

Department of Spanish

Departamento de español

Honors and Awards
Spring 2023
¡Felicidades a todos!



2022-23 Department of Spanish Honors and Awards



The **Department of Spanish** is pleased to offer **awards and scholarships** each spring to recognize the excellence and dedication of our undergraduate majors in Spanish. We congratulate the following students and recent graduates for their achievements and thank the generous donors who make these awards possible.

Suzanne M. Wheatley Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tubino-Blanco)

The **Suzanne M. Wheatley Award** is made each year to honor the memory of Suzanne M. Wheatley, who attended WMU from 1985 to 1988 and passed away before completing her studies. It is given to undergraduate students who embody some of Suzie's remarkable qualities, such as her love for the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures, as well as her zest for life.

The recipients of the 2023 Suzanne M. Wheatley Award are: **Abby Adams, Kyra Dyke, Eva Fotieo, Jessie Isaacs, Emiy Kostbade, Zabi Najafi, Lillian Randall, Sarah Siskonen, and Aleks Slotwinski.**

Abby Adams



¡Gracias a los benefactores y a mis profesores por todo! Actualmente estoy en los primeros pasos de mi tesis y me voy a Guatemala y El Salvador el verano que viene para hacer una investigación sobre el acceso al agua potable y su relación con los derechos de las mujeres. Voy a usar este premio por mis estudios allí y estoy muy agradecida por esta oportunidad. De nuevo, muchísimas gracias a la familia Wheatly, mis profesores y mi familia por apoyarme.

Kyra Dyke



I believe Spanish is an essential field of study.

It has not only helped me gain a better understanding of the world and different cultures but has also allowed me to make strong connections with others.

In the future, I would like to continue traveling the world and learning about the cultures that surround us.

If you are considering studying Spanish, do it, and it will open a whole new world of opportunities.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who believed in me and pushed me to be better than yesterday.

Evanthia Irini Fotieo



Gracias a todos mis profesores en WMU por el apoyo constante y para animarme a hacer lo mejor en mis estudios siempre. También, gracias a los donantes que hacen posible este premio, estoy muy agradecida.

After studying abroad in Spain this summer to complete my Spanish degree, I am going to graduate in December with a Bachelor's in Spanish and Social Work. I hope to use Spanish daily in my field so that I can help and connect with as many people as possible.



Jessie Isaacs

Words hardly begin to express the gratitude I have towards all the donors and WMU members that have helped me in reaching my goals.

A special thanks to...

The Wheatley family for sharing the financial freedom to study abroad with me.

Dr. Michael Millar for helping me sort out the details in achieving a degree in Spanish.

Dr. Mercedes Tasende for being with me throughout my WMU Spanish journey, for creating such a welcoming classroom environment, and for believing in me even when I doubted myself.

Mil gracias a todos.



Emily Kostbade

Me siento honrada de recibir este premio.

Muchas gracias a Suzanne M. Wheatley y su familia por su generosidad.

Agradezco al Departamento de Español por su apoyo. Gracias a ustedes, tuve la oportunidad de estudiar en Burgos. Ahora sé el efecto que la inmersión tiene en un estudiante, y pienso que todos deberían estudiar en el extranjero. Es una oportunidad para el desarrollo no solo académico, sino también personal.

Después de este semestre, espero continuar mis estudios de francés en Senegal y hacer una maestría en relaciones internacionales.

Zabi Najafi

Zabi is a student majoring in Political Science and Spanish.

Zabi is originally from Afghanistan.

He will be participating in the summer I study abroad program in Quito, Ecuador.

Lillian Randall



¡Muchas gracias a Suzanne Wheatley y a su familia por su generosidad y amabilidad! Estoy agradecida por todo lo que ha hecho el departamento de español, y todas las oportunidades para aprender y mejorar mis habilidades de español. Tuve la oportunidad de estudiar en Burgos, España y en Heredia, Costa Rica por dos semestres. Eran experiencias increíbles y especiales, donde aprendía mucho y conocí a mucha gente maravillosa. Después de graduarme, espero enseñar inglés en España, y seguir mejorando mi español. Muchas gracias a Prof. Tasende por su apoyo en mis solicitudes a estos programas.

