



Department of  
**LANGUAGES**  
**NEWSLETTER**

**Greetings to our friends, alumni and supporters of the Department of Languages!**

**As we close the door on another exciting academic year, we are delighted to shine the spotlight on the impressive achievements and successes of our students, faculty, staff and alumni and to share with you the highlights from 2022-2023 in the Department of Languages!**



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## A WORD OF THANKS FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Colleagues and Alumni,

With mixed emotions, I write this letter to bid farewell as the department chair of Languages at Clemson University. After nine beautiful years of serving in this role, it is my time to pass the torch.

During my tenure, we have achieved great success as a Department, and I am proud of what we have accomplished together. We have expanded our American Sign Language (ASL) program, the new B.A. in modern languages education degree in K-12 Spanish, French and ASL, many successful promotions and strengthened our position in the College as a force regarding majors and minors. With courage and hard work, we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic.

My deepest gratitude to my colleagues for their dedication and support during my time as the department chair. Working alongside such a talented and committed group has been a privilege.

To our alumni, thank you for your continued support of the Department of Languages at Clemson University. Your accomplishments and contributions to society make us proud, and we look forward to staying connected with you. Although my time as the Department chair has ended, I am excited to continue my work as a professor at Clemson University. I look forward to collaborating with my colleagues and contributing to the success of the Department with my teaching and research.

Thank you for the memories, the good times and the challenging times, the hard work and the shared achievements. I will always cherish the experiences and relationships we have built together.



Sincerely,

**Salvador Oropesa**  
Professor of Spanish

## A NOTE FROM THE INCOMING CHAIR



Dear Languages Department community,

I am a Professor of French and have taught at Clemson since 2004. I am a specialist of French cinema, media studies, society and literature, working on themes of attention, visibility, care, and ordinary language. I also have written about Cambodian cinema since the Khmer rouge period. This summer, I am grateful to be taking over the position of department chair from Salvador Oropesa's steady hand.

It is an exciting moment to begin, with new challenges and opportunities, including our entry into a brand-new College of Arts and Humanities. Mostly, I'm excited to work with and expand our successful and groundbreaking programs in modern languages, language and international business, and language and international health, while pursuing a new relationship with the College of Education, as well as other initiatives. Not only do our programs thrive in number, but they attract some of the best students at the University.

I look forward to watching over the Department's diverse and innovative scholarship profile as we become more of a public resource of information, analysis and understanding. More and more, our faculty offer stimulating and relevant courses that prepare students for their careers and challenge them to contribute to their communities in this ever-changing world.

Finally, I'm most eager to collaborate with the Department's alumni, you who have inspired us over the years and have gone on to impact others in your own careers and community engagement. Please reach out, we would love to hear from you!

Sincerely,

**Joe Mai**  
Professor of French

**The Department of Languages gratefully thanks Salvador Oropesa for his many years of dedicated service to the department as department chair. Please join us in welcoming incoming Chair Joe Mai.**

# Student Awards and Honors

## Department congratulates 2023 student award recipients



Eli Bechtel

**Eli Bechtel** — Dr. Patricia Walker Wannamaker Language & International Trade Annual Award of Excellence

**Kathryn "Kate" Henry** — Hagan Language and International Health Award for Excellence

**Sara Miller** — Ann and Lamar Bayne Award for Excellence in American Sign Language

**Eli Bechtel** — Clemson Chinese Laoshi Awards – Best Achievement

**Joseph Imbo** — Clemson Chinese Laoshi Awards – Best Beginner

**Courtney Glassburn** — Jordan A. Dean, Sr. Annual Award in French Studies

**Victoria Ann Dupre** — John Bednar Award of Excellence in LAIB

**Emily Cosgrove** — Carlton Moore '93 Excellence in German

**Katelyn Franck** — Draexlmaier Language Award for Excellence in German

**Austyn Sierra Barjona** — JAASC Harry Watanabe Award in Excellence in Japanese

**Lexie Colwell** — Joan Bridgwood Award for Excellence in Russian

**Robert Chase Mitchum** — Roger K. Simpson '76 Annual Memorial Award for Excellence in Spanish



Victoria Ann Dupre



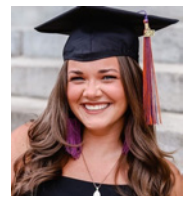
Katelyn Franck



Robert Mitchum



Courtney Glassburn



Sara Miller



Kate Henry

## Two students receive Fulbright English teaching assistantships

Two Department of Languages students have been awarded prestigious Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships for the 2023-2024 academic year.

**Carter Janse** (Spanish studies minor) will be completing his teaching assistantship in Spain, and **Alianna Pearson** (modern languages Spanish) will be completing her teaching assistantship in Argentina.

