

Waves

Connecting the World through Languages and Cultures

THE MOSAIC:
A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

GVSU MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Majd Al-Mallah



Welcome to the third edition of *Waves*, the magazine of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures (MLL) at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). The title reminds us that languages and cultures, just like ocean waves, are powerful forces which draw connections across continents. This year's volume explores the significance of multiculturalism and multicultural communities. The variety of articles celebrate the world as a "mosaic" by highlighting the importance of multiculturalism inside and outside of the workplace. In addition, the magazine showcases the successes of students, alumni, and faculty, as well as past events the department hosted.

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I am delighted to see the third installment of *Waves* come to fruition! This volume has been a collaborative effort department wide, but with substantial contributions by Grayson DeYoung, Editor-in-Chief, and Amanda Northrop, Creative Director & Designer. I would like to recognize the faculty members who served on the Outreach & Marketing Committee (Dan Golembeski, Jose Lara, and Zulema Moret), who oversaw the production of this volume. I would also like to thank Autumn Gorsline-Davis for playing a pivotal project management role in putting the magazine together from start to finish. My deep thanks and appreciation to all who contributed to the volume through writing, providing photos, or in any other way.

This volume appropriately focuses on multiculturalism and multicultural communities, since Modern Languages and Literatures is the very example of a multicultural community that brings faculty from all over the world to work with our students who pursue degrees and careers with an international focus. As the main feature clearly demonstrates, our country is also a great example of multicultural communities and the trend toward more of that is surely going to continue. The demand, then, for both linguistic and cultural understanding will no doubt continue and actually increase. Ultimately, the primary goal for us is to train our students and prepare them for this current and future reality.

As this volume demonstrates, our students and faculty are doing outstanding work. Such work is placing our students in various internships, study abroad, and job opportunities. Our faculty are active scholars in their field, but also active participants in university life and community service.

I hope you enjoy this volume and I look forward to welcoming you on campus and in Mackinac Hall!

MAJD AL-MALLAH

Majd Al-Mallah, Professor and Chair
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THE MOSAIC:

A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

by Grayson DeYoung

America's traditional identity as a melting pot today seems less of a reality than it did in the past. The idea of "melting together" means losing one's uniqueness and sacrificing individual identity for the whole. In recent trends, the "melting pot" is giving way to a new nickname: "mosaic". This new term emphasizes the way in which Americans of different cultural backgrounds blend together while retaining their unique characteristics. The various shapes, sizes, and colors of a mosaic showcase the entirety of the national community as a beautiful piece of art.

Language and cultural learning is—whether we recognize it or not—the primary portal into the global community for college students and recent graduates. Individuals with such skill sets have direct access to opportunity. "It's a multicultural world out there and we all have to interact with people who are different. Success comes with reaching out and integrating with the community," says PepsiCo's CEO, Indra Nooyi.

Indeed, the U.S. has one of the largest populations of non-English speakers—fully 17%—a 10% jump from 1990.

This means those who wish to work in areas like management, social work, or healthcare, need to be competent in other cultures and languages in order to keep up with the nation's growing diversity.

In 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that by the end of the decade, no single racial or ethnic group will constitute the majority of children under 18. In two decades, no single group will constitute the majority of the entire country. Language use is another indicator of the United States' diverse population. As of 2010, there are 25.9 million more Spanish speakers as compared to 1980, and there is—for example—a 599% increase in Vietnamese usage in the same period.

The job market needs those who can adapt to these constant cultural shifts, both in the U.S. and around the world. Michigan companies are seeking more bilingual employees; for example, the company First Mortgage has seen a 30 % increase in their Spanish-speaking client base. The company wants to connect with this growing clientele through language as well as cultural understanding. Companies are beginning to lean heavily on those with foreign language proficiencies, actively engaging their language and cultural skills so as to keep up with a globalized professional world.

While we understand in theory that language and cultural learning is important, what does it mean in the real world and why should anyone care?

GVSU's Director of Community Engagement, Ruth Stegeman, helps answer that question. Her role ties together language learning with community service. Stegeman explains the term community engagement as the mutual benefit between volunteers and communities. GVSU students and faculty go into Grand Rapids communities to work on projects like Fair Housing 49507. This project leads students, in the context of their courses, into a neighborhood to gain hands-on experience in community service and at the same time to be exposed to new cultures. The project's ultimate goal is to help the foreclosed crisis-affected neighborhood by rehabbing homes, generating new green space, and creating an overall positive community with accessible resources.

Stegeman says that through this program most students are completely immersed in a new culture—that of minorities and low-income cultures—right next door in Grand Rapids. In addition to Stegeman's experience, research by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) shows this type of community engagement to be the most beneficial educational practice for student learning.

Stegeman also believes that learning another language is "absolutely critical" for students who plan on working in communities and wish to move forward in their careers. A language study in 2004 showed "the positive impact of cultural information is significantly enhanced when experienced through foreign language and accompanied by experiences in culturally authentic situations." Much like the projects Stegeman is working with through GVSU students and the greater Grand Rapids area.

Stegeman also says, "If you talk to most adults about language, they will always say they wish they had mastered a foreign language." Dean of Students and Vice Provost for Student Affairs, Bart Merkle, agrees wholeheartedly. He believes his biggest educational regret was not continuing with his foreign language studies.

Dean Merkle's perspective on multiculturalism and language learning connects the issues of "real life" and campus life. He refers to his role as one that must "stir the pot," meaning he constantly encourages and challenges students to actively engage in a multitude of experiences offered at GVSU. Dean Merkle specifically highlights the annual Intercultural Festival, which takes place in March, as "really illustrative of the kinds of things that the university hopes students will participate in."

Not only does Dean Merkle wish for an increased attendance at cultural activities, but also for more students taking classes in MLL and Area Studies. "I think it's a challenge in our educational system to help students understand the values and benefits of developing language skills other than their native tongue," says Dean Merkle. These jobs can range from communications, research, and education, which are not limited to the fields of translation and interpretation students often associate with language studies.

The Dean also emphasizes the important mental exercises language learning has to offer. The American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) reports the existence of a positive correlation between increased language learning and higher academic test scores, increased memory skills, higher problem solving capabilities, and the offset of age-related cognitive losses. Therefore, language students gain skills and benefits beyond speaking and cultural proficiency; they are helping their brains work more efficiently.

