

LILT NEWSLETTER

September 2012
Volume 32, Number 4

WWW.LILTFL.ORG

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Back to School! On September 4th some of our members will begin their first steps into the LOTE profession, while others continue rewarding careers as LOTE professionals. LILT pledges to be there for all LOTE teachers on Long Island. Through our many programs, we hope to infuse the passion needed to bring languages to life with enthusiasm and innovation for our students.

LILT will continue to provide a wide range of opportunities to make your students shine and cast a favorable light on your department. Plan to attend the 2012 LILT Annual Conference. Go the extra mile and get your students involved in LILT's Poster Contest and LILT's Student Foreign Language Competition. Celebrate Foreign Language Week like never before. Choose those Professional Development Workshops that will give you an edge in your teaching, and increase your students' growth. If you are a seasoned educator, please consider sharing your expertise with other colleagues and apply to give a LILT Professional Development Workshop (kindly go to page 2 for details).

I would like you to join us at our Fall General Membership Meeting on September 20th, at Butera's Restaurant in Smithtown. Please bring along a colleague, enjoy some social time and a nice dinner, mingle with colleagues, and try your luck at the door prizes and Chinese Auction of *Teacher Baskets* LILT has for you. I look forward to meeting you.

The 2012 LILT Annual Conference Planning Committee has worked all summer to produce what promises to be another highly successful professional conference entitled: *Tools of the Trade, Enhancing Professional Practices*, to be held on Saturday, November 3rd at Comsewogue High School, Port Jefferson Station. **Please note, this date is NOT during Veteran's Day weekend.** As in the past years, **THERE IS NO ON-SITE REGISTRATION AVAILABLE on the day of the conference. ALL attendees must pre-register.** One can choose to register and pay conference fees online (preferred) on our website at: WWW.LILTFL.ORG, or register by mail. Please register early! Just as in the past three years, you will receive an e-mail confirmation when

your registration is completed.

In September, when welcoming any new department members, please inform them about the many LILT activities, events and opportunities for professional development our organization provides, and encourage them to join LILT. Not only does LILT provide activities for professional growth, but there are also many *LILT* ways of honoring and rewarding colleagues and students via LILT's awards, grant and stipend opportunities. Information on all of the above can be found on our website: WWW.LILTFL.ORG. Explore the possibilities!

Do you hold a Professional Certificate? Do you need to complete 175 hours of Professional Development every five years? Don't have your certificate revoked! LILT offers many professional development opportunities for which you can accumulate those much needed hours at the LILT Annual Conference in November, and Professional Development Workshops held in February-April 2013. Our fees are extremely reasonable, so if you are not sure how you will accumulate those hours, start with us. See how quickly your hours will add up while gaining valuable information.

2012-2013 will pose new challenges to our profession. It is essential we remain positive and hopeful while advocating for world languages, and find ways to promote them.

Sincerely wishing you a successful and rewarding school year,

Anahi Walton-Schafer

IN MEMORIAM

LILT mourns the passing of a dear friend and colleague, **Anita Cipriani**, on June 15, 2012. She was a beloved teacher at the Convent of the Sacred Heart and Hunter College Elementary School, both in NYC. She was honored by the French government as a *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques*, a decoration founded by Emperor Napoleon I to honor outstanding academics.



CONGRATULATIONS

To the new LILT Executive Board Members who began their duties at the end of the LILT Spring General Membership Meeting: **Anahí Walton-Schafer**, President; **Richard Zawislak**, First Vice President; **Elizabeth Buralassi**, Second Vice President; **Krystal Asher**, Secretary; **Ron Taub**, Treasurer; and **Matt Drucker**, Member-at-Large.

To **Lori Ramirez**, Herricks Public Schools, for winning the MERLOT Award for Exemplary Online Learning Resources for her website *MisCositas.com* in the World Languages category.

NEW YORK STATE SEAL OF BILITERACY

On July 31, 2012, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed into law a bill to recognize New York State high school graduates who demonstrate academic excellence in attaining proficiency in one or more languages other than

English with a state seal of biliteracy. The seal will be attached to diplomas and transcripts of graduates who excel in listening, speaking, reading and writing in multiple languages. The Governor said: "New York State should recognize the outstanding achievements of our students who have dedicated themselves to learning different languages. Acknowledging those students who have pushed themselves to do their very best and learn another language will provide them with an advantage when dealing with future employers and academic institutions. New York is a richly diverse state, and these students are doing their part to ensure that we remain an active member of the global community."

To read the original press release, please go to: <http://www.governor.ny.gov/press/07312012-multiple-language-proficiency-bill>



LILT SEEKS PRESENTERS

LILT is currently developing its 2013 LILT Professional Development Workshops program, given in February, March and April. Each year LILT provides a variety of successful professional development workshops, with each session running two hours (either weekdays 4-6 PM, or Saturdays 10 AM-12 PM). Teachers may attend as many workshops as they wish in order to learn how to enhance their lessons, develop new technology skills, or learn about the changes in instruction (Common Core, SLOs and APPR). Teachers who hold NYS Professional Certificates can accrue hours to meet their 175 Professional Development Hour Requirement.

