Hello Alumni and Friends!

Six Degrees of Separation, John Guare’s 1990 play about human interconnectedness, takes as its starting point the theory that any two individuals are connected by a chain of acquaintances that has no more than six intermediaries. Given the extraordinary advances in communication technology that have occurred recently—the Internet and the cell phone, for example—the small world phenomenon described by Guare seems less and less theoretical and more and more real. How, in the 21st century, can an individual not be more than six steps away from each person on Earth?

This current issue of Lingua Links also explores our interconnectedness albeit from a different perspective. Of all the links that connect us, one of the most important is the link represented by alumni. They play a crucial role in preparing our students of today for their lives of tomorrow. As you will see in the pages to follow, alumni of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures have been active participants in helping students approach the job market as well as in introducing students to the benefits of foreign language study at NIU.

It was terrific to see so many alumni join us for the 35th anniversary of the Foreign Language Residence Program this year. As I heard your stories about living on the floor and saw you reunited with other FLRPies, I realized what strong bonds you formed amongst yourselves during those years in Douglas. Today, another group of FLRPies is forging its own bonds. To all FLRPies, mark your calendars. The 40th anniversary will be here sooner than you know.

Faculty provides another link. You will read about new books published by three of our faculty members. While their areas of interest differ geographically from one another—France, Spain, Nicaragua—each author shares an interest in exploring what it means to be modern. Yet faculty involvement goes beyond disseminating their research both inside and outside the classroom. They contribute to the department’s mission in other ways, whether it is overseeing specific language programs, working with Fulbright teaching assistants, or serving as an advisor to an honor society.

No less vital a link are the secretaries in the main office. They are experts at keeping the channels of communication open so that we can all remain connected. This year witnessed a change in the staff. Rhonda Kitsos, who had been with us for two years, accepted a position outside the university. In October, Rita Miller joined Lynne Meyer and Renée Kerwin in the office. Originally from Buffalo, New York, Rita has been living in Sycamore for the last ten years with her husband and two children. She comes to us after having worked at NIU since January 2007 in the Department of Theater and Dance. We are delighted to have Rita on board. We are sad, however, to say goodbye to Elisa Robles, one of our work-study “girls,” who graduated this December with a B.A. in Communication Studies. We wish Elisa all the best.

Alumni, faculty, staff and students, all, are important links in the chain of human interconnectedness that makes up the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. For us, there is not six degrees of separation. We are family!

Anne L. Birberick
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
The Department Welcomes Two New Faculty Members

One might say that **Amy L. Ingram**, Assistant Professor of French, is on a quest. As a specialist in French romances from the 12th and 13th centuries and, in particular, the Arthurian legend, she is interested in how medieval narratives, such as those dealing with the quest for the Holy Grail, have influenced modern writers. But it is not only writers who have a connection to medieval romances.

According to Ingram: “Students should study medieval literature not only to learn about a culture and way of life from the distant past but also to recognize that, in some ways, life and people haven’t changed all that much. We are still driven by the same passions and emotions, even if many of our concerns and preoccupations have become more sophisticated.”

**Rajiv Rao**, Assistant Professor of Spanish, received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of California at Davis. Growing up on the central coast of California in an Indian household, Rao was aware of a strong presence of Spanish in his surroundings. Upon arriving at the university, his initial goal was to attend medical school; however, living and studying abroad in Costa Rica changed his future. Although he took the MCAT exam after returning to the States, he realized his true passion was for the Spanish language, specifically in relation to linguistics. So, instead of becoming a medical doctor he became a doctor of philosophy.

Rao’s primary research interests within linguistics are phonetics and phonology. He has presented his work on prosody and intonations at professional conferences and has published articles on this topic in journals. His research interests include detailing speech patterns of speakers of the Barcelona dialect of Spanish and investigating the phonetics and phonology of Palenquero, a Spanish-based Creole spoken in Columbia.

Félicitations

We wish to extend our congratulations to **Maryline Lukacher** who was promoted to the rank of Full Professor of French in spring 2007. Having received her Ph.D. from the University of California at San Diego, Lukacher joined the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures in 1988. An internationally recognized scholar on the 19th-century French feminist author George Sand, she has recently published a second book entitled *Autobiofictions: George Sand et le conflit de l’écriture* with Presses Universitaires du Nouveau Monde. One of many aspects about Sand’s work that fascinates Lukacher is that Sand addresses topics that remain relevant to 21st-century women: love, sexuality, marriage, and abandonment. “Sand proposes different ‘solutions’ in writing about women’s desires and frustrations,” Lukacher explains.