Dean Merkle also acknowledges the importance of students taking advantage of GVSU's study abroad opportunities. He views it as an expedited way to student success. According to The Center for Global Education, studies show study abroad students earn higher grades and complete degrees in four years at a higher rate than their peers. The Padnos International Center (PIC) offers students direct access to complete cultural immersion. Students who study abroad have the opportunity to transform their understanding of the world, while gaining a multitude of valuable working skills. Quintessential Careers, a resource for career seekers and college students, lists multicultural sensitivity and awareness as the 7th most sought after skill valued by employers.

During GVSU's past 2013-2014 academic year, there were 731 students who studied abroad. Rebecca Hambleton, the Director of Study Abroad and International Partnerships, primarily works globally with GVSU's partner institutions.

"When students are out doing this kind of work, they are getting multicultural experiences.

They learn how to negotiate, who they are in the context of the community, and what they are capable of doing," says Stegeman.

According to strategic research and corporate intelligent company, Merchant International Group, there are over one million companies in international trades and industry, doing \$12.4 trillion worth of business, while also employing millions of workers.

"OVER ONE MILLION COMPANIES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADES AND INDUSTRY DOING

\$12.4 trillion WORTH OF BUSINESS"

But she also works with individual students leaving the country, as well as those entering GVSU from abroad. Whether via telephone or email, Hambleton is constantly in contact with partners and students continents apart.

Hambleton's full global engagement has taught her numerous things about culture, language, and people in general. Her take on multiculturalism is simply put—she calls it “diversity of perspectives.” She enjoys bringing diversity to the campus and believes international students at GVSU not only benefit from the educational opportunity, but in return benefit the entire GVSU community. International students often integrate themselves through campus activities and organizations, furthering cultural openness and dialogue. “Our hope is that by bringing scholars in from our partner institutions we are introducing our students another perspective,” says Hambleton.

Studying abroad offers students tangible and immediate skill sets, as well as opportunities for MLL students to delve deeper into their studies. Immersion in a student's target language and culture can transform his or her educational experience much beyond his or her college career. San Diego State University surveyed 3,000 international business study abroad alumni. 58% of them states that their study abroad experience increased their earning potential and 80% states their internationally-oriented learning improved success on the job market.

Boston University has even created a résumé style guide to help students enhance their study abroad experiences to stand out in the competitive work force.

SDSU STUDY ABROAD ALUMNI



Studying abroad offers a direct route for language and cultural understanding with increased career opportunities. But most importantly, Hambleton says, “[students’] worlds open up.”

Although not all students decide to study abroad, they still have access to more cultural and professional opportunities through GVSU's Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA). The office's director, Dr. Connie Dang, describes the OMA's mission as three-fold. It assists the university's recruitment of a diverse population, it supports and fosters a welcoming, inclusive campus environment, and it brings awareness to different cultures through a variety of events and programs, such as the Multicultural Cohort Program and the Speakers of Color Lecture Series.

Part of Dang's job is to enter a variety of communities to work with diverse individuals and cultures. Her outreach has taught her the important strength of interpersonal skills and cultural competency in our fast-paced, globalizing culture. Dang advises students to “have an open mind, listen, be authentic, and have patience.” Students with language skills gain these types of characteristics within their coursework and develop them throughout the program to move into the future confidently. A survey among Fortune 500 companies ranks foreign languages and knowledge of geographic regions of the world vital to U.S. interests as the career fields most compatible with and in need of language skills.

Dang's pedagogy comes from her personal and professional experiences. She says, “In my mind, multiculturalism is the presence of many different cultures in the context of the American society.” Her appreciation of MLL's efforts to grow the diversity of GVSU's campus shines through her perspective on language learning. Dang identifies herself as an “Asian woman immigrant” who respects those who can learn languages in addition to their native tongue. The professional world also rewards those who have learned foreign languages. According to Salary.com, job candidates who are bilingual in both English and another language may receive a pay increase of 5%–20% per hour as compared to monolinguals.

On a personal note, Dang says, “If you come to me and speak my language, I am like ‘Wow, you took the time to learn about my culture, my people, and my language.’ I think that's the step in the right direction for us as human beings, to say, ‘You know what? I do care.’”



WHY NOT FRANCE & POLAND? by Chelsea Kobus

I opened my change purse while nodding and smiling at the cashier, hoping that we had a mutual understanding.

She picked through the coins I placed on the counter and I left the store triumphantly; I had yet another grocery store purchase! The excitement I experienced when completing any typical day-to-day interactions were the moments I lived for while studying abroad in Kraków, Poland. Well... besides the moments when I could be found eating pierogi, kielbasa, and lody (ice cream), which may or may not have been almost every day during my five-month study abroad experience.

My life in Poland was rewarding, yet unexpected. As a French major at GVSU, I was probably expected to study abroad in France when given the choice. I can't even count on two hands how many times I was asked: “Poland? Why Poland?,” to which my only response was—and still is—“Why not?”

I had only been in Polish 101 at GVSU for a few weeks at the time that I applied to study through Academic Programs International, and had completed Polish 102 by the time I packed my bags and left. My Polish professor, Ewa Lewak, inspired me to take a chance on Poland, which ended up being the best decision I ever made while in college.

I learned more about myself and about the world in those five months than I have in my entire life. The friends from all around the world that I met, the amount of progress that I made in Polish, as well as the independence I gained from the experience, are experiences that are completely priceless. Each moment, every single memory, holds a special place in my heart. I left Kraków with tears in my eyes, not only because I had just gotten charged an exorbitant amount of money for having to check three bags at the airport (oops!), but because I knew that even if I returned to Kraków, I would only be a tourist.

I came back to GVSU for one quick semester before heading back to Europe, only this time I made the expected choice: studying in France.

Both of my abroad experiences are different in their own ways, and I treasure everything that I learned from both of them.

You can study a language by learning about a culture in a classroom, but you couldn't possibly completely understand it until you go and experience it for yourself. To find yourself at home somewhere that had once been out of your comfort zone is an incredible feeling, and studying abroad can give that to you.





by Cera Kolenda

INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS

Deciding to live in Japan for four months was perhaps the hardest decision I have ever made in my life. It has also been the best. The first day of class at the Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU) was a little daunting since English is almost never allowed. But the lack of English only helped my adjustment to being completely surrounded by Japanese. JCMU's staff is incredibly supportive as well. For me, the most encouraging person there would have to be the second year language teacher, Aizawa Sensei (Sensei being a title for teacher). In one of our first weekly individual conferences he taught me that foreign students are too sensitive to how the Japanese might perceive a foreigner's grammatical errors. "The Japanese know you are not Japanese," he said to me as he explained that most Japanese are willing to help.

