



# Classical & Modern Languages Department

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## This past year:



Romance Language House residents relax on the Quad



Members present at ΣΔΠ's Día de los Muertos event



Students attend the VI Symposium on Catalan Language at the University of Missouri

## Greetings from CML

Greetings once again, alumni and friends of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages. What a year it has been since our last newsletter! We were delighted to hear from some of you and hope that many more will continue to reconnect in the future.

One of the themes touched on in last year's newsletter was change, but at that time we certainly had no idea how much change the department was about to experience. In my letter I shared news of the recent retirements of Vera Piper and Roy Tanner, commenting that "more of us would follow in the next few years." That was quite an understatement! This academic year brought an unprecedented number of faculty retirements university-wide, with CML outpacing all other departments.

May 6<sup>th</sup> will go down in the annals as the first quadruple retirement party in Truman history. With abundant international food, a live band and tributes by faculty colleagues, we thanked Tom Capuano (Spanish), Rebecca Harrison (Classics), Patrick Lobert (French), and

Carol Marshall (Spanish) for their many years of self-less dedication to our students and this very special place we call Truman State. They were preceded in retirement this past January by Rodney Taylor (German). I am sure they would all be thrilled to hear from you, so please extend a congratulations to them via e-mail or card as they make this exciting transition to life beyond the classroom.

When an upcoming retirement is announced, a faculty search is usually not far behind. As you can imagine, we have been extremely busy interviewing candidates - and the process is not yet over. We welcomed two new tenure-track faculty, Carmen Pérez-Muñoz and José Carreño-Medina, this academic year (see stories inside), and several more new faculty will join them in the fall. Our retiring colleagues leave some huge shoes to fill, as we wonder who will lead the Spanish Immersion Weekend, direct the Romance Language House, supervise MAE students, direct the French play, or lead service learning in

the local schools. However, we are excited by the areas of expertise and interest represented by the new colleagues who will soon join us and are confident that they will provide many new opportunities for our students.

We would love to see or hear from you! We invite you to share an expertise with current students, as several of our alums did at last fall's Alumni Homecoming Panel (see story inside); attend our *Alumni and Friends* reception at the Foreign Language Association of Missouri meeting; or simply drop us a line to let us know what you're doing these days. We hope you enjoy some of the highlights of the 2014-2015 academic year. Perhaps they will bring back some special memory of your time here with us.

Sincerely,

*Lucy Lee*

Professor of Spanish and Chair,  
Classical and Modern Languages

## Faith Beane Chosen to Participate in Russia Project



Dr. Beane visits with a colleague during her time in Moscow this past summer.

In the summer of 2014, CML faculty member and Russian Professor Faith Beane was one of 14 teachers of Russian from the United States to be selected for the only Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad Grant awarded in 2014. This project was initiated and led by Drs. Irina Kostina

and Anna Kolesnikova, both from the University of Iowa. Before leaving the United States, the group spent two months in a rigorous online pre-departure program in which they initiated research and held round-table discussions to prepare for their on-the-ground course work. During the summer, Prof. Beane spent one month in Moscow, Russia, in intensive language training as well as preparation for and

certification at various levels of the TORFL, the Test of Russian as a Foreign Language sponsored by the Russian Ministry of Education. She also implemented the development of individual multi-media teaching modules. Upon their return to the United States, group members continued work for a month with follow-up webinars to finalize their teaching materials.

## Dr. Thomas Cravens Visits Campus

Dr. Thomas Cravens, a nationally renowned Romance linguist from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, visited Truman in October to lead a three-day symposium. He spoke on topics such as strategies for learning multiple languages and diversity within Romance languages as it applies to regional identity,

multilingualism, and migration. Professor Cravens' lectures were open to the entire university community, though they were of special interest to students of Classics, French, Linguistics, Spanish, Portuguese, and the Romance Languages major. A final session was presented specifically for Romance Language

majors on the topic of how to choose a ROML Capstone project. Professor Cravens was instrumental in the creation of the Romance Languages major at Truman by providing consultation to the Truman faculty involved in the process, so the department was delighted to welcome him back to campus.

