2011 FALL EDITION

MFLA Notes

MARYLAND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION FALL 2011

Our Maryland Language Teacher of the Year, Sherri Harkins from Wicomico County, was chosen as the Northeast Language Teacher of the Year . In addition, our Best of Maryland session, "Implementing Arts Integration and Artful Thinking in Your Classroom," presented by Pat Klos of Anne Arundel County was chosen as the Best of Northeast. Both Sherri and Pat will represent the Northeast at the ACTFL Conference in Denver in November 2011.

From the MFLA President

Welcome back to a new school year!
I bring greetings on behalf of the MFLA Board of Directors!

MARYLAND HAS MUCH TO CELEBRATE!

Since my last message, The Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Conference was held in Baltimore in April and many of you attended. There was a multitude of opportunities to develop professionally, to network with colleagues, and to explore new resources and tools in the Exhibits Hall. Thank you to those of you who stopped by the MFLA table in the Exhibits Hall and congratulations to MFLA member, Linda Butt, who won free combination registration to our upcoming Fall Conference in the raffle. We are excited that the Northeast Conference will be returning to Baltimore on April 21-23, 2012. Mark your calendars.

Our attention now turns to our annual fall conference coming up on Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22, 2011. This year's conference theme is "World Languages and Beyond: Gateway to Global Communities" and will be held at the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, Maryland. Take advantage of this opportunity to attend targeted professional development, share and network with colleagues, and deepen your knowledge around best practices for the World Language classroom. We will be offering a full menu of professional development opportunities including Friday swap shops and workshops and Saturday concurrent sessions. Please note that we have been able to freeze the conference registration cost at the 2008 level once again this year. The conference flier and registration form are included in this newsletter.

I encourage you to continue to visit our website, www.mflamd.org, for conference registration plus updated information, news, and other items of interest to World Language educators.

In closing, I look forward to seeing you at the fall conference and wish you a smooth start to the new school year.

Sincerely,

Leslie M. Grahn, MFLA President

From the Editor . . .

What a hot summer we have had! I hope that many of you are taking some hot new ideas back to the classroom with you when you go in a few days (if you haven't already gone back). Most of us are just as excited (nervous?) as our students during those first days of the school year. Will my students succeed this year? Will I be able to reach all of my students? What do I do if there is one (or more) that I just can't get to? What can I do differently? How will I ever get it all done? One thing is for sure—you're not alone. Greet them with a smile and a new attitude every day. Try some of the new ideas you see in the newsletter and borrow some ideas. Have a great start to the new year!

Fall Conference

The coming year promises to be an exciting one for MFLA. In October, we are having our annual Fall Conference at Notre Dame in Baltimore (October 21 and 22) which is shaping up to be a full exciting conference under Chair Monica Abuliak and her committee who have been hard at work planning activities that you will not want to miss! What a weekend to look forward to! The pre-registration deadline for the conference is September 30th so there is still plenty of time to take advantage of this excellent professional development opportunity. The link to the conference registration form and related information is http://mflamd.org.

Spring Conference

Another piece of very exciting news is that, for the second year, the annual NECTFL Conference is being held in Baltimore. What an exciting time to be a World Language educator and a member of MFLA!

Rusty Mumford
MFLA Corresponding Secretary
MFLA Notes Editor

2011 MFLA
Fall Conference

World Languages & Beyond: Gateway to Global Communities

OCTOBER 21 - 22, 2011
COLLEGE OF NOTRE DAME
Baltimore, Maryland

Review Workshops!
Research Sessions!
Register!

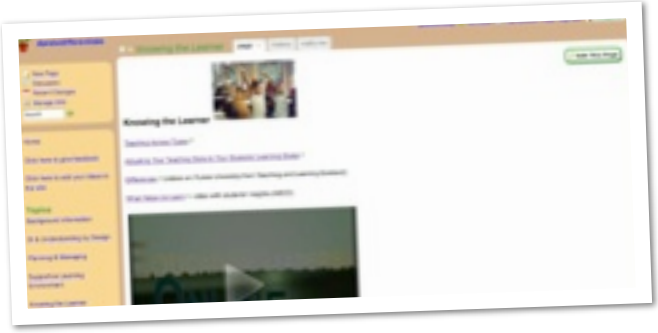
www.mflamd.org

Pre-register by September 30th & Save!

Back to School: Getting to Know Your Learner

LESLIE GRAHN, HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

We hear a lot about data-driven instruction which conjures up images of databases and assessment results. But, what about data that tells us who our learners are, how they learn and think, and what interests them?



There are many tools available online for collecting data on student learning preferences and interests. I maintain a wikispace called *Dare to Differentiate* on which I have created a page entitled Knowing the Learner (daretodifferentiate.wikispaces.com/Knowing+the+Learner). On that page, you will find a compilation of tools that can be used to collect data about student learning preferences and interests. Here are some of my favorites:

VARK: A GUIDE TO LEARNING STYLES

HTTP://WWW.VARK-LEARN.COM/ENGLISH/INDEX.ASP

This website allows students to take the learning styles questionnaire in multiple languages. What a great way to collect data and have students practice using the target language!