No matter how many mistakes you make, they are happy to see foreign students learning their language.

From him, one of the biggest lessons I have learned from being in Japan has been to not be afraid of unknown situations and talking to strangers in a foreign language. It was a lesson that was proven to me on one of my first adventures outside of Hikone, Shiga- the area in which JCMU is located.

Kyoto prefecture, an area with an incredibly traditional history, has an ironically large and confusing train station. Although Japan has many labels in English in public transportation areas, it took fifteen minutes of confusion to find the exit out of the station I wanted, where I found myself in front of a local area map. More confusion. Then, out of the blue, an Australian couple passing by offered me free bus tickets for the area, since they were leaving. I looked around afterward, baffled at seeing other foreigners. The train station had a surprising amount of people from all over the world, who I had not noticed in my haste to be outside the station. Getting back to looking at the map, only a minute passed before a Japanese woman asked me in English, "Do you need help?" With her speaking to me in English and me speaking to her in Japanese, we were both able to practice while she offered to walk me to the downtown area of Kyoto. It was only after we walked for

half an hour and she showed me where I wanted to be that I realized the direction she had led us in was in the opposite direction of her own destination. She said,

"Have a fun day. Thanks for studying Japanese. Please continue to learn our language."

The kind woman then headed all the way back to the other side of the train station.

A complete stranger had just gone literally out of her way to help me. And I still had free bus tickets. So although Japan may still be fairly homogenous, there are plenty of locals and other foreigners who are more than willing to help. I have even had a man help me find a train station attendant to ask which train line would be the best for getting back to Hikone. There are also many stories I have heard from fellow JCMU students that say some of the locals are almost too helpful when it comes to directions.

Japan still has a definite sense of uchi and soto, or insiders and outsiders, but as long as a foreigner in Japan has some basic Japanese skills, the Japanese will be less afraid to approach. (But of course, most do not mind being approached, so asking for help directly is fairly easy.) My experience here has shown me that Japan is not as intimidating as it may seem and to never be afraid of experiencing all that a new culture and its people, locals and other foreigners alike, have to offer.



Q&A

Jersey Born, Michigan Taught, Taiwan Grown

To begin with, can you give us a little insight into your daily life in Taiwan?

I always like to start my day with a traditional Taiwanese breakfast: soymilk, turnip cake (luobo gao), and an egg crepe (danbing). I love going to my local 7-11 just to chat with the staff there, or taking my usual bus in the morning just to spend some time joking around with the bus driver. All in all, I love to constantly interact with different people. Other than the regularity of work, I still try to make sure that my daily life isn't always the same. I like to look for a new restaurant, a new unexplored back alley, a hiking trail, a temple to visit, a hidden away coffee shop or a bookstore. Even after six years there's still so much more to be found!

Can you explain your role as a marketer and translator for the Chinese-learning software company you work for?

As a marketer, I've taken the unique position of someone who has learned the language, both by providing input in the development of the product and by connecting with our audience. This has also opened up other opportunities, such as being able to attend the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany to represent our company. I've also worked together with large publishing houses, such as The Commercial Press in Hong Kong. The CEO of my company is also the head of a large publishing house in Taiwan, so what we're doing is taking a few of their never-before translated title books, which I'm translating into English, and adapting them to teach Chinese.

Why did you decide to study Chinese language and culture as a student at GVSU?

Part of the reason I chose to study at GVSU was because both Japanese and Chinese were offered, and I was excited to have the opportunity to study them. Originally, I started studying Japanese in High School and continued it up through my time at GVSU. However, one thing I always found particularly captivating were the kanji—the Chinese characters—that make up a significant portion of the Japanese written language. But after seeing Chinese, I was instantly pulled in by a language made up entirely of these beautiful characters, which seemed so mysterious and yet deeply filled with meaning—I just had to find out more. After stepping in the door on that first day of Chinese back in 2005, I never looked back. I took every opportunity to be involved with the language and culture at GVSU, including starting the Chinese Language and Culture Club, taking each class that was offered, and studying abroad in 2006.

In Summer 2006 you studied abroad in Taiwan. How did that experience help shape you and your future?

I like to tell my coworkers that I'm "Jersey born, Michigan taught, and Taiwan grown." Even though the trip in 2006 lasted a short three months, it had a profound impact on me. I learned the valuable skills necessary to living and working in a foreign country, and since then, Taiwan has never ceased being a land of opportunity. The practical experience of interacting with people in their own native language was something I really enjoyed.

I knew I wanted to do more than study the language; I wanted to live it.

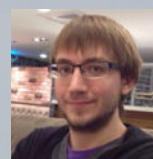
I knew after graduating from GVSU I would return to pursue a Master's degree and a career in Taiwan. Had I not jumped on the opportunity to study abroad, I would never have ended up where I am today.

How have your studies in Chinese language and culture helped you in the workplace as well as being a Master's student at National Taiwan University?

Truth be told, only great teachers can really inspire you and prepare you for the future; so much of my passion and success stems from the time and effort Professor Curtis Smith put into teaching. The language and culture courses he taught prepared me to use the language, and taught me to truly appreciate and understand the culture. In a country where both workplace and academic culture are completely different, it was very valuable to have this training beforehand. The Classical Chinese courses I took at GVSU prepared me to tackle the historical documents necessary for my Master's thesis, while the technical training of doing translation work has been very beneficial in the workplace.

Do you have any further advice for current GVSU students?

Find a foreign language you want to learn and start learning! If you have an opportunity to study abroad that lets you use the language you're learning, go for it! And the last thing I want to say is this: take every and any opportunity to try something new and challenging when it comes up. You never know where it could lead you!



MEET THE ALUMNI

Greg Bell, a 2008 GVSU graduate, studied Chinese for 3 years. His love for the language and culture compelled him to participate in the 2006 Taiwan study abroad program. From then on, Bell knew he wanted to return. During his GVSU career, he also helped create the Chinese Language and Culture Club that is still very active today. He is currently working as a marketer and translator for a Chinese company and is a Master's student at Taiwan's top university, National Taiwan University.

OPED

Characters and Culture, Where Languages Collide

Ever since I began studying French during my freshman year of high school, the strong link between culture and language learning has always been quite hard to ignore. As with French, my subsequent experiences studying Italian, Arabic, and Swahili as an undergraduate have continually validated the idea that culture plays an integral role in language learning.

