

# The International Buzz

With its interdisciplinarity and global vision of a changing world, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures contributes to the international education of students.



Issue 1, Fall 2011-Spring 2012

## Inside this issue:

**Pg. 1** *Letter from the Chair*

**Pg. 2** *Machu Pichu, Peru*

**Pg. 3** *Study Abroad in France*

**Pg. 4** *Study Abroad in Germany*

**Pg. 5** *Study Abroad in Italy*

*Letter from the Editor*

**Pg. 6** *Italian Club*

**Pg. 7** *Perspectives from an Alumni*

**Pg. 8** *News from the Department*



## Letter from the Chair

*"Language is our only homeland," the Nobel Prize Lithuanian poet, Czeslaw Milosz, once declared. This is poignantly true for those of us who study languages. Between the crevices and corners of grammar points and vocabulary, we seek a sense of home, of comfort, of connection with others.*

*Maybe that's why we tend to think of our department as home. The last few years we have seen members of our family come and go. John Antosh, Leonore Loft, Silvia Mannino, Mary Margaret Fogarty, and Albert VanDette have retired to pursue other projects. Our former students have come back "home," now members of our faculty: Joel Berg (Spanish), Cindy Jones (French), and Fritz Schattauer (German). Paul Schwartz came back in the Fall to teach and produce a French play. This time he took the show on the road and went to Chautauqua Lake Central School in Mayville to present it to French students from various schools.*

*This semester, we have started conversations about "remodeling" and "refurbishing" the way we teach languages. "Dreaming in Languages: Learning Languages in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" is a new task force that is looking into how we can restructure our program to make sure that every student at Fredonia graduates with functional proficiency in another language. Only then, can we all be at home in this new global world we live in. We invite you to visit with us whether it is through our website, Facebook, or in Fenton and be part of our family.*

*Carmen S. Rivera, Chair*



# Machu Picchu, PERU

Machu Picchu es uno de los centros arqueológicos más famosos del mundo, declarada una de las siete maravillas del mundo en el 2007 y por ende, el atractivo turístico más visitado del Perú.

La ciudadela de Machu Picchu (voz quechua: montaña vieja) y Huayna Picchu (voz quechua: montaña joven).

La ciudadela presenta al noroeste la zona religiosa principal, incluyendo la plaza llamada por Hiram Bingham "Plaza Sagrada", el templo de las "Tres Ventanas", el "Templo Sagrado", y el "Intihuatana" bloque de piedra labrada de carácter religioso.

Mi visita a Machu Picchu fue maravillosa, el reencontrarme con mis ancestros es algo mágico que

nunca olvidaré. Se presume era hogar de la nobleza Inca, así como también existe la hipótesis de que fue una Universidad ya que en sus excavaciones solo encontraron cuerpos de personas entre los 17 y 25 años.

Verdad es que, sin conocer la historia verdadera de lo que pasó ya que no existe nada escrito, los Incas lograron construir un imperio que se extiende por 3.680 km., con epicentro en Cusco que se encuentra a una altura de 10,000 pies algo que al principio se me hizo dificultoso, pero después me fui aclimatando.

Camino del Inca es el más espectacular trek de las Américas. Cuarenta y tres kilómetros de senderos, pavimentados en piedra, que conducen a la ciudadela y

llevan aproximadamente cuatro días para completar.

El viaje comienza en el kilómetro 88 del ferrocarril Cusco-Quillabamba. Siguiendo el sendero montañoso sobre la rivera izquierda del río Urubamba a 3.281 pies sobre el nivel del mar y termina en Machu Picchu.

Cerca de 2000 turistas nacionales e internacionales visitan diariamente Machu Picchu.

Machu Picchu es un lugar que recomiendo conocer, por sus paisajes, cultura y historia.

**Nathalie A. York**



## CUSCO

Cusco es considerado Patrimonio Cultural de la Humanidad. Llegar a esta ciudad, caminar por sus calles y disfrutar sus paisajes es transportarse directamente al pasado, algo en su atmósfera origina vivencias de profunda fascinación. El turismo es un importante sector

económico en el departamento del Cusco, que aparte de conservar importantes vestigios arqueológicos reúne un significativo muestrario de arte colonial, con magníficas obras arquitectónicas y escultóricas.

### LUGARES TURISTICOS

- CATHEDRAL DE CUSCO
- QORICANCHA
- BARRIO DE SAN BLAS
- COMPLEJO ARQUEOLÓGICO TAMBOMACHAY
- OLLANTAYTAMBO

### FIESTAS PRINCIPALES

- "INTI RAYMI" 24 DE JUNIO, MUY CONCURRIDA.
- "FESTIVAL DE TODOS LOS SANTOS" 1 DE NOVIEMBRE.
- "REYES MAGOS" 6 DE ENERO.