WHERE DOES YOUR INTELLIGENCE LIE? CLASS INTELLIGENCE PROFILE

These tools were created by a colleague of mine. Students complete the first survey by answering "T" or "F" to each statement and at the end, the form creates a pie chart of their preferences. The second tool allows the teacher to input students' survey results in a particular class and then generates a class profile in a pie chart format.

MON STYLE D'APPRENTISSAGE / CHAEA: ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE

HTTP://WWW.PEDAGONET.COM/OTHER/STYLES.HTM

HTTP://WWW.ESTILOSDEAPRENDIZAJE.ES/MENUPRINC2.HTM

These are two of multiple examples of learning style inventories on the wiki that students can complete in the target language.

Once you've gathered the data, what do you do with it? The data can inform your lesson planning as you implement differentiation strategies. The data may drive project choices offered to students, guide the creation of learning centers, and may encourage you to vary modalities of presentation of content or student practice. Learning preference data also empowers students to strategize about best ways to study and project choices that best fit their styles.

Learning style, multiple intelligences, and interest data are one part of the puzzle of information that informs our planning and instruction along with formative and summative assessment data. Collecting the data sends the message to students that teachers are interested in who their students are and how they think and learn. Taking the time to know our students well will reap multiple benefits. It will increase motivation and engagement in the classroom and will keep lesson planning learner-focused.

Using the Target Language in the World Language Classroom

Dr. Arlene White, Salisbury University

Many of the students in our classrooms have decided to study another language because they want to learn about the culture of another country, but most of our students want to learn another language. So what can we do as teachers to help them achieve that goal?

Who is in charge of target language use in your classroom? **You are!**

Who is the only person in your classroom whose use of the target language you can control? **You are!**

You need to find as many ways as possible to use the target language and make it understood by your students. World language teachers are some of the greatest actors, mimes, orators, magicians in the world of education – we can have such fun in the classroom using the target language!

Who is the person who controls what language students use in the world language classroom? **You are!**

Ideally all classes at all levels should be in the target language 100% of the time, but there are certain instances when you or your students might have to use English but YOU should still control when that would occur. How can you do that? Some teachers have a sign with the target language on one side and the word for English in the target language on the other. The teacher determines what side the students see and thus, what language is spoken in the class. Some teachers fly the American flag when English is permitted and a flag from a target language country when the target language is required. Some teachers use a towel or a hula hoop to reserve a "safe haven" of sorts, perhaps in front of the classroom, where English is permitted to be spoken but again, the teacher gives permission for students to stand on the towel or in the circle AND must go there herself to speak English.

Who is the person who can present vocabulary in context? **You are!**

Presenting vocabulary in context, using props, visuals or gestures allows you to stay in the target language and allows students to make meaning without the use of translation. Yes, you most certainly probably have Tony or Tanya the Translator in your class who is only too happy to say what the word means in English but you can draw all students back into the target language with personalized questions that incorporate the new vocabulary words in the target language. As a possible homework assignment, give each student a new vocabulary word in the center of a sheet of paper. Ask them to use the four corners / quadrants of the paper to draw a picture of the word, to write a sentence using the word, to write a synonym and / or to write an antonym. In lower level classes, students could perhaps pick two of the tasks to complete for homework and ask more of your upper level students. Debrief and share in groups the next day to allow students to use the target language.

Who is the person who can present a grammatical concept without translating it? You guessed it - **You are!**

Most textbooks provide explanations in English that students can use to review what was presented in class; that allows you to look for examples of the grammar point in context and in the target language that will be meaningful and authentic. Usually this involves a story – either told orally or given in written form – where students first concentrate on the meaning and eventually have their attention drawn to the new grammar point to be studied and then try to use the new information in meaningful ways.

As you start this new school year, think about how important it is for your students to be able to use the target language from the very first days and weeks of classes. Think about how YOU can make that happen!

iTunes U for K-16 Language Learning

JEFFREY D. SAMUELS, PHD - C

Foreign language instructors are among the most resourceful of all educators. We take a rectangular-shaped classroom, add a lot of decorations, insert a computer, projector, and a sound system, et voilà: our students are transported away to a remote setting immersed in the target language and culture. Or, at least, we make yeoman efforts to do so, and on little to no funding.

TECHNOLOGY IS OUR FRIEND

This is where technology can really become our ally. For those who are adventurous, resourceful, unafraid of devices called "smart," and above all creative, the purposeful and pedagogically-driven use of technology can enhance the student experience. It is often assumed that today's students are born with the ability to navigate all things technological and that they intrinsically understand the mysteries and nuances of devices like iPhones or GPS systems in French. While that is certainly true for some, it by no means universally the case, and the same can be said for their instructors. Fear not. There are some lower technology offerings such as iTunes U that are easy to access and best of all, completely free.

What is iTunes U? Does iTunes grant university degrees now? Well, not exactly, but iTunes does host academic content that is freely available. iTunes U consists not only academic content provided by instructors in higher education; there are also a number of K-12 resources. Even so, there are university level resources that are perfectly appropriate for K-12. It's just a matter of searching and listening. Think of it as a large audio podcast repository that is searchable by category. Podcasts can be played in iTunes, but can also be saved to a device such as a phone or mp3 player.

