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## Letters from the Chair...

Dear Colleagues and Friends of Foreign Languages,

The spring semester will soon come to an end, and we have been very productive this year again. As you will read in the following pages, several of our faculty members have distinguished themselves in various ways. Dr. Lawrence Williams recently hosted the first Texas World Languages Symposium which attracted presenters from several states and participants from various colleges and universities in Texas. Dr. Cristina Sánchez-Conejero is organizing her third International Conference on "Spanishness" in the Spanish Novel and Cinema of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> Century on May 1-2 in which renowned scholars from all over the world will participate. As President of the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), I am currently organizing our national convention which will be held July 2-5 in San Jose (CA).

The number of our faculty-led programs abroad is increasing. In Summer 2008, I organized a national seminar under the auspices of the AATF through substantial grants from the Swiss and Belgian governments; I also received a large grant from the UNT

Hispanic and Global Studies Initiative Fund, which enabled me to add 12 of our graduate students to this national seminar (see photo below). This summer, new programs are being established: Ms. Yayoi Takeuchi is taking students to Japan while Dr. Liljana Elverskog is organizing a trip to Morocco.



The new Ryan Delaney Scholarship in German was recently established. You will find the list of all our scholarships on p. 2. Our students need funding to complete their degrees and especially to travel abroad, which is a prerequisite for language majors. To this end, I would like to encourage you to support them by contributing to the existing scholarships or by establishing new ones, using the enclosed envelope.

We have new faces in the Department, as you can see on p. 3: we have hired four new professors (Drs. Chaguinian, Derusha, Manickam, and Vigil) and a new Administrative Assistant, Ms. Cara Cobos who is replacing Ms. Laura Wheeler who had to leave us. I would like to thank Mr. Robert DeLutri, Editor of our newsletter, who has expanded the number of entries in this publication which puts us in touch with many alumni and retired colleagues. A longer version is available at <http://www.forl.unt.edu/events>. Please let us hear from you. If you happen to be in Denton, I would be very happy to show you around the Language Building and our state-of-the-art facilities. In the meantime, I look forward to hearing from you.

Truly yours,

Marie-Christine Koop  
Professor of French and Department Chair

The 28 participants in the 2008 national AATF-UNT seminar at the University of Geneva



## Distinguished Honor

On June 4, **Dr. Marie-Christine Koop** was inducted to the Rank of Officer in the French Order of Academic Palms. This distinction was awarded by Ms. Kareen Rispal, Cultural Counselor from the French Embassy, in the presence of Mr. Dominique Chastres, Cultural Attaché from the French Consulate in Houston. Provost Wilkins spoke at the ceremony which was organized by Dean Schaake and held on the UNT campus.

*L'Ordre des Palmes Académiques* is an Order of Chivalry to academics and educators. The order was originally created by Napoleon to honor eminent members of the University of Paris and is one of the world's oldest civil awards. Originally, the *palmes académiques* were only given to teachers or professors but in 1866, the scope of the award was widened to include major contributions to French national education and it was also made available to French nationals outside of France who had made major contributions to the expansion of French culture in the rest of the world.



We applaud Dr. Koop on this well-earned distinction.

# Sponsored Scholarships

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is proud and grateful to announce that, thanks to the generosity of its sponsors, the following UNT students have been awarded scholarships this year:

**Scholarship in French: Forrest Williamson** (Solveig Olsen); **Nathan Penning** and **Alacia Cheney** (Vidrine Study Abroad)

**Scholarship in German: Ian Moore** (Solveig Olsen); **Ian Moore** (Liddell)

**Scholarship in Spanish: Justine Henderson** (Solveig Olsen); **Sahira Delgado** (Smith Donnelly); **Kayla Pedron** (McCarty)

The following students were selected for recognition on Honor's Day and will each be rewarded by Dr. Olsen:

French: **Omar Al-Rashdan** (graduate), **Forrest Williamson** (undergraduate)

German: **Ian Moore** (undergraduate)

Spanish: **Maria Schafler** (graduate), **Margaret Arant** (undergraduate)

We, and more importantly, the students are deeply appreciative of the generous contributions that have been made to language and cultural education at UNT.

