Language Department Welcomes a New Staff Member

We have a new face in our Language Department Office! Vickie Schafer became our Academic Department Associate in January of this year. She is one of our UWEC alumni (class 1992), and she has worked on our campus for over thirty years. Our readers may have seen her in one of her many past positions including: the Alumni Office, the Honors Program, and the Registrar. Having just come to our department from the English Department, she jokes that “I now know everyone on the fourth floor of Centennial Hall.” Vickie received a promotion when she joined our department, as it is the first time she has been a Department Associate. She says that she has enjoyed learning all the skills that come with her new position.

Originally from Hawkins, Wisconsin, on Highway 8, Vickie has lived in Eau Claire for many years. She enjoys gardening and spending time with her husband and their eleven-year-old son. She is currently learning Yoga at Beaver Creek, and she loves traveling to warm places. Vickie says she is very proud that she learned the names of all Language Department faculty and staff in less than one semester and, of her new position, she says that she is looking forward to “getting one year under my belt.” Seeing all of the opportunities available to students majoring and minoring in languages, Vickie is encouraging her son to study other languages. She likes working in a place where she can hear so many different languages spoken in the hallway.

Welcome Vickie! It is great to have you in our department.

New Language Added to Course Offerings

Beginning in the fall 2015, UWEC students will be able to take two semesters of Ojibwe language through the Department of Languages. “This is an opportunity for our students to fulfill their university language requirement while helping to save one of the world’s diverse languages,” says Ojibwe Language Instructor Dr. Wendy Makoons Geniusz. Ojibwe is an American Indian language Indigenous to Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region, and like Indigenous languages around the world, it is in danger of becoming extinct. In the past, UWEC offered some Ojibwe language instruction as part of American Indian Languages survey courses, which were taught through the American Indian Studies Program. These new courses will focus solely on Ojibwe instruction. Ojibwe is part of the Algonquian Language Family, and it is completely unrelated to any of the other languages currently offered by the department. This language has a unique way of dividing the world into the categories of animate and inanimate nouns, and understanding which noun belongs in which category often confuses English speakers. “These categories (continued on page 3)
Chinese language professor takes students to speech competition

Adapted from The Spectator, Sammi Wendling, Staff Writer, March 18, 2015

For the first time ever Blugolds competed in the 12th Annual Wisconsin Chinese Language Speech Contest.

The contest, which was held on March 7 by the Wisconsin Association of Chinese Language Teachers, catered to Chinese language speakers of different ages, from kindergarten to the collegiate level.

Kaishan Kong, assistant professor of Chinese at UW-Eau Claire, took five interested students to the event.

The Eau Claire group traveled to UW-Milwaukee on March 7, where friendly competition took place amongst other college Chinese speakers.

There were also different categories, so beginners and native speakers alike were able to participate. Contestants were divided into categories based on age, heritage and skill level for a more accurate competition.

Eau Claire students took home a first place win for the College Beginner division, as well as the Partial Heritage College Beginner division. They also earned the Honorable Mention title.

However, the contest was about more than just earning titles and placing well.

“All of the students were impressed to see how many people, how many different ages, were represented,” Kong said. “All of the people in the auditorium became united through the language. There were people coming from many different ethnic backgrounds there.”

Kong said her students were inspired by the amount of people who were paying homage to Chinese culture, especially during the opening ceremony, where a traditional Chinese song was sung.

Youa Xiong, sophomore, represented Eau Claire and said she was awestruck with the turnout.

“This feeling of sheer amazement came over me, seeing how many people were able to speak the language so fluently,” Xiong said. “Just seeing and being around other people speaking Chinese was so rewarding.”

Xiong said she was especially appreciative of the language in the song during the opening ceremony.

“There are different vowel sounds in Chinese,” she said. “It was interesting to hear what he was singing, given the background and cultural context of the song.”

After the contest was over, participants, family and friends were all invited back into the main auditorium for a celebration of culture. Kung Fu performances, dances and songs reflecting Chinese heritage concluded the event.

Kong believes it is important for students who are not involved in the Chinese program to hear about this valuable experience.

“Chinese is traditionally not a very popular language, and when the whole state becomes united through this language and culture, it is such an irreplaceable experience,” Kong said. “I would challenge students to learn a different language, to get out of their comfort zone.”

Xiong also believes that learning this language opens up a window of opportunities for students to understand more about Chinese culture and language.

“I encourage people to try to get out of their comfort zone and learn Chinese,” Xiong said. “It just gives you this entirely new, fresh outlook on culture.”

There is even more of an interest in the Chinese language and culture after the group of five retold their experiences to other students. The department is already planning on taking even more students to next year’s event.

International students honored in statewide writing, art contest

International students from Ami Christensen’s “Advanced Academic Writing” (ESL305) course recently participated in the 2015 WITESOL Writing and Art Contest — a statewide contest of the Wisconsin Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages professional organization. The theme for this year’s contest was “Being bilingual/bicultural is important to me because ...”

