Greetings from Humanities 235 where Administrative Manager Janna Harton, Secretary Mia Mauro and I are busily working to put this latest version of the LLC Newsletter to bed. It is unusually quiet, since the LLC faculty and graduate students who normally people these halls use the summer months for research activities which more often than not take them to far-off lands. Indeed, I myself am heading off shortly to present a paper at the annual convention of the American Association of Teachers of French. It is being held in Fort-de-France, Martinique this year, and besides the opportunity to share my research, I am most looking forward to experiencing an area of the francophone world that I have not been to before and that I will be able to better present to my students when classes resume in late August.

This past year, in addition to the many activities our LLC faculty, staff and students have engaged in which you can read about below, our faculty have been involved in a university-wide strategic planning process. This work resulted in the identification of five strategic priorities: student success, research excellence, diversity and inclusion, internationalization, and engagement and service. We believe that the framework places the work we do in LLC at the front and center of the university’s mission, and look forward to welcoming increasing numbers of students preparing to become globally engaged citizens through the study of the languages, literatures and cultures encompassed in our department.

As always, if you want to learn more about LLC, please contact us at our department email language@albany.edu, by phone 518-442-4100 or drop by the LLC Office in Humanities 235 in person. Feel free to check our website regularly for the latest events and news (www.albany.edu/llc) and connect with us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/UALLC). If you’re in the area, feel free to join us for our events—you’re always welcome. Finally, keep in touch. We enjoy hearing about your latest happenings too.

Best regards,

Cynthia Fox, Chair, Languages, Literatures and Cultures

**LLC Mission Statement**

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures helps students to develop communication skills in foreign languages—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—and also to understand the linguistic phenomena, literatures, and cultures common to the speakers of those languages. The department regards proficiency in foreign languages as not only a professional and intellectual asset, but also as the key to effective citizenship in a globalized and multicultural world.
Francophone Day 2018

On March 21st, eighty-five University in the High School (UHS) students from seven high schools from around the state attended Francophone Day, an annual event sponsored by the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, and the UHS program, with additional support from University Auxiliary Services.

Students took part in a campus-wide treasure hunt conducted in French, a Québécois music and dance workshop, and a French dessert contest, with host judges Jean-François Briere (Emeritus Professor of French, a French native), Régine Ananou (French Lecturer, a French native), and Joane MacMillan (former LLC Secretary with family ties to Haiti). For many of the participants, the highlight of the day was the conversation table activity, which provides the opportunity to converse in French with native speakers from around the globe. This year, the conversations were quite animated with fifteen Francophones representing Cameroun, Togo, Tunisia, Morocco, Haiti, France, Belgium, the Franco-American community and Quebec.

This special event from the French Program provides a unique immersion experience connecting high school students and their teachers with on-campus students and faculty to celebrate the Francophone world in all of its diversity.

Portuguese Students at the New York State Writers Institute Event

On April 3, 2018, the New York State Writers Institute organized an event featuring a major Portuguese poet, Rosa Alice Branco, and her translator Dr. Alexis Levitin, a professor of English at SUNY Plattsburg. Two students of Portuguese, Mayara Oliveira and Celeste Bond, were invited to introduce them. Oliveira and Bond did a great job highlighting the works of both Branco and Levitin. Since the occasion was a bilingual event (Branco recited her poems in Portuguese and Levitin translated them), Oliveira and Bond also did their introduction in a bilingual format: Oliveira spoke in Portuguese and Bond translated her words into English. An amazing job!

Parabéns aos estudantes!

On May 4 Denise Osborne celebrated the first group of students who completed their minor in Portuguese since her arrival. These students are:

Fahad Alsaud  
Joami Arias  
Jonathan Fernandez  
Alanis Gouvea  
Santino Sierra  
Aquioris Suero

It was wonderful to see the Portuguese students interacting with Brazilians who work at the Texas de Brazil restaurant. We all enjoyed the restaurant’s awesome churrasco and caipirinha.

Thanks to all who came to Texas de Brazil to celebrate, including the students of Portuguese, members of the Brazilian community, and Dr. Cynthia Fox.
The Spanish Linguistics Brown Bag Series continued this semester with two presentations. Due to a weather cancellation, both presentations took place on the same day—March 30—and were given in preparation for the Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics. Graduate student Farah Ali presented her paper “Attitudes towards code-switching among Muslim immigrants in Barcelona” (pictured at left) and professor Megan Solon presented with lecturer Cecily Corbett and graduate student Nyssa Knarvik on their project “Invariant lateralization and complete neutralization as a function of language experience? Rhotics in US Caribbean Spanish.” We thank everyone who attended and participated and look forward to new presenters in fall.