Sarah Siskonen



I would like to thank the WMU Spanish department, as well as the Wheatley family for this award. I am extremely thankful and looking forward to using this award toward my future. I graduate this summer, then plan to take a year to save money and apply for graduate school for my doctorates in physical therapy. I am hoping to go to the University of South Florida in Tampa. My advice for future Spanish majors is to take every opportunity you have to get involved on campus because it goes by fast. Also, although classes can be stressful, try to enjoy them, because they can be fun and enjoyable.



Aleksander Slotwinski

- Quiero expresar mi más sincero agradecimiento a la familia Wheatley por su generosidad con respecto al Premio Suzanne M. Wheatley. Este es un honor increíble, y esta inversión en mí será reinvertida en las conexiones de por vida que hago con mis habilidades de español en el mundo académico y más allá.
- Además, aunque se supone que debo reconocer a un profesor especial, es imposible para mí no reconocer el impacto legendario que todos mis profesores de español me han dejado. Por lo tanto, debo dar un reconocimiento especial a la Dra. Tasende, Dr. Vann, Dra. Pérez de la Cruz, Dr. Pastrana-Pérez, Dr. Isea, y Dra. Tubino-Blanco por cambiar mi vida para siempre al darme las herramientas para apreciar plenamente la belleza y el poder sobre la lengua, la historia y la cultura española.

Mathilde Steckelberg Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tubino-Blanco)

The **Mathilde Steckelberg Award** was established by her upon her retirement from our department. She taught Latin at WMU from 1927 to 1961, and was chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, which included Spanish, from 1944 until she retired. She established a scholarship to recognize outstanding achievement by students majoring in the languages available at WMU at that time, directing that students would be selected for their performance and potential in the language.

The recipient of the 2023 Mathilde Steckelberg Award is: **Sydney Grenier**.



Megan Baldry

Quiero dar mis gracias a todo el departamento de Español aquí en Western y en la Universidad de Burgos que me han ayudado en mi educación y mi carrera. Gracias a los donantes, cuya generosidad es la razón que puedo tener éxito aquí. Después de graduarme en 2024, estoy intentando trabajar en el campo de los recursos humanos.

He disfrutado mucho mi tiempo estudiando español y estoy muy agradecida de haber elegido este programa.



Sydney Grenier

BM Candidate Music Education;

BA Candidate Spanish (2023)

Al momento, estoy enseñando a Watervliet Elementary Schools como un “Student Teacher” en las clases de música. En el otoño voy a Burgos para estudiar en el extranjero. Estoy muy agradecida al Profesor Pastrana y a la Profesora Pérez porque en mi primer año universitario me guiaron en la lengua española. Muchas gracias al Dr. Wolfenbarger, my non-Spanish speaking trombone professor, who has always pushed me to be a better student in the practice room and beyond.

Herb B. Jones Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tubino-Blanco)

The **Herb B. Jones Award** is made in memory of Herb. B. Jones, a professor of Spanish who taught at WMU for 35 years. He was a man who devoted his life to the true assimilation of Hispanic culture. He passed away several years ago, and we remember him each year by awarding this scholarship to an outstanding student.

The recipient of the 2023 Herb B. Jones Award is **Abigail Airo**.

Abigale Marie Airo



Thank you so much for this scholarship. I am graduating in the Fall 2023 and will be attending graduate school in Clinical Psychology. I hope to use my Spanish skills in my future career, whether this be in communicating with clients or conducting research. The study abroad experience that I had through WMU, in Heredia, Costa Rica, has continued to influence me in many ways. Through experiences such as this, my love for the Spanish language has grown tremendously. I can not wait to continue to involve Spanish in my future education and career.

Michael Braun Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mariola Pérez de la Cruz)



The **Michael Braun Award** was established in memory of Michael Braun, who was an alumnus of our program who returned to become a beloved professor and mentor to students interested in becoming Spanish teachers. Since his untimely death in 2018, the department makes this award in his honor to celebrate his passion for the Spanish language and his dedication to training the next generation of equally passionate Spanish teachers.

The recipient of the 2023 Michael Braun Award is: **Hannah Wettlaufer.**

Hannah Wettlaufer



Estoy muy agradecida de haber recibido el premio de Michael Braun. Es un honor recibir un premio en su nombre.

Me gustaría agradecer a todos los profesores que me inspiran. Quiero mencionar a la Dra. Mariola Pérez de la Cruz en particular por apoyarme durante mi estancia en España. No podría haberlo hecho sin ti.