Yanxing Wu from China won first place in the adult/college category for her essay, “Roots and Wings”; Jiayue (Zoe) Duan, also from China, won second place for her essay, “On the Way”; and Ayaka Niwase, an exchange student from Kansai Gaidai University in Japan won first place for her original watercolor piece, shown above.

Each student received a certificate, book of winning entries and a small cash prize at the department of languages awards banquet. For more information, contact Ami Christensen, associate lecturer in ESL, at 715-836-2614 or christa@uwec.edu.
Have you ever heard ¡Dale!, ¡Vamos!, ¡Sigue! outside of a Pitbull song this semester? If the answer is yes, you have been spinning in Spanish for sure. Since last spring, Sara Echarri Recarte (Department of Languages) has been volunteering once a week (Thursdays at 7:00 pm) to teach a spinning class in Spanish at the Wellness Crest Center. The class is conducted entirely in Spanish and the music is entirely Hispanic.

According to Sara, the idea came from wanting students to have an opportunity to be exposed to the Spanish language in a more informal environment outside of the classroom. Furthermore, the students don’t need to have an extensive knowledge of the language to participate because the expressions used are simple, the vocabulary is limited and everything accompanies a physical action or movement. With that said, there are two different types of vocabulary or expressions involved with the class. Simple words, such as body parts, numbers and basic commands, are tied in with more technical vocabulary a typical student does not know, but after a few classes, it is easy to pick up on these and students feel accomplished and more confident. After classes, Sara has even noticed more students talking to her in Spanish to tell her how much they enjoyed the class.

Since classes started this semester, they have always been at full capacity and students have been calling the Crest Wellness Center as early as 6 am to reserve a bike for the class. Although Sara was excited to test out this new idea, she could not have imagined the turnout and popularity that the class has brought. She says that she will continue to offer the classes as long as it sustains its popularity, but hopes that someday a Spanish major will be able to take over and teach the class.

At some point, Sara would also like to see other fitness classes be offered in other languages to make diverse languages more prominent on campus. So, if you are hungry for something different and want to experience another language and culture in a unique setting, come to spinning in Spanish. You will not be disappointed.

New Language Added to Course Offerings

(continued from page 1)

are an example of the unique worldview students experience when they learn this language,” says Geniusz. “In Ojibwe ‘asingin,’ stones, and ‘opwaaganag,’ pipes, are considered animate beings. One can describe neither the color of nor our interactions with these items without using the same verbs that one would use to describe another human because we are all in the ‘animate’ category.”

Very few universities in the world offer Ojibwe language classes, and UWEC’s Ojibwe language program is further unique because classes are streamed live and archived on the Language Department’s website so that anyone in the world can learn from them and help to revitalize Ojibwe. Check out our classes and help us save this language: http://www.uwec.edu/Flang/academics/ojibwe/index.htm

Book Corner

Matt Waters’ book, Ancient Persia: A Concise History of the Achaemenid Empire 550-330 BCE, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2014. It was a featured work in UWECs Priory Author Book Signing series.

Here is a blurb from the publisher: The Achaemenid Persian Empire held sway over territory stretching from the Indus River Valley to southeastern Europe and from the western Himalayas to northeast Africa. Waters gives a detailed historical overview of the Achaemenid period while considering the manifold interpretive problems historians face in constructing and understanding its history. The book situates the story of the Achaemenid Persians in the context of their predecessors in the mid-first millennium BCE and through their successors after the Macedonian conquest, constructing a compelling narrative of how the empire retained its vitality for more than two hundred years and left a massive imprint on Middle Eastern as well as Greek and European history.

Nuria Ibarrechevea Hoff and Paul J. Hoff are co-authors of ¡Qué chévere! 1: Grammar and Vocabulary. This manual is a component of the new ¡Qué chévere! textbook series developed by EMC Publishing. Paul Hoff also is a contributing writer to the annotated teacher’s editions of the textbooks ¡Qué chévere! 1, 2 and 3.

Wendy Makoons Geniusz has edited two books which will be coming out this July from the University of Minnesota Press:

Plants Have So Much to Give Us, All We Have To Do Is Ask: Anishinaabe Botanical Teachings, written by Mary Siisip Geniusz, is an amazing collection of botanical teachings, stories, medicinal and culinary recipes from the Ojibwe, or Anishinaabe, culture. Much of the information presented in it was given to the authoress by Keewaydinqay, an Ojibwe medicine woman from Michigan. The breadth of information presented in this book is so wide, that there is something for everyone in it, from scholars to Native community members to the general public.

Chi-mewinzha: Ojibwe Stories from Leech Lake, authored by Dorothy Dora Whipple, is a collection of stories the author told to Wendy Geniusz in the Ojibwe over a period of eight years. Geniusz and her co-editor, Dr. Brendan Fairbanks (University of Minnesota) transcribed and translated them. The text is illustrated by Annmarie Geniusz, and, as it uses the very latest information on Ojibwe language grammatical research, this book promises to be the most accurate bilingual Ojibwe-English text printed to date.
My name is Emily Adler and I was a double major at UWEC in Music Education and Spanish Teaching. I graduated in 2011. I currently teach music at a Spanish Immersion Elementary school in St. Paul. My job perfectly combines what I studied at UWEC. When I moved back to the cities after teaching in Texas for two years, I hadn’t even finished filling out my online application before I started getting calls from principals wanting to interview me. Right now, I am the only bilingual elementary music teacher in the district.