**Our scholarship pool can grow and be sustained only through the financial support of our donors, the Friends of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, to whom we send this newsletter. We hope you will consider sending us a gift today.**

Our established sponsored scholarships to undergraduate language students include:

The Ryan Delaney Scholarship in German (**NEW**)

The Smith Dannelly Scholarship in Spanish

The Donald R. Vidrine French Study Abroad Scholarship

The Dr. Jacob Hieble Scholarship in German

The Martha & Voncile Lidell Scholarship in German

The Mildred Masters McCarty Scholarship in Spanish

The Martha A. Olsen Memorial Scholarship in German

The Solveig Olsen Endowed Scholarship for German

The Solveig Olsen French Expendable Fund

The Solveig Olsen German Expendable Fund

The Solveig Olsen Spanish Expendable Fund

**If you would like to contribute to our gift account or establish a scholarship fund for either undergraduate or graduate language students, please use the enclosed envelope or contact Dr. Marie-Christine Koop. You may reach her at (940) 565-2404 or e-mail her at [koop@unt.edu](mailto:koop@unt.edu). All contributions are tax deductible.**

# New Professors in the Department



**Dr. Christophe Chaguinian:** “I received my Ph.D. in medieval French literature from Indiana University in 2003. I am interested in the literary production in Old French and in Old Occitan. Up to now I have worked mainly with the lyric production of the *troubadours* and my first book, published this year in Paris, is a study and critical edition of the Occitan dawn-song (*alba*). I am currently working on two articles studying the reception/performance of the *chanson de geste*. I sometimes venture outside these chronological boundaries and work on Barbey d’Aureville, a 19th c. author. I have been invited to give a presentation on this author at the conference in December organized at the Sorbonne for the bicentennial of his birth.”



**Dr. Will Derusha** holds degrees from Georgia State University and the University of Georgia. His primary research field is Spanish-language poetry. His translation of Rubén Darío’s masterpiece for Duke University Press, *Cantos de vida y esperanza*, was the first book-length Darío work to appear in English. Another book of translated poetry appeared in Bucknell University Press, and his translations from Spanish to English and from English to Spanish can be found in journals on both sides of the Atlantic. His scholarly articles have been published in Spain, Germany, Nicaragua, Brazil, and Chile, as well as the USA. He is currently at work on a book about Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal and Liberation Theology, and is planning a research trip next summer on flamenco music and poetry. In addition, he has developed an overseas graduate course for summer on the relationship between Spanish poetry and painting, particularly the art of the Prado Museum in Madrid. Anyone interested in such a course

should not hesitate to contact him.



**Dr. Samuel Manickam:** “Though I’m from India I was born in Thailand where I spent my formative years until adolescence. After attending high school in the Indian Himalaya I came to the US for my undergraduate studies in English at Goshen College in Indiana. I then spent ten years teaching English – three in Turkey and seven in Mexico – before returning to the US for graduate studies in Spanish. I just finished up my doctorate in Spanish at the University of Oklahoma this past May. My area of specialization is 20th and 21st century Latin American fiction, and, more specifically, Mexican fiction. My interests/hobbies include reading (of course!), traveling, collecting old toys and books and learning how to play the classical guitar.”



**Dr. Donny Vigil** earned his Ph.D. in Spanish Linguistics from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana this year. His general research areas include: Spanish language and linguistics with emphasis in phonetics, phonology and dialectology; language contact; language variation; the phonetics and phonology of Portuguese; applied linguistics; second language acquisition and technology-assisted language learning. His most recent research analyzes the traditional Spanish spoken in New Mexico. In addition, Dr. Vigil is a basketball aficionado. At Purdue his intramural team won the championship in the Grad/Faculty/Staff league, and as a high school senior in New Mexico his team won the class 4A state championship.

## A warm welcome and our best wishes to you all!

We are also very pleased to inform you that our new colleagues, Drs. Chaguinian, Derusha, Manickam, and Vigil, have received a special UNT Research Grant for new faculty in the amount of approximately \$5,000. This will allow them to conduct research this summer. Please join us in congratulating them on this great achievement in their first year!

