MSU Hosts Two Linguistics Conferences

Michigan State University hosted two undergraduate linguistics conferences in spring semester 2011 to widespread acclaim. On April 22nd, 2011, the second annual Michigan State Undergraduate Linguistics Conference (MSULC) was held, followed on April 23rd by the first annual Great Lakes Expo for Experimental and Formal Undergraduate Linguistics (GLEEFUL). Both conferences were successfully organized by undergraduate linguistics students. Adam Litter was responsible for MSULC, while GLEEFUL was organized by Chris Heffner. Both students are members of the "q Undergraduate Association for Linguistics at Michigan State" (qUALMS), MSU’s first undergraduate linguistics society. Cristina Schmitt is the faculty adviser for the student organization.

MSU Linguistics undergraduate students presented their research at MSULC through poster and paper presentations to fellow Spartans and the wider community, highlighting the excellence in MSU’s Linguistics program. Three award-winning presentations at MSULC included “Variability in the input and acquisition of second-person and plural morphology in two dialects of Spanish” by Cari Ross, Anaite Castañeda, Dan Chabala, Laura Portko, and Shaina Selbig; “Complex quantifiers containing ordinal numbers” by Karl DeVries; and “Distal effects of pitch and timing of syllables on word segmentation” by Krista Bur and Prashanth Rajarajan.

GLEEFUL was an international undergraduate linguistics conference. Of 33 abstracts submitted, 15 were accepted. Participants came from all over the USA and Canada. The invited speaker was Thomas Roeper from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Participants reported being impressed with the professionalism of attendees and the devotion of MSU to undergraduate research, with many remarking that such a conference would be impossible at their home institutions. Both conferences had support from the Undergraduate Research Office of the Provost, the Honors College, the College of Arts and Letters, the Cognitive Science Program, and the Department of Linguistics and Languages.

Plans are already underway for MSULC and GLEEFUL for next year and years to come!

By Cristina Schmitt

Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends of Linguistics and Languages at MSU,

Just a few short months ago I penned my first “Letter from the Chair” for the fall 2010 newsletter, and here I am again at the end of my first academic year as chair of Ling/Lang to introduce our spring 2011 newsletter. Despite the rather cool and very rainy spring that we had, the campus has now blossomed into a beautiful garden of blooming trees and flowers, lush green grass, and refreshing Red Cedar waters. Most of the students have gone home or abroad for the summer, and we now have the energy and vibrancy brought by new MSU students during AOP. Work on the new Wells Hall addition is progressing at phenomenal speed, (see back page photos) and we are scheduled to move into the new offices a year from now. Similarly, the new art museum is beginning to take shape, and the ever-present MSU smokestack is scheduled to come down in the next few weeks (see photo on page 4). However, the most astounding development on campus is probably the new food court in Brody Hall, which boasts the finest food choices on campus, if not in all of East Lansing. If you are on campus during the academic year, you really need to make a point of stopping by Brody to marvel at the architecture and culinary offerings.

This has been a remarkable year for the department, and I encourage you to (continued on page 2)
Letter from the Chair, continued

read in this newsletter about the numerous awards garnered by the many outstanding students in our department, as well as the achievements of the hardworking faculty. It is truly a pleasure and an honor to be able to work with such wonderful people. I would especially like to draw your attention to the lead article about the spring Linguistics Conferences organized by undergraduate students and advised by Professors Cristina Schmitt and Alan Munn. Their continuing work with undergraduate students conducting research in linguistics underscores a commitment to the highest ideals of scholarship and involvement with students.

Our enrollments in all of our courses are strong; the new majors in Chinese, Japanese and Arabic are all reflective of the proud reputation that our department has in language instruction.

The articles in this issue on the Korean Program, the Israeli Film Series, and the Arabic Flagship Program profile three of the many activities that provide our students with rich opportunities outside the classroom to expand their horizons. The article on World Languages Day demonstrates the key role that Ling/Lang plays each year in the success of that important outreach event. Our involvement with the Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant Program and the close affiliation we have with the Center for Language Teaching Advancement at MSU not only enables us to offer a wide range of Less Commonly Taught Languages to the MSU community, it also demonstrates our expertise in offering quality language instruction and training that has given us an important reputation among funding agencies.

Take a look at Spartan Sagas at www.spartansagas.msu.edu and search for the story of Mark Bauer (Class of 1973). He shares a compelling story on how taking German language at MSU opened opportunities years later.