Living in a metro area with a significant Spanish-speaking population, not only do I use Spanish every day at my job, I am able to speak it daily in the community. Being bilingual has allowed me to make connections and friends that I otherwise would not have been able to. I am so grateful that I pursued the double major that I did. It was worth the hard work and fifth year of school to be as marketable in my career field as I am now!

My name is Hannah Becker. I graduated in the spring of 2013. My majors were Spanish Teaching and Elementary Education. I received a teaching job right after I graduated. I teach middle school and high school Spanish at two small districts in northern Wisconsin near my hometown. My experiences studying abroad definitely helped me to become the teacher I am as I have an array of experiences to pull from to talk about with my students.

¡Hola! My name is Kelly Brandstaetter and I graduated from UW-Eau Claire in December 2013 with a Spanish Education major and a TESOL minor. During my time at Eau Claire, I studied in Valladolid, Spain during the spring program - what an amazing experience! After graduation, I was a long-term substitute teacher at Menomonee Falls High School teaching Spanish II and III and Arrowhead High School teaching Spanish III and IV. This year I have my first job at Brookfield Academy teaching Upper School Students Spanish I and III.

My time at Eau Claire made me an effective and engaging teacher. By basing my lessons on language standards and skills, students are immersed in the language and interacting with authentic materials. My favorite lesson this year was when my Spanish I students looked at school schedules from numerous Spanish-speaking countries and compared and contrasted it with their schedule. Then, they shared these results in a small group. We all had a lot of fun and learned a lot of new information! I love teaching Spanish!

Bianna Butera, Spanish and French in 2001, has completed her Preliminary exams for a doctorate in Spanish Linguistics at UW-Madison!

Steve Dindorf, 1990 UWEC Graduate, BS-Spanish & Criminal Justice double major

I have been working in the beer industry since my UWEC graduation in 1990. I have worked for a local distributor, Jacob Leinenkugel and Miller Breweries, as well as most recently employed with The Boelter Companies in Milwaukee, for the last 20 years. I am the National Accounts Director for our Beverage Group. We supply the entire brewing industry with its Branded Barware Items that bars and restaurants use every day to serve the beverages to the consumers. Our industry and company have become more Global over the years, both from a customer and supplier standpoint. This has created opportunities for my traveling abroad, both to Mexico as well as Europe. I desire to return back to Spain someday, where I studied in Valladolid in 1988 (fond memories)! I’m encouraging my kids to stick with their Spanish as well into their college years, possibly resulting in a major and/or study abroad experience.

I find myself using my Spanish frequently, whether helping my kids with homework, family vacation travel to Mexico on numerous occasions, or out in the marketplace in the Milwaukee area. I am grateful for my Spanish experience at UWEC, including the friendships made, the Valladolid study abroad experience, and of course Dr Roma Hoff! Adios!

My name is Terren Duran. I am a 2007 UWEC graduate with a double major in Latin American Studies and Spanish for Business. I am currently an International Academic Advisor at Walden University advising student’s pursuing their master or doctoral degrees in Education or Public Health. I use my Spanish language skills on a daily basis via the Spanish phone line available to students, advising students during academic outreach campaigns, and via live orientation webinars. I thoroughly enjoy my position advising students while they pursue their academic and professional goals. My educational experience at UWEC and strong foundational knowledge using the Spanish language is a valuable skill I use in my current and past positions. Beyond my professional career I have applied my comprehensive Spanish language skills in several volunteer roles as a mentor, tutor, grant writer, and interpreter.

My name is Alexandra Esser and I graduated from UW- Eau Claire in 2013 with a BME and double majors in both music and German education. After I student taught in both disciplines, I interviewed for both German and music positions and took one for German. During that first year I taught four levels of German and worked on establishing a German-American Partnership Program (GAPP), which included hosting students from Germany and taking my students to Germany the following summer. I am currently teaching German in the Regis Catholic Schools System here in Eau Claire and am happy to be back in the area. I really enjoy getting to work with both middle and high school students and am looking forward to again taking students to Germany in 2016. In addition to teaching, I am working towards a masters in education with St. Mary’s University of Minnesota’s graduate program and plan to complete the program in a couple years. My current research focuses on improving vocabulary acquisition in high school students. Although I am excited to soon apply this research in my teaching, I have come to realize how strenuous simultaneously teaching and researching can be, and commend the world languages faculty for successfully doing as such.

