One of the hallmarks of the French or Italian undergraduate major or minor is the opportunity to spend time studying abroad. We are grateful to the alumni who contributed to our study abroad funds that allowed 13 students (listed on page 5) to study in France, Canada, and Italy. Rather than write about the obvious benefits of study abroad to develop globally competent citizens, let’s allow the students to speak for themselves, starting with Dan Giglio (Make Their Dreams Come True Scholarship) who recounts one of the often-stated benefits of study abroad: “Upon returning home, I’ve realized that the most rewarding parts of my experience in Siena are those little things that I learned about myself over the course of the summer. In retrospect, it is astounding to think that a city that knew virtually nothing about me was able to teach me so much about my own self.”

Kelsie King (Price Scholarship), one of 29 undergraduate students studying in Dijon, appreciates the financial aid that came through her scholarship: “I can honestly say that I could not be experiencing this magnificent country and learning at such an intense level without the gracious contributions to the scholarship funds here at Ohio State. To all of those back home, thank you for making this experience possible.” She appreciates both her studies and the opportunity to get to know France better, including a trip to Paris, a tour of Provence, and cooking with a French chef. She adds, “Though not to worry—my studies have been just as intellectually stimulating. From the intricacies of tonic pronouns to the exceptions of the subjunctive, my professor has pushed our brain capacities to the fullest.”

Liz Marasco (Price Scholarship) concurs: “Regarding Dijon, no other study abroad location would have suited me better. Dijon is welcoming and easy to navigate, yet there’s always something to discover. I’ve met a few wonderful natives who are willing to let me stumble through some French so that I can practice.”

Rachel Gapa (Students First, Students Now Scholarship from Ohio State alumna Mary Galvin) writes from Quebec, Canada: “Quebec has been great, and I couldn’t be happier that I chose to come here. There is so much history and culture in this city. I’m thrilled to be able to learn about it firsthand. I’m taking a class specifically on the culture, and once a week we go to the different neighborhoods to see the ‘real Quebec,’ instead of just touring through the tourist areas—though those are beautiful and extremely interesting, too! Another great thing is that everyone who lives here is really, really nice, so I’m able to get a lot of practice with my spoken French.”

Allison Lawrence (Price Scholarship) echoes Rachel’s enthusiasm: “The decision to study abroad in Québec is the best decision I could have ever made. The second I got off the plane, I began speaking French. . . . Words cannot describe how it felt to act like a local. While some of their words are “québécois,” I am learning more than I could have ever imagined.”

Thanks for the Memories: French and Italian Students Study Abroad
Grateful thanks and appreciation to all of you who contribute so generously to our special funds for undergraduate study abroad. As study abroad becomes increasingly important—and increasingly expensive—your gifts are all the more crucial, as we continue to find ways to help support international experiences for our majors and our minors. (And, we’ll be happy to send you one of our department mugs as a “thank you” for your donation!—see page 11.) Several of this year’s scholarship winners are featured in our newsletter, and their comments make clear how transformative the experience of studying and living abroad is for them.

Change is in the air at Ohio State and in the department but then it always is—autumn quarter brings in a new group of first-year students, increasingly well prepared by all university standards and convinced of the value of adding foreign language and culture expertise to their professional portfolios. The number of majors and minors in French and Italian remains strong. While we know that students see the value added of foreign language for their future careers, we also know that they enjoy the French and Italian courses they take because of the quality of the teaching they receive from our committed and expert faculty and graduate teaching assistants.

In this issue, several articles demonstrate the department’s continued commitment to teaching. Janice Aski is again featured for her outstanding teaching as the 2010 recipient of the Arts and Humanities’ Rodica C. Botoman Award for excellence in undergraduate teaching. Another way in which the department continues its excellence in GTA training is the possibility of a teaching apprenticeship in French. Doctoral candidates are offered the opportunity to work under the supervision of a faculty member in an intermediate or advanced level class.

Over the years, many of our graduates have gone into teaching at all levels of instruction and in many settings. Our alumni interview with Steve Hedge, a high school teacher here in Columbus, gives you a sense of the enthusiasm, commitment, and expertise typical of our graduates, while our Italian graduate testifies to the value of foreign languages in the unique setting of an NGO.

This has also been a year of hellos and good-byes. We wish retiring professors Christiane Laeuffer and Linda Harlow the best of luck. Both are known for their strong commitment to teaching. Marilyn Price, fiscal officer and administrative associate, retired after 18 fruitful years in the department. We received the sad news that former professor Hugh Davidson passed away after an illustrious career at Ohio State and the University of Virginia.

Meanwhile, Suzanne Mikos, our new fiscal officer, comes to us from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. We also welcome Iskra Iskrova, who joins us as a visiting assistant professor in linguistics, and we welcome back Karlis Racevskis who will teach courses in early modern French literature as a professor emeritus.

