I just spotted a post on social media announcing that a former student is heading to Paris soon to begin a two-year MA program in International Relations. Even after many years in this profession, that kind of news still excites me! It’s a given that the alumni of Modern Languages and Literatures, perhaps more than any other group of Furman alums, have been the ones whose interests, professions, and academic pursuits have carried them to more places around the globe to fulfill educational, vocational, and personal goals – or maybe just to satisfy curiosity and wanderlust. And we bring those perspectives from our travels back home – wherever home may be – with a keener understanding of the world and our place in it. We here in MLL enjoy hearing from our former students, and indeed there are many ways of keeping up with where you are, where you’ve been and what you’re doing these days. We always welcome it when you check in on our MLL Facebook pages, but we think there is still a place in this day and age for the venerable format of a newsletter, to help keep you in touch with erstwhile professors and classmates and let you know the many ways your departmental home at Furman continues to grow. We hope you enjoy catching up with us this way.

MLL assumed a new administrative structure this academic year: we are now composed of French, German, and Spanish professors, with Chinese and Japanese professors appointed exclusively to the Asian Studies department. The Asian-language programs have grown in recent years, adding new courses, professors, and full-fledged language majors, and as we applaud their success we continue to benefit from working together in the context of the Language House and the Language Resource Center on our shared mission to bring modern languages and cultures to Furman undergraduates.
There is only one Linda Ray.

For nearly four decades, Linda H. Ray has been the smiling public face of Furman’s Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Over the years she worked closely with five different department chairs (Cranford, Cherry, Chew, Bost, Allen), dozens of MLL faculty members, and thousands of Furman students. Linda is a student favorite because of the personal connection she makes so easily with young people and the calm, cheerful, and helpful way she greets all who enter the MLL suite. One of her many roles at Furman was guardian of the famous MLL candy bowl which gave her countless opportunities to chat with students and help them feel at home between classes.

When I think about Linda I always remember a long conversation I overheard between her and one of my students during my first year at Furman. I specifically remember my student telling Linda all about his family in Tennessee. When the young man finally came in and sat down for our appointment, I asked how long he and his family had known Mrs. Ray. A little surprised by my question, the student answered that he had actually never spoken to Linda before. By the way they were getting along, anyone would have naturally assumed they were old friends!

Linda has what we call in Spanish “don de gentes,” a gift for getting along with people. As Bill Prince says, “she gets along with everyone - everyone loves her.” Her sense of humor, generosity, and empathetic kindness are immediately obvious to all. In fact, the only people Linda has ever been heard speaking anything less than nicely about are fans from a certain former Southern Conference...
The desire of Furman students to include a modern language major in their degree is at an all-time high. At the end of the 2015-2016 academic year, there were nearly 175 declared Spanish, French and German majors. MLL professors will participate in the direction of study away programs this year in Berlin, Versailles, Madrid and Santiago de Chile. We are undertaking the renovation of our Language Resource Center to create a space for real social encounters in the languages we teach as well as to provide tutoring and technological support for learning. French and German staff are conducting nationwide searches for new tenure-track faculty to support our teaching in those areas. Our faculty continue to be among the most visible at Furman, inspiring students from their very first days on campus with dynamic, personalized teaching; attending national and international conferences to present their research; publishing well-received articles and books; and serving on key committees and occupying important leadership roles throughout the university.

No matter how busy we get, we are always glad to hear news from our former students. You should have received this fall an invitation to participate in an online MLL alumni survey; we extend our thanks if you have answered the call, and encourage you to respond if you haven’t. We would love to hear what you’re doing! Come see us at Homecoming sometime soon, drop us a line, like us on Facebook, get in touch: we haven’t changed that much since you last saw us!

—Bill Allen, Chair
Modern Languages and Literatures

Bill Allen, David Bost, Linda Ray, Jane Chew, and Maurice Cherry at Linda Ray’s retirement party; photo credit: Hope Ogunsile ’16
This has been an exceptionally busy academic year for the French Section at Furman, full of excitement, changes, and accomplishments: new classes, new partnerships, new students, and a few departures as well. Professor Pat Pecoy retired in 2014. She had been teaching at Furman since 1986. A true student of the Enlightenment, she always approached her professional work with rigorous logic, a talent for the ordered cataloguing of knowledge, and a fierce determination to stand up for her beliefs. An early adopter of using electronic media in support of instruction, Professor Pecoy was instrumental in the creation of the Language Resource Center, which she directed for two decades. We wish her the best in her retirement, and we know she will be enjoying leisurely rounds of golf, new books on French history, and her extensive film collection.

