



ACCENT!

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND CULTURES AT UNCG

LLC Culture Jam

Organized by **Molly Reininger**, our beloved Culture Jam was in full swing this year. The all-day event was held on April 3rd, with the goal of sharing and celebrating the cultural diversity found in our community here at UNCG. The event consisted of interactive workshops led by our LLC faculty and staff, culture and language students, campus clubs, and other members of our UNCG community.

These workshop leaders delivered mini hands-on workshop offering culturally relevant skills including learning how to sign your name in ASL, flamenco dancing, cutting papel picado, taekwondo, and many more activities! With over 500 students stopping by and participating we are excited to continue celebrating Culture Jam for many more years.



Japanese Conference

The third-year Japanese Language Conversation and Composition students, led by Dr. **Chiaki Takagi** showcased their class projects with pride at the 2023 North Carolina Japanese Language Student Conference, a vibrant gathering held on October 28th, at Wake Forest University.



Among the standout presentations were: **Jayla Perez** and **Asa Jackson**: "Which places do you want to visit in Japan?", **Jerell Clark** and **Seojun Kim**: "Traveling", and **Jeremy Clevenger** and **Ashley Birchfield**: "Introducing UNCG." Congrats to our students for their hard work and research!



Asian Autumn Festival

UNC Greensboro's Asian Autumn Festival, organized by Dr. **Meiqing Sun**, celebrated East and Southeast Asian cultures in fall 2023. Sponsored by IPC Kohler Fund, Office of Intercultural Engagement, and the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, the event united various student organizations like the Chinese Culture and Language Association, Filipino American Student Association, and more. Attendees enjoyed games, arts and crafts, and indulged in mooncakes, symbolizing unity and prosperity. Performances by K-Code, Martial Arts Club, and talented musicians like **Sabinne Charles** and **Ming Kong** elevated the festival's vibrancy, showcasing the talent that our students have here on campus.



Chinese Spring Festival



The Chinese Spring Festival is the largest traditional festival in China and many Asian countries. It is also an annual grant event organized by the Chinese Studies Program of the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures with the intention of bringing different cultures together

promoting cultural exchange, peace, and reconciliation. Every year the Chinese Spring Festival gathers hundreds of people from the students, faculties and staff across the campus and others in the Guilford-Winston Salem-Triangle Research community to fill the EUC Auditorium and its surroundings. It's a big conversation about discovery and intellectual adventure. There were art performances representing East Asian Lunar New Year traditions and diverse celebrations from other cultures, as well as ongoing tabletop interactive activities, and presentations by students sharing their research on cultural diversity. It has been recognized as an opportunity for students to come together to celebrate and share their rich cultural heritages with everyone on the UNCG campus.



Greetings From the Department Head

As we approach the end of the semester, I look back at a year full of losses but also full of gains. Our LLC department will not be the same without our graduate students. Our most impactful loss is not having the vibrancy, the inclusiveness, and the intellectual stimuli that our graduate students have brought to our department through the years. Yes, I am angry about it. We also lost three of our nine languages. The core of our identity and our diversity. One third of it is lost. Once more our LLC department will not be the same without Chinese, Korean, and Russian. Yes, I am angry about it, too. Our esteemed colleagues, loved and admired by our students and our community, successful researchers, teachers and leaders, whose lives have endured an unforeseen disruption. We will miss our colleagues; we will miss our graduate students. And we will also miss two of our faculty that are retiring after numerous years of remarkable dedication and hard work devoted to our department and the larger community of UNCG, Ms. **Sarah Carrig**, and Dr. **Kathleen Macfie**.

It is precisely in the richness and the diversity of our department that we can also find joy and celebration for all the successful moments we had this year. Dr. **Chiaki Takagi** won the College of Arts and Sciences Teaching Excellence Award; we all witnessed a tremendously successful “Hands-on Culture Jam,” wonderfully orchestrated by **Molly Reininger**; we welcomed **Jimmy Parker** as Business Manager; we are graduating a large

cohort of students, one MA in LLC with a concentration in French and Francophone studies: **Rodrigue Djigla**, four MA’s in LLV with a concentration in Spanish: **Cecilia Galicia**, **Sandra Lee**, **Keyla Márquez Vergel**, and **Tatianna Wilkins**. Three BA’s in LLC, French and Francophone Studies: **Cameron Burke**, **Éloïse Madjd-Sadjadi**, and **Grecia Nandín**. Eight BA’s in LLC, Global Languages and Communities: **Alexis Aguilar**, **Cameron Hall**, **Keenan Hawkins**, **Jayla Pérez**, **Jamilah Pettis**, **Sage Prince**, **Catherine Rodríguez Hernández**, and **Emma Torrey**. And ten BA’s in Spanish: **Karina Hernández Reyes**, **Tamara Jones-Worden**, **Daniela León Campos**, **Jorge López**, **Grecia Nandín**, **Jacqueline Rodríguez**, **Mariana Romero**, **Isabella Roose**, **Carter Schenck**, and **Alexandra Yi**. Congratulations! We hope you come and visit us and share all your successful stories. It is a privilege and an honor to lead such an outstanding and accomplished group of people. I hope we can continue to shine and show the rest of the university what a crucial role we play. We are essential for the health and progress of a global university and we will continue to serve and educate our remarkable students to help them become the sophisticated and well-rounded human beings that they are.



