

LINGUA FRANCA

A BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY
FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY
salemstate.edu/languages

Volume 10 • Issue 2 • Spring 2013

“WE ARE THE WORLD...”: DEPARTMENT CHANGES NAME!

By: Elizabeth Blood, Chair

As chair of the foreign languages department at Salem State University, I want to share some news about exciting changes in our department. Effective September 1, 2013, we will officially be renamed the **world languages and cultures** department, and we will be expanding our programs and language offerings.

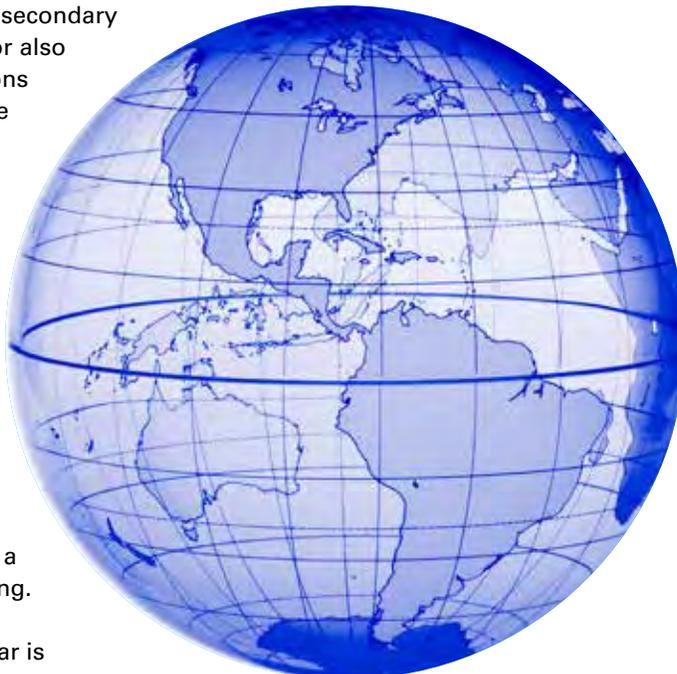
During the 2012-2013 academic year, the department expanded its language offerings to include seven languages: **Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Italian, Latin, and Spanish**. We have also recently expanded our minor programs to include minors in Arabic Studies, French, Italian, Spanish, or world languages (a combination of any two languages offered in the department).

Best of all, beginning in fall 2013, we will launch a new **bachelor of arts in world languages** and cultures. Students can still specialize in Spanish, including our popular teacher licensure tracks for Spanish elementary and secondary education, but the new major also includes concentration options in either French or Italian. We aim to prepare students for careers in the private sector, government, education, or nonprofit organizations where language skills, cross-cultural awareness and critical thinking are valued assets. Our programs include a range of courses in language, culture and literature. All concentrations require an internship course, as well as a senior thesis project on a topic of the student's choosing. Study abroad for a summer, semester or an academic year is

strongly encouraged for all majors and minors. The department sponsors summer study abroad programs in Canada, Italy, Spain and Costa Rica, and we are in the process of creating a summer program in Berlin, Germany. Study in other countries is also available through the Center for International Education.

We also encourage students to apply for post-baccalaureate fellowships to teach English abroad. Fellowships are available in France, Italy and Spain and are funded by the governments of those offices. Next year, we will send three students to Italy and one to France on fully funded teaching assistantships!

Our transformation is not complete, though, as we continue to explore new programs and new languages. Look for more courses in translation studies in the future, as we continue to grow our department.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

We are the World_____	page 1
Departmental News_____	page 2
Life in Lombardia_____	page 3
Next Year's Teachers_____	page 4
Language of Business_____	page 5
Tale of Two Popes_____	page 5
Student Scholarships_____	page 6
Translation Services_____	page 6
Couch Surfing in Sicily_____	page 7
Exchange Trip_____	page 9
Miss Bala_____	page 9
Student's "Amazing Race"_____	page 10
Peace Corps Volunteer_____	page 11
Poetry_____	page 11
Departmental Awards_____	page 12
Spanish Interpreter_____	page 12
List of Graduating Students_____	page 12

EDITORS:

Jon Aske

Kenneth Reeds

WEB PUBLICATION:

ssclinguafanca.wordpress.com

JOIN SALEM STATE'S LANGUAGE CLUBS' MAILING LISTS & FACEBOOK GROUPS

Visit This Page:

<http://tinyurl.com/ssulanguageclubs>

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

TEL: 978.542.6258

languages@salemstate.edu



This year's Psi Sigma Iota induction ceremony

¿QUÉ PASA? QUOI DE NEUF? NOVITÀ? DEPARTMENT NEWS ABOUNDS

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

NEW FACULTY IN GERMAN: Welcome to J. Doug Guy, our newest part-time German instructor. Prof. Guy holds a BA from Indiana University and an MA from Middlebury College and is the current president of the American Association of Teachers of German. He will be teaching the Intermediate German sequence next year.



The Department of World Languages and Cultures thanks Ronnette Wongus for her great first year working as the departmental secretary. We look forward to the next!