We hope that all of you have fond memories of your days in the department. Please send us your news for the alumni section (birckbichler.1@osu.edu), and think about supporting our students and department through planned giving.

Diane W. Birckbichler
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Faculty Focus
Sarah-Grace Heller
—a costumer fashioned into an expert on medieval life, literature, and languages

A long time ago, in another state, a young girl, bored in 8th grade classes, took French in an after-school program and designed costumes while she apprenticed as the wardrobe mistress for youth operas. And so, on to Grinnell College in Iowa where she majored in French, while also studying dramatic literature and theory. There she learned how to bring characters to life as a costumer, resulting in a position at the Minneapolis Opera costume shop. However, a six-month program in Nantes, France—her favorite academic experience—tugged at her mind. She missed speaking French. And so, the young woman went back to school, earning a master’s and a PhD in French from the University of Minnesota.

Now Sarah-Grace Heller has blended all her interests and become an expert on the semiotics of culture and medieval literature, a consultant to the British Museum, and a prolific writer on medieval fashion. At Ohio State, Heller teaches medieval literature and the long-suppressed Occitan (southern France) language. She can answer questions about why Charlemagne’s Roman toga looks askew, what situations and incidents led to the writing of the great medieval novels, and what chain mail meant to medieval knights.
Faculty Updates

Janice Aski, associate professor of Italian, has been awarded a 2010 Ohio State Distinguished Teaching Award, as well as the Rodica C. Botoman Award. Besides writing on Italian linguistics and grammar, she researched how culture is presented in elementary Italian textbooks. During spring quarter 2010, Aski volunteered to teach Italian to elementary school children at a local school, along with seven Ohio State student volunteers and four students taking the experience as an independent study.

Diane Birckbichler, professor of French and department chair, is also director of Ohio State’s Foreign Language Center. She served a second year on the Columbus City Schools Innovative Schools Task Force and on the Advisory Committee on Interpreter Services for the Ohio Supreme Court. As all faculty in the department, she is immersed in planning for the upcoming conversion to semesters in 2012. Her daughter, Katie, is now 29 years old and lives in the Seattle area.

Jerry Curtis, associate professor of French (Newark), continues to publish and present on French writer Lucette Desvignes, making a joint presentation with her at the 29th Cincinnati Conference on Romance Languages and Literatures. Curtis is completing work on five volumes of English translations of the works of Mme. Desvignes, with the final volume to go to press this summer.

Linda Harlow, associate emerita professor of French and associate provost of the University Honors and Scholars Center, has been working on the seventh edition of the intermediate college French textbook Bravo! with coauthors Judith Myskens, Michèle Viale, and Jean-François Brière. Harlow retired this year.

Sarah-Grace Heller, associate professor of French, is working on a book project, An Illustrated History of Medieval Fashion 500-1300. Besides duties as MA advisor and as acting director of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, she is writing an article on the medieval Louvre and guest-editing a volume on Law and Life in Medieval Occitania. As vice president of the Société Guilhem IX, Heller organized conference panels on Old Occitan. She also had time to welcome a new daughter, Athena Marguerite Baith, in November 2009.

Charles Klopp, professor of Italian, gave a paper on Montale’s poetry at a conference at La Spezia and made presentations on the Ohio State 2006 Trieste Conference at Trieste’s Caffè San Marco, the city’s Duino castle, and on Italian television. His publications during the past year treat Montale, Tabucchi, Tobino, Collodi, Tozzi, and Bufalino.

Christiane Laeufer, associate emerita professor of French, has published articles in Studia Neophilologica and in Word. Besides making presentations at Societas Linguistica Europaea and the Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States, she is in the final stages of a book-length study on the phonological and prosodic treatment of French loanwords into German and Germanic dialects. She has just retired.

Albert Mancini, professor emeritus, was nominated 2010 Honorary President of the American Association of Teachers of Italian. He continues to publish. Articles on post-war Italian critical reception of the theatre of Eugene O’Neill and on English translations of works of Ferrante Pallavicino have appeared in the past year.

Danielle Marx-Scouras, professor of French, gave two invited public lectures on French popular music at Ohio State’s School of Music and the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l’Homme in Aix-en-Provence, France—affiliated with the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique and the Université de Provence. She was also interviewed for a forthcoming French documentary TV film on popular music from the south of France. She is the resident director of the CIC summer program at the Université Laval in Quebec, Canada, for 2010-12.

Judith Mayne, professor of French, guest-edited a special issue of Studies in French Cinema on French film studies in the United States. It appeared in summer 2010. She was also a keynote speaker (“French Female Stardom in Crisis and Transition: A Case Study of...”)