But how exactly? Culture's effect on the acquisition of language is two-fold. The process of language learning is affected both by one's own cultural background and the cultural context in which the target language exists.

As a bilingual native Spanish- and English-speaker, my experience learning Italian was inevitably different from that of a Flemish-speaking Belgian or an Ethiopian whose mother tongue is Amharic. In the classroom, approaching Italian with a cultural background shaped by Spanish, a fellow Romance language, made it easier for me to understand the nuances of the language and culture than it was for my English-speaking peers with little or no Romance language experience.

Yet it was not until I spent two semesters studying abroad in Perugia, Italy, that I learned that this was a shared experience. Whether Spaniards or Latin Americans, many of my fellow Spanish-speaking friends in Italy had similar experiences. Amusingly, too, I found that one's cultural and linguistic background might even seep into the way the target language is spoken or understood. In one of my Italian dictation classes at the University for Foreigners of Perugia, a professor singled out the native Spanish-speakers in the class for our collective mispronunciation of an 's' paired with a vowel.

The second dimension of culture's effect on language learning has much more to do with the target language itself. I have often heard native Arabic speakers describe the flow of the language as more of a "spiral" than a straight line. In contrast to the straightforward nature of English and similar European languages, the Arabic language takes its time making a point. Beginning from its general and wrapping nature into itself, while moving toward the specific, the language takes on the characteristics of a spiral. Hearing this for the first time redefined my understanding of the language.

There is a certain beauty in knowing that the Arabic language is less concerned with the destination than the journey, so to speak. Moreover, this appropriately seems reflective of Arab culture in general. While studying abroad in Jordan during the 2013 Spring/Summer semester, I learned that the overall pace of life in Jordan is slower than in the United States. But what Jordanians sacrificed in promptness they more than made up for by making each moment more meaningful—whether

MEET THE AUTHOR

2013 GVSU graduate, Mario Amaya-Velazquez, will begin a 27-month stint as a Peace Corps volunteer beginning in September of 2014. Some of his interests include traveling, digital photography, reading, learning new languages, and running.

by Mario Amaya-Velazquez



at meal times, while conversing with friends, or just enjoying a social gathering. Language learning, it would appear, is as much about learning how the character of the culture and its native speakers factor into the language than it is about memorizing words and learning the grammar.

Then we have idioms, or the phrases native speakers of a language pepper their speech with as a result of common usage. This article, you might notice, is full of them. They are also perhaps one of the elements of language that say as much about the learner as they do about the culture from which they originate. During my most recent study abroad experience in the 2014 Winter semester, I became fascinated by Kenyan women's use of kangas, boldly designed and brightly colored rectangular cloths characteristic of Swahili culture, as clothing. A distinguishing aspect of kangas is the centrally placed jina, or Swahili text in the form of a saying, riddle, proverb, or idiom.

Frequently given as gifts, kangas and the messages they carry are appropriate for any occasion. I found the most interesting trait of kangas to be the frequently unapologetic majina (plural of jina) commonly printed on them. One such kanga I encountered was a gift from a mother-in-law to her former daughter-in-law stating that her worth was all but gone. It was gifted in the aftermath of a divorce. In asking around about the meaning of certain majina I saw throughout Nairobi, I came to learn a great deal more Swahili than I could have anticipated. Here, then, was a walking example of culture influencing language learning.

Learning a language can be a very personal experience because of the influence of one's own cultural background.

Nonetheless, in both the classroom and throughout my travels, I believe I have encountered a recurring, universal truth about culture and language learning: the two are simply inseparable.

To maximize language acquisition, those learning a new language should never lose sight of this.

by Caleb Duckworth

EL PATO PODEROSO, THE MIGHTY DUCK



While studying in Chile I had the opportunity to go to Punta Arenas, Chile, which is located in Southern Patagonia. My whole trip I had been waiting for my chance to vacation there and I finally was going to fulfill my dream. However when traveling abroad some of the most valuable experiences come from unexpected places. Once I arrived, I realized I needed supplies for my excursions, so I went out to the local mall to find what I needed. As I meandered through the mall I came across a small ice rink where people were skating. Having been playing hockey all my life, I immediately went in search of a flyer or something that indicated they had a program.

After a quick conversation with the cashier near the rink I got in contact with Alejandro, the coach of the program, which would later blossom into a solid and long lasting friendship. Alejandro immediately became interested in having me come out and skate at one of their weekly games. At first I was a little nervous about it because I had no idea how the Chileans would respond to a gringo. However my fears were unfounded; I was immediately welcomed into the group and many were eager to learn new skills. In addition to getting to play with the Chileans, I also had the opportunity to coach and teach some basic skills the day after. The program was only four months old and with my vast experience playing and coaching I was able to help many of the players develop.

After that week, I got asked to play on the first Chilean national hockey team in the first international hockey tournament ever recorded in Chile's history. The tournament was very small, but over 600 people attended and I was interviewed on both the TV and the radio, which forced me to practice my Spanish under pressure. Later I ended up traveling with the team and playing in Argentina as well. However the greatest part of this experience is the acceptance of the Chilean people. I was immediately one of the "guys" and went out after the games to have a beer and shoot the wind. I still keep in contact with many of the Chileans that I met on my trip and they have all offered me lodging and food if I should ever return to Punta Arenas in the future. I never in my life would have guessed something so grand could happen to me. It has been by far the most rewarding and life-changing experience I have ever had. I often think back to when I decided to go to Punta Arenas. I almost didn't go because I had to travel alone which I didn't really want to do. However, if I hadn't gone alone, I would have missed the opportunity of a lifetime.



AROUND THE WORLD ON ONE CAMPUS

In addition to permitting access to the university's resources, the student ID can also serve as a scholastic passport for one's mind and curriculum to travel and experience the world's cultures. Grand Valley State University is home to a wide array of language and culture clubs that both help to educate the campus' student body and create a multicultural learning environment.

Diversity is a term coined to represent a variety. It most commonly refers to culture and ethnicity. But, in this case, 'diversity' is applied and used in the setting of a college campus. Diversity also attributes the importance of the mixture of various origins and cultures to provide a worldly versed society. However, when diversity is cultivated and developed, the impact is great. GVSU's various clubs do more than just celebrate diversity, but they foster a communal style of living and learning.