## German Honorary Inducts Twelve

The Kappa Beta chapter of the German Honor Society Delta Phi Alpha inducted twelve new members at its recent initiation ceremony. Founded on Truman's cam-



pus in 1988, this society seeks to recognize excellence in the study of German and to provide an incentive for higher scholarship. The Society aims to promote the study of German language, literature and civilization and endeavors to emphasize those aspects

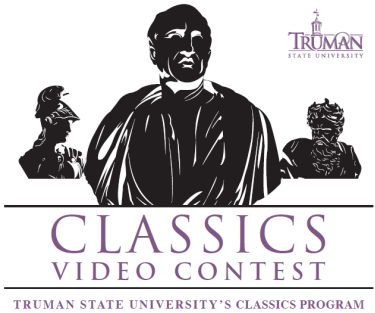
of German life and culture which are of universal value and which contribute to man's eternal search for peace and truth. Congratulations to these twelve new members of Delta Phi Alpha and to Professor Andrea Davis, chapter advisor.

## Classics Video Contest for High School Students

The Classics Program recently challenged high school students from throughout Missouri and the Midwest to create a video based on a classical Greek or Roman mythological story, literary scene, or historical event. The narration could be either an interpretive reading of a classical text or an original work written by the students in English, ancient Greek, Latin, or a combination of the languages. After careful evaluation of all

submissions based on creativity, accuracy, and overall appeal, the Classics faculty announced a tie for first-place. Students of Denise Turner in Hickman High School's Latin 3-4 class presented Pliny's letter, 7.27, about a philosopher and a haunted house in Athens. Students of Tom Herpel's Latin IV student from Parkway West High School gave a rendition of the events of Vergil's *Aeneid*, Book II. Overall, the Classics faculty

was extremely impressed with the level of talent and enthusiasm shown by high school students in all of the submissions. Hopefully, the videos were as much fun for the students to create as they were to judge and signal the beginning of a life-long passion for Classical languages and cultures.



## Prof. Tom Capuano Researches in Spain

With the support of an international travel grant from the School of Arts and Letters, Professor Tom Capuano accepted an offer from a research colleague to travel to Spain in the summer of 2014. Capuano, who teaches Portuguese and Spanish, presented his research at the "Escritura d'agricultura a les èpoques medieval i moderna" conference held at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans in Barcelona. The presentation dealt with medieval agriculture, while others presented on medieval medicine, water resources and irrigation. Capuano also connected with Truman State alum Clara Dahmer, who graduated with a degree in Romance Languages in 2013. The recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship to Andorra, Clara was working to create a Catalan language learning website for students of Romance Languages. With the

help of Professor Capuano, she completed a video and transcription project to generate learning resources for her language website.

Especially exciting for Professor Capuano was the discovery of a manuscript on agriculture while searching the national archives at the Biblioteca de Catalunya. The text describes a year-round planting season and provides insight into planting regimens practiced in the region in pre-Industrial times. This manuscript, along with others that Capuano has edited, provides evidence that the Catalan agriculturalists were the first in the peninsula to document their discoveries and give rise to agronomy as a written science in the vernacular. At that time, most farmers used ancient Latin sources on agriculture, as "contemporary" sources were

not easily trusted. Nevertheless, the Catalonians decided to record their own month-by-month planting and sowing schedule. Currently, Professor Capuano is seeking a student who would like to continue to assist in researching this and other similar documents.



**Prof. Tom Capuano meets with Clara Dahmer '13 in Barcelona in Summer 2014**

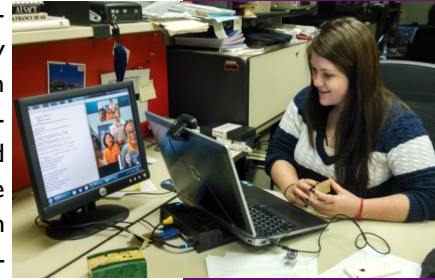
## Taiwan Connect Provides Service Learning

Thanks to a collaborative partnership established by Professor Julie Minn with a non-profit educational organization in Taiwan, for the past two years Truman students have had the opportunity to participate in a service learning project, *Taiwan Connect*. This academic year the program was approved by Classical and Modern Languages as a one-hour service learning course. Led by students

Michael Fentress and Joe Rhyne, and supervised by Professors Julie Minn and Ron Manning, the program features weekly Skype sessions in which elementary students in Changhua county develop English language competencies and learn about American culture.