My name is Cathy Etheridge. I graduated from UWEC in 1979. I was a Spanish major in secondary education. I taught Spanish for 33 years in the Appleton Area School district. After retiring 2 years ago, I became an adjunct faculty member of Concordia University and supervise student teachers who are placed with Spanish teachers in the Appleton area. I also use my Spanish skills as a member of Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners.

(continued on next page)
Spotlight On Alumni: Here are Their Stories (continued)

I was so blessed to have studied Spanish and French with the professors at UWEC!

Jennifer (Stolpa) Flatt, graduate in 1993 with a double major in English and Spanish—I went on to obtain a PhD in English with some graduate work in Spanish so I currently teach both English and Spanish at the University of Wisconsin-Marinette, where I have worked since 2000.

My name is Adele Gower (formally Christensen) and I graduated from UWEC in 2011 with a Spanish major and French minor. I currently work in San Francisco at a really cool startup called DataHero. I am the office/culture/many other things manager for a team of 12. It's a super fun job where I get to plan all of our team events and lunches, as well as handle all the other day-to-day office tasks.

While I might not use my Spanish or French language skills in my job, I use them a ton just walking around where I live since I'm in a very touristy area. I mostly talk with people who need directions or recommendations for places to check out in the city. Most recently, though, I was in Thailand on my honeymoon and rode in a taxi with a family from Mallorca, Spain. We got to talking about all sorts of random things, in a taxi with a family from Mallorca, Spain. We got to talking about all sorts of random things, and at the end of the ride we exchanged contact information with plans to visit each other in our respective cities.

I really loved my experience at UWEC in the language program and I would love to talk to anyone (alumni or current student) who might be interested in coming out to the west coast, especially the San Francisco Bay Area! Our best time was meeting new friends from all over the world! The highlight for me was going to the new year's Viennese ball in Austria

Karlene Groshek, B.A. in Spanish Liberal Arts, TEFL Minor, December 2011

Dearest Polyglots,

March marked my eighth month as a graduate student in the M.A. in TESOL at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, VT. I've recently returned from a two-month teaching practicum in a rural area of central Alajuela, Costa Rica, where I taught English to grade six students, and delivered workshops on pronunciation activities to public high school English teachers. The visit was especially enchanting, as my first trip abroad was to Costa Rica in 2005. Many similar feelings came back to me from the moment the plane touched down in San José. I was reminded of my reasons for deciding to study Spanish at UWEC. The most heavy-hearted point of the trip was leaving, yet again, the culture and people that have had such a great impact in my life, personally and professionally.

An email that entered my inbox mid-March brought an anxious awaited bit of news. I received notification from Fulbright that I have been accepted as a 2015-2016 English Teaching Assistant to Turkey. It is satisfying to have been granted this opportunity because I am eager to explore the country which bridges Europe and the Middle East. Aside from teaching English full-time to university students, I hope to engage in the culture by learning to play the oud and volunteering with refugee resettlement. Between now and then, I'll complete my TESOL teaching portfolio and teach Mexican high school students involved in a summer leadership camp at SIT.

Linda R. Hoover, German major in 1976.

I go back a long way! However, I have used my German skills for many years and, in the meantime, I have learned other languages. For the past 21+ years, since October 1993, I have been a foreign service officer with the U.S. Department of State and, with the exception of one 2-year tour in Washington, I have served all of my career overseas at U.S. embassies and consulates. For my 1-year tours in Islamabad and Riyadh, I did not receive Urdu or Arabic training, but rather used English in my jobs there.

1980, I lived in Belgrade for several years and learned Serbo-Croat, as it was called at that time. Technically I now speak both Serbian and Croatian.

1994-1996, For a tour in Poland, the State Department taught me Polish, which I used from 1994-1996, again from 1998-2000, and once more from 2009-2012.

1996-1998, I spent two years in Frankfurt at our consulate there and used my German all the time.

2000-2004, I spent four years in Munich at our consulate there and again used German extensively.

2012-2013, The State Department taught me French, which I have been using for the past 18 months and will continue to use for the last six months of my tour in Port-au-Prince.

I have always loved languages, enjoyed learning them, and am happy to use them whenever possible.

My name is Chelsey Hunt and I have two degrees from UWEC. I graduated in spring of 2010 with a major in Spanish. After that, I spent a year teaching English in Spain. When I came back to the United States, I went back to UWEC to earn my degree in Spanish Education & TESOL. I completed this degree in spring of 2014.

I am currently teaching Spanish for the Boyceville Community School District. I teach grades 7-12 and currently have 7th grade Spanish (7th and 8th grade alternate semesters) and Spanish levels 1 & 2 at the high school level. I will have Spanish 3 next year and hope to grow the program to Spanish 4 two years from now. I am also starting a Spanish club at my school and so far, I have about 50 students interested! We are hoping to set up pen pals with the school I worked at while in Spain.