LLC Hosts 22d Annual Meet of ACTR High School Olympiada of Spoken Russian

About sixty high-school Russian students from Shaker, Tamarac, and Staten Island Technical high schools competed in the annual Olympiada of Spoken Russian on April 25 at UAlbany. This was the twenty-second year that UAlbany has hosted this competition, which is part of a national program administered by the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR). This year’s Olympiada saw a handoff of primary organizational duties from Ms. Galina Kats to her colleague Ms. Anna Shkaf, both at Shaker. Since 2012, LLC’s Professor Timothy Sergay has served as UAlbany’s coordinator for the event. Five Russian-speaking members of the SUNY and UAlbany communities, representing the SUNY Office of Global Affairs, LLC, the Atmospheric Sciences Research Center, and Rockefeller College served as judges, as did Russian language teaching colleagues from Union College and Sage College, and members of the Albany area Russophone community.

This event represents the culmination of many months of effort for participants and the opportunity to test their skills and nerves interacting with unfamiliar Russian-speakers and to meet like-minded peers from other schools. Students compete in two major categories, “regular” learners who began their Russian studies in school and “heritage” learners from Russian-speaking families. Students are judged on their abilities in conversation on standard subject areas, their skills at reading and summarizing texts, and their recitation of short poems. Top-scoring students who proceed to round two of the competition are judged on how effectively they respond in Russian to judges’ free-form, open-ended questions about their interests and plans, especially with respect to the study of Russian language and culture. The Olympiada of Spoken Russian does a great deal to support the enthusiasm of regional high-school students for the study of this notoriously difficult but rewarding and critically needed language. Competitors are encouraged to continue their Russian studies at the college level, and, through the volunteer judges, the regional Russian émigré community is positively impressed with the degree of respect for and interest in their native culture shown by students, participating schools, and UAlbany.

This year’s runner-up in the heritage category was Sofia Kobcharenko of Staten Island Technical and the first-place winner was Timur Ibragimov, also of Staten Island Technical. The runner-up in the regular category was Alexander Myers of Shaker and the first-place winner was Rebecca Hyatt, also of Shaker. Congratulations to all who competed, and many thanks to all who assisted!
French Dictée

The dictation exercise has been a core component of the educational system in France and the Francophone world for nearly two centuries. Dictation tests mastery of a language whose spelling and pronunciation often do not coincide. Students usually dread the exercise which they see as filled with "pièges" (traps). Over the past six years, however, public dictation competitions, outside the school setting, have become wildly popular in France. The idea began with the immigrant community, but has spread to the entire population. A thousand contestants have sometimes gathered in public squares to spend Saturday morning taking dictation.

In honor of these "Dictées des cités" the French Program at UAlbany sponsored its first dictation competition on Saturday, March 3. Twenty-one students at all levels gathered to compete for five prizes. One contestant who is a student in second semester French commented that it was both encouraging and impressive to listen to the dictation texts as they advanced in difficulty. The enthusiasm and concentration of all the contestants was also impressive. Special congratulations go to the five winners: Hieu Feldman, Akua Sarpong, Ciara Cullen, Pamela Dolcine, and Camille Mbotchawo. Thanks to the Marcia Goldman Mayer Endowment for sponsoring this event.

Congratulations to LLC’s 2017-18 Awardees

Teaching Assistant Excellence Award - Alice R. Mathias Da Silva Seixas
Eleanor Bazzoni 1906 Fellowship Award - Caroline Scott
Frank Carrino Memorial Scholarship - Ines García Rojas
Guy A. Enfanto Memorial Award for Excellence - Mariantha Docous
Anthony M. Gisolfi Memorial Award - Elizabeth Batty
Marcia Goldman Mayer Award - Marianthi Constance Docous & Oyenika Ilaka

Excellence in Arabic—Sam Spampinato
Excellence in German - Miles Oborne
Excellence in Hebrew – Ryan Fox
Excellence in Italian – Christina Natale
Excellence in Latin - Mia McDonough
Excellence in Portuguese - Mayara Oliveira
Excellence in Russian - Michael Jennings

Congratulations to our Pi Delta Phi, French Honor Society inductees (pictured below right with Professors Susan Blood and Cynthia Fox):

Fatou Camille Mbotchawo and Hunter C. Belanger.

Congratulations to our new inductees to the Sigma Delta Pi Spanish Honor Society (photo above from the ceremony on May 9):
Carrie Kuehl on AFRE 399 Quebec Society and Culture
Spring 2018

This semester, I taught a special topics French course, Quebec Society and Culture. This was the fulfillment of a longtime wish, ever since my first summer graduate-level courses at Université Laval in Quebec City. Quebec, the only majority French-speaking state or province in North America, may be only a few hours away by car, but it is easy to spend an entire semester exploring its distinct history, music, traditions and contemporary society.

The students in this course learned about Quebec’s history from its indigenous peoples before the arrival of French explorers up to the thriving, contemporary Francophone society of today. We explored topics including maple syrup-making, tourist attractions of Montreal and Quebec City, and the variety of North American French spoken by the Québécois. We discussed short excerpts of a legend, and of classic novels of both traditional rural and urban life. Students analyzed song lyrics set to many musical styles about subjects ranging from possible independence, nostalgia for a simpler time or for one’s childhood, immigration and refugees, the deep attachment to the French language as an essential part of Québécois identity, and even about poutine. For their last assignment, they watched the 2011 Oscar-nominated film, Monsieur Lazhar and wrote personal movie reviews. It was a delight to teach such engaged students who often express complex ideas, completely in French. I hope that many of them will visit Quebec one day to experience the culture firsthand.

