The Ling Lang Letter
Department of Linguistics & Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages

THE 19TH ANNUAL MICHIGAN JAPANESE QUIZ BOWL

On March 3, 2012, the Japanese Program hosted the 19th Annual Michigan Japanese Quiz Bowl (MJQB), together with the Japanese Teachers Association of Michigan, the Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU), MSU's Asian Studies Center, and the Office of Gifted and Talented Education. This event, held at Wells Hall, drew the students from middle and high schools in Michigan (52 teams from 15 schools), bringing together over 400 participants, including parents, teachers, and others.

For this year’s MJQB, Dr. Mutsuko Endo Hudson and the Japanese instructors (Mariko Kawaguchi, Nao Nakano, Tomoko Okuno), as well as several Japanese faculty members from other Michigan colleges, served as judges. MSU and non-MSU students volunteered as scorekeepers, timekeepers, and score runners.

In addition to enjoying the competition itself, participants visited information booths set up by various college programs and vendors. At the conclusion of the event, Mr. Kuninori Matsuda, Consul General of Japan in Detroit, presided over the awards ceremony.

According to Dr. Endo Hudson, “K-12 students prepare hard to exhibit their skills and knowledge at MJQB. When these students see college faculty and college-student volunteers, they become further motivated to study Japanese in college. In fact, many former contestants return to the MJQB as volunteers, and they themselves become a role model to younger students.”

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends of Linguistics and Languages at MSU,

This has been an extraordinary academic year for the Department, culminating with our move into the new Wells Hall addition on Monday June 4. The new Wells Hall addition will be the highlight of the fall 2012 newsletter, but let me simply say that the new building is beautiful, the move went flawlessly, and everybody is quickly making it their new home.

I am pleased to report that we had an excellent group of students complete their degrees in our 6 departmental majors – Arabic, Chinese, German, Japanese, Linguistics and Russian – this year. Chris Heffner – Linguistics – was selected as the Outstanding Graduating Senior in the entire College of Arts & Letters. I am proud to say that majors from our programs are finding rewarding jobs, attending graduate school and successfully moving on with their lives. This newsletter highlights...
STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

REID HOLZBAUER

Although he had not studied the language previously, Reid Holzbauer decided to meet his James Madison language requirement with Arabic. A Grayling, Michigan native, Reid had an interest in Middle Eastern politics. The honors student found he loved learning Arabic, and by his sophomore year, was admitted to the Flagship Program and declared Arabic as his second degree.

Reid first studied abroad in the summer of 2010 through the Flagship program in Alexandria, Egypt. He says at the time he couldn’t speak Arabic that well and the experience really increased his proficiency. The following summer he planned to study in Syria, but the political situation there prompted him to change to Jordan. He credits this time studying advanced Arabic for giving him the skills he needed to qualify for the 2012-13 Flagship program back in Alexandria, Egypt.

Professor Endo Hudson says of Reid, “He is a great success in the Flagship Program. Reid is proactive in his language learning and is a sophisticated writer and thinker.”

In both programs he lived with native Arabic speakers which he feels was also critical to his language acquisition.

As a recipient of the prestigious Boren Undergraduate Scholarship, Reid will be serving the federal government for at least one year after graduation. Longer term, he is considering NGO work and pursuing a PhD in International Relations.

JADE PIECHOTA

After studying Japanese at Livonia Stevenson High School where she was active in their Japan Club and the Michigan Japanese Quiz Bowl (MJQB), Jade Piechota wanted to major in Japanese in college. While visiting MSU she met with a Japanese instructor and decided to pursue her studies here.

Professor Endo Hudson says of Jade, “She is bright, highly motivated and hardworking.”

An honors student, she graduated in May 2012. Jade appreciates that her major combined both Japanese language and culture. She also likes how the faculty brought “real world” examples into the classroom. “The classes were more than just reading from a textbook” she says.

The highlight of her educational experience was the academic year she spent at the Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU) where she studied upper-level Japanese. Jade’s strong language skills made her a great resource to other JCMU students as she often helped them navigate daily life in Japan.

Part of her study abroad program involved a homestay for six weeks in a “very traditional” Japanese home with a family that included three young children. She also completed an internship at the Hikone City Hall where she served as a translator and got a taste of Japanese work life.

Jade was at JCMU when the earthquake and tsunami struck in March 2011. She says she knew immediately that she should return home. “I felt it was wrong to stay and use up resources when the country was in crisis.”