Our French program is thriving. Typically, there are over 330 students enrolled in French courses at Furman each year and, in May 2015, we boasted 40 declared French Majors. We continue to delight in the achievements of our students and alumni in and outside of the classroom. Bethlehem Belachew was awarded the fifth annual Elaine Duffy Childers Award which offers substantial financial support for a student of French who designs her own summer study abroad experience. The 2015 David Wells Morgan Award in French—presented annually to the French Major judged to be the most outstanding based on scholarship, participation in co-curricular activities in French and enthusiasm for the learning of French language, culture, and literature—was awarded to graduating senior Lee Bolton. Additionally, we are proud that several of our recent alumni were selected to participate in the Teaching Assistant Program in France (TAPIF) for the 2015-2016 academic year.

One of our most significant developments in 2014-2015 was the implementation of a revision of the requirements for the B.A. in French. The French Major now consists of at least eight courses beyond intermediate French. “French Conversation” is a new addition to our French course offerings at Furman. It provides intense oral practice in French conversation and focuses on practical daily use as well as Francophone cultures and events with an emphasis on current, everyday speech. The course also aims at better preparing those students who wish to study abroad in France; it relies on creative projects such as weekly blog posts from a pretend study away program in a French-speaking city or a video to promote the study of French. By applying their newly acquired knowledge in practical and meaningful ways through such hands-on projects, our students build stronger language skills that allow them to better communicate in the real world.

The French section has been a hive of activity: our faculty, staff, and events foster a vibrant community and intellectual life. One highlight of this past academic year was the play Molière 2.0—an original homage to Molière borrowing its plot and (almost) all its lines from a dozen of his best-loved plays—which was performed at Furman by Columbia’s Club de théâtre de l’Alliance française in March. Mathilde Hénaff, the 2014-2015 French House Assistant, organized many exciting events and conducted over 80 cafés français. Our faculty have been busy presenting their scholarly work at national and international conferences; publishing articles in journals such as Cahiers Vassilis Alexakis, The Arts Journal, or Contemporary French and Francophone Studies/SITES; and finalizing book manuscripts that will be in print in 2016.

Since fall 2014, students participating the Furman Fall-in-Versailles program are enrolled in two courses—French language and civilization—at the Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ) while they continue to learn about French drama and to develop their conversational skills with Martine Sinniger and Suzanne Chauchat. When not in the classroom, students excitedly travel all around the country accompanied by their Furman program directors. Sadly, in November 2014, Michel Sinniger in Durfort, France; photo credit: Emily Zinger ’13
Study Away

Highlights from Fall-in-Versailles 2014
by Cherie Maiden and Bill Allen

Fourteen students along with co-directors Dr. William Allen and Dr. Cherie Maiden were the first to experience the new partnership with the Université de Versailles-Saint Quentin during the 2014 Furman Fall-in-Versailles. Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines is a “ville nouvelle,” in accordance with France’s philosophy of encouraging satellite communities around major urban agglomerations; our institutional affiliation with the new public university there provides our students with visas enabling us to extend the length of the Versailles program to 14 weeks, as well as providing instructional support to diversify our course offerings.

Dr. Allen accompanied the group in early September to assist with logistics while Dr. Maiden conducted the Paris orientation. The students then participated in a week-long orientation organized by UVSQ. The highlight of the UVSQ activities was the culminating “language dating” event and international lunch. Our students met many students attending the university, and Furman student Virginia Lesslie was one of a few international students interviewed in French by the local media. Otherwise, we have been able to retain the features of the Versailles program which have made it special for generations of students: the homestay with families in Versailles and Le Chesnay, classes conducted at the Lycée St.-Jean and at the homes of instructors Susan Chauchat and Françoise Vedel, weekly visits to sites in Paris and Versailles, weekend excursions in nearby regions and the two week long bus tour of sites all over France. As has usually been the case in recent years, students visited landing beaches in Normandy, châteaux in the Loire Valley, toured the calanques near Marseille by boat, explored the Roman amphitheater of Arles, went horseback riding on a beautiful day in the Camargue, and a few hardy students even went swimming in the shadow of the Pont du Gard and again in the Lac d’Annecy! This year participants were also able to shop the stalls of the famous Marché de Noël in Strasbourg, as our program now extends to mid-December. Visiting with Michel, Martine and Marie Sinniger at Martine’s home in Durfort near Carcassonne was one of the most memorable moments.

While this was the last group to enjoy the friendship of founder and host director Michel Sinniger, his memory lives on. Our students attended his funeral at the church up the street from the Sinnigers’ home in Bailly-le-Roi near Versailles and, at the request of his wife Martine, they led the singing of his favorite song, Leaving on a Jet Plane by John Denver, at the interment. Our student Henry Moore accompanied the group on guitar. It was always Michel’s tradition to sing the song with Furman students at the fête des familles, the last gathering held at the end of their stay in Versailles.

