



# The Language Educator

January 2012 • Volume 7, Issue 1



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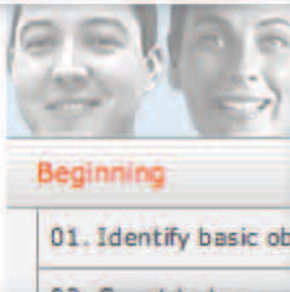
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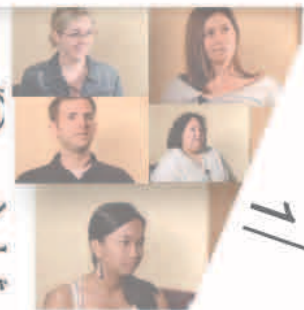
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*The Language Educator* (ISSN 1558-6219) is published monthly except March, May, June, July, September, and December by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Inc., 1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314 • (703) 894-2900 • Fax (703) 894-2905 • www.actfl.org • E-mail: headquarters@actfl.org.

*The Language Educator* is a publication serving educators of all languages at all levels. Articles and ideas for submission, and all other editorial correspondence, should be sent via e-mail to scutshall@actfl.org. Author guidelines are available online at www.actfl.org. Advertising inquiries should be addressed to Alison Bayley at abayley@actfl.org; (703) 894-2900 x109.

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Single copies of issues for the current year may be obtained by sending a check for \$10.50 (\$7.50 + \$3/S&H for orders within the U.S.) for ACTFL members and \$13 (\$10 + \$3/S&H for orders within the U.S.) for non-members. International shipping rates vary. For orders of more than one copy, call ACTFL headquarters at 703-894-2900. Claims for undelivered

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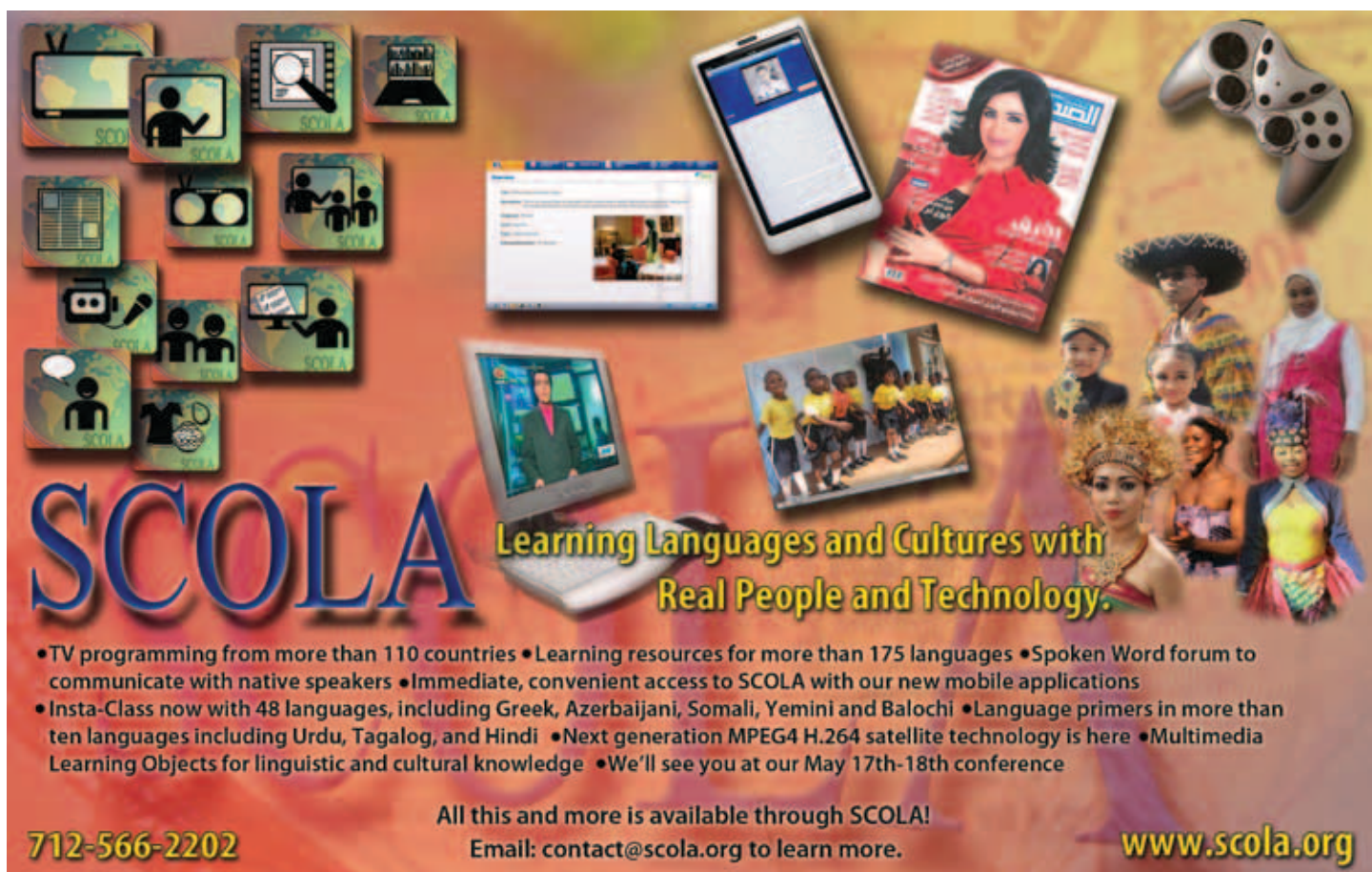
Editorial services by Print Management, Inc., Middleburg, VA 20117. Design by Goulah Design Group, Inc., Buffalo, NY 14223. Printed by Allen Press, Inc., Lawrence, KS 66044.

Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, VA and at additional mailing offices.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Inc., 1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314.





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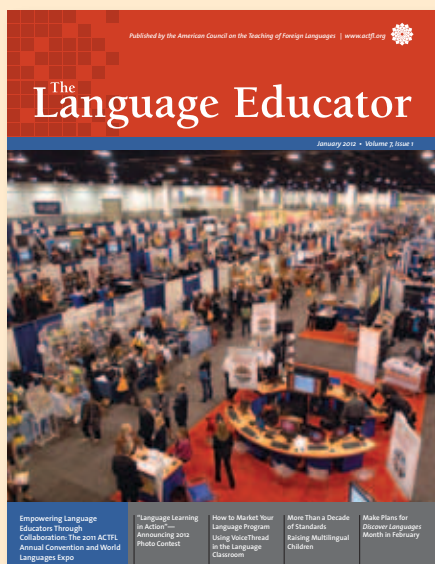
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*The World Languages Expo at the 2011 ACTFL Convention in the Colorado Convention Center.*

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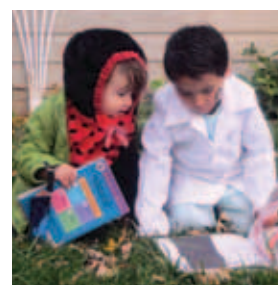
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## Spotlight on West Windsor-Plainsboro (NJ) Regional School District

When West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District in New Jersey received the **2011 ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language Education**, the awards committee noted

that the district “demonstrates a systemic approach to building articulated programs in a variety of world languages” and “it should serve as a national model for professional discussion and learning.”

West Windsor offers Spanish beginning in Grade 2 in all schools and offers a choice of Spanish or Chinese in Grade 4. When students reach middle school, they are also given options to begin studying French or German. The district employs a variety of formative and summative assessments drawn from the ACTFL Performance Guidelines to provide effective measure of students’ language development.

According to Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction Rosanne Zeppieri, the district took very seriously the mandate that the state of New Jersey put in 13 years ago for K–8 world language education. “What I think makes our program unique is the high quality of our teachers. I can’t say that strongly enough.” She notes that from the beginning of the program on there has always been significant focus on teacher training and hiring language specialists.

“There’s also been a tremendous amount of work done on articulation,” she adds. “Our curriculum is a series of thematic units that the teachers have created with the supervisors. All of the language functions and vocabulary are introduced, then re-introduced and expanded. It’s very spiraled, so that the students have many opportunities to use their vocabulary and language functions in new contexts.”

She points out the importance of advocacy and community support in the success of program. “When the economic ‘tsunami’ hit our state a couple of years ago, I don’t mind saying that I was fearful we could be cut. But it wasn’t even brought up.” She believes that was because of the quality of the West Windsor program—particularly its excellent language instructors—and the fact that teachers outside of languages, as well as members of the community, realize how truly valuable it is.



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# President's Message



Dave McAlpine  
ACTFL President

## Many Languages, One United Voice

I am very proud to be serving as your ACTFL President during 2012. Together, I believe we can begin to move our profession forward as we get to know one another better.

Another successful ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo occurred in Denver in November, offering our membership more than 670 sessions around the theme of *Empowering Language Educators Through Collaboration*. In his dynamic keynote address, Dr. Milton Chen, senior fellow and executive director emeritus at the George Lucas Educational Foundation, challenged us as language professionals to continue to provide the skills our students will need as 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens.

The approximately 5,800 attendees also had a choice of 31 pre- and post-convention workshops for in-depth training and over 380 exhibits available for finding the newest materials and technologies for their classrooms. The 2012 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year was awarded to Yo Azama and nine other awards were given to individuals for their outstanding contributions in the field of language education. Watch for spotlights on these ACTFL stars in future editions of *The Language Educator* and read more about everything that happened at the 2011 ACTFL Convention on p. 32 of this issue.

We must thank our wonderful ACTFL staff for the work they do to present such a quality program. Additionally, I want to recognize Barbara Mondloch who completed a highly successful year as 2011 ACTFL President. Always insightful and the consummate professional, Barb led ACTFL and provided critical continuity as we transitioned from one Executive Director to another. Her collaborative spirit will be long remembered by those who worked with her this past year.

Now on to ACTFL 2012: There are at least 100 organizations that exist to promulgate information on the learning and teaching of languages in our country, but unlike some countries, we do not have a national foreign language policy. While it is exhilarating that so many groups are spending their energies on our chosen profession, it can at times mean that there are at least 100 opinions on any given issue concerning language learning in the United States.

As ACTFL President, my theme—during this year and for the 2012 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo in Philadelphia—is *Many Languages, One United Voice*. Before anyone thinks that I am advocating that ACTFL be that one voice, let me make it clear that is not what I am suggesting. On the contrary, I believe our profession can come together in the spirit of the recent ACTFL Convention and find more ways to collaborate, so that when opportunities arise for language professionals to provide input at the local, state, regional, national, and international stages, we can speak with one voice for what we believe will move language learning forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Each language organization has knowledge and experiences to share. We can certainly learn much from and support one another during these challenging times for language programs.

Much of our disconnect as a profession, when it occurs, arises from our lack of knowledge about one another and our missions. Therefore, in each of my messages in *The Language Educator* and *Foreign Language Annals*, I would like to present more about the organizations and the people who represent the **many languages** of our profession with the hope that, by knowing one another better, we may identify common goals that allow us to speak with **one united voice** when the profession is called upon to respond to language-related issues.

During the next year, I plan to share more about your ACTFL Board members and the Board of Directors committee structure and also about our dedicated ACTFL staff and their duties. Later, I will take a look at the five regional organizations and their missions, and then offer some insights about the Modern Language Association and its affiliates. During the summer issues, the language-specific organizations will be highlighted. Finally, a focus on the organizations that help us get our messages out to legislators and stakeholders and the other groups that work to promote the learning of languages other than foreign languages will wind down the year.

In November, Dr. K. David Harrison, Professor of Linguistics at Swarthmore College and the author of two books and the subject of a documentary film, *The Linguists*, will speak at our annual convention about saving endangered languages and exactly what we all lose when languages become extinct. I believe his keynote will convince us that we must work together for our profession to prosper and that while we may speak many different languages, we must speak with one united voice.

## Unified Japanese Teachers Association Announced

January 1, 2012 marks the start of a new structure and a new name for the national Japanese educators' professional organizations: the American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ).

AATJ is being formed by the consolidation of the Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ) and the National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT). It will also incorporate the activities conducted over the past decade by the Alliance of Associations of Teachers of Japanese.

According to the organization's website, in the new association, ATJ members—who are accustomed to participating at the

national level—will be encouraged, if they so choose, to become more active in their regions. NCJLT members—who are more accustomed to participating in their local affiliates—will feel ongoing support for their regional activities and feel greater alliance with a national organization. This close relationship between K–16+ teachers will help improve articulation and advocacy during these challenging economic times and unify the efforts of all educators in the field.

A Transition Team appointed by the ATJ and NCJLT Boards has appointed a team of Co-Presidents and a Vice-President/Treasurer to serve for the initial two years until

the election procedure approved by both organizations and their members in 2010 can be fully implemented. The Co-Presidents are Yasu-Hiko Tohsaku, a past president of ATJ, and Jessica Haxhi, a past president of NCJLT. The Vice President/Treasurer is Kurt Thompson, 2010–2011 president of NCJLT. A Vice President/Secretary was elected in December 2011 by the members of both ATJ and NCJLT. [Note: The name of this individual was not available as of press time for this issue of *The Language Educator*.]

Find out more at their new website in early 2012 at [www.aatj.org](http://www.aatj.org).

## High Demand for French Education in Louisiana

Louisiana families continue to demand French language education, even with a large number of Hispanics having moved to the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. According to a recent article by the Associated Press in November, there is a waiting list at all 29 of the state's public French immersion programs, and at least one school—the International School of Louisiana in New Orleans—received more applications for its French program this year than ever before.

The article, "Demand for French Education Surges in Louisiana," by Stacey Plaisance appeared Monday, Nov. 28, 2011. It can be found online and was also picked up by several news outlets, including *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*.

Demand for Spanish language education remains strong, both for local use and as a language of inter-American commerce,

Plaisance notes. But even some Spanish-speakers are seeking French language education for their children in an effort to make them proficient in English, Spanish, and French.

Louisiana's push for a resurgence in the French language began in 1968 with the creation of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), after the language had been in sharp decline for decades.

The article also notes that the more French speakers that Louisiana has, the bigger the tourist draw. For example, Laura Plantation in Vacherie, upriver from New Orleans, attracts many French-speaking visitors because it offers tours in French. Louisiana has between 150,000 and 200,000 French speakers, roughly 50,000 of Louisiana's public school students are learning

French as a second language, and 3,500 students are in French immersion programs.

For generations, French has been spoken in various forms in Louisiana's French Cajun, Creole, and Native American communities. Around 1915, when the state Board of Education suppressed the language in public schools and children were punished if caught speaking French, the French language took a dive. In 1921, the Louisiana Constitution prohibited the use of any language other than English in the public school system but allowed students to take classes in French as a second language.

After CODOFIL's creation, Louisiana's first French immersion program was introduced in Baton Rouge in 1981, and today there are 29 such programs across the state. Most are in the southern part of the state, between Lake Charles and New Orleans.



## Mayor of Portland, Maine Touts Immersion Program in Inaugural Address

In December, Michael Brennan, the recently sworn-in mayor of Portland, ME, gave his inaugural address as the city's first popularly elected mayor in 88 years. Brennan took the occasion to discuss new education initiatives, including a foreign language immersion program for Portland students. In his remarks, which lasted about 40 minutes, Brennan reached back to his grandmother's arrival in Portland from Ireland as a 14-year-old immigrant in 1909 and forward to his own grandchildren, pledging to help build a community in which his newly married son will want to raise kids.

A major component of building that community, he said, will be providing an education parents will want to seek out. Among the new initiatives he announced was the push to establish the immersion program. He also reiterated his campaign pledge to encourage local research and higher education institutions to form a "research triangle." Combined, the initiatives could bring Portland worldwide notoriety as a city where the work force is fluent in the global marketplace, Brennan said.

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## Survey on LCTL Materials in the Digital Age

With funding from the U.S. Department of Education, the UCLA Language Materials Project (LMP) has launched a survey of digital instructional materials for less commonly taught languages.

The LMP is asking that language educators share favorite websites or DVDs for audios, videos, interactive lessons, or online dictionaries. If you use any language apps or RSS feeds, or you have created your own digital materials, they would like to know. The survey covers any curricular material created by a language teacher or pedagogical team that is available for purchase, subscription, or free use through an institutional website with open access. The material can be of any scope, from a video clip or app to a complete course. Survey results will be published in pedagogical and policy journals, and disseminated through the national Language Resource Centers.

Some currently available examples of the kinds of materials sought:

- **Arabic Webcasts** (National Capital Language Resource Center)  
Online authentic news in simplified Arabic with pre-listening background information, vocabulary support, and post-listening activities. Interactive multiple-choice or blank-filling exercises. Audios can be heard online, or downloaded to an iPod through RSS feed. (Also Russian Webcasts.) [nclrc.org/webcasts/Arabic](http://nclrc.org/webcasts/Arabic)
- **Hindi—A Trip to the Market** (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition)  
Online digital video with .doc or .pdf downloadable exercises. High Intermediate to Advanced level. (Other "shareable material" from Arabic and Azeri to Urdu and Vietnamese.) [www.carla.umn.edu/LCTL](http://www.carla.umn.edu/LCTL)
- **Mongolian Intermediate Readings** (Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region)  
Online video & audio files with reading/listening components. [www.indiana.edu/~celcar/intermediate/mongolinter.html](http://www.indiana.edu/~celcar/intermediate/mongolinter.html)
- **Pashto Writing Tutorial** (CeLCAR)  
An app for iPad, Playbook, or Android phone, providing interactive exercises and games for learning to write Pashto script.
- **Turkish Tutor** (UCLA Center for Near Eastern Languages)  
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- **Ukrainian** (University of Arizona Critical Languages Series)  
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- **LangMedia** (Five Colleges Center for the Study of World Languages)  
Videos, with transcripts, of short conversations in a large number of languages. Conversations are grouped thematically. The can be downloaded or viewed on the web. [langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/](http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/)

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## College Board Announces Changes to AP Language Courses and Exams

The College Board has announced further upcoming revisions to the suite of courses and exams in World Languages and Cultures offered by the Advanced Placement (AP) Program. In addition to the new courses and exams launched in 2011–2012, changes will be made to both the current AP Latin: Vergil and AP Spanish Literature courses and exams with the launch of AP Latin and AP Spanish Literature and Culture in 2012–2013. Changes will also be made to the current AP Spanish Language course and exam with the launch of AP Spanish Language and Culture in 2013–2014. Detailed information about all AP course revisions is available at [advancesinap.collegeboard.org](http://advancesinap.collegeboard.org).

### AP French Language and Culture, AP German Language and Culture, and AP Italian Language and Culture (2011–2012)

In fall 2011, the AP French Language and Culture and AP German Language and Culture courses were launched, and the AP Italian Language and Culture course was reinstated. Beginning in May 2012, these revised World Language AP exams will assess student proficiency in the three modes of communication and will feature revised multiple-choice questions for French and German, and revised free-response questions in all three exams. More information on implementation of AP French Language and Culture is available at [apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers\\_corner/2152.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/2152.html) and AP German Language and Culture is at [apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers\\_corner/2257.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/2257.html). An updated Course and Exam Description for AP Italian Language and Culture is available at [apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers\\_corner/28458.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/28458.html).

### AP Latin (2012–2013)

AP Latin course revisions promote reading Latin poetry and prose with historical and literary sensitivity. Students are encouraged to develop linguistic skills by engaging in multiple activities, including translating poetry and prose from the required-reading list, precisely and literally; reading passages of poetry and prose with comprehension; and analyzing literary texts in clear, coherent written arguments, supported by textual examples. Additionally, contextualization will play a central role in the new course, allowing students to rely on their knowledge of Roman history, culture, and literature to enhance their interpretation and analysis of texts.

AP Latin teachers are required to submit a syllabus for authorization in the 2012–2013 academic year. To assist teachers in this process, a syllabus development guide and annotated sample syllabi will be posted to the AP Course Audit website at [www.collegeboard.com/html/apcourseaudit/](http://www.collegeboard.com/html/apcourseaudit/).

Beginning in May 2013, the AP Latin Exam will assess the college-level content and skills articulated in the curriculum framework. The new Course and Exam Description, which provides sample exam questions, will be available on the Advances in AP Website ([advancesinap.collegeboard.org/world-languages/latin](http://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/world-languages/latin)) in February 2012.

### AP Spanish Literature and Culture (2012–2013)

AP Spanish Literature and Culture revisions promote the formal study of a representative body of literature, written in Spanish, from Peninsular Spain, Latin America, and the United States. The course offers students ongoing and varied opportunities to develop proficiency in Spanish across a range of skills, with emphasis on critical reading and analytical writing. It also encourages students to reflect on many voices and cultures as they read a rich and diverse body of literature in Spanish. Additionally, a greater emphasis on contextualization allows students to tie literary works to the historical, socio-cultural, and geopolitical contexts in which they were created.

Teachers of AP Spanish Literature and Culture are required to submit a syllabus for authorization in the 2012–2013 academic year. To assist teachers in this process, a syllabus development guide and annotated sample syllabi will be posted to the AP Course Audit website at [www.collegeboard.com/html/apcourseaudit/](http://www.collegeboard.com/html/apcourseaudit/).

Beginning in May 2013, the AP Spanish Literature and Culture Exam will assess the content and skills articulated in the curriculum framework. The revised *AP Spanish Literature and Culture Course and Exam Description* provides sample exam questions. It will be available on the Advances in AP Website ([advancesinap.collegeboard.org/world-languages/spanish/literature](http://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/world-languages/spanish/literature)) in February 2012.

### AP Spanish Language and Culture (2013–2014)

Revisions to AP Spanish Language and Culture stress the various modes of communication and encourage students to explore language and culture in engaging thematic contexts. The AP Spanish Language and Culture Curriculum Framework, released in October of 2011 through the Advances in AP Website ([advancesinap.collegeboard.org/world-languages/spanish](http://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/world-languages/spanish)), provides teachers with clear expectations of what students should know and be able to do at the culmination of their AP experience and contains information about the revised course and exam. It features learning objectives and achievement level descriptions, course themes including recommended contexts and essential questions, and information about the new exam, including a selection of multiple choice questions and a full set of free response questions.

Beginning in May 2014, the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam will assess student proficiency in the three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational) described in the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. The exam features a greater variety of authentic materials, both print and audio, reflecting the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Spanish-speaking world. Cultural knowledge will be assessed throughout the exam.

Future course and exam revisions include AP Chinese Language and Culture and AP Japanese Language and Culture. The dates of implementation for these revised courses and exams will be announced at least two years in advance.



# BriefBits

Here we present some language-related articles which appeared in newspapers and online, and were recently featured in ACTFL SmartBrief. To subscribe to this free e-newsletter and get the most up-to-date news sent directly to you via e-mail, go to [www.actfl.org/smartbrief](http://www.actfl.org/smartbrief).

## In Palm Beach County, Educators Keep up with 145 Different Languages

Palm Beach County School District in Florida has one of the most diverse student populations in the country, with students from more than 200 countries. All but 4% speak either English, Spanish, or Haitian Creole, but the district also has dozens of students speaking Dutch, Farsi, and other languages. Unless more than 15 students speak a language, in which case the district provides language facilitators, the students tend to rely on volunteers for help.

**"Students Who Speak 145 Languages Pose Diverse Challenge for Palm Beach County Schools"** in *The Palm Beach Post*, 10/10/11

## Learning Mandarin Gains Momentum in European, U.S. Classrooms

Gains in China's economic standing also have brought about a greater desire for children in the United States and Europe to speak Mandarin. More than 3% of American elementary schools offer the language, a large increase considering less than 1% did during the 1990s. "One way or another, China is the future," says Olaf Mertens, a school headmaster in Belgium.