As always, I hope that those who read this newsletter will find something of interest. We urge friends and alumni of the Department to stay in touch through the web page www.linglang.msu.edu or by emailing me with news and comments at Lovik@msu.edu. Have a pleasant summer and Go Spartans!

By Dr. Tom Lovik

Students Honored With University, College and Department Awards

The College of Arts and Letters held their annual Award Convocation and Reception on May 5, 2011 where several Linguistics and Languages students were recognized.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AWARD
Evamarie Cropsey, Linguistics major
Thao Dinh, Japanese major and Linguistics minor

ALUMNI AWARD FOR UNDERGRADUATE EXCELLENCE
Thao Dinh, Japanese major and Linguistics minor

ALUMNI ENDOWED STUDENT BOOK SCHOLARSHIP
Ellen Meeuwsen, German major

VARG-SULLIVAN ENDOWED GRADUATE AWARD IN ARTS AND LETTERS
Luke Plonsky, Ph.D. candidate, Second Language Studies

MARIAN LEE AYLESWORTH AWARD IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
Bailey Anne Doolittle, Linguistics major
Patrick Kindig, German major

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP
Elizabeth Rowley, German major
Allison Szatkiewicz, Arabic major

JOHN W. EADIE SCHOLARSHIP IN ARTS AND LETTERS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDY
Marissa Perry, German major

OUTSTANDING TEACHING ASSISTANT IN LINGUISTICS, GERMANIC, SLAVIC, ASIAN AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES
Hanna O’Neill, MA candidate in German Studies
Andrew Trotter, Ph.D. candidate in Linguistics

WILKINS/RODMAN GRADUATE AWARD IN LINGUISTICS
James Daniel Hasty, Ph. D. Candidate in Linguistics

OUTSTANDING STUDENT IN GLOBAL STUDIES IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Jeanette Bay, Jenna Hummell, Alya Lienhart

Some of the student Awardees with Department Chair, Dr. Tom Lovik (center): Thao Dinh, Karl DeVries, Hanna O’Neill, Matthew Korovesis
Faculty Notes

Barbara Abbott (Professor Emerita, Linguistics) is enjoying retired life in Leelanau County, especially after completing her book Reference (Oxford UP, March 2010). She is continuing work on topics in semantics and pragmatics, and presented a paper (with Laurence R. Horn) titled "Indefiniteness and Nonfamiliarity", at the LSA in Pittsburgh last January.

Debra Friedman (Assistant Professor, Second Language Studies) published the article "Becoming national: Classroom language socialization and political identities" in the Annual Review of Applied Linguistics 30, 193-201.

Caroline Helen Fuhst (Visiting Lecturer, Ojibwe), published The Introduction to the Sound Based Method of Understanding Anishinaabemowin. The book is the first of its kind in Anishinaabemowin, the native language of the people of this land, commonly referred to as the Ojibwe language. It offers a complete morphology of the language, listing the definitions of all of the smallest morphemes.

Aline Godfroid (Assistant Professor, Second Language Studies) joined the the department as a new faculty member in January 2011 and teaches graduate level Language, Learning and Teaching (LLT) courses. She received her MA in English and German Linguistics and Literature as well as her PhD in Linguistics from the University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Dr. Godfroid’s research focuses on cognitive processes in Second Language Acquisition, notably the role of attention and awareness in second language learning and the extent to which these two mechanisms always go hand in hand. Her research interests are: Attention, awareness and the “Noticing Hypothesis”, implicit and explicit learning and memory, incidental vocabulary acquisition while reading and eye tracking as a tool to measure online second language processing.

Senta Goertler (Assistant Professor, German and Second Language Studies) gave the keynote address at the annual conference on Technology & Second Language Learning at Iowa State University in September. The title of her presentation was “For a smoother blend: Lessons learned from blended instruction.”

Deborah Hardison (Assistant Professor, Second Language Studies) co-authored an article with M. Motohashi Saigo titled “Development of perception of second language geminates: Role of duration, sonority, and segmentation strategy” in Applied Psycholinguistics 31, 81-99.

Yen-Hwei Lin (Professor, Linguistics) gave the keynote address “Unexpected Morphophonological Outputs” at the Joint Conference of the 18th Annual Meeting of the International Association of Chinese Linguistics and the 22nd North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics at Harvard U. in May 2011.

(continued on page 4)

Program & Course Highlights

Arabic Flagship Program: The Arabic Flagship program continues to grow, with approximately 50 students currently enrolled. Funded since Fall 2007 with a National Security Education Program (NSEP) grant, Flagship students possess one common goal: to be able to master, not just learn, Arabic, and to use Arabic in their future professions.