In order to further develop this program, LILT is seeking presenters. Have you thought about sharing the great techniques you use in your LOTE classroom? Have you developed new ideas and methods? Have you found a new technological tool? Have you developed successful lessons that meet the Common Core Standards?

*If so, **LILT WANTS YOU!***

LILT is seeking members interested in presenting workshops dealing with:

- ✓ new technology
- ✓ successful lessons based on Common Core Standards
- ✓ methods to meet APPR requirements
- ✓ new games and motivators for all levels
- ✓ new projects and alternative assessments for all levels
- ✓ FLES and FLEX

Interested?

- ✓ Workshops are two hours in length, and provide opportunities for hands on experience.
- ✓ Workshops are held in your school.
- ✓ Workshops may be held after school, Mondays through Thursdays between 4-6 PM, Saturdays from 10 AM-12 PM.
- ✓ Submission deadline is November 15, 2012. Kindly submit your proposal to Richard Zawislak, 1st Vice-President, at rzawislak@liltfl.org.

If you have any questions about presenting, please contact Richard Zawislak, 1st Vice-President, at rzawislak@liltfl.org prior to the deadline.

LILT is looking forward to hearing from you!



Thanks to the following for proofreading this edition: Sean Doherty, Nancy Russo-Rumore, Ron Taub, and Anahí Walton-Schafer.

REMEMBER TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6th



FALL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

LILT would again like to show its appreciation for your continued support by helping to defray the cost of its annual Fall General Membership Meeting. Come help us celebrate the new school year and all that's happening in foreign languages today. Feel free to duplicate this form and bring a friend.

- WHEN:** Thursday, September 20, 2012
WHERE: Butera's Restaurant, 65 East Main Street, Smithtown, NY (631-979-9113)
TIME: 4:30 - 7:30 P.M.
COST: \$20.00 per person for dinner (appetizer, main dish: chicken, veal, vegetarian; dessert, soft drinks, coffee, tea and gratuity.) There will be a Cash Bar.
RSVP TO: Elizabeth Buralassi, 338 Lakeland Ave. Apt 6F, Sayville, NY 11782

Due to space restrictions, we can no longer accommodate walk-in registrations. Please reserve your seats in advance by submitting this form and your payment by September 14th.

DIRECTIONS:

From Southern State Parkway: Take Exit 41A on the left for Sagtikos Pkwy N towards Kings Park. Merge onto Sagtikos Pkwy. Continue onto Sunken Meadow Pkwy. Take Exit SM3E for NY-25 E Jericho Turnpike towards Smithtown. Turn right onto Jericho Turnpike. Continue for about 4 miles. Butera's will be on the left side.

From Northern State: Take Exit 45 toward Sunken Meadow Pkwy N. Merge onto Sagtikos Pkwy. Continue onto Sunken Meadow Pkwy. Take Exit SM3E for NY-25 E Jericho Turnpike towards Smithtown. Turn right onto Jericho Turnpike. Continue for about 4 miles. Butera's will be on the left.

From Points West on the Long Island Expressway: Take Exit 42 for Northern State Pkwy Hauppauge. Merge onto Northern State and follow directions above from the Northern State Pkwy.

From Points East on the Long Island Expressway: Take Exit 57. Stay on Service Road N. Turn right on NY-454 Veterans Highway. Turn right on Lincoln Blvd. Left onto Towline Road. Take the first right onto Hauppauge Road (Rte. 111). Turn left on Main Street. Butera's will be on the right.

ACTIVITIES:

- * Receive two (2) free raffle tickets at the door. You may purchase additional tickets for:
 - ✓ Chinese Auction
 - ✓ Wireless USB Presentation Remote Clickers
- * Many free promotional items, collegiality, and good conversation for all.

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN THE FORM BELOW NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 14, 2012



NAME(S) _____

PHONE Home () _____

School () _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED (\$20.00 per person) _____ (Checks payable to LILT)

Return to: Elizabeth Buralassi, 338 Lakeland Ave Apt 6F, Sayville, NY 11782

Not a member yet? Join us to see what LILT has to offer!

WHY BILINGUALS ARE SMARTER

Speaking two languages rather than just one has obvious practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. But in recent years, scientists have begun to show the advantages of bilingualism are even more fundamental than being able to converse with a wider range of people. Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.

This view of bilingualism is remarkably different from the understanding of bilingualism through much of the 20th century. Researchers, educators and policy makers long considered a second language to be interference, cognitively speaking, that hindered a child's academic and intellectual development.

They were not wrong about the interference: there is ample evidence that in a bilingual's brain both language systems are active even when he is using only one language, thus creating situations in which one system obstructs the other. But this interference, researchers are finding out, isn't so much a handicap as a blessing in disguise. It forces the brain to resolve internal conflict, giving the mind a workout that strengthens its cognitive muscles.

Bilinguals, for instance, seem to be more adept than monolinguals at solving certain kinds of mental puzzles. In a 2004 study by the psychologists Ellen Bialystok and Michelle Martin-Rhee, bilingual and monolingual preschoolers were asked to sort blue circles and red squares presented on a computer screen into two digital bins — one marked with a blue square and the other marked with a red circle.