To access iTunes U, you will need iTunes on your computer. This is compatible with both Macs and PCs. If it's not already installed, go to a web browser and download it for free from http://www.apple.com/itunes. Follow these steps:

- On the left side menu, under Store, select iTunes Store.
- In the main window, a title toolbar will appear (toward the top); click on iTunes U. (In fact, if you are using a Mac, you can click and hold and a drop-down menu with subject areas will appear.)
- Go to the right side menu, and click the drop-down menu "All Categories" under iTunes U Quick Links. Select "Language."
- The main window has categories such as "New and Noteworthy," "What's Hot," and "All Language." On the right, you will see "Collections" and "Downloads."

Once you have found a podcast you wish to explore, click on its icon. iTunes will present you with several options. Select "Subscribe" to get the most recent episodes of the podcast and to continue to receive new ones as they are produced. Select "Get All" to download all episodes at once. Or, look over the itemized index and select the individual episodes that you wish to download. You can even select the drop down menu arrow in the Price column for any of the episodes, and share it with your social media contacts via Facebook or Twitter.

A Memorable Summer Learning Experience

The Chinese Language Teacher Professional Development Workshop Series

ALICE ZHANG, BALTIMORE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

A five-day series of summer workshop was held by CCLTCD (the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development) of the University of Maryland and sponsored by the Confucius Institute at Maryland from August 8 to August 12, 2011, for pre-service and in-service Chinese language teachers.

Scholars and educators from the metropolitan D.C. area, Kentucky, New York and even all the way from China have participated, representing professionals from both private and public sectors. Dr. Francine Hultgren, the new chair of the Department of Teaching, Learning, Policy and Leadership (TLPL) from the College of Education at the University of Maryland, and Dr. Chuansheng Liu, the director of Confucius Institute at Maryland, Dr. Linda Valli, Principal Investigator of CCLTCD gave all the participants a warm welcome on the first day of class.

The series provided both theoretical and practical training in teaching Chinese. The workshops focused on relevant pedagogical theories and practical teaching methods and they also addressed specific challenges that Chinese language teachers encounter in their daily instructional activities. Speakers involved distinguished teachers and scholars in the field. These speakers shared their experiences of teaching Chinese and led discussions on how to teach pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, as well as on how to help with listening and speaking. They also shared insights and resources on issues such as teaching in Maryland public schools, technology, and psychology of foreign language learning. On the fifth day of this workshop, there was a demonstration of K-12 classroom teaching. It was incredible watching those teachers in action.

The workshop helped teachers enhance their professional skills as wells as further their theoretical knowledge of teaching methods and other fundamentals of language education. Teachers exchanged their practical pedagogical ideas with each other on how to communicate with their students, manage the classroom, and motivate students more effectively. American students are used to an interactive classroom, so teachers need to adopt a variety of methods to keep students interested and motivated.

As we all know, the number of Chinese learners is growing dramatically these years. Chinese teachers are not only professionals in the classroom, but also culture ambassadors. We are all on the journey of exploring, experimenting, and growing towards professional excellence. We should all be open to learning and new experiences. Thanks to CCLTCD, this workshop series provided an unforgettable learning experience for us, embedded with fun, laughter, food, and exciting new friendships with fellow teachers.

Waking a Sleeping Language

JASON SLANGA, BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SALVI - THE NORTH AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR LIVING LATIN STUDIES

We have heard the lines before. "Wow, I didn't realize people still taught that." "Do kids really sign up for that?" "Isn't that a dead language?" And of course, "But, why do you teach Latin if no one still speaks it?" To paraphrase Mark Twain:

THE REPORTS OF LATIN'S DEATH ARE GREATLY EXAGGERATED!

As my dear friend and master teacher, Nancy Llewellyn, is keen to point out, in 2,000 years the sun has not risen or set on a world in which Latin was not taught and spoken. There is an unbroken line of Latin speakers, teachers and students, stretching back to antiquity. As such, Latin is not merely a classical language, but has continued to be a vehicle for original thought throughout its history. And, while the Catholic church has been essential in Latin's preservation, it is not its sole custodian. Medieval scholars worked in Latin, using it as a shield for the spread of new ideas at a time when original thought was rejected by the less educated. Use of Latin was crucial to the success of the printing press. Humanists of the Renaissance wrote prolifically in Latin. In fact, classical Latin only accounts for a small percentage of all the Latin that exists.

This is not to say that Latin does not face challenges in the world today. Many teachers struggle to prove that it remains relevant, and to convince students to continue its study. In many places Latin programs are being cut in favor of other languages considered to be "more practical." However, if Latin is to be reinvigorated (not resurrected), we have to treat it as the living language that it is, not the "dead language" many suppose it to be. This past year has been a particularly productive time for me, as I strive to spread the spoken word of Latin. Here, I would like to share some of my experiences.

ONE YEAR AGO . . .

I was asked by my district to be trained for the professional development which we offer each year, the week before students return. This turned out to be some of the best training I have received, in which teachers of all languages watched samples of real teaching and discussed pedagogy in a truly meaningful way. The catch-phrases for the day were "teaching in the target language" and "vocabulary in context." Afterwards I approached one of my supervisors and told her just how excited I was about what we had been doing that day. I also explained to her the challenges facing Latin teachers who want to meet these goals. Only a handful of colleges and universities that offer Latin teach it as a spoken language; many even discourage this practice. My supervisor asked a few questions about what I thought could be done, and suggested that I write proposals suggesting a course of action.