The Fulbright ETA program is a 9-12 month assistantship in one of over 140 countries.

Awardees are placed in classrooms in their countries of specialization, where they gain valuable experience working alongside English-language teachers while serving as cultural ambassadors for the United States. Teaching placements range from kindergarten through university level.

## Students excel in Japanese speech contest

The Japanese program held the Clemson University Japanese Speech Contest on February 22.

**Josh Newton** won first place in the contest. Three students advanced to the Japanese Speech Contest of the southeast region held at Kennesaw State University on March 4.

Congratulations to **Nico Chalela**, who was awarded third place in Category 2.

# Student News

## LAIB major receives Department of Management award

**Adriana Witalis**, LAIB French major, has been awarded the Department of Management Academic Achievement Award.

The Department of Management Academic Excellence Awards are awarded to outstanding undergraduate students who are pursuing a concentration in the Department of Management. Awardees are selected on the basis of their outstanding academic performance in the undergraduate curriculum as well as in their areas of concentration.



## Spanish students gain experience out in the field

Students in Professor Magdaléna Matušková's SPAN 4990 class "Medical Interpreting, Ethics, and Intercultural Communication" had the opportunity to utilize their Spanish skills in real-life contexts.

Eleven students participated in three Medical and Nursing School Simulations with Prisma Health Simulation Center in January and March helping as interpreters-in-training to train future doctors and nurses to work with healthcare interpreters. They worked with about 150 students total between the three sessions.

Students also participated in the Clemson Veggie Rx program, which aims to support a healthy lifestyle in the wider community. Students' efforts included distributing vegetable boxes, calling clients and translating both a 60-recipe healthy nutrition cookbook and healthy lifestyle handbook for women into Spanish.



**Above:** students translated a variety of materials into Spanish, including a healthy-eating cookbook (right) and lifestyle handbook for women (left).

## 48th Annual Poetry Declamation returns to Clemson campus

The Department of Languages' 49th Annual Poetry Declamation Contest returned to campus this semester for the first time since 2019, having been canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and hosted virtually in 2021. The contest and awards ceremony were held in the brand-new Humanities Hall.

The Declamation contest brings together high school students from 22 different schools across South Carolina and Georgia to compete in poetry recitation in their languages of study. Contests are hosted in nine languages (ASL, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian and Spanish) and includes levels ranging from absolute beginner to native speaker. Students recite two poems from memory: a mandatory selection and their choice of a second selection. They are judged by a panel of judges comprised of Department of Languages faculty and 27 guest judges from the community. This year, 280 students participated.

The return to the in-person contest allowed the students, their parents and teachers the opportunity to learn about Clemson University first-hand and participate in campus tours.



**Above:** Students pose with the Tiger after participating in the 49th Annual Declamation Contest.

The Department of Languages thanks the hard work of the Declamation Committee: Su-I Chen, Amy Sawyer, Melva Persico, Julia Schmidt, Debra Williamson and Lee Ferrell. It also thanks the guest judges, Department of Languages faculty, lab assistants and many student volunteers who make this event possible.

## German and Spanish sections host forum for Latin American business



**Above:** Students of Spanish and German speak with representatives of BMW Manufacturing at the Forum for German and Spanish in Latin American Business.

In October, the German and Spanish sections joined together to hold a Forum for German and Spanish in Latin American Business. This conference highlighting German investment in Latin America gave special focus this year to investment in the Bajío region of Mexico.

The event was organized by Professors Daniel Garcia and Magda Matušková in Spanish and Professor Lee Ferrell in German. With both online and in-person sessions, approximately 130 attendees and 12 companies participated.

## Languages, LAIB organize Spring Career, Internship and Info Fair

The Spring 2023 LAIB Career, Internship, & Info Fair was held on Wednesday, April 19. Fourteen companies from around the Upstate region came to meet with Clemson students and share information about careers, internships and international business in the region.

The event was open to all Clemson students, and close to 120 students attended, along with alumni. Students said they were excited to learn about so many internship and career opportunities which, while close to



home, offer a chance to work in international contexts.

The companies in attendance have operations in Central and South America, Europe, China and Japan, and the industries represented include global trade, fiberoptics and communication, logistics, automotive, manufacturing and materials, data intelligence and digital engineering and more.

This event was organized by LAIB Director Jae DiBello Takeuchi with help from several professors in the Languages department, especially Lee Ferrell and Su-I Chen. We are especially grateful to all of the professors who shared the event with their classes and encouraged students to attend.



**Left and above:** Students talk with representatives at the Spring 2023 LAIB Career, Internship, and Info Fair.

The attending companies were: AFL, Capgemini, Cardinal Health, Vetroresina LLC, Fluor, Greenfield Industries, Haering Precision, JTEKT, TRS Staffing, Kuehne & Nagel, Magna International, Michelin, STAR EV Corporation and Uniqutex LLC.