Sinniger, founder and director of the Furman Fall-in-Versailles program, passed away after a brief illness. For over 40 years it was his pride, his passion and his pleasure to welcome Furman students to Versailles and to lead them to a deeper appreciation of French history, culture, literature and language. We will miss Michel’s effervescent enthusiasm, his visionary intelligence, his unfailing kindness, and the twinkle in his eye that could always light up a room. We have lost a good friend and a great man.
The last two years have marked the end of era… After serving Furman for over 30 years, Dr. Jane Chew retired in Spring 2014. Fortunately, to the delight of her former colleagues, she still visits her colleagues occasionally during lunch hours—bringing along some Pimento cheese—to keep us updated on her adventures in Berlin, her amazing time at the beach, and her newly discovered passion for drawing. Needless to say, we miss Jane daily, but since her departure we have been striving mightily to maintain the momentum which her presence always brought to our program. We had a record number of 21 German majors at the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, and have seen strong enrollment in all sections, bolstered by many students who are studying German for the first time at Furman. The fact that Germany is the most important foreign investor in South Carolina industry makes German language an attractive option for students.

In the current year, the teaching staff in German is being assisted by two able contributors. Onyx Henry is a former Fulbright ETA with a B.A. in German from Wofford College and an M.A. from The Ohio State University in foreign language pedagogy. Her energy and passion for German have been great additions to our program. As in previous years, we are delighted to have a Language House Assistant from Cuxhaven, Germany. Besides assisting students in the lower and intermediate level German classes in and outside the classroom, Lena Potschka organizes our extracurricular activities like movie nights, Kaffeeestunde, Stammtisch, and our annual Oktoberfest.

Anne Culberson, who has worked in MLL since 2005, is currently with our majors in Berlin, Germany. The FUBEST study abroad program is offered in collaboration with Furman and the Freie Universität—one Germany’s most prestigious institutions—since 2009. Dr. Ilka Rasch will again travel to Berlin in October and lead the second half of the program. The FUBEST program is the secret to the great success of our majors, allowing them to acquire the language proficiency needed for the workplace or to work abroad, even if they arrive at Furman without any prior knowledge of German. It also has proven invaluable for our Fulbright applicants, opening many doors post-graduation.

Currently, we are working to implement new ideas for the years to come, including volunteer opportunities abroad. In order to take our small but mighty program to the next level, we hope to offer a new business German class as well as give our German majors the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in supervised internships with German companies both in the United States and abroad. As we work through the logistics and locate potential funding sources, we would welcome our alumni’s suggestions and assistance.

Please contact ilka.rasch@furman.edu if you are in a position to offer help and/or advice.
On August 24, 2015, twelve students departed from various points on the globe to converge with us in Berlin. They have begun their study-abroad semester in Germany’s capital. Already they have integrated themselves into local homes. They have taken a boat tour down the Spree River, which provided a view back through this city’s development into a preeminent, multicultural European capital. They have pondered a Soviet War memorial with over 5,000 mass graves. They have walked miles through the great town center, which showcases remnants of a magnificent cathedral, hundreds of museums, renowned orchestra and opera houses, theaters. They have enjoyed bratwurst, Döner, and a riot of ice cream creations.

Academic studies began the first week in September at Freie Universität Berlin, one of Germany’s premier institutions of higher learning. Our twelve Paladins are pursuing a range of learning interests including “Modern German History in European Context,” “German Cinema before 1945,” and “Women’s and Gender Studies in Transatlantic Context.” One of them quipped: “Living in Berlin is a class in itself! I’m constantly learning about urban processes in real-world contexts and the ever-changing nature of this historical city.”

Furman’s Linguistics and TESOL Programs Expand
by Jerry Cox

For several years now, our course in general linguistics has been available as an option for students seeking to fulfill the general education requirement in Human Behaviors, and hundreds of students have discovered a love for the scientific study of language. Furman students now have the opportunity to select diverse offerings from the recently redesigned interdisciplinary minor in Linguistics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Students may focus on the languages of geographical regions such as Asia, Europe or Latin America, or of ethnic groups such as Hispanic and Latino Americans. It is also possible to maintain a theoretical or practical orientation in language as an aspect of human behavior for continued graduate study in the broad field of linguistics or to support language study in other disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, speech pathology, or sociology. Linguistics 210, 220, 230, 240, and 250 provide the opportunity for students to investigate not only the structure of language, but also first and second language acquisition, language as a cultural phenomenon, and the origin of language. Language-specific courses offered in Asian Studies, English, and MLL examine the structure of English, French, German, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese as well as the important sociocultural aspects of these languages. The minor continues to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for working with individuals from diverse regions of the globe. Students on the TESOL side have the opportunity to gain essential background knowledge, expertise and experience relevant for working with and assisting foreign nationals and immigrants in adult literacy development in the United States. The curriculum can also prepare them for teaching English overseas as a foreign language or in America as a second language. The methods and techniques for teaching English to speakers of other languages remain in place and there is also a possible service-learning or internship experience where theory is put into practice within the community. The requirement for the interdisciplinary minor is five courses: two required courses in the core experience and three additional courses chosen from the various subareas of related experience.
The Spanish program has been enjoying tremendous successes in recent years. Our thirteen faculty members continue to energize classrooms in Furman Hall and across campus with their innovative teaching, their passion for the language, and the highest commitment to excellence. Our general education program continues to serve close to 900 students each academic year. The 2014-2015 academic year concluded with more than 100 majors, making Spanish the largest humanities major and the sixth-largest overall major at Furman. We rolled out a heavily revised major curriculum in 2014. We have welcomed two outstanding new faculty members into the fold in Angeli Leal and Bryan Betancur. Our sought-after study away programs in Spain and Chile continue to provide our students with life-changing immersion in the Hispanic world, with a little fun to boot. And, finally, we are making an impact across the university through our first-year seminar offerings and our May Experience courses.

