

Visions & Views

A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning. -Brad Henry

Newsletter provided by the Nebraska International Languages Association

School is Out, Advocacy is In!

What a summer! I hope you are all enjoying some well-deserved time off before getting back into the classroom. Not to hurry the summer along too quickly, but there are a couple things to consider in the coming school year.

Representative Rush Holt, of New Jersey's 12th District, and Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey introduced the Foreign Language Education Partnership Act. The bill amends the Foreign Language Assistance Program in NCLB-Title V to create a new K-12/higher education foreign language education partnership program. This legislation would provide incentives for creating model programs of articulated, sequenced foreign language instruction from K-12, with the goal of graduating high school students with an advanced level. **NILA** has sent a letter confirming our support for the bill and endorsing it to ensure we are developing foreign language skills at a young age and continuing them through college in order to protect our national security, compete in the global marketplace and produce informed citizens. You can also support the cause by writing to our representatives and requesting that they too support such an important bill.

Secondly, we are currently seeking any retirees wishing to stay involved in **NILA**. Many have expressed interest in helping at the upcoming October 18th and 19th Conference events, but we would also like to utilize your talents to reach out to fellow language teachers in the western part of the state. If you would like to be apart of this new adventure, please contact me at gill.reb@districtor1.net.

Lastly, mark two dates on your calendar for the next school year: the **NILA.0 Conference** being held **October 18th and 19th**. We are extremely excited that Stephanie Iwan Flamme has agreed to present a special late afternoon workshop on Friday in Lincoln at our conference hotel, the Holiday Inn Express. This workshop will focus on the theme of our conference: technology, professionalism, and constant language usage in the classroom. We will then head to Doane College (a short drive) for Saturday's sessions and Keynote Address. Information on sessions and registration will be up within the month so we encourage you to visit the NDE/NILA website often, as we have made several great changes to help in registering and navigating the web easier. The second date, although quite a ways off, is **CSCTFL** that will be held in St. Louis **March 20-22**. I mention this now since it is so much closer than many of our other locations. Please take advantage of this!

Again, *enjoy* your summer and know that we are hard at work for you and language education.

Rebecca

Save the date

**NILA Fall Conference
at Doane College**

**October 18 & 19, 2013
Crete, Nebraska**

Information on page 6

**American Council on
the Teaching of Foreign
Languages (ACTFL)
Convention and Expo**

**November 22-24, 2013
Orlando, Florida**

Information on page 7

**Central States
Conference on the
Teaching of Foreign
Languages (CSCTFL)**

**March 20-22, 2014
Columbus, Ohio**

**ALSO PRESENTED
IN THIS ISSUE:**

Advocacy

Awards

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Reminders

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVOCACY

Sarah Percival

When I was a beginning teacher, the term “advocacy” was used frequently in professional discussions. Sure, I participated in some of these discussions and I used the word myself, but I began to wonder what “advocacy” really was. Was this idea a fad? What does one do to advocate? Who is involved in this? WHY is advocacy that important? Through professional development opportunities provided by going to NILA Conferences, I was able to learn more about advocacy and its importance.

I am now an advocate for advocacy. I am no longer in my beginning years of teaching and I have seen advocacy in action. It is as powerful and necessary as the well-qualified language teacher. So, is it a fad? No. Advocacy is a process we use to support our beliefs as language teachers. It is how we publicize that what we teach is vital to our society.

Isn't it ironic, that the more we become a global society, the more we need to advocate the importance of learning to communicate in other languages? The perception some people have that “everybody speaks English” is as prevalent as ever. Who assists in changing this opinion? It is the responsibility of any person made better by speaking more than one language. That means it is YOUR responsibility, educator! And it's yours, parents, students, business owners and community members.

Advocacy is a process and it is not undertaken by one person. To be an advocate for what you teach is to advertise the amazing assets you help your students to acquire. It is to participate in eliminating stereotypes and misconceptions about other languages and cultures.

Our NILA board is already working to make advocacy easy for everyone. We can provide resources for whatever you need to begin advocating for language teaching at your school, in your community, and in our state! Please contact us if you are interested in becoming part of the process of advocacy.

Please see page 8 for contact information.