President’s Excellence Awards

On May 2, both Véronique Martin and Cynthia Fox were honored at the UAlbany President’s Excellence Awards Ceremony. Véronique Martin, French Studies Lecturer and UHS Liaison, was presented with the award for Excellence in Teaching. This award recognizes consistently superior teaching at the graduate, undergraduate, or professional level over a period of several years. Cynthia Fox, French Studies Associate Professor and Chair of LLC, was presented with the Excellence in Academic Service Award. This award recognizes consistently superior service over multiple years by members of the full-time teaching faculty.

Portuguese Language Club

In Spring 2018, the Portuguese Language Club organized two fun events: a Movie Night and a Game Night. For Movie Night, the club showed the Brazilian science fiction film O Homem do Futuro. For Game Night, members of the club designed an online jeopardy game with questions about the language and the culture of Portuguese-speaking countries. The questions were in English and in Portuguese, which allowed those students outside the Portuguese program to participate. The club also prepared small bags containing gifts (Brazilian chocolate) for the winners. The Portuguese Language Club is grateful to the CHEER Fund which supported the club by providing funds to purchase the pizzas and chocolate. Our special “thank you” to all members of the Portuguese Language Club who have worked hard in organizing these events.
The **2018 Caribbean Film Festival**, organized by **Alejandra Aguilar** in collaboration with the Spanish Club, was a three-week campus event free and open to the public. It featured three Spanish-language movies: *Carpinteros* (Republic Dominican, 2017), *Santa y Andrés* (Cuba, 2017), and *Memorias de un corazón penitente* (Puerto Rico, 2016). Sponsored by the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures and the Department of Latin American, Caribbean and US Latino Studies, the event aimed to promote student engagement and social awareness on relevant topics pertaining to Caribbean culture and society. Students from Aguilar’s class, “Literature of the Hispanic Caribbean” were involved in all stages of the preparation of the event: flyer design, promotion of the event through social media, welcoming people in attendance, and serving refreshments and pizza. They were also in charge of presenting the films and leading lively, thought-provoking discussions after each screening. All students in attendance were eager to share their different perspectives on the films and engage in discussion on Caribbean cultural production. Student presentation and discussion of the selected films for the festival led to a fruitful collaboration between peers, which amounted to a respectful and productive exchange of ideas. According to a participating student, the movies featured at the festival helped her gain a better understanding of her own learning experience in the target language, “by relating the topics with my own life and identity, I was able to get a lot of knowledge and what I would call true education.”

The festival attracted the attention of both students and general public, with more than sixty people in attendance. The three movies provided an open and critical discussion on the sociopolitical, cultural and historical context of the Hispanic Caribbean. The festival was an innovative and instructive event for all those who attended.

From **Cecily Corbett**, Spanish alumna, “I wanted to share this photo of us from WSS9 (International Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics 9). So neat to have a mix of UAlbany students, faculty, and alumni together in Queens this year.”

Pictured left to right: Megan Solon, Cecily Corbett, Nyssa Knarvik, Leonardo Correa, Ashley LaBoda, and Lotfi Sayahi.
On April 11, Mary Beth Winn, Professor Emerita of French Studies, and Louis–Gabriel Bonicoli, PhD in art history from the University of Paris-Nanterre, presented the new database that they are developing on the work of one of France’s earliest and most prolific publishers, Anthoine Vérard (1485-1512). The database will be housed on the University at Albany’s Research IT Platform (https://www.albany.edu/verard/index.shtml). It will not only make information widely available to the public but also enable searches on multiple aspects of the data and foster exchanges among scholars and readers.

Anthoine Vérard published about 350 different editions of texts, ranging from the Bible to pseudo-scientific treatises, devotional manuals, history, medieval romances and contemporary literature. All were written or translated into French, except for eighty editions of the best-selling Book of Hours, containing prayers in Latin to be recited at each of the canonical hours of the day. Abundantly illustrated with wood and metal cuts, all these editions established Vérard’s reputation as the “father of the French illustrated book.” Vérard was not himself a printer, but an entrepreneur who hired about 25 different printers to print his editions, as well as artists and artisans to illustrate them. The printers are rarely named in the book, and often no date is provided. In order to determine who the printers were, close examination must be made of the materials used in the editions – the type as well as the illustrations. Since these materials will develop cracks or other signs of wear as they are used, comparisons can be made of their state in other editions in order to determine the approximate date of printing.

Vérard is best known for his deluxe copies that were printed on parchment instead of paper and hand-painted by the best artists of the day. Vérard applied the medieval art of illumination to the modern technique of printing by moveable type, adding miniatures, coats of arms and emblems, and even handwritten dedications to his printed books in order to personalize them for clients and patrons. Thus, while a standard copy would have woodcuts to illustrate various passages, in the deluxe copy the woodcuts would be colored in or over-painted with an entirely different scene that would more closely illustrate the text. Sometimes new miniatures would be added in the margins or over chapter headings. Readers left their marks as well, adding signatures or notes or bequests of the book to a family member or friend. These differences mean that no two copies of any edition are necessarily identical, and the database must therefore provide information not only about each edition, but also about each copy of every edition.