Jade is currently looking for work that would allow her to use her Japanese language skills. She is also considering returning to Japan to teach English.

In both programs he lived with native Arabic speakers which he feels was also critical to his language acquisition.

Anne Baker says of Reid, “He is a great success in the Flagship Program. Reid is proactive in his language learning and is a sophisticated writer and thinker.”

As a recipient of the prestigious Boren Undergraduate Scholarship, Reid will be serving the federal government for at least one year after graduation. Longer term, he is considering NGO work and pursuing a PhD in International Relations.

Reid Holzbauer at the pyramids in Cairo, Egypt
On April 25, 2012, the German Honor Society (LEFT) and the Russian Honor Society (RIGHT) met together to induct new members into their respective national chapters. Professors David Kim and Jason Merrill led each ceremony to recognize students for their academic excellence and lifelong commitment to German- or Russian-speaking cultures.

STUDENTS HONORED WITH AWARDS

The College of Arts and Letters held its annual Awards Convocation and Reception on May 3, 2012 where several Linguistics and Languages students were recognized.

ALUMNI AWARD FOR UNDERGRADUATE EXCELLENCE
Christopher Heffner, Linguistics major and Cognitive Science Specialization

ALUMNI AWARD FOR UNDERGRADUATE EXCELLENCE-Certificate of Merit
Kevin Richardson, Japanese major

OUTSTANDING TEACHING ASSISTANT IN LINGUISTICS, GERMANIC, SLAVIC, ASIAN AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES
Theresa Schenker, Ph.D. candidate, German Studies

ALUMNI ENDOWED STUDENT BOOK SCHOLARSHIP
Clara Balliet, Chinese major
Kristin McCool, Chinese major

COLLEGE OUTSTANDING SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Christopher Heffner, Linguistics major and Cognitive Science Specialization

LOUIS AND RANDY SOMERS ENDOWMENT FUND FOR THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE STUDIES IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Kali Bybel, Ph.D. candidate, Linguistics

OUTSTANDING GRADUATING SENIOR IN LINGUISTICS, GERMANIC, SLAVIC, ASIAN AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES
Christopher Heffner, Linguistics major and Cognitive Science Specialization
Marissa Perry, German major

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

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some of the many faculty and student accomplishments of the past year, and I hope that everybody enjoys reading about our department.

Please check out our new departmental web page (www.linglang.msu.edu).

UURAF AWARDEES

The following students were award winners at the 2012 University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF):

Bailey Doolittle (Linguistics major) “Predicate Nominals in Chaucer: A Study in Diachronic Syntax”

Christopher Heffner (Linguistics major) “Practice Makes Opaque: Learning Opaque Phonological Processes”

Adam Liter and Christopher Heffner (both Linguistics majors) “Lions, Zebras, and Plurals, Oh My!”
Laura Young, president of the MSU Russian Club and graduating Environmental Studies and Russian senior, started her involvement with the club her freshman year with a group of only four active students. During her time at MSU, she helped build the group into the active club that it is today.

“The Russian Club really took off once the Fulbright Russian FLTAs (Foreign Language Teaching Assistants) became involved with the club advising,” stated Jason Merrill, Associate Professor of Russian. This year’s FLTA adviser was Marina Lychaeva, who along with the club’s main adviser, Assistant Professor, Zarema Kumakhova, provided the support needed for the success of the club.

A few of the Russian Club’s many activities this year include a weekly Russian speaking practice with Marina, food parties where club members learn to cook Russian food and play Russian games, attending the Swan Lake ballet performance and a trip to the Russian restaurant, Allegro, in Bloomfield Hills.

The club’s “Maslenitsa” party - a religious holiday that celebrates spring’s arrival - was held in February and was featured in the State News.

Active networking with other student groups has also been a focus for the group.

The 2012-13 President and Executive Board is already established and Laura foresees even more growth next year. For more information about the Russian club and their activities go to: msurc@weebly.com

GERMAN PROGRAM BRINGS SPEAKERS TO MSU

During the spring semester, the German program cosponsored a Digital Gaming Talk Series. First, Julie Sykes (University of New Mexico) presented at the Second Language Studies Symposium on the connections between second language acquisition theory and gaming. The German program, with funding from the College of Arts and Letters, Center for Language Teaching Advancement, and the English Language Center, also invited Jonathon Reinhardt (University of Arizona) to lead a workshop and give a talk on gaming focusing on German. Both speakers are leaders in the field of digital gaming in foreign language education. Their forth-coming coauthored book introduces a game-based language learning theory.