A recent article of Heller’s explains the significance of the cloak of silk shot (a textile woven with red warp and gold weft) found in the tomb of Saint Bathilde (d. 680), wife of Clovis II, at the monastery of Chelles, France.

On the administrative level, Professor Heller, as acting director of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, represents its interests on the university-wide semester conversion project (scheduled for transition in 2012) and manages expected learning outcomes for undergraduate French and Italian majors.

(continued on page 4)
Danielle Darieux and the Occupation”) at the 10th annual Studies in French Cinema conference, held in Paris on March 26 and 27, 2010.

Dennis Minahen, associate professor of French, is completing a book project that examines how desire is “engendered” in the poetry of Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Rimbaud. He presented on Baudelaire’s “A celle qui est trop gaie” at the 2009 FRIT department Faculty Forum and on gendered word play in Rimbaud’s poetry, the latter published in Parade Sauvage.

Karlis Racevskis, professor emeritus, continues to “turn out book reviews and to read the occasional dissertation chapter.” He has written “The New Treason of Intellectuals,” an essay to appear in the forthcoming Truth to Power: Public Intellectuals In and Out of Academe (Cambridge Scholars Publishing). He will also present on Foucault and the Enlightenment at the upcoming MLA conference, besides rejoining the faculty to teach early modern French literature.

Dana Renga, assistant professor of Italian, has presented papers and prepared soon-to-be-published works on Italian B movies and mafia culture and cinema, as well as on directors Marco Bellocchio and Michelangelo Antonioni. Renga is the treasurer of the American Association for Italian Studies and serves on the MLA’s 20th-century Italian literature committee.

Louisa Shea, assistant professor of French, published her first book, The Cynic Enlightenment: Diogenes in the Salon, with Johns Hopkins University Press. She had essays appear in two edited volumes, Rousseau and Freedom and Lumières et Histoire, as well as an article in French Forum on film director Olivier Assayas. She is currently working on her next book project on theories of world literature.

Cheikh Thiam, assistant professor of French, has published extensively in the past year, including an essay on Negritude in Le Destin de la Négritude and a critique of essentialist theories in praise of pluralism in Éthiopiques. He also made presentations at the 2009 Africana Studies Annual Interdisciplinary Symposium at James Madison University, at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, and at the University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana.

Heather Wobb, assistant professor of Italian, spent fall quarter 2009 at Cambridge University on a fellowship at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities. She gave five invited talks at various universities in the U.K. Her book, The Medieval Heart, was published in February 2010 by Yale University Press.

Jennifer Willging, associate professor of French, has spent the last year working on two projects. The first is a pair of articles, a presentation at the University of Leeds, England, and a course on the conjunction of social class and space in representations of the Second World War in Marguerite Duras’s writing. The second project is a book-length manuscript analyzing changing food and drug consumption in contemporary France.

Wynne Wong, associate professor of French, has completed her term as managing editor of the French Review. Her book, Input Enhancement: From Theory and Research to the Classroom (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005) has been translated into Chinese and Korean. Current projects include writing two French textbooks and co-writing two related movies to be filmed on location in Paris, Montreal, and Quebec City.

An Academic Treat: Class with Janice Aski

Students, alumni, and colleagues agree: associate professor Janice Aski is a great teacher! One of only a few professors at Ohio State to win three different awards for outstanding teaching, Aski was recently awarded the 2010 Rodica C. Botoman Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching and Mentoring in Arts and Humanities, a $5,000 award. Aski’s response was brief: “I am truly surprised and honored by the award. It was not something that I expected.” The award is given to a member of the Humanities faculty who best exemplifies excellence as a teacher of undergraduates.

In 2009 Aski was one of five university-wide recipients of the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching that honors faculty members for superior teaching. For this award, recipients are nominated by present and former students and colleagues and chosen by a committee of alumni, students, and faculty. The emphasis of this award is on outstanding performance in the classroom, out-of-class teaching as a mentor or advisor, and using innovative teaching strategies that advance learning. Recipients are inducted into the university’s Academy of Teaching, which provides leadership for the improvement of teaching at Ohio State.

Aski’s first teaching award came in 2004 when she was named a College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher.

Aski received her bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate from the University of Wisconsin and a master’s in linguistics from the University of Manchester, United Kingdom. She joined Ohio State’s FRIT faculty in 2000.
Twenty-five years ago, two new faculty members joined the French and Italian department (at that time the Romance Languages department) as assistant professors: Linda Harlow, with three years of small college teaching (French and Spanish) experience after her PhD from Purdue University in foreign language education and administration; and Christiane Læufer, with a PhD in linguistics from Cornell University. Now both are preparing for a new phase in life—retirement.