The database will cite, for each edition, the author, title, date, collation, and illustration, as well as details about the people related to its production: printers, artists and artisans of the woodcuts, dedicatees or patrons. All known copies will be listed with their location and call numbers, and variants among them will be indicated: support (paper or vellum), binding, marks of ownership, manuscript additions, decoration and painted miniatures, with identification of artists. The database will provide links to relevant international databases as well as to digitized copies of the editions. Eventually, the database will also provide samples of printing types, illustrations, and watermarks of the paper used.

The information provided by the database will promote research on a wide range of subjects: early printing and the circulation of books, readership and social connections, the popularity of texts, the use and re-use of woodcuts, library collections, and specifically on the production of the Parisian publisher Vérard.
On Friday, May 4 LLC celebrated the “Building Bridges for Social Change” symposium. Students from “Latinos in the United States” (ASPN 322/ALCS 302) and “Literature and Cultures from the Borderlands” (ASPN 529/ASPN 443) presented their final projects to the public. Anahí Bolaños, Charlotte Albertin, Patrick Farrell and Jasmine Millner presented papers about important U.S. Latino figures that have contributed to positive political change. Amber Bradley analyzed the use of code switching in U.S. Latino Literature. Adriana Celaya, described her internship experience in which she is helping underrepresented communities in the Upstate region. Liza Muñoz and Mauricio Ramirez presented their autobiographical essays that celebrated their bicultural identity. The underlying themes of all the papers addressed how we can create bridges within communities for a more inclusive society.

Cornell Professor Gerald Torres gave a motivating keynote address, “Social Movements and Durable Legal Change.” In addition to his presentation, he was present at all the student talks and made comments about their work. Approximately 40 students participated in the morning conference session and another 50 attended the keynote address. The event was organized by Assistant Professor Carmen Serrano and co-sponsored by LLC and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.
The Portuguese Program at UAlbany
Spring 2018

Spring 2018 was a busy semester for the Portuguese Program which included talks and social events, movie nights and multilingual karaoke (event flyers below).

As well as a German Club that met regularly throughout the semester, the German Program offered these films Spring 2018:

For the latest LLC events see: www.albany.edu/llc/events.shtml
LLC Tables and Clubs with Contacts:

**Deutscher Stammtisch** (German Club)
Undine Giguere
ugiguere@albany.edu

**Italian Table**
Olimpia Pelosi
opelosi@albany.edu

**La Dolce Vita**
(Portuguese Table)
Patricia Keyes
pkeyes@albany.edu

**La Pause Café**
(French Table)
Cynthia Fox
cfox@albany.edu

**Português com Café**
(English-French Table)
Denise Osborne
dmosborne@albany.edu

**Spanish Club**
Lotfi Sayahi
sayahi@albany.edu

**Spanish Table**
Dora Ramirez
dramirez@albany.edu

**UAlbany Capoeira**
Eng-Wen Ong
capoualbany@gmail.com

**UAlbany Tango Club**
Jonathan Augustin
sunyalbanytango@gmail.com
In May 2018 Carmen Serrano, Spanish, attended the XXIV Annual Juan Bruce-Novoa Mexican Studies Conference held at University of California, Irvine. She presented her latest paper “Fangs of Contagion: Viral and Networked Vampires in Cinema and Television” that she plans to publish. She also had two articles accepted for publication: “Ghosting Indigenous Cultures: Yaquis’ Near Absence in Literature of the Mexican Revolution,” Journal of the Southwest (Forthcoming 2019); and “Mapping the Zombie: Diego Velázquez Betancourt’s Newfangled Zombie in La noche que asolaron Tokio.” Romance Notes 58.2 (Forthcoming, Summer 2018). After much discussion with the marketing team, Professor Serrano’s forthcoming book has finally been christened, *Gothic Imagination in Latin American Film and Fiction*, and will be published by the University of New Mexico Press in 2019.

Serrano has also been invited to present at the Rozanne Brooks Museum lecture series, located in SUNY Cortland. The theme of the 2018-2019 museum series will be “The Culture of Death”—a topic she often addresses in her body of research. More information about the museum can be found here: [https://www2.cortland.edu/departments/sociology/rozanne-brooks/](https://www2.cortland.edu/departments/sociology/rozanne-brooks/).

Endless thanks to Professor Maurice Westmoreland, Spanish, who has decided to retire at the end of August 2018 after nearly three decades of dedication to Spanish students and Spanish linguistics. The success of today’s Spanish Program is in great part due to his tireless efforts. The photo at left is of the Spanish Program’s preliminary congratulatory summer send-off (pictured are: Cynthia Fox, Elizabeth Lansing, Lotfi Sayahi, Leonardo Correa, Ilka Kressner, Dora Ramirez, Maurice Westmoreland, Alejandra Aguilar, Carmen Serrano, Janna Harton and Luis Cuesta. LLC plans to hold a formal send-off this fall. Stay tuned or call us for more information!