Rachel Lajoie (formerly Rachel Anderson) I earned my degree in Spanish Liberal Arts from UWEC in 2007. At the same time I also earned a degree in Physics from UWEC. Though my career has been in science, my language studies have proven very beneficial in my work and in my personal life. After finishing my courses at UWEC in December of 2006, I spent my last semester as an REU student in La Serena, Chile, working at the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory (CTIO). Though the internship was only to last for 10 weeks, my supervisors in Chile extended my stay for another five months as a research assistant. Though I worked with the astronomers in English, knowing the (continued on next page)
Spanish language and a great deal about Latin American history greatly improved the eight months I lived in Chile. My Spanish studies have continued to benefit me in similar ways. In 2009 I earned a Master of Science in Astrophysics from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and began working at the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) in Baltimore, Maryland. During my graduate studies and my work at STScI I have been able to return to CTIO to use the telescopes there. I also work with astronomers from Spain, Mexico, and Columbia. Again, we work in English, yet knowing Spanish has been useful to me when traveling to visit collaborators or socializing with my colleagues. Finally, while studying in Canada I met my current husband, Charles-Philippe Lajoie. Charles’s is from Quebec and his first language is French. His family and friends all speak French. Learning French has been relatively easy for me thanks to my Spanish major from UWEC.

Mary Loomer Oliver, Germanic philologist, medieval enthusiast

I graduated with an English major and German minor (all the German then available) in 1964. Taught English and German. Added a few classes here and there in summers, mostly linguistics. M.A. in English at UWEC in 1973, then to UMinn for one in Germanic Philology, followed by three semesters of mostly more Germanic Philology at Ruhr Uni in Bochum, Germany. Back to teaching German and English, finally just German, in the US.

Retired in 1998 and since then I just research this and that, mostly medieval German and Scandinavian history and literature and interesting byways, in particular early medieval music, including performance thereof. Research is great fun when you don’t have to DO anything with it except entertain yourself! I have been cornered into sharing some, however, in informal venues and, once at the Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo, which in turn led to an article on the “Palestinalied” of Walther von der Vogelweide.

My name is E Alan Magnuson, Spanish major, French and math minor, graduation in 1973, teaching certification in 1975. You asked me for a “blurb” about what I am doing or have done.

After finishing my teacher training at UWEC I was hired by the Stevens Point Area School District to continue and develop the Spanish program at the Senior High. I taught in that district for 33 years. In 2008 I retired. During my years as teacher I taught all levels of Spanish 1-6. During those years I led various student groups to Spain and hosted several high school groups from Spain in our community. At times I have been asked to translate for the school district and also for the police department and for social services when dealing either with Spanish speaking parents of students or with community members.

Having studied both Spanish and French, I have been able to travel comfortably and to not only interact with people I meet but to learn more about the culture of the area I am visiting. The song says that to understand someone you need to walk a mile in their shoes. If you truly want to understand someone, speak to them in their language.

Hi my names is Danielle Martin and I graduated in May 2014 with Double Major in Spanish Professions and Business Management, Minor International Business.

Since graduating I have moved out to Washington, D.C. to take advantage of an internship opportunity within international development. I currently work for an organization called Partners of the Americas, which is a government contractor that implements Department of State, USAID, and Department of Labor development programs within the Western Hemisphere. I started out as an intern using all the skills and language abilities I developed at UWEC, and now I currently work full time as a grant budget financial manager. One of the requirements for work is fluency in Spanish, therefore my study abroad experience and major really helped because I had obtained fluency after living abroad. When I started as an intern, I worked with a program in Costa Rica called the International Business Fellows. This program took entrepreneurs from Costa Rica and paired them up with similar countries in the US that would help them develop the tools and experience they needed. I was selected for this program because of my previous experience in Costa Rica, knowledge of the language, and understanding of the culture. Gaining this internship opportunity is what ended up opening the doors for my current full time position, which has been an awesome experience so far!

Hi. This is David Matthews, 1984 UWEC Spanish grad. I am a lawyer in Houston and have represented hundreds of Spanish speaking clients since passing the bar in 1988. I studied in Mexico for my last semester and minored in Spanish. I had no idea that my legal career would begin representing injured Spanish-speaking oilfield and construction workers. I have practiced all over the country and currently have a national practice, including Puerto Rico. We have over 15 employees who speak Spanish and feel so fortunate for the Spanish education from UWEC.

Hi, this is Megan. I graduated with a Spanish degree ten years ago. After graduation I worked a few years in the finance/business field, but knew that that wasn’t my long term goal. Fortunately, I was given the opportunity to work in my dream job, and for the past several years, I’ve worked as an analyst for the Department of Defense. My day-to-day job requires me to combine research in the areas of culture, history, and language, as well as geography, religion, political and military issues in order to better understand the threats facing the U.S. around the world.

My job gives me opportunities to travel, and to meet and talk with people from around the world, and the most successful people in my field are the ones who have a genuine interest in the cultures and histories of people around the world. My degree in Spanish and my study abroad experiences in Spain were crucial in preparing me to communicate and relate with a wide range of people and have directly contributed to my success on a number of occasions. Many thanks to my professors at UWEC who helped me get where I am today!