In addition to her work on Sand, Lukacher has also published numerous articles on important French writers such as Stendhal, Flaubert, Balzac, and Rachilde. She is currently working on a collection of essays that will bring together distinguished scholars in the field to explore the relationship between Sand’s extensive oeuvre and Balzac’s *The Human Comedy.*
Modern Times

Innovation. Experimentation. Individualism. These are a few of the words we associate with modernism. For, in one sense, being modern means diverging from the past, rejecting what has been traditionally sanctioned, and asserting the individual’s right to challenge societal norms. The impulse to be modern is also the focus of three new book-length studies written by Foreign Languages and Literatures faculty.

For Maryline Lukacher, Professor of French, the 19th-century French writer George Sand embodies the modern woman. Although Sand openly disregarded in her own personal life the conventions of her time—she smoked, she wore masculine dress, she had a series of famous lovers—she created a fictional world in which her heroines struggled, often unsuccessfully, against the limits imposed upon them by a male-dominated society. In Autobiofictions: George Sand et le conflit de l’écriture (Presses Universitaires du Nouveau Monde, 2007), Lukacher explores the tension that exists between Sand’s personal experiences and her artistic intentions as she studies the most important novels written by Sand between 1834 and 1865.

According to Lukacher, again and again Sand returns to several psychological and social issues, which are linked to the effects of bad marriages, coercive alliances, and the treatment of women artists. Sand is continually in the process of rethinking these issues as she conceals her personal feminine identity under a variety of fictional masks. Indeed, nowhere is this connection between author and heroine(s) more relevant than in the figure of the woman artist who looks to set herself apart from her male contemporaries. Sand’s struggle, both in her life and in her fiction, foreshadows debates on women’s roles that are continuing even today.

Since her undergraduate days, Louise Ciallella, Associate Professor of Spanish, has been intrigued by the “Generation of ‘98,” a group of writers so named to reflect the national crisis that occurred when Spain lost its last colony in 1898. As she continued to work on her Ph.D. in Spanish literature, Ciallella delved deeper and deeper into not only how gender and class roles were depicted by the “Generation of ‘98” but also the ways in which Cervantes’ Don Quijote influenced these end-of-the-century authors. One result of her research is a new book entitled Quixotic Modernists: Reading Gender in Tristana, Trigo and Martínez Sierra (Bucknell University Press, 2007).

In her book, Ciallella examines closely two best sellers, each one written by a little-studied author: Felipe Trigo and María Martínez Sierra. She compares these popular authors’ novels to an earlier canonical novel, Tristana (1892), written by Benito Pérez Galdós. Along the way, she also shows how aspects of the Quijote—the use of proverbial language, the theme of the “angel at the hearth,” or water, flower and animal imagery—are incorporated into these three works in relation to the roles assigned to men and women in society. What Ciallella’s multi-tiered approach reveals is the degree to which the modern transformation of gender roles at the turn of the last century becomes a quixotic undertaking, since the novels’ characters search, like Don Quijote himself, to reconnect with an elusive past rather than embrace an immanent future.

By the time he began as a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, Francisco Solares-Larrave, Associate Professor of Spanish, had already developed a passion for the work of Rubén Darío, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera and Rafael Arévalo Martínez as well as their literary movement known as modernismo. He also had formulated many questions about these writers, the chief one being: How is it that Spanish American modernismo has been hailed as offering a distinctive Latin American voice when the movement is full of influences that can be easily traced back to France and Spain? Solares-Larrave’s search for an answer to this question has led to the publication of Una armonía de caprichos: el discurso de respuesta en la prosa de Rubén Darío (University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

Focusing primarily on the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío, who spearheaded the movement, Solares-Larrave reveals how Darío’s poetry, despite its debt to French aesthetics, offers an original artistic response to European culture; indeed, Darío’s personalized vision of French literary schools (such as, symbolism) was so strong that it was his version—not the European one—that ultimately influenced the Spanish American poetic vocabulary. Yet Solares-Larrave takes his study one step further, for he also shows that Darío, who has traditionally been criticized for his unawareness of socio-political problems, is deeply concerned with the cultural and social conditions of Spanish America.
2006 Faculty Publications and Presentations

Barbe, Katharina


Bentley, John


Birberick, Anne


Brain, Dennis
Conference: “We are Family! Use of Television Interviews and Depictions of Families in Language Instruction,” Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ICTFL), October.

Calilhanna, Louise


Cooke-Plagwitz, Jessamine

Coxad, Mary Lee

Hartmann, John

Conference: “Teaching Thai to the Net/M Generation: Adapting a Child’s Narrative for Adult Acquisition.” The 16th Annual Conference of the Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages (COTSEAL), University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, April.