Lund Awarded “Officier”

From the Creighton News Center

It was announced March 3 that Creighton University Adjunct French Instructor Jan Schneider Lund was awarded one of the highest awards bestowed upon teachers of French: **Officier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques**, or Officer of the Order of the French Academic Palms. Mrs. Lund received the news from the French Ministry of Education through the French Embassy in New York. “Officier” is the second highest rank in the order, the others being Chevalier (Knight) and Commandeur (Commander).



In 1998, Mrs. Lund was presented with the rank of

Chevalier in this Order, and as such, was the first high school teacher in Nebraska to be honored with it. The honor she received on March 1 is a promotion to the next highest rank. No other teacher or professor in Nebraska has attained the rank of Officier.

The Order of Palmes Académiques is one of France’s oldest orders of Chivalry, (only the Légion d’Honneur is older), instituted by Emperor Napoleon in 1808, and modernized in 1955 by the French Government. The Order of the French Academic Palms is the highest designation in teaching bestowed by the government of France. The order of the Palmes Académiques is given to individuals to recognize their distinguished contribution to academia, education and the expansion of French culture throughout the world.

Dr. David Vanderboegh head of French in Creighton’s Modern Language Department said, “This is a rare honor indeed, comparable to a lifetime achievement award. Very few French teachers are granted this distinction.”



ABOVE: Cris Fishback, French teacher at Ralston High School, receives recognition for being Nebraska’s Outstanding World Language Educator at CSCTFL

Fishback Recognized at Regional Conference

During the Awards Ceremony of the Central States Conference (CSCTFL) held on March 14-16 in Columbus, Ohio, a fellow educator of ours was recognized for his stupendous service to our profession and to his classroom. Cris Fishback, a French teacher at Ralston High School, is a man who has invested in his school, language program and in his students.

In 2011 Fishback was recognized as the Nebraska French Teacher of the Year by NAATF and in 2012 NILA awarded him the highest honor of our association: the **Outstanding World Language Educator**. This is a once-in-a-lifetime recognition for a lifetime of hard work. Fishback’s most recent success as an educator with 17 years of experience has been to revitalize the French program at Ralston.

Once an educator is nominated for this award, he continues to the regional conference where they recognize one person from the 17 state region as the Central States Teacher of the Year. While Fishback was not selected as the Central States Teacher of the Year, we hope that his dedication to our profession serves as inspiration for new and experienced teachers alike that, with a little hard work, teaching is its own reward.

Scholarship Created for Retiring Westside Educators

Mitzi (Delman) Friedman and Diane Wulf both recently retired from Westside Community Schools.



The years of experience that will soon be missing in several world language departments across the state is astounding. With a recent wave of changes made to districts’ retirement plans, and teachers nearing retirement age, there will be a void left that less experienced teachers will need to fill.



Such is the reality at Westside High School. French teacher Mitzi (Delman) Friedman and German teacher Diane Wulf of Westside High School in Omaha, Nebraska retired at the end of this past school year. At their final department meeting, their coworkers recognized Diane and Mitzi’s contributions by presenting them with a scholarship established in their name. The **Delman Wulf Travel Scholarship** was established to benefit students who wish to travel abroad. Mitzi has orchestrated several studies abroad for students and Diane has nurtured a partnership with Crimmitschau, Germany. Both women have been vital to their department’s success of advocating language learning.



NAATF

The Nebraska chapter of the American Association of Teachers of French sponsors initiatives that support teachers in the classroom such as National French Week where French is taken out of the classroom and promoted in the community. There are also student-centered activities created that will enrich and reinforce French language learning. French Convention and Auberge de Jeunesse, an immersion overnight are offered in the spring on alternating years.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the chapter or have any questions, please contact Anne Johnson, aejohnson@mpsomaha.org.

NATG

New AATG officers as of January 15 are:

Mike Bendorf, President
Ginger Starks-Yoble, President Elect
Yvonne Engesser, secretary-treasurer (filling out Ginger's term until fall)
Pat Branson, Past President

If you are interested in becoming involved with the chapter or have any questions, please contact Mike Bendorf, mbendorf@westside66.org.