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[www.forl.unt.edu/events](http://www.forl.unt.edu/events)

## NEW STUDY PROGRAM IN GUADALAJARA

In Summer 2008 **Dr. Jongsoo Lee and Dr. Jiyoung Yoon** led a group of 32 students to Guadalajara. Students enrolled in two upper-level Spanish classes: one course from either Mexican Culture and Civilization or Advanced Spanish Composition and Oral Practice, and another course from either Mexican Cinema or Contemporary Mexican Literature. Students took advantage of the many opportunities to travel and visit cultural and historical places in downtown Guadalajara, Tlaquepaque, Tonalá, Guanajuato, and Puerto Vallarta. Commenting on their experiences in Mexico, students said “the entire experience was amazing,” that they really enjoyed the cultural experience and noted having markedly improved their Spanish language skills.

The same courses will be offered again in the summer of 2009, and the program will include excursions to Guanajuato and Tequila.



# Departmental News

## Please join us in congratulating...

**Dr. Marie-Christine Koop** on the publication of the selected proceedings of the international colloquium on Quebec that she had organized in March 2007: *Le Québec à l'aube du nouveau millénaire. Entre tradition et modernité.* (Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2008. Pp. xv + 418). Dr. Koop also contributed a chapter entitled "La place des femmes à l'Université. Etude comparative entre le Québec et la France."

**Dr. Teresa Marrero** as Assistant Director of the play "El método," performed in Spanish at the Kitchen Dog Theater in Dallas.

**Dr. Dorian Roehrs** on the publication of a single-authored book titled "Demonstratives and Definite Articles as Nominal Auxiliaries" with John Benjamins Publishing Company in Amsterdam (196 pages).

**Dr. Cristina Sánchez-Conejero** on the publication of a single-authored book titled "Novela y cine de ciencia ficción española contemporánea" (298 pages, Edwin Mellen Press).

**Dr. Lawrence Williams**, who has been awarded a UNT grant from the Charn Uswachoke International Development Fund to conduct research in France in 2009.

**Dr. Jiyoung Yoon**, Associate Professor of Spanish, has received a faculty development leave for next year. She will therefore be able to devote a full semester to her research.

Lecturers **Monika Campbell** and **María Muñiz** have both received a UNT Learning Enhancement Grant to teach on line courses in, respectively, German and Spanish.



Second year Japanese student **Lala Woodhull** won 5th place in the Japanese Speech Contest held February 14 in Dallas. Pictured left to right: Lecturer **Peggy Hardt**, **Lala Woodhull**, and Lecturer **Yayoi Takeuchi**.

**Congratulations to all on these wonderful achievements!**

In November **The Speakers Committee** hosted Dr. Joseph M. Sullivan (University of Oklahoma), who presented "The Knight and the Lady: Daily Life at Castle and Court in the High Middle Ages." The well-attended talk drew upon a broad range of sources, including visual art, architecture, religious writings and courtly literature of poetry, romances and epics.

Lecturer **Agnes Cser**'s German 4350 class presented an afternoon of reading some of the finest selections of German poetry. Thank you, Ms. Cser and all the students who participated, for this delightful afternoon event!

**Le Club Francophone** celebrated Mardi Gras with King Cake and refreshments at its second annual party. Our thanks to club president **Forrest Williamson** and club sponsor, Lecturer **Sophie Morton** for this enjoyable event.

Also in November, **Ms. Laura Wheeler** resigned from her position as Administrative Assistant II in order to start a family. We wish her all the best and thank her for her many contributions to our department.

Last but certainly not least, we warmly welcome **Ms. Cara Cobos**, our new Administrative Assistant, who succeeds Ms. Wheeler.



Cara has worked for UNT for seven years in the Philosophy and Environmental Science departments before moving to the Language Building. She holds a B.A. degree in English from UNT and has taught high school English and ESL. Cara is an avid reader, enjoys dabbling in digital art and graphic design, and describes herself as "a great cook." Welcome, Cara!

# News from Our Alumni

**Mary Bernard** (M.A. Spanish, 2006) is currently studying for her doctoral comprehensive exams and teaching 20th Century Latin American literature at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. She is specializing in Peruvian literature and theatre.

**Shelli (Bruce) Webb** (B.A. French, 1995; M.A. French 1999) teaches AP and pre-AP French classes at Denton High School and loves her students.