## “Kennenlernen” series helps students of German make connections

For the last four semesters, the German program has hosted a “Kennenlernen” (getting to know you) series to introduce students of German and other members of the campus community to members of the German business community in the Upstate region. These one-hour conversations, conducted via Zoom, are opportunities to learn about German business culture, the presence of Germany in our region and about different approaches to entering the job market.

This year we heard from alumni and others in the German business community speak about their experiences with BMW, The Fraunhofer USA Alliance, Adidas,

The German-American Chamber of Commerce, Moss, Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange and the College of Applied Sciences-Bremen.



**Above:** Caroline Aneskievich (LAIB Spanish, 2010), BMW Talent Management Specialist, speaks to students on Zoom on March 17.

### Connecting further: German section furthers study abroad partnerships

Lee Ferrell and Johannes Schmidt (Languages) hosted Thomas Schratzenstaller, Ph.D. of the OTH Regensburg, a partner university in Bavaria, Germany. The visit was to further our partnership to restart study abroad for our students and to discuss international virtual and hybrid experimental learning opportunities, as well as faculty exchanges. Professor Schratzenstaller also met with faculty and study abroad advisors in mechanical engineering and bioengineering.

## ASL, Creative Inquiry students return to Martha's Vineyard

Assistant Professor of ASL Jody Cripps and six of his Creative Inquiry students returned to Martha's Vineyard, Mass. from April 9-15. Last April, the Creative Inquiry team initiated a community outreach program in collaboration with local Martha's Vineyard institutions, which aimed to help revive the historic signed language community on the island. This year's project allowed a new group of students to continue these important outreach partnerships and to engage in unique field research.

The earliest deaf settlers in Martha's Vineyard arrived in the late 17th century, and the number of deaf individuals rose steadily until its decline in the 19th century. The last native islander with deaf genes was Eva S. West-Look, who died in 1950. Martha's Vineyard Signed Language (MVSL) is a unique legacy which arose from this community. The last resident who knew and used MVSL was Katie West, who died in 1952.

Through various outreach opportunities led by local institutions and Clemson ASL/Creative Inquiry students, the rich deaf and signed language history of Martha's Vineyard is once more being brought into public knowledge. Past and ongoing projects have allowed Clemson students to interview deaf residents, conduct primary source research, discuss their projects on a local TV station, meet with local professionals and discuss potential ways to integrate sign language into their training and into the community, and collaborate on projects which educate the public on the deaf legacy on the island.

This year's Creative Inquiry project aimed to use local institutions and primary source material to investigate the direct genealogy linking the Lambert and West families, expanding Lane et al.'s (2010) work on the history of the two families' link to deaf genetics.

The results of the team's research were presented by Professor Cripps and his students at the Spring Research Symposium at Watt Family Innovation Center on May 10.

For more on the CI team's experiences, check out our Department blog at: <https://blogs.clemson.edu/languages/>.



**Above:** Professor Cripps and his students visit Lambert's Cove. Jonathan Lambert was the first deaf settler in Martha's Vineyard, arriving in 1692.

## Professor Cripps, ASL program host talk by deaf Peace Corps volunteer

In April, Professor Jody Cripps and his wife Stacy Duvall sponsored an educational seminar featuring guest speaker Francine "Cinnie" MacDougall, a long-time educator of the Deaf and former Peace Corps (PC) volunteer. She is best known for her work and served as one of the teachers in the popular ASL Instructional Series "Signing Naturally," published by DawnSignPress.

MacDougall's stint in the Peace Corps was conducted between 1979-1982, where she worked with 52 other PC volunteers to promote education in the Philippine Islands. This group included some of the Peace Corps first deaf volunteers.

During her presentation, McDougall shared information about her experiences learning Tagalog, Filipino culture, Filipino Sign Language (FSL) and some of the simple pleasures of Filipino life on some of the 7,701 islands.

Many of her efforts were geared toward preserving and promoting FSL on the island with local government officials, educators and some of the deaf Filipinos themselves. She considers her greatest achievement to have been her ability to not only elevate FSL in the eyes of



**Above:** Francine "Cinnie" MacDougall with a group of Filipino children.

many Filipino educators, but also leave the island knowing that many of the people in the Deaf Community are now an integral part of the educational process.

A soon to be published manuscript will be available highlighting the work of deaf Peace Corps volunteers.



**Above:** Current and Former ASL faculty and friends with former Peace Corps volunteer Cinnie MacDougall at a local restaurant.

# Department News

## Consul and Vice Consul of Japan visit Clemson, students of Japanese

Consul General Maeda and Vice Consul Nakao visited Clemson University on March 31. During the visit, they met with College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities college leadership and visited a Japanese class.