Thus far, students report that *Taiwan Connect* has been extremely successful and beneficial for both Tru-

man and Taiwanese students by facilitating an exchange of culture and knowledge while giving Truman students experience teaching English as a second language. Program coordinators are optimistic the Skype program will soon spread to other schools in Taiwan!



## CML Welcomes Prof. Carmen Pérez-Muñoz

Classical & Modern Languages welcomed Dr. Carmen Pérez-Muñoz to the faculty this year as an Assistant Professor of Spanish. Originally from Sevilla, Spain, Carmen earned an English undergraduate degree from the University of Sevilla. She then began doctoral studies in English literature with an interest in children's literature. However, all of her plans changed when she was offered a scholarship in 2006 to spend a year at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. Soon after arriving at UNC, Carmen decided to apply for admission to the M.A. program in Hispanic Literature, where she eventually earned both an M.A. and a Ph.D. Her earlier interest in children's literature in

English led to graduate research on a different kind of children's readings, textbooks, as well as the relationship between education and the concept of nation-building in Latin American countries. Although Carmen's current research focuses on the case of Colombia, she plans to expand her studies to other Andean regions and to Spain.

During her first year here at Truman State, Carmen has taught Elementary Spanish II, Spanish Composition, and Medical Spanish. The latter holds special interest for her, as she gained ample training and experience in this area while at UNC through her collaboration with the School of Medicine. She has also become involved with the Romance Languages program and en-



joys interacting with Spanish majors. Regarding her transition from North Carolina to Missouri, Professor Pérez-Muñoz remarks that "it's been extremely helpful to find a great sense of community here at Truman." In her free time, she enjoys playing soccer and volleyball with other faculty members and, together with her husband, loves to entertain and cook for friends.

## Sabbatical for Prof. Sana Camara



*Professor Camara furthered his research by working with original sources while on sabbatical in Senegal.*

Sana Camara, professor of French, returned to the department in the fall after an enjoyable sabbatical experience in his home country of Senegal, Africa this past spring. The focus of the project was to conduct research in several ongoing areas by collecting information and cross-referencing ideas for essays. A faculty member at Truman State since 1989, Camara is currently developing a book which explores the Islamic religion with an emphasis on the Murid Sufi brotherhood. While gathering original sources for a book project on the Mandinka epic in Senegal, Camara was faced with multiple challenges. Due to the

violent tensions in the southern portion of the country from the growing support to secede, he was advised to delay travel and interview plans for his own safety.

Professor Camara regards his recent sabbatical as extremely productive, as he was able to make strides in all areas of his current research. He expressed appreciation for the support of faculty here at the university as he pursued this endeavor. Camara left Senegal, whose official language is French, to study in the United States and earned a doctorate in French from Ohio State. During his return visits to Senegal, he

often instructs students in translation and literary theory. He observes that the relationship between students and professors in Senegal is much more distant and formal than the professional relationships formed in the United States. Camara has also helped several Senegalese students come to the United States to study. All those he has mentored have completed graduate programs. It has been incredibly rewarding for Professor Camara to assist these young students with their own academic pursuits, as well as further his own research and studies during sabbatical leaves.

## Guatemalan Spring Break Internship

Two *Spanish for the Professions* minors, Keilah Sullivan



**Elizabeth Ditch '15 and Keilah Sullivan '15 during their Spring Break internship in Guatemala.**

and Elizabeth Ditch, traveled to Guatemala over Spring Break (2015) on a CML internship to work with The Friends of San Lucas Mission, a non-profit organization based in Eagan, MN. This organization was founded in 1962 to address the needs for housing, healthcare, nutrition, and education of residents in the area of San Lucas Tolimán. Keilah and Elizabeth's travel was made possible by the support of this NGO and the generosity of Mr.

Thomas Doyle, a Friends of SLM associate.

The students collaborated in the organization's Stove Initiative by helping to build safe indoor cooking stoves for families in Mayan communities in an effort to reduce rates of respiratory illness. Keilah (Health Science) and Elizabeth (Biology), who are both graduating seniors, were able to use their foreign language skills to interact with and help families in Mayan communities.