Me graduaré en el Otoño después de mis prácticas de educación y al graduarme, me gustaría enseñar Español en San Francisco, California. Estoy deseando compartir mi pasión por el español con mis estudiantes.

Carolyn Harris Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mariola Pérez de la Cruz)

The **Carolyn Harris Award** was established by the faculty in memory of Dr. Carolyn Harris, who was a professor and undergraduate advisor in the Department of Spanish from 1985 to 2014. Each year we give the award to an undergraduate student who embodies some of Carolyn's outstanding qualities: generous, kind, service-oriented, pleasant, and passionate about what they do.

The recipient of the 2023 Carolyn Harris Award is: **Piper Meldrum-Roy.**

Piper Meldrum-Roy



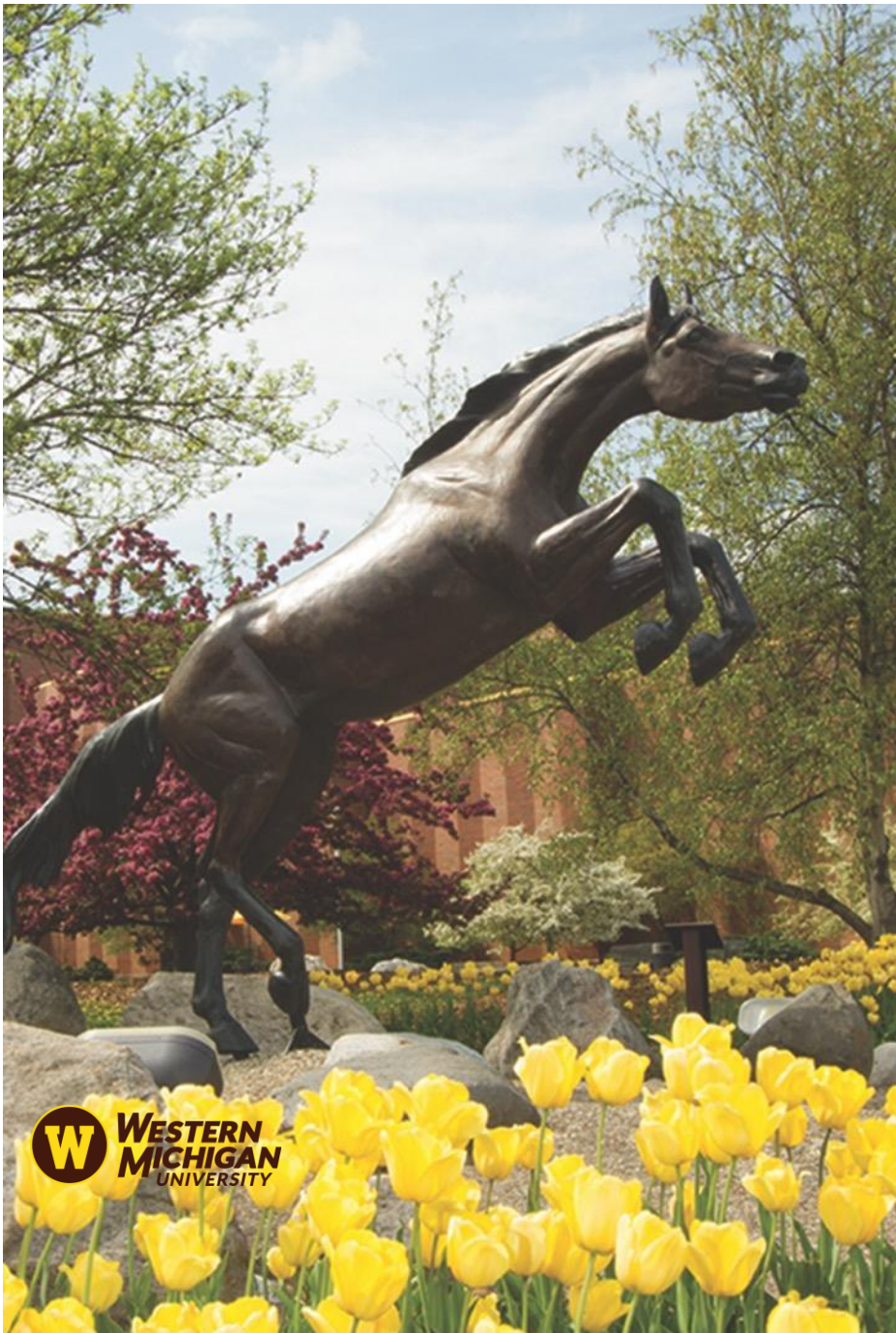
This is my third-year as a Music Education and Spanish major at Western, and I am so grateful for the experiences I've had through these programs, as well as the financial assistance provided through the Spanish Department. **Post-graduation**, I would like to get my Master's degree in Cello Performance. Following these studies, I will teach music in a French or Spanish speaking country.