Henry, Patricia

Jaeger, Frances

Conference: “Jim Crow in Panama: El Caso de Gamboa Road Gang de Joaquin Beleno.” Jornada Andinas de Literatura Latinoamericana (JALLA), Bogota, Colombia, August.

“Mestizaje meets Jim Crow in Rosa Maria Britton’s Esa esquina del paraíso.” Conference of Afro-Romance Theater and Culture, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO, April.

“Esu’s third Way in Nocilas Guillen’s El Diario que a diario.” The XXVI International Congress of LASA (Latin American Studies Association), San Juan, Puerto Rico, March.

Kat, Joanna
Conference: “Ciao i rozum: patriarchalism i feminismo w dramacjy kobiecej lat trzydziestych.” Congress of Polish Studies Abroad, Poznan, Poland, June.

Lukacher, Maryline

Conference: “De La Religieuse à La Confession d’une jeune fille,” International George Sand Conference, University of Ireland, Dublin City, Ireland, June.

Mazzola, Michael

Conference:
“The Two-norm Theory as an Emblem of Political Power & Historical Invention.” The 8th International Conference on Late & Vulgar Latin, University of Oxford, UK, September.

Merino, Elay
Co-edited Books:


Article:
“La representacion de José Antonio por el joven periodista Cela: el deber y su performance.” In La obra del literato y sus alrededores: estudios criticos en torno a Camilo José Cela. 223-52.


Conference:
“La homosexualidad politicamente ‘incorrecta’ [Reinaldo Arenas y Antes que anochezca],” Fourth Biennial Florida International University Conference on Spanish and Latin American Literatures and Film, Miami, Florida, February.

Book Review:


Morris, Michael
Book:

Article:

Conference:
“Moving the Agenda Forward.” American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Nashville, TN, November.


“Assessment and Evaluation” and “Promoting Oral Interaction.” Invited addresses at Swinburne University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, January.

Book Review:

Nissen, Christopher
Conference:

“La sátira dialogal con el Dialogo della musica di Antonfrancesco Doni.” American Association of Teachers of Italian; American Association for Italian Studies (joint convention), Genoa, Italy, May.

Rodriguez, Joshua
Conference:
“The Co-preterito as a Null Tense: Tense Anchoring and Sequence of Tense Revisited.” The 10th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium, University of Western Ontario, October.

“Macro Events and ‘Aspect Shift’ in Spanish.” Linguistic Symposium on the Romance Languages, Rutgers University, March.

Saborio, Linda
Conference:
“Consumerism and Female Racialized Bodies in Coco Fusco and Nao Bustamante’s Stuff” The 8th Annual Symposium of Theater, Washington and Lee University, March.

“Anomalous Realities in Luis Valdez’s The Shrunken Head of Pancho Villa and The Mummified Deer.” The Mid-America Conference on Hispanic Literatures, University of Missouri, November.

Solares-Larvave, Francisco
Article:

Conference:
“Ingermina o La hija del calamar, de Juan Jose Nieto (1844), y el discurso contraheuristico.” Jornadas Andinas de Literatura Latinoamericana (JALLA), Bogota, Columbia, August.

“Darío, criticó de la ciencia en Azul...” The XXVI International Congress of LASA (Latin American Studies Association), San Juan, Puerto Rico, March.

Book Review:

Tun, Saw
Article:


Conference:

“Nats in Burmese Literature.” The 37 Nats Exhibit Symposium, NIU Art Museum, Altgeld Hall, November.

Willems, Philippe
Conference:
“Realistic Illusions: An Industry of Turning Out Ghosts.” The Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, October.
Spotlight on Chinese, Japanese and Russian

“When it comes to foreign languages, our students get started too late—and too few study critical languages. We can and must turn this around.” So stated Margaret Spellings, the U.S. Secretary of Education, in November 2006 (http://www.dlnets.com) shortly after President Bush proposed a new $114 million National Security Initiative to bolster the study of languages deemed critical to the United States.

What is a “critical language”? In one sense, a language is critical when the demand for trained speakers exceeds the number available. This is frequently the case when we talk about the “Less Commonly Taught Languages” (LCTL); however, English, which is one of the most widely taught languages in the world, is also considered by many nations to be critical because of the role the United States plays on the global stage. In another sense, then, designating a language as critical frequently involves political, economic or cultural considerations. From the perspective of the U.S. government, seven languages, which are spoken in countries vital to American interests, have been designated as most critical: Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Korean and Russian.

Currently, the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures offers programs of study in three of these seven languages. Students interested in Chinese and Japanese may pursue a minor while students interested in Russian may opt for either a minor or a major. Moreover, the department has a long history of support for these languages.