Melissa Meyer

I graduated from UWEC in the spring of 2011 with a major in elementary education and a minor Spanish teaching. When I left the University I never thought that I would really end up using the Spanish part of my degree, but had it there more as an incentive for employers to hire me. Well, I found out that having the ability to speak Spanish truly did pay off in the job market. During the summer immediately following my graduation, I was lucky enough to be offered a position at the Waterloo Public School District, just outside of Madison. However, it was not just a regular education classroom; I was hired as a bilingual teacher for a dual immersion classroom. I had a class made up of both native English and native Spanish students and taught my day part in Spanish and part in English.

Surprisingly, I fell in love with being a (continued on next page)
bilingual teacher. The following year, I moved back to Green Bay, after being offered a position in their school district that has numerous bilingual classrooms/schools. I never thought that I would want to teach in Spanish, but I am now currently in my 4th year of being a bilingual teacher and I couldn’t love it more. I have become passionate about bilingual education, not only to allow Hispanic children the opportunity to maintain their native language, while learning English; but even more so to promote the learning of a second language early for native English speakers. The ability to speak multiple languages has so many benefits that I encourage as many as families as possible to consider the dual immersion bilingual program. Watching students from Kindergarten all the way up through school learn in two languages is truly amazing. I have continued my own studies of culture by completing my Bilingual/ESL license certification at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and I am continuing to study there to receive my Masters in Educational Leadership with a PK-12 Principal Licensure. I would love to continue using my bilingual abilities to not only teach, but work as the principal in a bilingual school.

My name is Cody Meyers, and I graduated from UW-Eau Claire in May of 2009 with a major in Latin American Studies and a minor in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. Immediately after graduation, I left for Costa Rica to work as an English teacher. A year and a half later, I returned to Wisconsin and earned a Wisconsin teaching license in both English as a Second Language and Spanish. Now, I currently work in Colby, Wisconsin as the coordinator for its K-12 English Language Learner (ELL) program. My responsibilities include assessing ELL students’ language proficiency, creating individualized language development plans, and working with staff to promote usage of teaching strategies beneficial to language learners. Additionally, my Spanish-speaking abilities are critical throughout the day as I also serve as a liaison between school staff and Spanish-speaking students and their families. I really enjoy getting to use my Spanish to make parent contacts, translate documents, interpret during conferences/meetings and promote cultural awareness within my district and community.

This degree has allowed me to accomplish great things, and it will continue to serve as a solid platform from which I’ll continue to grow professionally. As our state’s language learner population soars, I’d recommend to any student pursing a degree in education to add on an ESL license. It will make you an indispensable resource to all stakeholders in your district. Finally, I’d like to send a special thanks to my former professors Dr. Manuel Fernandez and Dr. Kate Reynolds, who were both such key influences in helping me to ultimately choose education as my career.

My name is Elise Buxton Nakano, and I graduated in 1983 with majors in French and Spanish. I also spent a year as an exchange student in Japan and had a minor in East Asian studies. I went back to school to get my Master’s degree in Secondary Education, at age 39, to become a teacher. I have been a teacher in public schools for 10 years and have taught French, Spanish, Italian, and Japanese.

Anne (Betz) Nerbovic, Japanese Minor, Graduation Date: December 2008

After graduating in December 2008 from UWEC, I worked in fast food, traveled and eventually ended up going back to school at UWEC and got a degree in Elementary Education. My husband and I then got a job working for an international school organization called Quality Schools International. We were offered positions at a school in Zhuhai, China. Currently I am teaching 15 five year olds, which are a mixture of children from all over the world. My students are from China, Japan, America, New Zealand, France, Italy, Vietnam and India.

While I teach all day in English and have an aid who helps with Chinese translations, I have also been using my Japanese language skills with my three Japanese students. Due to not using it much over the years, I have lost some of my ability, but communicating with these three students when they were unable to understand my directions or just talking with them on a personal level has helped me and them become closer. One of my students also does not understand English, so it has been helpful to speak some Japanese with him so that he can understand directions or words that the class is learning to read. Even though I only studied Japanese at the University because of my love of Japanese culture and the language, it has really benefited me in working with my students as well as traveling abroad. Now I am wishing I listened to Sensei Kakegawa and studied even harder back then!

Ingrid Peterson ‘88, Psychology Major, French Minor

I currently work in Career Services at a small, private, Catholic, liberal arts college in Vermont. After UWEC, I obtained my Master’s degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Appalachian State University in North Carolina. I have been at Saint Michael’s College in Vermont for 20 years. Conveniently, we are about an hour from Montreal so while I don’t use my French skills on a daily basis, they do come in handy for a quick weekend trip north. Thank you UWEC for paving the way to a career in which cultural sensitivity is so crucial for our large international student population.