The Consul General spoke to the students and answered questions from students in Japanese. The Consul General encouraged students to continue studying the Japanese language and go to Japan to further their study.



**Above:** the Consul and Vice Consul of Japan visited a Japanese class, where they spoke with students and answered questions.

# Alumni News

## Department of Languages graduate receives 2022 Roaring 10 award

2015 Department of Languages graduate Courtney Meeks (B.A. Spanish and International Trade, 2015; MBA Business Administration, 2017) has been named a 2022 Roaring10 recipient.

The Roaring10 is a yearly honor awarded by the Clemson Young Alumni Council to ten outstanding Clemson University alumni in recognition of their contribution to business, leadership, community, educational and/or philanthropic endeavors. The honor also recognizes the awardees' core

values of honesty, integrity and respect.

Since graduation, Meeks has been involved in many impressive organizations and enterprises. Some of her recent achievements in leadership have included being named a 2022 United States Global Leadership Coalition Next Gen Leader and participating in Furman University's Riley Institute Diversity Leaders Initiative. Meeks currently serves as the current president of the Clemson MBA Alumni Council.



**Above:** Courtney Meeks (M.A., 2015; MBA, 2017)



# Faculty News

## Faculty News and Publications

**Jody Cripps** served as editor of Society for American Sign Language Journal, Vol. 6, No. 1.

**Magda Matušková** received FDRP, Humanities Hub Manuscript Grant and Service-Learning Grant from OTEI.

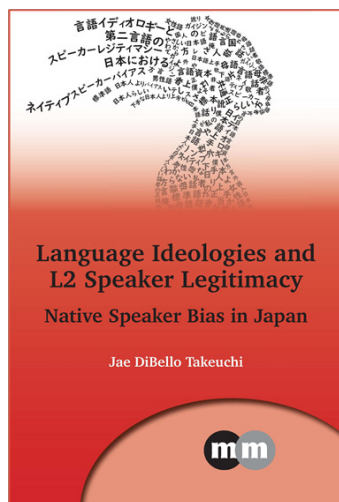
**Johannes Schmidt** served as co-editor of the Herder Yearbook. He published an article on Holocaust witness Dr. Peter Becker in the state-wide newspaper supplement “Holocaust Remembered”, 10th ed. He also participated in a screening and panel discussion of the condensed version of documentary film “The U.S. and the Holocaust.”

**Kumiko Saito** published “Reframing Modern Japanese Literature: Translation and Science Fiction in Meiji Era Japan” in the Journal of Japanese Studies.

**Jae Takeuchi** published the book “Language Ideologies and L2 Speaker Legitimacy: Native Speaker Bias in Japan.”

For more publications, check out the Faculty Bookshelf on the Department website!

**Below:** “Language Ideologies and L2 Speaker Legitimacy: Native Speaker Bias in Japan” by Jae Takeuchi. (Multilingual Matters, 2023)



## Awards and Honors



**Ellory Schmucker** received the CAAH Advisor of the Year Award.



**Pauline De Tholozany** received a Creativity Professorship in Humanities



**Arelis Moore** received the Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching

## Faculty Promotions

**Roberto Risso** was promoted to associate professor with tenure.

**Jae Takeuchi** was promoted to associate professor with tenure.

**Su-I Chen** was promoted to principal lecturer.

**Ellory Schmucker** was promoted to principal lecturer.

**Nora Logue** was promoted to senior lecturer.

**Rosa Pillcurima** was promoted to senior lecturer.

# We Want To Hear From You!

**Calling all alumni and emeriti: do you have an update on your career, achievements, family or other noteworthy happenings? We are excited to hear what our alumni and emeriti are doing! Let us know what you are up to by emailing Su-I Chen (schen@clemson.edu) with your updates!**

## The Clemson Polyglot

Did you enjoy this newsletter? You can find all of these news stories and more news through **The Clemson Polyglot**, the Department of Languages blog. Visit the blog at:  
<https://blogs.clemson.edu/languages/>

**Or find us online:**

 <https://www.facebook.com/Clemson-University-Department-of-Languages-271942146208878/>

 <https://www.clemson.edu/caah/academics/languages/index.html>

## Thank you to our friends and supporters!

The Department of Languages sincerely thanks all who have generously supported our efforts by donating to departmental programs and attending Department events.

## MAKE A GIFT

Please consider making a contribution to the Department of Languages. Even a small amount will go a very long way. Ways to give:

Go online at <https://iamatiger.clemson.edu/premiums/adf-public>

Call 864-656-5896 to give over the phone

Mail a check to the Clemson University Foundation, PO Box 1889, Clemson, S.C. 29633 and designate Department of Languages on the "for" line.

Thank you!