Læufer plans to begin retirement by finishing her work on the phonological treatment of French loan words in Alsatian, a Germanic language, taking a trip to Europe in the winter, and sitting in on a variety of courses at Ohio State that she never had the time to explore: kinesiology, film, and literature. After analyzing the units of language for so many years, reading novels is a pleasure that she intends to enjoy in the coming months. When Læufer was asked which of the courses in advanced French pronunciation and grammar, linguistics, and translation she enjoyed teaching the most, she named French 601 and French 604 because “there were always ‘aha’ moments . . .” for the students. Jim Anderson, a French and business alumnus now working in Grenoble, France, writes that in Læufer’s classroom, “Advanced grammar and translation came alive.”

Linda Harlow plans a somewhat different retirement: She is joining her husband Joe in North Carolina where she plans to return to playing piano and her Martin guitar, teach French at a community college, and become involved in service work. It will be quite a break after directing the French language program, serving as associate dean of Humanities, and then leading Ohio State’s Honors and Scholars programs for the past eight years. Harlow is proud of having “brought order to the university’s honors programs” by setting uniform academic requirements. Ohio State now sets the bar for other universities. Harlow says that hers was a “fascinating position.” It was “cool because you get to work with the best students on campus, as well as faculty and staff all over the university.” Harlow’s colleague and assistant, Garett Heysel, praised her “way of being accepting and open to all people.”

Study Abroad Scholarship Winners

Thirteen students won undergraduate department scholarships in 2010:

• Jaimie Polzin and Caitlyn Zabel (Ornello and Diamond De Pietro Scholarship)
• Daniel Giglio (“Make Their Dreams Come True” Scholarship)
• Stella Suryanto (Arthur C. and Lura Bell Chamblin Jahn Memorial Scholarship)
• Kara Brown, Kelsie King, Allison Lawrence, Laura Macinnis, Elizabeth Marasco, Zachary Rybarczyk, Steven Wagner, and Autumn Zimmerman (William S. and Marguerite C. Price Traveling Scholarships)
• Rachel Gapa (“Students First, Students Now” Scholarship—Mary Galvin)

In addition, eight of our undergraduates (25% of the total number of recipients) have won Wolfe Study Abroad Scholarships: Mitchell Collins (Italian), Daniel Giglio (Italian), Destiny Gingerich (French), Allison Horney (French), Kelsie King (French), Allison Lawrence (French), Devyn Paros (French), Cristina Sarmiento (French).

Further good news from undergraduates . . .

French major Isabelle Bateson-Brown was awarded an Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research Scholarship, based partly on her work for the Denman Forum on “The Codicological Context of a Cistercian Service Book.” Other presenters from the department include: Timothy Hoffine (French) on the “Centralization in French and American Secondary Education Systems,” Brittany O’Neill (Italian) on “Dreaming in Dante’s Purgatorio,” and Benjamin Reinke (French) on “Technocrats in the 4th Republic: The Nuclear Development of France.”
New and “Renewed” Faculty

The French and Italian department welcomes Iskra Iskova in taking the visiting professor of linguistics and language position from which Christiane Laeufer has just retired. Iskova received a joint PhD in linguistics and French linguistics from Indiana University–Bloomington. Her dissertation analyzed intonation in Haitian and Guadeloupean Creole. She also holds an MA in French linguistics from Indiana University–Bloomington and a DEA in language sciences from the University Paris VII, Denis Diderot. A native of Bulgaria, she became acquainted with the Francophone world at an early age. She grew up in North Africa and became an adult in France. She has lived in several Francophone areas, including Morocco, Algeria, Mali, Quebec, and the French West Indies. In summer 2007 she conducted fieldwork in Haiti for a Haitian Creole-English Bilingual Dictionary, co-edited with Professor Albert Vaidman and published in 2007 by the Creole Institute at Indiana University. Iskova has a passion for French-based Creoles and overseas varieties of French that exhibit effects of language contact. Her research focuses in the areas of phonetics, phonology, lexicology, and sociolinguistics.

Professor emeritus Karlis Racevskis is rejoining the department for the 2010-2011 academic year, teaching courses in early modern French literature (1600-1800), as well as advanced undergraduate courses. Professor Racevskis jokes that he is looking forward to having another retirement party in a year, because he enjoyed the first one so much!

PhD Candidates Meld Teaching and Learning

For some time now, the French and Italian department has offered French doctoral candidates the opportunity to teach an upper-level course under the guidance of a faculty member. Over the years, many of our graduate students have taken advantage of the teaching apprenticeship, most recently, Anaïs Wise, Beth Bishop, and Clare Balombin. Beth apprenticed in associate professor Jean Francois Fourny’s French 440 culture course. Clare apprenticed in professor Judith Mayne’s French 670—“Film noir,” while Anaïs worked with assistant professor Bernadette Hoef in French 426—“Literature and the Self.”

