

A Message from the Chair

First, a big “thank you” to everyone who helped make 2012-13 a successful year. A major achievement was the approval of our new certificate programs by the New York State Department of Education (see column to the right). In addition, four of our students won competitive scholarships for study trips to Japan (see page 2).

Our faculty continue to find new ways of providing extra curricular opportunities for our students. Prof. Keiko Miyajima was the guiding force behind the successful student applications for the Japan travel study program, as well as taking a group of our students to the Sakura Matsuri Festival at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens (see pages 3-4). Prof. Hana Masters began a new “Japan Club” (see page 4) and Prof. Jill Robbins’ Italian Club sponsored an event on Italian spring and summer fashions (see page 4). Earlier in the year, Prof. Yen-ling Yeh’s Chinese classes attended a calligraphy exhibition and workshop at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office and Prof. Aída Martínez-Gómez organized a trip to the United Nations.

The Department co-sponsored “Mexican Itineraries for the Twenty-First Century: (Re)locating Literature, Culture and the Nation,” a conference organized by the Program in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages at the CUNY Graduate Center, as well as “Legacies of Mass Atrocities: The Quest for Justice for the Disappeared in Argentina” and “Legacies of Mass Atrocities: Sexual Violence Against Women in Guatemala,” both with the Historical Memory Project and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Again, many thanks to everyone who contributed to our successes. Best wishes for a happy summer!

Silvia Dapía

Certificate Programs Approved

Three new certificate programs proposed by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures have been approved by the New York State Department of Education—Legal Translation (18 credit hours); Legal Interpretation (18 credit hours); and Legal Translation and Legal Interpretation (24 credit hours). “Interpretation” involves the simultaneous rendering of speech into another spoken language, while “translation” concerns the conversion of written materials from one language to another.

Targeted for people with fluency in English and Spanish, the certificates prepare students to take the professional certifying examinations and for careers in interpreting and translation. Adding a credential in interpretation and/or translation is a wonderful way for students in various majors to enhance their employment possibilities. The U.S. Department of Labor projects a 42 percent growth rate as opposed to the general growth rate of 14 percent.

Students interested in more information on the programs should contact the coordinator, Prof. Aída Martínez-Gómez at amartinez-gomez@jjay.cuny.edu or 212-621-3755.



The first group of translation / interpretation students.

News

Students Earn Scholarships for Japan Travel Program

Thanks to the efforts of Prof. Keiko Miyajima, four students in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures were awarded fully funded scholarships to participate in a study tour in Japan. They include undergraduates José Andres Arcos, Anjelica Camacho, and Maxi Cruz, and graduate student Malgorzata Sekowska.

The “JENESYS 2.0 and Youth Exchange Program with North America” is a new program designed to encourage greater understanding between the youth of Japan and the United States and to foster long-term and ongoing interest between the peoples of the two nations by providing firsthand experiences with each other’s culture. The grants include the cost of travel, visits to host schools, and staying with a host family for a ten-day study tour in Japan. The theme of the trip, “Cool Japan,” focuses on three aspects of Japanese culture: pop-culture, food, and tourism. Congratulations to our students on their success!



Prof. Keiko Miyajima

Jose Andres Arcos is a junior majoring in Economics with a concentration in Forensic Financial Analysis. He is president of the Association of the Latinos in Professional Finance and Accounting organization, participates in the Peer Ambassador Leadership Program and is a member of Alpha Phi Delta Fraternity. His Colombian and Ecuadorian background has influenced his appreciation for foreign cultures and his interest in economics and business inspired his dream to travel to Asia and visit countries like Japan.



very proud of the hard work they have put into my education, which was still showing fruits of their labor. Even though I am the one going to Japan, my family feels that through my success they have also succeed as well.”

Maxi Cruz is a 22 year old Computer Information Systems Major at John Jay College. He was born in the Dominican Republic but raised in the Bronx. He enjoys reading and has always had an interest in Japanese Culture.



Anjelica Camacho is of Puerto Rican and American descent. She was raised in the Bronx by her single mother, Maria Cabrera, and is a senior at John Jay College pursuing a history major and a minor in Anthropology. She is going to be the first college graduate in her family. “Being accepted into this program was a blessing because I plan to attain a graduate degree in Asian and Asian American studies with a focus on Japan. When my family found out about this trip, they were



Malgorzata Sekowska, a native of Poland, is pursuing a MA in International Criminal Justice. She plans to use her degree to follow her interests in human rights, the empowerment of women and transnational crime prevention. She holds BA in Sociology, an AA in Business Administration, and studied English Linguistics and Literature. Through participation in the JENESYS 2.0 program she hopes to explore Japan’s unique mixture of rich traditions, cultural heritage and modernity, and make friends with Japanese students and foster future cooperation.