**"Mandarin Has the Edge in Europe's Classrooms"** in *The Globe and Mail/Financial Times*, 10/17/11

## Students Studying Arabic Get Wide-Ranging Experience in Qatar

Lindblom Math and Science Academy, a Chicago-area school with one of the largest Arabic programs in the country, sent 19 high school students to Qatar in October 2011 thanks to the support of the Qatar Foundation International. The students did more than immerse themselves in their Arabic language studies. They also learned about water conservation and environmental problems in the local oceans from Alexandra Cousteau, granddaughter of Jacques Cousteau.

**"Lindblom Arabic-Language Students in Qatar"** in *The Chicago Tribune*, 10/10/11

## U.S.-Russian Teacher Exchange Opens Global Perspective for Students

An international outreach project at George Mason University allowed 20 Russian teachers to visit Northern Virginia and five American teachers to travel to Vladivostok, Russia. The U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs funded the program, and it focused on educating students in foreign languages, plus science, technology, engineering, and math. The teachers from opposite sides of the globe have stayed in contact following the visits and continued collaborating.

**"Teacher Exchange for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education" in Russia Beyond the Headlines**, 10/26/11

## California School District Is Creating Dual Language Program for all Schools

The National City School District is close to implementing a bilingual education program available to students at every school by year's end. The San Diego area district now employs a 90-10 split between English and Spanish. The district would like to move toward a 50-50 split. "When you learn a different language, you learn a different way of thinking," says Deborah Costa-Hernandez, Director of Educational Services.

**"Dual Language Program Heading to National City"** in *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 10/28/11

## French Immersion School Students Have Unusual Interest in Russian

Robert Goddard French Immersion School in Prince George's County, MD, has an unusual love for Russian. With about 175 students learning Cyrillic letters and singing Russian songs, Goddard has the largest middle school program in America, according to a survey. Russian is a language only 10% of students in this country have a desire to learn, and most that do have Russian heritage. Here, however, most students are black or Hispanic, and they spend the rest of their day learning in French.

**"At French Immersion School, A Love for Russian"** in *The Washington Post*, 10/5/11

## Sony Virtuoso™ Digital Language Lab Software Suite Offers HD Audio & More

SANS Inc., the developer and exclusive licensor of Sony language learning software solutions, has released new versions of the Sony Virtuoso™ and Sony Soloist® digital language lab software, featuring the new SANSTalk™ Audio Router Software module with High Definition (HD) audio quality.

SANSTalk takes full advantage of today's HD audio devices. Full-fidelity sound can be used where needed, but it may be limited if necessary to conserve network bandwidth. SANSTalk also reduces latency rates—the time delay between when a sound is made and when it is heard by others—to the lowest possible amount, virtually eliminating an issue that plagues many software/VoIP-based language labs.

When monitoring a student in the Sony Virtuoso lab, the instructor can now hear everything that the student hears in real time: audio from a file of a native speaker, a video clip, or even audio from an Internet site that the student may be using. This capability does not rely on the sound card/headset, so when the student records, only their voice is captured, making review and assessment of student work easier for instructors.

SANSTalk also uses the latest digital processing technology to eliminate “echo/reverb” sounds when students are communicating in set pairs or groups. Noise Suppression, Automatic Gain Control, and Equalization can be applied and customized to provide the best possible sound quality, regardless of the acoustical environment. Other behind-the-scenes enhancements, such as real-time resampling, provide for a faster and more responsive user experience.

For more information, visit [www.sansinc.com](http://www.sansinc.com).

## Promethean Releases ActivEngage Mobile Solution

Promethean, a developer of interactive educational technology tools, recently launched its first mobile app for the classroom, ActivEngage Mobile. This new virtual learner response system is designed to expand and support the use of hand-held devices, such as iPad, iPod Touch, iPhone, and Android devices (tablets and phones) for teaching and learning activities. The application can be used with a mix of hand-held technologies to enhance assessment for learning and student response activities without the added cost of additional hardware.

Promethean's ActivEngage is a multi-platform software application that will work on any laptop, desktop, or networked wireless device. Now, ActivEngage Mobile extends this functionality to include Apple iOS and Android devices.

The application supports delivery of a wide range of assessment question types, including multiple-choice, true/false, sort in order, text

response, and numeric. Advanced options, such as question leveling, enable progressive assessment activities to challenge students and help teachers address gaps in learning paths. Results are immediately tabulated, saving time and giving teachers information to address student needs in real time, bringing true and immediate data-driven decision making to the classroom.

The client application is available for download from Apple's App Store or the Android marketplace and the server application, which runs on the teacher's computer, can be found on Promethean Planet at [www.prometheanplanet.com](http://www.prometheanplanet.com).

## Byki for iPhone, iPad Available in More than 30 Languages

Transparent Language, Inc., a language learning software developer, offers Byki™ language learning applications for the Apple iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch.

Byki, short for “Before You Know It,” is a rapid learning system employing spaced interval repetition. Byki apps are available for English speakers to learn Afrikaans, Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, European Portuguese, French, Finnish, German, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Norwegian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Turkish, and Zulu.

Each version includes over 1,000 words and phrases in the featured language, and hundreds of additional lists in many languages are available on [Byki.com/ListCentral](http://Byki.com/ListCentral) covering a variety of subject areas, situational words and phrases, and chapter vocabulary from many popular language textbooks.

Byki Apps for iPhone include innovative features such as:

- Twitter™ Integration – Real-time Twitter search of words and phrases the user is learning so they can see real-world examples of how people use them in actual conversations.
- SlowSound™ – Audio control that slows down the pronunciation of the word or phrase. Combined with native speaker recordings, this feature lets Byki users hear every nuance of a language so they can reproduce and master its proper pronunciation.
- Searchable Phrasebook – Provides users with a quick reference in their native language so they can easily find the foreign language words and phrases they need.

For more information, visit [www.transparent.com](http://www.transparent.com).

## Share Your Ware!

*The Language Educator would like to hear from you.*

If you know of any new foreign language technology, software, or hardware, that you have used or reviewed, please send the information via e-mail to [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org).

*Descriptions, information, and reviews of the above software/hardware were taken directly from the respective websites. Inclusion of products in “Tech Talk” does not imply endorsement by ACTFL or The Language Educator.*



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## *A Guide to Help You Go Wisely*

In **THE SAVVY TRAVELER—Advice for Smart Travel and Study Abroad**, we present ideas and advice for how to make overseas travel and study a great success for you and your students! We not only offer tips and strategies, but we also focus on successful programs and stories of student and educator experiences abroad. Submit your travel-related ideas and articles for THE SAVVY TRAVELER to us via e-mail at [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org).

### STUDY ABROAD IS RISING ON U.S. CAMPUSES

Study abroad by U.S. college students was on the rise in 2010–2011 for the second year, after leveling off during the economic uncertainty that began in 2007, according to a new survey by the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Forum on Education Abroad.

IIE's Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, reported that 270,604 U.S. students studied abroad for credit during the academic year 2009–2010, an increase of 4% from the previous year. A new IIE/Forum online survey conducted in October 2011 indicates that this upward trend is continuing.

Open Doors had reported a slight (less than 1%) decline in study abroad for credit in 2008–2009, before rebounding in 2009–2010. The 2010 online survey had suggested that the decline had bottomed out, and was already being reversed. This rebounding was confirmed in the Open Doors data for 2009–2010 recently released, and the Fall 2011 survey indicates that these increases in the numbers of U.S. students studying abroad continued throughout the 2010–2011 academic year, including this past summer. To get an early indication of current study abroad enrollments, IIE and The Forum joined together last year to ask campus administrators about study abroad trends, and the two organizations repeated the survey again in Fall 2011. The online survey included questions about increases or declines in the numbers of students studying abroad, changes in student choices, changes in campus study abroad budgets and staffing, and steps taken by campuses to increase study abroad. Educators at 153 campuses responded, including 110 campuses that each send over 100 students abroad annually.

More than half of the campuses (53%) indicated that there had been an increase in the number of their students studying abroad in 2010–2011. This response suggests that study abroad enrollments

are continuing the pattern of increases that were seen in the survey conducted in Fall 2010. In that survey, 55% of respondents indicated an increase in study abroad during academic year 2009–2010, and 32% of respondents indicated an enrollment decline.

In the Fall 2011 survey, the majority of campus respondents indicated that they had taken proactive steps to strengthen study abroad participation in the past year. Sixty-one percent said they had added new short-term faculty led programs, and 36% offered new bilateral exchange programs to enable more students to have overseas experiences. Many institutions reported they had developed new partnerships with foreign institutions (36%) or domestic institutions (26%).

Last year, campuses indicated that they were not seeing as many cuts to their study abroad budgets and staffing as they had in 2008–2009, immediately following the economic crisis of 2007. This year, 30% of campuses responded that they had added staff members or increased staff time devoted to study abroad this year. Seventeen percent of respondents spent additional funds on marketing and promotion of study abroad programs, while 27% reported increasing the number of study abroad scholarships available.

Detailed breakdowns are available in the full survey report. Find out more online at [www.iie.org/en/research-and-publications/open-doors](http://www.iie.org/en/research-and-publications/open-doors).

### SENDING SMARTPHONE POSTCARDS APP

Postcard on the Run (available from Android and iPhone) helps you turn smartphone camera images into real postcards that can be sent anywhere in the world. The app is free but mailing the postcards starts at \$1.49. You can send a custom-designed postcard—with your signature—to more than one recipient at once. Find out more at [www.postcardontherun.com](http://www.postcardontherun.com).

## 2011 PAUL SIMON AWARDS FOR CAMPUS INTERNATIONALIZATION

Five institutions were recently chosen to receive the Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization in 2011, and are profiled in depth in a report published by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Three other institutions received the Senator Paul Simon Spotlight Award for their outstanding accomplishments in specific areas of internationalization. The report can be viewed online or ordered from NAFSA ([www.nafsa.org/interactive/core/orders/product.aspx?catid=5&prodid=387](http://www.nafsa.org/interactive/core/orders/product.aspx?catid=5&prodid=387)).

The five institutions awarded the 2011 Senator Paul Simon Award for Internationalization are: Beloit College (WI); Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IN); Kennesaw State University (GA); Macalester College (MN); and New York University (NY). The three institutions receiving the Senator Paul Simon Spotlight Award for outstanding accomplishments in specific areas of internationalization are: Barnard College (NY); University of Rhode Island (RI); and University of San Diego (CA).

## TEACHER TRAVEL *Tip:*

### SET UP EMERGENCY MEETING PLACE FOR STUDENT GROUP

A helpful tip for teachers when traveling with students abroad is to make sure to determine a location where you will all meet in case of emergency.

According to Carol Ross Stacy, who has taught 27 years at Newman Smith High School in Carrollton, TX: "Many years ago I had a group in Mexico City, and there was a bit of excitement, and in the crowd we got separated. The next time I had them all together, 10 minutes later—10 rather long minutes—I made sure everyone had written down the name and address of the hotel, and the address of the U.S. embassy." She told her students that if there was any serious unrest and the group got separated, they were to go to the embassy and also that they should always have some money on them for a taxi.

"We never had to put that info to use, but I was relieved to know that they knew and that we talked about it." And, she notes, "If that was true 15 years ago, it's even more true now in the age of terrorism. And I'd tell them in whatever language they will understand and remember in an emergency."

*Do you have a teacher travel tip to share? Send it in to [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org) with "The Savvy Traveler Teacher Travel Tip" in the subject line.*

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## Discover Languages® Month is Right Around the Corner—But It's Not Too Late to Start the Journey

In *2005: The Year of Languages*, the journey began, and every year since then, February has been celebrated as *Discover Languages Month*, with each day dedicated to ACTFL's national public awareness campaign *Discover Languages . . . Discover the World!*® Although we are now just one month away from the seventh annual *Discover Languages Month*, it's not too late to embark upon the journey that will help your community discover the value of language learning.

Before starting your trip, first pay a visit to the *Discover Languages* website ([www.DiscoverLanguages.org](http://www.DiscoverLanguages.org)), where you can fuel up with inspiration and lots of great resources, such as the *Discover Languages* logo and public service announcements available for download.

Next stop is the ACTFL website ([www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)), which has plenty of tools for language educators to use along the way, including research that shows what learning a second language can do for students and their communities, and how it can even

benefit local and state economies as well as our national economy. Check out the Advocacy section of our website at [www.actfl.org/advocacy](http://www.actfl.org/advocacy) for ways to use this valuable information to promote language learning. As they say in that old commercial—don't leave home without it.

### Different Routes, One Destination

Whether you are traveling the Internet superhighway or taking a drive down Main Street, there are plenty of ways to spread the *Discover Languages* message along the way. Some language educators use the traditional, tried-and-true methods of creating posters, bulletin boards, and even school announcements made by students in different languages or featuring different language facts every day. Students also demonstrate their skills at school assemblies or outside the classroom walls, as at the "language ambushes" or "pop quizzes" that many language teachers and their students have held in their communities. Our students are still the best argument we can make for language learning, as well

as the best advertisement we have for its effectiveness.

While some educators are taking the traditional route, others are employing new technology methods for their *Discover Languages* events. They may be spreading their messages through social media such as Twitter and Facebook. For example, language educators from across the country will be tweeting about *Discover Languages Month* during February using the #ACTFL hashtag. ACTFL will also be tweeting extensively throughout the month with interesting facts and news stories from around the country related to language learning, so be sure to follow us at @ACTFL. You can also join the ACTFL Facebook Group to follow along with the latest happenings in the language community. Consider adding a "Twibbon" badge to your Twitter or Facebook profile to show your support of *Discover Languages*. You can do this by going to the Discover Languages "Twibbon" page at [twibbon.com/join/ACTFL---Discover-Languages](http://twibbon.com/join/ACTFL---Discover-Languages).



A student takes part in the 24-hour webcast at Bella Vista during *Discover Languages* Month.

Last year, one teacher, Nicole Naditz, used a streaming webcast to celebrate *Discover Languages* Month. She and her French students hosted the 24-hour event from her classroom at Bella Vista High School in Fair Oaks, CA. This effort was recently recognized by Guinness World Records for the first-ever world record for “longest uninter-

rupted live webcast”—something which helped draw attention to her program and language learning overall. [Read more about this on p. 24 of this issue.]

Teachers are also showcasing their students’ abilities and knowledge through podcasts and videos. ACTFL’s National Student Video Contest winners are announced in February as part of *Discover Languages* Month, and this year’s theme is “Discover Languages . . . Discover the World!” Visit [actflvideocontest.org](http://actflvideocontest.org) for more details and to view the wonderful videos that were selected as the winners in the elementary school, middle school, high school, and postsecondary categories.

Whether the vehicle you use is the latest high-tech model or a treasured classic, and whether your students fuel it with stories and songs, or with rap and rhyme, what really matters is that you make the journey.

### At the End of the Trip: Share Your Experience

This is one time when all of the photos and videos of your trip will be welcome, so please share them, because your success is something other language educators can build upon.

Let ACTFL know about special events you hold as part of the celebration, whether it is by e-mail, Twitter, video, or other means. You may also want to post your event on the bulletin board section of the *Discover Languages* website and discuss it with your colleagues in the ACTFL Online Community at [community.actfl.org](http://community.actfl.org).

*Discover Languages* Month is the perfect opportunity to celebrate our profession. Even if you have gotten a late start, there is still time to climb aboard! It’s an opportunity not to be missed, because language learning advocacy is a journey we are all on together.

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# Spreading the Word as a Matter of Survival:

## How to Market Your Language Program

BY KRISTEN STIPE

**T**eachers teach, right? And marketing professionals . . . well, they promote, advertise, and sell products. In the past, there might not have been much—if any—overlap between these professions, but times have definitely changed.

As districts and institutions across the country face economic challenges and potential budget cuts, more and more teachers find they need to actually “sell” their language programs to their schools, administrations, and communities. A language program that has created excitement and captured students’ attention and focus is more likely to be perceived as being an integral part of school culture, which can be crucial when difficult budget decisions are being made.

Nicole Sherf, Associate Professor and Secondary Education Coordinator at Salem State University in Salem, MA, says, “I think of marketing under a bigger umbrella of advocacy. The school doesn’t market our programs so we have to, by getting the community into the department, getting the department out into the community, spreading the word through a variety of different strategies, and hopefully increasing enrollment as a result.”

“Growing your program is a lot of work, but the more you put into it, the more you get out of it,” says Jess Duran, a German teacher at Empire High School in Tucson, AZ. She is the only German teacher in her district and has been successful in almost doubling enrollment in only two years of the newly formed German program at her school. She continues, “It is so rewarding to see kids take things by the reins and run with it. It’s awesome to see them grow and learn and be excited about the program, getting their friends involved and taking it to the community.”



Carl-Martin Nelson, Director of Marketing and Communications at Concordia Language Villages, encourages stressing the importance of learning languages as being a valuable part of students’ futures. He explains, “I think it is most critical to not talk strictly about language, but to talk also about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Language is a critical and very important 21<sup>st</sup> century skill. It’s important for teachers to describe their courses in that way because it’s not just about learning Korean, for example, but it’s about preparing students for college, for employment, and global citizenship—those are the critical pieces for us beyond the language—the language is a means to that end.”

Effective marketing requires establishing a clear vision for your program as a base for promotion, building strong partnerships within the district and the community, and utilizing social media and Internet tools in order to get the word out.

### Strong Programs Make Good PR

In order to make language programs more visible, teachers need to begin by making them academically strong by focusing on the National Standards and proficiency outcomes as well as emphasizing creativity through cultural learning and global awareness. At the 2011 ACTFL Convention in Denver, Sherf, along with other board members of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association, led a presentation titled “Empowering State Language Organizations Through Collaboration.”

“I really think that a good starting point for every department in deciding what they want for themselves is to develop a solid mission



statement and strategic plan in which they envision how they want to grow,” she says. “That in itself doesn’t increase visibility but when you post your mission statement and decide what heights you want to reach as a department, it starts to get the ball rolling in terms of the various activities that you do in order to get yourself more visible.” Sherf says that the mission statement should tell the purpose of the department, allow for unique components of programming to be highlighted, unite the faculty in focus, and welcome students and the community. She adds that it is also helpful to use terminology from the Standards and the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and to make it short, simple, and clear. Once a department’s mission is clarified and posted, the programming should be created or modified to answer the following questions: *What does your mission say that you do? What do you want to become/achieve? How do you realize this?*

“The strength of the program can speak for itself if it is communicatively based, if there is a high degree of target language interaction, and if fun, communicative, creative projects are happening within the classes and within the program that can be promoted within the school,” says Sherf. “I feel strongly that every time students, faculty, or parents pass by a foreign language classroom they should be hearing a lot of target language. In the hallways, they should be seeing results of performance activities and presentations that are ongoing within the language classroom. If we can move away from teaching about the language and really begin teaching within the language and getting students excited about learning about the new culture and interdisciplinary connections they can make, then it becomes much easier to spread the word.”

Lynn Sessler teaches Japanese at Clovis Grove Elementary School in Menasha, WI, and says that when the world language program began in their district 19 years ago, they had a vision written down for what they wanted the program to be at the end. She explains, “It didn’t end up exactly how we initially envisioned it but we always had that goal to focus on and work toward. We didn’t just throw something in and not worry about what was going to happen the next semester or the next year; we already had steps laid out for what we wanted it to look like so we felt like we always had a road to drive down and could answer questions people might have about it. You must have a clear vision: *What do you want your students to know and be able to do?* A lot of times you think about just what will happen in the classroom but you also need to have a plan for getting the kids out and demonstrating their language skills and cultural knowledge to their families and community.” [See sidebar on Sessler’s very successful program on p. 20.]

## School and Community Involvement

When a department is successful in executing their plan and students are enthusiastic about what they are learning and experiencing, marketing the program’s benefits will largely be done by the students themselves. Duran describes how she engages her students and empowers them to be active participants in advocating for the language program.

“I think most of it is the involvement of the students—they are so excited about German and having opportunities to share what they’ve learned is what makes the difference. Your class has to be

interesting enough for them to be motivated to take it to the community. Make it fun and active. I probably do something with music and dancing once per week and they’re always up and about, actively communicating.”

She started a German club, which has organized many events and activities including a field trip to a local German restaurant, an overnight lock-in, and an Oktoberfest festival for the community. Duran continues, “Making noise on campus also generates a lot of excitement. I recently did a competition in class that was a version of the game Risk where the students had to conquer the different German states from other groups. The winning groups had different props that they carried around campus, for example a huge flag, a German scarf, an Oktoberfest hat. Other students were asking about them and what class it was from. Doing things to get people’s attention and asking questions does a lot.”

In addition to encouraging student involvement, it is important for the department to ensure that the program is included in administrative and management discussions and planning sessions.

“Make sure that you or a member of your department is on every school-wide committee including the hiring committee, strategic planning committee, and accreditation committee so that foreign language doesn’t get lost,” advises Sherf. “Every mailing that goes out from the school should include information about the great programming that is going on in your department and if you don’t have a district-wide newsletter then I think a quarterly newsletter from the foreign language department is a really great marketing tool. Articles in the town newspaper are also key; the voting members of the community should be aware of the great programming in the foreign language department, even if they don’t have kids in the system, so that they will be supportive if legislation affecting languages comes up.”

Kathleen Condray, Associate Professor of German and German Section Head at the University of Arkansas also offered a session, with Alexander Ganz, at the recent ACTFL Convention titled “Professional Skills for Branding and Marketing Your Foreign Language Program.” Condray agrees with Sherf about starting the marketing within your school while also taking it to the community.

“You want to reach your local audience because those are the people who are making the decisions that affect your program,” says Condray. “Try to get something about your program out every month—whether that’s how your students scored on a national exam, projects, or activities and events that your program has hosted or participated in—talk about what you’re doing in your program. That kind of thing is very important. You want a press release about once per month. Who do you send this to? First, send them to your administration and counselors at your school because they might not know everything you’re doing in your program. If you have a PTA newsletter, send it to those people. And if you write good copy, newsletter editors are always looking for things to write about—just send them a paragraph and be sure to include photos. Our university has a newswire that picks up stories from all the departments.”

Condray provides an example for how her outreach resulted in great press without costing her or her department any money. “For

*Continued on p. 21*



## Marketing a World Language Program: A Success Story in Wisconsin

**M**enasha School District in Menasha, WI, is a great example of how the marketing strategies described in this article were implemented and have resulted in a successful, deeply embedded K–12 world language program. Lynn Sessler, who teaches Japanese to elementary students in grades K–5 and is the district’s World Language Coordinator, has been a part of the program since its inception in 1992.

She tells the story of how the program began: “In the early 1990s, we had a very forward-thinking superintendent who really felt as though we needed to have an elementary world language program. We’re a public school—I think up to 70% of our students are on the free and reduced hot lunch program—so a lot of kids live at or below the poverty level. We aren’t hugely diverse but we do have Hispanic and Hmong populations and we’re getting more diverse as the economy changes. Menasha is a blue-collar town with a lot of paper companies so a lot of our students’ parents work in the factories doing shift work.”

Sessler thinks the community supported language learning because they wanted something more for their kids, feeling something like “we want our kids up with the paper executives, not necessarily doing the shift work with us.” Because the district always had Spanish and German, they wanted to add a language from a different part of the world and Japanese was one of the few languages that the University of Wisconsin certified teachers in at that time, she recalls. So the school district began offering Japanese in kindergarten and first grade and then added a grade every year. Time passed, the program grew, and now the first group is out of college.

“We’ve learned a lot during the process,” says Sessler. “I think our presence being everywhere helped. Keep that idea and mission going because when you’re part of something, you’re looked at as being important, which is a great marketing tool. We had a new elementary

report card during the first couple of years of including Japanese and one of our elementary world language teachers sat on that committee and we got ourselves on that report card. If there’s some big volunteer activity going on at the high school, we make sure that the world language teachers and kids are a part of it. It’s very important to have a constant and consistent presence.”