# Successful Year for Sigma Delta Pi



**Members of Sigma Delta Pi pose for the annual chapter photo.**

The 2014-2015 academic year was an eventful one for the Rho Rho chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society. Thanks to very successful fundraising through its ever-popular quesadilla sales on the quad and carnation sales for El Día de San Valentín, as well as grant support from Student Sen-

ate and the Multi-Cultural Affairs Center, the society was able to sponsor a number of exciting activities. Some highlights of the year included screening Mexican director Eugenio Derbez' blockbuster film, *No se aceptan devoluciones* (2013), in the fall semester and Spanish director Pilar Pérez Solano's Goya award-winning documentary, *Las maestras de la Republica* (2013), during Women's History Week in the spring. A full schedule of cultural presentations, a *Salsa con Salsa* dance workshop, the annual *Slam de Poesía*, and participa-

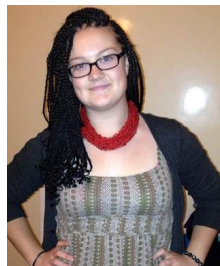
tion in several nationally sponsored Sigma competitions made for a busy year.

Rho Rho is especially proud of being named co-recipient for 2014 of the *Premio Frida Kahlo* for most outstanding website among chapters nationally. The acceptance of President Paige Bergan's proposal for inclusion in the Sigma Delta Pi Best Practices session at the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese Conference this July in Denver was another cause for celebration. Only three such proposals were accepted nationwide! Paige also received recognition for her exceptional leadership with the Premio Gabriela Mistral.

## Homecoming Alumni Panel

The Department of Classical and Modern Languages once again participated in Truman's Homecoming festivities. On Friday, October 10th, three alumni of the department returned to Truman to share their insights on life after Truman, and specifically how they are using foreign languages in their careers. Ashley Adams, a 2013 Romance Languages graduate, has worked with the Marion Medical Mission in Africa as well as other non-governmental organizations. She shared with the group her experiences in Malawi and Tanzania digging shallow wells for rural communities in need of water re-

sources. Erin Flannery, a 2011 Spanish and Romance Languages double-major, has worked as a professional translator and also founded her own business, Renderance Translation Services. She recently accepted her first Truman intern, Spanish major Emma Merrigan, who trained in bidirectional Spanish-English translation under Erin's direction. Finally, Laura Provance owns a boutique and cultural center in Springfield,

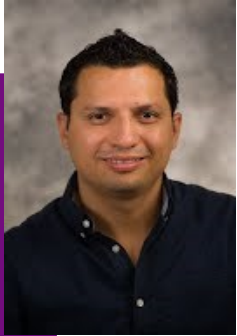


**Alumni Ashley Adams '13, Laura Provance 'and Erin Flannery '11 were panelists during CML's Fall 2014 Homecoming Festivities.**

Missouri, "Arts and Letters", which offers original art work, foreign language instruction and cultural event planning. The discussion panel was well attended by students interested in exploring career paths related to their foreign language majors and minors.

**You're Invited!**  
**Come visit the CML Department during Truman State's annual Homecoming celebrations this fall!**

## Faculty Spotlight: Prof. José Carreño-Medina



The Classical and Modern Languages Department was pleased to congratulate Professor José Carreño-Medina on his appointment to a tenure-track position in Spanish this academic year. Previously, Carreño spent one year as a temporary instructor in Spanish. A native of México, he completed his undergraduate studies in Teaching

Spanish as a Second Language and Spanish Literature at the Universidad Internacional in Cuernavaca, Mexico. He then pursued graduate studies at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Spanish.

This year Professor Carreño taught Business Spanish and Latin American Culture and Civilization, in addition to language courses. With a primary academic interest in poetry, he recently published his first book of poems, *Vigilias*, and provid-

ed students with the opportunity to learn more about poetry and film through the “Club de Cine y Poesía”, co-founded this past fall semester with visiting Assistant Professor Lidice Aleman. In the spring Professor Carreño collaborating with Professor Alemán to offer a 1-hour course on the same topics. He has also been very actively involved in numerous co-curricular activities and directed his first Spanish Capstone!

## Prof. Juan Carlos Valencia Returns from National Guard Deployment in Panama

Spanish faculty member Juan Carlos Valencia recently returned to Truman State from a two year deployment in Panama as a member of the National Guard. Valencia first joined the Marine Corps when he was 25 years old and served in the Persian Gulf War. After earning his PhD, he moved with his family to Kirksville to teach at the university level and then joined the National Guard in 2001. He served in Iraq from 2005 to 2006 and later had military assignments in Argentina and Panama.

