's talk about how you started developing what you do in front of these crowds. I think it's so great. How did you start developing this? To my mind, the hardest job in the house has to be the first room.

**Ryan:** Absolutely.

**Katie:** The Overture is a lot of fun because you have about five minutes just to welcome everyone and talk to all of the visitors who have just entered the room. So we have a few things we have to say, safety information, we introduce the videos. But then we have a lot of extra time. Usually between three and four minutes of time that's just ours to talk to people in the room.

**Ryan:** They [management] gave us a few things to say, but not nearly five minutes worth of material, and then after that [they said] 'just have fun, just entertain the crowd'... And I just started thinking, you know, what can we do? How can we entertain these people? It's a cool experience to be in a room with 500–600 people and have them for four minutes.

The following routine, as described by Katie, and then Ryan, was performed for Secretary of State Clinton in late May.

**Katie:** And so one of the things that we like to do a lot is teach a little bit of English. So Ryan's developed this act. We ask the crowd if anyone would like to learn some English and some hands go up. And then we ask them if they know how to translate or how to say



Ryan and Katie warm up the crowd in the USA pavilion. Photo courtesy of the USA Pavilion at Expo 2010

in English, *ni hen li hai*, which, in Chinese—

**Ryan:** Yeah. So, you say *ni hen li hai* in Chinese, right. And so then when we sort of ask, 'how do you translate that?' ... [S]o the word that we teach them is 'awesome' ... [I]t's our own personal translation. Awesome is the sort of word you don't really study in the textbook ... [A]nd I explain in Chinese that this is the kind of word that'll be really impressive if you use it in English because people will think your English level is really good. So then we just interact with them and teach them why this word is really important, and it's really cool: 'If you ever encounter an American who's, like, really awesome like I am and you want to praise them [laughing].' ... [S]o we practice and then they repeat after me, and it gets everybody excited and everybody's speaking –

**Katie:** And then all of a sudden you have a room full of people screaming “You. Are. AWESOME!”

**Shanghai Scrap:** You have that?

**Ryan:** We have that every time. So I say 'awesome' and then I say 'let's practice.' And I say 'awesome' and they say 'awesome' and then I say the whole sentence is *ni hen li hai*, that means you are awesome. And then I say repeat after me. And I say 'You are awesome,' and then I hold the microphone out to them, and they all scream at me: “You. Are. AWESOME!” [A]lso the people waiting [outside the pavilion] in line, they hear the people screaming in here, and it creates a very exciting environment.

**Katie:** I've also tried to learn a few sentences in Shanghaiese. One of them is *ni hen li hai*. And so, I also like to ask a lot of people in the room, 'Who's from Shanghai?' Some hands go up, and then I say to them *nong lau jie guen eh*. So that's also a lot of fun, usually we get a good response.

**Ryan:** [W]hen a foreigner speaks Mandarin, it's very impressive to them. But when a foreigner can speak one or two words in Shanghai dialect it makes the room just go crazy.

As difficult as the first room—the Overture—is to work, it seems to this blogger that a greater challenge is entertaining and managing the lines—lines that can wind for hours. I asked about how they manage this assignment.

**Katie:** [E]dward is another student ambassador, and he's Chinese American, and we have this little routine where Edward will face the crowd and introduce the pavilion in Chinese. And then I'll have a bullhorn, and we're standing back to back, and we flip around, and I'll say it in English. And then he'll say something else about the pavilion in Chinese. We do this a few times. So then the crowd starts to think that, well, because he looks Chinese and I do



not look Chinese, that I only speak English, and he speaks Chinese. But then we'll do a full circle, and then I'll start in Chinese. I'll introduce myself in Chinese. And usually at that point the crowd—

**Ryan:** They go 'Whoa!'

**Katie:** And Ed will turn around—

**Ryan:** And they're also impressed by his English, because he was born and raised in Kansas.

Ryan, an admitted lover of the microphone and crowds, takes a hammier approach.

**Ryan:** Usually I introduce myself, and during my introduction, I—it probably sounds really weird in English, but the Chinese love to hear it in Chinese—I say 'my name is Ryan I'm a student ambassador from New York. I'm a really authentic American.' And then I say 'Every day I eat more than twenty hamburgers.' And they know I'm joking. And then I say, 'And like, other than hamburgers, what else do I eat. Um, probably hamburgers. I only eat hamburgers, basically.' And so they just love it, because it's just—it kind of fits into their stereotype. But they also know that—it's not a bad stereotype or anything ... [A]nd I think it goes well with sort of just the character of being American in general. We're very light-hearted and we can have a sense of humor about ourselves. Sometimes they'll shout out "Why aren't you so fat?" You know? It's good, it's another interaction. One of the things that I find most interesting about the Student

Ambassadors is that they develop (and have developed) a performer's instinct for what does and does not work with Chinese Expo audiences. It's hard won, too: every day they spend hours and hours interacting with these audiences, joking and conversing with them, and measuring their moods. To be honest, I'm not sure of any other pavilion that has a staff with this kind of knowledge. At some point, I hope, somebody in the State Department will recognize that knowledge as a valuable resource for doing public diplomacy in China after Expo. In any case, here's how Katie describes the Chinese audience as she's gotten to know it.

**Katie:** I think they just want a little bit of exposure to the USA. And I think that's what we as student ambassadors really focus on. Even if you're standing at the turnstile if you can just make eye contact with everyone who's coming through and smile and say *huan ying guang lin* (welcome) it means something to a lot of people, because it might be the first time they've heard a foreigner speak Chinese. I had an experience just yesterday when I was working. A kind of middle-aged woman was pushing her mother in a wheelchair, so I just said *huan ying guang lin Meiguo Guan*. The daughter said to the mother, 'Isn't that great, it's a foreigner welcoming you in Chinese!'

Ryan and Katie will both return to the United States in early August, but both expect to remain connected to China. Katie will enter the University of Michigan Law School in the fall; Ryan is still evaluating opportunities, including a possible MBA. He hopes to do business in China at some point.

Speaking for myself, only, I really hope that the US State Department can figure out a way to tap into what the two of them—and the rest of the Student Ambassadors—are learning at the US pavilion on a daily basis. It strikes this American as invaluable.

*Adam Minter is an American writer in Shanghai, China, where he covers a range of topics, including the Chinese environment, religion in contemporary China, trade, sports, and cross-cultural issues between the West and Asia. Minter's work has been published in The Atlantic, Slate, The Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, National Geographic, Foreign Policy, The National Interest, Mother Jones, Scientific American, ARTnews, Sierra, and other publications.*

*Portions of the blog and photos were reprinted with permission from Adam Minter of <http://shanghaiscrap.com>*



*Ryan introduces himself to the audience in the USA pavilion. Photo courtesy of the USA Pavilion at Expo 2010*

## HOLIDAY PARTY PHOTOS



*Dr. Eynat Gutman and Dr. Deborah Steinberger.*



*Dr. Giorgio Melloni and Ms. Roberta Morriane*

## HOLIDAY PARTY PHOTOS *(continued)*



*Dr. Jianguo Chen and Dr. Rachael Hutchinson*



*Dr. Theodore Braun and Dr. Bonnie Robb*



*Graduate students Maria Jacobson, Olga Jimenez, Matthew Jokerst, Courtney Petchel, Chloe Obando, and Simone Willnath*



*Mr. Aaron Ward and Ms. Rae Stabosz*



*Ms. Dora Marin, Ms. Marion Bernard-Amos, and Ms. Amalia Veitia*



*The Penix-Tadsens*



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