After much work and deliberation, the Spanish faculty rolled out last year a revised program for the B.A. in Spanish. The revised major gives students more flexibility in selecting courses to fulfill requirements while ensuring that different types of experiences—courses, for example, in language, linguistics, civilization, literature, or cultural studies—are taught across all levels. We crafted a program that provides new majors with more sequence and structure, getting them on equal linguistic and intellectual footing, but that allows for more specialized instruction during their junior and senior years. All majors now conclude their coursework at Furman on campus with two specialized 400-level courses in a variety of possible disciplines. In addition to the talented faculty at our host institutions in Madrid and Santiago, our study away programs now feature at least one upper-level course, taught by the Furman faculty directors, which fashions clear connections between travel itineraries and the intellectual, conceptual, and linguistic milestones we want our students to reach. This exciting development is being implemented in Madrid this fall.

The Spanish faculty continues its tradition of innovation and productivity in research, with numerous scholarly articles and book chapters published during the last academic year. The new major program, the first-year seminar program, and May Experience have allowed for the creation of fascinating new courses that showcase our faculty’s exciting research.

Looking ahead, it seems that Bill Prince, another long timer, will be retiring within the next few academic years. Bill wrapped up nearly thirty years as Spanish Coordinator in 2012. Spanish faculty and students have profited immensely from his leadership in that position. It’s hard to imagine our program without Don Mauricio and Don Bill—we thank them for their decades of investment in Furman, for their friendship, and for their leadership, and we wish them both the best.

Looking ahead, we have an exciting year on the horizon, with two study away programs, new upper-level seminars, the typical dynamism of our veteran faculty, and the infusion of new energies with Professors Leal and Betancur. We look forward to the continued successes of our new major curriculum, and we hope you’ll stop in for a visit at homecoming this year.
“Somos una familia. We are a family.” That is how the 17 students referred to themselves throughout their time together in Madrid, Spain during the Fall 2014 semester. Even though these individuals came from a variety of backgrounds and with their own special dones, the Madrid group formed a strong sense of community from the very beginning of the program. The students often traveled together as a large group during the free weekends to near and far destinations—such as to Cerceda in la Sierra de Guadarrama and Almería in Andalucía—, and always watched out for each other’s welfare. Another noteworthy aspect of this year’s participants was their dedication to strictly speaking in Spanish with one another and, as a result, their gains in linguistic proficiency over the course of the semester as noticed, albeit anecdotally, by the co-directors.

The study away group soaked up madrileño culture by participating in various activities or attending events in the city, such as a tapas scavenger hunt in La Latina, a soccer game between Atlético Madrid and Juventus F. C. at the Estadio Vicente Calderón, the new flamenco dance show “La Pepa,” featuring the acclaimed artist Sara Baras, and the play “V.I.P.” by the renowned avant-garde theatre group Els Joglars. On the extended excursions, students discovered more about other important aspects of the cultures found in Spain. For instance, the September trip to Galicia included a boat tour through the Rías Baixas to the bateas, or “mussels farms,” where students learned about the importance of the fishing industry to the community’s economy. Besides the plethora of activities in Barcelona, the October excursion to Catalunya also featured a new trip to Tarragona where they visited the Roman circus and amphitheater, and to the town of Vilafranca; there, students witnessed the Festival de Castellers, or the Catalan tradition of building human towers. To conclude the program, students ventured to Andalucía, where they marveled at unmatched panoramic views in Ronda and analyzed the juxtaposition of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish cultures in Granada and Córdoba.

In terms of the academic program that la Universidad Antonio de Nebrija offered, the courses remained fairly unaltered from recent past iterations of Furman in Spain. Exciting and positive changes to the program’s academic structure are underway, and the 2015 directors will provide more information on these adjustments in next year’s newsletter. The members of this familia extendida have gone their separate ways since last fall: some to pursue careers in teaching Spanish, some to finish up their degrees in Spanish or other fields at Furman. Yet, due to this group’s apparent affinity for what Spain had to offer them, we would not be surprised if la Madre Patria were to welcome back some of its prodigal sons and daughters from the Madrid 2014 group in the near or distant future. And she’ll be waiting there, con brazos abiertos.
“Cuéntame cómo pasó: History, Change, and Memory in Contemporary Spain” is a team-taught course we gave for the first time in Spring 2013, with a second offering this past Spring 2015 as the first course taught under the rubric “SPN 450: Studies in Hispanic Civilization,” a new course in our recently-revised major curriculum. The basis for the course is a popular Spanish television series entitled Cuéntame cómo pasó (“Tell Me How It Happened”), which debuted in Fall 2001 and continues to run after 16 seasons and much recognition, thanks to a devoted viewership.