WHAT FOLLOWED . . .

can only be described as a miracle. My colleague and I, who have been working for years to use Latin actively in our classrooms, were given financial support to train the other Latin teachers in our district. Over six months we met in ten after school classes, every two or three weeks. We introduced them to new techniques, we practiced these techniques on each other, and we talked through their concerns. Then, this summer we wrote a new curriculum for Latin, which not only allows for, but actively embraces Latin as a living language. Our curriculum will become a resource and a guide as we

move in this renewed direction. It will also be a living document, which we will edit and supplement as we work through it. However, the end result is not about any document or class. In the end, ten teachers, who had known each other only through annual countywide meetings, have formed a community that is excited about teaching Latin in a new way.

In recent years . . .

there has been an tendency, often on the part of Latinists, to cast Latin as something different. Knowledge of Latin is brandished as a badge of academic distinction, and Latin's status as "special" is often used to excuse its instruction from the standards of other languages. It is true that Latin has a unique history. However, at its foundation it is, as any other, a language, one that was spoken by the masses.

A colleague, a man who has left a career in the private sector to provide others with the same opportunities Latin has afforded him, recently asked me "Why speak Latin?" He could see the value in it for himself, but wasn't quite able to defend the premise to others. I responded that if Latin is worth learning, as I consider it to be, active use of the language is the best way to do so. And, if we are to be true to our conviction and promise that Latin will help students learn other languages, then we must teach it as such. Most importantly, we must acknowledge that it can be taught as such. Speaking and listening, when integrated with other modes of instruction, provide a rich learning environment which engages students on multiple levels.

If Latin is to remain relevant,

those who are its care-takers must be willing to do whatever is necessary to make it so. My experiences with MFLA have certainly been helpful, as I work to bring the best methods of teaching any language into my classroom. However, there are also resources aimed specifically at using Latin actively.

- The North American Institute for Living Latin Studies (with whom I also work), runs a yearly Latin-immersion program, during the summer, called Rusticatio, in addition to other programs during the year.
- Many other spoken Latin programs are offered around the country (a search for the term "conventiculum" returns no less than five).
- Latin -- Best Practices is a discussion group where teachers of all levels of experience answer questions and exchange ideas.
- At the local level, groups run Latin cenae – dinners where people can put aside English for a few hours (feel free to contact me if you'd like to be added to the Maryland, Virginia, D.C. group).

Change like this does not happen overnight.

It comes in small steps, with hard work, courage, and an open mind. I encourage you to reach out to colleagues and ask questions (email me, and let's start a conversation!). Try something new, and see how it works in your classroom.

Tempora mutantur et nos mutamaur in illis.

– Horace

Links

- The North American Institute for Living Latin Studies: http://www.latin.org/
- Latin -- Best Practices: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/latin-bestpractices/
- "conventiculum" Google search: http://www.google.com/#q=conventiculum

Study Abroad: Experiencing the Second "C" in the National Standards Up Close & Personal

Dr. Thomas Wayne Edison, Anne Arundel Community College
Associate Professor of Spanish
Chair of the Department of World Languages

One of the perks of being a teacher is having the summer free to work on projects and do those things that have been put on the back burner during the rest of the year. This summer one of my goals was to go to Costa Rica to deepen my language skills and learn about a country that I have heard plenty about from friends. The trip rekindled my passion for Hispanic cultures and the Spanish language which had influenced me to become a Spanish teacher in the first place. In this article I will describe this experience with the hope that other teachers will consider participating in similar programs as a way to continue their own professional development and also be able to share this amazing and life-changing opportunity with their students.

In December, I researched programs that would allow me to accompany my Anne Arundel Community College students allow me to take graduate classes at the same time. I chose Modern Languages Studies Abroad (MLSA) because I had received much literature from the director during the last two years and the price was very reasonable for students. This program works in conjunction with the Universidad de San José to offer a wide range of courses accommodating all levels of Spanish-language learners. Students live with host families to allow them to reinforce their language skills. The program allows teachers to accompany their students and offers free tuition to instructors that are able to recruit seven students or more. I advertised the program among students at our community college and although I was only able to find three students that were interested in paying $2,085 in tuition and fees to participle.

On the 30th of June, one hundred fifty students from across the United States arrived at the San Juan International Airport to await a bus that would take us to an area close to the university campus to await the arrival of our Momma Ticas. I was wondering what to expect living for a month in the home of someone that I didn't know and depending on them for two meals a day and doing my laundry. My host mother arrived and I was not sure how to greet her: the traditional kiss on the cheek or a handshake. When we arrived at the house, I was pleased to discover that there was another participant staying with her family. He was my age and was also a teacher from the United States that had participated in this program for the last four years. It was great to have someone to teach me the ropes.

On the first day on campus we were given an orientation and a walking tour of the campus led by one of our two teachers. Each student was given the required student identification card, a phone card to call home and had an opportunity to watch a folkloric dance group that performed traditional Costa Rican music and dance. After a lunch of gallo pinto, horchata, fresh fruit, and a salad, undergraduate students took the language placement test while the graduate students were free to discover the wonders of the city of San José.