WORLD LANGUAGES VIDEO:

Our undergraduate communications intern, Caitlin Provost, is working on a promotional video for the department to help encourage more students to study languages at Salem State. If you are a current language student or alum of our major or one of our minor programs and you are willing to be interviewed for the video, please contact Caitlin to set up an appointment c_provost@salemstate.edu

FACULTY RESEARCH: Our dedicated faculty continue to research, present at conferences and publish in their areas of expertise. This year, faculty presented at the MaFLA regional conference for language teachers in Sturbridge, the ACTFL national conference for language teachers in Philadelphia, the MLA and the NEMLA, national and regional literary studies conferences in Boston, the NECTFL regional language teachers conference in Maryland, the NECLAS national Latin American Studies conference at Yale University, the Italian Studies conference at the University of Pennsylvania, the ASEMA (Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa) conference in Washington DC, the JNCL and NCLIS joint meeting for national committees on language policy in Washington DC, and the NEEAN conference on assessment at UMASS-Amherst, the Congreso Internacional

de Literatura Hispánica international conference on Hispanic literatures in the Dominican Republic, and the CIEF international conference on Francophone Studies in Greece. Dr. Doll and Dr. Dávila Gonçalves also presented their own original poetry at numerous events in the region. Faculty also published many research articles and books this year and a number of them will be honored at the University's Faculty Publications Celebration on May 2. To find out more about our areas of research, check out our faculty pages at salemstate.edu/languages

PHI SIGMA IOTA: Seventeen undergraduate and graduate **students** (Vilma Bibeau, Melissa Carella, Bianca Carreiro, Matthew Curley, Kelsey Delaney, Morgan Downs, David Gadbois, Jeleany Garcia Rijo, Angela Harling, Michael Hughes, Christopher Johanson, Molly Pinto Madigan, Melida Sanchez, Patricia Sanchez, Laura Timmons, Amanda Tower, Ai Toyoda), two **faculty** members (Amanda Minervini, Julie Whitlow), and four **community members** (Giovanni Graziani, Paula Graziani, Francis Mayo, Octavia Randolph) were inducted into our Phi Sigma Iota honor society this spring. Find out more about our Honor Society at: salemstate.edu/academics/23486.php

FUTURE TEACHERS OF ITALIAN PROGRAM

Participants in the Future Teachers of Italian program are placed in English-language classrooms in Italy. Beyond building their résumé, they also enjoy the opportunity to live abroad for at least one year. The following is an article by Joshua Brown who is currently finishing his year in Italy. After, are the profiles of the three students who will be teaching there next year.

LIFE IN LOMBARDIA

By: Joshua Brown

Given the opportunity to work in a foreign country in which I can practice a foreign language, while providing a service to the young people who reside there, has always been a dream and aspiration throughout my life. Thanks to the 2010 special agreement between SSU and school systems in Italy that was facilitated by the Italian Consulate in Boston, this year I was given this opportunity to teach in one of the best schools in the region of Lombardia, in Gallarate, at Liceo Scientifico Leonardo Da Vinci. Through the academic year of fall 2012- spring 2013 I am teaching as a mother-tongue English teacher, preparing lesson plans, living independently in a foreign country, and most importantly I am being immersed in a culture which I have studied throughout my career as a college student. Along with an experience, such as the one I am currently undertaking, there are many setbacks and difficulties that one can encounter. It is the duty of a student to learn from these experiences and to better understand the world in which they live. I have taken this responsibility to balance the life of being a teacher while learning from the situations in which I find myself while here in Gallarate, Italy.

Arguably the most important part of my being in Lombardy is to teach as a foreign language teacher. Each day I enter my school between 8 -10 am prepared for three or five classes, which generally consist of about fifteen students. The classes which I teach vary from second year to fifth year. In Italy students not only go to school on Saturday, but they also have a full extra year to help prepare them for university and the working world. I have a set curriculum which I follow, based on one created by the European Frameworks, although I am also given many opportunities to display what I have learned in the field of education. The themes which I have presented to



Joshua Brown

my students range from the mundane differences between schools in Italy and the United States to utilizing fashion icons, such as Alexander McQueen, to create fictions based on a piece of artwork. Working here as a teacher has given me the ability to better my understanding of instruction and of varied ways in which I can manipulate lessons in order to respect the needs of the students.

Aside from teaching, there are many other important aspects of living forty minutes outside Milan, Italy's second most flourishing city in regard to financial success. I regularly take a five euro train into the center of Milan where I see the largest gothic cathedral in the world, The Duomo, or one of Da Vinci's most famous artworks, "The Last Supper". The city of Milan has immersed me in the world of art, modern Italy, and most importantly for me, the world of fashion. Via Montenapoleone, or "Montenapo," is known as the Corner of Fashion. This street displays the most modern

examples of upcoming trends and current fashion in the windows of its luxurious shops such as Alexander McQueen, Burberry, Chanel, Fendi, Stella McCartney, Balenciaga, Prada, Versace, and numerous other designers whose clothes I will never be able to afford. Milan has given me an example of a real life of luxury and has inspired not only my fashion sense but also my outlook on art, business, food, and life in general.

While being immersed in the Northern Italian culture I have received a better comprehension of not only the language, but of the people who live here. I find that the people here are very closed in regards to progression throughout the world in subjects such as gay rights, religion, and women's role in society. I have personally been discriminated against and have also seen the effects of discrimination in my students, colleagues, and friends. At first, while here I was appalled by these discrepancies, however after living within this environment I have learned to take each experience as an opportunity to learn and, arguably most importantly, an opportunity to teach. I created a bond with my students of being not only their teacher in regards to English, but also an example of someone who is accepting of different ways of life. I teach them not to tolerate, but to accept differences in culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, and political ideas. This battle has been uphill and along the way I have ran into many problems, but I choose to learn from these problems and to teach my students that they too need to learn from the injustices within the world.