In the first task, the children had to sort the shapes by color, placing blue circles in the bin marked with the blue square, and red squares in the bin marked with the red circle. Both groups did this with comparable ease. Next, the children were asked to sort by shape, which was more challenging because it required placing the images in a bin marked with a conflicting color. The bilinguals were quicker at performing this task.

The collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests that the bilingual experience improves the brain's so-called executive function — a command system that directs the attention processes that we use for planning, solving problems and performing various other mentally demanding tasks. These processes include ignoring distractions to stay focused, switching attention willfully from one thing to another and holding information in mind — like remembering a sequence of directions while driving.

Why does the tussle between two simultaneously active language systems improve these aspects of cognition? Until recently, researchers thought the bilingual advantage stemmed primarily from an ability for *inhibition* that was honed by the exercise of suppressing one language system: this suppression, it was thought, would help train the bilingual mind to ignore distractions in other contexts.

But that explanation increasingly appears to be inadequate, since studies have shown that bilinguals perform better than monolinguals even at tasks that do not require inhibition, like threading a line through an ascending series of numbers scattered randomly on a page.

The key difference between bilinguals and monolinguals may be more basic: a heightened ability to monitor the environment. "Bilinguals have to switch languages quite often — you may talk to your father in one language and to your mother in another language," says Albert Costa, a researcher at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Spain. "It requires keeping track of changes around you in the same way that we monitor our surroundings when driving." In a study comparing German-Italian bilinguals with Italian monolinguals on monitoring tasks, Mr. Costa and his colleagues found that the bilingual subjects not only performed better, but they also did so with less activity in parts of the brain involved in monitoring, indicating that they were more efficient at it.

The bilingual experience appears to influence the brain from infancy to old age (and there is reason to believe that it may also apply to those who learn a second language later in life).

2012 LILT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TOOLS OF THE TRADE: ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

NOVEMBER 3, 2012 AT COMSEWOGUE HS
8 AM – 1:30 PM

A flyer will be arriving at your LILT Membership Address with all the details very shortly. Remember to register early to make sure you attend the workshops you wish.

In a 2009 study led by Agnes Kovacs of the International School for Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy, 7-month-old babies exposed to two languages from birth were compared with peers raised with one language. In an initial set of trials, the infants were presented with an audio cue and then shown a puppet on one side of a screen. Both infant groups learned to look at that side of the screen in anticipation of the puppet. But in a later set of trials, when the puppet began appearing on the opposite side of the screen, the babies exposed to a bilingual environment quickly learned to switch their anticipatory gaze in the new direction while the other babies did not.

Bilingualism's effects also extend into the twilight years. In a recent study of 44 elderly Spanish-English bilinguals, scientists led by the neuropsychologist Tamar Gollan of the University of California, San Diego, found that individuals with a higher degree of bilingualism — measured through a comparative evaluation of proficiency in each language — were more resistant than others to the onset of dementia and other symptoms of Alzheimer's disease: the higher the degree of bilingualism, the later the age of onset.

Nobody ever doubted the power of language. But who would have imagined that the words we hear and the sentences we speak might be leaving such a deep imprint?

*Reprinted from The New York Times, March 12, 2012.
Submitted by Riccardo Mancuso, Miller Place HS*

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

DONA MORALES



What happens when two teachers room together? In my case, a wonderful friendship develops. For the past three years, I have shared my classroom at Mepham High School with an intelligent, caring and open minded teacher who

has been a positive influence on her students, colleagues and department.

Dona Morales has been a Spanish teacher at Mepham High School in the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District for the past sixteen years, and an active member of the school community and her LOTE Department. During her years at Mepham, Dona has taught all levels of Spanish including the AP Spanish Language course. In addition, Dona has been the advisor of the Spanish Honor Society in which she has held many early morning breakfasts, dances, hot chocolate sales and coat drives in order to raise money for various charities. In the past Dona was a member of the Mepham High School Site Base Committee, helped found the AWOD Club (A World of Difference), wrote curriculum for various Spanish courses and was a recipient of the Mepham

Faculty Booster Award.

Dona, originally from Jamaica, holds New York State Certification in Spanish, in School District Administration and in School Administration and Supervision. Dona studied at St. Joseph's Teachers College, Kingston, Jamaica and then earned a Bachelor of Arts in Language, Literature and Social Science from the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. Then, after moving to the United States, she earned a Masters of Arts in Teaching Spanish from Columbia University where she became a member of Kappa Delta Phi, and took part in two fellowships to study Spanish in Salamanca and Madrid. She later completed her administration course work at Long Island University.

Dona originally planned to study English literature at the University of the West Indies, but began studying Spanish language and literature in addition to sociology. During this time her passion for the Spanish language continued to grow. She credited her excellent professors who made her think, and who instilled the desire to learn about the world. During these years, Dona completed her first study abroad experience in the Dominican Republic. It was there Dona had her most enriching cultural experience and developed her appreciation for other cultures. This study abroad experience was her first time living the language since she had no authentic interaction in Jamaica. Dona later traveled to Puerto Rico, Venezuela and Spain.