Professor Todd Presner (UCLA), a leading scholar in the field of digital humanities, was invited to campus in April to discuss some of the innovative genres and pedagogies using his experience with the “HyperCities” platform as a case study. He employed the tools and technologies of digital cultural mapping and critical curation to show how the Digital Humanities enable new research questions and modalities of interaction, collaboration, and design thinking. Prof. Presner will be affiliated with MSU for the next three years as a guest collaborator.
“SCHERZ, SATIRE, IRONIE, UND TIEFERE BEDEUTUNG”

German Professor Pat Paulsell chose “Deutsche Komödie der Romantik”, or German Comedy of the Romantic Period, as the theme for German 435 for Spring Semester. The course focused on two works: Ludwig Tieck’s Der Gestiefelte Kater and Georg Büchner’s Leonce und Lena. While the class studied the social and political background of these plays, Professor Paulsell maintains that students can appreciate theatrical works more by participating in a production themselves.

Students volunteered to participate in the writing of skits, performing musical pieces and being a part of costume and prop crews, as well as the production of the program and advertising for the show. All skits for the German 435 Lustspiel tied into the theme of German Comedy of the Romantic Period. In the end, the students successfully produced a 45-minute play for public performance.

ONE WORLD, ONE DAY PROJECT

The Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA) coordinated the One World, One Day project which focused on increasing literacy and cultural awareness among children in the Lansing area and Detroit. Held at libraries, the event shared the book “One World, One Day” by Barbara Kerley with children and their families. The book tells the story of the lives of children around the world, all in the course of a single day, showing that children across the globe have much in common (i.e. eating breakfast, going to school, doing chores). A DVD of international MSU students and scholars reading translations of the book in their own languages was also shared. Fourteen department students representing different cultures joined the events and shared information about their home countries. This project was funded by a Phi Kappa Phi Literacy Grant and supported by National Geographic and the College of Arts and Letters.

ARABIC TEACHERS TRAINED

Dr. Wafa Hassan, the Flagship Program Director of Outreach and K-12 Initiatives, and her team completed the development of The Flagship new instructional materials for teaching Arabic to secondary students. They will be conducting training workshops for K-12 teachers and coordinators of Arabic programs in the US schools. The workshop covers all language skills and contains individual and group engaging instructional materials using best practices in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. To date trainees have expressed particular enthusiasm for the inclusion of authentic materials and performance-based language activities at all levels.

7TH ANNUAL ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL

The MSU Jewish Studies Program once again hosted the Israeli Film Festival with support from the Department of Linguistics and Languages and numerous other MSU units and off-campus organizations.

The selected films showcased the various faces of Israeli society, and some of Israel’s most outstanding films. They included World-renowned Israeli Filmmaker Prof. Yael Katzir presentation of her new film Violins in Wartime.

The Undergraduate Association for Linguistics at Michigan State (qUALMS) sponsored the international linguistics conference, GLEEFUL, in April 2012. Pictured are presenters at the conference and keynote speaker, David Pesetsky from MIT (back row, second from right).
FACULTY NOTES

Mutsuko Endo Hudson (Professor of Linguistics and Japanese) published “Student honorifics usage in conversations with professors”, Journal of Pragmatics 43, 3689-3706. She also gave presentations last year in Manchester, England, San Francisco, Canada and Lansing, MI.


Dr. Hardison was also appointed to the Editorial Board of the journal Language Learning & Technology.

Angelika Kraemer (Community Language School, CeLTA) received the Best Fully Online Course Award of Excellence in the 2012 MSU-AT&T Faculty-Staff Award Competition in Instructional Technology for her course AL 491: “UN-Happily Ever After: The Real Household Tales of Europe”.

She is also serving as President of the AATG-MI (American Association of Teachers of German, Michigan) for 2012-14, as Vice President for the Michigan World Language Association, and as Senior International Vice President Elect of The International Honor Society Phi Beta Delta.


Malik Balla was hired by the Department of Linguistics and Languages in 1988 to initiate a program in Arabic Language. For 14 years, Professor Balla single-handedly taught all levels of the language. Following the transition to semesters in 1992 enrollments in Arabic classes at MSU continued to grow, even exceeding the national average. After Sept. 11, 2001, interest in Arabic experienced profound growth nationally and locally, leading to the hiring of an additional faculty member. In 2008 MSU was awarded a federal grant to become an Arabic Flagship institution.