We were interested in doing something unique and innovative—specifically, using the program as the basis for discussing the implications of Spain’s rapid evolution from a dictatorship to democracy, the compromises that facilitated that peaceful transition, and the national conversation and controversies about that transition that began to emerge about the time Cuéntame premiered. The program itself can be considered an example of “historical memory” and the question of how that differs from “official history.” But what is the program about? To give you more details, the program features the multi-generational Alcántara family from April 1968 to, in the most recent season, 1983. The lives and experiences of this fictional yet representative family are set against the backdrop of the late years of the Franco dictatorship, into the period following his death through the transition to democracy in the late 1970s and early 1980s. An essential feature of the program is the distinctive perspectives of the various generations within the family who have experienced and been shaped by dramatically different events, evidenced in the tensions that arise from their disparate reactions to this period of rapid change. Plot lines for episodes are typically inspired by actual events of the period, and episodes include original footage of news and other media of the time. In addition, images of Cuéntame characters are embedded in original historical footage to lend authenticity to the series, what the program directors refer to as the “Forrest Gump” technique. For this image-oriented generation—and for visual learners especially—using a television series as a textbook, along with more conventional literary and cultural readings, provided students a new way of engaging Spanish language and culture.
Language House Program

How do you hope to contribute to the MLL’s language programs this year?

Pauline Poudou
Hometown: Saint-Brieuc, Brittany, France

“The language program is a great chance for Furman students to discover new horizons. I hope I will show to students another view of France, different from the stereotypes we all have, by first organizing my weekly coffees and movie nights but also by throwing French events during the year. I am available for any questions and meetings with students who want help or who would like to learn more about France and its culture.”

Lena Potschka
Hometown: Cuxhaven, Lower Saxony, Germany

“I hope to be able to bring the students my culture and language a little closer.”

Yasbek Peña Cholac
Hometown: San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, México

“I think the Spanish House is an amazing opportunity for students to practice the language and even more important to get to know other cultures. As the LHA I will have different activities everyday, such as Spanish coffee tables, movie nights and game nights. I will also have different cultural events during the year so they can learn more about Mexican culture and get involved in our traditions. I was here last year and I really think that the Spanish House has helped a lot of people. It is important to give the students different resources to improve their language skills and the activities in the language house are a great option for them to enjoy the process of learning a foreign language.”

Ryan Blocker’14 Reflects on his French House Experience

I really enjoyed my time in La Maison française! I was a music performance major which means there wasn’t a great deal of flexibility in my schedule for me to take additional language classes. I’d studied French for a while in grade school and didn’t want to lose my foreign language skills, so La Maison française was a great opportunity to continue to practice the language in a way that easily fit into my schedule. It was a really fun and relaxed atmosphere. It wasn’t a grammar or literature intensive course. You were just making conversation with your friends, the Language House Assistant, and Supervising Faculty to develop your ear for the language. I looked forward to our weekly dinners, because it consisted of funny games and it was by far the best meal you could get on campus. Those dinners also served as a sort of culinary travel around the world. I became much more proficient at speaking French which has allowed me to converse with more people from all over the world and to develop friendships that wouldn’t have been available to me otherwise. And I believe that is truly the point of immersing yourself in another language: you gain an appreciation for cultures other than your own and gain the opportunity to nurture new kinds of relationships.

Reflections

Ryan Blocker and Grace Odell, 2013-2014 French House residents, enjoy a traditional French dish of raclette; photo credit: Marianne Bessy
French Major Travels to Morocco Thanks to Childers Award
by Dawn Strickland

Bethlehem Belachew is a senior from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, majoring in French and Political Science. In the spring of 2015 she was awarded the Elaine Duffy Childers Award; this annual award allows a student who has already participated in Furman's study away program in Versailles to gain additional francophone experience abroad.

Bethlehem used her award to be a volunteer in Ifrane, Morocco, where she taught French to village children, ages 10 to 15, who spoke only Arabic and Tamazigh. In addition, she spent some time teaching English at a community center in another town, Azrou, where her students ranged in age from 13 to 56. Bethlehem reflected on her time in Ifrane and Azrou: “My summer in Morocco was a defining experience in the cultivation of my passion for development work and education. I have also become more aware of a growing thirst for knowledge all across the world, and that only a segment of the population has the luxury of pursuing knowledge and passion. Meeting my students, in addition, has made me more aware of my own gift of a good education and the burden of responsibility that comes with it.”