FOCUS ON STUDENT AND FACULTY ENGAGEMENT



In the summer of 2023 Dr. **Ana Hontanilla**, **River Bondurant** and Grad Assistant **Tatianna Wilkins** of the Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Department took a group of 20 UNCG students to Heredia, Costa Rica for a 4-week Summer Abroad Program. While there, students lived with host families,

studied Spanish daily on the local college campus, completed service-learning activities and projects in both grade schools and elderly homes, and participated in many cultural field trips like cooking classes, traditional dance performances, visits to national parks, city tours, and more.

In the summer of 2023 Dr. **Ignacio Lopez**, **Felipe Troncoso** and Grad Assistant **Keyla Marquez Vergel** along with over 20 students visited Cadiz, Spain for a 5-week Summer Abroad Program. The students were immersed in the Spanish culture living with host families, studying Spanish history, and enjoying the activities the coastal city had to offer. They visited Sevilla and Granada and participated in cultural activities such as dancing lessons, a paella cooking class, surfing and more!

remote communication with real Chinese society in real context and supercharge students' language journey with live language and culture events. So far, dozens of students have effectively used this platform, and spoke highly of it, believing that this is a very rare opportunity to learn real language without going abroad.

Fluency in a foreign language allows individuals to gain increased cultural awareness and a global perspective. A greater appreciation



In June 2023, Dr. **Kelly Lowther Pereira** organized *Puentes* Spanish Immersion Summer Camp, a week-long camp at UNCG for local Hispanic/Latinx middle school youth, with funding from LLC and a Coalition for Diversity in Language and Culture (CDLC) grant. Middle-school campers engaged in a variety of activities centered around their heritage language, culture, and bilingual identities, with guest speakers and campus visits to the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Jackson Library, and more. *Puentes* Camp (which means "bridges" in English) was a great way to connect local youth to UNCG, while celebrating the linguistic and cultural diversity of their family heritage.

for other cultures can lead to an enhanced sense of empathy for those from different backgrounds, which can benefit you both personally and professionally. Every year, Dr. **Meiqing Sun** hosts a Chinese Studies focused Career Development Seminar which provides an opportunity and excellent network for students who are taking Chinese classes communicate with alumni who have successful professional career sharing their valuable experience. This year's guest speaker Joshua Dunlop is a native of North Carolina who is currently an oral English teacher at Shanghai Normal University in Shanghai, China.

The first phase of the cultural exchange project, a collaboration between the School of International Education of Shandong Normal University in mainland China and UNCG Chinese Studies Program, began in September 2023. The main objective of this collaboration is to build an online platform for language and cultural exchange for graduate students at Shandong Normal University and students studying Chinese at UNCG. It provides

A graphic titled "COLLABORATION" is divided into two sections. The left section features the text "Professor Wenjuan Guo, College of International Education, Shandong Normal University" above a portrait of a woman and the Shandong Normal University logo. The right section features the text "Dr. Meiqing Sun, Coordinator of Chinese Studies Program, The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, UNCG" above a portrait of a woman and the UNCG logo. The top right corner of the graphic has the text "CHINESE STUDIES" with a stylized graphic below it.



STUDENT & ALUMNI EXCELLENCE



LLC French and Francophone Studies major, **Sofie Muska**, is the recipient of the Pubantz Artist in Residency (AIR) program, for a novel she's writing! (the article of the novel is linked)

Congratulations to our following LLC French and Francophone Studies majors: **Parker Dambly**, **Ibrahima Dembele**, and **Grecia Nandin** who have been inducted into Pi Delta Phi in this April. Félicitations!

For the second year in a row, five Chinese students from the Chinese Studies Program have been honored as finalists in the National Chinese Speech Contest. They are **Emma Torrey** (LLC, GIC) and **Dre'kwan Fulton** (Chinese Minor) in 2023 and **Rebecca McEvoy** (LLC, GIC, Chinese Minor), **Jaden Macik** (Chinese Minor), and **Anya Huang** (Chinese Minor) in 2024, who won the third prize at the 2024 National Chinese Speech Contest. Congratulations on their wonderful accomplishments!