Thank you to all my Spanish professors for being engaging, compassionate, and committed to our Spanish learning. A special thanks to Professor(s) Tasende and Pastrana-Pérez for being encouraging and supportive throughout my time here at WMU.

Awards for excellence

The **Department of Spanish** is pleased to announce our awards for excellence in Spanish. We hope award winners take inspiration from those famous people after whom their awards are named to continue their engagement with the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures of the world.

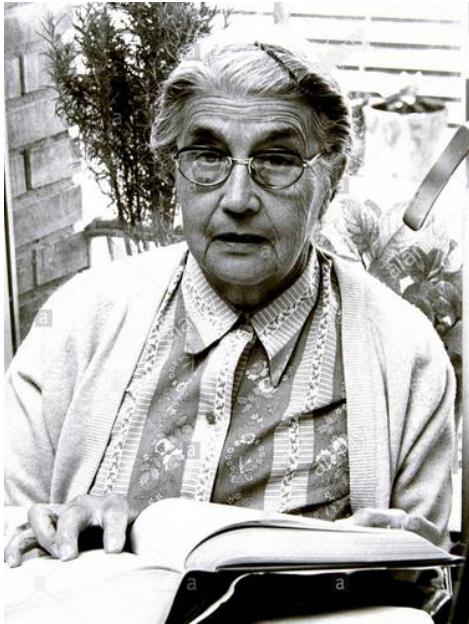
Announcements are alphabetical by student surname.



María Moliner Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mariola Pérez de la Cruz)

María Moliner was a 20th century Spanish librarian and lexicographer. She is known for her dictionary "Diccionario del uso del español," which is a "must" book of reference for all of us who study the Spanish language. The recipient of the 2023 María Moliner Award is **Zola Crow**.



Zola Crow



Estoy muy agradecida por el honor de este premio. He disfrutado mi tiempo en el departamento de español y tengo ganas de las posibiliades que tendré con mi título de español. Un buen recuerdo que tengo de aprender español es mi paso por Burgos durante mi estudio en el extranjero. En Burgos fui abrazado de una familia española y me enseñaron mucho de la cultura y la lengua. Me gustaría dar mis gracias a todos mis profesores de español también porque me inspiraron a amar el idioma y querer seguir aprendiendo tanto que pueda.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tasende)

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was a 17th century Mexican poet and essayist. She was a self-taught scholar and poet of the Baroque school. She is considered to be a contributor to the Spanish Golden Age and one of Mexico's intellectual gems. The recipient of the 2023 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Award is **Lauren Brainard**.



Lauren Brainard



Quiero agradecer a todos los instructores que me han enseñado español. He tenido una excelente experiencia en el Departamento de español. En el otoño, quiero seguir mis estudios en el programa graduado aquí en WMU.

En el futuro, no sé exactamente lo que quiero hacer, pero tengo una especialización en las Comunicaciones también. Querría decir a los futuros estudiantes de español que las clases pueden ser muy difíciles, pero el resultado vale la pena.

Rosalía de Castro Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tasende)

Rosalía de Castro was a 19th century Galician poet & fiction writer, whose work shows great sensitivity and concern for humanity. The recipient of the 2023 Rosalía de Castro Award is **Grace Betzold**.





Grace Betzold

Grace (en esta imagen encima de La Casa Mila en Barcelona) estudié Jazz de Voz y Español en WMU. Me graduaré este año, y después quiero trabajar como traductora y en una empresa de joyería/arte.

Quiere agradecer a Mercedes Tasende (que me ha apoyado mucho y es tan divertida y amable) y a Pablo Pastrana, que me ha ayudado muchísimo con sus estudios en el extranjero y más.