Hirsch ’15 Receives Fulbright Fellowship
by Ilka Rasch

2015 marked the fourth consecutive year a German Studies major received a Fulbright Fellowship. Like many of our majors, Kayla Hirsch ’15 had no prior knowledge of German before coming to Furman. During her freshman year, Kayla, who had been drawn to the German section’s support and camaraderie, also spoke with Brandon Tensley ’12, a senior Political Science and German Studies double major at the time. She was inspired to follow in his tracks as a double major.

In 2013, she participated in both the semester-long Washington, D.C. internship program and the FUBEST program in Berlin, Germany. According to Kayla, “Studying abroad, living with a host family, and developing deep friendships helped me realize that although people have their different backgrounds and traditions, we all ultimately have the same hopes and dreams—everyone wants to live a good life, however they find most true for themselves. I learned how to live outside of the U.S. and desired to expand my experiences learning about others.”

Upon her return to Furman, she shared her passion for German with others and became one of our most popular tutors. The challenging Fulbright application process during the fall of her senior year paid off, when Kayla received her acceptance letter in Spring 2015 prior to graduation. Following the Fulbright orientation and a visit with her former host family and friends in Berlin, she now resides in Nuremberg. When she is not working as an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) at the Johannes-Scharrer and the Labenwolf Gymnasium, Kayla can be found in one of the cafés in Nuremberg’s historic downtown.

To Not Know If: A Study of Uncertainty in Spanish
by Alecia Nichols ’16
2014 Furman Advantage Fellow in Hispanic Linguistics

In 2014, Dr. Stephanie Knouse and I investigated the variations in mood and tense that native Spanish-speakers use following the clause no saber si ‘to not know if.’ Being my first exposure to academic research, and corpora in general, this experience has also completely changed the way I think about language—as something that is constantly evolving—and how there may be deeper meanings behind subconscious choices we make. Seeing the data with my own eyes made me wonder at what was happening behind the scenes as each speaker chose a certain verbal form, and sparked a profound interest for me in the cognitive side of language.

This year I presented our findings both at the Spanish Linguistics in North Carolina (SLINK) Conference and at Furman Engaged!. Because of the more intimate nature of these venues, it allowed me to not only discuss the
project with others, but also meet Ph.D.
researchers and see what a career in
linguistics could look like. Now, due in large
part to this Furman Advantage research
experience, I plan to continue studying
linguistics at the graduate level, with a focus
on cognitive and psychological factors that
subconsciously influence the way people
use language to communicate.

Taking advantage of both the new structure
of the Spanish major and the new course
offering SPN 503: Individualized Internship,
Brock Baker ’17 recounts his experience
abroad this summer interning at Manos
Abiertas Buenos Aires.

Baker Assists
with Nonprofit
Organization in
Argentina
by Brock Baker ’17

I had no idea what
to expect when I
decided to spend
my summer in
Buenos Aires. It was going to be my first time traveling alone, living in a large city, and using my Spanish in a professional setting. However, I could not have imagined a better way to spend the summer. Every weekday I worked in the marketing and fundraising department of Manos Abiertas Buenos Aires, a nonprofit organization that works throughout Argentina by providing social assistance, education programs, and health services to the poor and disadvantaged. On the weekends and before work, I would travel by train to Villa de Mayo to volunteer with our projects. Some of the different projects included an orphanage, a center for adult education, and a hospice center for the homeless. Although I worked and volunteered a lot, I had plenty of opportunities to experience Argentine culture and its biodiversity. I learned to tango, ate way too many empanadas, whale watched in the Patagonia, stood underneath the waterfalls of Iguazú, and even sang “Don’t Cry for Me Argentina” at Eva Peron’s grave.

An Interview with Alumna
Hailey Domeck ’08
by Angélica Lozano-Alonso

One of the most rewarding parts of our jobs as professors is seeing how students’ language majors impact their future careers. I first met Hailey Domeck (then Carmichael) when I taught our Survey of Spanish American Literature class and then I directed her and her future husband on one of our study away programs. Since she graduated, it has been a joy to follow her world traveling adventures. Haley’s experiences demonstrate that a language major creates a variety of career options and can often lead to a life-long passion for travel.

Hailey, when did you graduate from Furman?
I graduated in 2008 with my bachelor degrees in Spanish and Communication Studies.

Did you participate in any of our study away programs or any other MLL related experiences?
I studied abroad in Chile with the Spanish department during “Winter Term” of my junior year. It was a life-altering experience that ignited a passion for world travel, gave me confidence in my language abilities, and inspired me to live abroad – twice.

How has your MLL major impacted your life or career decisions?
Just a few months after Furman Commencement, I moved to Madrid, Spain, where I worked in a bilingual elementary school for two years, a decision that was birthed from my study abroad experience. After returning to the USA, I taught middle school Spanish for a time.

My MLL degree not only helped me land jobs around the world, but it also shaped how I assess cultures different than my own—especially through the study of history, local literature, and cultural traditions and values.