The district has five elementary schools with one language (Japanese, Spanish, or German) being taught at each school. Now, 19 years later, the three languages are fully articulated and, as Sessler puts it, “they are part of everything we do.”

She notes, “We don’t have a specific German Day or Japanese festival, but our German program is a part of every music concert. It is incorporated and expected at any event. They’re always singing songs in the concerts and there are dedicated language areas in the libraries. When you walk into our school, you know that we learn Japanese because it is everywhere; it’s not a separate entity. It has really made our program marketable and successful and people know that it’s just going to be part of their child’s elementary experience. People move into our community and realize, ‘Wow, kids study world language from elementary through high school.’ It takes time to seep through to the community but you need to be consistent in order to do that.”

Along with the programming piece, Sessler stresses the importance of having solid assessments. “You need to be able to show what kids can do in the language,” she says. “That comes with the community piece, too—getting your kids out in the community using their language skills because then people are going to realize, ‘My gosh, these kids really are learning their language!’ and that’s very impressive. A lot of times in world language, parents might not have had much experience with it and think we’re just going to do it in the classroom and keep it there.”

Instead, says Sessler, “I have my kids go home (and I know the middle and high school Japanese teachers do too) and speak Japanese for their parents all the time. I suggested to them to sing songs to Grandma and Grandpa over the holidays. The grandparents might not



*First graders at Clovis Grove Elementary School perform a fan dance for the cultural topic of the Moon festival in Japanese.*



*Third graders at Clovis Grove Elementary School practice writing Japanese characters and celebrate by writing the last character of the alphabet they learned on a cupcake.*



*Fourth graders at Clovis Grove Elementary School taking a break to “welcome” you to their class after studying the solar system in Japanese.*

care what the song really says, but they're still impressed that their grandkids are actually learning Japanese."

Sessler echoes the belief of framing language learning in the context of being a 21<sup>st</sup> century skill and how important it is to be strategic in highlighting a specific language when it will be most beneficial for the entire program.

"We don't talk to the parents about how to conjugate verbs, we talk about how their kids are going to be able to go into a restaurant in Tokyo and order a meal and go sightseeing and experience the culture in the language and have a great time. We carefully watch the trends—Chinese is very popular right now, so we talk about how some of the characters in Japanese are the same in Chinese so really you're learning two languages. You have to use whatever language is most advantageous at that time or in that situation that is going to get you the most press," she advises.

"Of the three languages we offer, Japanese is the most uncommon. A lot of schools in Wisconsin offer Spanish and German (because of our heritage with Germany). So when the timing is right, we highlight Japanese as being different if we need that 'Wow' kind of press. If we need to tap into a heritage community, then we highlight the Spanish program. So we use that marketing tool very carefully and thoughtfully."

She stresses that it is important to not be in competition with other languages but instead to cooperate as a united front. "If they're having a special fundraiser for a Spanish trip and it involves serving a meal or something similar, the other world language teachers are always there, either buying the meal or helping to serve. We go to each other's concerts and special events—we really support each other. Even if Japanese gets more of the attention because it is unique, that press only helps to strengthen the whole language program in general."

Also impressive is the fact that the language program was not on the list of district cuts last year.

According to Sessler, "When budget cuts first came along, our district took hits in all areas—our class sizes are huge at the middle and high school levels. But we weren't even on the list of cuts last year. We've built a program that is so integrated that we really don't cost our district that much. We look for outside resources when we can, especially in German and Japanese—there is money available if you're willing to look for it. We just received a grant from a large foundation in Japan and one of the things we're going to do with the money is to hire a web designer who will design a Japanese website for students and parents. Once we have it designed and set up, we're going to use it as a model to hopefully eventually incorporate German and Spanish in the same way, to create a World Languages website for our district."



*Continued from p. 19*

National German Unity Day, the university and all the local junior high and high school programs held a German immersion picnic and played games in German. The whole thing was conducted in German so you had people from different areas and at different levels on teams. I put that in our university newsletter and the local editor of the newspaper picked up on it. They sent a photographer and it was on the front page of the newspaper the next day. I took just five minutes to send off a paragraph to the newsletter about the event and not only was it in the paper, but it was also the front picture on their website for the day. So we were front page news and it was absolutely free.

"Get yourself in the paper as much as possible," she advises, "because that's what the school board, parents, and voters are reading."

Another resource for increased visibility is partnering with other local schools, colleges, and universities to strengthen and reinforce the broader foreign language community.

"Inter-level programming is also a really great marketing tool," notes Sherf. "Any time you can have upper-level students either going to the elementary school and giving presentations or foreign language instruction in some capacity it gets kids, parents, and the community talking about languages. BA students can go into schools and do internships, peer tutoring, or community service—it all helps. I start my methods classes by saying that no discipline is like languages because we have to work harder to get the word out. We have to know the research and benefits and be able to speak for foreign language because it can be a forgotten discipline and we have to make sure that doesn't happen."

Nelson agrees and says, "If there's a Spanish culture reading at the local university sponsored by the Spanish department, go to it and bring your students. It increases your visibility in the community and raises your profiles." Sherf also feels that, for K–12, connections with nearby universities can be very helpful by having college students come into the school and talk about the program and possibilities for a bachelor's in a foreign language or how it contributes to another degree, or to generate excitement about going abroad. "It really does create enthusiasm for the lifelong learning that we're trying to establish," she says.

Nelson suggests stressing the potential benefits of how learning a foreign language can have a dramatic impact on students' futures by having alumni tell of their real-world experiences with the language and how it has affected their lives.

"Say one of your former students graduated high school and then studied abroad in college in France and is now working in Cameroon as part of a non-governmental company or organization," he says. "Get that former student's e-mail address and have them explain how they are using French today and how it has been important to them and their career choices. Have them make the case about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and describe the opportunities that have arisen because of their French learning. Get that on the blog, on the website, or in the newsletter. Profiles of



alumni who can demonstrate the value of their language learning are very powerful. Get those personal stories out through the media; it is very immediate and very real.”

Language clubs not only promote camaraderie among students who are studying a language as part of a common goal but can also provide students with opportunities to demonstrate what they are learning by creating activities and events that can be shown to the community or to which the community can be invited. According to Sherf, “An ‘International Week’ can take place in which some kind of demonstration is presented to the community or inter-level within the district or you can request guest speakers from the community to talk about the use of foreign language in careers or travel. The bond

that is created back-and-forth between the language department and the community really helps to spread the news.”

Nelson also encourages language departments to reach out to local businesses since they can be powerful allies for advocacy when planning events for the community. The business may provide monetary support as a sponsor for the event and promote attendance to their customers and in turn the business gets exposure to the public by advertising at the event. Some businesses might also have a connection to the native country and they can provide cultural insight through the products and/or services they offer. Students could partner with the company for a field trip or invite a representative to class to explain their association with the country. These experiences,

## Marketing 101: Best Ideas in Brief

*See how many of these great suggestions you can incorporate into your own marketing efforts. It's not as hard as you think and can pay off with great dividends.*

### Kathleen Condray:

- If you can write good copy, newsletter editors are always looking for things to write about—just send them a paragraph and be sure to include photos.
- Try to get out a press release about once a month. Send it to your administration and counselors at your school, PTA newsletter, local newspapers, and other media.
- Get yourself in the newspaper as much as possible because that's what the school board, parents, and voters are reading.
- Be on the lookout for ways to create marketing materials such as flyers, posters, and banners using free or budget-friendly online resources.

### Jess Duran:

- Involve students. If they are excited about learning the language, they will enjoy sharing what they've learned. Your class must be interesting enough for them to be motivated to take it to the community.
- Make some noise on campus to generate excitement. Use competitions, games, props, etc. Other students will ask about them and what class the students are from.

### Alexander Ganz:

- Keep your website up-to-date, current, and interesting. Content is king. Think of your website as your hub for everything else.
- Give the power of marketing to students. If students produce and update the content (such as on Facebook), then they share parts of themselves, which really works.

### Carl-Martin Nelson:

- Don't talk strictly about language, but also about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- Reach out to local businesses to create partnerships within the community that will promote events and help get the public invested in your program.
- Stress the potential benefits of how learning a language can have a dramatic impact on students' futures by having alumni tell of their real-world experiences with the language and how it has affected their lives.

### Lynn Sessler:

- Have a clear vision: What do you want your students to know and be able to do? Have a plan for getting the kids out and demonstrating their language skills and cultural knowledge to their families and community.

- To fight budget cuts, look for outside resources when you can. There is grant money available if you're willing to look for it.
- Do not compete with other languages but instead cooperate as a united front. Support their special events and programs.
- Pay attention to trends and use whatever language is most advantageous at that time or in the situation that is going to get you the most press.

### Nicole Sherf:

- Develop a solid mission statement and strategic plan in which you envision how you want to grow.
- Move away from teaching about the language and really begin teaching within the language and getting students excited about learning about the new culture and interdisciplinary connections that can be made.
- Make sure that you or a member of your language department is on every school-wide committee including the hiring committee, strategic plan committee, and accreditation committee.

again, get people talking about different cultures and increase global understanding. Partnerships between businesses and a language department get people within the community interested and invested in the kids and their language learning.

## Using Social Media and Online Tools

In order to reach and stay connected with today's students, it can be very helpful to incorporate social networking into your foreign language program. Websites and social media outlets are also great tools for marketing your program's successes and announcing upcoming events to a large audience.

Alexander Ganz, a PhD student in Transcultural Studies and Marketing/Communications Specialist in the Office of the Chief Information Officer at the University of Arizona, says that when he took over marketing for the university's German department two years ago, the first thing he did was to revise their website ([german.arizona.edu](http://german.arizona.edu)) when he realized that it was not up to date.

"In the world today, if you don't receive or broadcast your information in a timely manner, you are losing against everybody else," notes Ganz. "The first step is to get your information out there on time and the easiest way to do that is with your website. Once it's good, most people will go to it regularly. We went from about 80 people looking at ours per month to now about 400–500 people; it was a huge increase. Keep your website up-to-date, current, and interesting. You first need to make it look decent and then remember that content is king. Think of your website as your hub for everything else." The next step for their German Department, Ganz says, was connecting the website to free social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook.

"If you're a small department and the website seems like it would require too many resources to keep up, there are always tools like blogs that can be used in the same way—and these are pre-set up and very easy to use."

Once a website or blog is created, keeping it maintained and current can require too much time for just one person to be successful. Ganz empowered others to get actively involved by allowing updates of the website and Facebook page by students who have been given access.

He explains, "On a given day we might have one or two things going on so students will take photos of the project, presentation, or event and post them on the website. You designate people to write up posts and update the website as things occur and then not one person has all of the responsibility. Most everything is captured in a timely manner, and the students are invested, too. We're giving the power of marketing back to the students—which is really important, especially when you think about Facebook. People don't care as much about sharing stuff that comes from the department, but if students produce the content then they share parts of themselves, which really works." Duran has done something similar by designating one of her German club positions as the Media and Technology Coordinator, who is responsible for uploading pictures and updates on events.

Condray also advocates using Facebook and says, "As a teacher, you can set up two profiles—one as your professional page for students and one for personal use. You should also set up a page for



TOP: An example of a completed postcard created at [www.picnik.com](http://www.picnik.com).

ABOVE: A screenshot of creating a brochure on [www.picnik.com](http://www.picnik.com), which is free of charge. Condray adds that a good source for copyright-free pictures is to search by country or word at [capl.washjeff.edu](http://capl.washjeff.edu).

your program. Anyone can start a Facebook Group and if you don't do it, someone might do it for you and then your program might not be represented the way you want it to be. I use it all the time—for scholarship announcements, gatherings, public lectures, community events—people can see how active your department is but another important part of that is that your students' friends see that in their news feed. So, they see the students taking the language and enjoying it (because otherwise they wouldn't be a fan of the page). You want to be seen as a cool subject."

In addition to using social media, be on the lookout for ways to create marketing materials such as flyers, posters, and banners using free or budget-friendly online resources. Condray provides two examples of sites that have been very beneficial and simple for her to use:

- [www.picnik.com/](http://www.picnik.com/) – "A completely free resource and I create the most professional looking ads with it—you can upload photos and play with all these different effects. It really is a very easy thing. I even create my own Christmas cards with it."
- [www.vistaprint.com/freeoffer](http://www.vistaprint.com/freeoffer) – "You can get 100 postcards for \$4. I made a banner there for about \$15. You can get pens with your program's name printed on them for free when you order something else."

Ganz concludes by saying, "It took us a good two years to get where we are now. You have to be consistent, involve as many people as possible, and empower your students to help with outreach. Get going! The more you do and the more you network, the more everyone benefits."

*Kristen Stipe is a freelance writer based in San Jose, California.*

# Creative Marketing in Action



## Bella Vista High School teacher and students establish Guinness World Record for language advocacy event

On October 31, 2011, Nicole Naditz, French teacher at Bella Vista High School in Fair Oaks, CA, received official notice from the Guinness World Records organization that the 24-hour *Discover Languages* webcast that she and her students hosted last February had established the first-ever record for the "longest uninterrupted live webcast." [We have covered Naditz's marathon webcasts in previous issues of *The Language Educator*.]

"This was actually the second year we've done the webcast; we did it for 24 hours in 2010 too," Naditz says, "Since we'd been successful last year and wanted to do it again, I thought there needed to be a new twist if we were going to send out press releases for the same thing this year. So the idea for the World Record came up because I thought, 'What do we need to do in order to generate press a second time?'"

Naditz then looked up whether there was a standing World Record and determined that not only was there no record but there wasn't even a category that included webcasts. She continues, "I went through the application process and initially they said that it was similar to the longest radio broadcast, so to please attempt that record. I looked at those requirements, explained to them how it was different, and asked them to reconsider. They did and responded by telling me that they created the new category based upon my request. So this was born from a desire to positively ensure

that if this was going to be an advocacy event for world language education then it *had* to generate media attention."

Naditz explains that "for languages that may be seen as being 'less valuable,' there is a misunderstanding on the part of the public as to how incredibly desperate employers can be for French speakers, or German speakers, or Japanese speakers." In order to change that way of thinking, Naditz believes that teachers can create media attention by highlighting class activities and projects that are already occurring as part of the program. "You don't have to design a whole new thing to market your program," she says. "Take something you're already doing and find the hook that makes it interesting and then get the word out so that it's not just you and your students and maybe some of your colleagues at school who know how valuable your program is. More importantly, the people in the community will hear about what you're doing and how valuable and relevant language learning is."

She continues, "You might think, 'I already webcast with my students.' Yes, but chances are your local media doesn't know your students are doing broadcasts over the Internet in French. Of course you do conversation group and you and your kids meet at a café once per month, so let people know what you're doing. There are many smaller online local newspapers as well as your traditional media markets—let them know."

Portions of the official press release for the webcast resulting in the World Record accomplishment read as follows:

In honor of *Discover Languages* Month, students at Bella Vista High School and their French teacher Nicole Naditz organized their second annual 24-hour *Discover Languages* Webcast. During the webcast, students served as "news anchors," broadcasting news segments about the importance and benefits of language learning, including how language proficiency prepares students for 21<sup>st</sup>-century careers. Naditz provided the research and arranged all of the interviews that occurred during the webcast. Students interviewed authors, researchers, business owners, and entrepreneurs and other innovative leaders in a variety of professions in person or via Skype during the webcast. The students also operated the camera and audio equipment, multiple computers, and social media feeds in order to effectively display their information.

Included in the webcast were a language trivia game show, multicultural entertainment, and other activities highlighting the importance of language and culture in California's increasingly diverse society.

Naditz shared that the event was an "opportunity for students to celebrate their blossoming proficiency in world languages and cultures and to share with others the incredible benefits of becoming multilingual." She also stated that the event gave the students "additional experiences leading to the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills as the students interviewed diverse people from all walks of life, solved problems that arose during the webcast, and employed a variety of technologies to make the event a success."



Students taking part in the world record-winning webcast.



## LETTERS TO *The Language Educator*

Dear Editor:

I believe *The Language Educator* needs to publish a correction regarding page 9 of the October 2011 issue. In the piece on the Bloomberg survey, French is mistakenly identified as having 68 million speakers. That is approximately the population of France alone, which I believe stands at around 65-66 million. As most ACTFL members know, France is far from the only French-speaking nation. Estimates run closer to 190-200 million, of which anywhere from 75 million to 128 million are native speakers. If one includes all multilingual people who count French among their languages, numbers may be well over 250 million.

I have seen this same erroneous figure published elsewhere, but would have expected better from an ACTFL-sponsored publication.

Yours truly,

Dr. Laura Dennis

Associate Professor of French, University of the Cumberlands

Thank you for calling our attention to what is most likely an under-representation of the number of speakers of French worldwide. We reported on the Bloomberg survey as research that had been done by a reputable organization and that was widely covered in the national media. Because it is not always possible to do our own independent research (i.e., to compile the data from various sources) for every item printed in the magazine, we often have to trust outside sources. However, your point is also well-taken and we agree that the total number of French speakers could well be greater than was stated by the study.

According to Bloomberg, its sources for the language figures were: World Bank, IMF, Ethnologue, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), CIA, International Telecommunications Union, and UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Languages were awarded points from 0 to 100 based on position relative to each other. Points were summed to rank each language.

Bloomberg states that their methodology was as follows: "To create this ranking, we first identified the 25 languages with the greatest number of native speakers, then narrowed the list to the 11 that are official languages of G20 countries. (Countries where English is the official language, or one of multiple official languages, were excluded.) We then compiled statistics from countries where each language is official. In countries with multiple official languages, statistics were included for each language. For example, Switzerland's data were included for its three official languages: German, French and Italian."

Thank you for your careful reading of the magazine and willingness to let us know when we also should be questioning other sources.

—Ed.

### WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS!

Please send them via e-mail to [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org) and include your name, institution, and title.

[WWW.CASIEONLINE.ORG/EVENTS/GLC](http://WWW.CASIEONLINE.ORG/EVENTS/GLC)

# 2012 global language c o n v e n t i o n

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Q:

Q: What activities or efforts have you undertaken that have been particularly effective in advocating for your language program?

## ACTFL Invites Educators to Air Their Views on Topics in *So You Say*

### FEBRUARY

**Q:** What most makes you feel like “you belong” to the language education profession?

### APRIL

**Q:** What is your favorite website for classroom use and how do you incorporate it into your students' learning of language and culture?

**So You Say** is the section where **you** can speak up on the issues most important to **you**.

Each issue of *The Language Educator* will include this feature where our readers can offer their opinions on topics relevant to language education. Representative statements will be published in the magazine.

To offer your views on a topic, please go to [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org). You will be taken to a form where you may enter a message of no more than 150 words. When finished, click submit and your message will reach the editor.

**Thanks in advance for contributing to more representative content for *The Language Educator*!**

Collaborating with other specialists (art, music, physical education, core classroom teachers) and then documenting the project—an art installation, a concert, a thematic unit of study—in the school and in community news venues (internal newsletters, local newspapers, etc.). We even presented one collaborative project at the PEN (Progressive Education Network) conference in Washington, DC, a few years back.

*Alisa Shapiro-Rosenberg, Spanish  
Greeley Elementary School, Winnetka, IL*

Project CLIMB [Critical Language Initiative in Mandarin in Beaufort, SC] began last year at my school, Broad River Elementary. Being a new program, my partner teachers, Chu Qing and Paul Goodwill, and I use the basic framework that was created and build upon it to serve the students in our first and second grade classes. By helping to establish and build this new program, we are making history in our school and in our county, which is incredibly rewarding. Even more, our students are really flourishing in their new language environment. As teachers, we are not the only advocates for our program—we have successfully created two classrooms of students and parents who are wonderful advocates for our Mandarin Chinese language immersion program as well!

*Mindy Farris, Chinese, Broad River Elementary School, Beaufort, SC*

I have taken the initiative to start an Arabic study abroad program in Jordan. I visited the University of Jordan during a recent trip and contacted the Dean of International Institute for Teaching Arabic to Speakers of Other Languages. The dean of my college was very keen on having George Mason send students to the institute, so I connected him with our Center of Global Education and the institute. We hoped to register six students but we got 14 instead and some of them are coming from other campuses. The College of Humanities contacted me and published an article about this program.

*Ghassan Husseinali, Arabic, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA*

I have offered to host a professional development on the use of technology in the foreign language classroom and have advocated for a district-wide foreign language wiki to keep all schools abreast of what is happening and to serve as a forum for shared learning.

*Luann Smith, Spanish, Churchland High School, Portsmouth, VA*

Showing the relevancy of language learning through former students' stories of studying, traveling, working, and performing community service abroad is very effective. I invite former students to be guest speakers in the classroom and at our Language Honor Society Induction ceremony, and I always ask the local newspaper to feature the story. I request former students serving in the Peace Corps to be our classroom correspondents through the World Wise Schools program. I often share anecdotes from former students with my current students that highlight their struggles and successes of language learning and living abroad. At key periods during the school year (Open House, course registration), I make sure that our department has a prominent display that features the benefits of language learning. This January, we will feature alumni from the past 10 years who continue to use their language skills as they study, travel, and work internationally.

*Katy Dueppen, French  
Mahomet-Seymour High School  
Mahomet, IL*

Keeping in mind that university world language students/majors were often successful language learners in high school, I initiated a number of years ago a World Language Day for high school students at our university. Students compete in spelling bees, poetry recitations, poster and DVD recitation, and get 15-minute mini-lessons of other languages usually not taught at high schools such as Italian, Farsi, or Korean. The event not only promotes our six language programs but also helps high school programs to build up motivation in the students who will attend the day. The promotion of language learning should be an effort across school types and language programs.

*Marcel Rotter, German  
University of Mary Washington  
Fredericksburg, VA*

I have currently volunteered to take the lowest performing English students and team-teach with an English teacher, so that I can focus on just teaching French for the next academic year. We are on a 90-minute block schedule and we will be splitting a block into two 45-minute year long classes in an effort to see if we can boost our AYP (adequate yearly progress). Tennessee has asked for a waiver from NCLB, since we are part of the Race to the Top program. Our test class will take their English EOC (end of course exam) at the end of the year 2012–2013. I am really excited about this program.

*Virginia L. Thompson, French and Spanish  
Springfield High School, Springfield, TN*

Hosting German students and teachers through GAPP [German American Partnership Program] has increased awareness of our German program in the community, and we are also planning to visit our partner school in either 2012 or 2013. Additionally, adding Honors II to the curriculum as well as working extra hours with students in level IV who want to prepare for the AP exam has been particularly effective. I am planning to make German IV into a IV/V course while I work on the AP syllabus next year, and then adding AP as a course.

*CJ Hendrickson, German  
Chatfield Senior High School, Littleton, CO*

I am advocating for an immersion program in our district. Showing the "Speaking in Tongues" video to my teachers, parents, superintendent, and school board members really helped them wrap their minds around and embrace a concept that was unfamiliar to them. We still have a ways to go, but that was probably the most persuasive and powerful tool I have used to advocate for immersion programs.

*ACTFL Past President  
Barbara Mondloch, Spanish  
Brookdale Elementary, Tacoma, WA*

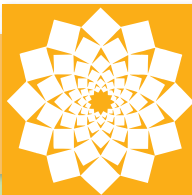
Asking for and getting permission to run Spanish for Fluent Speakers (SFS) helped our overall Spanish program tremendously. The program pulled the native speakers out of classes for language acquisition where they were bored, sometimes disruptive, or not very successful and where non-native students were daunted by their ability to speak Spanish. It provided them with a place to develop/master/maintain reading and writing skills and allowed them a place where different heritages could be acknowledged by the unifying element of the same native language. It opened the door for these students to take advanced level (AP and IB) courses that might never have been available to them otherwise. Lastly, the SFS program provided Hispanic parents with a resource where their children would have a better chance to preserve and improve their heritage language.