Italy, and particularly northern Italy, is full of beautiful examples of art, language, and culture. It harbors many years of history and a traveler residing here can learn not only about what one sees, but also about one's self. When someone travels abroad they have the choice to see the country as the romanticized version of what they thought the country was, or to be immersed in the real culture and learn from their experiences. I have chosen, while living here, the latter option. As a teacher and a student I believe I have the responsibility to take off my rose-colored glasses and study to accept the world for what it is, while growing thanks to every situation I encounter. I have the responsibility as a teacher to always learn from every aspect of life, and to teach these lessons to the next generation so that they can be the ones to make a change in this world.

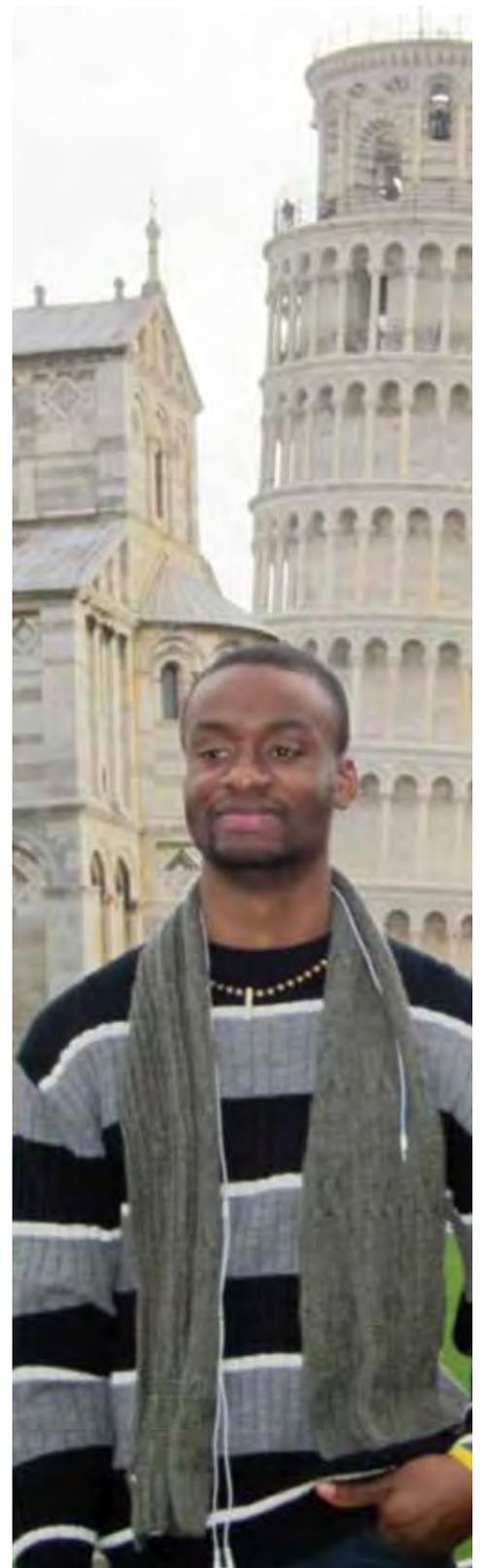
NEXT YEAR'S TEACHERS

TESSA ALLEN is an undergraduate student majoring in art + design, with a concentration in art education (5-12), as well as a minor in Italian. She is passionate equally about both visual arts and language-learning. In the summer of 2010, she participated in a study abroad program, traveling to the small town of Tuscania, Italy, and living there for a month. She is involved in Salem State University's Italian Club, serving as President since 2011. She will be graduating this May 2013, with hopes to study Italian at the graduate level.



JACQUELYN WEATHERBEE

Jacquelyn Weatherbee is a recent graduate of Salem State University, having earned her BA in theater performance with a minor in music and Italian. She is an actor, playwright, director, and musician, among other things. Ms. Weatherbee has a deep love of culture and wants to get out there and see the world.



KARL ETZER LIMAGE is an undergraduate student in psychology. Originally from Haiti, Salem State University's language programs have amplified his international view of the world. This was furthered through study abroad in Florence, Italy. He hopes that future students of SSU will get to benefit from these same opportunities and create memories that will last a lifetime.

IN WHAT LANGUAGE DOES BUSINESS SPEAK?

By: Kenneth Reeds

In a recent edition of *Lingua Franca*, the dean of the Bertolon School of Business spoke about language learning and the business world. A fluent speaker of French and English, K. Brewer Doran recognized the importance of language acquisition, stating that she feels “everyone should learn a second language.” However, at the same time she also pointed out that, in her opinion, learning a new language is “not necessary in today’s business world.” While perhaps seeming at least partially contradictory, these two statements also reflect a large amount of truth.

English is indeed the language of international business. A recent Ipsos poll of employees in 26 countries whose jobs require them to speak to people in other parts of the world reported that two-thirds said that English is the language that they use most often. Quoting the CEO of Ipsos, Darrell Bricker, a Reuters article concluded that “[t]he most revealing aspect of this survey is how English has emerged as the default language for business around the world.” *The Harvard Business Review* agrees with this conclusion, declaring in an article that “Ready or not, English is now the global language of business.” This idea moved a while ago from opinion and observation into action as business schools around the world began imparting classes in English in the early 1990s. *The New York Times* reports that “[i]n the last five years,

the world’s top business schools and universities have been pushing to make English the teaching tongue.” This means that regardless of their first language, students are learning to speak business in English. Or, examined from another perspective and echoing the dean’s words, those people who are born native English speakers start with an advantage in today’s international business world.