Barbara (Ledwith) Prust - Spanish secondary ed., vocal music, 1976

I just retired from teaching in June 2013, after having taught in Wisconsin for eight years (Waukesha and Fond du Lac) and 25 years overseas in various countries (Peru, Mexico, Jordan, Korea, Guatemala, Turkey). I am now using my other major (music), working as a church music director in Waterloo, Iowa, but I’m also a free-lance translator/interpreter for the Waterloo School District, interpreting for parent-teacher conferences. In addition, I do some volunteer translating for an NGO in town and interpret twice a month at a free clinic, which has been extremely gratifying. My husband (also a retired teacher) and I raised our two kids overseas; as adults, they are both using their bilingual skills in the workplace.

James Richie, Spanish Teacher - McDonnell Area Catholic High School

My degree from UWEC helped prepare me a lot for my career. Since graduating with a BA in Spanish liberal arts and a minor in language studies in 2014, I have become the head of the world language department at a high school in the Chippewa Valley area [McDonnell Area Catholic High School]. My job includes teaching language, literature, and culture as well as preparing and encouraging students to explore global opportunities. Thanks to what I learned at UW Eau Claire, I’ve been able to add new courses and implement effective teaching strategies.

Kathleen Ruscin, Class of 1972, UW-Eau Claire

I was an English major with a minor in French (secondary education). Unfortunately, I found that I did not like to handle a large group of students and decided after student teaching to work in the business world instead. I was the Executive Secretary at Eau Claire Electric Cooperative for 10 of my 25 years there; then held the same position at Regis High School (then CASE Catholic Schools).

(continued on next page)
Spotlight On Alumni: Here are Their Stories (continued)

While at CASE, I was in charge of enabling foreign students to get their visas and other paperwork prepared to attend our schools and continued to monitor them during their stays in the US. (Very interesting and successful project). I am now retired and living with my husband in Fall Creek, Wisconsin, on the farm on which I grew up. We travel extensively overseas and continue to explore the ins and outs of the lives of people we meet there and stay in contact with very close friends we have made in the areas we have travelled.

Jennifer Sallis UWEC 1992, French major, Spanish minor

Since 2011 Jennifer has been employed by the Ralph Lauren Corporation in NJ. Recently Jennifer was asked to bring her work experience to Ralph Lauren’s Change Management team in Europe, headquartered in Switzerland. Jennifer will now spend 1-2 weeks each month working in the Geneva office. Her BA in French and Spanish have continued to prove extremely useful!

My name is Ashley Salmonson. I graduated in December of 2012 from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire (UWEC) with a double major in Communication Sciences and Disorders and Spanish. During my undergraduate studies, I studied at the Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, Recinto en San German through the National Student Exchange program and stayed the additional three summer months to work. After graduation, I worked in Nicaragua for a year as a bilingual speech-language pathologist (SLP) at Los Pipitos, a school for children and adults with disabilities. I worked with children and adults in English and Spanish with varying communication disorders, including Down syndrome, autism, phonological and language disorders, and deafness. Most therapy was in Spanish with monolingual speakers and a few Spanish-English bilingual speakers.

I’m currently a graduate student at The College of Saint Rose in Albany, New York studying to be a bilingual SLP. I completed the Advanced Bilingual English-Spanish Education Certification Program at The College of Saint Rose in December of 2014. I’ve used my Spanish skills in many of my clinical settings. I’ve interacted in Spanish and English with children who have autism, and communicated with monolingual Spanish parents as their interpreter to present concerns as a SLP and the concerns of teachers and other school specialists. I translated documents from English to Spanish for monolingual Spanish parents and wrote an informal Spanish articulation screener with Spanish sound developmental expectations. I will be graduating in August of 2015, and would like to work in a medical setting with individuals with cognitive disorders who are bilingual speakers.

Betsy Sanford, French Teaching, TESOL minor, Graduated 2009

I attribute nearly 100% of my professional accomplishments and experiences to my having studied a foreign language. After college, I spent a year in France working at a high school. Since then, my most valued accomplishment is taking a group of high school French students from Minnesota on a trip to France and teaching them how to fall in love with the language and culture just like I did. After a semester teaching at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, I found my forever school in July 2014 in Florence, Arizona. I currently teach French 1-4, AP, and IB French at Florence High School (celebrating its 100th year in 2015) and am planning my second student trip to France for 2016. As a teacher at an International Baccalaureate school, I’ve met teachers from all over the world, gained international perspective, and realized how to push students to levels that as a college student I thought were impossible. I’m finally learning to appreciate the most challenging French courses I took at UWEC, as they have equipped me with so much knowledge and so many resources (films, literature, etc.) that I would have otherwise never known were important to the Francophone world. Teaching IB French is not easy, but it is challenging me to my maximum potential, and I feel extra-well-qualified coming from Wisconsin.