**Je me souviens...I remember:**

**Presenting and Preserving the Heritage of Upstate New York’s Franco-American Communities**

On Sunday, June 24th, otherwise known as La Saint-Jean Baptiste or the national holiday of Quebec, Cynthia Fox, French, participated in the official launch of a new project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities to create a digital archive documenting the Franco-American heritage of northern New York State. The event took place at the Lofts at Harmony Mills in Cohoes. This complex of 19th Century buildings, now on the National Historic Register, originally housed one of the scores of textile manufacturers that attracted nearly one million French Canadian and Acadian workers to settle in the northeastern United States between 1840 and 1930. During the event, Professor Fox gave a presentation on the Franco-American community of Cohoes that included excerpts of interviews she had recorded with French speaking residents in the early 1990s, and Franco-American singer-songwriter Josée Vachon gave a concert that included many traditional songs. These activities provided members of the community the chance to learn about and celebrate their heritage while a team of researchers from Siena College led by professors Janet Schideler (Modern Languages) and Karen Mahar (History) digitized over 30 objects that attendees had brought with them to help record and protect that heritage. The images, which include (among others) family photos, mass cards, certificates of naturalization, and medals worn during the Saint-Jean parades that were held annually in Cohoes, will be permanently archived in the New York Heritage Digital Collection available at [https://nyheritage.org/collections/je-me-souviensi-presenting-and-preserving-heritage-upstate-new-yorks-franco](https://nyheritage.org/collections/je-me-souviensi-presenting-and-preserving-heritage-upstate-new-yorks-franco). During the period of the year-long grant, Professors Schideler and Mahar will continue to build the collection as they take their mobile digitizing equipment on the road, visiting other communities in northern New York State where French Canadian and Acadian descendants have made their homes.
Leonardo Correa, Spanish, presented his poster (pictured at left) at the 9th International Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics that took place at Queens College/City University of New York. This presentation investigates the variation in the production of the final -s in the variety of Spanish spoken in the city of Bogotá Colombia, where the governmental social stratification system that is in place in the city conditions the production of the variable.

Faculty Updates

Alejandra Aguilar, Spanish, has been active as both researcher and speaker during the academic year 2017-2018. Two of her articles are forthcoming this year: “Negritud y catástrofe caribeña en la narrativa de Mirta Yáñez” in the Afro-Hispanic Review, and “La masculinidad negociada: virtud heroica, oratoria y conciencia autoral femenina en la poesía cubana (1868-1912)” to be published in the Hispanic Journal. She participated in Views from Below: the Underdog in Contemporary Latin American and Spanish Film presenting a paper titled “Reflections, Distortions, and the Homoerotic Aesthetics: Looking to Caribbean Female Filmmakers” and also presented another paper, “Literatura, activismo y cambio social en el Caribe hispano: notas para un debate,” at the 2018 Modern Language Association Annual Convention. She was selected as the 2018-2019 Alternate Fellow Woodrow Wilson National Foundation Career Enhancement Fellowship for Junior Faculty.

Aguilar’s research project, “Heirs of Freedom: Black Criminalization, Leadership, and Writing in Colombia, Brazil, and Cuba,” received The UAlbany Initiatives for Women’s Louise C. and Earl M. Applegate Award. This award will be used to travel to Bogotá, Colombia during the summer to present a conference paper, do archival work, and meet well-established scholars from Latin America. Doing archival work in the Luis Ángel Arango Library in Bogotá, Colombia will help her to complete a book-length manuscript on Afro-Latin American leaders, writers, and activists. By re-examining canonical literary pieces along with non-literary and literary texts produced by Afro-descendants that have been neglected in Latin American studies, this project will offer a new perspective on Latin American culture and society. It also aims to promote conversations on the impact of racial constructions to the everyday practices in Latin America as a platform to reflect on the pervasive consequences of all forms of discrimination in contemporary societies. In addition to addressing the topic of Afro-Latin American’s representation in printed culture, this project is significant for its interdisciplinary analysis informed by feminist theories of gender and nationalism and critical race theory, particularly with regard to stereotypes of Afro-descendants. This research will also have an impact on her course titled “African Diaspora in Latin America” (Fall 2018), which will offer an introduction to Latin American literature by focusing on the literary form and other forms of cultural expression of Afro-descendants from the colonial period to the present.
Megan Solon, Spanish, was awarded the Judy L. Genschaft Initiatives for Women Award. The award is to help continue an in-progress research project she is working on with alumna Cecily Corbett and Spanish graduate student Nyssa Knarvik related to heritage Spanish phonetics. The award will help her recruit and compensate participants for the next stage of their project.

Solon was invited to participate as a keynote speaker at the Current Approaches to Spanish and Portuguese Second Language Phonology Conference, held February 23-24 at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. The conference, celebrating its 10th anniversary, featured a Roundtable Discussion on Second Language Sounds including four keynote speakers. As stated in the conference program, the roundtable was designed to bring together senior scholars and up-and-coming researchers—including Solon—“to reflect on the progress in the field since the inception of this conference and to identify key areas for moving the field forward.” It was an exciting event!