So, the question then becomes, if you’re born an English speaker and you want to enter business, is it worth your time to study a new language? Many people study business with the goal of earning money. With this in mind, *The Guardian* pointed out that the simple fact is that “a language can add between 10% and 15% to your wage.” Beyond the increased salary, we are discussing a competitive place where landing a job or attaining a seat in a well-regarded MBA program are difficult tasks. The Modern Language Association emphasized language-learning’s potential contribution to providing a candidate with the needed edge: “Competition for the best jobs and for admission to top-rated graduate and professional schools is intense. Directly and indirectly the study of languages and their cultures and literatures will provide you with important job-related knowledge and skills that can give you a competitive edge.” Of course it is also important not to forget that 75%

of the world does not speak English. Language acquisition reduces the number of people a businessperson cannot communicate with directly while also honing cross-cultural and communicative skills that the dean seemed to suggest were important.

Imagine competing for a job with a recent MBA graduate from the *École Normale Supérieure*. He or she will have a graduate degree that was conducted in English. However, thanks to the place where this graduate was born, he or she will also speak French. Competitively, this is an enormous benefit. English is indeed the language of business and this gives US-born students an advantage; however this quickly turns into a disadvantage if it removes motivation to learn a new language. Language acquisition provides cross-cultural, interpersonal, analytical, and communicative skills that can be essential to success in business. Beyond this, multilingual business people are more likely to be hired and will earn more money.

Do you want to be just another person with an international business degree or MBA? Why not make yourself unique by adding another language and studying in another country?

For reference information, and to read the articles referenced here, see the online version of this article at sslinguafranca.wordpress.com

A TALE OF TWO POPES (BUT NO GOVERNMENT)

By: Amanda Minervini

In recent months the Catholic Church and Italy have been the focus of considerable news coverage.

On February 11, 2013 Pope Benedict XVI announced his decision to resign. He had been elected Pope in 2005 and not many Popes in the history of the Vatican have decided to leave, certainly none in the last six centuries. A period of uncertainties, but also of hopes, started among Catholics, whose attention was mesmerized once again by the little city-state within the Italian capital.

Cardinals started congregating for the election of a new Pope, which takes place in the marvelous Sistine Chapel.

If you happened to be a tourist around the time of the conclave, then you would not have been able to visit the Chapel, but you could have waited in St. Peter square for the response: a smoke signal—black: there is no Pope; white: “habemus Papam” (we have a Pope).

After a surprisingly brief conclave, on March 13, the cardinals elected their colleague from Buenos Aires, Jorge Mario Bergoglio. He is a Jesuit born in Argentina from an Italian family and he decided to call himself “Francis.” In the long history of the Church, Cardinal Bergoglio was the first Pope to ever pick the name of Francis, in honor of Francis of Assisi. He

was also the first Jesuit to become Pope, and the first from Latin America. He chose the name Francis thinking of a Church dedicated to peace and to the care of the poor. This is why Pope Francis seems to have rekindled some faith in the Catholic Church, despite the many scandals that have plagued it in recent years.

However, there is a side of Bergoglio’s personal history that would need clarification if he really wants to be the heir of St. Francis, the man of peace and of the poor—not the Francis loved by Italian Fascists in the name of his endurance of pain, his perfect obedience, or his trips to the Orient (that the Fascists

continued on next page



The Two Popes

tried to replicate, talking of “a New Crusade,” when they started their colonial project in Ethiopia and Somalia). In fact, soon after Bergoglio turned into Pope Francis, newspaper articles from around the world started asking questions about his relationship with the Argentinian fascist regime.

After the resignation, Pope Benedict XVI became “Pope Emeritus,” and a quite sensational picture portrayed the meeting of the two Popes, who called each other “brothers.” Meanwhile, the “brothers of Italy” (“fratelli d’Italia”), as the national anthem calls them, waited for months for the formation of a new Government after the elections held on February 25th. They can rejoice about their two Popes, but many wish to have a Cabinet and a functioning State. There is no clear majority, though, and the alliances are so frail, they can fall apart any second. Right now, the Parliament is holding meetings for an important decision: the election of the new President of the Republic (who is elected by the Chambers, not directly by the people, and who stays in office for seven years). Yet, rather than agreeing on possible candidates, so far they have only managed to upset each other and a good chunk of the electorate. Maybe irreparably. We will see.

THREE STUDENTS WIN SUMMER STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS

By: Elizabeth Blood, Chair

This year, foreign languages launched a new summer study abroad scholarship program to encourage students to participate in our summer programs in Spain, Italy, and Quebec. We would like to congratulate three undergraduate students who were each awarded \$250 scholarships towards their study abroad this summer based on their excellent essay entries: **TAYLOR CRAMPTON (SPAIN), MEGAN FORREST (SPAIN), AND KIMBERLEEN TOUSSAINT (QUEBEC)**. Each of these students has different motivations for learning a second language.

TAYLOR CRAMPTON, a nursing major and honors student who has been studying Spanish since elementary school, is looking forward to the challenge of living and studying in Oviedo, Spain this summer. “As a future nurse,” Taylor writes, “my advanced understanding of the Spanish language will only help me. I will be able to better communicate with patients of Hispanic origin in order to provide better, more personal patient care.”