*Denise Collado, Spanish  
Albemarle High School, Charlottesville, VA*

Those who teach in a parochial school may be interested in what our department began last year: Each of February's weekly masses is bilingual. (The Latin teacher's work was done for him centuries ago.) Our French teacher, Lyn Smith, is also a musician and has found beautiful music that the choir sings in French; she even procured prayers from those at the Sacre Coeur Basilica in Paris on that day. The students read the liturgy and petitions in the target language; the English translation is printed in the bulletin. The responses are printed for all students to say in the target language. As a Spanish teacher, I know that I, but especially the students who are not involved in studying a language, are in awe to hear so many voices joined in reciting the *Padre Nuestro* [Our Father].

*Sinde Wickersham, Spanish  
John Carroll Catholic High School  
Birmingham, AL*





# Inside ACTFL

AN UPDATE FROM THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

## ACTFL Official Election Results

### President-Elect

Toni Theisen, Loveland High School, Loveland, CO

### Members of the Board of Directors

Marjorie Hall Haley, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

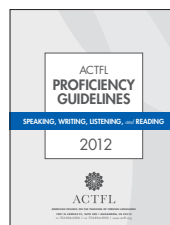
Thomas Sauer, Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, KY

Jocelyn Raught, Cactus Shadows High School, Cave Creek, AZ, was also appointed as the new SWCOLT representative to the Board, replacing James Yoder. Board Member Mary Lynn Redmond was selected as Treasurer for 2012.

Congratulations to all of these new leaders! More information on the new ACTFL officers will be featured in the February issue of *The Language Educator*. For information about nominating someone for the ACTFL Board of Directors, please visit [www.actfl.org/nominations](http://www.actfl.org/nominations).

At the same time we welcome these new Board members, we extend our sincere thanks to outgoing Board members Donna Clementi, Janine Erickson, and James Yoder, as well as outgoing Past President Eileen Glisan.

## 2012 Proficiency Guidelines Released at ACTFL Convention



A new version of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading (2012) was introduced at the 2011 ACTFL Annual Convention in Denver.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were first published in 1986 as an adaptation for the academic community of the U.S. Government's Inter-agency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions. New for the 2012 edition are the addition of the major level of "Distinguished" to the Speaking and Writing Guidelines; the division of the "Advanced" level into three sublevels of "High," "Mid," and "Low" for the Listening and Reading Guidelines; and the addition of a general level description at the "Advanced," "Intermediate," and "Novice" levels of all skills.

The newly revised 2012 Guidelines are available for download from the ACTFL website at [www.actfl.org/profguidelines2012](http://www.actfl.org/profguidelines2012). For further information, contact ACTFL Professional Programs at 914-963-1275; [professionalprograms@actfl.org](mailto:professionalprograms@actfl.org).



## Abbott Becomes New ACTFL Executive Director

As was announced by ACTFL Past President Barbara Mondloch in her final President's Message in the November 2011 issue of *The Language Educator*, Marty Abbott has been chosen as the organization's new Executive Director by the ACTFL Board of Directors. Abbott took on

the position last fall, shortly before the ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo was held in Denver, and she was actively engaged in all aspects of her new job during the convention.

In announcing the appointment, Mondloch said, "The search committee went through a rigorous search process that was open to those both inside and outside the language profession. We are very pleased that the search resulted in Marty's appointment. She has demonstrated experience as a strong educator, leader, collaborator and stellar advocate for the ACTFL mission."

Upon assuming the new position, Abbott stated, "I look forward to working collaboratively with the Board of Directors to sharpen the focus of ACTFL's mission in providing vision, leadership, and support for quality language teaching and learning."

Abbott has served as ACTFL Director of Education since 2004. Prior to joining the organization, she was the Director of High

School Instruction in the Fairfax County Public Schools (VA) and also served as its Foreign Language Coordinator and as a high school teacher of Spanish and Latin. Abbott has also taught briefly at the elementary and postsecondary levels.

She has held a wide variety of leadership positions including ACTFL President in 2003, Chair of the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in 1999, and President of the Foreign Language Association of Virginia in 1996. She earned her B.A. degree in Spanish with a minor in Latin from the University of Mary Washington and her M.S. in Spanish Linguistics from Georgetown University.

Abbott has been involved in many national language initiatives, serving on task forces that developed the student standards, beginning teacher standards, and performance descriptors for languages. Most recently, she has been involved with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Map for World Languages and the alignment document for the student standards for language learning and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Her advocacy efforts are well known in the field, principally as co-chair of the national public awareness campaign 2005: *The Year of Languages* and now ACTFL's national public awareness campaign *Discover Languages . . . Discover the World!* She has also been very involved with coordinating the ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year program.

## ACTFL Announces New Awards and Scholarships

Beginning in 2012, there will be some changes to the ACTFL Awards Program. Additional information about all the 2012 awards can be found on the inside back cover of this issue of *The Language Educator*.

### New K-12 Technology Award

A new award has been created entitled the “ACTFL Award for Excellence in K–12 Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT.” It is meant to offer a similar honor to K–12 educators as the “ACTFL–Cengage Learning Faculty Development Programs Award for Excellence in Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT” which is meant for the postsecondary level. Both of these awards recognize outstanding language educators who have excelled in integrating technology into instruction.

### Postsecondary Leadership Award Renamed for Rivers

The “ACTFL Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, Postsecondary” has been renamed the “ACTFL Wilga Rivers Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, Postsecondary.” This has been made possible by a bequest from the Wilga Rivers estate. Rivers was an ACTFL Charter Member and the recipient of the ACTFL-NYSAFLT Anthony Papalia Award for Excellence in Teacher Education in 1988 and the Steiner Postsecondary award in 1977. She was previously a Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. [The Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, K–12 remains the same.]

### Robert J. Ludwig New Teacher Scholarships for Convention

ACTFL also is announcing three new scholarships for new teachers (less than three years in the classroom) to attend the 2012 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo in Philadelphia, PA, for the first time. These were made possible by a bequest from the Robert J. Ludwig estate. Ludwig was a member of the ACTFL Board of Directors (then Executive Council) from 1985–1988 and he served as ACTFL President in 1989. Ludwig had been a teacher and Supervisor of Foreign Languages for the Schenectady, NY Public Schools and had served as President for the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT).

The applications for these scholarships will be on the ACTFL website in February. The deadline to apply will be **July 11, 2012**.

## ACTFL Officers Nomination Deadline

Nominations for 2013 President-Elect (2014 President) and three Board of Directors positions must be postmarked by **April 30, 2012**. Visit [www.actfl.org/nominations](http://www.actfl.org/nominations) for details.

## Summer Scholarship in Mexico

ACTFL and IMAC–Spanish Language Programs are pleased to offer ACTFL members a scholarship for four weeks of Spanish language study during summer 2012.

IMAC has over 40 years of experience and is the only language school in its region with official accreditation for both DELE testing from the Ministry for Education of Spain and the Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language from the Secretary of Education of Mexico.

The scholarship includes tuition and learning materials. The winner is responsible for all travel to and accommodations in Guadalajara, Mexico and any personal expenses and optional activities.

Details can be obtained by visiting [www.Spanish-School.com.mx/guadalajara](http://www.Spanish-School.com.mx/guadalajara). You can find the scholarship application on the ACTFL website at [www.actfl.org/imac2012](http://www.actfl.org/imac2012). Completed applications, including recommendations, must be received at ACTFL by **March 23, 2012**. ACTFL will review the applications, and the selection will be announced in late April 2012.

## 2011 ACTFL Webinars for Language Educators Available On-Demand

Previous ACTFL Webinars for Professionals from 2011 are currently still available on-demand online. Fees for ACTFL members are \$75 per webinar (\$180 for three; \$325 for all six); for non-members, \$99 per webinar (\$239 for three; \$425 for all six). Find more information on the ACTFL website at [www.actfl.org/webinars](http://www.actfl.org/webinars).

## Teacher Educators: Request Your ACTFL Student Kits Today

Many teacher educators find that getting their students involved in professional organizations early helps in their development as future teachers. If you are a teacher educator, you can receive information packets about the products and services available from ACTFL along with sample copies of *The Language Educator* and *Foreign Language Annals* to distribute to your students **at no charge**. Enclosed with these packets are membership brochures and applications for your students to join ACTFL.

We hope that you will encourage your students to become members of their professional organization and take advantage of the resources and benefits you enjoy. Student membership in ACTFL is available for \$25 a year and requires a letter verifying student status. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity for your students! To request these packets, please send an e-mail containing your name, address, and number of packets needed to [membership@actfl.org](mailto:membership@actfl.org) or call (703) 894-2900. Please allow four weeks for processing and delivery.



## Q&A INTERVIEW

with  
U.S. Representative from Colorado  
**Jared Polis**



*On behalf of the members of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), we thank you for your willingness to take time to speak with us today on the important topic of language education.*

**Q:** You have been a member of the U.S. House of Representatives since 2008, representing Colorado's second congressional district. Recently, you signed on to co-sponsor H.R. 1994: The Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act. Can you explain why you decided to champion this legislation? As the national organization representing more than 12,300 language educators and administrators from elementary through graduate education, as well as government and industry, what can ACTFL and our individual members do to help publicize and promote the passage of H.R. 1994?

**A:** Foreign language education is proven to increase student achievement across the board. And we know that in our increasingly interconnected world that knowing a second or third language is an asset in finding a job. With education budgets on the chopping block across America, it's more important than ever that we make the case for increasing and improving, not cutting, language programs.

The Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act is a particularly important bill because it invests in professional development, scholarships to recruit language teachers, and improved standards and assessments. The bill would also improve state-level governance and infrastructure in foreign languages through a state coordinator and advisory council in every state. I've also co-sponsored the Foreign Language Education Partnership Program Act, which would help ensure that we have the data we need to measure what's really working.

To advocates I would say that you need to be armed with data as well. Foreign language programs aren't just a luxury that cash-strapped school districts can do without. They're essential. You've got to be on the ground making the case to policymakers in terms that they can understand. Be armed with the facts. Take your case to Congress. And don't let up. They need to hear from you again and again.

**Q:** You have also had a career as a successful innovator and entrepreneur. Prior to joining Congress, you founded several successful Internet companies including *Proflowers.com* and *bluemountain.com*. From your point of view as an experienced businessman and employer, what 21<sup>st</sup> century skills do you think language educators should be teaching through world languages in order to help today's students prepare for their future careers and citizenship?

**A:** It starts with communication. Language educators need to teach students how to speak and write clearly, concisely, and persuasively. They need critical analysis skills so they can get to the heart of an issue and find solutions. They need to be taught initiative and how to drive a process to its successful conclusion. And they have to learn teamwork because collaboration is essential to success in virtually every field.



**Q:** Your relationship with ACTFL originated in 2005 when you served on the Honorary Committee for *2005: The Year of Languages* and you helped us to promote language learning through this public campaign effort. Over the years, you have distinguished yourself as a strong supporter of language learning in the United States and we congratulate you on the receipt of the 2011 Edwin Cudecki Award for Support for Language Education. Why do you believe language education is so important for our students? What do you see as the most compelling reason for investing in more programs for more students to learn languages in more grade levels?

**Q:** When you decided to apply your entrepreneurial spirit to the field of education, you founded two innovative charter schools in Colorado. You also served as superintendent of one of these—the New America School, a public charter school focused on English language literacy and high school liberal arts education for new immigrants. What lessons were learned and which particular experiences had the greatest impact on your thinking? Can you share any stories that you think educators should remember as they teach new languages to speakers of English and of other languages?

**A:** Because that's what the data says! Time and again, when you look at what works and what doesn't—and that requires that you dig into the data and have the right measures of achievement—you see that foreign language proficiency translates into student achievement in literacy and math throughout grade levels and is a critical skill that employers look for. And we also need to see it in terms of our economic competitiveness as a nation. If we're going to lead the world and if we're going to be a place where graduates are going to find good-paying jobs, then we need to not only strengthen language education programs, but to reach kids at an even earlier age when they're more receptive to attaining fluency in another language.

**A:** Nearly all of the students at New America School are multilingual. Many are learning a second or third language at the school in real time while also gaining knowledge in content areas towards gaining a high school diploma. Immigrant students have a constitutional right to a public education. The New America School is about making sure older English language learners, who otherwise might not be in school, receive the education that is their right. Laws like the one passed in Alabama and proposals that would dismantle support for English language learners destroy the amazing human capital that has always made our country better, more productive, and more competitive.

Clearly, given what the data tells us, we need to be doing a better job of educating Hispanic students and English language learners. It is unacceptable to allow schools to continue to fail these students—or any students for that matter. This means effective interventions for schools where too many students are non-proficient, dropping out, truant, unsafe, and unengaged in their learning. It means that all teachers and principals must be evaluated, partly based on objective student assessment growth, so instruction improves. And it means that we need to hold schools and school districts responsible for closing achievement gaps for low-income and minority students, those with disabilities, and English language learners.

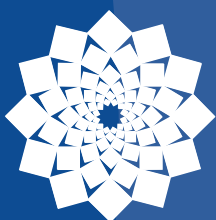
Quality foreign language classes must be a key component of schools' curricula because they help all students understand, respect, and relate to one another's differences regardless of their background, culture, or linguistic skills. These are the seeds of how our society and economy will be high functioning, productive, and safe for all people.

When I stood with the graduates of the New America School year after year, seeing in their eyes the pride of their own accomplishment and their understanding of what that meant for their future chances of success in life, I was moved to expand these opportunities to others. When I met with teachers and students in New America School classrooms and heard their hopes for a better future, I became more inspired to fight for greater access and better outcomes. As leaders, we have to do all that's in our power to stand up for students' success in school, however we can. It's their most fundamental right and has enormous implications for all of us.



# EMPOWERING LANGUAGE EDUCATION

## The 2011 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo



# ACTFL

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE  
TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ANNUAL CONVENTION  
& WORLD LANGUAGES EXPO

## DENVER 2011

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER  
NOVEMBER 18–20

A successful gathering of language educators demonstrating the power of connection and collaboration

*“Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much.”*

—HELEN KELLER

When we come together, we grow in strength. When we collaborate, we are empowered to achieve things far beyond what we might dream of doing on our own. Nowhere is this fact more consistently evident than at the ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo where every year thousands of language educators gather to learn, share, network, and become inspired once again about their chosen profession.

More than 5,800 individuals attended the 45<sup>th</sup> ACTFL Convention held November 18–20 at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver, Colorado, and they found themselves taking part in the largest professional development opportunity of its kind in existence. With more than 670 sessions, meetings, workshops, and events, there was something at the convention to meet the needs of every attendee, regardless of their language, level, or length of time in the classroom. Of the total number of registrants, 22% were first-time attendees and 8% came from locations outside the United States. Registrants specified a wide variety of languages they taught, including many less commonly taught languages. The top four languages represented in order were Spanish, Chinese, French, and German.

Naturally, convention participants came to experience the many excellent educational sessions as well as opportunities to network and share with their colleagues. But, additionally, they were there to attend the one-of-a-kind World Languages Expo, featuring 386 booths from 238 companies and organizations. The Expo is the premier showcase of products and services available for today's language educators and their classrooms. The varied exhibits gave attendees the opportunity to learn about





# ACTORS THROUGH COLLABORATION: Languages Expo

innovative products and technologies, browse the latest publications, and network with industry leaders. Also featured were 75 special exhibitor workshops offered during the Expo.

Following on the successes of last year, this year's program again featured electronic poster presentations presented on laptop computers on popular topics varying from "iPads in Education: Uses, Strengths and Shortcomings" to "Promoting Global Competence and Oral Communication Skills via Social Media." Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in group discussions of 10 people seated around a common table during the ACTFL Research Roundtable sessions. These focused on a wide range of topics from "Building FLES Programming Through District and Community Collaboration" to "Achieving the Cultures Standards Goals While Preserving L2 Classroom Use" to "Using Service-Learning Programs to Bring Authenticity to Language Learning."

Some other highlights of the 2011 ACTFL Convention:

- This year for the first time, attendees were able to use an ACTFL Convention Mobile App on their smartphones and tablets to locate sessions and plan their personal schedules. ACTFL received very positive feedback from users of this new technology.
- The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) suite was on display at the Language Testing International (LTI) booth in the exhibit hall and at ACTFL Central.
- Many special guests visited the convention, including Hwee Lem, CEO of the Credu Corporation of South Korea. Credu, the top e-learning company in that country, is a very important business partner of ACTFL and LTI, who has successfully promoted ACTFL proficiency testing in South Korea.
- Special luncheons were hosted by the Embassies of France and Spain for French and Spanish teachers respectively. As always, these luncheons offered excellent opportunities to network



*Images of the 2011 ACTFL Convention include the ribbon dancers from the Opening General Session (p. 32, third from left); the Language Testing International booth (center); pre-convention workshops (p. 33, second from right); and participants in sessions and at the World Languages Expo (all other photos).*

with colleagues and learn more about full program scholarships, resources, and services available from the Embassies.

- Helene Zimmer-Loew was honored by the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) at a Saturday evening event to celebrate her remarkable career in the language education profession, most significantly as the long-time AATG Executive Director.
- ACTFL Central was a hub of activity at the convention, offering information about membership, professional programs, publications, and more. This year, it was also an especially appealing location, with a warm and attractive layout that invited those browsing through the exhibit hall to stop in and find out more about ACTFL and even to share their own stories of why they feel "they belong."

*"None of us is as smart as all of us."*

—JAPANESE PROVERB

The official beginning of the convention always takes place on Friday morning at the Opening General Session and this year's program started off with an exciting display of acrobatic prowess from a pair of professional aerial ribbon dancers. Their obvious teamwork, trust, and reliance on each other for success set the perfect tone to begin the convention with its theme of "Empowering Language Educators Through Collaboration."

Next, several attendees from throughout the hall introduced themselves one-by-one, declaring to all why they belong to ACTFL and the language profession, with statements such as "I belong at this conference because I want to learn about the best ideas and research





**"I belong because all of you continue to inspire me to be a better leader and to take a stronger stand for education!"**

*—ACTFL President Barbara Mondloch*

that I can apply to my classroom;" "I belong at this convention because I get renewed energy by being around so many of you from around the world. I wouldn't miss it," and "I belong because I take pride in ACTFL being a global leader in language education—and that means a lot to me."

"Good morning, I'm Barbara Mondloch," ACTFL's President then declared from the stage. "I belong because all of you continue to inspire me to be a better leader and to take a stronger stand for education!"

She continued, welcoming all the convention participants to Denver. "I am deeply grateful to all of you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your president this year," she said. Mondloch thanked the ACTFL Board of Directors and staff for their "tireless efforts" in supporting the membership and she discussed the many things she learned during her year in office.

"As I began serving as your ACTFL President, I quickly learned the importance of language educators having a voice in our political process and how easily we can be ignored when we do not," she said. "As a teacher, and then a principal, I underestimated the importance that having a political presence has on decision-making. This

year, I have met with senators, congressmen, and even the Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, as we have advocated for restoring FLAP and Title VI funding and generated support for H.R. 1994—The Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act, which provides a wonderful vision for language education."

The lesson that she learned from all of this, Mondloch told the crowd, was that she "should have been making these contacts all along." She continued: "Political leaders tell us that they don't hear from many language educators, but you should know that when they do, it makes a difference. Please do your part to advocate by speaking up for language education with your elected officials."

Next, Mondloch shared, "Another amazing part of my journey as president has been the experience of seeing our organization grow and flourish. ACTFL has more than 12,300 members now representing over 50 different languages from 57 different countries worldwide. The number of new teachers that have joined ACTFL has gone up by over 50% just in the past year."

Mondloch introduced Clarissa Adams Fletcher, the 2011 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year, and the five regional finalists for the 2012 contest. Japanese Teacher Yo Azama from Salinas, CA, was then chosen as the 2012 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year, from among the finalists, who for the first time ever represented five different languages [see sidebar on p. 37].

Keynote Speaker Milton Chen, Executive Director Emeritus at the George Lucas Educational Foundation, addressed the Opening

General Session with some inspiring words about how American education could look and the role that language learning should be playing in that vision.

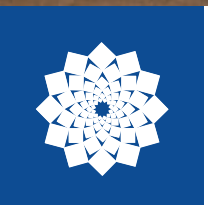
"I do believe as an advocate of global learning and global education, that the teaching of foreign languages is a critical part of this . . . The statistics show that only 32% of our K–12 students are studying foreign languages and it drops to about 8% in college. So, we have a long way to go. I really believe those figures should be 100% of kids in K–12 and 100% of students in college studying foreign languages," said Chen.

"Imagine an Education Nation," he suggested, echoing the title of his own recent book, "a learning society that really values education as much as it values everything else—jobs, the economy, national security . . . I do believe that a nation is only as good as its schools and we're still not there yet."



*Keynote Speaker Milton Chen was a highlight of the Opening General Session.*





*“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.”*

—HENRY FORD

However, Chen noted that he felt “we are witnessing the greatest expansion of creative capability ever in the history of humankind,” and that, “It’s a great time to be alive; it’s a great time to be a teacher and an educator and a student. Now we have these tools—these very powerful tools—that can actually help us accelerate our learning.”

The “six leading edges” of innovation that Chen details in his book and elaborated on his keynote address include: Thinking; Curriculum & Assessment; Technology; Time/Place; Co-Teaching; and Youth. He offered numerous examples of innovation in these various areas on the *Edutopia.org* website and other sites.

“I do believe that it’s time to talk about weapons of mass instruction,” said Chen. He noted that 2010 could actually be considered the “first year of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in education” because of a new willingness to use technology which has increased the ability of teachers to provide innovative education to their students.

Immediately following the Opening General Session, Chen was available at the ACTFL Central booth in the World Languages Expo to sign his books and visit with ACTFL Convention attendees.

While the 2011 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo in Denver was a great success in terms of professional development experiences—it was only the beginning of a focus on the critical need for collaboration in our profession. The next ACTFL Convention, to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 16–18, 2012, will provide an even greater opportunity for our many languages to speak with “one united voice” to further a vision of a nation where language education is a top priority. We hope to see you all there and we truly need everyone’s voice to be heard—so don’t miss it!



P. 34: Images from the 2011 ACTFL Convention and World Languages Expo include a participant (second from left) using the ACTFL Convention Mobile App.

P. 35: ACTFL Central (top left); Executive Director Marty Abbott (top center); retiring AATG Executive Director Helene Zimmer-Loew receives flowers from AATG President Carol Anne Costabile-Heming (middle left); the Embassy of Spain luncheon (below); and participants engaged in professional development (other photos).



## ACTFL Thanks Our Convention Co-Sponsoring Organizations

American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)  
 American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI)  
 Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS)  
 Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA)  
 Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers (CCFLT)  
 National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL)  
 National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT)  
 National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL)  
 National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)

*“As language educators we have often been working in isolation, focused on our programs in our own silos of excellence—a tradition of independence rather than interdependence. But with the fiscal and political realities we are facing, and the evolving needs of our students, we can no longer afford to continue working independently, if we truly want to prepare our students to be global citizens fluent in at least two languages.”*

—ACTFL PRESIDENT BARBARA MONDLOCH



## Plenary Sessions Enhance Convention Experience

Once again this year, ACTFL sponsored and presented special plenary sessions in order to draw attention to some of the most important topics facing the language education community today. These plenaries brought together panels of esteemed language experts to each focus on a specific aspect of the topic and then included opportunities for the audience to ask questions and share their own ideas and comments, thus creating a productive conversation among the attendees and panelists.

### Empowering Language Educators Through Collaboration

Effective collaboration among levels of instruction leads to well-articulated language experiences for our students. Today, there are many innovative ways that language educators from PK through 16 are making this happen in language programs. This important topic was the subject of a plenary session on Friday, November 18, featuring a panel of language experts, including Kelly Aramaki from Beacon Hill International School in Seattle, WA; Gregg Roberts from the Utah State Office of Education; and Erwin P. Tschirner of the University of Leipzig, with ACTFL President Barbara Mondloch presiding.