Congratulations to our students who have gone above and beyond in and out of the classroom earning outstanding major awards! In our French major **Éloïse Madjd-Sadjadi**, for Spanish **Isabella Roose**, and for Global and Local Communities, **Emma Torrey**. Congratulations also to **Alexis Aguilar** for his outstanding work in the community and the recipient of this year's community engagement award!

The Provost Student Excellence Award is the highest academic honor for undergraduate students at UNCG, recognizing excellence both in and out of the classroom on behalf of the Honors Council of Lloyd International Honors College. A big congratulations to award winners **Alexis Aguilar**, **Rebecca McEvoy**, and **Sofie Muska**!

Grad student **Keyla Marquez Vergel**, who has been with us for two years, defended and passed her master's thesis titled *Travesía de la posmemoria: la nostalgia genealógica y el trauma intergeneracional en la literatura cubanoamericana*. With Dr. **Ana Hontanilla** as committee chair, Keyla's thesis is the last one for the LLC master's program. Felicidades, Keyla!





FOCUS ON LLC FACULTY



This year marks the 47th issue of UNCG’s International Poetry Review, edited by Dr. **Ana Hontanilla**. This year’s issue, titled Arab Spring, centers the poetry of Middle Eastern and North African writers. With a tone of resistance, Arab Spring collects the stories of artists in the Arab world and in the diaspora with the aim of inclusion and representation of those voices.

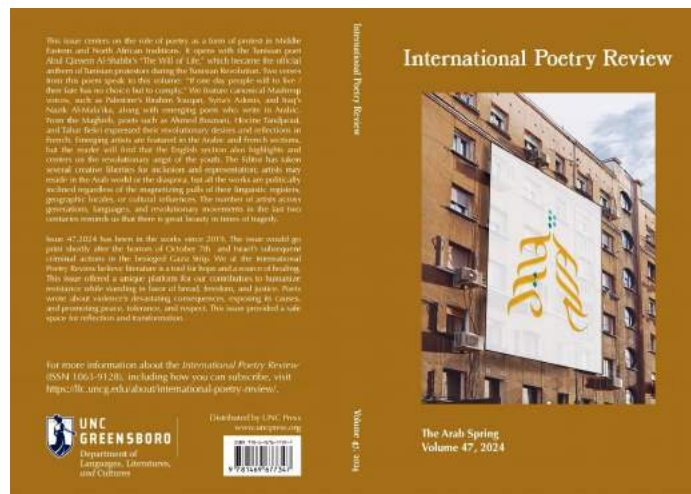
Dr. **Ana Hontanilla** was also published in LARR (Latin American Research Review) in the spring of 2024 with an [article](#) (linked) titled “Pardo Soldiers’ Historical Claims in Late Eighteenth-Century Cuba.” Felicidades, Ana!

Dr. **Cybelle H. McFadden** presented a paper, “Documenting Racism and Discrimination,” for the panel “Independence, Representation, and Discrimination: Contemporary French Women’s Cinema” that she organized for the 20th–21st Century French and Francophone Studies International Colloquium hosted by Villanova University in February 2024. In 2023, Dr. McFadden had two encyclopedic entries published in *The Art of Directing: A Concise Dictionary of France’s Film Directors*. Félicitations, Cybelle!

The Japanese Studies Program hosted the annual conference of SEATJ (Southeastern Association Of Teachers Of Japanese) on February 2nd, 2024 on UNCG’s campus. Dr. **Chiaki Takagi** was the conference chair.

Dr. Takagi was also invited to lead a literature workshop for k-12 educators. The Online Workshop featured the book *The Color of the Sky is the Shape of the Heart* by Chesil and translated by Takami Nieda.

Dr. **Chiaki Takagi** with all her hard work has been this year’s recipient of the CAS Teaching Excellence Award. Congratulations, Chiaki! We appreciate all you do!



Due to the extraordinary work they have put into the LLC Department, many of our faculty have been promoted! Promoted to Principal Lecturer include: **Guylene Deasy, Karen Denaples, Maria Freeman**, and Dr. **Chiaki Takagi**. Promoted to Senior Lecturer include:

Mary Ann Horley, Liliana Lira-Rivera, Laura Lopez, Joshua Lunsford, and Molly Reininger. We are extremely proud of our successful Lecturers in our department that have been promoted. Congratulations!

Thanks to their remarkable contributions to the Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures and their devotion their students we want to congratulate Dr. **Daniel Kim**, Dr. **Kevin Reese**, and Dr. **Meiqing Sun** for being this year’s recipients of the annual Above and Beyond Lecturer’s Awards. Congratulations also to our lecturers **Molly Reininger** and **Sarah Carrig** for receiving the LLC Community and Diversity Award. We also want to wish a happy retirement to lecturer **Sarah Carrig** and Dr. **Kathleen Macfie**. A heartfelt thank you for your many years of service and dedication to our department. Congratulations and best wishes to both of you!

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