Dear CT COLT Colleagues,

There’s no denying it’s been a long winter and with the arrival of spring, it’s time to start fresh, plan new adventures, connect with people, generate good energy and learn new things!

Spring wakes us, nurtures us and revives us. I have yet again been inspired by attending and participating in CT COLT sponsored events during the month of March. It began on Saturday, March 14 at Central Connecticut State University and their hosting of the 9th Conference for Language Teachers. The CT COLT World Language Future Teachers Honor Society held its 1st initiation and inducted nine promising language teachers. On March 17, Lyman Hall High School in Wallingford hosted our Poetry Contest with over four hundred students from forty eight schools. The CREC Theater at the Learning Corridor hosted our annual Rhyme Celebration with 220 students from 32 schools on March 18th.

My passion for teaching is always revitalized by students regardless of their age! Our students’ commitment, engagement, and enthusiasm in striving for career excellence, reciting poems and riddles and singing songs made for delightful sunshine during March!

“It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.” (Rainer Maria Rilke)

I’d like to give a shout out to all of our participating students, to their teachers, to their parents and most importantly to all of the volunteers for their hard work and time dedicated to the success of these events. A special thanks to the host schools and all the chairpersons:

Central Connecticut State University-Rocio Fuentes, Linda Dalpe, Aileen Dever, Christine Dombrowski
Lyman Hall High School in Wallingford-Kimberly Moore, MaryLouise Ennis, Paul St. Louis
The CREC Theater at the Learning Corridor-Kate Krotzer, Kristen Tagg

Many of our member volunteers have been working hard behind the scenes all winter long on several initiatives that include:

- The first initiation of the CT COLT World Language Future Teachers Honor Society

On March 14 at the CCSU 9th Conference for Language Teachers, ten language majors who have shown and proven a deep interest in language and culture and wish to share this love by becoming a world language teacher were inducted.

- The re-instating of the State World Languages Consultant position

On February 4th, a small group of World Language professionals accompanied me to the monthly State Board of Education meeting. During the public participation portion of the meeting, we all spoke to board members about how a World Languages Consultant would provide leadership and act as a representative and collaborative agent in three major areas:

- re-designing a rigorous framework and vision for instruction and assessment in world languages that is fully aligned with Common Core and graduates students who are truly proficient in world languages;
- providing professional development opportunities specific to world languages for all world language teachers in the state; and,
- ensuring the availability of highly qualified world language teachers for all school districts.

On March 24th, Vice-President Jimmy Wildman and I met with Interim Commissioner Dianne Wentzell, Ellen Cohn, Division Director of the Academic Office, and Stephen Armstrong, Past Social Studies Consultant. We were provided with suggestions...
of how to rally the troops in a grassroots effort. Please let us know if you’d like to be part of this challenging yet indispensable initiative! We are looking for members to serve on this committee in our journey to establish and build a working relationship with the Department of Education.

**The Seal of Biliteracy**

What is the Seal of Biliteracy? The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by a school, school district, county office of education or state in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. Its vision is to help students recognize the value of their academic success and see the tangible benefits of being bilingual. You can read more and learn about the states that have already adopted the Seal by visiting the Seal of Biliteracy Website at [http://sealofbiliteracy.org/](http://sealofbiliteracy.org/). You can also visit their Facebook posts, pins, images and tweets from everyone across the nation! If you have something to share, use the hashtag #sealofbiliteracy or #biliteracy on Twitter or Instagram. At our March Board of Directors meeting, we invited Stacie Berdan, 2013 Fall Conference keynote speaker and co-author of **RAISING GLOBAL CHILDREN: WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP OUR CHILDREN GROW UP READY TO SUCCEED IN A MULTICULTURAL GLOBAL ECONOMY**, to join us in researching our efforts for a Seal of Biliteracy here in CT. She will join us again in May and provide us with advice and suggestions moving forward. Please let us know if you’d like to be part of this fast-moving initiative to promote bilingualism!

“Spring is the time of plans and projects. (Leo Tolstoy)

Our mantra must be “Many languages - one voice.” We must advocate that foreign language study is critical in the education of our children. On the CT COLT website and on the ACTFL website there are advocacy articles about the need to speak another language and understand another culture. I am asking you to join us. I want to challenge you to share your talent, your passion, your expertise with others. Whether a university professor, a secondary or elementary teacher, or a student teacher, you have a great deal to offer the organization. Feel free to contact me at lapmane@ctcolt.org to discuss how you can get involved!

Stay connected! Follow us on Facebook at [https://www.facebook.com/CTCOLT](https://www.facebook.com/CTCOLT), Twitter at @CT_COLT, or visit our website at [http://www.ctcolt.org/pages/welcome.asp](http://www.ctcolt.org/pages/welcome.asp).

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**Advocacy**

**Reauthorization of ESEA: Where in the World Are Languages?**

By Guest Blogger on March 2, 2015 12:29 PM

By guest bloggers Marty Abbott and Bill Rivers

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is leaving behind world languages. Marty Abbott the executive director of American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and Bill Rivers the executive director of Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL), outline why this should not be the case and how you can get involved.
Demand for World Languages

Global skills are fundamental to responsible citizenship in the 21st Century. The need for global skills has never been as acute, as dynamic, and as challenging, influencing the growth and fulfillment of the individual and carrying significant implications for global security, economic growth, and social justice, both in the United States and worldwide.

What’s more, Americans recognize this. Surveys show that 70% of respondents consider language to be as important as math and science and that our children should be fluent in another language by the time they graduate from high school. Parents all over the country pressure their Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to start language programs at the elementary school level—and increasingly, these parents start charter schools when the local school system doesn’t provide options for learning languages. Forward-looking governors in states as diverse as Utah, Delaware, and Kentucky have started statewide world language initiatives for their K-12 systems. Seals of Biliteracy for the high school diploma have been established in eight states, with legislation pending in at least six more.

A Federal Obligation

Why then do we see K-12 world language education as a "federal problem"? Simply put, the United States Department of Education has an obligation to lead policy on world languages. Why? To begin, it's worth remembering that there are more than 17,000 public school districts in the United States. Each one has broad discretion over curriculum, and almost all are governed by locally elected school boards. As a result, inclusion of language education at the K-12 level is haphazard at best, and too many LEAs ascribe to the persistent myth that language education is "nice to have," but that achievement in English language arts and mathematics are first and foremost in the curriculum.

As we know, this myth is demonstrably false. Language programs, and in particular, Dual Language Immersion, have been shown to reverse achievement gaps for the most disadvantaged students in our schools, and Dual Language Immersion participants show impressive results in English literacy and in math. Denying children the opportunity to participate in world language programs because they are seen as "enrichments" constitutes a fundamental affront to the principles of equal access and excellence for all students.

The Federal Role, in our view, is to provide leadership—both in terms of rhetoric and funding—to encourage school systems
to add world languages to their curricula. This requires a federally-driven program and funding.

**FLAP**

Fortunately, there has been a world-class, innovative world languages program in the US Department of Education since 1991. The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), created as a recommendation of the 1979 President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies, served for 20 years as a living laboratory for world languages, providing three to five year matching grants to Local Education Agencies to seed language programs. There were also options for funding at the state level and in partnership with institutions of higher learning. At the local level, dozens of school districts used FLAP funding to seed language programs, including Memphis, Tennessee; Portland, Oregon; Anchorage, Alaska; and Oxford, Mississippi.

But FLAP faces a bleak future, with nothing to replace it. The US Department of Education stopped funding FLAP in 2012 and placed it in the Well-Rounded Program bucket, which hasn't been funded since. Congress is working to update the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) formerly known as No Child Left Behind. None of the versions of the new Act—Senate, House, Republican, Democratic—have any dedicated programming for world languages.

**We Need You!**

So what can be done? You can lend your voice to those of the 13,000 language educators of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, and the 103 organizational members of the Joint National Committee for Languages, by letting the US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions know that **languages matter**. JNCL and ACTFL have a template for messages to the committee; [click here](#) to access it and send a message.

It's too important—we can't let languages slip through the cracks in the reauthorization of ESEA!

*Follow [ACTFL](#), [JNCL](#), and [Asia Society](#) on Twitter.*

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**Global Connecticut**

March 1, 2012 By [CBIA](#)

**Boosting exports, foreign direct investment a key to recovery**
By Bill DeRosa

With unemployment going from 4.4% in January 2007 to a high of 9.2% by February 2010, there is no question that the Great Recession hit Connecticut hard. But without the economic contribution of globally active companies, it's likely that the impact would have been much worse.