Do you have any advice for current MLL students?
Whether you choose to go abroad or volunteer with the local Hispanic community, intentionally immerse yourself in the cultures that you are studying. Step out of the “Furman Bubble” and put what you’re learning into practice!

Where are you now?
My husband Justin Domeck ’08 and I recently moved to Zurich, Switzerland. I have my own travel website—www.GlobalHeartbeat.co—where I share my experiences from around the world. In our free time, Justin and I are working on our High German and Swiss German, and of course, we are exploring Europe together!

Please contact us at mll.alum@furman.edu if you would like for us to consider you for being featured in a future newsletter. In your email, make certain to share with us where your language major has taken you.
Bill Allen presented two papers this past April on 20th century novelists writing in French: the first at the Carolina Conference on Romance Literatures on space and postmemory in recent Nobel prize winner Patrick Modiano’s Dora Bruder, and the second at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference on the immigrant odyssey in Irène Némirovsky’s Le Vin de solitude.

At last fall’s Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference (MIFLC), Linda Bartlett read a paper entitled “Autonomy: Cars, Space, and the Dynamics of Power in Cuéntame cómo pasó” and will read “Riding in Cars with Girls: Female Automobility in Cuéntame cómo pasó” this fall. The article she and Lourdes Manyé co-authored on their experience teaching SPN 450 “Cuéntame cómo pasó: History, Change, and Memory in Contemporary Spain” will appear in September’s issue of Hispania. Entitled “Television as Textbook: Cuéntame cómo pasó in the Spanish (Literature) Classroom,” it makes the case for the pedagogical effectiveness of utilizing a television program as the primary text in an upper-level Spanish course.

Marianne Bessy continues to work on the Editorial Board of Cahiers Vassilis Alexakis. In 2014-15 she published two articles and presented papers at the Northeast Modern Language Association and the 64th Annual MIFLC which was held on Furman campus and for which she served as organizer. The book manuscript entitled Racines et déracinements au grand écran: trajectoires migratoires dans le cinéma français du XXIème siècle, a multi-contributor essay collection she co-edited with Dr. Carole Salmon (University of Massachusetts Lowell), was recently accepted for publication by Brill for their Francopolyphonies collection.

David Bost is entering his second year as Chair of the English Department. Although much of his time is spent with English Department faculty, he continues to teach Spanish. His research in the last several years has evolved to include spatial theory, memorial sites in Latin America, and non-fictional testimonial narratives. His most recent article is “From Memorial Site to Text: Villa Grimaldi, El palacio de la risa, Villa and the Dynamics of Space,” published in the September, 2015 issue of The Latin Americanist.

Jeremy Cass ’00 published “The Hypothetical Homeland: Looking for Cuba in Hijuelos’s Our House in the Last World, A Simple Habana Melody, and Thoughts Without Cigarettes” in Negotiating Latinidades, Understanding Identities within Space. He begins his tenure as editor of the MIFLC Review this year. He is taking a full-year sabbatical during the 2015-2016 academic year to bring a variety of scholarly projects to completion.

Stephanie Knouse co-published two articles last year: “Teaching Hispanic Linguistics: Strategies to Engage Learners” with Laurel Abreu and Timothy Gupton in Hispania and “Expanding the Community and Enhancing the Experience: Web 2.0 Technologies in a Spanish Service-Learning Course” with Francisco Salgado-Robles in the Journal of Language Teaching and Learning.
Knouse also gave two presentations at the Annual Convention of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and, based on their 2014 Furman Advantage project on no saber si, Knouse co-authored a poster for the Spanish Linguistics in North Carolina Conference with Alecia Nichols ’16, who presented on their behalf.

Angélica Lozano-Alonso published “Seeking Spatial Justice in Reyna Grande’s Work” in Negotiating Latinidades, Understanding Identities Within Space. She presented “Reyna Grande’s The Distance Between Us as a Testimonial for Spatial Justice” at the MIFLC. For the same conference she organized a plenary session and an invigorating roundtable, “Incorporating Latino Culture and Civilization into the Spanish Major,” which resulted in a new community of scholars in the field. Her article, “Exile, Identity and Friendship in Silvia Molina’s En silencio la lluvia” will be published in a special edition on exile in South Atlantic Review in early 2016.

Cherie Maiden’s recent scholarly activities include the presentation of the following papers: (De)fin(d)ing Home in Taiye Selasi’s Ghana Must Go: Reconnections with the African Fatherland at the 41st Annual African Literature Association Conference held in Bayreuth, Germany, June 3 – 6, 2015 and “Remembering the Past: A Season of Lost, Sorrow, and Survival in Léonora Miano’s La saison de l’ombre” at the 40th Annual African Literature Association Conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa, April 9–13, 2014.