Solon is working with colleagues in the School of Education and in Spanish & Portuguese at Indiana University on a research project related to the use of an elicited imitation task for measuring second language Spanish proficiency. The project, part of the Trends in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) working group organized by Dr. Hae In (Lauren) Park in the UAlbany School of Education, explores issues related to the reliability and validity of the Spanish EIT for measuring proficiency for research purposes. The research team—including Solon, Park, Marzieh Denghan Chaleshtori (graduate student in ETAP), and Carly Henderson (graduate student in Hispanic Linguistics at Indiana University)—presented their work at Evolving Perspectives on Advancedness: A Symposium on Second Language Spanish at the University of Minnesota in February and at the American Association of Applied Linguistics conference in Chicago in March.

Timothy D. Sergay, Russian, presented a multimedia lecture, “Russian and Soviet Film Music: A Tuneful Survey,” as part of the “Conversations With...” series of presentations hosted by Close Encounters with Music, a regional classical music performance and education society on Sunday, April 22 at Edith Wharton’s The Mount in Lenox, MA. Using selected clips from Russian films, Sergay surveyed not only the more famous contributions to film scoring by Sergei Prokofiev, Dmitri Shostakovich, and the pioneering émigré Hollywood composer Dmitri Tiomkin, but also such lesser known masters as Georgi Sviridov. Sergay stressed that Western filmgoers are already quite familiar with the influence of Soviet and Russian music on Hollywood film scores—but they may not always be aware of it, since major mainstream composers like John Williams, James Horner, Danny Elfman, and others regularly “quote” or interpolate from the Russian masters. Perhaps the most striking demonstration of this practice was a clip from James Horner’s score to Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan (Nicholas Meyer, 1982) in which Horner manages to overlap quotations from both Prokofiev’s score to Alexander Nevsky (Sergei Eisenstein, 1938) and Rachmaninov’s Symphony No. 1. The lecture was followed by questions and answers, which developed into a lively exchange with a very musically literate audience. Sergay is scheduled to lecture again to Close Encounters with Music on August 11 during the organization’s High Peaks Festival at the Berkshire School campus in Sheffield, MA. The subject will be “The French-Russian Connection.”

Sergay was also invited to the New Russia Cultural Center’s annual Heritage Awards Dinner December 9 at the Center’s new facility in Rensselaer. The event “celebrates...those who have enriched the community and established a legacy in the Russian-speaking community in the Capital Region of New York State.” At the dinner, Sergay was awarded the 2017 Heritage Award in the category “Education.” For more details: www.newrussiacenter.org/heritage-dinner/2017.
Faculty Updates

Denise Osborne, Portuguese, has published an article called *Learning Portuguese Through the Art of Film* in the *Portuguese Language Journal* – a double-blind refereed journal dedicated to current research on the teaching and learning of Portuguese.

In February 2018, Megan Solon, Spanish, and Osborne presented their ongoing work on the acquisition of Portuguese sounds by English-Spanish bilinguals at the Current Approaches to Spanish and Portuguese Second Language Phonology (CASPSLaP) conference, held at Indiana University. Their presentation was entitled “Pronunciation Learning in the Portuguese Foreign Language Classroom: A Snapshot of the Multilingual Starting Point to Better Interpret Learning Progress and Development.”

On May 5, 2018, the United Nations in New York City organized a major event to celebrate the International Day of the Portuguese language and culture – called Portuguese Language and CPLP Culture Day (CPLP stands for Community of Portuguese Language Countries). Osborne participated in this event, representing the University at Albany. At this event, members of the Portuguese-speaking communities participated in storytelling, round table discussions, concerts, a book fair, and interactive theater. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, who is Portuguese, participated in the event and delivered a speech on the North Lawn of the UN Headquarters.

Congratulations to LLC’s three 2018 Initiatives for Women awardees who were recognized at the IFW ceremony on July 19, 2018, Drs. Alejandra Aguilar and Megan Solon, and Spanish PhD student Tara Feeney!

Alejandra Aguilar, James R. Stellar, Provost and Senior Vice President, for Academic Affairs, and Megan Solon (left to right).

Lotfi Sayahi, Leonardo Correa, Tara Feeney and Anahi Bolanos received an ODI 2018-19 Diversity Transformation Award grant for their proposal “Linguistic Diversity among Hispanics in NY.”

Cynthia Fox and Megan Solon received an ODI 2018-19 Diversity Transformation Award grant for their proposal “Diversity TALKS: A Film and Speaker Series on Language, Language Learning, and Social Justice,” enabling them to invite three special guest speakers to campus this fall for events that will be open to all.
Graduate News

Farah Ali, TA and Spanish PhD student, presented a paper at the 9th International Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics, titled "Attitudes towards code-switching among Muslim immigrants in Barcelona." She was also awarded both the Benevolent Association Research Grant and the Dissertation Research Fellowship Award for her dissertation research. She recently accepted a job offer as Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish at Gettysburg College, a liberal arts college in Gettysburg, PA. She will be joining their Spanish department to teach language and linguistics courses starting Fall 2018.