I encountered several challenges during my month in Costa Rica. The first was getting used to the conversion rate-- the Costa Rican Colón was five hundred to one American dollar. Going to the ATM was a challenge because it did not feel right to take out $50,000 at a

time, even though it was equivalent to one-hundred American dollars. This amount was enough to buy lunch for a week or so and get around town. Toilet paper was another interesting issue that was a challenge to get used to. Most public spaces like the college campuses do not always have toilet paper available --a point that was mentioned by many participants. When toilet paper is available, or if you have your own stash, it must not be placed in the toilet due to sewage issues and rather placed in it in a waste paper basket. There are no street signs therefore one quickly learns to identify landmarks to find addresses and give directions to a taxi driver. Costa Rica was more expensive than I had imagined and only later did I discover that it is one of the most expensive Central American countries.

During the first week I quickly learned to use Pura Vida an expression that almost every Tico, or citizen of Costa Rica says throughout the day as a greeting. According to Nuria Villalobos, this tradition developed in the late 1950's from a Mexican movie.[1] I was excited to be able to experience tastes that were totally new for me such as countless varieties of bananas that are not exported, the manga (large mango), mamón chino (a purple fruit with a soft spiny peel), and the mango panameño (a fruit that looks nothing like a mango and has a mild taste like a honeydew melon). Every day students discussed the new fruits that they had just tasted. All students took two classes that ran Monday-Friday from 8:00 – 10:15 and from 10:45-1:00. The first three days students were able to make changes to their schedule. Mostly these changes were based on the classes that their friends were taking or their level of fluency in Spanish.

During the first week the program had a tour for students to the Museo Nacional de Costa Rica which helped students to understand the nation's history from before the colonial period until the twenty-first century. One of the most fascinating elements of Costa Rica's history is its mysterious stone spheres which stand out among the gold jewelry and figurines in the museum. It is believed that these shaped stones symbolize the universe but the impressive detail is how large they are and how smooth they were made. Another impressive trip that was free for students was to the Teatro Nacional de Costa Rica allowed the students the see the detailed beauty of this building constructed by the elite coffee plantation class at the beginning of the 20th century to attract arts and culture to this this small Central American nation. Another included excursion was a trip to Cartago to see the basilica built for the Virgen de los Angeles, a black version of the Virgin Mary that is believed by many Ticos to perform miraculous cures. On the first of August every year, thousands of people make a pilgrimage to the small town to thank the Virgin for her assistance during the year. There were other excursions that were available at an additional cost.

One such trip was a Pacific Island cruise to a small land mass off the eastern coast named Tortuga Island. Once on the island, participants had an opportunity to horseback ride, scuba dive, ride banana boats or just relax beside the pristine turquoise water. We were served a buffet meal and were pampered on a comfortable ship that served tropical drinks and trays of local fruit. During other long weekends, participants went to discover other wonderful parts of the country.

During the last week of the program, students were truly focused on their final exams and oral presentations and at the same time discussed all the new places that they had discovered in the country. Most participants returned to the United States on the 31st of July and many host families and participants that were in tears at the airport as the program came to an end.

This summer trip was a wonderful experience for me to discover a culture that I knew little about. It was also great to be able to make it possible for three students at our college to develop their language skills and learn about the beauty of Costa Rica. Many of my favorite

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[1] Villalobos cites a study by Anna Marie Trester, who notes that a film called Pura vida came to Costa Rica from Mexico in 1956, directed by Gilberto Martínez Solares. In the movie, "Pura vida" is the expression of eternal optimism used by a comic character, played by the actor Antonio Espino, who unfortunately can't seem to do anything right. While a small population used it then, the phrase "Pura vida" was used nationwide by 1970.

moments were seeing my students and talking to them and watching them go through the different phases that naturally happen when one is adapting to another culture: frustration, joy, enlightenment, homesickness and excitement. The program that I chose was wonderful but I would suggest that teachers research to find a program that best works for them and the students that they serve. Many students at the higher education level can use financial aid to fund these trips. These trips work very well to allow students to deepen their knowledge of the target language in a context that also allows them to appreciate the culture in which the language is spoken.

I am excited about the idea of returning next year and hope to recruit more students to experience the wonders of the Costa Rica. While I enjoy including elements of culture in my classes, there is nothing better than actually living the second C in National Standards in Foreign Language Education competencies. My hope is that more teachers will see this as a valuable resource for themselves and their students.

Work cited

Villalobos, Nuria. (2011, August 12, 2011). Costa Rica is "pura vida"! Retrieved from http://pocketcultures.com/topicsoftheworld/2010/01/26/costa-rica-is-%E2%80%9Cpura-vida%E2%80%9D/

A & R Scholarship

The A&R Scholarship was established in 2010 by Arlene White and Ruth Malone who have worked together professionally for the last 10 years presenting workshops for world language teachers locally, regionally, and nationally. Both women are members of the Board of Directors of MFLA and NECTFL and believe strongly in the idea of professional development, particularly for beginning teachers. So it just seemed to be a good idea to create a scholarship for beginning teachers who were members of MFLA to encourage them to attend an exceptional regional conference like NECTFL. We were fortunate to have two extremely well qualified and highly motivated teachers win the first award – Ms. Angela Hammond (Harford County) and Mrs. Erin Crissman (Wicomico County).