Recomiendo que los estudiantes de español estudien en el extranjero si quieren trabajar con el idioma porque, en mi opinión, no se puede entender lo que no se sabe sin estar entre los hispanohablantes- y que se debe experimentar más culturas.

Antonio de Nebrija Award

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tasende)

Antonio de Nebrija, one of Spain's greatest humanists, published the first grammar of the Spanish language in 1492, now credited as the first published grammar of any Romance language. Nebrija was known for his belief that the power of the Spanish Empire spread through the teaching and learning of the Spanish language, which is one of the reasons he wrote his grammar. The recipient of the 2023 Antonio de Nebrija Award is **Tessa Wrede**.





Tessa Wrede

I want to say thank you to everyone who is involved in keeping this program as effective and beneficial for its students as it is. I feel so blessed to have been able to participate in such a great program for three years. Thank you to Pablo especially for keeping it all together and for all you did on the 2022 Santander study abroad.

I have more opportunities in the design industry because of my Spanish experience. I am looking forward to getting to use it as I look for jobs internationally!

Alfonso X el Sabio Award

(Presenter: Prof. Natalio Ohanna)

Alfonso X el Sabio was a Spanish King in the 13th century. He was called “the Wise” because he established centers of learning all around Spain. He was responsible for codifying the medieval Castilian language, which we call Spanish today. The recipient of the 2023 Alfonso X el Sabio Award is **Laura Steele**.





Me at the University of Burgos

Laura Steele

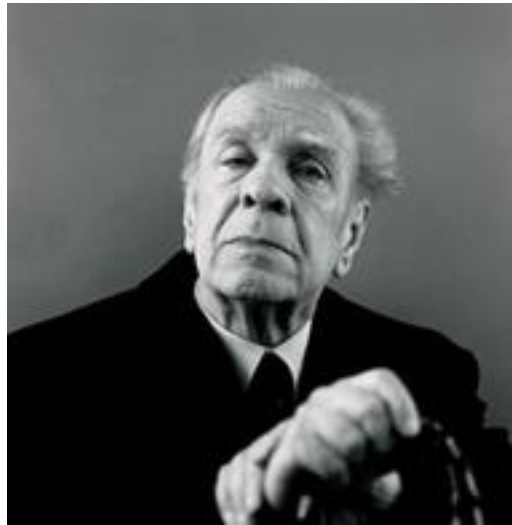
First, I would like to give a huge thank you to the Spanish faculty who have selected me to receive this honor. I would also like to express my gratitude to all the donors who have contributed to the awards and scholarships presented today. Your investments in our futures are invaluable.

Moving forward, I plan to graduate in 2024 with a double major in Spanish and music therapy. I hope to utilize my Spanish language abilities as a music therapist in the medical field, so that I can connect with and serve a greater diversity of patients.

Jorge Luis Borges Award

(Presenter: Prof. Natalio Ohanna)

Jorge Luis Borges was an Argentine poet, essayist, and short-story writer whose tales of fantasy and dream worlds are classics of 20th century world literature. He truly changed the world of literature with his imagination, creativity and intellect. The recipient of the 2023 Jorge Luis Borges Award is **Katelyn Whitehead**.





Katelyn Whitehead

Major(s): Biomedical Sciences and Spanish

Minor: Chemistry

What's Next?

- Study Abroad in Santander
- Graduation in Fall 2023
- Pursue a career in biomedical research

Advice to Future Spanish Majors:

- Take advantage of the small Spanish class sizes, it's a much less intimidating way to make friends than lecture halls.
- Be vulnerable! Don't be afraid to express yourself in Spanish.
- Enjoy every moment in college. The four years will fly by.

Special thank you to my family, Spanish professors, donors, and everyone else who has supported me along my college journey. I am eternally grateful for your constant support.

Inca Garcilaso de la Vega Award

(Presenter: Prof. Natalio Ohanna)

The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was a cultural historian in the 16th century. He was born in Peru. His father was a Spanish Captain and his mother an Inca princess. He was therefore a "mestizo," that is to say, a man of two races, two worlds, two visions and two languages. The recipient of the 2023 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega Award is **Sydney Davidson**.