Louderes Manyé delivered a paper titled “Inevitable Legacies: Memory and Postmemory in Maria Barbal’s País íntim” (“L’herència indefugible: memòria i postmemòria a País íntim de Maria Barbal”), at the 15th International Colloquium of the North American Catalan Society (NACS) in Barcelona, June 2015. During the colloquium, she was reelected President of the NACS for a second two-year term.

She also co-authored an article with Linda Bartlett, “Television as Textbook: Cuéntame cómo pasó in the Spanish (Literature) Classroom” to be published in the September 2015 issue of Hispania, the journal of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

Harlan Patton recently signed a contract for his translation of the Vassilis Alexakis novel La Langue maternelle, for which novel Alexakis received the prestigious Prix Médicis in 1995 The English language version of the novel, entitled The Mother Tongue, will be published by Autumn Hill Books in early 2016. Alexakis, recipient of the Grand Prix du roman de l’Académie française in 2007, is widely read throughout Europe and much of the world. For this American edition, only the second Alexakis novel to appear in English, Marianne Bessy authored an afterword to introduce the highly-respected Greek/French novelist to new English-speaking readers.

As in previous years, Ilka Rasch will present her scholarly work on Gerhard Richter and Andres Veiel at the German Studies Conference (GSA) in Washington, D.C. in Fall 2015. Beginning in October, she will direct the FUBEST study abroad program in Berlin. In addition to serving as the German Studies Coordinator and being a member of the Film Studies Steering Committee as well as the Humanities Development Fund, she will join Furman’s Curriculum Committee and lead the search for the new tenure track line in German Studies.

Bryan Betancur holds a bachelor’s degree in Spanish and Psychology from Providence College and a doctorate in Hispanic Studies from Brown University. His principle area of research is early modern Spanish theater, and he is particularly interested in studying the ways in which conflicted family dynamics on the Golden Age stage reflected political and social tensions offstage. He co-edited Miguel de Cervantes’ play La Numancia while at Providence College and will have an article published in an upcoming edition of The Bulletin of the Comediantes analyzing the father-daughter relationship in Pedro Calderón’s El alcalde de Zalamea.

Bryan is excited to join the Furman faculty and has been impressed with students’ ongoing engagement and intellectual curiosity in his Elementary Spanish and Survey of Spanish Literature courses. The son of Colombian immigrants, Bryan is also eager to forge ties between MLL and the growing Hispanic community in and around Greenville.
We congratulate the following MLL students for their accomplishments in 2014-2015:

2015 MLL Award Recipients

David Wells Morgan Award in French
Lee Carter Bolton ’15

Goethe Award in German
Alexander David Pumphrey ’15

Cervantes Award in Spanish
Michaela Jo Barnett ’15

Elaine Duffy Childers Award in Study Abroad
Bethlehem Belachew ’16

Phi Beta Kappa 2015 Inductees
Michaela Jo Barnett (Spanish),
Lee Carter Bolton (French),
Cassandra Hua Chee (Spanish),
Eliza Claire Hardy (Spanish),
Mary Dolores Mitchum (Spanish),
Alexander D. Pumphrey (German),
Emily Reid Vontsolos (Spanish)

MLL Student Presentations at Furman Engaged! 2015

Oral Presentations

“Engaging Spanish Culture: Reports from Madrid 2014,” organized by Lourdes Manyé and Stephanie Knouse
Sarah Clark ’16: “A Growing Problem: Child Obesity in Spain”
Alice Hall ’16: “Modern (Spanish) Family: New Trends in Contemporary Spain”
Catherine Hinshaw ’16: “Crossing the Atlantic: International Relations between Spain and Latin America”
Annie Jestus ’16: “Excalibur’s Sacrifice: Questioning Animal Rights in Spain”
Brooks Terry ’15: “Painted Walls: Living Through Graffiti in Madrid”

Poster Presentations

Annie Brasington ’15: “Adult Learning Center (Spartanburg, SC)”
Lee Bolton ’15: “Canadian American Business Council (Washington, D.C.)”
Harrison de Vignier-Awad ’16: “Canadian Parliament”
Alecia Nichols ’16: “A Corpus-Based Investigation of no saber si: Revisiting the Analysis”
Sarah Walsh ’16: “DE Global Limited, Management Consulting (Shanghai, China)”

Let us hear from you!

Please feel free to reach out to the editorial team of The Palingual with your suggestions, updates, and photos. Email us at mll.alum@furman.edu or write to us at Modern Languages and Literatures Department, Furman University, 3300 Poinsett Highway, Greenville, SC 29613.

Please help us out with our MLL Alumni Survey!
We are gathering information on what our alumni are up to professionally and personally. To give us your updates, please access the following link and respond to a brief survey. Thank you in advance! Online survey link:
tinyurl.com/MLLalumnisurvey

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The editors of The Palingual would like to thank all newsletter contributors for making this a fun and worthwhile project that, we believe, captures the spirit of what is done in the department of Modern Languages and Literatures.

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Stephanie Knouse

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