A music major, **MEGAN FORREST** has always been drawn to studying Spanish. After hearing a student speak about his summer study experience in Costa Rica at a residence hall event last year, Megan decided that this might be something she would be interested in. “I think that this trip would be a great opportunity to learn about a different culture and way of life,” Megan writes, “I think that it is important to branch out in the world, and to not always stay in the same corner.”

KIMBERLEEN TOUSSAINT, an economics major of Haitian ancestry, is hoping to develop fluency in French, a language spoken by her parents and grandparents. Her interest is personal, but also professional. “I would like to go to Quebec to be immersed in the culture and the French language so that I can truly learn. I want to come home speaking French so that I can speak to my grandmother and ban English from our household,” says Kimberleen, “I also aspire to minor in French and have the ability to converse in French during an interview. Being able to speak another language would be beneficial in the job market.”



TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES: SSU PARTNERS WITH SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By: Elizabeth Blood, Chair

Last year, foreign languages was contacted by the Salem Public Schools. They were looking for interpreters to help with parent-teacher conferences and had an urgent need for interpreters in Arabic and French. A culturally and linguistically diverse city, 27% of the students in the Salem public schools come from families where the primary language spoken at home is not English. These families speak 36 different languages. Most are Spanish speakers or speakers of Portuguese, and the schools generally have access to interpreters and translators in those languages. Where they needed help was with the “low-incidence” languages, and we were able to assist by developing a resource list of bilingual students and faculty to provide interpretation services when needed.

“We often struggle to find translators for our low-incidence languages, meaning those that are spoken by much smaller numbers of students—Arabic, Albanian, Tagalog, Haitian Creole, Chinese, Somali, and so on. Being able to contact someone who is fluent in these languages through Salem State University is a wonderful benefit for our English Language Learners,” says Nancy Meacham, ELL Coordinator for the Salem Public Schools. “It is so gratifying to see the relief on parents’ faces when they meet a translator

and realize they can now communicate fully with their child's teacher or school," says Meacham.

Meacham also highlights the importance of cross-cultural understanding: "Culture and language are so closely linked, and having translators who can bring that cultural expertise and sensitivity is crucial to positive communication between students, teachers, and their parents." This sentiment was echoed by Dr. Joseph Hitti, an Arabic instructor at SSU who is also a professional translator. Dr. Hitti, a native of Lebanon, was able to help out with the initial urgent request for an Arabic interpreter, working at Collins Middle School and Bates Elementary School for an Iraqi family who has children in both schools. He highlighted the need for interpreters to understand both cultures in order to facilitate positive communication. "For me," Hitti says, "the interesting thing about interpretation is that it always puts me in situations I've never been in before. This time, it was dealing with refugees and the education system. It's actually a personal reward for me to be able to help people and to be an advocate for new immigrants."

Brice Bambara, a 2012 SSU graduate with a major in political science and a minor in foreign languages, also volunteered to help with interpreting for the Salem schools. An international student from Burkina Faso, Bambara speaks fluent French in addition to several African languages. He was asked to help with interpreting and translation for French-speaking African families at the Bentley Elementary School. "I was asked

to translate different types of documents, ranging from report cards to a document about new systems being implemented in the school. I also attended parent-teacher conferences," says Bambara. "It was a great experience to be the link between parents and teachers. I felt very useful explaining to parents how their children are progressing learning English. It reminded me of my own experience in a way." Bambara, who has been accepted into several prestigious graduate programs for International Relations in France and Switzerland, hopes to use his language skills in the future. "This gave me a sense of what it would be like to work in an international environment where people communicate in many different languages."

Since the initial contact with the Salem Public Schools, foreign languages



developed a resource list of speakers of many different languages. To date, we have been able to provide assistance for families who, in addition to Arabic and French, speak Albanian, Russian, Bengali, Chinese, Urdu, Vietnamese, and Portuguese. Also, according to Bilingual Outreach Specialist Alma Pimentel, five SSU students answered our call to assist with parent-teacher conferences in Spanish at the Bentley Elementary School in March.

In a letter to the foreign languages department written last month, Dr. Stephen Russell, Superintendent of the Salem Public Schools, thanked the students and faculty of Salem State for their willingness to assist Salem's multicultural families: "Having access to Salem State professors and students who are fluent speakers of these [low-incidence] languages has been an invaluable benefit to our students and their families...Thank you sincerely for your efforts in connecting this resource at Salem State University to our work with Salem's English Language Learners."

Foreign languages has also assisted with volunteer translation projects for Lifebridge and the Boys and Girls Club in Salem this year, and we plan to continue to expand our translator/interpreter resource list in the future. If you are a student, staff, or faculty member who is bilingual and would like to be contacted for paid or volunteer work in translation/interpretation next year, please send your contact information to Dr. Blood (eblood@salemstate.edu).

COUCH SURFING IN SICILY

By: Richard Strager

"Vai più piano, Eduardo!" I shouted. "Go slower!" How did I end up here, speeding along this narrow Sicilian coastal road under the glare of a scalding August sun, sitting behind this 65-year-old silver-haired Italian gentleman, perched on the back of his classic Moto Guzzi motorcycle which was almost as old as he was?

I'd only met Eduardo for the first time the day before. He had replied to a request I'd placed on the Couch Surfing website looking for accommodations for the couple of nights I was hoping to spend in Catania, Sicily. Couch Surfing, in case you haven't heard of it, is the easiest,

cheapest and coolest way to travel around the world without having to pay for a place to stay. In addition, the site provides travelers with the unique opportunity to get to know local people and perhaps to be shown around by them.