THE TRAVEL AGENT

While GVSU is home to a multitude of cultural organizations that represent cultures from all over the world, the International Relations Organization (IRO) is the travel agent to navigate the subcultures of the university. Their job is to tell people what's going on in the variety of organizations. They have formed a diversified community among all the different clubs and their overall goal is to encourage the same thing across Grand Valley: a multicultural society celebrates the spirit of oneness, sharing and helping others.

LATIN AMERICA

Traveling to the Americas, we find ourselves in the diverse land of Latin America. **The Latino Student Union (LSU)** aims to "spread awareness and knowledge of the diverse Latino student body and the various cultures that is it composed of, as well as the aggregate Latino community of Western Michigan," says LSU president David Gonzalez. The LSU community focuses on mutual love, respect, and support. Their diversity is illustrated through their community's use of different languages and cultures. Not only has the LSU created a unique and multicultural group, but they have also formed a large community presence. Their forms of outreach include work with the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, conducting community cleanups, and giving tours of culturally important landmarks and museums. In the future, the LSU hopes to expand their network by engaging in collaborations with non-cultural student organizations to foster a grander community.

A detour to the Caribbean will land us with **Students For Haiti**. One of the few groups not focused specifically on language, they offer an opportunity to help a community in need. They emphasize the country's importance as a multicultural example and hope to bring awareness to how any diverse group of people can become bound together. The group volunteers with local Haitian organizations, such as Grand Rapids West International Church

of Nazarene, and also works with other clubs on campus to hold entertaining events like their annual Haitian Dinner Night.

Whether in the Americas or back to Spain, where Spanish is the common language of 21 countries, **La Tertulia Club** is filled with students dedicated to improving their Spanish speaking skills and building confidence, connections, and a cultural understanding. The group operates on a mission not only to enlighten the Grand Valley community, but also to eradicate ignorance toward the culture. To do this, the club focuses on all of the diverse communities that utilize the Spanish language, showing the differences of the cultures but also the similarities.

No extensive travel is needed to reach the **Hermanos**, a faculty-led initiative aimed at retaining the Latino male community at GVSU. Salvador Lopez, faculty leader, says, "Hermanos seeks to bring different cultures together in order to grow as a unit." The club has formed a tight bond with the Latin American Studies Office as well as the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Hermanos offers great support for young Latino males, giving them a chance to interact with a community of professionals and to see the opportunities for their own success.



EUROPE

Heading northwest, we find ourselves in France. Our passport is stamped as we visit the GVSU's French sub-culture, **Les Francophiles**. The name comes from the members' love of the French language and culture. The group operates more than just as a method to share language and culture, but it is also their strategy to share and express that with the community. The presidents of the club believe a sufficient community is one that has helped many people discover their own uniqueness and self-identity, which has become the mission of Les Francophiles.

Leaving France, we cross the border into Italy with the **Il Geranio Italian Club**. Every meeting for this Italian club has a different topic. Sometimes it's the mafia, sometimes it's pizza, and sometimes it's even gelato. There is a large Italian population at GVSU, so the wide range of meetings complements the intensive Italian courses that are offered. It is all supposed to help learn more about the Italian culture, disprove stereotypes, and further explore Italian origins. The club often ventures out into the Grand Rapids area to local restaurants and venues to help expand on their culture.

Trekking a little ways northeast brings us to the **Polish Club Klub Polski (PCKP)**, which shares the common mission of spreading awareness of Polish culture. A focus on ancestral heritage of its members is one of the goals of the organization. They hope their exploration helps to draw in students sharing a similar interest. The group's core foundation is cemented with celebration: the celebratory nature of the Polish culture, the culture of its members, and the culture of the entire GVSU population.

The most recent stamp on our student ID passport is the **Dutch Student Organization**. The group's central focus is connecting students to the exciting Dutch culture in West Michigan. To do this, they have formed a close-knit group, including international students and Michigan Dutch residents. The club's president holds Dutch language lessons for any interested students. Although they're new to the scene, the club is already jet setting to success. In the coming year they hope to collaborate with other on-campus groups to share the love of all cultures at GVSU.



NORTH AFRICA AND WEST ASIA

The Arab Culture Club (ACC) is GVSU's student organization that provides a broader understanding of the Arab world and tries to break stereotypes regarding Arabic culture. The ACC holds campus-wide events including Arabic films, food, and dancing that all revolve around educating both members and non-members. They also strive to include more than just students and faculty by reaching out to organizations in the Grand Rapids community like the Muslim Student Association.

EAST ASIA

Next we'll head farther east to learn from the **Chinese Language and Culture Club (CLCC)**. The CLCC focuses on more cultural traditions, spending meetings educating members on how the Chinese language is deeply rooted in practices that span generations. Topics range from calligraphy to Chinese medicine to instructional Kung Fu sessions. In conjunction with a strong relationship with the Grand Rapids Language School, the CLCC creates a platform that launches from a classical community to forge one that is more contemporary.

Hopping over the East China Sea will bring us to the **Japanese Culture Club (JCC)**, which fosters a communal style by embracing contemporary culture. In addition to the Japanese language, the club also focuses on the current status of everyday life for Japanese residents today. Their more widespread outreach has led to a bond between the **Asian Student Union** and the **Korean Pop Group** on campus. The JCC holds an annual showcase entitled the Japanese Culture Conference, which is meant to attract any kind of student and provide a glimpse into the world that they might not get otherwise.

Traveling just a little north we'll find the **Korean Intercultural Society (KIS)**, a group focused on garnering enough support to bring Korean classes to GVSU. The club is comprised of an even blend of language and culture and how the two can be used together in making something unique and fun. The common thread between the language and culture of a community is the basis of the Korean Club's functionality. They believe that to learn is to understand, and that to understand is to start on the road to acceptance.



ALUMNI & STUDENT SUCCESSES



DeAnna Espinoza 2010 Graduate
Major: Spanish
Minor: Hospitality and Tourism Management

DeAnna first fell in love with the Spanish language and culture in Spanish 101 at GVSU. After she graduated with her degree she worked with Grand Rapids Public Schools as a tutor to migrant students. Shortly after, Deanna enrolled in Eastern Michigan University to earn her Master's in Spanish. There, she was offered a Graduate Assistant position and worked as a Spanish Tutor and led Spanish Conversation tables for a year until she earned the position as a Teacher's Assistant. After finishing her Master's in December 2012 she was offered the opportunity to continue to share her love for language by working as a Lecturer at EMU, a job she is passionate about. She plans on going on to obtain her Doctorate degree in hopes of one day becoming a professor of Spanish.