Dona has always had an interest in teaching. When she was in school she had teachers who were not engaging and would not spark interest in their students. Dona would think about how to make learning more meaningful and developed a passion to change the way she was taught. Dona recalled her experience in her Spanish seventh grade class. At that time, the audio-lingual approach was popular, but she found it highly boring and thought of it as a nonproductive way of learning. She and her classmates would sit and repeat, and although she can still recall some of the phrases and dialogues today, there was no importance on structure, culture or application. Language learning was not a living experience, therefore Dona knew she could change it, and she has.

When asked about the most rewarding aspect of teaching, Dona responded, "...having students come back to express their appreciation for what they have learned. Whether if it was Spanish language skills or the discipline of studying they gained from my classes; it is highly rewarding." Many of her students during the years have come back to tell her they decided to major or minor in Spanish; this has brought her much pride. Dona noted the most challenging aspect is motivating some students to appreciate the value of learning a language and how it could enrich their lives and career opportunities. She said there is no one way to do this, and every year is different.

Dona is a fountain of knowledge and experience. Daily she provides guidance and suggestions to her colleagues, friends and family. Dona's advice to new teachers is to remember three things:

1. Teaching is a rewarding career
2. Stay focused
3. Students are the most important part of teaching.

For a teacher of any discipline, Dona suggests to learn the culture of his or her school, and to become a member of the school community. Dona believes it is important for all teachers to stay up to date with current trends, and with one's content area. Dona travels at least once a year to a Spanish speaking country to keep her language skills sharp, as well as learning new methods and technology. In the last few years Dona has introduced Blogs to her classes which she has found to be an excellent modern method to practice writing.

When asked what keeps her motivated, she mentioned what her mother used to say to her, "When men on Earth have done their best, angels in heaven cannot do any better." No matter the challenge, Dona puts her best foot forward, and she is comfortable in doing what she needs to do, which is always her very best. It is this attitude that makes Dona a phenomenal teacher, colleague, and friend.

Submitted by Richard Zawislak, Grand Avenue MS

THE HARDEST JOB EVERYONE THINKS HE/SHE CAN DO

This piece was inspired by a heated discussion I had with a man who believes teachers have an easy job.

I used to be a molecular biologist. I spent my days culturing viruses. Sometimes, my experiments would fail miserably, and I'd swear to myself in frustration. Acquaintances would ask how my work was going. I'd explain how I was having a difficult time cloning this one gene. I couldn't seem to figure out the exact recipe to use for my cloning cocktail.

Acquaintances would sigh sympathetically. And they'd say, "I know you'll figure it out. I have faith in you." And then, they'd tilt their heads in a show of respect for my skills....

Today, I'm a high school teacher. I spend my days culturing teenagers. Sometimes, my students get

disruptive, and I swear to myself in frustration. Acquaintances ask me how my work is going. I explain how I'm having a difficult time with a certain kid. I can't seem to get him/her to pay attention in class. Acquaintances smirk knowingly. And they say, "well, have you tried making it fun for the kids? That's how you get through to them, you know?" And then, they explain to me how I should do my job....

I realize now how little respect teachers get. Teaching is the toughest job everyone who's never done it thinks they can do. I admit, I was guilty of these delusions myself. When I decided to make the switch from "doing" science to "teaching" science, I found out I had to go back to school to get a teaching credential.

"What?!?," I screamed to any friends willing to put up with my griping. "I have a Ph.D.! Why do I need to go back to get a lousy teaching credential?!?" I was baffled. How could I, with my advanced degree in biology, *not* be qualified to teach biology?!

Well, those school administrators were a stubborn bunch. I simply couldn't get a job without a credential. And so, I begrudgingly enrolled in a secondary teaching credential program. And boy, were my eyes opened. I

understand now.

Teaching isn't just "making it fun" for the kids. Teaching isn't just academic content. Teaching is understanding how the human brain processes information and preparing lessons with this understanding in mind.

Teaching is simultaneously instilling in a child the belief that he/she can accomplish anything he/she wants while admonishing him/her for producing shoddy work.

Teaching is understanding both the psychology and the physiology behind the changes the adolescent mind goes through.

Teaching is convincing a defiant teenager the work he/she sees no value in doing serves a greater purpose in preparing him/her for the rest of his/her life.

Teaching is offering a sympathetic ear while maintaining a stern voice.

Teaching is being both a role model and a mentor to someone who may have neither at home, and may not be looking for either.

Teaching is *not* easy. Teaching is *not* intuitive. Teaching is *not* something that anyone can figure out on their own.

2013 LILT STUDENT FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETITION TOPICS

Essay: My Most Unforgettable... (Person, Place, Experience...)

Language Production: Infomercial For A Newly Created Product

Multi-Media Presentation: Healthy Mind, Healthy Body



2013 POSTER CONTEST THEME **Be Inspired, Learn Another Language**

Your 2013 membership must be paid by December 31st for your students to participate.

Education researchers spend lifetimes developing effective new teaching methods. Teaching takes hard work and constant training. I understand now.

Have you ever watched professional athletes and gawked at how easy they make it look? Kobe Bryant weaves through five opposing players, sinking the ball into the basket without even glancing in its direction. Brett Favre spirals a football 100 feet through the air, landing it in the arms of a teammate running at full speed. Does anyone have any delusions that they can do what Kobe and Brett do?