Congratulations to Benjamin Mielenz, Spanish TA and PhD student, who received awards from the UAlbany Graduate Student Association and the Spanish National Honorary Society Sigma Delta Pi Graduate Research Grant Award, which is particularly competitive at the national level. The awards will help pay for fieldwork in the city of Astorga, Spain this summer where he plans to study variation in hypothetical constructions.

Congratulations to Nabila El Guennouni, our newest French PhD graduate (4/23/2018), whose dissertation title was “Au-delà de l’autofiction: écriture et réécriture de soi chez Malika Mokeddem.”

Jannis Hahn, German TA (pictured at left in Wurzburg), writes: “Looking back at my stay in Albany from August 2017 to May 2018, I have many pleasant associations with my experiences there. I got to know many great people, reaching from other exchange students through to lecturers and students that I supervised at the German table by myself. I will never forget my class hours with Undine Giguere who was not only doing a great job in teaching her students, but also in making me feel more at home. Giving my predecessors, my successors, and myself the opportunity to experience something which will always stand out as truly unique in our life’s journey, LLC will always remain a special place for us and everybody who is open-minded and seeks an internationally connected world.

Congratulations to Nyssa Knarvik (Spanish, PhD,) on her new job as Special Assistant Professor in Spanish Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition at Colorado State University beginning in Fall 2018.
For previous issues of the LLC Newsletter, see: www.albany.edu/llc/llcnewsletters.shtml

UAlbany senior Patrick J. Farrell will be attending the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom in fall 2018 to pursue an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice. He chose Oxford among offers from the University of Cambridge and the London School of Economics and Political Science. Hailing from Syracuse, NY, Farrell majored in Criminal Justice and Spanish and minored in Political Science and English. Farrell emphasized the importance of his knowledge of the Spanish language and culture as he prepares to enter a career in the field of international human rights.

Nadine Zaky Kotb, Spanish major and 2018 graduate, received the 2018 UAlbany Presidential Undergraduate Research Award. She writes: "Under the mentorship and the guidance of Professor Lotfi Sayahi, I was able to present my research project titled Gender Assignment to English Nouns in Arabic in New York both at SUNY Oneonta on the 20th of April at The SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference and a week after on the 27th of April at the 15th Annual University at Albany Undergraduate Research Conference. Thanks to Dr. Sayahi, I was nominated as a 2018 Award Recipient of the UAlbany Presidential Undergraduate Research Award, and I was given the award after giving my presentation in front of faculty, students, friends and family."

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LLC Russian Student Competes in Russian Language Competition

UAlbany is a member of a consortium of regional colleges (including Union College, the US Military Academy at West Point, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, SUNY Binghamton, Vassar College, Bard College, and Syracuse University) that holds an annual Russian-language competition, for first- and second-year students of Russian with non-Russian-speaking family backgrounds. Five students maximum participate from each school. Taking part in the competition, called an Olympiada, is a great way for students to challenge themselves in Russian and meet peers from other institutions who share their enthusiasm for this challenging critical language. Students compete in poetry, written grammar, speaking and reading an unfamiliar text in Russian. Russian language faculty from participating institutions judge.

West Point hosted this year’s event on April 21. UAlbany was represented by Michael Jennings, who competed at the first-year level. Jennings has since embarked on a summer Russian study abroad program in Moscow by arrangement between LLC and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences. The Olympiada concluded in a friendly luncheon with Russian food prepared by the host institution's Russian culture club and an awards ceremony, followed by rousing choral singing of favorite Russian folk tunes. UAlbany Russian Professor Timothy Sergay congratulates Jennings on a respectable performance at the regional Olympiada and hopes to see more first- and second-year students of Russian following in his footsteps.

Congratulations to Ciara Cullen, a French minor and former University in the High School student of French, who was enrolled this spring in an Intermediate French II course and applied for and received a $4000 fellowship from the Société des Professeurs Français et Francophones d'Amérique (SPFFA). This award will support her study of French at the University of Laval in Quebec City this summer.
Alumni News

Ashley LaBoda (PhD, 2015, pictured at left) accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Spanish at George Washington University in Washington DC beginning in August 2018. Since 2015, she has been a Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish and Linguistics at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In her time at Franklin and Marshall she taught Basic and Intermediate Spanish courses, Introduction to Linguistics, and Sociolinguistics. She has also been working on a research project on Spanish-English bilingualism in South-Central Pennsylvania with a colleague at Franklin and Marshall and a small group of students. The project examines how bilingual proficiency and executive function influence self-reported code-switching and actual production of code-switching in semi-structured autobiographical narratives. They are currently revising a paper for publication and hope to present their research at the Hispanic Linguistics Symposium in the fall.