Aramaki discussed collaboration in Seattle, both within his school and throughout the district. He remarked upon the growth of international schools in the city, noting that they will soon make up 10% of Seattle public

schools. Roberts highlighted the collaborative efforts that helped the state of Utah establish what he called the “K–16 language program of the future.” He noted that their success in creating statewide dual language immersion had much to do with bringing businesses and other community stakeholders together to collaborate. Tschirner talked about international collaboration between the language communities in the United States and Europe, specifically with regard to the recent conference held in Utah to determine common understandings about language proficiency as shared by the ACTFL and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) communities.

### Research Priorities—Phase I: Moving Language Education Forward

Among the current priorities for research in language education are the sustainability of foreign language programs, the development of language in content-based classes such as literature, building interactive classroom communities, and teacher education. Two members of the Research Priorities Task Force and two authors from Phase I of the project shared key results from the reviews of the research recently completed on the four priorities areas at the plenary session on Saturday, November 19. ACTFL Past President Eileen Glisan presided over a panel that included Richard Donato and Francis J. Troyan from the University of Pittsburgh; and Kate Paesani from Wayne State University.

Troyan discussed the research taking place on the National Standards, and he noted a lack of research on learner outcomes, the fact that the most researched goal area was Communication, and the need to clearly operationalize the standards in research. Paesani reviewed research on three key themes: (1) differing conceptions of literature and culture can impede their integration across a holistic foreign language curriculum; (2) proposals for merging language and literary-cultural content at the course level are typically focused on advanced language courses; and (3) curricular solutions for merging language and literary-culture content are often grounded in standards or the concept of literacy. Donato focused on class-



TOP: At the Collaboration plenary, left to right: ACTFL President Barbara Mondloch, Kelly Aramaki, Gregg Roberts, and Erwin Tschirner.



ABOVE: At the Research plenary, left to right: ACTFL Past President Eileen Glisan, Francis Troyan, Kate Paesani, and Richard Donato.

room discourse, the need to integrate language and content, and the connection between teacher knowledge, classroom practice, and student outcomes. Glisan also discussed Phase II of the project which will focus on conducting research on the priorities identified.

### Utah Program Highlighted in Video

At the Friday plenary session, Gregg Roberts presented an excellent 12-minute video entitled, “Utah Dual Immersion” which highlighted the successes of the language program in that state as well as the overall importance of language learning. This video can be found on the Utah Public Education YouTube Channel at [www.youtube.com/user/UtahPublicEducation](http://www.youtube.com/user/UtahPublicEducation).

### Learn More About ACTFL’s Research Priorities Project

The ACTFL Research Priorities Project that was the focus of the Saturday plenary will be further illuminated in an upcoming special issue of *Foreign Language Annals* mailing together with the regular Summer issue of the journal. The special issue will focus solely on research priorities in language education as identified in Phase I and will be co-edited by Guest Editors Eileen Glisan and Richard Donato. More information on this issue will be presented in the April 2012 issue of *The Language Educator*.





*"My experience as a language teacher convinces me that today's students are ready and more than willing to learn other languages and cultures, and prepare themselves to join a world that has no borders and offers them unlimited opportunities if they have the linguistic and cultural competency . . . Language connects us and as a result it binds us as the global family that we are."*

—Yo Azama, 2012 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year



BELOW: Yo Azama (center), with fellow finalists (l-r) Wendy Brownnell, Susanne Kanning, Sherri Harkins, and Lisa Podbilski.



# ACTFL Names 2012 National Language Teacher of the Year

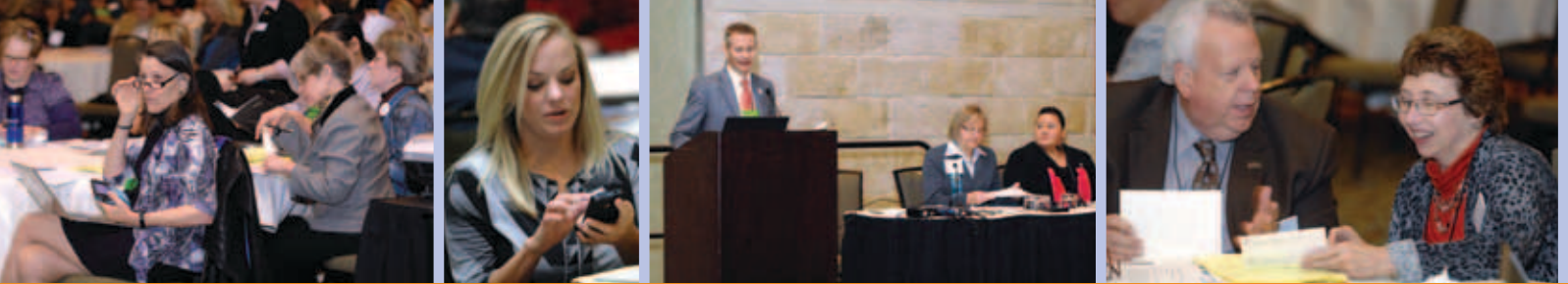
Japanese teacher Yo Azama of North Salinas High School in Salinas, CA, was named the recipient of the **2012 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year Award**. Azama, who represents the Southwest Conference on Language Teaching (SWCOLT), was one of five regional representatives from around the United States who were finalists for the national award. The others were Wendy Brownnell, Spanish teacher at Camdenton High School in Roach, MO, representing the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSCTFL); Sherri Harkins, French teacher at Pittsville Elementary Middle School in Pittsville, MD, representing the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL); Susanne Kanning, German teacher at Inglemoor High School in Kenmore, WA, representing the Pacific Northwest Council for Languages (PNCFL); and Lisa Podbilski, Chinese teacher at Berkeley Preparatory School in Tampa, FL, representing the Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT). For the first time, the five finalists for the award this year represented five different languages.

Azama is a graduate of California State University in Monterey Bay, CA, and holds a single subject credential from that university's program. He also has a multiple subject teaching credential from the New College of California and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Showa Academia Musicae in Kanagawa, Japan. From 1996 to 1999, he taught Japanese at Clarendon Elementary School in San Francisco, and from 1999 to 2000, he taught Japanese, English Literature, and a cultural exploratory class at Gavilan View Middle School in Salinas. Since 2000, he has taught Japanese at all levels at North Salinas High School. He has published widely in the field of language education and culture. He was named Teacher of the Year by SWCOLT for 2011 and has received many other awards since beginning his teaching career 15 years ago.

Sponsored by ACTFL and publisher Holt McDougal, the award annually recognizes an individual who exhibits excellence in language teaching. Nominees are first evaluated by their state language associations and the state winner is submitted to the regional language conferences. Azama will make appearances and give presentations throughout the year at language conferences as well as at events that promote language education through the *Discover Languages* public awareness campaign.



Previous winners and finalists for the ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year, 2006–2012.



## Leaders Collaborate at the Assembly of Delegates

**T**he 2011 Assembly of Delegates, held Thursday, November 17, brought together approximately 225 individuals representing ACTFL and various language organizations, as well as the Assembly's co-sponsors—the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) and the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL)—for a full day of discussion, planning, and, of course, collaboration.

"It is fitting that we assemble as leaders of the language profession to engage in a collaborative agenda that will benefit all of our groups and members," said ACTFL President Barbara Mondloch.

"It is difficult to deny the fact that language education has lost ground in recent years—in particular, as many language programs in K–16 have been closed and some teachers have been replaced with software programs," she said. "But that's why it's even more important than ever to work together sharing resources, and most importantly to inspire each other with creative solutions that we know work."

Mondloch was joined by Gregory Fulkerson, representing NCSSFL; Greta Lundgaard, representing NADSFL; and Debbie Cody, representing the Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers (CCFLT), in welcoming the delegates.

The morning session of the Assembly, held jointly with NCSSFL and NADSFL, focused on several important national issues including the effort to develop a draft document to highlight the relationship between the Common Core Standards for Language Arts and the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning; the emphasis on teacher effectiveness at the federal, state, and local levels; and language advocacy strategies for progress at the national level. 2011 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year Clarissa Adams Fletcher also shared

about her year in the national spotlight. During the luncheon break, representatives from the College Board, Keith Cothrun, Juan Carlos Morales, and Marcia Arndt, discussed updates to the World Languages and Cultures Advanced Placement (AP) Program.

In the afternoon, delegates gathered in small groups to review some of the "success stories" in the profession, particularly with regard to state initiatives and advocacy, as well as to focus on recent ACTFL activities and accomplishments. Mondloch encouraged the participants to consider what they could learn from one another that could inspire each organization to set individual goals and work towards them "so that when we gather next year," she suggested, "there will be even more successes to celebrate."

### PRESENTATIONS

#### Common Core and National Standards Crosswalk

Working with the Council on Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA), a task force of representatives has developed a draft document that highlights how the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning support the existing Common Core State Standards for Language Arts. Two of the task force members, Jacquie Bott Van Houten from the Kentucky Department of Education, and Martin Smith of West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District (NJ), led a review of the draft document with the delegates in order to provide their input for the task force.

A new technology—"Poll Everywhere" ([www.poll.everywhere.com](http://www.poll.everywhere.com))—was used in this process so that individuals used the texting feature of their cell phones in order to respond to questions including: *How familiar are you with the Common Core? Has your State*

*adopted the Common Core? Is your state and/or district working with the Common Core Standards? If yes, has this impacted World Languages?* Delegates' responses were compiled in real time and projected to the group in order to quickly come to consensus.

#### Teacher Effectiveness: What Does It Mean for Language Educators?

The emphasis on teacher effectiveness at the federal level with the Race to the Top (RTTT) grants and the language field's interest in assessing student progress have provided the synergy for an in-depth look at the relationship between teacher and student performance. Gregory Fulkerson from the Delaware Department of Education and Helga Fasciano from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction presented to the Assembly of Delegates on the RTTT and its aims to fundamentally redefine the educational landscape in the United States. The federal grants program gives states the incentive to lead reform in a comprehensive and collaborative way, with a \$4.35 billion budget. Delaware and North Carolina, as two of the initial RTTT grant recipients, were highlighted particularly in relation to what the efforts mean for world language teachers and programs. Alyssa Villarreal from Memphis Public Schools (TN) then discussed her district's experiences as a pilot project for the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL – [www.tellproject.com](http://www.tellproject.com)). TELL is a collection of products and processes that language educators can use to enhance their effectiveness as teachers and leaders.

#### Language Advocacy Strategies

Susan Frost of The Sheridan Group; J. David Edwards of the Joint National Committee for Languages & The National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-





NCLIS) and Todd Bowen from New Trier Township High School (IL) outlined a strategy for ensuring that language learning becomes a national legislative priority and promoting the idea that every graduate be proficient in at least two languages. Delegates were updated on how the current political landscape has changed since the 2012 elections, with a particular emphasis on budget constraints and appropriations battles. Frost focused on political and policy decisions affecting Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) funding, as well as a new effort to create state teams of language advocates. These teams have already begun to move the agenda forward and ACTFL is helping new teams get organized to fully implement an effective advocacy strategy. Edwards also discussed advocacy around the Higher Education Act Title VI: "International and Foreign Language Education" and other legislative priorities. Bowen shared about some of the successes in Illinois that have come from working together in a coordinated state team advocacy effort.

## Standards Impact Grant and National Standards Refresh

June Phillips, co-director of a grant to determine the impact of the National Standards a decade or so after their introduction, reported on this three-year project. She highlighted one of the major accomplishments of this effort: the creation of a bibliography of standards as they appear in the professional literature, with topics categorized and major works annotated. The Standards Impact survey has provided valuable information on the National Standards and teachers in their classrooms; on states and district standards, curriculum frameworks, and departments; on professional development context and content; and on methods course practices and priorities. Phillips outlined some recommendations including to refresh the

generic standards document to reflect 15 years of practice; to update language-specific scenarios as fuller lesson plans; to create professional development opportunities focused on the Communities and Connections standards; and to encourage more research and professional development to deepen knowledge and promote teaching grounded in standards.

## State Initiatives

Individuals from New York and Michigan reported on initiatives taking place in their states. First, John Carlino from the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT) discussed an effort to create position statements for his state organization. These are now available on the NYSAFLT website ([www.nysaflt.org/documents/pdf/misc/positionstatements.pdf](http://www.nysaflt.org/documents/pdf/misc/positionstatements.pdf)). Emily Spinelli, Anne Nerenz, and Jackie Moase Burke reported on the development of a high school language requirement in the state of Michigan.

Delegates spent the latter part of the day seated in state groupings and this afforded them the opportunity to brainstorm and prioritize their own advocacy goals.

## Update on ACTFL Activities

Delegates were briefed by ACTFL Executive Director Marty Abbott on the many initiatives in which the organization has been involved in the past year, including the Common Core State Standards Initiative; the creation of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Map for World Languages; the National Standards Impact Grant Survey; the new ACTFL Professional Development series, including the very successful webinar series; the Research Priorities Initiative; and the further development of the ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)

She also praised ongoing successful efforts such as the ACTFL National Language Teacher

*Participants in the Assembly of Delegates included Gregory Fulkerson, Helga Fasciano, and Alyssa Villarreal (p. 38, second from right); President-Elect Dave McAlpine and ACTFL Board Member Patricia Carlin (p. 38, far right); June Phillips (p. 39, far left), Martin Smith (p. 39, center); a working group from Colorado and California including 2012 President-Elect Toni Theisen and Board Members Janine Erickson and Duarte Silva, Yo Azama, and Debbie Cody from CCFLT; (p. 38, second from right), and Jacque Bott Van Houten (p. 39, far right).*

of the Year and **Discover Languages** programs. Because delegates last year communicated an interest in having access to more current research studies online, the ACTFL website is being updated with the latest research, including intercultural competence, an area that was not there previously, said Abbott.

Director of Professional Programs Elvira Swender also spoke to the participants about newly revised ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines that were released at the convention.

In closing, ACTFL President-Elect Dave McAlpine invited all the delegates to Philadelphia, PA, next year for the 2012 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo. The theme of *Many Languages, One Voice* is a continuation of the idea of collaboration from this year, he said, and then takes it a step further.

"Each language organization offers a unique perspective on language acquisition and learning . . . To move forward as a profession, we have to present a consistent and unified message to our stakeholders," he said. "We're not saying ACTFL needs to be the voice; we're saying everybody here in the room needs to be that voice."

As in years past, the 2011 Assembly of Delegates did an excellent job of amplifying the voice of the language profession, strengthened by a spirit of collaboration and with an inspired vision of the future.

*Many of the materials presented at the Assembly of Delegates are available online at [www.actfl.org/aod2011](http://www.actfl.org/aod2011).*





ACTFL

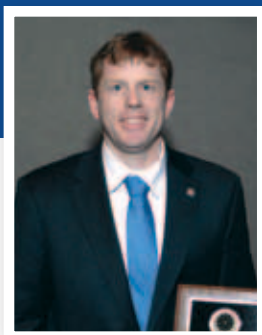
# CONGRATULATIONS

to the Award Winners at ACTFL 2011



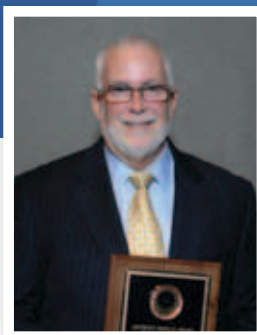
**Jianling Liao**, recipient of the ACTFL-MLJ Emma Marie Birkmaier Award for Doctoral Dissertation Research in Foreign Language Education. Liao's study, "The Impact of Interactive Discussions on L2 Chinese Composition Writing," contributes to two distinct, yet complementary areas: the imaginative use of computer-mediated communication techniques and the development of writing skills in Chinese. The strengths of the study include its pedagogical value to instructors of Chinese and its potential as a model for similar studies in other languages.

*"As writing constitutes a major challenge for many American learners of Chinese, I hope that my study may supply some useful knowledge regarding how second language writing ability may be nurtured through collaborative and interactive planning."*



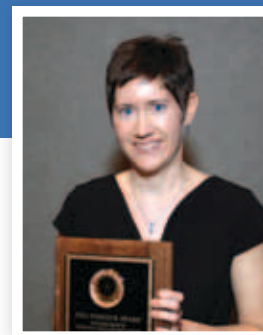
**Michael Shaughnessy**, recipient of the ACTFL-Cengage Learning Faculty Development Programs Award for Excellence in Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT. Shaughnessy, an Associate Professor of German at Washington & Jefferson College, found an innovative means to enrich the lives of teachers and professors at a global level through the development of the Culturally Authentic Pictorial Lexicon (CAPL). CAPL has included culturally authentic images not only for German, but for ESL, French, Spanish, and Chinese, and there are plans to expand its inventory to include Russian, Arabic, and Japanese.

*"I am excited about the prospect of continuing work on the CAPL project, and promoting this and other open source media endeavors for foreign language learning through technology."*



**Gregory W. Duncan**, recipient of the ACTFL-NYSAFLT Anthony Papalia Award for Excellence in Teacher Education. Duncan, founder and President of Interprep, Inc., has made strong contributions to language education from the national to the classroom level. In his role as teacher, educator, and author, his transformative effect on teachers and programs has strengthened the language learning experience for countless students, and his extensive work with presentations for state departments; districts; and state, regional, and national conferences exemplifies dedicated service to improving the standards and quality of the language teaching profession.

*"I felt like the luckiest person on the planet when I was teaching high school kids Spanish, so you can imagine my surprise when I found out that teaching teachers was even more rewarding!"*



**Rachel L. Shively**, recipient of the ACTFL-MLJ Paul Pimsleur Award for Research in Foreign Language Education. Shively, of Illinois State University, is the author of the article, "From the Virtual World to the Real World: a Model of Pragmatics Instruction for Study Abroad," which was published in *Foreign Language Annals*, 43(1), 105–137. Her study addresses the important matter of the development of language skills and intercultural competence during study abroad, and demonstrates that through the instruction of pragmatics during and after the immersion experience, students make greater gains in language and culture learning outcomes.

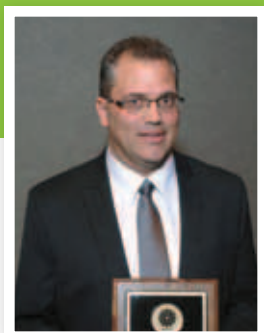
*"It is my hope that the pedagogical model that I present may be useful in the design of study abroad programs."*

West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, recipient of the ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language Program. The West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District in New Jersey provides a strong model for world language programs nationwide. The district employs a variety of formative and summative assessments drawn from the ACTFL Performance Guidelines to provide effective measures of students' language development. The district's exit assessments show that students are achieving at the benchmarking levels, and West Windsor offers a clear plan for articulation, in terms of grades and language options, from the elementary level to the next level. The district has demonstrated very strong advocacy efforts, striving to engage all stakeholders, and it also excels in the area of professional development.



*"We are deeply grateful to ACTFL for this recognition, as it affirms the work of the world language teachers, the commitment of their students and parents, and the support of the administration."*

—Rosanne Zeppieri, Curriculum and Instruction Supervisor, K–5



**David Jahner**, recipient of the ACTFL Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, K–12. Teachers in the Gwinnett County, GA school system, where Jahner is Director of the Foreign Language Program, say that he helps them do what they do better. Other descriptions include "the most responsive, inventive, concerned coordinator I have ever known," and "the dedicated leader that we should all aspire to be."

*"Every step along the journey, there have been key people to support, guide, and encourage me, contributing light, vision, and pattern to my education and career. When mirrored as multiple reflections, these contributions create a beautiful kaleidoscope filled with energy, color, inspiration, and life. I am so fortunate to have learned so much from so many."*



**Martin Smith**, recipient of the ACTFL Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, K–12. In his role as supervisor of world languages, ESL and bilingual education of Edison, NJ Public Schools, Smith transformed the world languages program and informed administrators and the public of language value. He has been praised for coaching, inspiring, and leading the teachers he supervises, and for being a leader in his field who has been involved in restructuring and transforming AP language courses and assessments.

*"It is my hope that we reach the vision embodied in the standards to raise a generation of American students comfortable interacting in the world in English and at least one other language."*



**Paula Rae Heusinkveld**, recipient of the ACTFL Nelson Brooks Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Culture. Heusinkveld, who is the Director of Language and International Trade at Clemson University, has devoted much of her professional life to improving the teaching of culture. She has provided a blueprint for current and future language educators on how to help students understand the relationship and interplay among cultural products, practices, and perspectives.

*"Over 40 years ago, when I was a novice teacher, the writings of Nelson Brooks impressed me profoundly, shaping the way I would forever think about culture. I never imagined I would someday receive the award bearing his name."*



**Jared Polis**, recipient of the Edwin Cudecki Award for Support for Foreign Language Education. Polis, Congressman from the Second Congressional District of Colorado, has a relationship with ACTFL which goes back to 2005 when he served on the Honorary Committee for **2005: The Year of Languages**, helping to promote language learning and supporting the public campaign effort. He has been a steadfast supporter of language education on Capitol Hill and recently signed on to co-sponsor H.R. 1994: The Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act.

*"I want you to know that there are many in Congress—including me—who know that your hard work every day strengthens our economy, enriches lives of generations of children and youth, and will lead our country forward."*

[See a Q&A interview with Jared Polis on p. 30.]

# More Than a Decade of Standards: A Look at How Far We've Come

By SANDY CUTSHALL



**T**he 5 Cs...*The Standards...The National Standards...The Standards for Learning Languages...The National Foreign Language Standards...The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*...whatever you call them, you know them—or you should know them—as the visionary goals guiding foreign language education and reflecting best instructional practices in the United States today and for the past 15+ years.

But just where did those “5 Cs” come from? Those newer to the profession may feel like “they’ve always been here”—but in reality they came about as a result of hard work, creativity, and the commitment of many members of the language education field.

“It was an amazing opportunity for all of us to work together,” says Christine Brown, chair of the task force responsible for creating the standards, recalling the process by which they were written over a three-year period in the mid-1990s. Brown says the task force included “a balance of individuals with experience in the field and gravitas with young and dynamic thinkers”—all of whom represented multiple aspects of the language education profession.

“We took a ‘creativity’ approach—which is echoed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills movement today—to creating the standards themselves: brainstorming how to make something new, how to move our field from the old, traditional grammar-oriented focus into something that was so different and reflective of what was happening in other core areas, had connections to other disciplines, showed culture, showed the connections piece, and re-imagined communication away from grammar at the center to a much broader view.”

“The language profession has been fortunate to reach early and continued consensus around what is important in language pro-

grams—ensuring that students know ‘how, when, and why to say what to whom,’” says ACTFL Executive Director Marty Abbott, also a member of the task force. “This embodies what the National Standards outline and these standards have been incorporated into every national initiative for languages since they were first released in 1996.”

“In the past, classroom instruction was often focused on the memorization of words and grammar rules. The standards for foreign language learning require a much broader definition of the content of the foreign language classroom,” states the Organizing Principles of the Standards. “Students should be given ample opportunities to explore, develop, and use communication strategies, learning strategies, critical thinking skills, and skills in technology, as well as the appropriate elements of the language system and culture...The standards provide a background, a framework for the reflective teacher to use in weaving these rich curricular experiences into the fabric of language learning.”

## Developing National Standards

In 1993, a coalition of four national language organizations (ACTFL, the American Association of Teachers of French, the American Association of Teachers of German, and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese) received funding to develop K–12 standards for foreign language education.

At that time in the United States, there was a major movement toward establishing national standards for core subject areas in education, and foreign languages was the seventh and final subject area to receive federal support to develop standards. As a result, the 11-member Standards Task Force, representing a variety of languages, levels of instruction, program models, and geographic

regions, was appointed to undertake the enormous task of defining content standards—what students should know and be able to do—in language education.