Jeff Hayes 2000 Graduate
Major: Journalism

Jeff was a student of Chinese during the developmental stages of the GVSU program. Although Jeff graduated with a degree in Journalism, he was very passionate about the Chinese language while attending GVSU. After graduation, he attended the University of Hawaii on a Foreign Language Areas Studies fellowship to further his love for Chinese culture and language. There, he earned his Master's in Chinese Studies. Returning to Michigan in 2005, Jeff began the Rockford High School Chinese program. He is currently the head of the department and is working towards a new Chinese exchange program with Weiming Education Group. He plans to continually expand Rockford High School's international program.



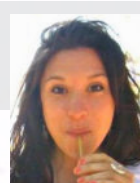
David Leestma Expected 2015 Graduate
Major: International Relations
Minors: Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies

David Leestman is a current GVSU student who has achieved great success during his studies. David was the recipient of two major national scholarship awards, the National Security Education Program's (NSEP) Boren and the U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship (CLS). Although winning both, David opted to take the CLS, which he used to study in Meknes, Morocco during summer 2014. After he completes the CLS program, he will move to Nablus, West Bank to partake in an intensive Arabic program. David has also studied Arabic in Lebanon. In the future, David will apply to graduate schools in hopes of obtaining his PhD in Modern Middle Eastern History.



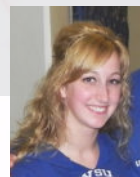
Catherine Menyhart 2002 Graduate
Majors: International Relations and French

For a year after graduation, Catherine found herself working on an organic farm and tending to other odd jobs around Europe. Afterwards she began to work with the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) to pursue her passion for international education and exchange. She began working in the Portland, Maine headquarters but soon after transferred to the CIEE Study Center in Dakar, Senegal. In 2006 Menyhart returned to the U.S. and held various positions at the CIEE while earning her Master's in Education. Currently, she manages employee training and development programs with a focus on experiential learning and intercultural development. In the future she hopes to continue help others come into awareness of their own cultural identities and work more effectively and mindfully across cultural differences.



Alexandra Moralez 2013 Graduate
Major: Spanish and English
Secondary Education Emphasis

After graduation, Alexandra moved to Ogden, Utah to pursue her passion in teaching and Spanish. She is currently heading the Spanish department at Mount Ogden Junior High. There she teaches all beginning levels of Spanish as well as Spanish for Heritage speakers, grades 7-9. In the immediate future, she hopes to further develop the Spanish program and potentially start a Latino Student Alliance chapter. Also, she will be attending Weber State University to obtain her ESL endorsement. Alexandra continues to dream big with hopes of enlisting in the Peace Corps and earning a Master's in Education.



Tricia Nichol 2013 Graduate
Major: Spanish Education
Minor: English and Secondary Education

Last year's graduate Tricia Nichol jumped right into her desire of Spanish teaching. Shortly after graduation she accepted a Spanish 1 and Spanish 2 teaching position at Coopersville High School. Through her new experience, the Spanish language and its multiple layers constantly surprise Tricia. Since she speaks Spanish on a daily basis, Tricia is learning new things every single day through interactions with her students. Tricia is currently looking forward to furthering her education by pursuing a Master's in Spanish Linguistics. Also, she hopes to host a Spanish-speaking exchange student in the near future!



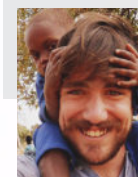
Seth Price 2014 Graduate
Major: Anthropology
Minor: Archaeology, Near East Emphasis

After graduating this past year, Seth went straight into more studies by accepting the U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship (CLS). With the CLS, David furthered his Arabic language proficiency by studying in Meknes, Morocco with fellow GVSU student, David Leestman. In the past, Seth lived in Israel for two months working with a researching excavation group. His experiences abroad have not only helped his proficiency in Arabic, but have allowed him to connect with the residents of the countries where he conducts work. After leaving Morocco, Seth is looking forward to either teach TEFL English courses for children in South Korea or working a museum internship.



Larissa Van Wyk 2014 Graduate
Major: Business Administration
Human Resource Management Emphasis

Larissa plans on returning to the MLL to finish her Spanish minor, which she is short of by only 9 credits. But as of right now, she loves working as a recruiter at Spectrum Health Hospital. Although Larissa is a part of the Human Resources branch, she uses her Spanish skills in her career by conducting interviews in Spanish and working specifically with Spanish speaking members of the community. A part of her job is to do what she can to make Spanish-speaking candidates feel comfortable and valued in the workplace. Larissa plans on remaining at Spectrum long term to further develop her skills within the Talent Acquisition department.



Tommy Zoppa 2010 Graduate
Major: English Language and Literature
Minor: French

For the first two years after graduation, Tommy worked at an international call center using his French language 40 hours a week. After gaining experience on the day to day use of French and customer service he joined Peace Corps. He was assigned to travel to Senegal, West Africa where he lived for over a year working as a Preventative Health Care Educator. There, he further developed his language skills by learning the Pular language. Currently, he is happy to be back in Grand Rapids and is greatly excited to soon relocate to Northern France where he was recently accepted into the French government's English Assistant Teaching program.

FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Majd Al-Mallah

Professor of Arabic & Middle East Studies

Published article:

"Al-Istimrar wa al-Istithmar fi dirasat al-lughah al-Arabiyyah lighayr al-Natiqin biha: al-furas wa al-tahadiyat" (Continuing and Investing in the Study of Arabic: Opportunities and Challenges) for the International Conference on Arabic Language, 2014.

Published encyclopedia entry in a book:

"Madih and Madih Nabawi" in Muhammad in History, Thought, and Culture: An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God, 2014.

Janel Pettes Guikema

Associate Professor of French

Edited book chapter:

"Digital literacies in foreign language teacher preparation" in Digital literacies in foreign language education: Research, perspectives, and best practices, 2014.