The B.A. degree in Russian Language and Literature dates back to 1962, with the minor in Russian being established in 1978. Yet support for Russian has extended beyond merely offering courses; Joseph Suhadolc, a former Professor of Russian, established a scholarship in his name to support undergraduates studying either Russian or German. Today, Joanna Kot (Associate Professor of Russian) oversees the program with the assistance of an FLTA, Evgenia Gulyaeva. Kot’s unwavering devotion to the program has kept it going during rough times. Although enrollments in Russian have fluctuated widely over the years, it should come as no surprise that the U.S. government considers the language critical, since it is spoken not only in Russia but also all over Central Asia (a key geographical area given the world’s energy needs) and many parts of Eastern Europe.

Chinese and Japanese represent the two fastest growing critical languages offered. The department first began teaching Chinese language courses in 1982 and then established the minor in 1999. Although we have never had a tenured faculty member to teach our courses in Chinese, we have been fortunate to have excellent instructors. Lan Hui Ryder, who has been with us for five years, has worked diligently to grow the Chinese program, which now has 16 minors. Due to increased student interest, we will be offering two sections—rather than one—of FLCH 101 (Beginning Chinese) in fall 2008. Ryder also regularly teaches FLCH 381 (Introduction to Chinese Language and Business Practice) to students at both the NIU main campus and the satellite campus located in Hoffman Estates. China’s socio-economic power in the international arena would be one of several reasons to consider Chinese a critical language.

Japanese is mainly spoken in Japan, a country with which the U.S. generally has a good, stable relation. Japan is also home to the extremely popular

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Cross Cultural Enrichment: The Fulbright Teaching Assistant Experience

Once again, the department is pleased to welcome several Fulbright Teaching Assistants. Administered by the United States Institute of International Affairs, the FLTA program enables young educators from around the world to refine their teaching skills, increase their English language proficiency, and extend their knowledge of the cultures and customs of the United States while engaged in non-degree studies at an accredited institution of higher learning. As has been the case in the past, we have three FLTAs with us who are sponsored by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and they work closely with faculty from the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department. Rahmi Hartati from the University of Bengkulu in Indonesia is assisting Pat Henry, Associate Professor of Indonesian; Ricah Elaine Ursos, who attends Siliman University in the Philippines, is working with Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail, Instructor of Tagalog; and Bussra Thongthai, who received her undergraduate degree in computer science from Naresuan University, is assisting John Hartmann, Professor of Thai and Presidential Teaching Professor.

This year for the first time, the department itself is sponsoring a fourth FLTA: Evgenia Gulyaeva from Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad), Russia. Evgenia is pursuing her Ph.D. in sociolinguistics at Volgograd State Pedagogical University where she has also been a senior instructor in English since 2002. Here at NIU she works with Joanna Kot, Associate Professor of Russian, helping students practice pronunciation, designing course materials, and assisting with FLRU 101 and FLRU 201. Evgenia is well traveled, having spent time in Poland, Germany, England, India, and the United States—this is her third visit to the U.S. As the end of the first semester draws to a close, we asked her a few questions about her experiences so far.

Q: What have you enjoyed the most about being an FLTA?
E: Most of all I like the idea of meeting different people and learning about American culture.

Q: How do American university students compare to Russian students?
E: I think that all the students are more or less the same—they are funny and cheerful, with a good sense of humor. They remember about their studies only at the end of the semester.

Q: What culture shock have you experienced while living in DeKalb?
E: I wouldn’t say that I have experienced any culture shock, because it is my third time in the USA. I am happy being close to a big city and having an opportunity to go there often. I love museums and galleries, theaters and concerts. I wish DeKalb had more entertainment of this kind.

Q: If there were one thing you could bring back to Russia from the United States, what would it be?
E: I would definitely bring back to Russia all the friends I’ve made here in the USA. I’ve already started thinking of how hard it’ll be to leave the people I really like.
Enhancing the Student Experience: Alumni and Careers in Foreign Languages

After a long winter, spring has finally arrived in DeKalb. As Phil savors a walk around the East Lagoon, he mentally reviews his checklist for graduation. Completed all necessary courses? Check. Paperwork for graduation? Check. Reserved cap and gown? Check. While Phil watches the ducks lazily float on the water, the realization that he is not coming back next semester hits him like a well-placed left hook during a heavy-weight championship match. In a panic, he races to his advisor’s office and blurts out: “I’m graduating in a month. What job can I get with a B.A. in Spanish?”

As far-fetched as the above scenario may seem, I witnessed it with surprising frequency during my tenure as a Spanish advisor for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. A steady stream of deadlines, papers and exams during four years makes it very easy to postpone career planning. A presentation on Careers in Foreign Languages seemed to be a viable first step to facilitate students’ exploration of how a major or minor in a foreign language can translate into an exciting, fulfilling and meaningful career.