The members of this group met numerous times over the next three years, discussing every aspect of language learning and identifying the broad goals of the discipline (what were to eventually become the 5 Cs—Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities). Within each of these areas, they identified the essential skills and knowledge students would need to acquire—and these became the 11 Standards.

In 1996, the first version, *The Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, was published and disseminated to the language education field. Subsequent to this publication, the collaboration of the four professional organizations that had sponsored the Standards project was expanded to include seven others: American Association of Teachers of Italian, American Classical League, American Council of Teachers of Russian, Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools/Chinese Language Teachers Association, and National Council of Secondary Teachers of Japanese/Association of Teachers of Japanese. These groups pursued the next steps in specifying standards by creating language-specific standards that built on the so-called “generic” standards of 1996. A much-enlarged second edition of the document was then published as *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* in 1999, including language-specific standards for Chinese, Classical Languages, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. A third edition was published in 2006, with some revision and the inclusion of Arabic language-specific standards.



The process for creating the original Standards document remains a game-changing moment in the history of language education in the United States, which was made possible because of the creative thinkers that were put on the task.

"It was just an amazing group of people coming together—and if you look at them today, they are all the leaders in our field," says Brown. She notes that the task force was supported by an advisory council of equally esteemed individuals within the profession, as well as an external advisory group of stakeholders—"very pivotal and prominent people in the field of education and business at that time," says Brown.

Abbott notes that during the three-year process, the task force regularly put out draft documents to the field and revised according to their feedback. "It was very important to get everyone's input," she notes.

"It was exciting and humbling for me to be a part of this effort, much less to be chosen to be the chair. It was a watershed moment in the language profession, but it was also a watershed moment in my own professional life," says Brown. Other participants agree.

"This was the most satisfying professional development opportunity and experience that I have ever had as a professional educator," says Tom Welch, another member of the task force. "My colleagues were all so extremely committed, intelligent, and creative that it made every meeting a joy to look forward to. Also, because the grant was over three years, we met four times a year for those three years—usually close to a week at a time. This gave us the time to develop a lot of confidence in and commitment to one another."

Despite the camaraderie of the group, the current format of the 5 Cs/11 Standards did not emerge fully formed. "We went through an incredible number of iterations," Welch recalls. "We had many different draft versions we passed around. It was probably the last year that we were working on it that we had finally figured out a different way to look at what we were trying to do as a profession and how we were trying to propel learning and that's where the 'Cs' eventually came from. We looked at our goals and

they seemed to gel into those." He believes that the fact the group put in a significant amount of time, spread out over years, allowed it to do something unique.

"The standards ended up being a really different way of looking at what we were doing and where we were going as a profession. Sometimes with other working groups that I've seen, because they don't have a lot of time, they simply come up with a new version of what has already been done. But we had the time to reflect and communicate and then to come back...and we had enough time to get to know each other so that we could feel comfortable in sharing those 'aha!' moments. The luxury of having time really made a critical difference in our ability to come up with something completely different—that I really think helped push the profession forward."

## Determining Their Content

"When we went to develop the standards, we had the opportunity to re-think what we were teaching and what we were all about," says June Phillips, project director for the grant to develop the National Standards and another member of the task force. She says that at that time the field was just starting to look at language education in terms of proficiency (i.e., what students could actually do) and moving away from memorization and a grammar-based syllabus.

"In developing the standards, we had the chance to look at what kinds of things really happen in good language classrooms," she says. However, the group soon realized that while the new focus on proficiency was a great improvement over what came before, communication was only one aspect of learning a language, in addition to learning about another culture, geography, history, the arts, and more. "We realized we needed to broaden from the proficiency movement—not abandon it—but broaden it so that we show all the other rich content that foreign language teachers deal with."

Why are there "5 Cs" and not "4 Ts" or "10 Ms" or any other combination of numbers and initials? According to Phillips, it was part lucky accident and part clever packaging.



## The Philosophy Behind the Standards

"Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language."

—STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY,  
STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
LEARNING

"Communication was an obvious one," she recalls. "But we said we need to make it explicit that we don't just teach verbs and vocabulary words and how to order a meal in a restaurant. We do teach Culture, of course, and then we do a lot of interdisciplinary work—that became Connections. We teach how to compare cultures and languages, and this eventually blossomed into Comparisons. Communities became a really important goal; part of the grant said that we had to have an advisory board of stakeholders outside the profession—school district supervisors, businesspeople, parent associations—and a couple of people from the business community really pushed that what we were teaching was so that our students could go out into the global community and use the language. As we broadened our ideas, we accidentally hit on some Cs." It took just a bit of tweaking from what came up naturally in the discussions to create an easy-to-remember way of thinking about these goal areas.

"We realized that we had a discipline that needed to be presented in a way that would make sense to this larger public. I think at one point we ended up with 4 Cs and then the interdisciplinary area, and we just said—'Well, that's connecting to other disciplines!'" she says. "It gives us a great shortcut way to talk about what we teach in languages. We were aware that we didn't want to have too many standards. So we had come up with 11 but when we saw we could cluster them under the five goal areas, it all made sense."

"The concepts we'd come up with needed to be made more marketable and interesting to the profession in some way," says Keith Cothrun, another member of the Standards Task Force. "In creating the 5 Cs, we were trying to think of ways to put it all together to make it memorable and make it something that language professionals would really latch onto and talk about."

## Measuring Their Impact

They may have been a welcome change from the past, they may have been carefully crafted by thoughtful people, but have they really made a difference in language education?

In 2008, ACTFL was awarded a federal grant to assess the impact that the National Standards have had on the profession. The three-year grant, *A Decade of Foreign Language Standards: Influence, Impact, and Future Directions*, assembled data from a variety of evidence and has resulted in three reports that together show that the Standards have indeed influenced and instigated change in how languages are taught and learned. These documents, now available on the ACTFL website, include a narrative report describing the impact of the Standards on institutions, educators, and research in the profession and *Decades of Standards: Influence, Impact: Survey Results*—the raw data and analysis in more detail.

Phillips, co-chair of the Standards Impact Grant, has overseen the project which included an electronic survey of more than 1,200 language educators and a review of the professional literature on the Standards. "When this three-year project came to an

end, we had posed three main questions: Did the Standards have an influence on what happens in foreign language classrooms? Our research tells us yes. Did it have an impact and was that impact positive? Yes. And, is there more to do? Definitely," she says.

According to Phillips, one of the main accomplishments of the literature review was the location of 591 publications that related to the National Standards. The literature task force organized those into three groups, including one where they were principally mentioned and one where they were substantially mentioned, which led to a group of 310 Standards-related articles from 1997–2009 that have now been annotated and are on a searchable website at ACTFL. Phillips says the plan is for the profession to work together to keep this bibliography going so that it does not end at 2010.

An additional benefit of the impact grant, she explains, is that the survey gathered a wealth of statistical data as well as open-ended responses. "We were able to look at teachers and the kinds of practices they are using in their classrooms," says Phillips. "Which standards are they using most extensively? Which ones are they most comfortable with? Which ones are they uncomfortable with? Which ones are they not understanding?" She says this information can be helpful in shaping and guiding professional development to assist teachers' understanding of the standards, such as the ACTFL webinar series.

"One of the things that we came out of this process feeling was that the Standards—after 15 years—have proven to be broad enough that states can develop frameworks from them—and districts can—and departments can. They were not too proscriptive and that was important to us. They were flexible enough that different teachers and different programs could use those Standards and not feel constrained by them. We found they were truly visionary enough; in fact when you look at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Map—you see our ability to "cross-talk" with administrators on these skills is much greater as a result of our own Standards." She mentions all the other educational initia-

tives that the language education profession has been able to connect with as a result of having established the Standards, including ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts; the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills; and the College Board's new curriculum for Advanced Placement (AP).

Clearly, the Standards have had an impact on classroom teachers and the language education profession, but this impact has not been limited to K–12; it can be seen within higher education as well.

"In our profession, as language educators, one of the age-old problems we are always trying to solve is articulation," says Cothrun. "I think that the Standards actually provided that framework for what we are *articulating*—and provided us with the opportunity of a common language to use across levels to discuss what students should be able to do, and later to what degree. Even though the funding for the original grant was K–12 because it was coming from the U.S. Department of Education, on the task force the scope of our thinking was always K–16," he says. "The idea was really to think about what to look for in a progression of K–16... Immediately after the generic standards were complete, we set to work on the language-specific standards and almost all of those were developed to illustrate K–16 programs."

"Because the AATs [language-specific organizations] were part of our Collaborative Board, we naturally focused on K–16 rather than just K–12," says Phillips. "And partly because of this and the fact that we went beyond the communication aspect to include culture, colleges and universities were willing to acknowledge us as part of the humanities." She also notes that in the literature survey as part of the impact grant, much of the research came from higher education, so it is clear that many at the postsecondary level are interested in the Standards.

Cothrun sees a major impact of the Standards movement as helping to unite the profession across languages and levels. He

## Taking a Closer Look at the 5 Cs and the 11 Standards

For the rest of this year, we will be focusing on the National Standards in a five-part series of articles in *The Language Educator*. Each issue, we will examine one goal area and the standards contained within it and offer some examples of language educators who are doing an excellent job of incorporating and integrating the 5 Cs in their instruction.

**Communication**—Communicate in Languages Other Than English: Standards 1.1., 1.2., & 1.3

In **February**, we will begin our series with a focus specifically on Communication. “*Communication* is at the heart of second language study, whether the communication takes place face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature.”\*

**Cultures**—Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures: Standards 2.2. & 2.2

In **April**, we will continue the series with a look at the Cultures goal. “Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the *cultures* that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs.”

**Connections**—Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information: Standards 3.1 & 3.2

The **August** issue will bring a focus on Connections. “Learning languages provides *connections* to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to the monolingual English speaker.”

**Comparisons**—Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture: Standards 4.1 & 4.2

We will look at Comparisons in the **October** issue. “Through *comparisons* and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world.”

**Communities**—Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World: Standards 5.1 & 5.2

The series will conclude in **November** with a focus on Communities. “Together, these elements enable the student of languages to participate in multilingual *communities* at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways.”

\*Quotes from the Executive Summary of the National Standards document.



continues, “It has also gotten teachers—the classroom practitioners—to think about what really is important in the study and acquisition of language. And it’s not necessarily learning things in isolation; it’s not about being able to recite the rules. It’s actually about application. That has served us in providing students satisfaction in what they are learning in the classroom. Students in Standards-based programs are walking away with proficiency in the language—and that’s what they come to our classrooms for, to use the language in a very practical fashion and to communicate.”

## Looking Towards the Future

The Standards document and supporting information is by no means absolute or unchangeable, as previous revisions and editions have shown, and in fact the Standards Collaborative Board met recently to discuss some changes that they expect to make to the Standards document leading up to publication of a fourth edition.

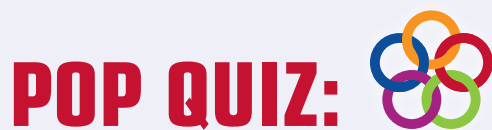
“Now that we have the survey done, we have learned some things and we’re going to do some refreshing of the information sup-

porting the generic standards,” says Phillips. “Some of that will be updating of technology—think of all the things that have changed since 1996. We had no Facebook, we had no Skype, no YouTube. So, we want to update the document with how these technologies can help us develop Communications Standards, as well as Communities Standards. We also want to take what we’ve learned in the survey and from the past 15 years of practice, and add to the Standards document by exploring the instructional

*Continued on p. 47*

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE STANDARDS IMPACT GRANT ON THE ACTFL WEBSITE BY CLICKING ON [WWW.ACTFL.ORG/STANDARDSGRANT](http://WWW.ACTFL.ORG/STANDARDSGRANT). LEARN ABOUT THE CROSSWALK BETWEEN THE NATIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE STANDARDS AND THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE AT [WWW.ACTFL.ORG/CCSTANDARDS](http://WWW.ACTFL.ORG/CCSTANDARDS).





# How Well Do YOU Know the National Standards?

The Standards for Foreign Language Learning (“National Standards”) were published in 1996. Now, 15 years later, you can test your knowledge of the standards with this quiz by selecting the BEST answer among the choices.

1. The Standards for Learning Languages are organized into **five key goal areas**:
  - A. Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Consensus, Cultural Awareness
  - B. Problem Solving, Hypothesizing, Using Technology, Adaptability, Global Responsibility
  - C. Ordering, Giving Directions, Asking Questions, Making Polite Requests, Sending Messages
  - D. Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, Communities
2. The **five goal areas** are most effectively taught:
  - A. As five separate elements of each lesson
  - B. Fully integrated and interwoven throughout each unit of instruction
  - C. One at a time, one goal area for each day of the week
  - D. Starting with only one goal area and then adding another one each year of instruction
3. **Three modes of communication** placed the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) into a purposeful relationship based on the reason behind the communication. The three modes of communication are:
  - A. Texting, Translating, Publishing
  - B. Interpersonal, Interpretive, Presentational
  - C. Negotiate, Understand, Create
  - D. Interrupt, Delete Messages, Finish Someone Else’s Sentences
4. **Culture** is described as the connection of three broad concepts:
  - A. Products, Practices, and Perspectives
  - B. Festivals, Food, and Fashion
  - C. Economics, Politics, Sociology
  - D. Big C, Middle C, and Little C
5. The Standards provide “a framework for the reflective teacher to use in weaving rich curricular experiences into the fabric of language learning.” Several curricular elements support learning in a standards-based classroom. Identify which of the following form this **weave of curricular elements**:
  - A. Language system and communication strategies
  - B. Cultural content, learning strategies, and content from other subjects
  - C. Critical thinking skills and technology
  - D. All of the above
6. The **Connections** goal means that students:
  - A. Will reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines plus acquire information and recognize distinctive viewpoints through the foreign language and its cultures
  - B. Will find a way to link language learning to their career goals
  - C. Will “Skype” with native speakers abroad
  - D. Will improve their chances to win at Jeopardy
7. The **Comparisons** goal involves:
  - A. Selecting one culture as better than another one
  - B. Knowing the origin of vocabulary words
  - C. Being able to improve one’s pronunciation in the target language to be compared to and mistaken for a native speaker
  - D. Demonstrating understanding of the nature of language and the concept of culture by comparison of the language and culture studied with one’s own
8. The **Communities** goal means that teachers:
  - A. Must take students into the local community or abroad to hear and see the target language used
  - B. Need to schedule field trips each quarter
  - C. Should connect students with native and heritage speakers of the target language through social networking or other technology, using local resources, and building lifelong habits to communicate with native or heritage speakers
  - D. Should sponsor exchange students



9. The National Standards quickly became adopted in their entirety or with slight adaptations by state departments of education, to become the state standards guiding curriculum, assessment, and instruction across the nation. How many states have adopted the essence of the **five goal areas** into their state standards for language learning?
- A. Fewer than 10  
B. 10-24  
C. 25-39  
D. At least 40
10. Initially, the standards were published in a generic volume. Since then, different language organizations have added companion documents that place the National Standards into the context of learning their **specific language(s)**. For how many languages have specific standards documents been published?
- A. Three  
B. Seven  
C. Ten  
D. Seventeen

Quiz Created by ACTFL Associate Director of Professional Development  
Paul Sandrock

*Continued from p. 45*

implications.” [Note: The 11 Standards themselves will not be changing.]

There are currently a number of new language-specific standards that are either ready to be published or in the preparation process, so those will be coming out soon—including American Sign Language, Chinese (13–16), Hindi, Korean, Modern Greek, Russian (updated), Scandinavian languages, Swahili, Urdu, Yoruba, and Zulu. The already established language-specific standards will also be updated with new scenarios, according to Phillips. Cothrun sees the move towards developing additional languages as positive for all.

“Where we are right now with the various less commonly taught and ‘critical needs’ languages that are developing Standards is that it’s really giving them credibility as legitimate languages to study,” he says. “It provides educational institutions with a motivation to include these languages in their programming because they are legitimized by the definition of their Standards. I think it’s really been beneficial as we see the growth in the less commonly taught languages, that they see themselves connected to Spanish, French, and German and they realize that in order to be in the same discussions, there has to be a level of standardization. It’s actually a marketing tool for promoting study of their languages and all languages.”

*Sandy Cutshall is Editor of The Language Educator. She is based in Mountain View, California, where she also teaches English as a second language and U.S. citizenship preparation to adults.*

1. D  
2. B  
3. B (Option C describes what a student needs to do within the modes of communication)  
4. A (Option D describes how culture used to be categorized: Big C for arts, literature; Little C for daily routines, celebrations; and sometimes as Middle C for systems such as economics or politics)  
5. D (All seven of these are identified as essential curricular elements)  
6. A  
7. D  
8. C  
9. D  
10. C (Arabic, Chinese, Classical Languages, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish); however, standards in American Sign Language (ASL), Hindi, Korean, Modern Greek, Scandinavian languages, Swahili, Urdu, Yoruba, and Zulu are underway.

**POP QUIZ Answers:**

# Raising Multilingual Children

BY PATRICIA KONING

*EDITOR'S NOTE: While this article is meant for the readers of The Language Educator—primarily language teachers interested in how language use at home can support language learning in the classroom and vice versa—educators may also wish to share the information here with parents and other family members who would like to know the best methods for raising children to speak multiple languages.*

**T**eachers Pablo and Jackie Muirhead are planning to leave their two children a very special inheritance, but it's not a financial gift. Instead, they are focused on giving their children something even better—bilingualism.

Pablo grew up bilingual; a native of Peru, he spent his childhood summers there after his family moved to the United States. "Spanish was the language in our home, of my family. That had a huge influence on me," he says. "When we had children, we knew we would make Spanish a part of how we raised them."

Jackie grew up monolingual, but began studying Spanish in high school and increased her proficiency in college. For their two children—four-year-old Santiago and two-year-old Gabriela—they are emulating Pablo's childhood.

"We only speak Spanish to our children," he explains. "Our feeling is that they will get enough input in English outside of the home. Our goal, long-term, is that they maintain a high level of Spanish."

Full immersion is one way to raise bilingual children, but it is not an option in families with only one bilingual parent. Sarah Dodson-Knight, a former French teacher in Colorado, speaks French

fluently but her husband does not. However, they are committed to raising their four-year-old son and six-month-old daughter bilingually.

The idea came to them about six years ago when Dodson-Knight was caring for her nephew one day a week. "My sister-in-law and her husband are not bilingual, but they had lived abroad and they appreciated the value of speaking another language," she explains. "They asked me to speak only French to the baby."

What happened astounded her. "By the time he was 18 months old, he was







OPPOSITE PAGE: Pablo and Jackie Muirhead with their children Santiago and Gabriela.

LEFT: Sarah Dodson-Knight reads a book of French rhymes to her son Griffin at age 2.

speaking two to four-word phrases in French. This was based on a maximum of five hours a week with me," she says. "It blew my mind.

When I saw that, I was

sold and my husband was on board too."

As the author of *Get Ahead by Going Abroad: A Woman's Guide to Fast-Track Career Success* and *Go Global! Launching an International Career Here or Abroad*, it may be surprising to learn that Stacie Berdan is monolingual. "Multilingualism and international experience are no longer nice to have—they're necessities," she says. "If I tried to repeat my career right now I would not be nearly as successful because I only speak English."

Berdan is determined to expose her two daughters to as many languages and cultures as possible to inspire curiosity about the world at large. "Getting them used to hearing foreign languages, to not fear different cultures, that is the first step in setting the stage," she says.

## Why Raise a Bilingual Child?

The benefits of speaking two or more languages are clear—multilingualism sharpens cognitive skills, improves employability, provides a better understanding of the world, makes travel more enjoyable, and broadens one's horizons. The earlier one starts learning a language, the more pronounced those benefits become.

A 2002 study by Laura-Ann Petitto, Director of the Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory for Language and Child Development at Dartmouth College, found that the earlier a child learned a language, the better they learned it and that children also learn better if they picked up the language in their families or communities. [Other research has also backed up the case for beginning language learning early. For an extensive list of studies, go to [www.DiscoverLanguages.org](http://www.DiscoverLanguages.org) and click on "What the Research Shows" and "Information for Parents" under the Resources tab.]

Myths that learning a second language can confuse a child or cause speech delays have been debunked repeatedly. Petitto found that the results of her study "fly in the face of educational policy that says expose a child to only one language at first."

In her 1994 book, *Language Acquisition after Puberty*, Judith R. Strozer reported that the human brain is more open to linguistic development during the years between birth and pre-adolescence and that children who learn a language before the

onset of adolescence are more likely to develop native-like pronunciation.

For the Muirheads, raising their children bilingually is about more than just the language. "We want them to appreciate their cultural heritage and take pride in being bilingual," says Pablo. "Spanish is part of who we are."

Berdan places a high premium on language skills, but she views multilingualism as much more than a tool or line on a résumé. "Someone once said that to speak another language is to have a second soul," she says. "That's how I want my daughters to see it. Language is so much more than an academic exercise."

## Getting Started Early

Jackie Muirhead strongly recommends starting at birth. "When I meet a Spanish speaker and we begin our relationship in Spanish, it feels awkward to later communicate in English. It's so hard to switch languages as language is so much a part of identity," she explains. "I didn't want it to feel awkward or contrived to switch over to Spanish with my children so I made a conscientious effort to 'begin our relationship' in Spanish."

Children begin learning the sounds and rhythms of different languages well before they become verbal. A 2009 Italian study reported that being bilingual seems to make the brain more flexible. Researchers tested recognition of three-syllable patterns in 12-month-olds and found that bilingual babies learn two kinds of patterns at the same time while monolingual babies learned only one.

Jacque Bott Van Houten, president of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL), says the ideal time to learn another language is before children enter first grade, from birth to age six.

"During this time of life, language is acquired innately through exposure to language spoken in context in a natural environment. Infants learn by seeing, hearing, and repeated imitation," she explains. "Babies babble, making sounds that are used in many languages, but when they start to talk they mimic only those sounds they hear people around them say, discarding the rest. Those discarded sounds are ones that have no relevance to their speech purpose. This is why we say it becomes more of a learning process to pick up a language later. It is also why learning environments that replicate language-in-context environments, such as immersion programs, are so successful in helping students acquire another language."



LEFT: At only 5, Stacie Berdan's daughters quickly learned how to scan the Polish menu for their favorite pierogis on their trip to Warsaw, Poland.

RIGHT: Berdan and her family spent a month in Italy in spring 2007. Here they are at the ancient theatre in Taormina, Sicily.

As language educators—they both teach Spanish at Milwaukee Area Technical College—the Muirheads have found it fascinating to watch language acquisition take place before their very eyes. “It is amazing to hear our son throw around the imperfect

subjunctive like few Spanish majors can,” Jackie shares. “That said, he still can’t tie his shoes.”

Of course, parents who are starting later should by no means despair. Research shows that even into adolescence, children still absorb language readily—but being consistent is even more critical in these later years.

In November, Dodson-Knight gave a session entitled “Second Language Learning at Home: Strategies, Challenges, and Resources” at the 2011 ACTFL Convention in Denver. One of the biggest issues that session participants brought up was the challenge of time. “Research says that if you want to become fluent, about one-third of your waking hours need to take place in the target language,” she says. “For working parents, this can be really tough.”

She recommends that parents stick to a routine that works for them. “Find a time in which you always speak that language,” she advises. “Maybe dinner is always in the target language or you speak only the target language in the car. Or you can create a space in the home that you can devote exclusively to the target language—a colorful Bolivian blanket on the floor where people can only speak Spanish, say, or a cushion that only people speaking Arabic can sit on.”

### It's No Accident

For the Muirheads, raising their children bilingually should be easy since they both speak Spanish. Since Dodson-Knight knows French, all she has to do is speak it to her daughter. Not true—even for bilingual parents, raising a child bilingually takes a concerted effort.