Anaïs calls hers an “extremely satisfying experience.” She worked on topic preparation, suggesting questions for tests and leading discussions and small group activities. She says that she is “grateful for the support from the professor and the department” that helped her feel prepared to teach on the college level.

Clare’s experience in French 670 was slightly different, as the class included both undergraduate and graduate students. Clare worked in small group discussions with the undergrads, and presented one of the nine films screened. She notes that, “The class gave me renewed respect for the art of the film and for the depth of Professor Mayne’s presentations.”

Beth Bishop adds that, “An apprenticeship allowed me to become familiar with a course [that] I would not normally have the opportunity to teach as a GTA. [It] allowed me to gain experience and build my vita.”

Professor Judith Mayne comments, “From my vantage point, the teaching apprenticeship program is a wonderful opportunity for our PhD students, since it allows them to look closely at how courses are planned and taught. It’s yet another example of what our department does to prepare our PhD students for teaching careers.”

How Do We Think About the Holocaust as Seen in Films?

Through the efforts of film professors Judith Mayne and Dana Renga, the Department of French and Italian and the Wexner Center will host a two-day symposium and mini film series this fall titled “New Directions in French and Italian Holocaust Cinema.” The symposium examines representations of memory and trauma in a selection of French and Italian films that address the Holocaust. The event runs October 31–November 4, and includes four films, two panels, and two keynote lectures by Professors Leah Hewitt (Amherst College) and Millicent Marcus (Yale University).

In the meantime, a second French-Italian seminar is being offered by Dana Renga in fall 2010: “French and Italian Holocaust Cinema.” (“French and Italian Renaissance Literature” was offered in 2008). Professor Renga explains her interest in depictions of the Holocaust: “Both France and Italy witnessed the extermination of thousands of native and non-native Jews (75,000 in France and over 9,000 in Italy) and experienced complicated and controversial reactions surrounding the legacies of collaboration, resistance, and survival. Some 65 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, Italy and France are still grappling with what remains from the years of occupation.”
The Blues à la française

French students get front row seats to a blues concert in France without leaving the classroom

Students in Professor Danielle Marx-Scouras’ French 631 (“What’s ‘French’ Anyway?”) class attended a blues concert in France this year without leaving the classroom. With the support of a Digital Union Learning Technology Grant and funds from the Department of French and Italian and the Foreign Language Center, they had front row seats.

The University of Provence in Marseille hosted the European side of the mini-concert, with Musicians Tatou and Blu representing the blues group, Moussu Te lei Jovents from La Ciotat, near Marseille. The Kermit Hall videoconference center enabled students to watch (and sing along with) the musicians, and then ask them (in French) about their work. Two-dozen students and several faculty members participated in the event. In response to questions from students, the musicians talked about issues of nationalism and multiculturalism in contemporary France, as well as instrumentation.

Professor Marx-Scouras has worked with the group previously, as her recent research involves contemporary French musicians and their place in society. She remarked later that it was not an easy task to set up the concert, with issues of technical compatibility on two continents, licensing, and scheduling the musicians and the space.

French undergrad minor Maggie Neola sums up the experience: “It was not simply watching a movie of two Frenchmen playing music; we could interact with them as if they were in the same room. I felt like French culture became more tangible.”
Alumni Updates

Rosa Ailabouni (BA French, International Studies, Political Science, 2001) went to graduate school in Paris at Institut D’Etudes Politiques de Paris, and then to Columbia University. Now at Booz Allen, she supports both U.S. and international governments in strategic planning and business process improvement projects. She says, “Working in foreign countries, I find that it is very important to communicate in foreign languages, understand their history, and appreciate different cultures—studying a foreign language assists in doing so.”

Aymara Boggiano Barbieri (BA French, 1983, MA Romance Languages, 1987) writes from the University of Houston where she coordinates TA training for the Faculty Senate, teaches a French course, and coordinates an Honors Spanish course. Aymara was looking forward to meeting Dean Roberts who recently moved from Ohio State to the University of Houston. She and her husband, Enrique (BS, MS, PhD from Ohio State), have three boys, ages 25, 20, and 16. She notes, “I really appreciate the opportunity that Dr. Linda Harlow gave me as . . . her administrative assistant in the French Language Program. The experience I gained in that position is what has helped me advance in my career.”

Adrienne Barbo (MA French, 2008) won a Critical Language Scholarship from the U.S. Department of State to study intensive Arabic in Alexandria, Egypt, in summer 2010. The program covers one year’s worth of Arabic study in three months, as well as organized trips and cultural excursions.

Laura Belland (BA French, Microbiology, 2008) spent two years as a post-baccalaureate research fellow at the National Institutes of Health. She will be attending Mount Sinai School of Medicine in the fall to pursue an MD. Her interests lie in surgery, geriatrics, and emergency medicine.