Fortunately, at NIU we have the advantage of two excellent resources to assist students. First, the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures can draw on a large pool of alumni who have successfully pursued careers both nationally and internationally in fields as diverse as education, banking, business, manufacturing, real estate, government work, public service, translation and missionary work. Secondly, the university has an outstanding Career Services division on campus, designed to provide support to students and alumni alike in career planning, job searches, networking, resume writing and interview preparation.

In November of 2006 we held our first ever “Careers in Foreign Languages” presentation to a room that was so packed that students had to sit on the floor. Pat Andersen from Career Services gave a brief overview of the assistance provided and wowed the audience with all the useful links on the Career Services website that addressed such basic questions as: What kind of careers can I pursue with a B.A. in a foreign language? What jobs are out there right now? This presentation was followed up by a frank talk by Nadia Gutierrez (2002, B.A. in Spanish Translation and Business Major), currently Hispanic Business Development Coordinator at Castle Bank, about her experiences as she transitioned from student to first job to current position. She gave an excellent overview of her field, current local trends in banking, requirements for her position and practical advice for a first job search. Students responded very enthusiastically to both presentations.

After this initial success to our first effort to connect our students with alumni and Career Services, it seemed worthwhile to make the Careers in Foreign Languages presentation a regular, biannual event. During the Spring 2007 semester we were fortunate to have Todd Olson (1986, B.A. in French Translation and Business, 2002 M.B.A.) and Ralph Strozza (1981 B.S. in Marketing and B.A. in French Translation and

Looking over materials at Careers in Foreign Languages workshop

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Business) volunteer. Olson spoke about his experience living and working in Vieux-Charmont, France for Burgess-Norton, based in Geneva, IL. In his talk, not only did he stress that all students pursue study abroad programs, but he also advised students to take advantage of the department offerings to learn an additional language. For example, it would be advantageous for a French major to pick up another Romance language, such as Spanish or Italian. Olson also suggested adding German if planning a career in Europe or Mandarin if looking to stand out in a competitive global economy. Strozza gave a spirited PowerPoint presentation detailing his experience as a student at NIU to his present position as founder and CEO of InterPro Translation Solutions, highlighting the unexpected professional twists and turns that he dealt with on the way. He also insisted that students consider study abroad as a vital part of their education. Terry Schmidgall from Career Services gave an in-depth look at resources for Career Services and strongly encouraged students to make follow-up appointments with her and career guidance counselors. She was also instrumental in running the Resume Writing Workshop the department held the following month.

Given our students’ very positive responses, we offered a Careers in Foreign Languages presentation this fall semester and will continue to offer one each semester hereafter. If you are interested in coming to DeKalb and sharing your experiences with our students, please do not hesitate to contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Francisco Solares-Larave, at (815) 753-6448 or SpanishAdvising@niu.edu. If you are unable to come to campus but would still like to share your experiences, we would be delighted to read your written testimonies during these events. Students are incredibly interested in hearing about the career paths and experiences of our alumni, and our presentations would not be half as successful without your generous assistance!

Frances Jaeger
Associate Professor of Spanish

United Nations Proclaims 2008 the International Year of Languages

The UN General Assembly has named 2008 the “International Year of Languages” with the intention of “promoting unity through linguistic diversity.” In May, the 192-member assembly adopted a resolution by consensus recognizing that the UN pursue multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting, and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally. The resolution also emphasizes the importance of equality among the organization’s six official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.
It was an invitation we accepted with pleasure. **Tom Bendicsen** (2000 B.A. in Spanish Language and literature; 2002 M.A. in Spanish), who is currently the Chair of the World Language Department, invited members of the department out to Addison Trail High School to speak to students about foreign language study. Addison Trail offers robust programs in German, Italian and Spanish. On February 23, 2007, **Katharina Barbe** (Associate Professor of German), **Christopher Nissen** (Associate Professor of Italian), **Diego Pascual y Cabo** (Instructor of Spanish) and **Greg Ross** (Coordinator of the Foreign Language Residence Program) as well as **Claire Foust** from the NIU Study Abroad office traveled out to the high school where they made two presentations to an auditorium filled, each time, with over 200 students. Their presentation introduced students to FL&L’s programs, the benefits of participating in the Foreign Language Residence Program, the need to study abroad, and the kinds of careers available to foreign language majors. The NIU guests also met individually with students and were treated to a lunch with Addison Trail faculty, which includes another alumnus, **Peter Ginter** (2000 B.A. in German Language and Literature).