Connecticut is now home to 5,400 companies that export goods or services to foreign countries, says Anne Evans, director of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) [Middletown Export Assistance Center](#). Many of those companies were able to ride out the recession and minimize job losses because they were selling to markets that continued to expand. Take Canada, for example. Connecticut companies export more products to Canada than any other country except France. Because our neighbors to the north were not hit as hard by the recession (employment there fell only 1.8%), sales to Canada remained more robust than sales to many other states and countries.

Indeed, exporting traditionally has been a way for companies to guard against regional or national economic downturns. [CBIA's 2011 International Trade Survey](#) found that more than
half (56%) of the 265 Connecticut exporters surveyed said that exporting helped them weather the recession and/or better position their firms for a stronger recovery.

“Exporting helps companies offset domestic economic cycles, because their markets are more diverse,” says John Rathgeber, CBIA’s president and CEO, who compares exporting to diversifying one’s personal investment portfolio as a means of protecting against downturns in any one financial sector.

The state’s economy was also supported during the recession by another kind of globally active company: U.S. subsidiaries of foreign-owned firms.

Connecticut is home to approximately 1,000 U.S. subsidiaries. “We’re lucky to have so many foreign-owned companies,” says Laura Jaworski, director of the state Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Foreign Affairs Office. She points out that foreign direct investment (FDI) in Connecticut creates jobs, increases tax revenue, and leads to knowledge transfer and the adoption of new technologies and workforce practices. In addition, when foreign-owned companies locate a subsidiary in Connecticut, their suppliers often come too, adding more jobs and boosting economic growth.

The Export Effect

Connecticut exporters bring billions of dollars into the state, bolstering tax revenues, Gross State Product (GSP), and their own ability to create more jobs.

Over the last decade, sales of manufactured goods by Connecticut companies to overseas markets have grown impressively, nearly doubling from over $8 billion in 2000 to more than $16 billion in 2010. During that time, exports’ share of GSP rose from 4.9% to 6.8%.

In 2010, Connecticut exported $2.2 billion in manufactured goods to France, making that country the state’s top trading partner, followed by Canada ($1.6 billion), Germany ($1.3 billion), China ($1 billion), and Mexico ($1 billion). Belgium, Singapore, the UK, the Netherlands, and Japan rounded out the top ten. Exports of transportation equipment led the way for Connecticut with nearly $7 billion in sales, followed by machinery ($1.5 billion), and computer and electronic products ($1.3 billion).

Exporting’s role in job creation is significant, says Jaworski, noting that for every $1 million in new exports, 13 additional jobs are created. Exports currently support, directly and indirectly, 500,000 jobs in Connecticut—including 24% of the state’s manufacturing jobs.

“Exporting is about 35% of our revenue and so roughly 35% of our 850 jobs. So it’s important,” says Bill Lee, president and CEO of The Lee Company in Westbrook. His firm manufactures miniature hydraulic components and exports them around the world to companies involved in commercial airliner construction.

Selling overseas also sustains many of the state’s small and midsize businesses—companies with fewer than 500 employees. Such companies comprise 90% of Connecticut’s exporters, account for more than one-quarter of the state’s total exports, and average more than $1 million in exports per firm.

“Export sales are about 70% of our total revenues and support about 50 out of 75 jobs,” says Lou Auletta, president and CEO of Bauer Inc., a Bristol-based manufacturer of aircraft component test systems and support equipment. Bauer has been exporting for many years, says Auletta, selling its products to countries in Asia, the Middle East, Europe, South America, and Africa.

Why Export?

According to CBIA’s 2011 International Trade Survey, the vast majority of Connecticut companies (83%) enter foreign markets to increase company sales and profits. However, businesses also benefit from exporting in a number of less direct ways that ultimately boost their bottom line, says Evans.

“Exporting elevates your status and usually makes you a better manufacturer, because you have to meet more standards and certifications,” she says. “Companies that export tend to be successful domestic suppliers, because they have to have a world-class product. It’s a good thing to be able to tell a
company in Ohio that you sell worldwide and that your products meet international standards.” In addition, since 95% of consumers are outside the U.S., exporting is clearly a way for businesses to expand their customer base, says Evans. Tim Pedrotty can attest to that. Director of global business development at Reflexite Corp. in Avon, Pedrotty attributes much of his company’s success and capacity for job creation to its overseas program. “The international component is a big, big part of our business,” he says. “More than 50% of our sales are now overseas.”

A producer and developer of reflective materials and optics components for a variety of industries, Reflexite has been a global player for more than 25 years and has grown into a multinational company with operations on six continents and 500 employees worldwide.

“We embarked on globalization of our company in the mid-eighties, which first started with exports,” says Pedrotty. “We then moved into joint ventures with overseas partners and grew into having overseas subsidiaries. Not having the international component would have severely constrained our growth.”

Pedrotty says that when Reflexite opens an overseas subsidiary, jobs are created not only in the foreign country but in Connecticut as well. “Growing in an overseas country means we’re better able to penetrate that market, which creates more demand for our products, and that demand is typically filled from Connecticut. So, we may hire someone overseas in manufacturing, distribution, or marketing, but that creates jobs here that we might not have otherwise had.”

Impact of Foreign Direct Investment

Like exporting, FDI supports a significant number of jobs in Connecticut. In 2009, for example, U.S. subsidiaries employed 100,700 people, or more than 7% of the state’s total private-industry workforce, giving Connecticut the third-highest share in the U.S. of workers employed by foreign companies (behind only Delaware at 8.5% and New Hampshire at 7.6%). Thirty-five percent of those workers were employed in manufacturing.

Companies from seven countries accounted for most of Connecticut’s “insourced” jobs in ’09: the Netherlands (19,600), the United Kingdom (18,300), Germany (10,700), Switzerland (8,600), France (7,400), Japan (6,600), and Canada (6,100).

Connecticut’s Appeal

What attracts foreign corporations to Connecticut? To answer that, says CBIA economist Pete Gioia, it helps to understand what kind of firms come here. “Our companies tend to be at the top of the food chain—the highest of the high end—when it comes to manufacturing, financial services, and research and development,” he says.

Such companies depend on innovation and productivity gains, so they place a high value on a well-educated, productive workforce and the quality of a state’s colleges and universities—areas in which Connecticut has traditionally excelled.
Søren Torp Laursen, president of LEGO Systems Inc. in Enfield, wants to make sure it stays that way. “It is vital to continue to prioritize investments to the education sector so that Connecticut can stay ahead and to foster the growth of future professionals,” he says. Headquartered in Denmark, LEGO employs 500 people here. The iconic toymaker began Connecticut operations in Brookfield in 1973, moving to its current location two years later.

The state’s education environment is the main draw for TRUMPF Inc. President and CEO Rolf Biekert. A German developer and producer of industrial lasers and fabricating machinery, Biekert’s firm employs more than 500 people at its North American headquarters in Farmington.

“Connecticut’s biggest advantage is that it values education,” he says. “Many outstanding academic institutions are located in the state, and according to the DECD, the state’s workforce is ranked nationally as having the most educated labor pool. Employee productivity is at an all-time high, with output per worker more than 33% above the national average. I would say this is something we can all be proud of.” Nevertheless, Biekert is concerned that Connecticut may be losing its edge when it comes to workforce development. Referring to a growing shortage of qualified workers for the precision manufacturing industry, he argues that Connecticut’s education system must place greater emphasis on science and technology and make sure students understand what modern manufacturing is all about. And, he says, companies like his can help.

“Manufacturers must do their part in reaching out to young people. We need to let tomorrow’s workers know that in the 21st century, this is not your grandfather’s factory floor. Today’s manufacturing facilities are bright and clean, and manufacturing offers interesting, well-paying jobs. We all need to do a better job of presenting manufacturing as a viable career option.”

Another key component of Connecticut’s appeal to foreign companies is its location—a huge plus for German pharmaceutical firm Boehringer Ingelheim. The company began operating in Connecticut in 1971 and employs 2,500 at its Ridgefield R&D and manufacturing facility, the largest of its five U.S. subsidiaries.

“For Boehringer Ingelheim, it’s geography—specifically that we have easy access to resources in places like Boston and New York,” says John Adamou, head of U.S. Strategic Transactions and Alliance Management.

“The strategic advantage that this provides is that it puts us firmly in the center of the knowledge and technology corridor. For instance, for a company in the healthcare or biotech industry, everything is within a reasonable driving distance, including our labor pool and major health, technology, and higher education institutions.”