Cristina Benedetti (MA Italian, 2007) will begin an MA in arts policy and administration at Ohio State next year.

Lily Birkhimer (BA French, 2009) is working on an MLIS (MA of Library and Information Science) from Kent State through its Columbus program and planning to work in Special Libraries (i.e. corporate, nonprofit, law, etc.) once she’s finished (summer 2011). She’s currently working in a small nonprofit/professional organization library where she gets “to do a bit of everything.”

Andrea Boron (BA French, 2003) is serving a one-year detail to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, where she is the director of Trade Policy for the Office of Textiles.

Peter Carlson (BA Marketing and French, 2009) worked at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base for a year. He started a two-year master’s program at L’Institut d’Études Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) in August 2010, studying international affairs with a concentration in security, dealing with conflict resolution and peace negotiations. He says, “I’m happy to say that the French program at Ohio State has certainly played a key role in my decision to pursue a career in the international sphere (and hopefully use my French).”

Todd Donahue (MA French, 2008) has been teaching English at the Université de Rennes as part of Ohio State’s university exchange for the past two years. He now has a separate, two-year contract with the Université de Rennes to teach English.

Grace Fry (BA French 2009) taught English in a middle school in Normandy last year as part of the French Embassy Program, and “loved the experience.” She notes, “It was great to finally speak French with native speakers on a regular basis and vastly expand my vocabulary.” She is now working in Columbus.

Jessica Hanzlik (BS Physics, BA French, 2008) is finishing up graduate studies at the University of Oxford this August, “When,” she says, “hopefully!) I’ll have completed two master’s degrees—one in particle physics and the other in comparative social policy. Next summer I hope to begin teaching high school science in an urban school district.”

Alexandra Salmeron Hesson (MA French, 2007) still works in Reno, Nevada, as a senior recruiter for Aerotek. She and her husband just bought their first home.

Humberto Gonzalez (MA Italian, 2008) has a position teaching Italian at Baylor University in Texas.

Melanie Mann (BA French and BS Economics, 2006; MS Development Economics, 2010) was accepted for the Teaching Assistant Program in France (TAPIF) to teach in her top choice region, Grenoble.

Audrey Martinko (MA Italian, 2008) is currently working full-time as an Italian instructor at Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama.

Joyce Miller (MA Italian, 2009) teaches Italian at the University of Cincinnati and organizes UC’s summer study abroad program in Florence. She presented two papers at conferences: one on the meaning of hands in DeSica’s “Ladri di biciclette” at the American Association for Italian Studies, and a second on Benigni’s “La vita è bella” at the University of Cincinnati’s Romance Languages Conference.

Philip Nelson (PhD French, 2010) successfully defended his dissertation titled “Irony’s Devices: Modes of Irony from Voltaire to Camus.”

Kelly O’Reilly (MA French, 2009) will be working full-time at Dublin Jerome High School next fall, teaching French I-III. Kelly notes, “I
am still teaching communicatively and loving it! It’s been fun seeing Wynne Wong's theories work for children as well, although I will say they need a few more structured input activities than the students did at Ohio State. I collaborate with Ben Hirt (a former Ohio State graduate student) on classroom activities and district exams.”

**John Petrus**  
(BA International Studies and French, 2009) taught English from October 2009 through April 2010 in a small town near Dijon named Joigny, an “isolated, very rural, but beautiful” location. He says, “I learned a lot about the French school system, and I had a lot of liberty with my classes.” He followed up teaching by working in a vineyard in Senan, France (la “Bourgogne profonde”), but is returning to Ohio State to start an MA in Spanish this fall.

**Scott Pochatila**  
(BS Mechanical Engineering and French, 2007) just finished his second year of law school at Case Western Reserve University. This summer he’ll be working in Paris as an intern at the law firm of Santarelli SA, which specializes in intellectual property law (patents, trademarks, copyrights, etc.).

**Vincent Porretta**  
(MA Italian, 2007) will begin a PhD program at the University of Alberta next year.

**Julia Stephens Praud**  
(PhD French, 2005) has accepted a three-year position as assistant professor of French at West Point starting summer 2010. Besides teaching beginning and intermediate-level classes, Julia will be teaching an upper-level seminar on Francophone African literature and advising seniors working on capstone projects in Francophone Africa.

**Megan Prince-Miller**  
(BA French, 2007) lives in Willoughby Hills, Ohio, with her husband, Matthew, a graduate of Ohio State’s College of Engineering). She graduated from Case Western Reserve University School of Law with a JD in May 2010.

**Amanda Miller Smerdel**  
(BA French, 2004; MA Foreign Language Ed., 2005) welcomed her first child (May 2010) and has temporarily retired from teaching at the high school level.