NATSP

The Nebraska Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese is an organization that networks and encourages statewide educators of Spanish and Portuguese. NATSP has two immersions per year. One in the spring about February or march and one in the fall, the Friday before the NILA conference. The immersions are created by educators in the state and involve cultural pieces, best practice strategies and take-home resources.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the chapter or have questions, please contact Mandy Freitag, afreitag@westside66.org.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the immersions or have questions, please contact Shanna Hellerich, shellerich@esu10.org.

Professional Development

Great teachers help create great students. In fact, research shows that an inspiring and informed teacher is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement, so it is critical to pay close attention to how we train and support both new and experienced educators.

It is critical for veteran teachers to have ongoing and regular opportunities to learn from each other. Ongoing professional development keeps teachers up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. The best professional development is ongoing, experiential, collaborative, and connected to and derived from working with students and understanding their culture.

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The following pages are a list of professional organizations and development opportunities that you may pass on to fellow educators and use yourself. We encourage you to add to this list as you can. It is in no way comprehensive, but it is a start for new teachers entering our profession.

Professional Development Opportunities for the (New) World Language Teacher

ACTFL

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

Organization offering a variety of webinars, workshops, courses, and resources. A great resource for advocacy tools. Has a yearly national conference.

CSCTFL

Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

A yearly conference that serves 17 states. Several sub committees and workshops meet the week of this conference. Known as “the friendly conference”.

AATF

American Association of Teachers of French

Also has a state-level organization: [NAATF](#)

AATSP

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese

Also has a state-level organization: [NATSP](#)

AATG

American Association of Teachers of German

Also has a state-level organization: [NATG](#)

NDE

Nebraska Department of Education

Helps find visiting teachers, creates workshops and events, sponsors Nebraska’s LinguaFolio and other state organizations

NILA

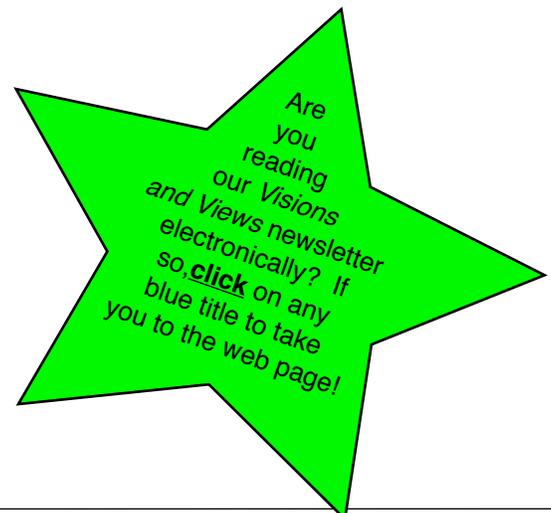
Nebraska International Languages Association

Offers seasonal workshops, provides a newsletter to keep teachers informed of what matters most, awards scholarships and grants, and provides opportunities for development, mentoring, and advocacy. Hosts a fabulous annual conference within the state.

NCLRC

National Capitol Language Resource Center

Created a website called “The Essentials of Language Teaching”, which offers examples and information for both the principles and the practice of teaching a language.



Twitter

Are you a member of Twitter? There are a whole host of professional development opportunities! What better way to stay on the cusp of the newest practices and trends in education! Below are some featured language-oriented pages that are excellent. You may also want to follow the organizations already listed previously.

[@TeachAmazing](#) “Education technology website dedicated to bringing you the best edtech, web 2.0, and tips to teach amazing!”

[@SenorG](#) “2013 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year. I'm about Ideas, Inspiration, Collaboration, Words, Risk-taking & Being”

[@tonyvincent](#) “The only thing I like better than teaching is learning.” Does a lot of sharing of mobile learning strategies.

[@tesMFL](#) “Shares with you the best Spanish, French and German resources, lesson plans and teaching ideas.”

[@tesResources](#) “Sharing fantastic free teaching resources, offering support for the classroom and helping you to be the best teacher you can be.”

[@sharemylesson](#) “A place where education professionals can come together to create and share their very best teaching”

[@edutopia](#) “Inspiration and information for what works in education.”

2013 Conference Preview

Our next conference, “NILA.0: Powered by Professionalism”, will be at Doane College in Crete, Nebraska. Please join us October 18th and 19th for a host of quality sessions and inspired collegiality.