Despite the high cost of doing business here, Connecticut is often seen as a good business location because of its quality of life, the key advantage for Laursen.

While he extols the virtues of the state’s excellent educational institutions and location between Boston and New York—which, he says, “makes it easy to do business with external partners in both cities”—it’s clear that life in the Nutmeg State is a good fit for LEGO.

“Connecticut is a great place to live, particularly for families with children,” he observes. “The small-town communities provide a high quality of life, which helps support our core LEGO company values. We also like to say we are ‘an hour from awesome,’ particularly for those who are looking for an active lifestyle. Whether it is skiing, nice beaches, or amazing restaurants, the central location of our headquarters offers a variety of activities outside the workplace.”

Laursen admits, however, that LEGO’s north-central location sometimes makes attracting young, single professionals difficult. “We need more areas developed like West Hartford, where people can find a contemporary lifestyle that fits the transition from college to work life.”

Ramping Up FDI

Although global business has had a positive impact on Connecticut’s economy, the state’s slow recovery from the recession and continued high unemployment highlight the need to refocus on economic opportunities afforded by FDI.

“Foreign direct investment is a key strategy for jumpstarting significant employment gains in Connecticut,” says Gioia. “One of the reasons job growth here has been so anemic is that we haven’t paid attention to foreign direct investment as much as other states have.”

Of course, Gioia points out, that wasn’t always the case. During the 1970s and early 1980s, the state was aggressive—and extremely successful—in recruiting foreign firms. In fact, that’s when most of the foreign-owned businesses operating in Connecticut today came here. During that time, says former DECD Commissioner Ed Stockton, the state maintained offices
in Frankfurt and Tokyo to facilitate recruitment from Europe and Asia.

“We once had a visit from the chairman of the board of a British company, and Governor Grasso asked him why he came to Connecticut,” recalls Stockton. “He said that his company had put out a notice indicating an interest in establishing a U.S. location and that Connecticut’s European representative was the first person on his doorstep.”

Stockton acknowledges that effective foreign outreach is expensive and would require additional personnel in the DECD’s International Affairs Office, but he believes it’s worth the expense. “You cannot sell Connecticut sitting behind a desk in Hartford. You’ve got to get out and establish relationships. And the way you do that is visiting companies overseas and inviting them to visit Connecticut. It costs money, but the return on investment is enormous.”

The good news is that under Commissioner Catherine Smith’s leadership, the DECD appears ready to renew efforts to attract foreign-owned companies to Connecticut. Jaworski, the sole staff person in the DECD’s International Affairs Office (Stockton recalls there being six during his tenure), says that the department is currently planning strategy and developing action steps. “There is an appetite to get out there and do outreach and globally brand Connecticut,” she says.

**Strategic Recruiting**

Efforts to attract FDI will have a much better chance of succeeding, says Rathgeber, if the state takes a strategic approach. “Clearly we need to understand what types of companies have been successful here and have a good potential for being successful. That’s not picking winners and losers, but there are certain types of business profiles that traditionally have been better able to be competitive from a base like Connecticut.”

As an example, Rathgeber cites German manufacturers like TRUMPF that specialize in high-end capital goods. They’re successful here, he says, in part because they’re not shocked by the structural costs (although they’re not happy about them) and there are markets here and throughout North America for their products. In addition, they need employees with the same advanced skill-sets that they would find at home.

“Conversely,” Rathgeber notes, “we are not going to be successful attracting manufacturers from low-income, low-cost foreign environments that produce marginal-value-added products. They’re not going to be successful in a global economy with the cost structures here in Connecticut.”

**Speak the Same Language**

Anthony Chirico advocates that the state also take a strategic approach to helping businesses—especially small businesses—meet the challenges of exporting. Chirico is president and CEO of the Chirico Group, and Essex-based consulting firm specializing in international trade. He recommends that the state set up a task force to identify what Connecticut products and services are the best candidates for export and the foreign distributors who could help get those products and services to the right markets. He sees the state’s website as a key tool.

“He would also like to see the state’s website available in multiple languages, giving overseas companies seeking business opportunities in Connecticut more ready access to information. “If someone wants to visit here from, say, China or the Arab world and get an idea of where to go, it’s difficult, because everything is in English. In California, the state website is in multiple languages [53, to be exact], so the ease of information access for foreigners is good.”

Gioia has similar advice for companies that want to begin or expand their overseas business. “A lot of companies have a web presence to inform their customers and take orders,” he says, “but very few have foreign-language capacity. You buy in your language, you sell in their language.”

**New Export Initiatives**

The DECD and the DOC’s Middletown office are planning several new initiatives to support Connecticut companies interested in introducing a product to foreign markets or extending their global reach. Their timing is good, given rising concern about the potential impact of the European debt crisis on Connecticut exports. Five of the state’s top ten trade partners are European countries.

“The European market has been slow for us for the past few years,” says Bauer’s Auletta, “so we would expect it to degrade much more. Any recovery in that market we might have been looking forward to would be a longer time coming.”

The Lee Company also has a lot at stake in Europe, and Bill Lee thinks the debt crisis could have a significant negative impact.
“We own five sales subsidiaries in Europe,” he says, “so we have money over there, operating funds in local banks held mostly in U.S. dollars. So we’re watching very carefully.”

The DOC’s Evans believes the European debt crisis will affect Connecticut exports, but her agency is not simply taking a wait-and-see approach. “In the spring, we are doing a large event that will have our senior staff from all over Europe, plus some economists, talking to the region’s companies about the issue,” she says. “Connecticut companies sell a lot in Europe, but our job is to make it so companies are global, so that they’re selling to South America and Asia too. And that’s the key. Diversifying your export markets helps you weather the crisis better.”

Evans’s office is also offering a series of webinars this year to help Connecticut small businesses break into exporting. Topics include global defense market opportunities, export compliance basics, and international standards and certifications. (Register here.)

The DECD is collaborating with the DOC on several new initiatives. “We have a lot of programs happening in the state that would make now a better time than ever to explore other markets,” says Jaworski, who explains that Connecticut was awarded a $546,822 State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). “The grant will allow us to offer programs to educate companies on what it takes to export to different markets and help make that process a little more financially feasible for companies.”

Among upcoming events is a China Trade Day on June 11, designed to teach Connecticut firms the ins and outs of exporting to China. The session will bring in China industry experts to help companies in the manufacturing and service industries find Chinese business partners.

The DECD is holding a Global Trade Summit July 25–27 at the Mohegan Sun in conjunction with the U.S. DOC and the U.S. Small Business Research and Innovation Office. Jaworski urges any company “with a high-tech product ready for commercialization and ready to be exported” to attend.
The DECD also has its sights set on Brazil and is working on a new project with the Eastern Trade Council (ETC) to advance exporting to that emerging market. The ETC comprises New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the six New England states. "Through our ETC budget, we’re in the process of opening an office in Brazil as a six-month pilot program,” says Jaworski, who served as ETC chair in 2011. “The office will be staffed by a representative who will be able to answer basic market-research questions from companies in the 10-state region.” Jaworski explains that the ETC will cover the costs, but that if the work becomes extensive, a fee-for-service arrangement may be added.

“We selected Brazil as a test market for this pilot project because we see it as a place of growth and a place where companies need some extra help; there seem to be a lot of non-tariff regulatory barriers [in Brazil],” she says. “Right now we’re very excited that for no cost, a company will have access to our contact down there.”

**Act Locally, Succeed Globally**

One of the most important things the state can do to strengthen its position in the global economy is to improve the business climate right here at home.

“Make it a better environment in general for companies to do business,” says Lee.

Rathgeber agrees. “It’s the same as the priorities for reinvestment in the state’s economic base industries. It’s dealing with long-term fiscal issues so that there isn’t uncertainty in the tax environment. It’s about not having overly burdensome structural costs or regulatory policies. It’s about modernizing infrastructure so that companies can reach their markets. For some, that means roads, bridges, rail, and airports, and for others, it’s bandwidth. And it’s very much about the future workforce’s productivity, innovation, and leadership.”

Although TRUMPF is headquartered in a high-cost country, Biekert believes that Connecticut’s high business costs are the biggest challenge for companies already doing business here and a barrier to convincing others to come. “Connecticut’s utility rates are among the highest in the nation, as are its taxes,” he says. “Reducing taxes and adding tax credits, combined with less governmental interference in the day-to-day operation of business, will help stimulate economic growth by affording Connecticut companies the ability to add new employees to their payroll.”