Yet, people have delusions that *anyone* can do what the typical teacher does on a typical day. Maybe the problem is tangibility. Shooting a basketball isn't easy, but it's easy to measure how good someone is at shooting a basketball. Throwing a football isn't easy, but it's easy to measure how good someone is at throwing a football. Similarly, diagnosing illnesses isn't easy to do, but it's easy to measure. Winning court cases isn't easy to do, but it's easy to measure. Creating and designing technology isn't easy to do, but it's easy to measure.

Inspiring kids? Inspiring kids can be downright damned near close to impossible sometimes. And... it's downright damned near close to impossible to measure. You can't measure inspiration by a child's test scores. You can't measure inspiration by a child's grades. You measure inspiration 25 years later when that hot-shot doctor, or lawyer, or entrepreneur thanks her fourth-grade teacher for having faith in him/her and encouraging him/her to pursue her dreams.

Maybe that's why teachers get so little respect. It's hard to respect a skill that is so hard to quantify.

So, maybe you just have to take our word for it. The next time you walk into a classroom, and you see the teacher calmly presiding over a room full of kids, all actively engaged in the lesson, realize that it's not because the job is easy. It's because we make it *look* easy. And because we work our derrieres off to make it look easy.

And, yes, we make it fun, too.

Reprinted from Musings on Life and Love, September 13, 2010, Submitted by Robin Fisher, Jericho JMS

TEACHERS HELPING TEACHERS

Starting A New School Year: Nine Tips For Collaboration

Late August or early September is a make-it-or-break-it time for educators. The non-stop, brutal schedule that is a school year starts with all the finesse of trampling elephants, and doesn't relent for the next nine months (not coincidentally, the same amount of time it takes to gestate a baby). That makes starting the year right important -- and there are few more critical pieces to an educator's success than collaboration.

Collaborating in the classroom

1). Call Home: Yes, having a blog is great, and you're

ahead of the curve if you use Edmodo, Facebook, Schoology or any other of a number of platforms built to help educators and families connect. But as busy as you - and the parents of your students - are, the more personal the initial communication, the better. If you can make five phone calls each day before heading home, you should be able to reach out with a positive message to each parent by the end of the first month of school. An alternative is hand-written postcards, but phone calls - or better yet, face-to-face meetings - are ideal.

2). Use Team-Building Activities: Team-building activities are excellent ways to get the year started right by connecting with students. So many students believe that they're starting off the year at a major deficit. Success - or mere participation - in an early team-building activity can change that.

3). Know The Names: This can be a huge challenge for some teachers (don't ask me how I know), but do whatever it takes to learn the names of your students. Use your district's grade and attendance software if it provides student images from the year before. Developing five-minute games to start each class will help speed the process. Use assigned seats or nametags. Whatever you do, learn those names, and do so quickly. Nothing de-authenticates a relationship quicker than, "I really care about your learning Mr. -- wait, what's your name again?"

Collaborating In Your Building And District

4). Step Out Of Your Comfort Zone: We all have comfort zones, some more confined than others. You need not live beyond your comfort all the time, but don't be afraid to step outside your normal stomping grounds to make new friends, or at least show yourself to be accessible, curious and ultimately collaborative even if you're not a social butterfly.

5). Show Up Early To Meetings: Oftentimes, more collaboration happens in the five minutes before a meeting than in the meeting itself. Showing up early isn't always easy, but if you're going to try, better August than March. And during meetings, try building off your colleagues' ideas in PLCs, Data-Team, team and staff meetings. This can go a long way toward laying the groundwork for future collegial dynamics. Using stems like "Piggy-backing off what Lianne said . . .," or "Duane's insight regarding the posting of learning targets was spot-on . . ." helps build a collaborative atmosphere that's conducive to deeper future connections.

6). Use Post-It Notes: The most thoughtful ways to collaborate are also the simplest. Post-it notes reacting to an idea given at a staff meeting or thanking another educator for his or her effort are casual but meaningful ways to build trust and a collaborative spirit in a school. Stick one to the screen or door of a fellow educator with a specific, authentic message, and establish the helpful tone of your working relationship early on.

Your Global PLN

7). Ask For Help: Early in the year, many other educators worldwide face the same challenges you do. Pinging your PLN early on can make them feel needed, and equip you with resources it might have taken you hours of Googling to find.

8). Connect Little With Big: Connecting your local colleagues with those national and global can spark new professional relationships while honoring everybody involved by showing that you're thinking of each one. And because keeping distance through digital networks is easy, it's totally different from setting up your best friend for a blind date. Totally.

9). Prune Your Networks: While that *Pinterest* account or Facebook group may have served you well last year or even last month, our needs as educators change as we grow. You may need more of this, and less of that. So prune your networks without guilt. Move on. The world's greatest teachers survived for millennia without social media. Your world won't stop spinning because you stop using the platform that you held so dearly this time last year. In fact, I'd be more concerned if changes weren't made.

It's About The People - Getting the school year started right can mean calling home with a positive message, stepping out of your comfort zone or simply asking for help. The connections you make in August can serve you well through the trials of K-12 education. You never know when you're going to need help - from an encouraging smile to a better way to assess a standard. While the Internet and social media are great, they are merely tools to connect you with the people behind all of the accounts. With so much to do, it can be easy to push collaboration back, but this can have a long-term erosive effect on your happiness in teaching. The earlier you start, the easier it becomes.