Eduardo, a retired oil refinery inspector, was full of energy and bravado. He had lots of free time on his hands and enjoyed spending it hosting travelers from all over the world and introducing them to his beloved Sicily. When he offered to take me on a tour of the north-eastern coast of Sicily, I accepted without hesitation, in the spirit of adventure. I felt lucky to have my own personal Italian tour guide

for the day. I assumed we'd be going by car, so when he handed me a helmet and told me to hop on his motorcycle, I was taken aback. But, he assured me that he'd been riding motorcycles his whole life and it was the best way to see the coast. So I jumped on board behind him and roared out of the city leaving behind the chaotic urban sprawl of Catania and up into the surrounding hills along the coast-hugging cliff roads, heading toward the fashionable resort town of Taormina. Little did I know we'd be covering 75 miles that day over the course of 12 hours. Eduardo had also failed to mention how much he enjoyed weaving in between traffic, riding



down the center stripe of two-way roads, and his preference for stopping at red lights only as a last resort.

Couchsurfing.org is a website that seeks to create and promote a culture of helping and hosting travelers for free. The 'couch' part is a bit misleading. A simple couch is certainly one type of lodging that people might offer, but in my three experiences staying with people in Italy last summer, on each occasion I was given my own room, own bathroom, internet access, and at least one home cooked meal. In exchange, I was only asked to spend some quality time with whoever was hosting me, sharing travel stories and chatting about the world from the sundry to the profound. In my case, I intentionally chose hosts who didn't seem to speak any English since I much preferred to use my Italian. Most people on the website, however, appear to be bi-, tri- or quadri-lingual, which is not that unusual in Europe. Some hosts, in fact, are very likely angling for a chance to hone their English speaking skills while

showing guests around their town or city. There are also those on the website who don't have a bed or couch to offer, but are eager to meet for a cup of coffee or a glass of wine, or to invite you to a party or cultural event. Others might be able to put you up for a night or two, but not have any free time to spend with you. It really varies from place to place and person to person. While a lot of details are covered in the posted profiles of those seeking to host, flexibility is a must if you want to participate. It's free to sign up and there is no obligation or even expectation that you offer reciprocity in terms of hosting the people who host you. In addition, each profile also contains personal recommendations from past guests which provide a way to evaluate which hosts might be the most reliable and worthwhile to contact. The hosts also get to rate their guests.

Meanwhile, gripping tightly to the back of the motorcycle, I found myself continuously bouncing back and forth somewhere between exhilarated and

terrified. I was thoroughly enjoying the breathtaking views and the cooling, buffeting blasts of wind that swirled around me, vibrating my body to the core. I was also cringing at the speed with which we rounded those hairpin turns. At times I'd be gazing in awe at the gorgeous pristine turquoise of the Mediterranean Sea which stretched for mile upon dizzying mile far below us, at other times I'd be seeing my life flashing before my eyes. Yet, at a certain point, I consciously loosened my grip, let go of my fear and relaxed, finally just enjoying the moment. I felt appreciative of this opportunity to discover Sicily from a very unusual perspective, and was ultimately thrilled by this ride of a lifetime.

So strap on your helmet, hold onto your seat, and take a spin around the world for free using the couchsurfing.org website. Set up your profile today and get ready for some guaranteed unpredictable adventures.

Do you dare?

EXCHANGE TRIP

By: Vilma Bibeau

As part of my teaching duties at Billerica Memorial High School I assist with the international exchange program. Over the past two years I have been very fortunate to travel to Europe and experience an international exchange trip with my students. In our first trip, in 2012, I traveled to Spain with my students. This year, assisted by a chaperone, I brought them on a trip to Italy.

The exchange program is a "relationship" between two schools from different countries. At Billerica Memorial High School, where I teach Spanish and Italian, we have a trip for each of the four languages we offer; Italian, Spanish, German, and French. It has been the practice that the "sister" school sends their students to visit us and stay with our students and families during September. After, in this year's exchange, the groups from our school visited the students and their families in Italy (February) and France (April). Every year we alternate countries. Thus, next year we will exchange with Spanish and German students, giving all of our language students an opportunity to enjoy this opportunity.

The direct contact between our students and the host families was an extraordinary experience for all involved. My students were not just happy to be in an amazing country, visiting fantastic places, but they were thrilled to use their language skills in an authentic setting. My favorite reaction from the kids was: "Mrs. Bibeau, I can speak Italian and I understand what they say!" And my reply is: "I know. That's what it's all about!"

Being a foreign language teacher is an incredible job that allows you to share the world with your students. You have the opportunity to open a window to the world for them. With their acquired language skills the students are now able to enter into the international stage, where they can broaden their horizons and open their minds to other perspectives.

I believe that these exchange programs are great opportunities to expose students to a world of possibilities in terms of learning a language and its beautiful culture. They may forget other things, but they will never forget a memorable trip like this and their new friends.

MISS BALA AND OPERATION FAST AND FURIOUS

By: Michele C. Dávila

According to criminal statistics, in 2012 there were 30 assassinations per day in Mexico, 70% of which were committed by weapons purchased in the United States (Univision). This is not a commonly-known fact in the United States. One of the reasons may be because it has not yet been depicted in a Hollywood movie. But in 2011, writer/director Gerardo Naranjo filmed the movie Miss Bala (Miss Bullet), based on true events, in which there is a glimpse of the violence in the warzone that exists on our southern border. The website Rotten Tomatoes shows the film receiving 87% favorable reviews, but there are very few people that have seen it in the United States. Here I will talk briefly about the movie and about its historical context, giving details about "Operation Fast and Furious," established by the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and its arms trafficking to Mexico.