Biekert sees the state’s cost structure as a workforce issue as well. “Connecticut isn’t just expensive for companies. Our employees are also saddled with personal tax burdens that often make it difficult for them to justify remaining here, and so good people often leave for jobs in other areas of the country.”

Adamou also acknowledges the problem, saying that attracting a talented workforce can be difficult “due to the high cost of living and personal taxes.” He believes that following the October legislative session on jobs, the state can continue to make it easier to do business through regulatory reform and by reducing uncertainty by making the tax system more predictable. Those steps, he says, “would allow businesses to plan and grow.”

As Connecticut’s interests become increasingly dependent on global markets, having a modern, efficient transportation, energy, and communications infrastructure is more critical than ever. Laursen would like to see the state improve rail transportation and local access to international air travel and—in the wake of last October’s snowstorm—its energy infrastructure. “The state needs to continue to prioritize storm preparedness and to invest in infrastructural improvements,” he says.

Adamou thinks Connecticut is moving in the right direction. “There appears to be a heightened awareness around infrastructure improvements,” he says. “The administration and legislature appear to be exploring viable options and solutions to not only improve the energy and transportation systems but to prevent repeat occurrences of system failures.”

**Connecticut’s Global Future**

Not only did global business cushion the impact of the recession in Connecticut, it is also critical to the state’s future economic competitiveness.

“Although locally-based economies are important to people’s everyday lives,” says Rathgeber, “it’s through exporting products and services and importing wealth through foreign direct investment that we create a bigger economic pie overall, which then helps to sustain more vibrant local economies and Connecticut’s traditionally excellent quality of life.”

“It’s clear that emerging markets will create tremendous demand for products and services as they develop a middle-class standard of living. Given the diversity of our state’s industries, Connecticut is in a good position to take advantage of those opportunities.”
Students Say…

**Spanish Class is not Boring** by Sierra Thibault (RSD #10)

When it came time to choose classes for my senior year of high school, I knew I wanted to continue Spanish. However, I was not very interested in taking AP Spanish. As I looked through the course selection book I came across an Advanced Topics in Spanish class. I read the description and decided this was the right choice for me. The curriculum was based on learning about different Spanish-speaking countries and then watching a film related to our area of study.

Currently, I am three-fourths of the way through this class and it is an excellent experience. I am learning so much about the culture and history of countries such as Mexico, Argentina, El Salvador, Chile and Cuba. Some of the films the class has watched include, “El Norte,” “La Historia Oficial,” “Crude,” and “Viva Cuba.” Each movie has had a strong connection to our studies. Personally, the structure of the class is very effective. The teacher introduces a new topic and vocabulary. Then, over the next couple days, each student prepares a short “investigation” on a theme related to the topic and presents it to the class. This gives a base of background info to help the class understand the time period in which the film is set. During the movie we fill out comprehension questions and work on projects after we finish the film. In my opinion, the structure contributes immensely to my retention of info because it has depth; in my history classes over the years, I briefly learned about some of the important people and events in these same countries, but never completely retained the info.

I will remember my Advanced Topics in Spanish class years from now; it has increased my knowledge base of Spanish-speaking countries, while allowing me to expand my Spanish language skills.

**Memories of Spain** by Emma Kryzanski (RSD #10)

The 2014 Spanish Exchange Program was an experience that I will certainly never forget. One reason for its significance in my memory is Spain’s culture. In just ten days the exchange opened my eyes (and taste buds) to a whole new lifestyle. For example, I was able to try so many new foods and loved the majority of them. Not only do Spaniards eat five meals a day, they eat different foods than we do in the United States. On the weekends our “host siblings” took the group to tapas restaurants. Tapas are small, appetizer like dishes that are eaten for dinner. Waiters would come around with plates, each with a different type of tapas on it. Some had sea food, some had cheeses and meats, and there were some that had foods that I had never seen before; nevertheless we all tried every type. A huge component of culture is food and the exchange allowed me to have a one and a life time experience with the Spanish culture. If given the chance, I would return to Algeciras in a heartbeat because being immersed in a foreign culture is such a fun, spontaneous, and eye opening adventure.

**Personal Perspectives**

**Pura Vida: Winter in Costa Rica**

Jill Griswold
Recipient of the Irene Stanislawczyk Scholarship

With the help of the Irene Stanislawczyk Scholarship, I spent three weeks of my winter break exploring the beautiful country of Costa Rica, dividing my time between Heredia, a small city outside of San José, and Sámara, a beach town in the Guanacaste region. I was selected to participate in the University of Connecticut’s ‘Migration and Human Rights’ study abroad program. Along with eleven of my peers, I was completely immersed in the “tico” lifestyle, refining my Spanish-speaking skills at the Intercultura Language School, and learning about migration and human rights in Central America, through a variety of meaningful, hands-on experiences.

When we weren’t out adventuring, we were spending time with our host families who graciously welcomed us into their homes. I stayed in a bustling household that had family members visiting from breakfast time to bedtime. New Years Eve was one of my favorite memories from my time in Heredia. In the US, I am accustomed to going out with my friends and
ringing in the New Year outside of the home. Spending New Year's Eve with 'mi familia tica' showed me how much the people of Costa Rica value time spent with family and how central it is to their culture. No matter how young or old, all 30+ family members and relatives stayed up until midnight to ring in “el año nuevo.” After the family gathered in a circle to hear the abuelo give his blessing for the New Year, everybody hugged and wished each other a “feliz año nuevo.” We released fireworks in the front lawn, watched our neighbors send off paper lanterns into the air with their new year's wishes, and watched as people wheeled empty suitcases down the street to represent their hopes to travel in 2015. This night was a special one that I will never forget.

In between our Spanish classes at the Intercultura School, we went on a variety of excursions to gain a better understanding of migrants and their rights in Central America. Out of the 300,000-500,000 migrants in Costa Rica, 75% of them come from Nicaragua. Much like the Mexican migrants who come to the United States to work seeking a better life with more opportunities, they often find themselves with less rights and face much discrimination, as one of the minority groups of the country. Because Nicaraguan migrants are not necessarily welcomed into Costa Rica by the local ticos, they must find comfort in each other and build their own communities. While in San Jose, we visited the Plaza de Merced where we learned that many Nicaraguans hang out. We talked with one woman who wakes up early every morning to cook authentic Nicaraguan food and brings it to the park to sell to other Nicaraguans. While it is a mini business and income for her family, it also is a taste of home for those who congregate in this plaza. We learned that many other migrants from Nicaragua work as servants or maids, on farms and as bus drivers. We also visited La Carpio, a very impoverished area of the city, originally inhabited almost entirely by Nicaraguan immigrants. While this area is perceived as being dangerous and those who live in these neighborhoods are extremely marginalized, we had the privilege of visiting a place that is actively making a positive impact on the lives of many women and children in the area, the Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation. Their founder, Gayle, spoke to us about how their centers help empower families struggling with oppression and we spoke to several families who frequent the center who migrated from Nicaragua and have transcended from sadness and are moving up the proverbial “spiral” to escape poverty.

We spent one day on a coffee farm in Santa María de Dota, where I gained an understanding about the lives of not only immigrants, but also of those Costa Rican natives who work extremely hard everyday to export products, that I previously had taken for granted, to the United States for us to enjoy. Our trip to the coffee plantation was incredibly revealing about the process of cultivating and processing the coffee beans that we just do not think about, being so detached in the US. Many migrants from Nicaragua, Panama, and other Central American countries, as well as many Costa Rican natives, work on these plantations. Being able to see the plantations and learn how to pick the coffee beans was incredible. I was tired after spending a few hours in the sun, picking beans and barely covering the bottom of my basket, so it is hard to imagine working in the hot sun all day to fill as many baskets as possible, barely taking any breaks. We also only picked on flat ground, but, as we saw, many of the farms are on steep mountains and rough terrain. The work is so labor intensive that it seems like they should be paid way more than we learned that they really are.