In return, we invited the Addison Trail students and teachers to visit us. On April 18, 2007, approximately 60 students and teachers came out to NIU under the leadership of Bendicsen. Students toured the campus, visited with folks from the Honors Program, Study Abroad, and Career Planning and Placement. They also received a tour of the Foreign Language Residence Program, which is located in Douglas Hall, and, last but not least, our state-of-the-art Multimedia Learning Center. Finally, Addison students and teachers were treated to lunch at Blackhawk Food Court with FL&L faculty and students.

The visits were a terrific learning experience not only for the Addison students but also for the NIU faculty. Because student enthusiasm was so high, FL&L and Addison Trail have agreed to reciprocal visits every other year. Thanks are due to all those who gave generously of their time.
Student Awards, Honors and Accomplishments

The M.A. program in French and Spanish continues to thrive. A combined total of 14 French and Spanish graduate students received their M.A. degree in 2007. Several Spanish M.A. students also received honors and recognition. **Linda Schumacher** was awarded a grant from the NIU Center for Latino and Latin American Studies to conduct research in the capital of Ecuador for a project entitled “Quichua Loan Words and Expressions in the Andean Spanish of Quito.” **Jonah D. Conner** was named as the department’s outstanding graduate student for his work on key issues in the translation of verbal tenses and mood from classical Greek into Spanish. **Rebecca Martin** was selected to serve on the Graduate Student Advisory Committee for the academic year 2007-08. Spanish undergraduate majors earned distinction as well. **Laura E. Harrison** was the recipient of an NIU Outstanding Women Student Award while **Michelle Vargas** won the Don Buckner Leadership Award. We extend our congratulations to all these individuals for their fine accomplishments.

Study Abroad Scholarships were awarded to the following students:

- **J. Suhadolc Scholarship:** Allison Murphy
- **Levin, Jachman, Greenberg and Wagman Scholarship:**
  - Carolyn Scheele (German)

**Lillian Cobb Scholarship:**
- Dina Baker (Spanish)
- Rosa Campos (Spanish)
- Ana Luisa Dominguez (Spanish)
- Dana Hochleutner (Spanish)
- Matt Konfirst (German)
- Albert Nelson (Spanish)
- Michael Schneider (Spanish)
- Betsy Rolaff (Spanish)

**Dean’s Award** (Given to a graduating student who has achieved at least a 3.0 G.P.A.):
- Juliya Gilburd (French)
- Kimberly M. Radosits (Spanish)

**The Award for Academic Excellence** (Given to graduating majors who have achieved at least a 3.65 grade point average in the major and overall G.P.A.):
- Daniel Butler (Spanish)
- Lucio Diaz (Spanish)
- Karen Enockson (Spanish)
- Andrea Esler (Spanish)
- Juliya Gilburd (French)
- Monica Guerrero (Spanish)
- Colleen Keane (Spanish)
- Melanie Lanni (Spanish)
- Kristin McCullough (Spanish)
- Rick Reyes (Spanish)
- Mark Rzepecki (Spanish)

**Degrees with Distinction:**
- Juliya Gilburd (French, Magna Cum Laude)
- Maureen Labotz (Spanish, Cum Laude)
- Melanie Lanni (Spanish, Magna Cum Laude)
- Griselda Leon (Spanish, Magna Cum Laude)
- Dax Miller (Spanish, Cum Laude)
- Kimberly M. Radosits (Spanish, Cum Laude)

**Phi Sigma Iota: International Foreign Language Honor Society**

Founded in 1917, Phi Sigma Iota recognizes outstanding ability and high standards of students and faculty of foreign languages, literatures and cultures (including classics, linguistics, philology, comparative literature, ESL, bilingual education, and second language acquisition). We are pleased to announce that the honor society has returned to the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures this year. **Louise Ciallella**, Associate Professor of Spanish, is serving as the society’s faculty advisor. In spring 2008, five members will be initiated:
- Danielle Arellano (Spanish)
- Brad Broughton (Spanish)
- Marisela Gradilla (Spanish)
- Lance Leiva (Spanish)
- Laura Olsen (Spanish)

**Critical Languages**

**Americans and foreign languages**

Did you know that fewer than 1% of American high school students study Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Japanese, Korean, Russian or Urdu.

- Three hundred million Chinese are learning English. Meanwhile, only 34,000 American college students are studying Chinese.
- Roughly 10,000 American college students are studying Arabic, but only 300 (or 3 percent) reach advanced level in Arabic each year. Of the 1,000 people who work at the US Embassy in Baghdad, only 33 speak Arabic, and only six of them speak it fluently.