Zulema Moret

Associate Professor of Spanish

Published poems:

"Tanguera" and "Renacimiento" in Diálogo (Center for Latino Research), 2014

Published essay:

"De las voces indígenas al danzante viajero: Algunas reflexiones en torno a la obra poética de Astrid Fugellie y Diana Bellessi" in Diálogo, 2014

Published poetry book:

Poesía reunida- La mujer de la piedra, 2014

Medar Serrata

Assistant Professor of Spanish

Published article:

"Noticias de Cosmópolis: La ciudad de Santo Domingo entre las ruinas y la modernidad" in Siglo diecinueve (Literatura hispánica), 2014

Michael Vrooman

Associate Professor of Spanish

Published book review:

"La subtitulación en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras" in Hispania, 2014

CULTURE, PASS IT ON: LANGUAGES DAY AT GVSU

A group of Arabic students stood in front of the crowd in a uniform line. Professor Maisel introduced the presentation, “Everyone Can Learn Arabic!,” explaining that the presentation will take place among the attendees, mostly excited-looking students. After a brief introduction, the crowd quickly grew to include faculty, staff, students and the Arabic group. Armed with pens and paper, each Arabic student paired up with a member of the crowd and gave a crash course in Arabic; the attendees learned how to spell and say their name. The crowd interaction gave the chance for Arabic students to practice their target language while actively engaging the audience. Amid laughter and good cheer they attempted to spell out the beautiful characters and pronounce their name in a whole new language.

March 20th, 2014 marked the first annual Languages Day Celebration at GVSU. The all-day event focused on the languages and cultures taught on campus. Eight languages, thirteen presentations, live music, food, dancing, and this past year’s keynote speaker, Alan Headbloom. All participants are invited to consider the value of language and culture. The program’s coordinator, Associate Professor of Spanish Zulema Moret says, “The goal of the day is to make students aware of how important it is to study languages.” Professor Moret immediately debunks the myth of language learning as relentless speaking drills and grammatical exercises. She adds,

“[Language learning] is not only grammar; it is communication, joy, fun, and culture.”

Representatives of each language offered 30-minute presentations giving guests an insightful look into the culture in question. And so, every few minutes Kirkhof’s Grand River Room was transformed into a new part of the world. Languages Day is an event where one can explore; become involved, immersed, and enjoy the parts of life we cannot (and should not) box away. At Languages Day language and cultures become real, almost palpable, something everyone can explore. Presenters ask students, faculty, and staff to dive head first into the multiple cultures and languages of the Modern Languages and Literatures Department.

Professor Liang stood at the podium with an eager look on her face. Her talk, entitled “Impressions of China” began with two YouTube videos. The videos showcased the difference between traditional and influenced culture within the borders of China. The first video began with traditional dance, music, and the overall Chinese aesthetic while bringing in history through the arts. The beautiful video cast a silent awe over the crowd. The second video was a humorous 7-Up commercial cleverly named “Rescuing Snow White” after the fairy tale and Disney film. The commercial comically illustrated the influences on Chinese culture. Following the videos, Professor Liang invited students Zachary Ellsworth and Megan Lendman to give a firsthand account of their travels in China. Through pictures and funny stories, they shared their experiences with the crowd. Everyone felt the transformative power and diversity of the Chinese language and culture.

Not only is Languages Day a fun introduction to a variety of languages and cultures, but it also showcases the importance of multicultural communities at a University level. GVSU language and culture clubs lined the room with tables offering information about the activities they engage in. The Vice President of Les Francophiles, the club for those who, literally “love things French,” Brandi Boersma wanted “to promote awareness and openness to other cultures and languages in a celebratory manner.” Similarly, the Arab Culture Club’s goal at Languages Day was to “give the GVSU community a broader understanding of the Arab world and break stereotypes of the Arab culture,” says club Vice President Nicole Harrington. Whatever the reason, the culture and language clubs of GVSU all wanted to stress the importance of being involved in a multicultural and diverse community through cultural learning.

Soft guitar strums and the Spanish language waved over the crowd in song. The lights dimmed but heads were visibly swaying from side to side, and people were quietly singing along to the words projected on the screen. As Professors Jeanette Banashak, Professor Médar Serrata, and Spanish student Caleb Duckworth transitioned from a traditional song to Enrique Iglesias’s Hero, the crowd laughing to suddenly recognize the tune. Spanish is the largest MLL program; the

section boasts 28 professors and no fewer than 53 available Spanish courses! Glancing around the room, many students and faculty knew how to sing along with pride in the Spanish language. An attending student, Peter Chhum, cited the Spanish sing-along session to be one of his favorite moments of the Day.

“Being a minority at GVSU, multiculturalism is a huge part of my life. I think embracing our diversity is really important and should turn into a community.”

Also participating in Languages Day were representatives from the Peace Corps, GVSU Career Services, and the Padnos International Center. Both the Peace Corps and Career Services presented on the transformative benefits of learning another language through a professional and personal lens. “Learning a language teaches you about yourself. You realize there’s not just one way to do something,” says Peace Corps representative Kera Halvorson. The Padnos International Center’s table provided information on available opportunities for students interested in studying abroad. Outreach Coordinator, Alissa Lane, who has studied in three different countries, says the most important thing about being a part of a multicultural community is embracing our differences and realizing that is where our strengths are.

One of the most entertaining activities of the day was the live music of WaZoBia. WaZoBia is a traditional African and Afro-Cuban drumming group based out of Grand Rapids. Three fast-paced drummers represented the group. While the drummers set up, a table of Argentinean empanadas, Chinese pot stickers, fried plantains, and hummus was served. They rolled out about 20 separate drums and exploded before the crowd with caseloads of energy, instantly bringing everyone to their feet. The drummers formed a circle and placed an audience member at each drum. Suddenly, faculty, staff, and students alike became drumming professionals. Faces were beaming as the excitement was high for the duration of the hour-long concert. Student Jessica Wamsley says, “I really liked the drum performance of WaZoBia. It was really cool when they had various audience members come up and play.” More presentations followed the drummers, ranging from a German graffiti art demonstration, to a speech on the commodification of the French language, and even a dance lesson from GVSU’s Latin Dance Crew.

Alan Headbloom took the stage for the Day’s closing event. His talk, entitled “One Key, One Lock, One Portal You Never Knew,” encouraged college students to immerse themselves in language and cultural learning. When asked for his personal definition of “multiculturalism,” Headbloom could only answer, “Multiculturalism is the air I breathe, it is the walk I walk.” Headbloom offered more insights during his talk, which centered on his own personal language and cultural experiences, which began with his interest in his Polish roots. From there, he fell in love with learning about the world through the lens of language and culture. Headbloom holds degrees in German and Applied Linguistics and currently works as a cross-cultural consultant helping “foreign-born professionals communicate with increased comfort and accuracy when the stakes are high.” Recently, Headbloom and his wife, GVSU Professor Kim Roberts, co-created the television show Feel Like You Belong, which focuses on real stories about migrants and their experiences in the United States.