Students on-campus this year visited the Arab American Museum in Dearborn, Michigan and were able to practice their Arabic at local Arabic restaurants. In November, the playwright, Ibrahim Miari, visited campus to perform his one-man show, In-Between, which explores the cultural tensions between Arabs and Jews, Palestinians, and Israelis. Student had the pleasure of joining him for breakfast to discuss his play and his personal experience growing up between both of these worlds. In April, Egyptian exchange students who had participated in the youth revolution visited campus and spoke with Flagship student about their experience.

Japanese Program: In the 2010-11 academic year, JPN369 (Japanese Literary and Cultural Studies I) and JPN469 (Japanese Literary and Cultural Studies II) were offered for the first time as part of the revised curriculum for the newly launched Japanese BA program.

In JPN 469 students successfully completed an ambitious Genji project—to read The Tale of Genji in its entirety (54 chapters, 1,120 pages) and to create a Genji website to feature their own chapter summaries for a broader audience (https://www.msu.edu/~ryuc/). In addition to this group course project, each member produced for the final project an in-depth literary analysis of the novel with a particular thematic focus.

Korean Program: The Korean Program received a renewal of the grant from the Korean Foundation for the academic year 2011-12. The grant will allow the Korean Program to once again offer all four years of Korean classes for the upcoming academic year.
Language and Culture Enrichment Programs in Detroit

“Shukran, Xie xie, Danke, Gracias, Merci, Jereof,” said participating students at John R. King Academic and Performing Arts Academy (JRK) in Detroit at the end of the enrichment program in spring 2011. Creating Inclusive Excellence funding from the MSU Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives allowed Department of Linguistics and Languages undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty and staff members, to visit JRK throughout the academic year and to teach JRK students about different cultures and languages. The initiative was offered through the Community Language School (CLS), part of the Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA).

The after-school enrichment program met once a week for 2 hours at JRK and introduced students to different cultures. The program consisted of four 4-week rotations, 2 per semester, in German and Arabic (Fall 2010) and Chinese and Spanish (Spring 2011). The CLS was also able to include sessions on Luxembourghish and Wolof.

The project provided service-learning opportunities for 40 MSU students and involved 86 JRK students.

Each rotation ended with a visit to a local market place – staged in the classroom – where students got to order and taste an authentic snack. The lessons raised students’ cultural awareness and appreciation of other cultures while introducing functional language concepts. “It was an excellent experience for me, and I hope for the kids,” said Houssem Ben Lazreg, a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant from Tunisia.

Principal Hughes-Norde was able to secure a Skillman Good Schools Grant that will allow 32 of the participating students to come to MSU in the summer for a residential language camp. “We are very grateful for the experience and look forward to continuing our collaboration with MSU!”

More information about CeLTA’s upcoming programs and events can be found on our website at http://celta.msu.edu

By Angelika Kraemer

Photo: Ann Desiderio and Mohammed AlSadah teaching some JRK students about Dubai.

Faculty Notes, continued

Patrick McConeghy (Professor, German) published “Angels at the Gate:Guarding Utopia in Daniel Kehlmann’s Mahlers Zeit” in Gegenwartsliteratur 9 (2010), 36-58.

Charlene Polio (Associate Professor, Second Language Studies) was the co-editor with Alison Mackey of Multiple Perspectives on Interaction: Second Language Research in Honor of Susan M. Gass. (Routledge, 2009). Susan Gass is a University Distinguished Professor in the department.


Catherine Ryu (Associate Professor, Japanese Literature and Culture) delivered a paper, “The Silk Road Imaginaire and The Tale of Genji: A Poetic Flight through the Figure of a ‘Maboroshi’,” at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Scholars, Honolulu, Hawaii this spring. Throughout the spring semester, she also participated in various faculty development programs, including the CAL Tier-II Working Group, the CAL Blended Learning Community, and STAF (Strategies & Tools across Fields: Teaching with Writing). Professor Ryu will integrate all of her newly acquired experience and knowledge from these programs into her teaching both to enhance student learning and to assess learning outcomes in her courses (JPN369 & JPN469).

In Memoriam

Frank L. Ingram (Professor Emeritus, Russian) of Coronado, CA died January 2, 2011. He was a faculty member at MSU from 1968 until he retired in 1996. In addition to teaching Russian language and literature classes, Dr. Ingram taught a unique course titled “Reading Russian Without a Dictionary,” based on a manual he researched and published.