Reprinted from Edutopia.org, Aug. 21, 2012. Submitted by Nancy Russo-Rumore, Emerita

TEACHER INCENTIVE GRANT WINNER

I was very fortunate to be awarded the LILT Teacher Incentive Grant for 2011-2012. *Vive le français!* was inspired by the need to support French enrollment at Baldwin Middle School. As department chairperson, one of my priorities is to maintain and encourage the French program, especially during an economic time when language programs are being sacrificed. This grant enabled me to purchase a variety of cultural videos, bulletin board sets, and activity packets which had been displayed throughout the middle school during National French Week, and Foreign Language Multicultural Week. Many of these cultural ancillaries were utilized in our French and FLEX (Foreign Language Exploratory Program) classes, to help students have a better understanding and insight into the francophone world. They also supported the native Haitian population that is

culturally enhancing our community in Baldwin. These students were thrilled to see their culture highlighted in our building.

During the last few years, Baldwin Middle School has participated in a variety of ways to support our French program. The French Department and its students presented skits and songs at a PTA meeting, and explained their reasons for studying French. We have administered the National French Exam, and students participated in a French Breakfast and Crêpe Tasting Party during National French Week. These academic and social celebrations have been a huge success. The parents of our students have wholeheartedly supported the efforts put forth by the French Department, a very dedicated group of professionals.

It is with much gratitude I extend to the LILT Awards, Grant and Stipend Committee, and the LILT Executive Board, my thanks for their continued commitment supporting second language programs, ideas and initiatives.

Submitted by Melisa Enriquez, Chairperson, Baldwin MS

STUDENT WINNERS

Camila Herrera and Gustavo Gonzalez were LILT's 2012 Lucille Lambert Award for Excellence in Second Language Studies winners, and were feted at LILT's Spring Membership Meeting. The following are excerpts from each application:



CAMILA HERRERA

Language is singularly human. It is complex, a set of rules and symbols guiding the way in which we communicate with one another. It is unique because it not only expresses our ideas and feelings, but is also evocative of a culture and its people. The relationship

between a language and its people is what has enriched my understanding and appreciation of studying foreign languages. When I first began learning French, I would think only of how I could translate English into French. I soon realized that technique was useless, and eventually I understood why. Every language is a reflection of its culture, and each culture has different customs and beliefs. A region's language is created in order to communicate exactly what its inhabitants wish to communicate, and for this reason, any other language trying to translate that meaning will only achieve a diluted response. Therefore, it is necessary to study a language because understanding it and what it means to a people will help bridge the gap between two cultures. We are in a stage of globalization; it has become easier to communicate with people from all over the world. We are connecting with each other more and more, yet many of us are unable to speak the languages of the places we travel to. Technology has moved us closer to each other, but we need to understand each other, and

language can do this for us.

Learning to speak a foreign language is something I had to do when I was younger. I was five years old when I moved with my mother to the United States from Colombia. I remember entering kindergarten late because we had arrived here in November, not knowing a single word of English. The little homework we got was always a struggle as neither my mom nor I knew what the instructions said. In the beginning it was tough, but gradually, I started improving with the help of Sesame Street and Blue's Clues. At school I tried to mingle with the other kids, but I found it easier to just retreat with a book even though I had no clue as to what it said. I underwent a year and a half of ESL; finally, I could pick up that Berenstain Bear book and read it all by myself. In hindsight I think those years were some of the best in my life; they helped me discover the power of words. I struggled through most of it, but knowing that what one day was unintelligible to your ears is comprehensible to them now, is one of my greatest satisfactions.

Studying a foreign language has broadened my mind and given me an appreciation of the English language. I have been taught more about English grammar in French and Spanish class than I have in actual English class. The parallels between the two languages are not always great, but studying French and Italian has also enriched my knowledge of my native language, Spanish. Within these three languages, I do often find parallels, although I always try to keep them separate. Furthermore, learning foreign languages has allowed me to learn about different cultures. I have been exposed to other views of the world, ideas unlike ours, but also similar to ours. I have learned about problems affecting other countries, not letting me forget the existence of the issues that impact upon people around us.

Having knowledge of languages has become vital in today's workplace. However, I wish to go a bit further by pursuing a career that deals with foreign languages specifically. I will continue to use my knowledge of French, Spanish and Italian into college, and definitely expand on it further. I hope to study abroad and will utilize my skills in these languages to learn more about other countries, and, hopefully, add to my knowledge of their cultures. Additionally, I hope to use my comprehension of foreign languages to educate others about tolerance, and to be more open to other beliefs. Language can serve as a pathway to meeting these goals, and besides, they are so much fun to know!

Ms. Herrera was a senior in Susan Salzman's class, Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK HS.

GUSTAVO GONZALEZ

HOW HAS THE STUDY OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENRICHED YOU?

There will always be that one thing you can spend hours on end doing, studying, and perfecting; in my case, it is



foreign languages. To me, they are not simply school subjects; they make part of something much greater in my life. From Spanish, to English, to French, to Italian, each of these languages has left a mark on me from the way they sound, to the culture and history surrounding each and every one of them.

