



MCTLC Newsletter

*Our Mission is to Advance the Teaching of
World Languages and Cultures in Minnesota*



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John Rassias is the 2012 MCTLC Keynote Speaker

World-renowned language methodologist, John A. Rassias, the William R. Kenan Professor of French and Italian at Dartmouth College, is coming to our fall conference in October. He will deliver the keynote speech on Friday and a three-hour pre-conference workshop on Thursday. He is the developer of the innovative and highly effective dramatic approach to teaching languages, known as the Rassias Method®. In the early sixties he began a lifelong relationship with the Peace Corps as the Director of the first pilot program of languages for the Peace Corps in Africa. In 1996, the United States Peace Corps honored him for his pioneer work in developing their language and language teacher training program. Over 165,000 Peace Corps have been trained using his method. He has travelled the world training teachers and over 180 languages are being instructed with his method in North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia.

Professor Rassias has always known how to highlight the importance of language learning in the media. He appeared on "The Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson and was featured on "Sixty Minutes" on CBS. In 1978 he was the only language teacher appointed to President Jimmy Carter's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies. He authored the section entitled "No Longer Foreign; No Longer Alien," in the *Report to the President, Strength Through Wisdom*, November 1979.

One of my favorite quotes by him is "Once a language is spoken, it is no longer foreign and once a culture is understood, it is no longer alien." He always encourages teachers to be true to themselves and students to "Be brave, dare to make mistakes." You will not want to miss this opportunity to meet John Rassias. Join us October 18-19 at the Earle Brown Heritage Center. In the meantime, meet Professor Rassias on-line at www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QNZEQ4YeMA

Mark your calendars: MCTLC Fall Conference, October 18 & 19, 2012

From the president's desk . . .



**“Imagine Globally,
Engage Locally”
is our 2012 Fall
Conference theme.**

Our Call for Proposals is open at www.mctlc.org so propose a three-hour workshop or fifty minute session before the deadline, April 1. If one of your colleagues is doing innovative and insightful work, encourage him or her to propose a session, too. The ideas that the board brainstormed seemed to come down to the following basic themes: language teachers as agents of social justice, the interconnectedness of technology and global awareness. We hope that these themes resonate with you as you consider the sessions you would like to propose.

The MCTLC board always seems to be gearing up for our premier event, the fall conference. Yet as stewards of the organization we strive to meet the needs and expectations of our constituency throughout the year. We want to thank Betty Lotterman for being the guest editor of the February and March newsletters and welcome Jodi Yim James as our guest editor for the next few months. Jodi teaches French at Breck School in Minneapolis and is an excellent and experienced writer. The newsletter is just one of the ways we try to serve you. Our webmaster, Jennifer Duronio has recently updated the MCTLC website to make it more user-friendly. In the process she enlightened me that Web 2.0 is now Web 3.0. There is a reason she is called the webmaster. MCTLC Treasurer, Allison Spenader, will be attending the Central States Leadership Academy this year to learn how to strengthen the grant writing for the organization. We would like to hold more regional training sessions like the technology workshops that were offered in the past two years. In the meantime we will be working with Gay Rawson of Concordia College to develop future webinars. Send us your suggestions on how to better serve you to info@mctlc.org.

Finally, reflecting on my experience at the ACTFL conference last November and gearing myself up for Central States in March I am reminded of the interconnectedness of our language organizations. The 2011 ACTFL Teacher of the Year, Clarissa Adams Fletcher of Dunwoody High School in Georgia inspired us in Denver to “Refuel, Recharge and Retool.” Whether you connect with your colleagues in your school, your state region or at the state, regional or national conference, essentially you are doing just that. As language educators we build off each other to engage with our students in the most dynamic and awe-inspiring ways. We connect them to the world! We are the agents for social justice and world peace in our society.

*Mary A. Thron,
MCTLC President*

Advocacy for Language Education

Lisa Lilley, ACTFL 2010 Teacher of the Year, suggests that we start producing PSAs with m”ultilingual celebrities promoting speaking other languages. Can you imagine how Ricky Rubio, the Spanish *phenom* of the Timberwolves, could get the attention of the public in Minnesota?