**Adrienne Strong**  
(BS BioSciences, French minor, 2010) has received a Fulbright scholarship for 2010-11. She will be going to Tanzania (for the fourth time) to continue her research on the barriers to the use of health care services during pregnancy and delivery. An article on her research appeared in *Juros*, the Ohio State journal of undergraduate research.

**Stacey Weber-Fève**  
(PhD French, 2006) received an all-university 2010 Early Achievement in Teaching award (one of two awarded) from Iowa State University. Stacey says, “It’s a wonderful testament to the excellent training and modeling that you...provided me during my time at Ohio State. I am so grateful for the preparation that you all have given me to excel so early in my career.”

**Camilla Zamboni**  
(MA Italian, 2009) is in the middle of doctoral studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She says, “My studies are going well. I’m just ridiculously busy all the time. Conferences, projects, everything happens at the same time!”

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**16th Annual FIGSA Conference**

“Resistance and Outcasts” was the theme chosen for the 16th annual FIGSA (French and Italian Graduate Student Association) Conference. Nine graduate students presented their research, including six from Ohio State: **Adrienne Barbo** (“Whose Veil Is It Anyways?: Hijab, Niqab, and Identity in Muslim Women in France”), **Sara Bernstein** (“The Power of Words: A Sociolinguistic Study of Day 2, Novella 9, of Boccaccio’s *Decameron*”), **Lisa Bevevino** (“Weeping and Wailing: A Foucauldian Study of Power through Female Grief in Robert Garnier’s *Les Juifves*”), **Eleonora Boscolo-Camiletto** (“Gabriele D’Annunzio: Poetics and Nocturnal Prose”), **Anthony Viltro** (“Expressions of Female Sexuality in the *Decameron*”), and **Anaïs Wise** (“Jean Gabin: Une gueule d’amour et d’envergure”). Other FRIT grad students helped in planning, preparing, and chairing conference panels. They were: **Heidi Brown**, **Aurelia Bunescu**, **Michele Gerring**, **Jeffrey Harris**, **Evan Keller**, **Kelly Lombardo**, and **J.D. Winteregg**.
Spotlight on Alumni

How an MA in French found a job that he loves

By any measure, Steve Hedge’s eight-year tenure as a French instructor at Grandview High School has been a success. Enthusiasm for the experience of learning French has kept enrollments up—25% of the student population takes French; 30 students will participate in the biennial trip to France; and students’ reaction to his work made necessary the hiring of second French instructor.

As Steve says, “As a French teacher today you have to be a shameless self-promoter who keeps it (French) relevant.” How does Steve keep French relevant? He asks the question, “How does the French language influence English words?” when looking at cognates. He asks what students have learned from other classes that relates to French. The answers might be surprising: Chemistry students point out the periodic chart symbols for copper (Cu—cuivre) and lead (Pb—plomb); history students read from Voltaire; and English students encounter existentialism.

In many instances, Steve uses songs to reinforce teaching points—even grammar! At the top level (similar to a blend of Ohio State’s 104 and 201), a song is studied every Friday; a two-week unit on Mérimée’s Carmen includes a plot synopsis, reading the lyrics from Bizet’s opera, watching the opera, then watching Beyoncé’s “Carmen, the Hip Hopera” from MTV. The follow-up assignment is to find the story of another love triangle and relate it in French.

Steve notes that 80% of the jobs his students will have probably haven’t been “invented” yet. He believes that through French he is teaching students how to adapt, how to be flexible, and how to work with a variety of people. Francophone culture, not just Paris and the Hexagon, provides many examples.

Steve’s own résumé includes an eight-year stint as a management trainer for Lowe’s during a period of rapid growth. He enjoyed the training, but traveling five days a week with little time off grew tiresome. Hearing a radio ad for teacher training at Antioch-McGregor, he quit his job and took a year to prepare himself for his second career.

Says Steve: “I love my job. It’s fantastic. I can’t imagine doing anything else now.”

Funds supporting the Department of French and Italian

The Added Advantage: French and Italian Department Support Fund (309086)
Provides support for activities and programs for students and faculty of the Department of French and Italian

French Lectures on Literature, Language, and Culture (312143)
Supports lectures on historical and contemporary topics relating to French and Italian with the purpose of enhancing the intellectual life of students, faculty, staff, and the general public

Italian Support Fund (308148)
Provides support for activities and programs for Italian students and faculty

“Make Their Dreams Come True” Scholarship Fund (313186)
Provides funding for students studying abroad to enhance their French or Italian skills and knowledge

Students First, Students Now French Scholarship (312991)
Provides a scholarship(s) to a student(s), sophomore or above, with a minimum grade point average of 2.75 and majoring in French

Transforming Learning Through Technology (312142)
Facilitates faculty and GTA use of the latest in technology to transform the teaching and learning of French and Italian

Your gifts will offset the high costs of study abroad...