To quote Angela Hammond, "I received the A&R scholarship last year to attend NECTFL. I thought that the conference was a great professional development experience especially since I just finished my first year of teaching high school French. The conference fell at a perfect time of year; I was comfortable with what I was doing and was ready to expand on the various techniques I was using. I think that the sessions were so varied that I was able to go to many different types that allowed me to focus on different aspects of teaching. I got such great ideas and I used some the Monday after the conference. I am looking forward to going to the conference again next year so that I can continue becoming a better teacher."

MFLA AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Full details at www.mflamd.org Deadlines are **April 30, 2012,** unless otherwise noted.

Ann Beusch Scholarship: For a graduating high school senior who intends to pursue a major in a foreign language and become a world languages teacher.

Celeste Carr Study Abroad Scholarship: Awarded to a teacher in support of professional development through a study abroad program.

Dora Kennedy Scholarship for Latin: Awarded to a Latin teacher to pursue professional development in the teaching of Latin.

Escola Grant: A generous grant awarded to a world languages teacher to support a curricular project.

Maryland Language Teacher of the Year: The MFLA begins its search for the Maryland LTOY each Spring and celebrates the winner at the Fall Conference Banquet in October. Are you or someone you know the 2013 Maryland Teacher of the Year?

Visual Arts Contest: Students from elementary school through higher ed are eligible to participate as long as their teacher is a MFLA member.

Visual Arts Contest: Gateway to Motivation

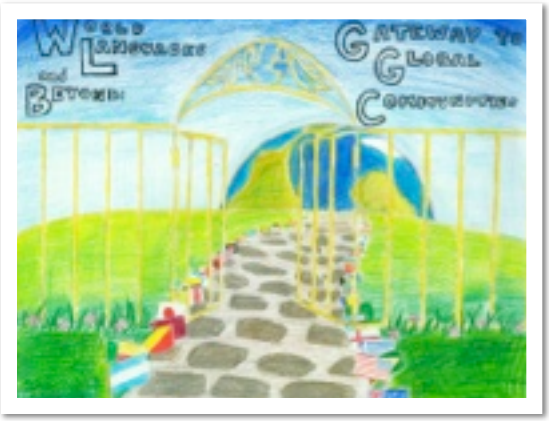
DEBORAH MCGEE MIFFLIN, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Each year, the MFLA promotes the theme of the Fall Conference through its Visual Arts Contest. World language students in all grades, whose teachers are members of the MFLA, are invited to visualize the theme either on paper or in digital format and submit their creation to the contest. Winners take home a monetary prize and are honored at the Fall Conference. The 2011 theme 'World Languages & Beyond: Gateway to Global Communities' elicited images of meandering paths crossing borders and enticing the viewer to the exciting worlds of different cultures made accessible through the power of language. This year, six MFLA member teachers in four schools involved their students and sent in entries.

Congratulations!

This year's winners received their certificates and monetary awards in ceremonies at their respective schools. Winning entries are posted on the MFLA website. The students will be honored along with their teachers at the Fall Conference on Saturday, October 22, 2011.

Middle School Winner
Jordan Hendricks
Immaculate Heart of Mary
Teacher: Eileen Phelps



High School Winner
Janine Bach
Annapolis High School
Teacher: Kim Riley

Overall Winner
Cailin Oakes
Annapolis High School
Teacher: Kim Riley

Get Involved!

As you plan your curriculum for the year, be sure to put the 2012 MFLA Visual Arts Contest on the calendar for APRIL 2012. The deadline for entries is always in the last week of April.

German Students Study Trip to Germany

MAUREEN HELINSKI, ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MFLA Board member, Maureen Helinski, and MFLA member, Shirley Santora, chaperoned groups of high school German students on a three and a half week school stay in Nuremberg, Germany this summer. The students, from all over the United States, won the trip based on their scores on the AATG National German test. The German government paid all expenses and even gave the students spending money. The trip included one week in Berlin. It was an incredible experience according to Maureen Helinski. The students were intelligent, talented, mature and fun. They used only German in all school classes, tour explanations, at home with their host families and even among themselves. Seeing their accomplishments makes one proud of the success one can achieve in high school. This is an experience the students will remember even when they return to school and community life.

Summit 2 on the Future of German

MAUREEN HELINSKI, ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Maryland AATG will hold a second summit on the future of German language study in our area on Sept. 24, 2011, at the Goethe Institut, in Washington D.C. The topic of the second summit will be "German Means Business." This theme has many possible meanings and is open to several different topics of discussion. One of the goals of this summit is to form working groups to brainstorm ideas and develop action plans for building networks between German teachers and the local business community and between individual schools and area businesses. We hope to hear from representatives of the business community on how we can best prepare our students for the post-college world; what qualities employers look for when hiring into entry-level positions or giving out internship spots; how we can bring representatives from the business community to our schools; how we and our students can get an inside look into their workspaces; and how we can better advertise the advantages that a knowledge of German has for the job market.

Germany has a booming economy and is one of the leading economic partners of the U.S. There are 3,500 German companies in the U.S. with a huge potential for future jobs for bi-lingual Americans. Germany is also a leader in renewable energies, a market that sees and will continue to see rapid growth in the U.S. as well. Therefore, one of the questions we may want to ask at the summit is, why not use Germany's economic power as a marketing tool for our German programs? After all, the German language may be the ultimate asset to open the doors for our students' future careers!