Many of Professor Balla’s former students have gone on to be successful students in graduate programs. Professor Balla is still an active member of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic, the African Studies Association, the Sudanese Studies Association and the Middle East Studies Association.

In 2011 Professor Balla accepted the position of Adjunct Associate Professor of Arabic and Director of Islamic Studies at Oakland University in Rochester, MI. He continues to maintain close ties with his colleagues in the Department at MSU.


Suzanne Wagner (Assistant Professor of Linguistics) was awarded a HARP (Humanities and Arts Research Program) grant by the MSU Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. The grant will allow Dr. Wagner to carry out sociolinguistic fieldwork this summer, and to employ undergraduates in 2012-2013 to help analyze the data.

Paula Winke (Assistant Professor of Second Language Studies and TESOL program) published a 2011 TESOL Quarterly paper “Evaluating the validity of a high-stakes ESL test: Why teachers’ perceptions matter” that was awarded the 2012 TESOL Award for Distinguished Research from TESOL and Heinle. Dr. Winke is also currently the President of the Midwest Association of Language Testers.

Malik Balla Retires

Professor Malik Balla at a World Languages Day session. Photo courtesy of University Relations.

MALIK BALLA RETIRES

Professor Malik Balla at a World Languages Day session. Photo courtesy of University Relations.
Rakeena Barnes (Arabic major) received a $41,353 scholarship award from the Qatar Foundation International (QFI) to support her Arabic teaching certification program and to fund attendance to workshops and training seminars provided by QFI.

James Canty (BA Japanese and BA Chinese, Fall 2011) is pursuing an M.A. in Hotel & Restaurant Management at Eastern Michigan University.

Scott Casey (MA candidate, German Studies) was awarded the Modern Language Association International Bibliography Fellowship for 2012-2015. Scott worked with Assistant Professor David Kim to catalog a number of German journals for the MLA online bibliography this past spring semester.

Ken Edgington (BA East Asian Languages & Cultures and BA Linguistics, 2010; MA Linguistics, Spring 2012) was accepted into a master’s program in speech-language pathology at the University of Memphis.

Kelsey Fedewa (BA German, Spring 2012) was accepted into the MA in German Studies program at MSU.

Mykala Ford (Arabic major) was awarded a U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) for the study of Arabic in Tunisia this summer.

Daniel Hasty (PhD Linguistics, Spring 2012) accepted a tenure track assistant professorship position in the English Department at Coastal Carolina University. He will be teaching linguistics, in particular sociolinguistics and syntactic variation.

Christopher Heffner (BA Linguistics, Spring 2012) will begin a PhD program in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science at the University of Maryland, College Park in the fall. He will work closely with faculty in linguistics and hearing and speech sciences.

Ashley Hesson (PhD candidate Linguistics) gave a presentation at the MSU Department of Medicine Grand Rounds series this past March. Believed to be the first graduate student to present at Grand Rounds, Ashley is an MD-PhD student, who is conducting linguistic analysis of doctor-patient communication. The presentation was entitled “A linguistic comparison of patient- and doctor-centered interviewing.” Also in March, she convened a panel with Assistant Professor Suzanne Wagner at the Georgetown University Roundtable on Linguistics, titled: “Using physician-patient interviews for quantitative sociolinguistic analysis: a methodological checkup.” The panel brought together sociolinguists and health communication researchers from both quantitative and qualitative backgrounds.

Mina Kim (BA Japanese, Spring 2012) was accepted into the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET).

Chun-Yi Peng (MA Linguistics, Summer 2012) will begin a PhD Linguistics program at City University of New York (CUNY) in the fall.

Mark Phillips (German additional major, Spring 2012) was accepted into the PhD in German Studies program at MSU.

Chris O’Brien (MA Linguistics, Spring 2012) will be attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Linguistics PhD program.

Kaavya Ramesh (Chinese major) was awarded a U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) for the study of Chinese in China this summer.

Anna Schroen (Japanese additional major, Summer 2012) accepted a News and Information internship position with National Public Radio’s “All Things Considered” program in Washington, DC.

Bryan Striker (BA Japanese and BA Chinese, Spring 2012) was accepted into the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET).
Wells Hall Grand Opening!
Friday, September 7, 2012
4-6pm

Festivities will begin at the
East Entrance of the Building

The move to our new space!

Packing up A-Wells Hall

Settling into B-Wells Hall