A summer in Lecce, Italy, or Quebec, Canada:
Ohio State tuition, plus a $1,350 program fee.

A 15-week semester in Dijon, France:
Ohio State tuition, plus a $2,851 program fee.

Make an undergraduate’s dream come true!

Among the wishes of our undergraduates studying French and/or Italian is one of visiting and studying in France, Italy, or a Francophone country (e.g., Senegal or Quebec) for a summer quarter or for a year. Alumni of foreign language programs know that the overseas experience can change a person for a lifetime.

For that reason, the department would like to make the dream of foreign study more of a reality for as many students as possible. If you’d like to help fund overseas study for undergraduates (or another fund), consider a donation to the “Make Their Dreams Come True” Fund (309086)—or create your own fund to support undergraduate studies in French and Italian as part of the “Students First” campaign. (Visit frit.osu.edu/aboutUs/funds.cfm.)

For your contribution of $75, we will send you a 17-oz. red mug with the Ohio State logo and “Allez les Bucks” and “Forza Bucks.” For a donation of $125, you’ll receive a set of two—one for home, one for the office. (We always welcome larger donations, too!) How better to celebrate the experience and knowledge gained from attending The Ohio State University and the Department of French and Italian!
**Spotlight on Alumni**

**A meaningful job...helping those in need**

Anna Bianco, only recently an Ohio State political science major with a minor in Italian (2007) and a former president of the Italian Club, has grown, along with her Master’s in Public Administration (2009) from the John Glenn School of Public Affairs. After four months of Spanish language training at Mission Emanuel (missionemanuel.org), a nonprofit that runs schools, a clinic, and a water treatment facility in the Dominican Republic, she became the director of its medical clinic. Anna writes that, “It was easier for me to learn Spanish because I had taken Italian classes. My minor in Italian really helped me to complete an essential part of my job here—being able to communicate with people.”

In addition to supervising 10 employees, including two doctors and one dentist, Anna manages a community health program. As part of this program, community health workers are trained in how to assess health problems and how to teach families about health, hygiene, and nutrition. Vaccinations against childhood diseases are an important part of the work of Mission Emanuel, as is physical therapy for children with cerebral palsy and Down’s Syndrome. When relief supplies for earthquake-devastated Haiti began to arrive, a special storage room was created for shipments of supplies from the Dominican Republic to Port au Prince, Haiti. Anna traveled to Haiti to ensure secure arrival of needed water and medicines.

Anna’s plans for the future include two more years at Mission Emanuel where she will continue to manage the clinic. She also plans to learn French: speaking French will help her in work with Haiti and, Anna believes, when applying for jobs with the United Nations. Her work in the clinic has also started her thinking about possibilities in nursing or medical school.

When asked what she considers the best part of her job, Anna replied: “Its hard to choose. Every day brings a new challenge, especially in a community where there are scarce resources and overwhelming need. Anytime we are able to bring a smile to a face that was once weighed down by hopelessness and poverty, that makes my day.”

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**Give a gift**

to support the teaching and learning of French and Italian languages and cultures

Our funds are listed (left) in alphabetical order. Choose the one that interests you. You may clip out and send in a contribution directly to the department at 1775 College Road, Columbus, OH 43210. If you access the funds page on the FRIT web site (frit.osu.edu/aboutUs/funds.cfm), and a page on Ohio State’s I-Give web site for the fund exists, you may make your contribution to that fund through a secure, online connection.

- Please send me the Ohio State/FRIT 17-oz. red coffee mug for a $75 contribution to support FRIT students and learning.
- Please send me the set of two Ohio State/FRIT 17-oz. coffee mugs for a $125 contribution to support FRIT students and learning.

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For more information on funding and naming opportunities, please contact Margo J. Wolanin, Director of Development, (614) 292-9200 or wolanin.2@osu.edu.
We’d like to hear from you...

We’d like to let you know what’s happening with other alumni and with the department, but it doesn’t need to be on paper!

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter—or any interim updates—via e-mail, please indicate so on the form below, and send it in—or e-mail your preference and updates to Clare Balombin at balombin.1@osu.edu. With your consent, we will discontinue sending a paper copy of this newsletter and will let you know when it is uploaded onto our FRIT web site for easy viewing. We will also let you know about upcoming events and nuggets of French and Italian information—no more than once a month.

Name ___________________________________________ ___________________________________________

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Degree ___________________________________________

Year of graduation ___________________________ Daytime phone ___________________________________________

E-mail ___________________________________________

What’s new? (professionally and personally): ___________________________________________

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Please update me electronically about FRIT department news!