Overall, my studies have enriched me in ways that I have never thought of before. They have taught me to become more open-minded with cultures that are different from mine, demonstrated to me that there are so many great groups of people with whom I can communicate, and most importantly, the knowledge of four languages has expanded my mind to think in four different ways. To me, I find that to be one of the most fulfilling experiences one could ever have in his or her life.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO STUDY A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN TODAY'S WORLD?

Foreign languages are a crucial aspect of our society, but many people have taken this for granted. A foreign language not only expands your knowledge, but it expands your perception of the world around you. We are in a civilization where the global market is expanding more rapidly than ever, and if each person does not learn at least one language other than his or her own, how can the global market continue expanding? Not only will the lack of a foreign language be a disadvantage at a global level, but at a national level as well. In our country, many careers are becoming more competitive, and that knowledge of a foreign language can be that one spark that can incite the manager of a company to hire you over the person sitting next to you. These are two important reasons as to why foreign languages should become a key component in our society.

HOW DO YOU HOPE TO USE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF ANOTHER LANGUAGE AND ITS CULTURE IN THE FUTURE?

Oftentimes, I look back and see how far I have gone with my passion for foreign languages. With this, I decided to not only continue to learn and expand my knowledge of foreign languages and cultures, but to teach and convey this knowledge to other people as well. In college, I am going to study to become a foreign language teacher at a high school, and hopefully move on to teach as a college professor. With this career path, I can enlighten young people, and teach them the true importance of learning foreign languages and cultures, which is something that I am more than determined to do. As I said previously, a foreign language is not simply a school subject; it is a method of altering one's perception of the world, and this is the message I would love to express to each person.

Mr. Gonzalez was a senior in Tammy Green's class,

Division Avenue HS, Levittown.

Student photos by Gene Lowenberg, LILT Historian.

STUDY OF MANDARIN CHINESE BY U.S. STUDENTS BOOMING

Chinese is in. Latin and French, it seems, are out. And Spanish is still, well, *el jefe*. (Translation: the boss or chief.) That's the quick-and-dirty takeaway from new data on the study of foreign languages by U.S. students.

In another sign of China's growing prominence on the world stage, the number of U.S. students learning Mandarin Chinese has tripled in recent years, according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. But the roughly 60,000 young people studying it as of the 2007-08 academic year was dwarfed by the millions learning Spanish, by far the most popular language.

Overall, the data released today show that enrollment in foreign language courses and programs has increased slightly. That may sound like good news, but as officials at the council are quick to note, it's nothing to celebrate, as fewer than one-in-five American students at the K-12 level are enrolled in foreign language education. That's right, only 18.5 percent in 2007-08, or 8.9 million students, up from 18 percent in 2004-05.

"We're still woefully behind almost all other countries of the world, particularly industrialized countries," Marty Abbott, the education director at ACTFL, told me in an interview. "When you look at all the countries that surpass us on the PISA tests, they all have early-language programs, they start children learning language in elementary schools."

She added: "In Europe, the whole effort is to learn another language besides your language to a near-native level, and a third or fourth at what they call a 'functional proficiency level,'" she said.

Abbott did note the data are more favorable when looking at the middle and high school levels, where most U.S. students study foreign languages. In grades 7-12, 32 percent were taking a foreign language. But that still suggests that most students will graduate from high school without ever having studied a foreign language.

As for Mandarin, Abbott said she's not surprised to see more students studying it, noting this is consistent with previous trends when the rise in a nation's prominence led to more U.S. students studying the language. In the 1960s, she said, there was a big rise in the study of Russian, and Japanese in the 1980s. (I wrote last fall about the growing role of the Chinese government itself in promoting Mandarin language instruction in the United States.)

I also spoke with Bret Lovejoy, the Executive Director of the ACTFL. He said the question is whether Mandarin will remain popular.

"The problem I see is that, and this can be with any language that seems to grab the attention of a lot of

people, is how well is it going to be sustained over time," he told me. "And too often, what we see is that a new language program is installed in a school system or a school, and that one that's there and that may be very successful, is eliminated."

Here's a snapshot of key findings, based on comparing 2004-05 enrollment with 2007-08. The languages that saw an increase include:

- Mandarin, up 195 percent to 60,000
- Japanese, up 18 percent to 73,000
- German, up 8 percent to 395,000
- Russian, up 3 percent to 12,000
- Spanish, up 2 percent, to 6.42 million

Meanwhile:

- French is down 3 percent to 1.25 million
- Latin is down 9 percent to 205,000

One other thing. President Barack Obama just yesterday promoted the learning of foreign languages in a speech at a District of Columbia public school.

"For all the young people here, I want you guys to be studying hard because it is critical for all American students to have language skills. And I want everybody here to be working hard to make sure that you don't just speak one language, you speak a bunch of languages."

Lovejoy said he was pleased by the plug for learning other languages, but said he's been disappointed by the president when it comes to action.

"He's saying the right things, but we're not really seeing this translate into policy," Lovejoy told me.

He highlighted the fact that President Obama has proposed to consolidate funding for the \$27 million Foreign Language Assistance Program at the U.S. Department of Education into a broader, competitive fund focused on promoting a "well-rounded education."