State World Languages Pipeline Project

SUSAN SPINNATO, DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS, MSDE

As part of Maryland's Race to the Top grant, local school systems will implement new Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish programs in elementary schools. The first four school systems were recently notified that they will receive funding from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). New elementary programs in Chinese will be established in Allegany County Public Schools and Prince George's County Public Schools. Anne Arundel Public Schools will add an elementary Arabic program, and Worcester County Public Schools received a grant to plan a dual immersion Spanish program.

STEM & World Languages

This summer, curriculum writers from across the state collaborated to write world language STEM (science, technology, technology, and mathematics) modules in Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish for students in kindergarten and grade 1. Content-based, interdisciplinary curriculum development for students in primary grades was a new experience for our diverse group of writers; it was a learning experience for all as we planned and created "outside the box." These modules will be available online for Maryland world language teachers to use in new and existing programs.

Teaching World Languages in the Elementary Grades

Additionally, a new online continuing professional development course will be developed for Maryland teachers on strategies for teaching world languages in the elementary schools.

The four-year Race to the Top grant will continue through September 2014 with continuing curriculum writing and professional development on the horizon. If you are interested in becoming involved in the project, please contact me at sspinnato@msde.state.md.us.

ACTFL Update

ACTFL Annual Convention & World Language Expo

All systems are "go" for the ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo to be held for the very first time in Denver, Colorado from November 18-20, 2011. Barbara Mondloch, ACTFL President, will preside over the gathering in the "mile high city" which promises to be especially exciting as the theme "Empowering Language Educators Through Collaboration" will provide the backdrop for this year's program. With Milton Chen, Senior Fellow and Executive Director of The George Lucas Educational Foundation, as the keynote speaker, Barb notes, "In my discussions with Milton, he seems energized by our collaboration theme and is prepared to offer his own suggestions about maximizing our initiatives to an even broader audience than just our own profession." More information, including the entire program, may be viewed and/or downloaded from www.actfl.org.

New Executive Director

The search is underway for a new Executive Director for ACTFL. The search committee, chaired by Barb Monloch, ACTFL President, hopes to have a new person in place by the time the language profession meets in Denver in November of this year.

Research Priorities

ACTFL has undertaken an initiative, under the direction of Immediate Past-President Eileen Glisan, to first look at the current status of research in our field regarding critical topics that can inform language learning and teaching. A task force identified the topics and then selected authors to review the research in the various areas and write up a report of their findings. These papers will become a special issue of Foreign Language Annals, edited by Eileen Glisan and Richard Donato, which will be published next spring thus finalizing phase two of the project. The recommendations made by each paper for further research will provide the basis for the next steps of the project.

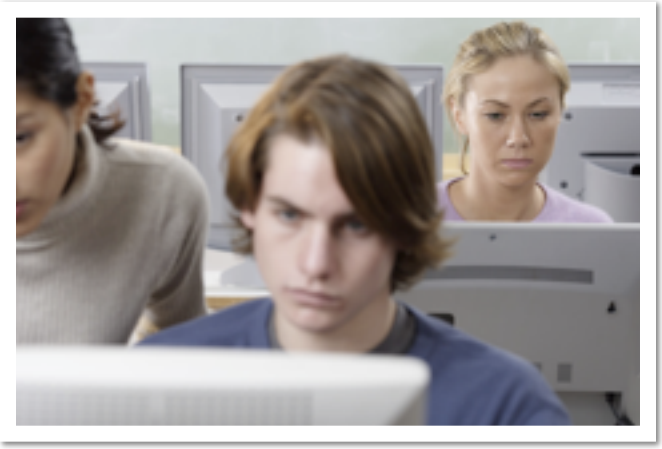
Position Statements

The ACTFL Board approved the Position Statement on the Use of Technology after incorporating input from the ACTFL Organizational members provided at the Assembly of Delegates at the November meeting in Boston and online from the general membership. It reads as follows:

Use of Technology

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) acknowledges and encourages using the potential of technology as a tool to support and enhance classroom-based language instruction. ACTFL also acknowledges the potential of well supervised and articulated distance learning programs to fill a need where classroom teachers are not available. However, because language is one of the most complex of all human activities and interactions ACTFL also recognizes the pivotal role of a qualified language teacher to incorporate and manage the implementation of technology so that it effectively supports the language learning experience.

The use of technology should never be the goal in and of itself, but rather one tool for helping language learners to use the target language in culturally appropriate ways to accomplish authentic tasks. Further, all language learning opportunities whether provided through technology or in a traditional classroom setting, should be standards-based and help develop students' proficiency in the target language through interactive, meaningful, and cognitively engaging learning experiences, facilitated by a qualified language teacher.



Therefore, ACTFL strongly advises school and university administrators to place the responsibility for language instruction in the hands of qualified language teachers rather than solely in technology programs. Cost-cutting measures such as replacing teachers with software or online programs for language learning or launching new language programs using language software or other technologies will disadvantage language learners if learners will have significantly fewer opportunities to develop language proficiency under the necessary conditions of a dynamic environment and interaction with and guidance from a qualified language teacher.