**Baltazar Flores** (B.A. Spanish, 2007) is currently a Bilingual Special Education Teacher at Plano ISD. "I grew up speaking Spanish, but by majoring in it I was able to learn literature, history, culture and correct grammar. Now I am applying that to my career as a teacher." (balflores@yahoo.com)

**Emily Graves** (B.A. Spanish, 2001; M.A. Spanish, 2003) is currently ABD in the Hispanic Studies Department at A&M (College Station) and is Graduate Teaching Assistant for the department. Her dissertation research is focusing on contemporary Hispanic exiled writers. (emaline.graves@gmail.com)

**Scott Meneely** (B.A. Spanish, 2005) is today the Associate Director of the Dorothy Shaw Bell Choir in Fort Worth. He also volunteers twice a year with Jalisco United to work in impoverished communities in Mexico (with Spanish Adjunct Nicholey Schwab). "My favorite part of studying Spanish at UNT was participating in the Study Abroad trip to Spain (led by Lecturer Kellye Church) and in learning first hand about the language and culture." (jsmnop@yahoo.com)

**Arnaud Perret** (M.A. French, 2006) is in the Ph.D. program in French Studies at the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana) while teaching French. He has written a chapter titled "Lumina Sophie dite Surprise: un combat pour une représentation du 'réel'" for a collective work on Suzanne Dracius to be published in 2009, and three book reviews published in the French Review since Fall 2006. (aperret2@illinois.edu)

**Sally Perret** (M.A. Spanish, 2006) is in her last semester of course work for her Ph.D. in Spanish at the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana) where she is studying Post-Civil War Peninsular Literature. Sally has received a Tinker grant to do field research in Madrid, has been awarded a fellowship for the Spring semester, and has won \$500 in the her department's "Best Grad Paper" contest. This semester Sally became president of SIPGO, the department's graduate student organization. (sperret2@illinois.edu)

**Lisa Schlottmann** (B.A. Spanish, 2001; M.Ed., 2004) has completed 48 hours of doctoral course work in Hispanic Studies at Texas A&M (College Station). She currently is a stay-at-home mom and is expecting her second child in April. Lisa does some translation work when her schedule permits. Lisa and her husband Chris, a family medical doctor, have been married for three and a half years and live in Haslet. (lisschlottmann@yahoo.com)

**Rémi Adam van Compernelle** (M.A. French, 2007) is currently working on his Ph.D. in French Linguistics at Pennsylvania State University, where he is a Teaching Assistant as well as Research Assistant in the Center for Language Acquisition. His doctoral research focuses on sociolinguistic variation in computer-mediated French and sociocultural approaches to language learning and teaching. (rav137@psu.edu)

**Andrew Wasserman** (B.A. German, 2008) is currently teaching English in Salzburg, Austria, after receiving a teaching assistantship from the Austrian Ministry of Education Fulbright Commission. As an English assistant, he is responsible for representing the culture and politics of the United States. Additionally, Andrew is studying Germanistik at the University of Salzburg and is planning to pursue a doctorate in German at the University of Wisconsin (Madison). (wasserman252@yahoo.de)

**It is always a pleasure to hear from our former students. Please email robert.delutri@unt.edu to keep us up to date about yourself and other UNT alumni you know.**

# The Honor Societies

The National French Honor Society, *Pi Delta Phi*, held its induction ceremony in November. Pictured left to right are: Mr. Eric Castaneda (advisor), inductees Athena Barnes, Walsh Costigan, and Forrest Williamson. The UNT chapter is Alpha Iota.



The National German Honor Society, *Delta Phi Alpha*, induction ceremony was held in March. Pictured on the far right is Ms. Carmen Terry, advisor of the UNT chapter, Iota Epsilon, and front row, left, vice president Amy Hall; second from the left, chapter president, Jennifer Boylan. The inductees are: Kelly Perego, Shelby Cleveland, Kent Kirkman and Ian Moore.



Twenty-six new members were inducted into the National Spanish Honor Society, *Sigma Delta Pi*. Pictured on the far left is Ms. Connie Martínez, advisor of the UNT chapter, Alpha Pi, at the ceremony held in November.