After Heredia, we spent a week in Sámara, (on the beach!). In between surfing, zip lining with the howler monkeys and visiting one of Costa Rica’s volcanoes, I learned a great deal about the Costa Rican economy, based heavily on tourism and more specifically, eco-tourism. As most people who travel to Costa Rica, I was drawn to this country by its natural beauty.
Costa Rica’s mountain ranges, beaches and volcanoes are just a few of the things that attract many tourists. Regions on the coast, like Sámara rely especially on tourism to drive their local economy. Despite there being more of a need in these areas for waiters in restaurants or tour guides, etc., there still exists much instability with their job market. The season affects when people travel and thus, the jobs that are in demand. For example, during Costa Rica’s “high season”, many more people travel to Costa Rica, but during the “low season,” there is a significant drop in tourists and thus, less jobs for the locals. When I talked to my tico hermano, who works as a waiter at Casa Esmeralda, a hotel in Sámara, about tourism’s role in Costa Rica’s economy, he did not hesitate to tell me that the hotel would not be able to survive without tourism and that the job market does indeed suffer during the low season. During my three weeks there, I thought about the role that I played on Costa Rica’s economy as a tourist in the country. Even my professor at Intercultura remarked that if students didn’t continue to study Spanish at the school, he would be out of a job! In Sámara, I went out to many of the bars there, ate at the various restaurants on the beach and went ziplining. As a group, we went on several tours,
Host School for the 2016 Poetry Recitation Contest
during the month of April

CT COLT is pleased to offer these INCENTIVES for HOST SCHOOLS!

- All expenses paid by CT COLT for the Host School (food, entertainment, support services, etc.)
- At least 5 CT COLT memberships for the Poetry Contest year
- FREE host school registration for the Poetry Contest
- FREE registration for up to 10 students for the Poetry Contest
- CT COLT Committee will help to coordinate all aspects of the contest
- Recognition of you and your school at the Fall Conference
- Trophy or plaque (your choice) presented at the Fall Conference
- CT COLT Newsletter article showcasing your school

Why not HOST our 2016 Poetry Contest?

- Bring recognition to your school!
- Promote diversity among your students!
- Promote collaboration among your school staff
- Bring positive attention to your language department, your administration & your entire school district!

THINK ABOUT IT!

Remember that you wouldn’t need to rent buses...

Contact us today at president@ctcolt.org
# HOST SCHOOL PROPOSAL

**World Language Poetry Recitation Contest**

**Connecticut Council of Language Teachers / CT COLT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size of School / Number of Students</td>
<td>Dates Available in April, 2016</td>
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## Contact Person (Future Site Coordinator) Information

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>School Address</td>
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<td>School Phone</td>
<td>Ext.</td>
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<td>School Fax</td>
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## School Principal Contact Information

<table>
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<th>School Phone</th>
<th>Ext.</th>
<th>School E-Mail</th>
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## Site Information

<table>
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<tr>
<th>45-85 rooms needed for recitations, depending upon contest size</th>
<th>Please attach a scan of your school map with this application</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of available non-laboratory rooms</th>
<th>Number of available laboratory rooms</th>
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<tr>
<td>School Dismissal time</td>
<td>School Nurse available after hours?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earliest time contestants could arrive</td>
<td>Custodial cost / hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auditorium seating capacity</td>
<td>Parking Lot capacity for buses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cafeteria seating capacity</td>
<td>Parking Lot capacity for cars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnasium seating capacity</td>
<td>Parking Lot / handicapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library / Media Center capacity</td>
<td>Reliable reception for Cell Phone? WiFi?</td>
</tr>
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### Application Deadline: May 1, 2015

**Please email completed MS Word Doc & Map to ml.ennis@aya.yale.edu**

**Or send to Mary Louise Ennis, Poetry Co-Chair, CT-COLT**

**31 Independence Way, Middlefield, CT 06455**

**Thank you so much for your interest in hosting our Poetry Contest!**
visited Volcan Póas, stayed at several different hotels and ate at many different restaurants. I realized that these establishments are reliant on large student groups like ours to bring in income. I think it is interesting to examine how deeply embedded tourism is in the Costa Rican economy and how the majority of ticos whom I met during this trip all have jobs which are directly related to tourists visiting the country.

In all, I had an amazing three weeks and learned so much more than I had anticipated. I am so thankful to COLT for awarding me the Irene Stanislawczyk Scholarship so that I could afford to have these experiences that I will never forget. I am hoping to return to Costa Rica after graduation to obtain my TEFL certification in Sámara.

**Materials & Resources**

**Woonsocket, Rhode Island: Land of the Québécois**

Written by Stephanie Duchesneau

New York City is a great destination for any language teacher looking for an art, theater, music or gastronomic experience for students. This past summer, another French colleague and I decided to visit the Work and Culture Museum in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The idea came from a newspaper article that I had read a year earlier. I have a habit (as many teachers do) of keeping articles just in case they might come in handy for school. After traveling to Westerly, RI with a high school friend who talked about her mother’s French Canadian roots and the communities in the state that sprung out of the migration from Canada, I pulled the article out of the drawer. I decided it was time to see what the museum was all about.

It is housed in a beautifully restored factory or municipal building with a small theater, factory floor, one room schoolhouse, traditional replica of a typical home (both in Canada and the United States) and other exhibits. The information throughout is in both French and English. Tour guides in French are available. Simsbury and Farmington high schools combined students to travel for a special day at the museum and a traditional French Canadian lunch. Anne Conway, the museum Director helped us put together the activities. She also forwarded activities to prepare our students for the visit and what they would see.

When we arrived, the Union Hall was set up for us to view a newly released documentary called “Un rêve américain”. A young Franco Ontario artist journeys from Eastern United States to California tracing the journeys of the French Canadian immigrants. Students heard stories in French and English during the road trip of Damien Robitaille. They also followed the map across the country which traced places with the French names that still exist today. The struggles of language and assimilation as well as working conditions, religion, family life and education were all incorporated into the film and tour. Anne arranged for two tours to run simultaneously for the different levels of students. There are interactive activities such as a competition to set up spools for spinning in the textile factory or a lesson in the school house. The guides are friendly and passionate about the culture and people. They make sure the students understand what they are explaining by asking questions and keeping them engaged.

We found a small local restaurant called “C’est bon” and contacted them saying we wanted our students to try traditional French Canadian food (or at least have it as a choice). They put together a menu which included tourtière, the well-known meat pie, molasses and raisin cookies, and apricot shortbread cookies. Students were able to choose from a wide variety of items that also included quiche, spinach puff pastries and chicken pot pie. They delivered the food to the museum packed and organized so that we could easily distribute it. Students had time to walk outside to see the river or down the Main street where the French immigrants lived and shopped.
The cost of the trip was very reasonable. Entry to the museum is $6 per student. We gave students the option of lunch from the restaurant or bagged lunch and of course the bus. Students who had lunch paid $47 and those with bagged lunches paid $32. These prices included all expenses. It would also be possible to head to Providence and visit a cooking school for a special program or their version of Little Italy if you are not married to an entirely “French” immersion day.

The museum is interesting and the exhibits have variety to keep students interested. The documentary was a special feature and the director could tell you if it is available for your visit. I would recommend touring the museum first, eating lunch and then viewing the film (if that is part of your package). Due to another group booking, we did not have the option of changing the order however after a long bus ride, it is better to move around rather than sit for the film. It is also a richer experience if the students complete activities before the day of the visit. We did not get to use the packet because our students came from different courses that included teachers who were not going on the trip.

Alors, allons-y à Woonsocket!

Resources:

Museum of Work and Culture
42 South Main Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
(401) 769-WORK (9675)

Director: Anne D. Conway
aconway@rihs.org

Un rêve américain:
Bande Annonce / Trailer (French only):

ACTFL Assessment & PD:
http://www.actfl.org/assessment-professional-development

TELL Project:
http://www.tellproject.org/

Key shifts in English Language Arts:
http://www.corestandards.org/other-resources/key-shifts-in-english-language-arts/

The Cognitive Rigor Matrix information:
http://www.karin-hess.com
http://www.karin-hess.com/#lresources/cuv (videos on DOK)

21st Century Skills:
http://www.p21.org
http://newtech.coe.uh.edu/

Habits of Mind:
http://www.habitsofminstitute.org

Carol Dweck and the Growth Mindset:
http://mindsetonline.com/whatishat/about/
http://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve?language=en

Here are a few sites I follow on Twitter:

TELLproject@TELLproject
MindShift@MindShiftKQED
EDTech K-12 Magazine@EdTech_K12
About World Language@aboutworldlangs
Seal of Biliteracy@BiliteracySeal
CASLS@CASLS_NFLRC
ACTFL@actfl
Langchat@langchat2011
edutopia@edutopia
NADSFL@NADSFL
JNCL-NCLIS@JNCLInfo

Technology

Crash Test Results!
Flipped Classroom Part 2
By Amy Schlett

In my role as World Language Curriculum Coordinator for Regional School District Ten, I am constantly looking for valuable PD opportunities to enhance student learning. Here are a few of the resources and/or sites I highly recommend you explore regardless of your role in your district!
some useful things and am excited to share them! Here are my crash test results!