Most recently, he was called to Panama in 2012, where he worked with the US Embassy in the coordination of military teams and on multiple humanitarian efforts. Valencia was

often involved with briefings of the US ambassador and became well acquainted with then-President Martín Torrijos. On the humanitarian side, Valencia worked with Engineers Without Borders to build two new community bridges as well as help ensure that the country had drafted protocol for natural and manmade disaster.

Valencia considers one of the most rewarding moments of his experience in Panama to be completion of the physically demanding Ocean to Ocean bike ride, in which participants



Juan Carlos Valencia explores Panama.

ride 104 miles between Colon and Panama City. He was able to share this accomplishment with his family, who lived in Panama with him for a year. Welcome back to Truman!

## Professor Maria Escayol Teaches Catalan



**Dr. Maria Escayol (left) is pictured with two students, Clara Miller-Broomfield (far right) and Taylor Libbert, as well as Luis Viquez, PhD candidate at UMKC and former Truman Romance Language House resident.**

In the Spring of 2015 Dr. Maria Antònia Martí Escayol, Professor of History at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, came to Truman as visiting professor for a course in Catalan Language and Culture. She won over her students easily with

her warm approachability, great sense of humor and her openness to learning about small town American culture. Dr. Martí Escayol gave several presentations on the question of Catalan statehood, which has been a hotly debated topic in

Spanish and Catalan politics. For one of her presentations, given at the VI Symposium on Catalan Language, Literature and Culture at the University of Missouri, she invited her class to travel with her and meet their counterparts, undergraduate Catalan students at Miz-zou. This trip was made possible by CML Foundation Funds. For her final class, she taught the students how to grill and enjoy *calçots*, a traditional springtime onion-like vegetable in Catalunya.

## Director Fred Kuwornu Screens Films

In early November, Classical and Modern Languages hosted Fred Kuwornu, an award-winning Italian-Ghanaian film maker and social activist. Born and raised in Italy, many of his films explore the contemporary issues of race and ethnicity within the country. Mr. Kuwornu met with students involved in multiple disciplines,

including Italian studies, migration studies, African studies, and film studies, as well as screening two of his documentaries. *Inside Buffalo* (2010), explores the previously unknown story of a segregated African-American combat unit which fought in Italy during World War II. The film has won numerous awards, was

screened at the Pentagon and Library of Congress, and received recognition from President Obama. Kuwornu also presented *18 Ius Soli: The Right to Be Italian* (2013), which examines the status of more than one million immigrants raised in Italy, who have been denied citizenship.

## Celebrating Student Success

Congratulations to the following students for their exceptional achievements this academic year!

### National Awards

**Brian Jacob**, German major; Fulbright Fellowship to Germany.

**Paige Bergan**, Spanish major: Fulbright Fellowship to Spain and Gabriela Mistral award (Sigma Delta Pi national award for student leadership).

**Lauren Baker**, Romance Language Major: Fulbright Fellowship to Andorra.

**Joseph Meinert**, German major: Fulbright Fellowship to Germany.

CML “*Outstanding Student Awards*” for excellence in the major

**Claire Drone-Silvers**: Classics

**Brian Jacob**: German

**Ashlee Estep**: French

**Paige Bergan**: Spanish

**Amy Soto**: Romance Language



**CML Retirement Extravaganza 2015. Congratulations, retirees!**



*Want to be featured in our next newsletter? Send us updates about what is new with you—career changes, further educational opportunities, family additions—we can't wait to see where you are today!*

*Entries can be sent to :  
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## CML Scholarships and Funds:

*If you would like to direct your Truman giving to a specific area related to your Truman major, please consider the following options to help ensure the future success of CML programs and students:*

**Classical & Modern Language Department Foundation Fund:** Used to support opportunities for students: travel and participation in conferences, guest speakers, student plays, Romance Language House, etc.

**The Vera Piper Endowment Fund:** Scholarship support for study abroad in Costa Rica

**The Dr. Maren Partenheimer Memorial Annual Fund:** Scholarship support for study abroad

**The Dr. Maren Partenheimer Memorial Endowed Fund:** Scholarship support for CML students

**The German Club Fund:** Scholarship support for study aboard

**The Max Kade Fund:** Scholarship support for students in German Studies

**The John and Denise Teal Classical and Modern Languages Fund:** Scholarship support for French and Spanish majors

**The Donna Crawford Fund:** Scholarship support for French majors