Sydney Davidson



Thank you to the donors who make it possible for students to pursue their goals within the Spanish department. A big thank you to the faculty in this department, who inspire students every day to excel in their Spanish education; especially to Professor Mercedes Tasende, who has sparked a love of Spanish literature in me that just won't go away.

What's next: obtaining my doctorate in Physical Therapy and using my knowledge of Spanish to help underserved Spanish speaking communities.

Joan Coromines Award

(Presenter: Prof. Antonio Isea)

Joan Coromines was one of Catalonia's foremost linguistic scholars of the 20th century as well as an outspoken Catalan nationalist. Coromines lived in exile following the Spanish Civil War and even held a professorship at the University of Chicago before returning to Barcelona to pen his most famous works, which are now classics in both Catalan and Spanish philology. The recipient of the 2023 Joan Coromines Award is **Anna Davidson**.



Anna Davidson

Estoy agradecida por este premio de Joan Coromines. Quiero decir gracias a todos mis profesores, especialmente Pablo Pastrana-Pérez y Mercedes Tubino-Blanco por su apoyo en mi interés en logopedia. En el otoño, voy a regresar a WMU para ganar mi maestría en logopedia y después quiero usar mi conocimiento del español en mi trabajo. Para otros estudiantes, recomiendo que todos estudien en el extranjero. Es una experiencia excelente.

La foto es de mi viaje a Coruña cuando estudiaba en Santander.



Sandra Cisneros Award

(Presenter: Prof. Antonio Isea)

Sandra Cisneros is an award-winning Chicana poet, novelist, essayist, artist, and performer known for her portrayals of the lives of working-class people. Her accolades include a MacArthur Fellowship (known as a “Genius Grant”). Her work is read and beloved throughout the world. The recipient of the 2023 Sandra Cisneros Award is **Magglé León de Bautista**.



Magglé León de Bautista

Magglé is originally from Venezuela. She studied in Santander in 2022.

Rosario Castellanos Award

(Presenter: Prof. Robert Vann)

Rosario Castellanos was a Mexican poet and author and was one of Mexico's more important literary voices in the last century. Throughout her life, she wrote eloquently about issues of cultural and gender oppression, and her work has influenced feminist theory and cultural studies. Her work opened the door of Mexican literature to women. The recipient of the 2023 Rosario Castellanos Award is **Gabrielle Francois**.





Gabrielle Francois

Le quiero agradecer al departamento de español por darme este premio Rosario Castellanos. También un gran agradecimiento al profesor Pablo Pastrana y a cada uno de mis profesores de español por crear una experiencia académica emocionante y de apoyo aquí en Western. Acabo de completar mi primer año en el programa de maestría acelerada y enseñaré mi primera clase de SPAN 1000 el próximo otoño. Espero aprender más sobre la enseñanza y sumergirme completamente en el programa.

Musical Interlude



Voice: Marysol Millar; Cello: Piper
Meldrum-Roy

Pajarito colibrí, de Natalia Lafourcade
Soledad y el mar, de Natalia Lafourcade

Honorary Speaker and 2022-23 Alumni Achievement Award recipient



The WMU College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award is the highest honor for alumni who have risen to a level of distinction throughout their professional lives and is awarded in each department during Homecoming Week. The award is given to an alumn of the Department of Spanish for their prestigious accomplishments within their careers and communities. The recipient of the 2022-23 Alumni Achievement Award in Spanish was **Maggie Bullard-Marshall** (BA 1998, Spanish and Organizational Communication). Her presentation is titled, “*El español es tu superpoder / Spanish is your superpower.*”

Presidential Scholar and recipient of the Robert and Barbara Felkel Cervantes Prize

The Presidential Award represents the highest academic honor at WMU that a department bestows on an undergraduate student.

The WMU Department of Spanish **Presidential Scholar** for 2022-2023 and winner of the **Robert and Barbara Felkel Cervantes Prize** is **Marysol Millar**.

Thanks to the generosity of our retired colleague, Professor emeritus, Doctor, Maestro Robert Felkel and his lovely wife, Magistra Barbara Felkel, we offer the Cervantes Prize each year to our Presidential Scholar.