English has become the language of international business, science, politics, and the Internet. While the world understands us, we do not understand the world. People all over the world have access to our literature, intelligence, technical manuals, academic journals and our culture. But we lack the ability to do the same in other languages.
FLRPIes Rule

2007 was a banner year for the Foreign Language Residence Program. On November 9-10, we celebrated 35 years of robust health at Northern Illinois University with a reunion attended by over eighty FLRP alumni and friends, some of whom came from as far away as Texas and California. The weekend events kicked off with a Friday night reception held in the recently renovated Altgeld Hall. On Saturday afternoon, Ralph Strozza (FLRP ’78-’81), founder and CEO of InterPro Translation Solutions, hosted a tailgating tent where folks could enjoy good food and drink before heading off to the NIU-Kent State match up. President John Peters also stopped by the tent to welcome returning alumni. A gala dinner was held on Saturday evening at the Barsema Alumni Visitors Center. As part of the evening’s program, FLRPIes recognized the late D. Raymond Tourville, who founded the program in 1972, by presenting his children, Marc Tourville and Lisa Sullivan, a commemorative plaque in his honor.

We sincerely hope that those of you who participated in the 35th anniversary had a wonderful time. It was great to see all of you, and we hope that you will stay in touch. FLRP Rules!

FLRP alums from the 1980s reunite

Seated L to R: Lisa Sullivan, Ralph and Beatrice Strozza. Standing: Grant Olson

The next generation: FLRPIes from 2000
On the Floor

This year we would like to welcome four new FLRP natives. Bérénice Guyot from Avignon joins the program as the French head native speaker. Serving as the other French native speaker is Jean-Philippe Schmitt who is from Nancy. Schmitt is interested in becoming a foreign language professor and, in working toward that end, has also enrolled as a graduate student in the department’s M.A. program in French. César Ordoñez from Guatemala is a new Spanish native speaker. He is currently a student in the communications department and would like to work for the United Nations upon graduation. Our last new native is Pin Chi (Eric) Su who is the head native speaker for the Chinese group, which we began this year. Along with these new natives are several returning natives: Iska Hoerner from Germany; Rie Tameyori from Japan; Maritza Salas-Segura from Costa Rica; and Xiomara Vargas from Columbia. We are delighted to have them all on the floor. We are also pleased to announce that the FLRP men’s soccer team won the Men’s Competitive League Soccer Intramural Championship with a perfect record. Captain Gui Norohna from Brazil led the international team of FLRPies, cheered on to victory at every game by a rousing group of supporters.

Douglas Hall Serves Up P.I.E.

Every year, Northern Illinois University plays host to around 900 international students from over 90 countries. Two years ago, International House (Douglas Hall, B-2) launched the Partners in International Education Program (P.I.E.) for American students who want to room with an international student from one of these countries. Students are paired according to their academic and personal interests, and participate in activities and events that promote international cooperation. This past year, we had students from South Korea, Africa, Canada, Bangladesh, and Japan, France, Germany, South America and China living in International House. As part of the effort to promote international awareness, we sponsored a “Celebrating Asian Culture Night” with traditional dances from Southeast Asia, and international students had an opportunity to spotlight their culture by participating in the “Global Market Exchange” poster display in Neptune Hall; there was a total of 32 informational and beautifully designed posters on display for the campus community. By working with the participants and native speakers in FLRP, International House provides a unique opportunity for international students and American students to connect with the world’s diverse cultural landscape, and to learn up close and personal the importance of networking on a global scale.

If you know students interested in joining us in this wonderful experience, please have them contact: Greg Ross (gross@niu.edu).

Gregory T. Ross
Coordinator of International House

How are you?

in languages taught by our department:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>How are you?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burmese</td>
<td>ကျင်းမြင်စေတယ်လိုအပ်မယ်</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>你好吗？</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Comment vas-tu？</td>
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<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Wie geht’s？</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>Apa kabar？</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Come stai？</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>お元気ですか。</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khmer</td>
<td>សុំអោយអ្នកមានជូន្រឹះ？</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Quid agitur？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>Como estas？</td>
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<td>Как дела？</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>¿Cómo estás？</td>
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<td>Kumusta Ka？</td>
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<td>Thai</td>
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Lingua Links
New Wave Assistance in the Learning Center

Just before the turn of the millennium, a young undergraduate from Moldova came to us to interview for a job as webmaster at our Learning Center. (At that time, I had only known of Moldova through its red wine.) I recall that when we were finished with the interview, we brought our discussion to a typical close by declaring we would “get back to him.” “Everybody says that...,” was his response. While I was a bit taken aback by this comment, I also felt it had a certain honesty and freshness about it. This young man’s web work was really very creative and aesthetically pleasing. We told him we would try not to waste too much time in getting back to him; I think we hired him the next day. Ion Soltan has been with us ever since. He has seen us through three revisions of our website and will soon be moving up to be assistant coordinator of the Learning Center.