My name is Scott Schone. I was a double major in Spanish and Business Admin with an Accounting Minor graduating in 1983. After two years as an international / Spanish speaking auditor for Cargill, I went to the U of Minnesota for my Industrial Relations Masters. Since about 1988 I have been working in HR. In 2001 I obtained a job as Director of HR for a Global Medical Company in Minnesota. Soon they found out I spoke Spanish and in 2002 I was transferred to Puerto Rico as Director of HR in our plant there. I lived in PR for 6 years and in 2009 I transferred to Belo Horizonte Brazil as Director of HR for SJM in our plant. During this stay I learned Portuguese. In 2009/2010 I transferred to Costa Rica to manage the start-up of our facility in Costa Rica. I have lived in Costa Rica since 2010. Since that move I have obtained HR responsibility for all of SJM Latin America sites. This includes manufacturing plants in Puerto Rico, Brazil, and Costa Rica and sales offices in Puerto Rico, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina. I travel about 40-50% yearly to these sites and am now fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.

It is a certainty that these opportunities are a direct result of my Spanish (and now Portuguese) language skills. Language has opened many doors in may life. Also, I have had the fortune of living in the States, Chile, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and now Costa Rica which has given me a broad perspective on different ways of doing things and different cultures.

My name is Kayla Vandenberg. I’m a UWEC alum. I studied Spanish and I graduated in December 2013. I am currently teaching in Aldine ISD in Houston. I am a sixth grade Spanish teacher at an intermediate school. I teach seven classes each semester. Because I am in Houston, I am surrounded by native speakers. Over half of my students are native speakers. I have native speakers and non-native speakers in each class that I teach so it’s a fun challenge daily. I get to work with my non-native speakers on the introduction to Spanish content and I can push my native speakers to the next level since most of them haven’t had formal Spanish education. I love what I do and I feel I am truly accomplishing my goals as an educator.

Alyssa Walker, UWSMPH Class of 2016 MD Candidate

I am a third year medical student at UW School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison, WI. I graduated from UW- Eau Claire in 2012 with a Biology major and minors in Chemistry and Spanish. I began working with a student-run free clinic through my medical school that serves uninsured members of the community. In this particular clinic, the patient population is predominantly Hispanic and when working I frequently act as a translator during medical encounters. I took on a leadership position with this clinic in my second year so I could continue working with this wonderful population of patients. I have also continued to use my minor in Spanish to communicate with Spanish-speaking patients while on my third year clinical rotations. It makes such a difference to interact with my patients in their native language, and I am so thankful I am able to do so! By communicating in their

(continued on next page)
The Department of Languages welcomes and invites your support. Private gifts to the Department of Languages Advancement Fund enable us to address needs that cannot be met by the state-assisted operating budget. This fund provides resources to endow existing or create new student scholarships, to schedule extracurricular events such as conferences with invited guest speakers, or to enhance the learning environment for our students.

Your contribution to the Department of Languages Advancement Fund will be gratefully accepted by the UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Inc. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes. Most important, your gift will enable the department to continue to build upon its reputation for excellence and to provide future generations the same quality education you received and more.

Please use this form to send in your contribution and know that you are making a difference in the future of our department. You may also simply go to http://connect.uwec.edu/donate where you will find easy instructions for online donations. Thank you!

Rachel Hookstead Zock, my major was Spanish and my minor was French. After a junior year in Spain and upon graduating in 1979, I continued my studies by living in Europe for a number of years to also acquire fluency in Italian, German, and Portuguese. E-mail, FB, and Skype have been great ways to stay current with friends from then. Upon returning to the US, I took a job with Lufthansa German Airlines at JFK Airport as a Passenger Service Agent. As Lufthansa was also the handling agent for TAP Air Portugal, Royal Air Maroc, and Kuwait Airways, numerous languages were spoken on a daily basis. Fortunately, that job also gave me the opportunity to travel all over the world. Languages came in handy! Those 15 years were full of unusual experiences and lots of stories! Upon marriage and 2 sons, my family moved to upstate NY where I continue to use my languages to tutor and substitute teach in the Foreign Language classes for the VC School District. In between being a full time mom, and showing my boys the wonders of travel as often as possible, I’ve also been taking courses to learn Chinese. The one great thing about foreign languages is that the possibilities are endless!

To all those studying at UWEC, make the most of your studies, foster your acquaintances, and enjoy the variety of opportunities that are awaiting you!

Deana Zorko ’89, a UW-Eau Claire Spanish graduate, has been named 2015 Teacher of the Year by the Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers.

Conference Presentations and Publications
See the many and varied accomplishments of our instructors. Visit http://www.uwec.edu/Flang/research/faculty.htm.

Support Your Department of Languages

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU
What have you been doing since graduation? We would like to hear what’s happened to our language graduates. So please send updates to Vickie Schafer via email (lazarvr@uwec.edu) or the mail address below.

Department of Languages
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004
Phone: 715-836-4287
Fax: 715-836-2922

Please visit us on the web at www.uwec.edu/Flang or join us on Facebook.

Our fall newsletter is published online and in print. Our spring newsletter is published online only. To receive electronic notifications, please add your email address to the Alumni files by going to www.uwec.edu/alumni/index.htm and Update your information.

To view our latest newsletters, go to: www.uwec.edu/Flang/news/newsletters.htm

Spotlight On Alumni: Here are Their Stories (continued)