The iconic MSU smokestack is being dismantled this summer. The white MSC bricks will be saved.
Department Outreach

**FLTAs: Community Connections**

This year, in addition to their outstanding teaching on campus, the nine Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) hosted by the department were also very active in campus and community activities. The FLTAs all presented their language and culture at World Languages Day on April 16, 2011 (see article below). In addition, the FLTAs greatly enjoyed speaking at various local schools, libraries, youth centers, and book clubs in order to share their culture and language while also learning more about U.S. culture. Finally, several of the FLTAs had the opportunity to teach some classes with the Community Language School on campus and in the Detroit area (see article on page 4). All of this community involvement greatly enhanced the experience the FLTAs had while at MSU and hopefully led to more cross-cultural and language awareness in the greater community.

**World Languages Day 2011**

MSU hosted its Seventh Annual World Languages Day on Saturday, April 16, 2011. This event brought 750 participants, presenters, and volunteers to campus for a day-long conference on world cultures and languages, globalization, the importance of learning foreign languages, and the positive impact knowledge of other languages can have on future career paths. High school students, parents, and teachers from across the state came to learn more about MSU and the myriad international opportunities it offers. Participants chose from 90 sessions taught by MSU faculty, graduate students, and community members, with a significant contribution of presenters from the Linguistics and Languages Department.

“The range of organizations represented at World Languages Day as well as the enthusiasm of student participants, some of whom had to get up at 6:00 a.m. on a Saturday, were awe-inspiring. The keynote speaker – Sam Singh, former mayor of East Lansing – gave a riveting and energizing presentation on his recent travels around the world.” Tom Lovik, Chair, Linguistics & Languages

**Israeli Film Festival**

MSU’s Sixth Annual Israeli Film Festival was presented from March 20-21, 2011 and showcased some of the various faces of Israeli society, and some of Israel’s most outstanding films. Films shown included two documentaries and two award winning feature films. True to the diversity of Israeli society, the films included multiple languages. The goals of the festival were to spotlight Israel’s thriving film industry, and teach about Israeli society and culture to MSU and the greater community.

The 2011 Israeli Film Festival, coordinated by Ellen Rothfeld, was hosted by the MSU Jewish Studies Program, with support from the Department of Linguistics and Languages and numerous other MSU units and off-campus organizations.

**35th Annual “Women in German” Conference**

Approximately 80 scholars and graduate students from North America and Europe attended the 35th gathering of “Women in German” for four days in Oct. 2010. Organized by Professor Liz Mittman and held at the Yarrow Golf & Conference Resort in Augusta, MI., the conference offered a stimulating range of panel discussions, scholarly presentations, and informal sharing sessions. A highlight of the conference was the acclaimed German filmmaker Ulrike Ottinger, who brought several of her films and who engaged the participants during the conference in discussions about her work. Professor David Barclay, Executive Director of the German Studies Association, and Helene Zimmer-Loew, Executive Director of the American Association of Teachers of German, also attended the conference.

Generous funding support was provided by the Department of Linguistics & Languages, the German Academic Exchange Service, and the College of Arts & Letters as well as other MSU centers.

*Photo by Mason Robinson*

**MSU to Offer Teacher Certification in Arabic Language**

Michigan State University will help increase the number of teachers certified to teach Arabic language in K-12 public schools by offering new academic programs for both current and prospective teachers starting Fall 2011.

Demand for teaching Arabic is particularly great in Michigan, home to one of the largest populations of Arab Americans in the country. However, few teachers are actually certified in the subject area because state-approved preparation programs have been limited.

About 30 teachers attended an information session held in April at West River Side Academy in Dearborn. The session was hosted by Wafa Hassan, Arabic instructor and Outreach Coordinator for the Arabic Flagship along with Professor Jeff Bale, College of Education.

“Many expressed their interest and hope to actually transfer from their universities to MSU just to continue their degrees in the Arabic Teaching Major.” said Dr. Hassan.

MSU offers teacher certification in other languages taught in the department as well. These include Chinese, German, Japanese, and Russian. For more information go to: [http://education.msu.edu/certification/](http://education.msu.edu/certification/)

*Photo by Mason Robinson*
Korean Class Celebrates with Cultural Experience

Since 2008, the Korean Program (KP) has hosted an end-of-semester presentation event called "chekguri (책가리)" to celebrate learning Korean. The literal meaning of chekguri is "celebrating text completions". Traditionally parents of students brought rice cake with filling to school to celebrate their children’s learning and to thank their children’s teachers. The filling represents the knowledge students gained by leaning a subject. College students in Korea usually celebrate chekguri by going to restaurants with their classmates and professors at the end of the semester.