The position statement on Alternative Teacher Certification and Add-on Certification or Endorsements is still undergoing review and revision and should be finalized by November.

Legislative Update

ACTFL has been working to advance two issues with Congress: first, addressing the Title VI cuts to international and language programs which includes the National Foreign Language Centers and second, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), formerly known as "No Child Left Behind." In regard to the Title VI cuts, ACTFL has signed on to the letter written by the Coalition for International Education along with JNCL. ACTFL also wrote its own letter supporting Title VI and has information on its website regarding how others can contact their congressional representatives to promote the restoration of funding.

ACTFL has supported Congressman Rush Holt and Paul Tonko's introduction of H.R. 1994, the "Excellence in Innovation in Language Learning Act". The bill provides American students with access to high-quality world language instruction starting in the early grades, creates state language councils to share best practices and coordinate language programs across the state, and establishes a national coordinating body made up of leaders from different agencies to ensure that evolving national security and economic needs are met. . Information is on the ACTFL website about how members of our profession can contact their congressman to sign on to the bill. ACTFL has also been working with members at the local level to contact their Senators about sponsoring a similar bill in the Senate. Please contact Marty Abbott if you are interested if you or your state would like to reach out to your Senators.

Update Modern Greek SIG Proposal

The ACTFL Board approved the establishment of a new Special Interest Group (SIG) for Modern Greek. This is a conditional approval pending the SIG meeting the conditions of a new SIG and having a successful business meeting at the annual convention in Denver.

21st Century Skills Map

ACTFL in collaboration with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills released the World Languages 21st Century Skills Map on March 29, 2011 in a press conference held on Capitol Hill. Among key spokespersons for the map launch were Tony Jackson from the Asia Society and Charles Kolb from the Committee on Economic Development. The highlight was the lesson demonstration by students from Mount Vernon Woods Elementary in Fairfax County, Virginia from a Chinese FLES class focused on geography and math. The skills map can be downloaded from http://www.p21.org/documents/Skills%20Map/p21_worldlanguagesmap.pdf and a video of the entire program including the elementary class can be viewed at www.actfl.org on the main page.

New Technology Award for K - 12

The ACTFL Board approved a new award for excellence in the integration of technology into language instruction at the K-12 level. This new award was established to complement the existing similar award for postsecondary. The award will be given for the first time at the 2012 Annual Convention in Philadelphia.

Common Core Standards

With the task force on the impact of the National Standards for Foreign Language Education wrapping up its work after the three-year grant and finalizing its report, the ACTFL Board approved an effort to "refresh" the existing language standards based on the 21st Century Skills map and other innovations that have occurred since the release of the original standards in 1996. In addition, this effort will include developing a companion document to the Common Core standards for language arts and mathematics that will identify how the national standards for language education support and reinforce the concepts included in the Common Core. It is important to remember that the term "Common Core" refers to those subjects that will be tested at the federal level and does not refer to whether or not the subject area is a core subject. "Foreign Languages" is listed in the legislation as a core subject. However, similar to social studies, science, the arts, and other subjects, it is not tested at the federal/national level. The development of this document will assist language educators and administrators to promote the case for integrating language education into instructional programs K-16.

Newsletter Submissions

We encourage you to share information and news on a variety of topics: successes and achievements, special programs, best practices, technology tips, educational trips, presentations, conferences.

Email your submission(s) to the MFLANotes editor at:

popirusty@comcast.net

Use MFLA Article in the subject line.

MFLANotes is published twice a year. Articles can be submitted at any time for publication. If space does not allow for all articles to be included in an issue of the newsletter, they will be held for the next publication date.

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Mark Your Calendar Now!

What better way to start off the new school year than by making a commitment now to attend the annual Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in our own backyard!

Mark the dates of this year's NECTFL gathering: April 20 - 23, 2012. Think about how beautiful Baltimore's Inner Harbor is going to look that weekend. Fresh off the wonderful experience we had last spring, the conference will again be at the Marriott Waterview on the edge of Fells Point. The hotel is wonderful and the views are simply spectacular! But even more importantly, you'll have access to over 150 sessions and workshops along with an exciting exhibit hall filled with resources for you and your students. The conference theme, "Global Identities" is going to be realized through a variety of activities throughout the conference. There will be immersion workshops, technology sessions, panel discussions, best practice explanations, plenty of resources, and LOTS more to allow you to reaffirm, reenergize, and renew your teaching and your classroom. All of it designed to highlight your global identity while expanding it at the same time.

Maryland is part of the Northeast Region and joins 13 other states in NECTFL. It is the largest regional language organization in the nation. As always, there will be excellent representation from our MFLA ranks as NECTFL presenters, but there will also be lots of others from a variety of school districts across the region including perennial favorites such as Greg Duncan, Marty Abbott, and John DeMado. They will be joined by presenters both from our region and from across the country. Simply put, this is an event you don't want to miss!

In future MFLA newsletters you can look forward to more conference details, but spring weekends fill up fast. Mark your calendar now so that you know you'll be ready to attend. Registration will be open soon and you can save some money by registering early. We're hoping you'll join your language colleagues from across the country and across the planet as we celebrate our Global Identities!