"The only proposal we've seen is to fold the FLAP into the well-rounded child [program]," Lovejoy said, "and I think that will lead to less money for languages."

*Reprinted from Educator Week, March 29, 2011.
Submitted by Nancy Russo-Rumore, Emerita*

ITALIAN CLASSES FOR THE COMMUNITY

The Center for Italian Studies, Stony Brook University, will be offering Italian classes October 9-April 6, 2012-2013, at John Glenn HS, Elwood Road, Elwood, NY 11743. Go to www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies for more information.

AATF-SUFFOLK

AATF-Suffolk presented more than 140 awards to students who competed in the 2012 National French Exam. Jonathan Wertheim, Harborfields HS, was the recipient of the Kathleen Ann Lyons Scholarship. Maria D'Amore was elected AATF-Suffolk's new VP, and Nancy Wolman, President, and Bruno Bernardino, Secretary-Treasurer, will continue in their positions.

PROFESSIONAL CALENDAR

September 20	LILT FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, Butera's Restaurant, Smithtown, 4:30-7:30 PM	March 1	Deadline for submissions for the LILT Student Foreign Language Competition
September 23	Concorso d'Eleganza, Annual Celebration of Italian Vehicle Excellence and Beauty, Stony Brook University, 10 AM – 1 PM	March 3-7	NECTFL Conference, Baltimore, MD
October 5 & 6	NYS AFLT Annual Meeting, Saratoga Springs, NY	March 15	Deadline for submissions for the LILT Poster Contest
October 27	NYCAFLT Annual Conference, NYC	March 16-18	ASCD Annual Conference, Chicago, IL
October TBA	AATF-Suffolk, Trip to Ellis Island	April 15	Deadline for submitting all LILT Awards, Grant and Stipend
November 3	LILT ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Comsewogue HS, Port Jefferson Station, 8-1:30 PM	April TBA	LILT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS end
Nov. 9 & 10	Italian Film Festival, Stony Brook University Go to www.stonybrook.edu/italian_studies for more information	May 30-June 2	2013 AATI National Conference, Strasbourg, France
Nov. 14 & 15	NADSFL Meeting, Philadelphia, PA	July 2-7	ASLTA National Professional Development Conference, Charlotte, NC
November 16-18	ACTFL Convention Philadelphia, PA	July 5-8	2013 AATF National Convention, Chicago, IL
February TBA	LILT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS begin	July 8-11	2013 AATSP National Conference, San Antonio, TX

FOOD FOR YOUR SOUL

Marc Chagall

An exhibit of Marc Chagall will be at the Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor, NY, from July 7, 20-Novemnrber 4, 2012. A daily screening of the film, *Artists of the 20th century: Marc Chagall*, will be shown daily at 11 AM, 12 PM, 1 PM and 3 PM. Call (516) 484-9338 for further details.

Staller Center, Stony Brook University

Dec. 2, 2012 Shaolin Warriors at 7 PM
 Mar. 16, 2013 Celtic Nights at 8 PM
 Apr. 6, 2013 Dance Brazil at 8 PM

Metropolitan Opera HD broadcasts:

L'Elisir D'Amore (encore), October 14, 2012 at 1 PM
Otello (encore), October 28, 2012 at 1 PM
Tempest (encore), November 18, 2012 at 1 PM
Un Ballo in Maschera (live) December 8, 2012 at 1 PM
Clemenza di Tito (encore), December 9, 2012 at 1 PM
Les Troyens (live), January 5, 2013 at 12 PM
Aida (encore), January 12, 2013 PM at 1 PM
Maria Stuarda (live), January 19, 2013 at 1 PM
Rigoletto (encore), February 17, 2013 at 1 PM
Parsifal (encore), March 17, 2013 at 12 PM
Francesca da Rimini (encore), March 23, 2013 at 12 PM
Giulio Cesare (encore), April 28, 2013 PM at 12 PM

Call 631.632.ARTS for further details.

The Metropolitan Museum Of Art, New York City

Present-September 30, 2012: Italian Renaissance Illuminations from the Robert Lehman Collection
 Present-January 6, 2013: Colors of the Universe: Chinese Hardstone Carving
 Present-January 6, 2013: Chinese Gardens: Pavillions, Studios, Retreats
 October 3, 2012-January 6, 2013: Bernini: Sculpting in Clay
 October 9, 2012-February 14, 2013: Turkman Jewelry from the Colledction of Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf
 October 30, 2012-January 27, 2013: Extravagant Inventions: The Princely Furniture of the Roentgens
 December 4, 2012-March 17, 2013: Matisse: In Search of True Painting
 Long-Term Installation: Fabergé from the Matilda Geddings Gray Foundation Collection

For more information, call: (212) 535-7710

Dance in New York City

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater: The season begins on November 28, 2012. Call (212) 405-9000
 Dionisia García Flamenco: Introduction to Flamenco Dance for Absolute Beginners Workshop. Call (212) 426-7363 for more information.
 New York City Ballet: The season begins on September 18, 2013. Call (291) 496-0600 (tickets)
 Broadway Dance Center: Take classes in ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop, etc. Call (212) 582-9304 for more information.



Richard Gentile
LILT Newsletter Editor
99 Soundview Road
Huntington, NY 11743

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