By adding a modern and geographical touch to the tradition of chekguri that began as early as the Koryeo dynasty (918–1392), students in the KP presented what they have learned in classes. First-year Korean students picked a Korean letter and told a story about a key word that began with the letter that related to his or her own life. A group of second-year students recorded a play entitled "A Concubine in the Mirror" from a Korean folklore story that they read in class. They wrote the script for the play as a collaborative work using Wiki. Amulya Emmandi from third-year Korean gave a presentation about how to do business in Korea. Fourth-year Korean students studied Korean dynasties and created a poster that highlighted each dynasty.

Additionally, in-class language partners who generously donated their time and energy for students were recognized during the event.

Event attendees included KP students, their friends, former KP students, in-class language partners, faculty members from the Linguistics and Languages Department and Dr. Kang from the Council on Korean Studies (CKS) at MSU. The Asian Studies Center and the CKS provided delicious Korean food catered from a local restaurant.

By Ok-Sook Park

Students introduce the play entitled “A Concubine in the Mirror". (From left to right: James Lee, Ying Zhu, Kyara Marchand, Florence Lee, Devon Davidski and Erin Mcaul)

Student Highlights

Fatima Foflonker (Arabic major) was awarded a Boren Scholarship, funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP). She used this scholarship toward her studies in Egypt and Morocco as part of the Flagship Program this current academic year.

Daniel Hasty (PhD Linguistics) won the prize for Best Student Paper at NWAV 39 last year. NWAV is the foremost North American conference in language variation and change. The prize is voted on by the conference attendees. His paper will be published in this year’s Penn Working Papers in Linguistics: Selected Papers from NWAV 39. He’s also been invited to contribute a chapter to a forthcoming book, edited by Raffaella Zanuttini, on the syntax of non-standard dialects.

Ashley Hesson (PhD Linguistics) is the first student in the MD/PhD program to be pursuing a PhD in Linguistics, and one of a very few students in the MD/PhD program who are not pursuing a degree in the biological sciences. Ashley comes from Georgetown University with degrees in Linguistics and Biochemistry. For her PhD she will research linguistic variation in doctor-patient communication.

Reid Holzbauer (Arabic major) was awarded an Undergraduate FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies) scholarship administered by the MSU Asian Studies Center. Reid will use the scholarship to support study in Jordan this summer.

Mina Kim (Japanese major) is one of the six Gilman Scholarship awardees at Michigan State University. Mina will be using the scholarship to participate in the Summer Intensive Language Program at JCMU (Japan Center for Michigan Universities).

Marissa Perry (German major) is the recipient of the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst) Alumni Association’s Academic Excellence Award. Marissa is studying at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, Germany with a DAAD Undergraduate Scholarship. The current award consists of participation in the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) Academy, which takes place in Berlin in late July.

Kevin Richardson (Japanese major) was awarded an Undergraduate FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies) scholarship administered by the MSU Asian Studies Center. Supported by this award, Kevin will participate in the MSU-University of Ryukyus Exchange Program during the 2011-12 academic year in Okinawa, Japan.

Matthew Sherman (MA, German) has been awarded a 2011-2012 Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship for Austria, where he will teach English to high school students at two separate schools in Innsbruck. Matt has been a German teaching assistant at MSU the past two years.

Nada Zohdy (Arabic major) was awarded a Boren Scholarship, funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP). She used this scholarship toward her studies in Egypt and Morocco as part of the Flagship Program this current academic year. Nada is also a 2009 recipient of a Truman Scholarship.
Recent Graduates

Jennifer Chaldekas graduated in May 2011 with a degree in German. She has been awarded a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship to Germany for the year 2011-2012.

Amanda Dalaba graduated in May 2011 with degrees in German and Linguistics. She has been awarded a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship to Austria for the year 2011-2012.

Karl DeVries graduated in December 2010 with majors in Linguistics and Philosophy. He will pursue his PhD in Linguistics at the University of California Santa Cruz.

Thao Dinh graduated in May 2011 with degrees in Japanese and Communicative Science and Disorders. She is the recipient of the David M. Knox Fellowship for her graduate studies at Purdue University, where she will be enrolled in the program in Speech-Language Pathology in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences. This summer she will spend one month volunteering in Vietnam with the Global Foundation for Children with Hearing Loss.