Less is more...

The flipped classroom has definitely had a positive impact on my students, especially the ones who need extra processing time. However, it’s important to note, that it’s not a magical cure-all. The students who struggle in class are the same ones who are likely to give up trying to understand the material in the video. That’s why scaffolding the material during videos helps student comprehension. Also - less is more. When the concept is broken down to its simplest parts and in multiple videos, there are better results. My first mistake was trying to put the entire explanation into one video. Yes, I put myself under the time limit set by Eric Bergmann, one of the leading proponents of the Flipped Classroom, which is 1 to 1 ½ minutes per grade level. Unfortunately, I was inundating my students with too much to process. I also learned that some grammar topics are better presented face to face with the teacher. There are topics that don’t need a video and grammar explanation and I can teach them by reusing and recycling in the target language in class.

Why didn’t you do your homework this time?

Students who don’t do their homework now will most likely continue to come to class unprepared. Some students don’t like the extra steps of logging onto a computer and finding the video. It was much easier for them to pull out a worksheet and do the practice activities. A zero on homework? It did not matter. It was also not a big enough deterrent to require them to watch the video in class while others did the planned activities. They figured, I’ll just watch it tomorrow and bring up my grade another way. When I instituted an after school detention, 97% of students completed their homework, as opposed to 79% with no consequence. What about that other 3%? I guess we will be good friends by the end of the year! There were better results learning the concept when I provided a guide to go with it. An outline of the main concepts was more effective than taking notes using the Cornell method. The fact of the matter is even though we work hard to reach 100% of our students, we don’t always, and this is not a magical solution.

UGH! Technology

Technology is sometimes unreliable. For example, Youtube changed some of its settings and students who logged onto school google accounts were automatically placed in safety mode. Sounds great, right? We want our students to be safe and don’t want them seeing anything inappropriate. I get it! What I don’t understand is why some of my videos were blocked. It is important to keep this in mind if your school has student google accounts. The only solution is to switch off safety mode, which then begs the question, if they can turn it off then what’s the point? I have yet to find the answer, but I no longer host my videos on Youtube. Thankfully, my school allows me to use Edmodo by posting video on my feed.

What do we do in class?

After viewing the video, students are ready for practice. I start the class with a simple exercise that asks them to use what
they learned. This gives me time to check the homework. If a student didn’t complete the homework, they are given a computer, headphones and detention, and are asked to complete the video. If a student is doing the practice incorrectly, I can address it. Next, students have the opportunity to ask questions. If they are unsure of the verb tense they ask, “Can we go over stem changing verbs”, “I see that there’s a change in the nosotros and vosotros forms, but it’s not the same as the other forms...” The students are given the opportunity to answer the questions before I step in. Next, there is practice related to the concept. While students work, I circulate and check papers for misunderstandings or accuracy. During this time, students can refer to their notes or ask questions of their peers. Finally, they write an explanation of the steps to conjugate the verb or apply the concept without simply copying the notes from the video. This serves as an informal assessment to check understanding. By flipping the classroom, I still provide the instruction, however in class, students are required to understand and apply the knowledge in class. Students take on different roles in class since they already understand the material. After this, we do an activity focused on production, which includes a communicative activity to apply what they have learned.

My classes are more engaged with the practice when they have had an opportunity to interact with the material before class and are ready to go! So with the bumps in the road, what have I learned? There are improved quiz results, higher student participation, and a decrease in student frustration. As a novice teacher, it has definitely been an interesting experience with learning curves along the way. I encourage you to create a video and give it a try!

**Tech Tools for WL Teachers and Learners**

By Bruno Koffi

The Modern Languages Department at Central Connecticut State University hosted its 9th Conference for Language Teachers on March 14, 2015 from 8:00 to 4:00 PM. The purpose of the conference was to bring together World Language teachers to share their experiences, ideas and resources. I had the privilege to do a presentation on Tech Tools for the WL Language Classroom to share my expertise in this field.

If you were unable to attend the conference, or did not attend this workshop, here is what I shared with my colleagues. This information will keep you informed about some tools you can successfully use in your classes. I have used these tools and Apps with great success over the years, and I am sure, some or all will help you infuse a new level of energy and engagement in your classes. For each of the sites below, you will need to provide some basic information about yourself, and your school to get started.

**www.engrade.com**: Is a free website that I use as my electronic planner. It has a calendar that allows the user to post activities and homework. The site is easily accessible from any web based computer. I attach most of my worksheet or class documents, or I hyperlink websites so students can access them and complete activities covered in class, when they are absent. To see how I use it, access my classes at [www.engrade.com/koffib](http://www.engrade.com/koffib).

**www.quia.com**: Houses templates for creating 16 types of online activities. You can test and assess online, create and use your own content or copy from a Shared Activity Bank with hundreds of activities and edit them. There is free Basic as well a paid Advanced version. If your district does not have a subscription, you can still create and assign most academic tasks with the Basic version. I used the Basic Editor for several years before learning about my district subscription. I still use the free features.

How I use it with my classes: I first search the Shared Activities bank for quizzes and practice activities. If I find one, I edit it to meet my objective and my students’ needs; if not, I create one and make it public. A variety of quiz options are available: multiple choice, true or false, pop-up, multiple correct, fill-in multiple correct, initial answer, short answer, essay, matching and ordering. There are also a wide variety of practice activities and games to keep student interest high. I assign weekly homework on [www.quia.com](http://www.quia.com) and program the computer to display immediate feedback: just the score, or give feedback with or without the suggested answer to students. For further information, please visit [www.quia.com](http://www.quia.com). There is a tutorial on each of the many features.

You can also do some google searches to assign game or review activities, by typing quia, the initials of the activity and the keywords of the lesson you intend to have students practice. For example, open Google.com and type **“quia hm imparfait”** for a hangman game about the imperfect in French. **“quia hm imperfecto”** for for Spanish.

Quia hm + keyword for Hangman games
Quia rr + keyword for Who Wants to be a Millionaire
Quia mc + keyword for Jeopardy games
Quia cz + keyword for Close activities
Quia jw + keyword for jumbled word games
Quia cl + keyword for Matching games
Quia jq + keyword for mini quizzes

**www.typeit.org**  This site is a “one-stop-shop” designed for language teachers and learners who have difficulty typing foreign accent marks referred to as “diacritical marks”. Teachers as well as students should bookmark it so that they can open it anytime they have a paper to write.

**www.classdojo.com** was initially set up to be a behavioral tracking tool for teachers, students and parents. Parents can login and check on their student child’s behavior and performance from a web based device or App if you invite them via their email or if you print and have their son or daughter send them a copy of an individualized code. This website can be used for class participation, engagement, homework completion etc. I start each class with the classdojo page open on the Smartboard. I use the Attendance tool as my proxy way of taking attendance. I mark everyone ABSENT by clicking on “Mark all absent” which turn student names red. Individually, students have to double-tap their name to make it turn green. No student can tap someone else’s name as part of our class rules. Before the second bell marking the beginning of class, I have an idea of who is already in the classroom; all names not tapped remain red.

When I assign pen and paper homework, students bring their homework to the front of the class, where I visually check it for accuracy; I then stamp it and indicate how many credits it is worth. Each student taps on the appropriate tab on the smart board to give himself or herself the appropriate amount of credits. The screen is customized to reflect “green points” for good behavior or performance and “red points” for behaviors which need to work on or where any violation occurs. The green point is entered by the student whereas the red point is discreetly entered by me, upon letting the student know what violation has occurred. There is also a timer to timer for your activities. At the end of the marking period, the teacher can customize the grade sheet for the date range and can print out a report for analysis or to enter in his or her official gradebook.

**www.create.kahoot.it** to assess student understanding of various concepts. This platform is good for multiple choice tests, true or false or surveys. It is revolutionary, and my entire department is going crazy about it. Once the teacher designs a quiz or test on the Kahoot platform, students take out their iPhone, iPad or computer, or partner up to share their devices by typing “get.kahoot.it” , they are then asked to enter a game pin which appears on the screen. Once entered, students are prompted to enter a nickname, after which their name pops up on the projector. If no new students enters their name, the computer counts down from 15 seconds to 0; then the game starts. The game can be programmed to run automatically or by clicking to advance to...
the next question. I find this to be the most practical of all the tech tools I use.

www.gradecam.com is the online version of the Scantron sheet we use in school. Create a username and password. You need a computer with a webcam or need to plug in a document camera. Create classes by entering student first and last name and ID number. You then print a blank sheet off as student answer sheets. Students bubble in their answers on the blank sheets. To electronically grade the quizzes, the teacher must create a key online. After students have taken the quiz, they walk up to the computer and show their answer sheet to the camera. The camera captures their answers and beeps. The score is stored online. The teacher can also collect student answer sheets and run them.