News

Students Visit United Nations

On April 9, four faculty from the FLL department took a group of John Jay students on a visit to the United Nations headquarters. Included in the visit was a session with a U.N. interpreter who provided the students with insight into the role of interpreters at the U.N., valuable information that was particularly timely in view of the recent approval of our new certificates in interpretation and translation.



Students and faculty of John Jay College gathered in the lobby at the United Nations building.



Department faculty on the student trip to the United Nations. From left, Professors Liliana Soto-Fernández, Aida Martínez-Gómez Gómez, Raúl Romero, and Silvia Dapía.

Sakura Matsuri Festival

Prof. Keiko Miyajima took a group of students to the Sakura Matsuri Festival, a celebration of Japanese culture held at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden in April. “Sakura” means “cherry blossom” in Japanese and the annual appearance of the cherry blossoms is occasion for celebrations. The Botanical Garden observance featured Taiko-style drummers, martial arts demonstrations, and workshops on Bonsai, origami, and Sohenryu-style tea ceremonies among its many scheduled activities.

The first cherry trees were planted at the Gardens as a gift from the Japanese government following the First World War. Today it has more than 200 trees and 42 different varieties of cherry blossom.



Performers at the Festival. Photo by Jennifer Rovira.



A view of a portion of the Japanese section of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens. Photo by Jennifer Rovira.

News

Italian Club Event

Prof. Jill Robbins gave a lecture to the Italian Club on the history of Italian fashion after which the students participated in a runway show of spring and summer fashions.



Members of the Italian Club with Prof. Jill Robbins in the center in yellow. Photo by the Photography Club.

Anime Performance

Students who attended the Sakura Matsuri Festival were treated to a fashion show presented by the New York Comic Con, the group that sponsors the annual



Costumed Anime performers.

New York Anime Festival. Anime is a Japanese form of hand drawn or computer animation that is widely popular in the U.S. and other nations. It can include animated television productions, short films, or feature-length movies. The annual event, held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in Manhattan, draws more than 100,000 people.

New “Japan Club”

Anyone interested in things Japanese—culture, film, food, history, literature, language, etc.—is invited to join the new Japan Club. Prof. Hana Masters, the faculty advisor, reports that the club meets every Tuesday between 1:30 and 2:50 in room 1.63 in the new building. Everyone is welcome—you do not have to be enrolled in a language course to participate.



Kudos

Silvia G. Dapía had her article on “Argentina’s Attempt to Foster Immigration from Eastern Europe in the 1990s,” published in *East Central Europe in Exile: Volume 1, Transatlantic Migrations from East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), edited by Anna Mazurkiewicz. She also was an invited lecturer on “Borges y la filosofía” at the “New Perspectives on Borges” symposium sponsored by The Cátedra Argentina of The Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University and attended the annual conference of the Latin American Studies Association in Washington, DC.



Raúl Rubio presented papers on “Cuban Material Cultures: Exilic, Diasporic, and Global Contexts” at the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, The Graduate Center (CUNY); “Corporal Cuba: Performing Cuban America” at the “Haciendo Caminos: Mapping the Futures of U.S. Latina/o Literatures” conference at John Jay College; and “Ethnicity and Humor: Challenging Heteronormativities Through Stand-up Comedy” at the National Association for Ethnic Studies Annual Conference, Fort Collins, Colorado.



John Sorrentino received his PhD in French Literature from the CUNY Graduate Center. His dissertation was entitled “Gide in the First Person: The ‘I’ of Religion and Same-Sex Sexuality.”



Aída Martínez-Gómez received a PSC CUNY grant for her project “Research on Non-Professional Interpreters: Looking at the Past to Build the Future” and a Center for the Advancement of Teaching Travel Fellowship.

Keiko Miyajima worked closely with four John Jay students who received full scholarships from the “JENESYS 2.0 and Youth Exchange Program with North America” for a travel study program in Japan. She also arranged a student trip to the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens to view the annual Sakura Matsuri Festival.



Arístides Falcón Paridí directed the documentary film “Rumba Clave Blen Blen Blen” about Cuban rumba music in New York City. Musical performances in the film include some of the best musicians in New York.



Liliana Soto-Fernández organized a conference on “Panamá: Canal de Culturas” for the New York Metropolitan Chapter of AATSP at John Jay College. She also published “One Short Story: Three Approaches” in *Cambios y Conexiones: Latino-America y España* (Regwell Press), edited by Mary-Anne Vetterling, Joy Renjelian-Burgy and Lucía Ortiz.

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