“Language acquisition does not happen by accident,” says Pablo Muirhead. “We live in an English-rich environment, so we have to ensure our children get the language input they

need at home.” He notes that with the exception of his extended family, his children will experience much of the world outside their home in English.

The myth that children learn languages so easily and naturally that nothing special needs to be done to foster the growth of two languages can set parents up for failure. “When parents believe this way, they may fail to provide the proper bilingual learning circumstances and then be surprised or disappointed when children are not fully bilingual,” says Barbara Zurer Pearson in her chapter, “Bilingual Infants: Mapping the Research Agenda” which appeared in the 2002 book, *Latinos: Remaking America* by Marcelo Suarez-Orozco and Mariela Páez.

Dodson-Knight found that she had to re-learn French in a whole new way to interact with a baby. “I was a great student in French. I lived abroad and taught college-level French for seven years,” she says. “But when it comes to a baby, there is a whole different lexicon. Despite a master’s degree in French, I couldn’t say ‘uh-oh, the baby had a blowout in his onesie and it got onto the bouncy chair.’”

She read French parenting blogs and French child-rearing books to bolster her baby language vocabulary. “At first it felt silly and forced to barrage my infant son with French, especially in public,” she says. “But I didn’t anticipate how speaking French to my children would make me feel like a better parent. Not just because I’m teaching them something valuable—it’s that every interaction is very deliberate and my attention is very focused. While I’ve given up parts of my culture by not interacting with my kids in English, I feel like speaking only in French has helped me forge a stronger connection with them.”

Simply having bilingual parents is not enough; it is important that children hear the target language in many different circumstances and from different speakers. Studies have linked language speed and growth of literacy to the number of conversations and the word variety that a child hears.

Having your child interact with other children in the target language is also crucial. Amanda Seewald founded the MARACAS: Spanish Program for Young Learners to do just that. “Kids really learn best with their peers,” she says. MARACAS began as a grant-funded pilot program developed by Seewald and has found a home both within the local recreation department and as part of the curriculum and extracurricular offerings in several private preschools and elementary schools in New Jersey.



*Children play in Spanish in a MARACAS enrichment class. Interacting with peers in the target language, through school, classes, playgroups, and even Skype chats, is an important component of a bilingual childhood.*

Parents can also look for a playgroup in the target language or create their own. Dodson-Knight, for example, started a French story time at her public library. Jackie Muirhead has become a minor celebrity among Santiago's friends because she gives a weekly 15-minute Spanish lesson to his pre-kindergarten class. At the end of her first class a girl asked Jackie if she spoke "like Dora" at home as well.

## Keeping It Fun

All work and no play is a sure way to drive children away from language learning. Fortunately, making language learning enjoyable is not difficult.

"While formal methods of instruction vary according to the child's age, you don't need to turn your house into a classroom and think of all your interactions as language lessons," says Dodson-Knight. "Just give your child as many possibilities for him or her to hear and interact in the different languages."

## Language Systems

One of the most widely used language systems to raise bilingual and multilingual children is **One Person, One Language (OPOL)**. Each adult consistently speaks only one language to the child, like in Sarah Dodson-Knight's home. This method requires language supplement, like playgroups, travel, or caregivers who speak the language, as it is important for the child to hear the language from more than one person. This can also be challenging for parents if one does not speak the target language.

The Muirheads are using the **Minority Language at Home** pattern. Typically, everyone speaks the target, or minority, language at home and the majority language is used elsewhere. In the Muirheads' case, Spanish is the language of their home and with Pablo's relatives. This is considered the most fail-safe method, as children will hear and interact in the language with both parents consistently from birth until they leave home.

The Multilingual Children's Association (MCA) says this method requires strong nerves on the part of the parents, since the child may not catch up with his monolingual peers in the majority language until around five years of age or when they start school. The Muirheads, however, aren't worried about this. "Santiago's English was at age level months after starting preschool because he is surrounded by so much English outside of the home," says Pablo. "Our concern is not with their English but rather in making sure that they always maintain a high level of proficiency in Spanish."

The MCA suggests a few other patterns: one language spoken every day, the other on extended vacations to another country or in a specific location, such as in an immersion program at school. Any pattern that works for a family is good and what feels most natural will work best.

Dodson-Knight has one friend who lives in France and is teaching her children Spanish and English. She switches between English and Spanish every two weeks while her husband speaks only in French. "It comes down to consistency," she says. "Whatever method you can stick to day in and day out is best."





She recommends rich and varied input: books, music, toys, videos, and computer games. Interactions in the target language should be fun, she advises. Don't give your eight-year-old flashcards to memorize or criticize your toddler's pronunciation. Rather, play games like Simon Says, Bingo, and Memory.

Dodson-Knight suggests taking tours of the house, identifying objects and rooms and colors or doing art projects that require the kids to follow directions. Sing songs, recite nursery rhymes and fingerplays (with gestures to reinforce meaning), and act things out together. "You can make patently false statements that your child will gleefully correct, like 'we're going to eat pizza with rocks on it in the bathtub for dinner,'" she says.

Seewald was surprised by how well music helped her younger students. "I knew, of course, that music doesn't just entertain, that it helps with language acquisition," she says. "But when I began sending music CDs home for parents to play during the week, the difference was amazing."

While the YouTube video website ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) was created primarily for entertainment and social purposes, it is a rich educational resource as well. Dodson-Knight looks for clips of children singing and playing in French—those cute videos that parents post to show their friends and family—and shares them with her children. "Seeing another child having fun in the target language is very motivational," she says.

In the Muirhead house, Spanish-language television is the rule. "We have a Latino package from our cable pro-

vider," says Pablo. He concedes that "it is easier to find this for Spanish than many other languages."

Books, of course, are crucial to language acquisition in any language. They also help children see language as a living, breathing thing, says Seewald, and not just something that mommy and daddy say.

"We have had to buy additional bookshelves to house the growing number of Spanish-language books that our kids have," says Jackie Muirhead. "We find this a great way to extend the variety of topics that our kids can talk about."

## Finding Immersion

Immersion is one of the fastest and most effective ways to learn a language. If you cannot provide a complete immersion environment at home, look for ways to give your children those opportunities elsewhere.

Last summer, Berdan and her family spent four weeks in Central America, traveling through Nicaragua, Panama, and Costa Rica. By the end of the trip, she says, her daughters were picking up on the different accents and phrases of each country. "Four weeks abroad seems extravagant, but it probably cost us less than a week at Disney World," she says.

There are plenty of summer immersion camps, ranging from Concordia Language Villages in Minnesota to programs offered through local school districts—and these can be a particularly good way to find immersion in a less commonly taught language. Berdan's daughters attended a STARTALK Chinese immersion summer program

## Resources

### Better Chinese

[www.betterchinese.com](http://www.betterchinese.com)

### Bilingual/Bicultural Family Network

[www.biculturalfamily.org](http://www.biculturalfamily.org)

### Bringing up Baby Bilingual

(Sarah Dodson-Knight's Blog)  
[babybilingual.blogspot.com](http://babybilingual.blogspot.com)

### Center for Applied Linguistics

[www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)

### Foreign Language Fun

[foreignlanguagefun.com](http://foreignlanguagefun.com)

### Hello World

[www.hello-world.com](http://www.hello-world.com)

### MARACAS

[www.maracas123.com](http://www.maracas123.com)

### Multilingual Children's Association

[www.multilingualchildren.org](http://www.multilingualchildren.org)

### Multilingual Living

[www.multilingualliving.com](http://www.multilingualliving.com)

### Multilingual Matters

[www.multilingual-matters.com](http://www.multilingual-matters.com)

### National Network for Early Language Learning

[www.nnell.org](http://www.nnell.org)

### PBS Noah Comprendo

[pbskids.org/noah/games.html](http://pbskids.org/noah/games.html)

### Raising Bilingual Children

[www.raising-bilingual-children.com](http://www.raising-bilingual-children.com)

### Spanglish Baby: Raising Bilingual Kids

[www.spanglishbaby.com](http://www.spanglishbaby.com)

### Stacie Berdan

[stacieberdan.com](http://stacieberdan.com)

offered through their school district. Many heritage schools offer weekend classes.

Seek out friends and family who speak the target language, or hire someone who does. Have a high school or college student babysit in the target language (and be sure to pay them a little extra for the service!).

## Language Rebellion

The “tween” and teen years are a challenge for any parent. In bilingual families, it is a common phenomenon that older adolescents will resist speaking a second language. One way to combat this is to make sure children understand your motivations.

“Instead of lecturing, try to get the kids to generate reasons why it’s a good idea to know more than one language,” says Dodson-Knight. “Can they think of people they know, celebrities they admire, who are bilingual? Why is it cool to be able to speak another language?”

Societal pressures can come into play. Pablo Muirhead remembers a time in fourth grade when he wanted to go by the name Paul at school and did not want to speak Spanish in public due to teasing.

“To combat societal ignorance, such as anti-immigrant sentiments, we need to be proactive in instilling pride in being bilingual,” he says. “Kids are quick to pick up values attached to language and recognize which language is of higher value. We want our children to take pride in their ability to speak Spanish.”

He recommends that parents communicate with their children’s teachers. “Teachers should know not just that a child lives in a bilingual household, but that it’s something your family prizes,” he explains. “Teachers can help reinforce that pride.”

Above all, don’t quit. “We’ve seen too many parents give up when their children are nine or 10 years old,” says Pablo. “When the kids begin to resist, it’s more important than ever to remain consistent.”

He and Jackie expect that one day their children might not want to speak Spanish. “We’ll keep responding in Spanish,” he says. “Even if they take a hiatus from speaking Spanish, they still need that consistent input.”

Parents should keep their expectations high, but also realistic. One parent in Spain, raising his son to speak both English and Spanish, commented on Dodson-Knight’s blog that deciding to raise a child bilingually adds another layer of uncertainty to parenting.

“Maybe the smart thing to do is set realistic goals,” he writes. “[My son] doesn’t need to be Shakespeare and it’s not your challenge, and it’s not about showing everyone how smart your kid is because he speaks English. It’s just about giving tools to your kid so he can survive in the jungle.”

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*Patricia Koning is a freelance writer and regular contributor to The Language Educator based in Livermore, California.*

## Teaching What You Can’t Speak?

Can you teach your child a language you don’t know? The answer is a qualified yes—it is possible, but takes significant commitment. According to Jacque Bott Van Houten, the best influence a parent can provide is to model an attitude of appreciation of difference in general, and language and culture in particular.

Stacie Berdan’s primary goal isn’t for her daughters to achieve fluency in a single language at an early age, although she would like them to eventually become multilingual. “It’s more about setting the stage for them to enjoy traveling and learning about other cultures and want to know more of the world,” she says. “Language is a critical skill for the 21<sup>st</sup> century; it’s what inspires me professionally and personally.”

Van Houten suggests that parents who are not bilingual should routinely use the language in chunks or phrases in meaningful contexts, like saying good morning or night or wishing happy birthday. Parents should also take advantage of opportunities to sing, play games, and read to their children in the target language.

You can also learn along with your children. As Dodson-Knight learned, the language of infants is a world removed from adult conversation. The Multilingual Children’s Association (MCA) suggests studying on your own or taking a class during this time. It is also important to find native speakers to supplement your efforts.

And as for making mistakes—the MCA says not to worry. According to the organization’s website, native speakers make mistakes too. Your errors will be “overruled” by the amount of exposure your child gets to the language. The same is true for pronunciation: How many different accents exist even within one single language?

According to the MCA, one day your child might start correcting you. Then, they say, you can relax.

## Join ACTFL’s LLC SIG

The Language Learning for Children (LLC) Special Interest Group (SIG) promotes and supports early language programs in the United States through advocacy, networking, and articulation. Find out more from the ACTFL Membership Department at [membership@actfl.org](mailto:membership@actfl.org).

# In the Classroom

## ***Using VoiceThread to Engage Students and Enhance Language Learning***

LEAH A. MCKEEMAN



Language educators are constantly seeking new, innovative, and meaningful ways to support students' language learning. VoiceThread ([www.voicethread.com](http://www.voicethread.com)) is a tool that can be used as an effective way to engage and extend students' language learning outside of the classroom. Here we explore the opportunities available with VoiceThread technology, including higher quality student engagement, a unique instructional platform not available in the traditional classroom environment, and increased quality of student language production.

The integration of VoiceThread has been researched and used to support instruction with elementary, secondary, and post-secondary students. Instructional examples demonstrate how VoiceThread has been effectively implemented within these settings. The comments from secondary and postsecondary students shared here explore their perceptions of VoiceThread.

### **What Is VoiceThread?**

VoiceThread is an online, collaborative, multimedia slideshow tool that was created with educators in mind. It can be used for free or at a minimal expense depending upon which features are desired. It is open source, allowing participants within a VoiceThread to virtually, asynchronously interact with other individuals and gain new perspectives worldwide. VoiceThread would be classified as a Web 2.0 tool. It supports information sharing and creation, encourages collaboration, and is situated within a virtual environment.

Conversations are hosted via an online platform that allows for students and educators to comment on the content and subject of the thread. Comments can be made through multiple formats (voice recording, written text, or video recording) thus providing a platform in which to converse around media (text, pictures, video, and/or documents). The "doodling" tool allows individuals to supplement comments through a written overlay of the slide that disappears once the comment times out. The capability to doodle

while commenting can enhance understanding for others who are viewing the thread, starting back with the original slide for each new comment.

VoiceThread has vast possibilities and potential as an instructional tool. However, it is nonetheless a tool and is only as effective for instructors and students as the way it is structured and utilized. For optimal effectiveness, using VoiceThread should not be an isolated activity. Instead, think about how it connects to in-classroom activities and how it can be used as an extension to existing classroom instruction. For instance, VoiceThread can act as a monitoring or editing tool, offering another platform to reinforce teaching. Texts can be embedded within various slides of the VoiceThread and students can edit sentences, paragraphs, or longer texts through verbal explanations and/or the doodling feature. This not only encourages students to monitor their language use, but it also supports their metacognitive and critical thinking. Therefore, what is happening in class is supported through a carefully crafted VoiceThread activity.

### **A Study in VoiceThread**

VoiceThread was designed with education in mind. To document what VoiceThread can do within instruction and how it may impact teaching and learning, a research study was recently conducted with participants from two postsecondary classrooms (one at a Midwestern four-year college and one at a community college) and two high school classrooms. Data were collected through qualitative surveys, observations, informal interviews, and artifacts. Classrooms who participated in the research integrated VoiceThread into their instructional design over the course of a year. Periodically, participating students were asked to reflect upon their experiences and perceptions of using VoiceThread. Examples are shared in this article about how VoiceThread was implemented within instruction and the resulting perceptions of the student participants.



## VoiceThread as it Engages and Motivates

VoiceThread can reach students who might not be fully participating in a traditional classroom. It can also engage and motivate students to learn by minimizing anxiety, providing additional processing time, and fostering creativity and originality.

A vital element within a language classroom is the creation of an environment and culture that fosters language learning, supports multiple perspectives and viewpoints, and provides a safe environment in which to make mistakes. VoiceThread offers a less intimidating space, which can lower students' affective filter or level of anxiety, thus increasing the feasibility of language acquisition. Jessica, a postsecondary student using VoiceThread stated, "I'm not a fan of public speaking and tend to get nervous when speaking in front of people. This type of assignment gave me a chance to speak aloud but from my own home, which helped me be more at ease."

VoiceThread allows all students to be able to participate within discussions, encouraging reluctant participants, and forcing others who might tend to monopolize a conversation to share in the discussion. Marissa, a secondary student, shared a similar sentiment by saying: "It was also nice if you are a shy person, to not have the whole class looking at you while answering questions." By allowing students to produce language and share their viewpoints in a less intimidating way, students can be more willing and apt to contribute. VoiceThread offers students a chance to be able to listen, review, and re-record what they say so that they can accurately express their thoughts, strengthen their pronunciation, and increase their overall confidence as a second language learner.

Due to the nature of VoiceThread as a Web 2.0 tool, students are innately drawn to it and motivated to engage and create with it. Justin, a secondary student, said, "It was much cooler to do a project using VoiceThread versus a PowerPoint presentation. You can personalize it and make your project so much more interesting." Finley, a secondary student, stated, "Seeing others' VoiceThreads encouraged me to be more creative and imaginative with my own." The affordance of VoiceThread to support student learning preferences and individuality further illustrates how VoiceThread engages and motivates student's language learning.

## VoiceThread as it Enhances Language Learning

Language educators typically have a finite amount of time to spend with students. Therefore, the majority of language students have limited opportunities to learn and interact within the target language. In an attempt to extend language learning outside the classroom, VoiceThread offers a platform to support and enhance students' interaction using the target language. Without the constraints of time or how many students can participate at once, VoiceThread offers a space to facilitate learning. VoiceThread can be utilized outside a traditional classroom environment to allow for more

## VoiceThread in Action

The following activities offer some ideas for utilizing VoiceThread within language instruction:

- Embed a culturally authentic painting, for example Paul Cezanne's "The Card Players," and ask students to create a story in the target language based upon the piece of art. Students might create a dialogue between the players, or students could imagine the card game these individuals are playing and describe the game, rules, how to win, etc.
- Present a current event to students and ask them to discuss it. For instance, present the October 2010 news story coupled with a picture of the successful rescue of the 69 Chilean miners. This will act as a springboard for students to discuss the individuals involved in this event, key occurrences, impressions, etc.
- Create a biography of a real or fictional person. Embed a picture or headshot, then describe who he/she is, what he/she likes to do, physical characteristics, occupation, etc.
- Create a 21<sup>st</sup> century word wall. Embed the different letters of the alphabet onto individual slides of the VoiceThread. Then, as new content is learned, students can continually add words/phrases to the appropriate letter.

When assessing student progress, VoiceThread can e-mail daily reports that time stamp when each contribution was made and by whom. This helps determine if students completed assignments on time. The format of VoiceThread also allows instructors to replay content therefore being able to attend to individual components (e.g., pronunciation, content, grammar) when assessing student work.



To find some examples of VoiceThreads related to languages, go to [www.voicethread.com](http://www.voicethread.com) and click on About → Digital Library → Education → Foreign Language.

contact hours with the target language, greater instances for students to practice the language, and extended instructional/teaching opportunities. Since VoiceThread is an asynchronous communication platform, each student within the class can participate simultaneously, thus optimizing learning potential. VoiceThread allows users to embed multimedia, thus supporting learning via multiple modalities. Students can access content by listening, reading/viewing, and tactile manipulation through doodling. All of these pedagogical practices are touted for being sound instructional techniques which support good learning. Thus, VoiceThread provides yet another tool to enhance and support students' language learning.

Through the use of multimedia, students can engage with the target language through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Authentic and meaningful input can pair with students' ability to practice and provide language output. For example, a VoiceThread could provide students with auditory and visual input, a picture with supporting text, and the prompt, given through verbal instructions. After processing the input, students formulate a response, which can be portrayed through a comment in either oral or written language. The multimedia format offers opportunities for accommodations of students with special needs. For instance, the video commenting can allow participants to use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate. Instructionally, the affordance of rich context fosters more comprehensible input, thus increasing student learning.

Many teachers have discovered that their students' output is of higher quality in VoiceThread projects and conversational

assignments. Pam, a secondary student, said, "When I would think about my VoiceThread, I would have to record it over and over again until I felt it was right. This is because listening to other people's comments and hearing how good theirs sounded encouraged me to make a better effort." Tamera, a postsecondary student stated, "Each project I did required me to not only read the text, but also to put together my own thoughts and ideas into oral format." There is benefit from the opportunity for students to talk through their understanding and to work collaboratively with others to gain further insight into what they are learning and reading about, thus cultivating a community of language learners. With this access to integrated multimedia input and the choices in output format, multiple learning styles are supported. As a result, a more robust understanding of the material can be generated. Content can be reinforced or further extended so that language learners, at all levels, and can increase their understanding while participating and contributing to the discussion and thus to the learning process.

In addition, VoiceThread offers a unique instructional platform that a traditional classroom environment cannot offer. With the asynchronous and online nature of VoiceThread, students can take the time they need to fully process and comprehend material. One student said, "I read and interpreted online text differently through VoiceThread because I could go back and hear what my classmates had said multiple times. In an actual classroom setting you cannot hit the rewind button, so that is an advantage." When content and/or text is complicated or challenging, students need the processing time to digest the material. VoiceThread offers the opportunity not only to provide unlimited time to review and process the media and content presented, but to allow students to voice their questions, concerns, and comments, thus entering into a conversation with those participating within the VoiceThread.

A concern that may arise when implementing VoiceThread within instruction is the issue involving access. The default setting is for VoiceThread to be open access and for the general public to both view and participate within individually created VoiceThreads. When using it with younger students, this default setting could cause concern. Either way, it is important to closely and carefully monitor postings, comments, doodles, and conversations. If the issue of access is a major concern, it is possible to change the access settings to allow only certain individuals or groups of students to view, and contribute to the VoiceThread. This can be easily done as you are finishing your VoiceThread and preparing it for publishing.

Overall, VoiceThread is an intuitive tool that, when coupled with these suggestions, offers great potential for extending instructional opportunities and language learning.

### ***Getting Started with VoiceThread***

When considering how to get started using VoiceThread, bear in mind the following tips:

- Keep it simple. Don't try to do too much too quickly. Get a feel for the VoiceThread platform and gradually implement more features, slowly increasing complexity.
- Provide engaging prompts to which students can respond. It will be much easier for students to know how to enter into the conversation through comments when they are clearly and explicitly invited into it.
- Plan ahead of time. The more preparation that is done ahead of time, the more likely the VoiceThread will be successful because you have considered potential challenges and pitfalls.
- Keep it current, authentic, and meaningful. VoiceThread allows for a real and more authentic conversation. Therefore, help to increase student motivation by providing students with content that is not dated, has meaning, and is engaging.

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## Photo Contest Theme: *Language Learning in Action*

### Instructions:

Please upload your photo(s) directly on the ACTFL website at [www.actfl.org/2012photocontest](http://www.actfl.org/2012photocontest). Please limit the number of images you upload to only the best magazine-worthy shots—one photo per entry. You can submit multiple entries. These should be in focus, well framed and uncluttered, and a minimum of 300 dpi (dots per inch) resolution. Once you have uploaded your photo, you will need to enter personal information including your name, title, and institution, as well as a caption explaining who and what is pictured and why you believe this image best communicates the theme of “Language Learning in Action.” Please note if you are the photographer or, if not, explain who took the picture. Be sure that you have their permission to submit it for the contest. It is the responsibility of each submitter to ensure that he or she has permission for publication from all individuals who appear in the photo, as well as the photographer. You will be able to download a photo release form on the ACTFL website.

**Prizes:** The first place winner of the contest will receive a **\$500** American Express gift card; second place a **\$200** gift card. For all other entries, if we feature the photo in *TLE*, photographers will be credited in *TLE* and on our website.

All questions should be directed to  
[scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org)



**Contest Deadline: June 15, 2012**

## Give Us Your **Best SHOT!** *2012 Photo Contest*

We invite you to participate in our 2012 *TLE* Photo Contest: Capturing “**Language Learning in Action.**” Send in your high-quality digital photographs that represent language education inside or outside the classroom and you may see them in a future issue of *The Language Educator*.

Examples of images that would be appropriate for submitting include:

- Classroom activities that are visually engaging
- School-wide events where language students make presentations
- Images of travel and study abroad which convey the use of the target language
- Community service projects and service learning programs
- Students interacting with legislators and other community leaders to demonstrate their language skills and advocate for language programs
- **Discover Languages** events or any other special school or community festivals, fairs, or events
- Students on local field trips using their language skills
- Language camps and summer programs
- Any other interesting situation where language learning is shown!

Think about how an image can tell the story. Consider how you can best showcase your students’ language learning through an excellent photo—and then enter it to win!