# A semester abroad in France

Gina Lanfranchi



I had the incredible opportunity to spend the Fall 2011 semester on SUNY Albany's exchange program in Grenoble, France. It was without a doubt one of the best decisions I have made in my academic career. I was directly enrolled in the University Grenoble's language and literature college—l'Université Stendhal III. I had the luxury of choosing my own courses with the help of some French student assistants who specialized in collaborating with foreign students to ensure that they get the courses that they are looking for. I had the ability to choose between courses specifically designed for international students as well as courses that were part of the standard French curriculum—meaning French courses designed for native French speakers. I split my time between the two tracks. I took courses in French conversation, grammar, translation and linguistics. I was able to get an insider's look at the French education system at the University level by taking French classes using notebooks, pens, workbooks and instruction *à la française*. It was unbelievable, but not always easy. It took me the entire first month to acclimate what I thought French sounded like to that of a native French speaker.

I was immersed in French everyday

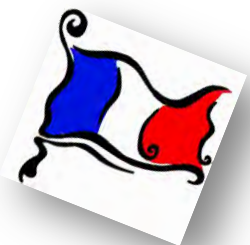
life or *la vie quotidienne*.

Everything from the groceries that I would buy to the transportation that I would take to get to school to the music I would listen to was representative of what is currently French. I was able to turn on my iPod radio and listen to *FranceInfo* (a major French public news radio station) every morning as I would walk to class and when I would go for my mid-afternoon runs along the Isère River. The international office at the university gave my name to a highly qualified French student who volunteered to show me around the school and the city. She introduced me to some of the greatest sights in the area, as well as the plethora of extracurricular activities available on and off campus. Thanks to Laurianne, not only did I have a new francophone friend, but I also got involved with three community organizations.

During the breaks for school I had the luxury of traveling around Europe with some of my friends from all over the world! I had the opportunity to visit some of the most amazing places in all of



Europe including London, Turin, Trier, Cologne, and, of course, Paris by taking advantage of the highly efficient railroad system that connects France to other hot-ticket international destinations. I would recommend this program to the passionate francophile who wants to challenge his or her language and social abilities.



# A semester abroad in Germany

Mandela Avril



Hello, my name is Mandela Avril, I am a senior dual major in Theatre Arts and Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing (most people just say Marketing). Last year, I decided to spend the entirety of my junior year in Osnabrück, Germany. I always had a desire to travel and a passion for languages so college was the perfect time for both. During that year I had numerous amazing experiences and made many friends from all parts of Europe and the world. While there, I also had the opportunity to work for a large German land machinery firm as a marketing intern. The internship was extremely hands-on where I got to do everything from searching through company archives for “marketable history” to helping them set up their huge stand at an expo show in Paris. My greatest accomplishment while there, though, was becoming fluent in the language. My program luckily had very little Americans and other native English speakers, and my roommates also weren’t really fluent either so the learning process came quickly. I find the art of speaking another language a highly rewarding one, both for me personally and whichever career I later on choose.

In conclusion, I’d recommend going abroad (for a semester or more if possible) to everyone who’s able to, since it’s an amazing experience (even when it’s not necessarily a “good” experience) that anyone who has done it, would surely agree with. One of my favorite things about being abroad, whether I was with a group of Germans or a group of the other international students, was the constant feeling of acceptance. As most of us didn’t know each other’s culture to a personal extent we just had to accept each other’s actions as who they were. I never found myself doing something because it was what I was “supposed” to do, rather I did things simply because I wanted to. A lot of growth comes when the pressures of your own society are miles away from your thoughts.





When I arrived in Florence, Italy, in spring 2011, the concierge asked me, "Do you know any Italian? Would you like to practice with me?" I said yes! But after my first walk around the amazing city, I found myself struggling to answer the concierge's simple questions. I panicked and hurried to my room and my books to find the words and phrases I found myself wanting to use, cursing that I had not kept up with my Italian since the previous spring.

By the time I had moved into my school housing at the *Istituto Lorenzo de Medici*, I'd learned that practicing Italian with Italians required being comfortable with embarrassing myself. Italians love and appreciate that you're trying to learn and use their beautiful language and they'll help you with tough conjugations, and always be kind as they correct you. Practicing Italian wasn't a requirement for the program; all my classes were taught in English. But speaking only Italian with new friends, teachers and especially strangers, my beginner's Italian swiftly changed for the better. I began to understand and make myself understood much more easily.