LaBoda also has forthcoming publications based on her dissertation and has presented her findings at national and international conferences. About her time in LLC she says, “As a Teaching Assistant in the Spanish PhD program at UAlbany I felt well-prepared to pursue a career in academia. In addition to conducting research and writing my dissertation, I was also teaching and engaged in service to the department as a course coordinator. Learning to balance these three areas as a graduate student helped ease the transition into a full time faculty position.”

Congratulations to one of our former French graduate students, Genevieve Fortin, on her newly released book, "Water’s Edge," a historical romance that had its roots in Fortin’s research with Professor Cynthia Fox in her Franco-American project. Fortin writes, “Back in 2002, when I was a graduate student in French Studies at UAlbany, I worked as a research assistant on a large-scale research project on Franco-Americans. The project was led by Dr. Cynthia Fox, who trusted me to work with her and her team. As I transcribed interviews with Franco-Americans who told their stories, how their families were compelled to leave everything behind in Quebec and move to New England to work in cotton mills and how they adapted to their new environment, my life changed. That’s when the characters of Water’s Edge were born in my mind and they grew in me all these years until I finally wrote and published a novel. I will always be grateful to Dr. Fox and my experience on the Franco-American project for giving me Water’s Edge.”

Nathan Bogardus (Spanish MA, 2009) writes that he and Carmen Nieves (Spanish MA, 2013) “have been interpreting Spanish-English at the Albany County Correctional Facility, where approximately 320 foreign nationals are being held pre-arraignment for an array of immigration-related issues. Most are seeking asylum, having fled the latest wave of devastating corruption and violence that has plagued Central America and Mexico for more than a decade. The Legal Project has just completed phase 1 of its plan by pairing volunteer interpreters with attorneys doing pro bono work to explain the basics of the asylum process, provide an overview of the credible fear interview, give general legal guidance, and gather information to track law enforcement trends related to immigration.”

Bogardus and Nieves encourage graduate students and other alumni to join them in this or any other local endeavor by contacting the Refugee Roundtable (dmazengia@nycap.rr.com), the USCR (info@uscri-albany.org), or by emailing (nathanbogardus@gmail.com). Bogardus explains, “There is no better application of the skills I spent years learning in LLC than to empower people to lawfully find safe haven here in the US. Locally and nationally, people are reshaping our political reality through long hours of volunteerism, by heeding the suffering of one another, and by protecting the rights borne by our legal, cultural and educational institutions.”
Nicholas Figueroa (Spanish PhD, 2017) is finishing up a year as Adjunct Professor of Spanish at the College of Mount Saint Vincent and just accepted a teaching position as a High School Spanish Teacher at Uncommon Leadership Charter High School in Brooklyn, NY this August. Figueroa also presented his research, “The Effect of Spanish Language Education on /ɾ/ by U.S.-Born Caribbean Heritage Spanish Speakers” in the 5th National Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language, April 5-7, at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa.


Congratulations to Cecily Corbett (Spanish PhD, 2017) on her new position as the ESL Coordinator in the Latino Community Advocacy Program at the Saratoga County Economic Opportunities Council.

2018 Commencement Ceremonies Livestream Video Feeds
www.albany.edu/commencement/webstream-2018.php
Despite this dispiriting story, Briere ended on a positive note, citing a couple of aid programs (such as a micro-credit scheme, "FONKOZE," aimed at nurturing women-owned enterprises) that seem to be helping to break the cycle of poverty.

Haiti comprises the western part of the island of Hispaniola (the Dominican Republic is the rest), once called "the pearl of Antilles" (the Caribbean). It was inhabited by the Taino people when Columbus grabbed it for Spain, brutally dragooning them to work on plantations. After the Taino population was literally worked to death, they were replaced by slaves imported from Africa. In 1791 the slaves revolted, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, the "black Napoleon," himself a planter and former slave. He was eventually captured and died a prisoner. But the French were defeated by 1804, making Haiti independent. Later, Haiti agreed to pay France heavy reparations in exchange for recognizing its independence. The cost further hobbled Haiti's economic development.

Haiti stands unique as a nation founded through a slave revolt. But its subsequent history is baneful. Shambolic conditions there prompted the US to occupy Haiti from 1915 to 1934, making it virtually part of our economy. However, lack of economic development (i.e., enough value-added products) have kept Haiti heavily indebted to the present day.

Another misfortune for Haiti is being on a geological fault-line, and the 2010 earthquake was devastating. A proliferation of humanitarian relief organizations "arrived like locusts," Briere said, causing an economic earthquake; their high pay in relation to Haitian incomes blew up the cost of living. And their efforts achieved much less than one might have hoped. Hurricane Matthew in 2016 killed yet more thousands.

Despite this dispiriting story, Briere ended on a positive note, citing a couple of aid programs (such as a micro-credit scheme, "FONKOZE," aimed at nurturing women-owned enterprises) that seem to be helping to break the cycle of poverty.
Many, many thanks to our wonderful LLC supporters! Your continued philanthropy helps LLC provide conference travel grants for graduate student scholarly presentations, scholarships to undergraduates, honoraria to guest speakers, and funding for our special events. Every gift makes a difference. Here’s how you can partner with LLC to help promote languages:

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