Even though the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) has been eliminated by Congress, ACTFL encourages us to contact our U.S. Representatives and Senators. We need to ask why the funding was eliminated and to communicate the importance of language learning. If you have been a recipient of FLAP money, educate them on how important the funding was to your community.

SENATOR AL FRANKEN
309 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON DC 20510
(202) 224-5641
www.franken.senate.gov/?p=contact

SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR
302 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON DC 20510
(202) 224-3244
www.klobuchar.senate.gov/emailamy.cfm

Practitioner's Corner . . .

Notes from our vice president and historian, Marjie Hay. . .



In November 1976, Percy Fearing, MN State Supervisor for Foreign Languages, passed away unexpectedly. A memorial was established in his honor. MCTLC continues to offer an Award for Language Curriculum Development in his honor.

The Emma Birkmaier Award was established in 1977 to recognize outstanding service and support of world language education in Minnesota. The first recipients are Dr. Helen Jorstad and Dr. Jermaine Arendt. There are currently 33 Emma Birkmaier Award recipients in the history of our organization!

MCTLC AWARDS 2012!

Start thinking about nominating a colleague to receive statewide recognition for their performance and achievements in world language education. Check out the Grants and Awards tab on our website for information.

<http://mctlc.org/Awards>

Deadline for award nominations is June 15th.

Sometimes convincing students to speak in the target language feels more like a constant battle than a fun change of pace that students can look forward to when they arrive in the classroom. One of the sessions at last fall's MCTLC conference shared some ideas from the Concordia Language Villages that could be adapted for classroom use. Both the German teacher and I have been successfully using this strategy to get our students speaking the target language and making it fun.

We started by cutting out images of famous or well-known people who speak the language. These people may be dead or alive. We labeled each person, laminated the pictures, punched two holes in the top, and used yarn to make necklaces. When students come into class, they often rush over to the pile of necklaces and grab their favorite. There are usually a few that are the most prized. In my class they are Pancho Gonzalez and Shakira. In the German classroom, they are Martin Luther and Claudia Schiffer. It's always fun to see who the students choose.

By wearing a necklace, the student agrees to speak the target language all hour. If they are caught speaking English, the necklace gets taken away and they have to start over the next day. At the end of the quarter, students who have been successful ten times get a small root beer float. Twenty times gets them a large root beer float. They can also choose extra credit if they prefer. In my classroom, three days earns them one extra credit point. Students look forward to their reward at the end of the quarter and are readily engaged in speaking the target language not only for the classroom activities we do, but also in their personal conversations with their classmates.

Having the opportunity to use Spanish to talk about what they want to talk about always brings about the need to know new words which I readily share with students, creating a list on the board each day for all students to use. Even though it is not required, students check the word list daily and use the words they find useful or funny. Encouraging students to use the target language in the classroom makes class more fun, engages students more fully and better prepares them for real-life use of the language.

Submitted by Kay Edberg, Spanish teacher at Mora High School. We invite you to share your ideas for successful classroom practices by sending them to info@mctlc.org.



At the *Place de Vosges, Paris*

MCTLC Newsletter
Dr. David L. Paulson-Wolf, Editor
Southwest Minnesota State University
1501 State St, Marshall MN 56258
editor@mctlc.org

The board would like to encourage membership participation both in our newsletter and on our website. So we are proposing a “*Website question of the month.*” Each month we will pose a different question and invite our membership to post responses on the forum of our website. Here is our first edition.

Website question of the month: Where have you traveled recently with your students? Where are you planning to travel this summer?

Jennifer Duronio spent a month in Cuernavaca, México with a group of students from the Blake School. They attended Universal Language School and lived with host families.

Marjie Hay will be traveling to Costa Rica this summer with students from Brooklyn Park HS. They will be traveling with Educational Programs LLC and will be incorporating a family stay and a service project into their trip.

Kay Edberg traveled with a group of students from Mora High School to Costa Rica last summer with Ed-Ventures. They spent most of their time in the Guanacaste region, staying with Costa Rican families and attending classes at CPI Flamingo Beach.

We will be posting these questions on our website's forum so you can share your plans and travel experiences with other members. To find our forums, go to www.mctlc.org and click on "Resources for members". The question and answers will be posted in the Discussion Forums and listed under "Communities". We are hoping to share some of your responses in future newsletter articles.

Submitted by Kay Edberg, membership chair

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