Power up your professionalism!

This year’s conference is all about you. It is about making your professional life easier. We want you to come enjoy the offerings of sessions, vendors, and professional guidance and leave inspired to make every school day between conferences better than the last. The information below is an excerpt of a brochure that will soon be distributed to Nebraska school districts.

The Nebraska International Languages Association is your professional organization dedicated to the support and promotion of language teaching and teaching English as a second language for the state of Nebraska.

At our conferences we **welcome** any person who is interested in or actively engaged in the teaching of a second language at any level of education. Attending the Fall Conference will provide you a year-long membership so you may take advantage of all NILA has to offer you. Membership is also open to administrators, school

counselors, retired teachers, student teachers, interns, and parents.

NILA is your **support system!** With us you can connect with colleagues from across the state. You will get innovative ideas for Monday morning, the most current best professional practices and more for every day of the year! We have your network to resources, creative ideas, and meaningful collaboration with teachers just like you.

There are numerous **professional development** opportunities offered through our Fall Conference as well as through the Nebraska chapters of the Associations of Teachers of French, German, Spanish and Portuguese.

Recognition of your hard work is as vital as continuing education for all educators. NILA gives out mini-grants to teachers who need support to put ideas into action. We also pay tribute to educators who are outstanding in their

field for teaching and professionalism by honoring them at our yearly Fall Conference.

Keynote Speaker: Clarissa Adams Fletcher



Our Keynote Speaker for the upcoming NILA conference will be Clarissa Adams Fletcher. She is the 2011 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year and a National Board Certified Teacher.

Mrs. Adams Fletcher is a Spanish teacher and an Instructional Leader at Dunwoody

High School in Georgia. She is an advocate for language education and we are excited to host her at our conference!



2013 ACTFL Conventions and World Languages Expo

*The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Annual Convention and World Languages Expo, where learning comes alive, features over 600 educational sessions covering a wide spectrum of the language profession addressing the theme *New Spaces, New Realities: Learning Any Time, Any Place*. More than 250 exhibiting companies will be showcasing the latest products and services for you and your students. The ACTFL Convention is an international event bringing together over 6,000 language educators from all languages, levels and assignments within the profession.*



Visit ACTFL's website for the information you have read here and much more:

www.actfl.org

ACTFL Delegate Assembly Report



Pat Branson volunteered to attend the ACTFL Delegate Assembly on behalf of NILA. The Assembly of Delegates met November 15, 2012 for a day-long workshop. Her personal comments about the meeting conveyed that she was impressed by the wonderful organization and amount of fascinating information that was disseminated in such an amount of time.

Delegates were seated at tables organized by region in order to collaborate more effectively. For the discussion of advocacy, participants discussed what our essential message should be and how we will spread the word and raise awareness. Topics of discussion included:

- National initiatives impacting language education
- Connecting languages to the common core state standards
- Connecting languages with STEM education
- Connecting with languages for special/specific purposes
- Connecting languages with college and career readiness
- Advocacy

If you are interested in learning more about any of these topics discussed at the Delegate Assembly or becoming a participant in the advocacy for world languages, please contact any NILA Board Member.

Some Facts From JNCL/NCLIS:

- There are 1.2 million auto workers but a half million language people
- There are 200,000 full-time language professionals
- Languages are responsible for \$25 billion in the US economy and over 6000 small businesses need foreign languages

Other ACTFL News:

- 21st century skills map will be on the ACTFL website
- Performance Descriptors for Language Learners will be on the ACTFL website
- How Lingua Folio aligns with the indicators will also be online
- There is now a Memorandum of cooperation with the European Centre for Modern Languages
- The public relations push for 2013 will be to go beyond the language community—there will be an online platform for this
- ACTFL 2013 will be November 22-24 in Orlando: "New Spaces, New Realities"; proposals are due by January 9.

NILA Board Members

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We are busy people.

We want to extend a big *“thank you”* to all of our volunteers who have helped us in organizing and hosting our excellent conferences. We feel that our volunteering isn’t anything like work because it is enjoyable and fun!

There are several committees and positions that will suit anyone’s desired level of involvement. If you are interested in volunteering with the Nebraska International Languages Association contact Sarah Percival.



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