ABOVE: Gabil, a senior at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, with her new friends in Manabi, Ecuador, during a summer service project. (Photo submitted for the 2011 *TLE* Photo Contest by Jose Palos.)

Don’t delay—submit your best shot today! You may see your photograph in a future issue of *The Language Educator*.





# Legislative Look

NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL NEWS ON POLICY AND LEGISLATION

## 2012 Legislative Day Announced

The Annual Joint National Committee on Languages & The National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS) Legislative Day and Legislative Assembly has been planned for **May 20–22, 2012** at the Marriott Metro Center in Washington, DC. More detailed information is available at [www.languagepolicy.org](http://www.languagepolicy.org).



ACTFL Past President Barbara Mondloch presented Congressman Rush Holt (D-NJ) with the 2010 ACTFL Edwin Cudecki Award for Support for Foreign Language Education during a visit to Capitol Hill in October 2011. Holt was unable to attend the 2010 ACTFL Convention in Boston where he was awarded the honor in absentia.

## FY 2012 Budget Remains Up in the Air

At the time that this issue of *The Language Educator* went to print, an agreement on the Fiscal Year 2012 budget had not yet been reached. Therefore, funding for the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) and Title VI had not yet been determined.

ACTFL, in coordination with FLAP grantees and ACTFL state language teams, has been actively engaged in advocating for these programs. As soon as any further news becomes available, we will update ACTFL members via e-mail as well as in upcoming issues of *The Language Educator*.

## ESEA Act to Be Focus in New Year

The national legislative calendar in 2012 could include debate on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

In an unexpected move, a draft ESEA bill was passed out of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee in a bipartisan fashion in October 2011. The bill appears to have gained momentum, but consideration could easily be stymied by the shifting political environment. The bill proposes the creation of a grant program to improve the teaching of subjects other than reading and math. This section, often referred to as a “well-rounded education” includes foreign language.

The ESEA was first enacted in 1965 and emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. The law authorizes federally funded education programs that are administered by the states. In 2002, Congress amended ESEA and reauthorized it as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

## Supercommittee Fails to Resolve Budget Issues

In late November 2011, the U.S. Congress Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (known as the “Supercommittee”) failed to reach a consensus on a plan to cut \$1.2 trillion from the national deficit. Ultimately, the committee could not agree on a balance of tax increases, entitlement reform, and discretionary spending reform.

Given the Supercommittee’s failure to reach a consensus, automatic cuts totaling \$1.2 trillion over the coming decade are

scheduled to go into effect in FY 2013. The Department of Education, which administers FLAP and Title VI grants, could see a 7.8% budget cut. Since the failure of the Supercommittee was announced, Members of Congress have declared their intent to make adjustments to the anticipated cuts and it is clear that this will continue to be a major topic of conversation this year.



## Advocacy Tip: Use Key Online Sources to Stay Informed and In Touch with Legislators

**TIP:** You don't always have to visit Capitol Hill or your statehouse to learn about the latest legislation related to language education; some actions you can take right from your desktop. One website offering good information about Congress and advocacy is [congress.org](http://congress.org). At this site, visitors can find lawmakers by zip code and link to their pages, contact them, and find out more

about their legislative priorities. The websites [house.gov](http://house.gov) and [senate.gov](http://senate.gov) also offer quick access to national legislators. Another helpful site for this purpose is the Senate's Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee webpage at [help.senate.gov](http://help.senate.gov). There, you can find out if any of your senators are members of this very important committee, click on their names, and find out what they say are the

issues which matter most to them and whether or not they have any official statements about language education. This information can help you in future communication with them. Educators may also want to consider doing this exercise with your students—particularly during *Discover Languages* Month in February—as a way to get them personally involved with advocacy for language education.

For more tips on advocacy, go to [www.actfl.org/advocacy](http://www.actfl.org/advocacy).

### GAO Report Released on Language and Culture Training

In October 2011, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress charged with examining matters relating to the receipt and payment of public funds, released a report entitled: "Language and Culture Training: Opportunities Exist to Improve Visibility and Sustainment of Knowledge and Skills in Army and Marine Corps General Purpose Forces."

The GAO undertook this study because the Department of Defense (DoD) has emphasized the importance of developing language skills and knowledge of foreign cultures to meet current and future needs and is investing millions of dollars to provide language and culture predeployment training to its general purpose forces. DoD has noted that such training should be viewed as a long-term investment and that training and personnel systems should better account for the knowledge and skills of service members acquired through training to help manage its forces. The committee report accompanying a proposed bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (H.R. 5136) directed GAO to review language and culture training for Army and Marine Corps general purpose forces.

The full report is available for download online at [www.gao.gov/new.items/d1250.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1250.pdf).

### Advocacy Was Key Topic at ACTFL Convention

At the Assembly of Delegates held Thursday, November 17 prior to the start of the 2011 ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo in Denver, CO, Susan Frost of The Sheridan Group, Dave Edwards of the Joint National Committee on Languages & The National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS), and Todd Bowen from New Trier Township High School in Illinois briefed the delegates on federal policy and made the case for state language associations, teachers, parents, and educators to engage with federal policymakers. They emphasized the increased importance of these relationships in times of tight budgets and fiscal constraint.

Additionally, Frost and Jill Allen Murray (also of The Sheridan Group) led a session during the convention entitled "Language Advocacy: It's Everybody's Business!" along with ACTFL Executive Director Marty Abbott and Nicole Naditz of Bella Vista High School in Fair Oaks, CA. The session featured strategies that help make the case for language programs.

ACTFL is actively working with states across the country to create state advocacy teams. State advocacy teams have been made up of several leaders in the state who have agreed to take on a strategic approach to contacting their legislators at the federal level. Three existing teams currently work closely with ACTFL to help make language learning a priority and protect funding for language programs. ACTFL is actively seeking language educators who are willing to help lead state teams. If you are interested in joining a state team, please contact Marty Abbott at [mabbott@actfl.org](mailto:mabbott@actfl.org). The state advocacy team effort will also be highlighted further in an upcoming issue of *The Language Educator*.

# WebWatch

WHAT'S ONLINE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

## Spanish Resources for Children

[www.elhuevodechocolate.com](http://www.elhuevodechocolate.com)

El Huevo de Chocolate has a number of activities and resources for children in Spanish, including fables, poems, riddles, and myths.

## Russian Language Training Video

[www.confluenttranslations.com](http://www.confluenttranslations.com)

The Confluent Translations site has a Russian language training video with phrases specifically chosen for business communication and to help avoid international cultural mistakes. There is also a downloadable script pronunciation guide and Russian translation.

## Environmental Issues for Children in Six Languages

[www.unep.org/tunza/children](http://www.unep.org/tunza/children)

Tunza is a website of the United Nations Environment Programme that is part of its strategy to engage young people in environmental issues. Tunza is a Kiswahili word meaning to “treat with care.” The strategic plan is available in English as well as Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish. There is also a Tunza song called “Time for Action.”

## German Unification Case Study

[www.foothill.fhda.edu/divisions/unification](http://www.foothill.fhda.edu/divisions/unification)

This Foothill College website has a classroom activity intended to expose German language students and social science students to the issues surrounding the German unification of 1990. It includes a teacher's guide that suggests how German instructors could have their students use German in the classroom when working on the project. In the activity, the students assume German characters, prepare arguments, and take part in a roundtable discussion—as if it were taking place between 1990–1994—regarding goals and issues of unification.

## Catalan Language and Culture

[www.nacs-catalanstudies.org](http://www.nacs-catalanstudies.org)

The North American Catalan Society is a professional organization of scholars, students, and others who are committed to encouraging and advancing the study of Catalan language and culture in North America. The organization's website has information about Catalan studies, news, and links to newspapers, radio, and electronic media for Catalan language and culture resources.

## Vocabulary Exercises in Four Languages

[www.learningchocolate.com](http://www.learningchocolate.com)

The Learning Chocolate site is designed to help language learners memorize English, Japanese, Mandarin, or Spanish vocabulary in a way that it describes as being as much fun as enjoying a piece of chocolate. The exercises use pictures, sounds, and games, and users can choose any vocabulary topic link from the homepage to start learning new words. After reviewing the vocabulary, they can play up to five games to see what they have memorized. The numerous topics include animals, activities, clothing, food, hobbies, and holidays. There are games for matching the new word to its meaning with pictures or its pronunciation, and there are games for learning how to spell the new words.



## Japanese Reading System

[hinoki.ryu.titech.ac.jp](http://hinoki.ryu.titech.ac.jp)

This site from the Tokyo Institute of Technology International Student Center has a Japanese reading system for Japanese language learners. Users of the ASUNARO system type in a Japanese sentence they want to read and select the language to display the meaning. Options include English, Chinese, Thai, Malay, and Indonesian.

## Latin Dictionary

[athirdway.com/glossa](http://athirdway.com/glossa)

Glossa is an online Latin dictionary based on *A Latin Dictionary: Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary* (1879). It is available as a web-based version in which users can type in the Latin word to get the definition, and as a desktop version that can be downloaded from the site.

## How to Order Chinese Food

[www.howtoorderchinesefood.com](http://www.howtoorderchinesefood.com)

This delicious site is certain to stimulate the appetites of all visitors. It features a quick guide, as well as ordering guides for pork, beef, chicken, fish, and vegetarian dishes in Chinese. There are also guides for soup, rice, noodles, and breakfast. In addition, there are guides to Chinese regional cuisine such as Sichuan, Hunan, and Northeastern. A Chinese culinary glossary can also be found on the website.

## Hindi and Marathi Script

[www.bookofindia.com](http://www.bookofindia.com)

The Book of India website has information about the script used in North Indian languages like Hindi and Marathi. The site includes alphabets and vowels, and allows users to hear the pronunciation by clicking on a letter, vowel, or a letter and vowel combination.

## Global Education Collaborative

[globaleducation.ning.com](http://globaleducation.ning.com)

The Global Education Collaborative is the official social network of the Global Education Conference, and it includes forums, blogs posts, events, and activities that may be of interest to language educators. The events include Food and Culture—a Global, Collaborative Classroom Project, and Écouter Lire le Monde—Global Read Aloud.

## Arapaho Language Resources

[www.arapaholanguage.com/language.htm](http://www.arapaholanguage.com/language.htm)

This Wind River Tribal College project website has Arapaho songs and stories, and a language learning guide that includes Arapaho sound charts and consonants, an Arapaho language podcast, and research on documentation and revitalization of the Arapaho language.

## Tech Tools for Teachers

[www.superteachertools.com](http://www.superteachertools.com)

The SuperTeacherTools website has free technology tools for teachers for uses such as games and classroom management. A recent addition is Lesson Tower, a web-based tool to allow teachers to create and manage an online community for their classes, clubs, or other groups.

*These and other Web resources  
can be accessed through the  
Publications area on the ACTFL website  
at **[www.actfl.org/webwatch](http://www.actfl.org/webwatch)**.*

*Why not visit today?*

# Upcoming Events 2012

## January

**5–8** American Philological Society Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. Information: [apaclassics.org/index.php/annual\\_meeting](http://apaclassics.org/index.php/annual_meeting).

**5–8** Modern Language Association Convention, Seattle, WA. Information: [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)

Also held in conjunction with the MLA Convention:

- American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages. Information: [www.aatseel.org](http://www.aatseel.org)

**11** Deadline for submission of proposals for the 2012 ACTFL Convention and World Languages Expo, Philadelphia, PA, November 16–18, 2012. Information: [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)

## February



**1–29** The seventh annual *Discover Languages . . . Discover the World!* Month will continue efforts to increase public awareness of the importance of language learning. Information, and products and resources to help celebrate Discover Languages Month: [www.DiscoverLanguages.org](http://www.DiscoverLanguages.org).

### Find More Upcoming Events Listed in the ACTFL Online Community

If you are looking for additional conferences, professional workshops, and special events of interest to language educators and administrators, please visit the ACTFL Online Community Events Calendar at [community.actfl.org/ACTFL/ACTFL/Calendar](http://community.actfl.org/ACTFL/ACTFL/Calendar).

If you have any events to add to this calendar, please send the information to [membership@actfl.org](mailto:membership@actfl.org).

## March

**8–10** Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Milwaukee, WI. Information: [www.csctfl.org](http://www.csctfl.org).

**15–18** Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Information: [www.aasianst.org/Conference](http://www.aasianst.org/Conference).

Also held in conjunction with the AAS Convention on March 15:

- American Association of Teachers of Japanese Annual Spring Conference. Information: [www.aatj.org/atj/conference/index.html](http://www.aatj.org/atj/conference/index.html).

**22–24** Southern Conference on Language Teaching, in collaboration with the Foreign Language Association of Georgia and the Southeast Association for Language Learning Technology, Atlanta, GA. Information: [scolt.webnode.com/a2012-conference-information](http://scolt.webnode.com/a2012-conference-information).

**23** ACTFL-IMAC Scholarship applications due for Spanish language study in Mexico in summer 2012. Information: [www.actfl.org/imac2012](http://www.actfl.org/imac2012).

**28–31** Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Convention, Philadelphia, PA. Information: [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org).

## April

**12–14** Southwest Conference on Language Teaching, Phoenix, AZ. Information: [www.swcolt.org](http://www.swcolt.org).

**20–23** Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Baltimore, MD. Information: [www.nectfl.org](http://www.nectfl.org).

**26–29** National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages Annual Conference, Madison, WI. Information: [www.ncolctl.org/conferences/2012](http://www.ncolctl.org/conferences/2012).

**30** Nominations for 2013 ACTFL President-Elect and Board Members Deadline. Information: [www.actfl.org/nominations](http://www.actfl.org/nominations).

## May

**20–22** JNCL-NCLIS Annual Legislative Day and Delegate Assembly, Washington, DC. Information: [www.languagepolicy.org](http://www.languagepolicy.org).

**28** ACTFL Awards Nomination Deadline. Information: [www.actfl.org/nomhandbook](http://www.actfl.org/nomhandbook).



## June

**15** *The Language Educator* 2012 Photo Contest Deadline. Theme: "Language Learning in Action." Information: [www.actfl.org/2012photocontest](http://www.actfl.org/2012photocontest).

**27–30** American Classical League Annual Institute, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV. Information: [aclclassics.org/pages/Institute](http://aclclassics.org/pages/Institute).

## July

**5–8** American Association of Teachers of French Convention, Chicago, IL. Information: [www.frenchteachers.org](http://www.frenchteachers.org).

**7–10** American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Information: [www.aatasp.org](http://www.aatasp.org).

# The Language Educator

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## Announcements

Please send in your brief announcements of interest to ACTFL members to [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org).

### ACTFL Board Member Honored by Her State

Lynn Fulton-Archer, member of the ACTFL Board of Directors and Spanish instructor at Richmond Drive Elementary School in Rock Hill, SC, has been named South Carolina Spanish Teacher of the Year.

Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Spanish Honor Society, announced the award in November 2011 at its headquarters at the College of Charleston. Fulton-Archer is the first elementary school teacher to receive the award since this recognition began seven years ago. Past recipients have all been high school teachers.

Last year, Fulton was named Foreign Language Teacher of the Year by the South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers Association (SCFLTA). During her 19-year career, Fulton-Archer has taught middle and high school Spanish for South Carolina Educational Television. With a federal grant, she created a distance learning world language program for elementary school students. She developed the units and taught all of the taped Spanish lessons of the series *Kids Interacting Through Early Language Learning*, used by schools across the state.

She has served as president of the SCFLTA and president of the South Carolina chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. She is a member of the state committee that developed the modern and classical language standards.

### Educator Wins Competition in Russia; Students Participate in Festival

Russian teacher Betsy Sandstrom from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria, VA, recently participated in a competition with teachers from 70 different countries and was awarded First Place for Distinguished Teaching of Russian Language and Culture in the International Competition. The contest took place at the First International Russian Language and Culture Festival held in St. Petersburg, Russia from Oct. 30–Nov. 3, 2011, where some of Sandstrom's students also attended the festival. Three of them—all national U.S. winners—participated in the pre-college

competition. James Graham, '12; Tania Ermak, '12; and Gordon Hart, '13 were awarded Laureate Status Certificates.

According to Sandstrom, in the teachers' competition, "We watched a video of a young teacher's lesson after being told that we would see two parts to the lesson and what the goals of each part were. We were then given 20-25 minutes to answer the following questions: What worked? What did not work?"

The Committee announced a few hours later that there were 10 winners from the morning, including Sandstrom. She continues, "We, the selected 10, then had to participate in an oral interview individually before a committee, in which they asked us to defend some of what we had written earlier and to elaborate. They challenged us on some of our comments and gave us the opportunity to offer different approaches to the same lesson plan. What would we have done differently to achieve the goals of this lesson? I felt really good about the discussion with the committee—I shared a lot of positive comments about the class and the teacher from the video. But I was honest about what I did not actually see successfully completed and suggested alternative ways to achieve the goals."

The second place winner was from Austria and the third place winner teaches Russian in Bulgaria. Sandstrom says, "It was an amazing experience to meet so many teachers of Russian from all over the world and to share our teaching philosophies and exchange ideas."

To be invited to the festival, teachers had to be recognized by an international committee for their career contributions to the teaching of Russian. Sandstrom has served as Program Director of a STARTALK institute for students and teachers of Russian, held at Thomas Jefferson High School and in Glastonbury, CT. She is a former Vice President of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages and is the current Vice President of the American Council of Teachers of Russian.

### ACTFL Past President Given Lifetime Membership in WAFLT

ACTFL Past President Barbara Mondloch was awarded a lifetime membership by the Washington Association for Language Teaching (WAFLT) at their fall conference in October 2011. Mondloch was honored for her many contributions to the language teaching profession in the state and nationally.

## Marketplace

### FELLOWSHIPS

### \$2,000 Summer Fellowship for Innovative Teachers!

March 31 deadline.

The Murdock-Thompson Center for Teachers offers fellowships for projects in new classroom strategies, motivational schemes, or curriculum reform. Work over the summer to perfect your innovation.

K-12 teachers.

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### ADVERTISE IN The Language Educator MARKETPLACE

We have introduced this section to provide a venue for classified advertising, including employment, schools, travel, and more! Find out more about this opportunity to reach language educators by contacting **Alison Bayley** at [abayley@actfl.org](mailto:abayley@actfl.org) or 703-894-2900, ext. 109.



WE WANT YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO

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**H**ave you been involved with an innovative project in language education? Or have you taken part in an unusual professional experience that you would like to share with your colleagues? Do you possess special expertise in an area that others might benefit from learning more about? Have you ever wondered why you haven't seen coverage on a particular topic—when it is an article that you yourself could write?

If you have something valuable to share, we welcome your submission to *The Language Educator* magazine!

## Some Advice for Submitting to *The Language Educator*

- ▶ **Become familiar with the magazine.** Read previous issues. Pay particular attention to the style of writing in TLE. How is it different from some educational newsletters or academic journals you may be used to reading? Look over the guidelines (available on the ACTFL website). Always be sure that your article represents accurate, up-to-date information.
- ▶ **Think beyond yourself to a greater audience.** Try to see your topic beyond your own classroom or perspective. Will this be interesting to an educator who teaches a different language or at a different level? Might this be important to someone who cares about language learning but is not an educator? Would the information be accessible for administrators, government officials, parents, students, or others? Have you talked to anyone else to get another perspective and can you include quotes from other experts that broaden the topic?
- ▶ **DOs and DON'Ts for writing about research.** DON'T simply repackage a research study or dissertation. DO approach the information you have from a new angle. DON'T include every small detail of your research procedures. DO get to the heart of the findings and why they are important. DO add in quotes with reactions from participants or experts concerning the topic. DON'T include extensive citations to previous studies, literature reviews, bibliographies/reference lists, etc. DO properly cite sources naturally within the body of your text. [Note: If what you have done is really an academic study, we encourage you to submit to ACTFL's journal, *Foreign Language Annals*.]
- ▶ **Add some extras.** Can you provide photos that go with your article? Are there other items such as bulleted lists, pull-out quotes, or short vignettes that might be featured alongside your article in a box or sidebar item? Can you provide some “web extras”—such as rubrics, documents, interviews, or further information that could be made available on the ACTFL website as a tie-in to your article?
- ▶ **Be patient and responsive.** The magazine is printed six times a year and there is limited space for publication. Not all submissions can be accepted and some are in consideration for some time before a decision is made. Often accepted submissions are scheduled for an issue months later because they will fit well with the articles in a future issue. Try not to write something that will be dated in a few months. Alternatively, you may hit the timing just right and submit something that fits perfectly for an upcoming issue. Please respond right away when contacted by the editor in order to get your article ready for publication. If you have not been contacted recently or have questions, feel free to follow up via e-mail to [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org) for an update about your submission.

### We are always looking for:

- ▶ Exciting new programs and practices being used around the country
- ▶ Technology advances in language education
- ▶ Hot news in language learning at all levels
- ▶ Your suggestions and contacts for Q&A interviews



# Help Us Honor the Best in Our Profession

## With ACTFL Professional Awards



### ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year Award

Do you know an exemplary language teacher who would be an excellent representative for our profession? Consider nominating that person for the **ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year Award**, sponsored by ACTFL and Holt McDougal. The Teacher of the Year Award also includes a \$2,000 stipend.

- Submissions are made by state organizations.
- Go to [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org) to learn more about the award and the necessary steps to make nominations.



### ACTFL-MLJ Emma Marie Birkmaier Award for Doctoral Dissertation Research in Foreign Language Education

Have you read a great doctoral dissertation lately? Maybe you should nominate the writer for the **ACTFL-MLJ Emma Marie Birkmaier Award for Doctoral Dissertation Research in Foreign Language Education**.

- Abstract of Dissertation must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.
- Finalists are notified to send copies of dissertations to the award committee chairperson by **July 7, 2012**.



### ACTFL Nelson Brooks Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Culture

Know someone who is dynamite at teaching culture? Maybe that person should be a candidate for the **ACTFL Nelson Brooks Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Culture**.

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### ACTFL-Cengage Learning Faculty Development Programs Award for Excellence in Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT

Think that someone has excelled at integrating technology into instruction at the postsecondary level? How about recommending that person for the **ACTFL-Cengage Learning Faculty Development Programs Award for Excellence in Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT**?

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### \* NEW \* ACTFL Award for Excellence in K-12 Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT

Know someone who has excelled at integrating technology into instruction at the K-12 level? How about recommending that person for the **ACTFL Award for Excellence in K-12 Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALLT**?

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### ACTFL-NYSAFLT Anthony Papalia Award for Excellence in Teacher Education

Were you inspired by an excellent teacher educator? Then that person would make a great candidate for the **ACTFL-NYSAFLT Anthony Papalia Award for Excellence in Teacher Education**.

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### ACTFL-MLJ Paul Pimsleur Award for Research in Foreign Language Education

Have you read a great research article lately? Then let the editor of that journal know that the author should be submitted as a nominee for the **ACTFL-MLJ Paul Pimsleur Award for Research in Foreign Language Education**.

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### ACTFL Wilga Rivers Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, Postsecondary

We all know great postsecondary leaders in our profession! Help us to honor these individuals with the **ACTFL Wilga Rivers Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, Postsecondary**.

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### ACTFL Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, K-12

We all know great K-12 leaders in our profession! Help us to honor these individuals with the **ACTFL Florence Steiner Awards for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, K-12**.

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.



### ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language Program

Have you heard about an exemplary elementary foreign language program? Consider nominating that program for the **ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language Program**.

- Nominations must be postmarked on or before **May 28, 2012**.

To bestow these annual awards, ACTFL relies on its member organizations to nominate qualified candidates. Awards include cash prizes of \$500. More information is available at [www.actfl.org/awards](http://www.actfl.org/awards).

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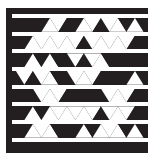


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