To send audio via a cell phone: Open your phone and look for the Voice Memo icon, press it and it opens to “Record”. Press the red round button to start recording. When finished, press the square red button to stop, and press “Done”. Save Voice Memo is displayed; name your file and save it; then tap on the file name below the red button. Tap on the blue arrow sticking out of the blue square to share. Tap the email icon and enter the receiver’s email address, and Send.

www.edpuzzle.com: If you want to flip your lesson plan, this is the place to go. You can access hundreds of free online videos which you can edit to turn into interactive video in which you embed questions for students to answer in order to proceed. Teachers are assigned a class code that students have to have to access the videos and answer question. For the tutorials go to https://edpuzzle.com/faq

www.quizlet.com This site is a global repository of educational resources. This free website provides learning tools for students, including flashcards, study and game modes. All materials are user-generated. Teachers can copy, edit personalize activities, assign activities to classes or to folders. Students can look up teacher activities by entering teacher’s username.

www.goanimate.com For the free version student can create 30 second videos. Once they log on, students should hover the cursor over the different templates. They should select the videos that display the lab “Make a video” without “Subscribe”.

I hope that you will find these tools and activities useful. For further information, please contact me @ bruno_koffi@whps.org. (Bruno Koffi Ed. D., French and Spanish Teacher, William Hall High School, West Hartford, CT 06117.)

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CT COLT Cadre Debut

On April 6th, over 40 WL teachers and supervisors participated in the CT COLT Cadre debut entitled "CT COLT Rubric Sharing Day" led by Jessica Haxhi New Haven Public Schools, and facilitated by Lisa Peterson, Monroe Public Schools, Christine Dombrowski, SCSU, and Beth Lapman, RSD #10 and CT COLT President.

Jessica Haxhi presented the group with samples of rubrics and student work that was calibrated and discussed. She focused her presentation on the three modes of communication: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational. Breakout groups focused on and brainstormed on topics that included:

- types of rubrics
- criteria to use when creating rubrics
- "scoring on the fly"; and
- converting rubric scores to grades

CREC hosted the event and CT COLT provided a light breakfast and lunch. If you are interested in joining colleagues to plan and coordinate future sessions like today’s, please contact Lisa Peterson, the CT COLT Cadre Coordinator at: lpeterson@monroeps.org.
CT COLT Future Teachers Honor Society

There’s exciting news! A **CT COLT Future Teachers Honor Society** has just been created and the first induction of ten students from Central Connecticut State University and Quinnipiac University took place on Saturday, March 14, 2015 at the 9th Annual CCSU Conference for Language Teachers. Beth Lapman, President of CT COLT, and Dr. Rocío Fuentes, CCSU Professor and Chair of the Conference Organizing Committee, conducted the beautiful inauguration ceremony.

Royal blue and white are the colors of the **CT COLT World Language Future Teachers Honor Society** whose members recited these solemn words as part of the official ritual:

> I pledge to uphold the highest standards of integrity, leadership, and service in the pursuit of excellence as a member of the CT COLT World Language Future Teachers Honor Society to promote understanding between peoples of the world and to open the minds and hearts of my students through the teaching of language and culture.

The students inducted were:

- Melissa Costa, CCSU, Graduate Certification Program, Spanish
- Lilliana García, CCSU, BEd. Spanish
- Eliza González, CCSU, BEd. Spanish
- Carmen McKeown, CCSU, MAT Spanish
- Laura O’Reilly, CCSU, MAT Spanish
- Elizabeth Pantoni, CCSU, BEd. Spanish
- Kaitlyn Schneider, CCSU, BEd. Spanish
- Angélica Valdéz, CCSU, Graduate Certification Program, Spanish
- Felisha A. Nunes, Quinnipiac University, MAT Spanish
- Taylor A. Rose, Quinnipiac University, MAT Spanish

A pin proudly displaying the CT COLT Pegasus will be given to each inductee to nurture their professional identity as future teachers. The pin, which looks like this, can be worn to interviews and on parent-teacher nights:

In addition to the pin and induction ceremony, students received certificates, a small CT COLT gift, and a free membership coupon. Chapters at universities and colleges can additionally choose to honor inductees with graduation honor cords and a special reception at their campuses.

This wonderful initiative originally grew out of a Post-Secondary Think Tank meeting last November (2014) organized by Linda Dalpe, past president of CT COLT and part-time professor of Spanish at Quinnipiac University, that centered on how to create essential connections between K-12, higher education, and CT COLT. Prof. Rocío Fuentes first floated the idea of an honor society for language teachers during that initial meeting and Linda Dalpe, SCSU Professor Christine Dombrowski, and I enthusiastically discussed the proposal. With her usual dedication to the cause of promoting languages and the teaching profession as well as her inimitable ability to get things done, Linda Dalpe turned the idea into a full-fledged initiative. CT COLT President Elizabeth K. Lapman and the Board of Directors expressed their wholehearted support and all CT COLT members were given the opportunity to vote on the initiative which received decisive approval. Linda Dalpe then enlisted the invaluable assistance of Jimmy Wildman, CT COLT President –E Elect and teacher of Spanish at Glastonbury High School, who created google documents for professors to input names of prospective inductees, printed the certificates, and had proof designs made for the new honor society pin. After several Skype meetings between the Think Tank group, things were ready to go for the ceremony!

Professors at accredited Connecticut colleges and universities who are members of CT COLT may nominate their language students accepted into their education programs for the **Future Teachers Honor Society**. The nominal fee is $5.00 per student. The Think Tank cohort will be reaching out to other colleges and universities who have World Language Certification programs inviting them to participate in induction
2015 Poetry Recitation Contest

The names of the student recipients of medals for this year’s contest are listed on the CT COLT website at www.ctcolt.org/pdfs/PC2015Winners1.pdf.

ceremonies that will take place in the Fall at the CT COLT annual conference and in the Spring at CCSU Conference for Language Teachers. If any CT COLT members reading this article are connected to a college or university, please spread the news about this wonderful, new opportunity for future teachers.

These ten inductees of the Future Teachers Honor Society are certainly already learning about the excellent professional support available through CT COLT and its commitment to excellence in world language education. All information regarding this new initiative can be found on the CT COLT website.

Perhaps many years from now these future teachers will open a small, velvety box containing their pin and eagerly tell their grandchildren that they were the very first inductees of the CT COLT Future Teachers Honor Society!

Helena Curtain to Deliver Keynote Address at CT COLT Fall Conference

Helena Curtain has worked as a language educator at all levels. She served as Foreign Language Curriculum Specialist for the Milwaukee Public Schools for many years and in that capacity coordinated and supervised K-12 foreign language, immersion and ESOL programs. She served as associate professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and directed the Foreign Language and ESOL teacher preparation programs. She is the co-author of Languages and Children: Making the Match which has been translated into Chinese. She has received several national and regional awards and has authored numerous articles dealing with second language instruction. She has broad experience working with schools and school districts, teaching and conducting workshops throughout the United States and internationally in thirty-one countries.

2015 CT COLT Rhyme Celebration

The twenty-fourth annual CT COLT Rhyme Celebration was held on Wednesday, March 18th. The event took place at the CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Theater of the Performing Arts in Hartford, CT at 5:00 P.M and was hosted by Kristen Tagg, Spanish Teacher at the CREC International Magnet School. The Rhyme Celebration is an opportunity for children from kindergarten to sixth grade to promote an early love for world languages. Participants represent approximately 20 towns, over 10 school districts, and about 35 schools (both public and private) from around the state. This year, there were 220 student participants with over 30 world language teachers and world language administrators supporting the children in their recitations.
This year’s theme was “A Feast of Rhymes”. The rhymes, songs, poems and tongue twisters are chosen by the world language teachers and are presented by students with costumes and props. The students and teachers practice for months. Some groups performed in world languages learned in school, while other performances represented languages learned at home. This year, we had rhymes and poems in Albanian, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Japanese, Spanish, Tamil, and Telegu. Each elementary student received a certificate of participation printed in the language of the recitation, an illustrated souvenir program booklet (with all of the rhymes), a Rhyme Celebration button designed by a student, and a “goody bag.”