I chose the program because the city

## A semester abroad in Italy

of Florence has one of the largest available collections of Renaissance art and architecture in all of Italy but I could not have imagined how much – and, hard as I tried, I certainly didn't see it all! The teacher for my "Fresco Painting and Restoration" class had taken part in the restoration of Sandro Botticelli's *Allegory of Spring*; one afternoon he took our class into a room closed to the public where Michelangelo had made his first drawings for *David* and some figures in the Sistine Chapel. Fresco painting was a medium unlike any other that I don't think I would have ever tried my hand at if I hadn't taken it in Florence. Another class met at a different museum every time and we would draw statues, paintings, and frescos.



Nearly every other weekend I was taking a trip to another beautiful Italian city such as Rome or even the smaller cities such as Lucca or Siena. During my Spring Break, my friends and I spent four nights in Paris, France and another four in Barcelona, Spain. For a Visual Arts major in love with Renaissance art and Italian language, this trip was a dream come true. And it's not over. Soon I'll be going back!

Skylar Nichols

## Letter from the Editor (Chiara De Santi)

When we decided to have an electronic newsletter, we also needed to choose a name that would represent us as a Department of Modern Languages, where so much emphasis is given to the international side of the teaching and learning experience. So, we held a contest to name the newsletter and invited the students to submit their suggestions. Among more than 40 names, the final decision was for *The International Buzz*

by Margaret Drzewiecki, a student of Italian 115. Congratulations, Margaret!

The goal of this electronic newsletter is to place our Fredonia students at the center, letting them write and tell their own stories of experiences, both abroad and on campus. Our intention is to have our students contributing to make Fredonia an international place where world cultures and languages take them by the hand to a

wonderful and unforgettable experience. As faculty, our intention is to accompany our students on this journey, so that it remains valuable in the years to come.





Club founded in  
2010

March 19, 2012

A Sicilian Tradition comes to  
campus!

The Italian Club organized a  
St. Joseph's Table meal



Pictured from left to right: Jonathan Boylhart, Angelina Modica,  
President Hefner, Nicole Ceppaglia, Roothland Medina.

# One Big Famiglia: The Italian Club *Unione Italiana*

Founded in 2010, *Unione Italiana*, the Italian Club, is a relatively new club on campus. The club is made up of students who are both of Italian and non-Italian origin, but with a similar love for the culture. Growing up, there was nothing I was more proud of than being Italian. Being president of *Unione Italiana* this year has given me a chance to do something with my love for my heritage. The feature I love the most about the club is that it is a true *famiglia*, with both the e-board and general body always working together. In fact, at meetings it is sometimes difficult to pick out the e-board members from the general body with all of us sitting together, sharing stories and, like true Italians, always eating!

You may have seen us around campus, perhaps playing soccer outside, or seen our display case in the Library during October 2011 for Italian Heritage Month. We were active again most recently because March 19<sup>th</sup> is a very important date for Sicilians. It is the Feast of St. Joseph. This semester, the Italian Club and our advisor, Dr. Chiara De Santi, of the Modern Languages Department, worked very hard putting together our own St. Joseph's Day Feast, making sure it has remained true to the Sicilian tradition. Look around the school for flyers and always check our Facebook page, *Unione Italiana di Fredonia*, for all meeting times and events.

*Unione Italiana* is also working on building a tighter relationship with the local Italian heritage organization C.I.A.O. (Chautauqua Italian-American Organization).

So consider joining us and becoming part of this wonderful *famiglia* on Fredonia's campus!

Nicole Ceppaglia





# Perspectives from a Fredonia alumni who has returned as Faculty

It feels great to be back at Fredonia! It wasn't long ago that I was here as a student. I never had much of an interest in learning another language until I made my first trip to Chile to visit a friend. Once there, I knew that I wanted to see and learn a whole lot more. I originally studied at SUNY Oneonta and received a B.A. in Spanish. In 2002, I returned to Chile to study at La Universidad de Concepción. In this six-month period, I travelled throughout Chile and made trips to Perú, Uruguay and Argentina. I graduated from SUNY Oneonta in 2004 and I had no idea what to pursue. After taking a summer to think it over, I decided I really want to teach.



I knew Fredonia was the best place to continue my education. During this two-year period, I felt extremely confident that I was receiving the proper education to become a successful educator. Not only did I feel at home, my educators were more than willing to go the extra mile. These two factors made the experience quite enjoyable.