While curious kids of my generation grew up taking apart old tube radios and TV chassis, Ion grew up customizing CPM and DOS-based computers as well as early versions of Windows. By the time he came to NIU, he was ready to set up Linux-based web servers. Over the years Soltan has helped our departmental website win awards and attract attention. One summer, when the university was rerouting electrical power to the building that houses our Learning Center, we built a cultural website on Thai Buddhism (www.thai buddhism.net) that would eventually be linked to NIU’s website on Southeast Asian languages (www.seasite.niu.edu). Currently, Soltan is completing a master’s degree in computer science. He plans on customizing some applications to make our lives easier, keeping our website (www.forlangs.net) on track and enhancing our multimedia workstations.

Portable, Take-Away Information

The compact floppy disk invented by Sony in the mid-1980s has quietly gone into hiding. The new computers we order no longer have floppy disk drives. This change happened with a minimum of debate and discussion. Students are now equipped with the so-called “thumbdrive” or “flashdrive.” Because there are no moving parts, this technology is superior, and soon current hard drives will probably be replaced by internal RAM drives of a similar type. At any rate, we have always needed some kind of portability, some way to maintain take-out information. Increasingly, with the creation of student portfolios and translation databases, students need to have ways to grow with the projects they have created and ways to maintain such projects for future use.

It may sound strange, but in many ways we are now encouraging students to start things they may not finish. Increasingly, we are assisting students in gathering and packaging samples of their work that will take the form of a portfolio. Our ultimate goal is to show students how this information can be packaged in innovative ways. A good portfolio could be comprised of mp3 audio samples of a student speaking a language, mpeg video files of a student “performing” in a foreign language, pdfs of papers, translations and résumés and so on. Such a portfolio can now be preserved on a CD or DVD and would even have a menu similar to commercial DVD movies; later these same pieces could be moved to a personal website. While we ask students to archive what they have done up to a certain point, such projects are ongoing and can travel with them as they go out into the real world job hunting. This archive, therefore, can serve as an adjustable electronic CV.

(continues on next page)
Alumni Class Notes

Thanks again to all of you who updated us on your activities. Here is what some of you told us.

Clifford J. Gallant (B.A. 1949) is still in the classroom. His distinguished career includes having taught at Skidmore College, Western Michigan University (department chair), Bowling Green State University (department chair), and as a Senior Fulbright-Hays Lecturer in English at the University of Niamey (Niger). Currently living in Arizona, Gallant is now retired and teaching at Paradise Valley Community College.

Jeffrey A. Gutke (B.A. 1991; M.A. 1993) teaches Spanish and is Department Head at Lakes Community High School in Lake Villa, Illinois. He is married to Carol Galitz (B.A. 1992) who also teaches Spanish at Antioch Upper Grade School. They met in the FLRP program and now have three boys.

Elizabeth Padden (B.A. 1995) went on to complete an M.A. in French at the University of Virginia. Currently, she is teaching Spanish (and from time to time a French class) at Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, Virginia. She is currently working on her doctorate in Spanish at Middlebury College.

Catherine J. Rosa (Yanong) (B.A. 1997) is in her 9th year teaching in District 62. Her first two years she taught middle school Spanish and the following four years she taught at-risk students. For the past two years, she has been teaching in the English Language Learner Program. This fall she will begin a Master’s Program in Special Education.

In Memoriam

This past year also brought sadness. On January 25, 2007, Heinz Zoldester passed away under tragic circumstances. Heinz joined the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures in 1972, teaching primarily 18th- to 20th-century German literature and culture. He was born in Vienna, Austria but immigrated to the United States and settled in New York in 1949. He received his Ph.D. in German literature from the University of Minnesota in 1968, after which he went to the University of Virginia before coming to NIU. Although he retired as an Associate Professor in 1991, Heinz continued to teach occasionally as a professor emeritus. He had a reputation for being an accomplished scholar and an inspiring teacher. Heinz loved animals, particularly dogs, and he doted on his “puppies.” Friends and colleagues will miss him dearly.

On August 15, 2007, Sally Valette of Boulder, Colorado passed away at home. Sally held M.A. degrees from Northern Illinois University and the University of Paris-Sorbonne. She taught French for 22 years at Sycamore High School, where she was chair of the department of foreign languages. Sally retired from teaching in 2000 and moved to Boulder with her husband, Francis Valette, who had retired as an Associate Professor of French from NIU. Gourmet cook, seasoned traveler, dedicated teacher and loving spouse, mother and grandmother, Sally will be missed by all.
Let Us Hear From You

We would like to keep up with you. Let us know what you are doing. Send information about yourself to the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois 60115 or e-mail annie@niu.edu.

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