Miss Bala is the story of Laura Guerrero, whose dream to become Miss Baja California suddenly becomes a nightmare when Lino Valdez, the capo of the region, takes a

continued on next page



shine to her and unwillingly Laura starts to participate in Mexico's violent war. At the end she wins the crown in a ridiculous and obvious way in front of the cameras, without undergoing the normal procedure. This scene is a replica of the famous case of Laura Zúniga, Miss Sinaloa 2008, who was arrested when she was found in a truck full of arms outside of Guadalajara, Jalisco.

In the movie, Laura also loses her reputation when the police, in connivance with the drug smugglers, chooses her as the scapegoat for the staged attempted murder of an army coronel, and is presented in the news as a prize of the war against crime. In the last scene we see Laura being dumped alive out of a car in a solitary street.

Laura is both accomplice and victim because she has two paradoxical reasons for staying and helping Lino. The first is that he promised her the pageant crown, something Laura really desired. The second reason becomes the decisive factor for her staying on: the gang knew where she lived and could kill her father and brother if they so desire. As a result, Laura seems to have no emotion during the film; her face is impassive and quiet.

There is another important scene in the movie that the American movie reviewers did not mention. The capo sends Laura across the border to the United States with thousands of dollars strapped to her torso, and there she meets with an

American who in return gives her high-caliber arms. The main contact the drug traffickers have in the United States is someone who has the advantage of possessing military-style weapons for sale. Who is this guy? The movie does not say, but if we track the firearms we can begin to understand.

It is now known that from 2006 to 2011 the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) ran a series of operations, including Operation Fast and Furious, in which they allowed American firearm dealers to sell weapons to illegal buyers from south of the border. The purpose was to track the guns to the Mexican druglords, and consequently, dismantle the drug trafficking in the area. It is estimated that more than 2,000 firearms were sold, of which only 710 had been recovered by 2012. None of the cartel "capos" have been arrested.

Operation Fast and Furious began in October 31, 2009 when four individuals purchased AK-47s in Arizona. The ATF's Phoenix office was in charge of the investigation and chose the name of the operation because the suspects were based in an auto-repair shop and participated in street races, just like the Vin Diesel movie franchise. The Sinaloa Cartel and its biggest enemy, the Juárez Cartel, are the two warring groups that have benefited most from the firearms, and were the perpetrators of two

massacres that outraged Mexico because many of the victims were innocent people. The Mexican government started investigating the increase in cartel warfare and the American arms since the Aliviante Massacre in 2009 in a rehabilitation center, where 17 were killed, and the Salvarcar Massacre in 2010, with 16 young men murdered. According to an investigation by Univision aired in 2012, the operation became only questioned by the United States when DEA agent Brian Terry was killed provoking the "gunwalking scandal." Jake Tapper, a journalist for ABC News, stated that Operation Fast and Furious started nine months after President Obama started office, although similar programs had been started during the Bush presidency.

As a result of the scandal, for the first time in congressional history the House of Representatives voted on June 19, 2012 "to hold Attorney General Eric Holder in contempt for refusing to turn over documents tied to the botched Fast and Furious gun-running sting—a discredited operation that has become a sharp point of contention between Democrats and Republicans in Washington." In the end, the different operations were stopped.

If you want to understand what it is like to live in a state of siege, you do not need to go to the Middle East. Miss Bala reminds us that in a place as close as our southern border, whole communities live under constant threat of violence.

THE STUDENTS OF ITALIAN 303 "AMAZING RACING" THROUGH SALEM

By: Rayanne Menery

The students of the Conversation in Italian Class (Italian 303) were racing through the city of Salem one evening in March while finishing a scavenger hunt completely in Italian. Some students planted the clues before class, while the rest of the students were trying to catch up all the way to the end of the hunt. We ventured from the Friendship ship, in which students had to call a cell phone number by counting the number of the masts, to finding a clue in the hand of the statute of Sabrina the witch. The students used their Italian skills to navigate through the city while also using a GPS system, Morse code and utilizing employees at some local establishments such as the Hawthorne Hotel.



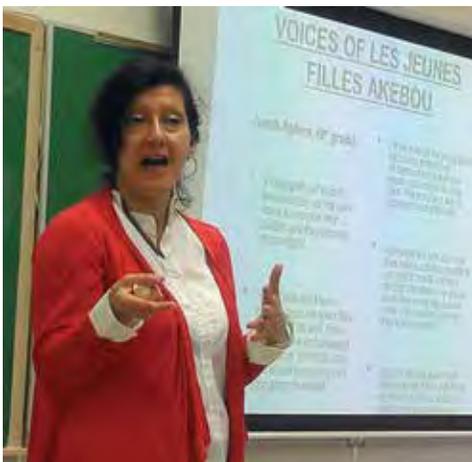
continued on next page

After finding a clue under one of the benches in a park, the students found the last clue at the Bella Verona Ristorante where they were treated to an authentic Italian meal while speaking in Italian. The students in the scavenger hunt were Marshall Jespersen, Damon Jespersen, Christine Bancheri, Andrea Capoilupo, Anna Lucia DeLoi, Victoria Parker and Philemon Awah Ngeh. All enjoyed themselves while dressed in costume as they deciphered the clues. Who knows? Maybe you will see another group in upcoming weeks venturing throughout the city. I was extremely proud of the enthusiasm and the Italian echoing through the streets of Salem. It was a nice review of the Imperative tense as well!



RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER SHARES EXPERIENCES

Dr. Laurie Lopez Charles, a returned Peace Corps Volunteer, spoke on campus on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 to language students. Dr. Lopez Charles served in Togo, West Africa in 1999-2001 just after completing her Ph.D. in Psychology. Later, she returned to the Central African Republic with Medecins Sans Frontières. Today, she runs a family therapy clinic in Lynn and works as a freelance consultant training psychologists and therapists in post-conflict areas in French-speaking Africa and other locations around the world. Dr. Lopez Charles explained how language skills are an asset for students interested in applying to the Peace Corps and how the Peace Corps can help you to further develop your language skills in a meaningful way. Students interested in the Peace Corps can consult peacecorps.gov to find out more.



POEMS FROM DR. DOLL'S LITERATURE CLASSES

Jarchas are brief poetic jewels dating as far back as the 11th century. They are the first poems written in Mozarabe, an Arabic-influenced version of Hispano-Romance spoken in the south of Spain in the Middle Ages. They are characterized by notes of desire, longing and sensuality. Written by men in the voices of women who yearn for the return of their beloveds, jarchas are poignant glimpses into the emotional realm of men and women in early Spain.

Here are a few selections written by students in this semester's undergraduate (SPN401) and graduate (SPN706) classes in Spanish literature.

FROM SPN401

Ya habibi ayenee
tus labios son rosas
creciendo en el jardín.
Tus ojitos reflejan el sol.

--Alison Sabean

Cuando me despierto te quedas a mi lado
La brisa de la mañana lleva tu olor
Como al-misk y el jengibre
Mi morenito está aquí

--Christina L. Hamlin

FROM SPN706

Sin ti habib no puedo
ma bon, mi bello
ma bokella grita por ti
e tu corazoncito ¿gime por mí?

-Betsy Ramos

Mi corazón salta cuando pienso
del color negro, como tu pelo.
Cuando no puedo verte
quiero comer fresas, como tus labios.
¿Dónde estás, mi habib? No sé.

-Gabriella Mirabella

¡Meu sidi, amor lindo!
Su pecho peludo, una almohada de animal,
tanto anhelo, un reposo, un oasis en el desierto
dentro de su abrazo mortal.

-Sara Amancio

DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS 2013

EXCELLENCE

Ryan Walsh (ITL)
Philemon Awha (ITL)
Jeffrey Robinson (FRE)
Matthew Curley (FRE)
Melissa Carella (SPN)
Angelica Greene (SPN)
Angela Harling (SPN)
Nilsa Huynh (SPN)
Patricia Sanchez (SPN-MAT)
Aviel Valenzuela (SPN-MAT)
Katie Hanchette (SPN-MAT)

ACHIEVEMENT

Naomi Deckert (ARA)
Miki Nakamura (CHI)
Takumi Matsuoka (CHI)
William Winn (CHI)
Cynthia Su (CHI)
Amie Dibbern (ITL)
Gabiella George (ITL)
Caitlin O'Toole (ITL)
Laura Howard (ITL)

Karl Limage (ITL)
Ruth Cooper (LAT)
Kristen Sanfilippo (FRE)
Ciara Tavares (FRE)
Nicholas F. Martinez (FRE)
Chelsea L. Gaudet (FRE)
Emily L. Doucette (FRE)
Makalah L. A. Moore (FRE)
Jacob T. Crawford (FRE)
Álvaro Jose Witt Duarte (GER)
Amanda Tower (SPN)
Kelsey Delaney (SPN)
Rosa de la Cruz (SPN)
Kayla Fields (SPN)
Alise Rittershaus (SPN)
Courtney Welch (SPN)

SERVICE TO DEPARTMENT OR COMMUNITY

Tessa Allen (ITL)
Marta Marucci (ITL)
Mikeneil Paul (FL)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS GRADUATING IN MAY 2013

The following students will be graduating from SSU in May 2013 with a Master of Arts in Teaching Spanish, a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish, or a foreign language minor in either French, Foreign Languages, Italian, or Spanish

SPANISH MAJORS

Cherie A. Mann
Christina Maria DiLiegro
Melida E. Sanchez
Vanessa Rose Risti

FRENCH MINORS

Ernstsherley C. Blanc
Cassandra M. Cirillo
Christopher Tyler Dubois
Nicole B. Freeman
Michael Joseph Hughes
Stephen James Lacey
Erik Weissinger

ITALIAN MINORS

Tessa Renee Allen
Kelly J. Duggan
Cristina Paterno

SPANISH MINORS

Melissa Marie Carella
Amy Elena Castellano
Nicholas E. Cristoforo
David Allen Gadbois
Socrates Joel Garcia
Christina Leigh Hamlin
Jaclyn Leigh Keefe
Adam K. McQuarrie
Laura Elizabeth Sawulski

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MINORS

Matthew Jerome Curley
Chad Whitman Freeman
Iris Hoxha
Darlene Rodriguez
Mario R. Rodriguez
Catia R. Simas

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING SPANISH

James M. Dickens
Katina McClain
Jennifer M. Scott
Sara H. Amancio
Samuel Martinez
Anastasia Kolokithas



SPANISH INTERPRETER VISITS FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Dr. Leonor Figueroa-Feher, Program Manager for Training at the Office of Court Interpreter Services, Boston MA, spoke about interpreting and translating as possible careers on Monday, February 25. The lecture was sponsored by the foreign languages department.