I graduated with a B.A. in Secondary Education in 2006 and immediately accepted the invitation to teach in Utica, NY. My preference would have been to teach locally, but I knew that the opportunities were quite limited. After a few years teaching in Utica, I decided to accept a yearlong invitation at Pine Valley Central School. In the fall semester of 2009, I was asked to teach Introductory Spanish at Jamestown Community College. Although I've enjoyed teaching in both the middle school and high school setting, I was intrigued with this option. I completed my third semester as an adjunct instructor at JCC this past semester.

Since graduating from Fredonia, I've also travelled to the Dominican Republic, Colombia and Guatemala. I never missed the opportunity to tell new friends about my teaching experiences and my experience as a student at Fredonia. I remember lending a friend in Guatemala my Fredonia State hoodie, which she decided to keep! I am quite sure Fredonia is becoming more and more known throughout Guatemala.

In December of 2011, a friend of mine informed me that Fredonia was looking for an adjunct instructor to teach Introductory Spanish. I was very interested and intrigued with the possibility. I immediately contacted Dr. Rivera, Chair and Professor of Spanish to inform her of my interest. I was offered the opportunity to teach for at least this semester and I immediately accepted it. I am thrilled that SUNY Fredonia has made me part of their faculty-student culture this semester.

Have a great summer!

Joel Berg

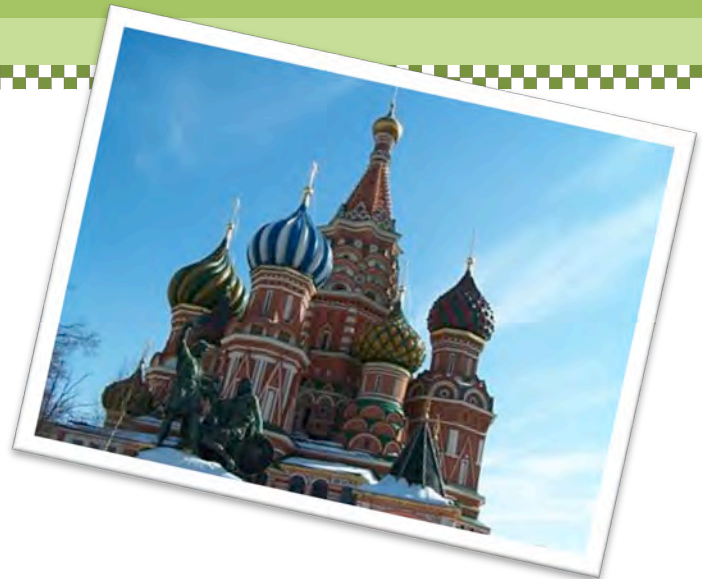


## News from the Department

- We welcome new faculty Aubrey Kubiak (French) and Freddy Barrera (Spanish). Dr. Chiara De Santi (Italian) has been appointed full-time faculty as Visiting Lecturer starting in the spring of 2012.
- Dr. Juan De Urda published an article in the fall of 2011: "La figura del "señorito" en la poesía republicana de la guerra civil española" in *Rondas Literarias de Pittsburgh 2010*.
- At the invitation of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Carmen S. Rivera attended the Winter Meeting of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in San Antonio, TX. Part of the professional meeting for provosts was a discussion about language teaching in higher education.
- In February 2012, Dr. Juan De Urda was invited by the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and by the Peace Studies Program of the University of Missouri-Columbia to deliver a talk about "Poetics of Violence in the Spanish Civil War."
- Dr. Juan De Urda delivered a paper at the last PFLC Conference in September 2011. Drs. De Urda and Chiara De Santi presented papers at the NeMLA Conference in Rochester, NY, on March 16 and 17, 2012. Dr. Kate Douglass presented her work at the Research Day on campus on March 23. Dr. De Santi will be presenting papers at the AAIS Conference in Charleston, SC, on May 3 and at the CSIS Conference in Waterloo, Canada, on May 26.

### Department of Modern Languages

Carmen S. Rivera, Chair  
2113 Fenton Hall  
SUNY Fredonia, NY 14063  
(716) 673-3380  
[Carmen.Rivera@fredonia.edu](mailto:Carmen.Rivera@fredonia.edu)



We are on the web:

<http://www.fredonia.edu/departament/modernlanguages/>

We are on Facebook too! Look for us!



For more information about this issue, please contact the Editor, Dr. Chiara De Santi, at [desanti@fredonia.edu](mailto:desanti@fredonia.edu)