Chelsea Gagnon graduated in May 2011 with a degree in Japanese. She was accepted into several graduate programs, including Columbia University, New York University, CUNY, and Boston College. She has decided to move to Indiana this summer and will apply to Indiana University (Bloomington) in the fall.

Brad Griffin graduated in May 2011 with a degree in Japanese. He will continue to study Japanese and Korean independently while working with his band to put out its first album and begin touring. Brad also plans to teach English in Korea and Japan.

Julia Kartush graduated in May 2010 with a degree in Linguistics and a specialization in Cognitive Science. She is currently working for the Linguistic Data Consortium at the University of Pennsylvania, where she is a project manager. She is attached to the GALE project, sponsored by DARPA (the federal Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency). The goal of the GALE project is to enable the military to rapidly collate and interpret large volumes of information in local languages of interest, and deliver them to monolingual English personnel. Julia will start a PhD program here at MSU in Linguistics this fall.

Matthew Korovesis graduated in May 2010 with a major in Russian and degree in Political Science. Matt is currently applying to the AmeriCorps and seeking employment to capitalize on his degrees in Journalism and Russian.

Jason Lamport graduated in May 2011 with degrees in Japanese and Finance. He will begin work for PNC Financial Services this summer in the real estate department in Pittsburgh, PA. In the future he hopes to leverage his Japanese major for employment in the Japanese financial market.

Craig Maser graduated in May 2011 with degrees in Japanese and Applied Engineering Sciences. He will be working for SRG Global as a Project Manager in Warren, MI. He will also start traveling to the firm’s Japan offices in the next 18-24 months.

Thomas Morales graduated in May 2011 with a degree in Japanese. He will begin an MA program in Japanese at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he will be a teaching assistant. His professional goal is to become a translator, and he is planning to translate a Japanese book by one of his favorite authors, Nasu Kinoko, over the summer.

Luke Plonsky is graduating Summer 2011 with a PhD in Second Language Studies. In the fall he will begin a new position as an assistant professor of applied linguistics at Northern Arizona University.

John Rieman-Klingler graduated in May 2009 with a major in German and a degree in History. He has been awarded a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Turkey for the academic year 2011-2012. After graduation from MSU, John spent a year and a half teaching English in Korea.

World Events Impact Students Abroad

MSU students studying in both Egypt and Japan witnessed significant global events in spring 2011. US State Department travel warnings for both countries resulted in the suspension of study abroad programs in Egypt and Japan.

Egypt

Five Arabic Flagship students were studying for the year at the University of Alexandria in Egypt when the youth revolution broke out, prompting a swift evacuation of the students back to the U.S. A quick response by officials in Washington, and coordinated with the Arabic Flagship personnel at MSU, enabled all students to finish their year overseas in a safe and academically and culturally stimulating environment. In spite of the chaos and frustration of being uprooted from the city and country they had just learned to call home, all of the students were able to see the silver lining. Not only did they get to live history, but they were able to continue their academic program in Ifrane, Morocco, less than a month after the evacuation from Egypt. Lead teachers from the program in Alexandria continued to teach the students at their new site, where students quickly adapted to a new dialect of Arabic and a very different Arab culture.

The summer program for Flagship students will be at the Arab American Language Institute in Morocco (AALIM) located in Meknes.

Japan

Students studying at the Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU) ended their program a month early due to the uncertainty, following a major earthquake and tsunami and the damage to the nuclear reactors in Fukushima. JCMU, located in Hikone City in central Japan, is over 500 miles from the earthquake’s epicenter and incurred no damage from the earthquake nor the tsunami.

According to Kate Simon, Program Coordinator for JCMU, the JCMU students and staff are still processing the experience. Students felt deeply connected to the program and it was challenging to have to leave early. “We hope this experience deepens their connection to Japan and their commitment to return to visit, teach or continue their studies in the future.”

The summer program at JCMU is continuing as planned. The JCMU staff will monitor and evaluate conditions in Japan on a regular basis throughout the summer.

The MSU Japan Club and other partner MSU student organizations raised over $14,000 for disaster relief in Japan.
Stay in Touch!
Let us know what you’ve been up to. Send your news to The Ling Lang Letter, Department of LGSAAL, MSU, A-614 Wells Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824 or lovik@msu.edu

Wells Hall Addition Continues

Completion of the Wells Hall addition is slated for spring 2012. For more information go to www.construction.msu.edu and select Wells Hall Addition Project.