The Rhyme Celebration traditionally begins with a warm up rhyme and a theme song to get the students and the audience prepared. The students from the CREC schools led the guests with “Peter Piper” and “Little Miss Muffet” and also sang the chorus of “On Top of Spaghetti.” Dina Crowl, superintendent of the CREC magnet schools, who expressed her appreciation of the languages in the elementary schools, as well as the importance of bringing the school districts together with such an event, welcomed the audience. Beth Lapman, CT COLT president thanked all parents, teachers, administrators and students for their work in supporting language learning and presented a plaque to Kristen Tagg for all her work in hosting the event.

The students did a wonderful job reciting their rhymes with props and enthusiasm. Students rhymed about pizza and fruits in Spanish, about starting the day with breakfast in French, and in Chinese a group of students even

CT COLT Rhyme Celebration Chair, Kate Krotzer, believes that children who attend the Rhyme Celebration develop their 21st Century Skills by building their language skills and their appreciation of world cultures. This year’s host, Kristen Tagg, teacher at CREC International Magnet School, was excited to have children come to the celebration and perform on stage in languages other than their own because they not only develop communicative skills, but also gain understanding of language diversity.

Additional event information, photos and a DVD order form, are available at [www.ctcolt.org](http://www.ctcolt.org). Please contact Rhyme Celebration chair, Kate Krotzer with any questions at kate.krotzer@gmail.com.

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**News From CT Schools**

**The 9th CCSU Conference for Language Teachers**

A teacher’s job is never ending. From learning the new theories about language learning to finding out the new games that their students like, teachers are always trying to fill up their pedagogical “bag of tricks.” The CCSU Conference for Language Teachers is one of the major professional gatherings in Connecticut in which teachers can learn about new methodologies, technologies, exchange ideas, and network with their peers in a stimulating environment.

This year our 9th annual spring conference featured thirty seven presentations and workshops dealing with different important issues for the Chinese, French, German, Italian, Spanish and TESOL classrooms. The presenters boast impressive credentials and are respected members of the teaching community in the United States, China, Italy and Mexico. Indeed, every year the conference becomes more international!
The organizers also tried to give the conference a new character by replacing the traditional keynote speech by a plenary workshop delivered by Judith Liskin-Gasparro, a renowned scholar and author who specializes in foreign language assessment and is one of the authors of ACTFL’s OPI. Liskin-Gasparro showed different assessment techniques that can be easily used in the classroom. The audience had the opportunity to work on several examples and discuss their ideas among them.

In the afternoon break, CT COLT’s President Beth Lapman conducted the first induction ceremony of the Honor Society of Future Language Teachers. The founding members of the society are: Melissa Costa, Lilliana García, Eliza González, Elizabeth Pantoni, Kaitlyn Schneider, Angelica Valdés and Carmen McKeown from CCSU and Felisha A. Nunes and Taylor A. Rose from Quinnipiac University.

In an emotive moment, the newly inducted members pledged to “…to uphold the highest standards of integrity, leadership, and service in the pursuit of excellence as a member of the CT COLT World Language Future Teachers Honor Society, to promote understanding between peoples of the world, and to open the minds and hearts of [their] students through the teaching of language and culture.”

After lunch—which featured many savory dishes—the audience had the opportunity to listen to Francisco Barba, from the Consulate General of Spain in New York, who presented an alternative to solve the shortage of Spanish teachers in the state of Connecticut. The exhibitors at the conference also showed their products and services to interested viewers. We thank the support of the Chinese Culture Center, Chester Technical Services, Colegio Delibes, the Confucius Institute, the Consulate of Spain in New York, CT COLT, the European Studies program at CCSU, the Italian Resources Center, Santillana USA Publishing, Studio Arcobaleno Training and Education, and the Summer Institutes for Language Teachers at CCSU.

The afternoon session presented several workshops that gave the attendees valuable knowledge and skills, but also materials that can be adapted to their classroom. The conference ended with a Wine and Cheese reception that toasted the organizing committee for their dedicated work, and thanked the audience for their continuous support.

See you next year!

Asia Society Selects Simsbury Chinese Class For Educational Video

By Kristin Stoller contact the reporter High Schools Asia Elementary Schools Educators

SIMSBURY — A Simsbury High School Chinese class was one of seven selected from across the country to be featured in an instructional video lesson for Chinese language teachers throughout the world.

The video lesson, taught by SHS Chinese teacher Shiffon Theodorou, aims to showcase effective and engaging techniques for teaching and learning Chinese.

"This is the kind of initiative Shiffon has and the vision she has for the district," said Erin Murray, the district’s assistant superintendent for teaching and learning. "Other people chose not to apply, but Shiffon does a lot in putting her name out."

Theodorou said about 50 teachers nationwide applied to be in the video made by the Asia Society, an organization dedicated to education and partnerships among the people, leaders and institutions of Asia and the U.S.

Theodorou also shared her lesson at the 2014 National Chinese Language Conference in Los Angeles, said Stephanie Duchesneau, the high school’s world language department supervisor.

"We were very proud. The room was packed with teachers," Duchesneau said. "It was a great lesson and very engaging."

The director of the Asia Society Chinese Initiatives, Jeff Wang, recently visited the district and met with Murray about the development of the Chinese program in Simsbury.

When the district’s Chinese program began seven years ago, Murray said there was only one teacher who was a native Chinese speaker. Within a year, Theodorou, a native Chinese speaker, was hired and the program has grown to include classes from seventh grade to high school AP classes, she said.

"What is unique to our program is that we don’t have a lot of heritage speakers taking Chinese," Duchesneau said. "They are not Asian and getting them to the AP level is very challenging, but some took the AP exam last year and did very well."

This spring marks the second time middle and high school students and their parents will be accompanying Simsbury
teachers to China as part of a "new, model" exchange program, she said.

The district also sends students to attend Chinese summer camps for American students in China, Theodorou said.

Organizational News

National Association of District Supervisors for Foreign Languages

Lea Graner Kennedy,
CT COLT Liaison to NADSFL
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As a new board member of CT COLT, I would like to share information and provide some insight into the current work of the National Association of District Supervisors for Foreign Languages (NADSFL). NADSFL has its annual meeting at ACTFL each year, which is a two-day workshop aimed at training leaders in the most current PD for language learning. This year’s focus for the meeting in San Antonio was “Novice Is Not Enough; In Pursuit of Proficiency.” The learning and conversations were extremely rich and productive. The mission of NADSFL is to “promote excellence in foreign language education for all learners through professional development of foreign language supervisors. The organization supports supervisors by facilitating member networking and communication, by promoting knowledge of current initiatives, trends and research, and by encouraging advocacy for foreign language learning at all levels.”

If you are currently serving in a leadership capacity in your district and you are seeking additional learning opportunities, please feel free to contact me or go to www.NADSFL.org for more information. On the NADSFL website, there are useful resources, ACTFL position papers, and other announcements. The board is currently seeking nominations for Supervisor of the Year. Glastonbury’s Rita Oleksak was last year’s winner and it was an honor to see Connecticut in the spotlight.

At the NADSFL annual meeting, there are also opportunities for collaboration with members of NCSSFL, the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages. The NCSSFL members have been working to promote the Seal of Biliteracy. This is an exciting new endeavor that eight states have already adopted. “The Seal of Biliteracy is an award granted by a state department of education or local district to recognize a student who has attained proficiency in English and one or more other world languages by high school graduation. The recognition of attaining biliteracy becomes part of the high school transcript and diploma for these students. The Seal serves to certify attainment of biliteracy for students, employers, and universities. It is a statement of accomplishment that helps to signal evidence of a student’s readiness for career and college, and for engagement as a global citizen.” http://sealofbiliteracy.org/ For more information, visit the NCSSFL website at http://www.ncssfl.org/

Another opportunity for CT language leaders is to join COFLIC, Coordinators of Foreign Languages in CT. This group works together to find solutions to common challenges facing all districts, advocate for languages at the state level and share resources from the region and ACTFL. CT does not have a WL State Supervisor, however COFLIC is advocating for the reinstatement of the position so that we have representation at the national meetings. The COFLIC members are also speaking at State BOE meetings to move forward with the need for legislation to support the Seal of Biliteracy in CT. Please join the COFLIC group at one of our upcoming meetings at CCSU.

The results of the Poster Contest will be announced within the next month!
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