During his presentation, Headbloom explained to students how, in addition to individual enrichment, learning a second language can result in a large career payoff. He encourages students to get outside of their comfort zones and capitalize on the opportunities offered by a university setting.

As we continue to celebrate culture and language here at GVSU, we must constantly remind ourselves that every person has a story, a culture, and value. The breadth of human life is astonishing. The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures does not place culture or language into a neat box, instead it cherishes the stunning bounty of human language in all of its diversity.

Languages Day 2015 is already in the works. The department of Modern Languages & Literatures wishes to continually encourage students, faculty, staff, and the general public to participate in new language and cultural activities. Languages Day is about celebrating the languages and cultures taught at GVSU through smart, witty, and fun engagement. To participate is to be immersed in curiosity, dialogue, a wide range of activities, and open-minded learning. The event provides more than great educational value; it shows the beauty of multiculturalism through the lens of our diverse community. According to Headbloom, “If you’re committed to becoming different, enlightened, or just becoming, you have to do something. If you want to stretch yourself, put yourself in rooms where people don’t look like you and don’t talk like you.” Grand Valley’s language classrooms are excellent first steps in that direction.





Plaza Comunitaria: Living and Learning in Spanish

Imagine being thrust into a world completely foreign to you—people speaking an unrecognizable language, schools teaching new subjects, employers requiring seemingly unobtainable skills, even restaurants serving unfamiliar foods—and having no way to move forward, no way to join in. This is the issue thousands of citizens are facing in the West Michigan area, and it's the issue La Plaza Comunitaria is starting to fight against. Plaza Comunitaria is a relatively new resource for non-English speaking members of the Hispanic community; it's a place where they can attend classes and work toward a GED equivalent to the degree they may have forgone in their home country to relocate to the United States. Another resource the Plaza has to offer, designed by Consejo Nacional de Educacion Para La Vida Y El Trabajo (CONEVYT) and Instituto Nacional Educacion de Adultos (INEA), is an online course for adults looking to obtain high school and elementary official certificates. To most, this degree could be the difference between securing a higher-paying job, but to some it could be the saving grace when it comes to supporting a family.

Plaza Comunitaria focuses on secondary school completion by ensuring students' literacy in Spanish and comfort in areas such as math, science, and finance. Founded in 2010, the company owes its roots to the Latino Community Coalition; Grand Valley's Latin American Studies Coordinator, Dr. Zulema Moret; Program's Maria Yolanda Macias; Arbor Circle's Sarah Mathias; and Dick Bukowski of Steepletown Center in Grand Rapids. The coursework is comprised of twelve modules that are certified by the National Institute for the Education of Adults (INEA) in Mexico and, due to the background of their clients, instruction is given completely in Spanish, which provides a unique opportunity for Grand Valley students to immerse themselves rewardingly in a very different culture. GVSU students are active tutors with the Plaza Comunitaria.

They grow to become a part of the community that is fostered in the center; one of fostered growth through learning and education.

Student volunteers help with administrative tasks, such as designing flyers and helping prepare for graduation or other special events, but they can also receive training on how to properly teach modules in the program itself. Kayla Pedrolini,

a 2014 graduate from Grand Valley and a regular volunteer at Plaza Comunitaria, sees the benefits not only for the students in the center, but also for herself on a personal and academic level.

"Plaza [Comunitaria] is a beautiful thing because it is a symbiotic relationship between the 'tutee' and the 'tutor' where, at least in my case, we both help each other learn each step of the way."

Grand Valley's involvement with Plaza Comunitaria doesn't end with student volunteers, however. Dr. Christian Trefftz, a professor in the School of Computing and Information Systems, provides classes focusing on computer skills to the students, and upper level CIS students even developed the website for Plaza Comunitaria that will help to spread the word about this service and provide updates to former and current students.

While the primary goal of Plaza Comunitaria is to educate members of the Hispanic community, it really serves as a bridge between cultures in West Michigan, extending even beyond the relationship it has established with Grand Valley. The center works with other local non-profit organizations to make sure students may take full advantage of all opportunities that will help them to succeed.

Furthering their education is obviously one of these opportunities, but there's also something to be said for reaching out to other communities on a more personal level. This is something that Pedrolini attests to herself. "One of my favorite moments [at Plaza Comunitaria] was a conversation I had with the woman I was working with about food," she says. "She gave me a great recipe for guacamole."

La Plaza Comunitaria is currently based out of Steepletown Neighborhood Services in Downtown Grand Rapids, but they hope to expand into other more convenient locations for students to potentially raise attendance in the program. Classes are offered Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. For more information: <http://laplazacomunitariagr.org>.

What comes to mind when you hear "MULTICULTURALISM"?

"VIVE LA DIFFÉRENCE!"

Dan Golembeski, French Professor

"Coexist! We are all allies of one single human race. We must responsibly accept diversity and learn to love our fellow humans. Villagers or neurosurgeons; we are each armed with highly intelligent minds. Together we can offer a collective strength and knowledge that can empower us and our coexisting neighbor, to whom we owe allegiance."

Ela Komnenovic, Italian Faculty

"Multiculturalism is my global village."

Kilian Goodson, Student

"My one word is: Diversity."

Michael Pate, German Student



"Multiculturalism is an open-mindedness and a willingness to experience other cultures as well as a humble ability to share about your own culture without being egocentric. Patiently observing and actively participating in diversity truly reveals all of the colors of the world."

Megan Lendman, Chinese Student

"A mural." Dave Leins, Arabic Student

"Multiculturalism goes beyond accepting other cultures, but attempting to understand them."

Sean Sloop, Chinese Student



"One humanity, many varieties."

Jason Herlands, Japanese Professor

"To me, 'multiculturalism' means breaking the boundaries between groups of people and finding the similarities that exist within each group." Emily Gibbons, Spanish Student

"Multiculturalism for me means being between two chairs, being French and American, not fully belonging to one culture or the other, but being at an intersection. It also means that my now individual culture is made off all the different cultures that have touched me in various ways during my life: cultures from Africa and Asia also. Choosing what fits my world view and leaving the rest, but being extremely aware that I am different yet share being human with all earth inhabitants."

Isabelle Cata, French Professor

"I imagine people of different colored skin in the field, cultivating and trading food unique to their area." Cullin Flynn, Spanish Student

"Multiculturalism: a bridge that crosses diversity in 3D." Gisella Lacari, Italian Professor

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