Marysol Millar

Since I began studying Spanish at WMU, I have lived in Spain, become fluent, interned as a translator, and become the ESL teacher at El Concilio. I am eternally grateful for the ways in which the Spanish faculty support me and for all of the collective expertise that they share with their students. I want to especially thank Profesor Pastrana, Profesor Millar, Profesor Mercedes T, and Profesor Emeritus Felkel who have not only been my amazing teachers and mentors, but who also support my other academic pursuits. This community is very special and I feel so prepared to go out into the world and pursue the things I love. I intend to continue teaching English, eventually in México. My ultimate goal is to become an Ayurvedic birth worker with a focus on birth equity and Mexican Traditional Medicine in Latino and Hispanic communities. I am so grateful for this award and will use it to pursue my accelerated masters in Spanish.



Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award

(Presenter: Prof. Germán Zárate-Sánchez)

The **Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award** is given yearly to a graduate teaching assistant who is a consummate pedagogue and who excels in the craft of teaching. The recipient is not only the top choice of our Director of the Spanish Language Program, Dr. Germán Zárate-Sánchez, but the teacher rewarded with the highest student evaluations.

The recipient of the 2022-23 Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award in Spanish is **Carmen Vinkemulder**.

Carmen Vinkemulder



I am honored to have been chosen for this award. I would like to express my profound gratitude to the entire Spanish Department. I would especially like to thank my Grad Assistant Director, Dr. Zárate-Sáñez. From the beginning of my studies here at WMU 5 years ago, this department has supported and encouraged me to reach my goals. Now as a Graduate Assistant learning from my fellow students and beloved professors, I have gained a new appreciation for the individual attention that this department has to offer. I plan to pursue Physician Assistant school once earning my M.A. in Hispanic Studies. My ultimate goal is to become a bilingual PA in women's healthcare.

Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award

(Presenter: Prof. Patricia Montilla)

The **Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award** is given yearly to a graduate student who excels in research. The recipient of this award is someone with high intellect, an excellent ability to read critically, and a notable writer. The recipient of this award is the top choice of graduate faculty and the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Patricia Montilla. In this case, the decision was unanimous!

The recipient of the 2022-23 Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award in Spanish is **Emma Baratta**.



Emma Baratta

Desde el fondo de mi corazón, gracias.
Para los profesores que me han guiado,
mis padres que me han apoyado y mis
amigos y compañeros de clase que
ayudaron en el camino, nada de esto
sería posible sin ustedes.

A los futuros estudiantes:
Recuerde que el lenguaje es poder, y nuestra
capacidad de comunicarnos y entendernos
unos a otros es lo único que puede guiarnos
hacia un mundo mejor.

President's Award for Study Abroad

(Presenter: Prof. Michael Millar)

This year's recipient of the Department of Spanish President's Award for Study Abroad is:

Yossi Diaz, for Burgos, Spain (Fall 2023)

¡Felicitaciones y buen viaje!

Yoselin Diaz



Thank you to the whole Spanish department for rewarding me with the President's Award so I can continue my studies for my Spanish major while studying abroad in Burgos, Spain. I would like to give a special shout out to Professor Millar who has always guided me and has given me the best advise regarding my Spanish studies.

President's Scholarship for Study Abroad

(Presenter: Prof. Michael Millar)

This year's recipients of the Department of Spanish President's Scholarship for Study Abroad are:

- **Olivia Anderson**, for Burgos, Spain, Fall 2023
- **Claire Dougherty** for Burgos, Spain, Fall 2022
- **Genesis Escobedo** for Burgos, Spain, Fall 2023
- **Sydney Grenier** for Burgos, Spain, Fall 2023

¡Felicitaciones y buen viaje!

Olivia Anderson

I want to thank all the donors for allowing me the opportunity to be here. Without them I would not be able to accomplish my Spanish learning career goals. In the coming semester I will study abroad in Burgos, Spain, where I will hopefully learn more about the language and Spanish culture. I want to use this knowledge and all the Spanish skills that I have learned to help teach future learners. Language studies, such as this one, are not for everyone. But to those who wish to become Spanish majors as well, I want to say “Bienvenido.”





Claire Dougherty

Muchas gracias a todos los donantes y profesores en el departamento de Español, especialmente Mariola Pérez de la Cruz por ser nuestra directora durante el programa. Después de graduarme, quiero trabajar con inmigrantes y refugiados, ayudándoles con cuestiones legales o médicas. Aconsejo a todos los futuros estudiantes de español que aprovechen esta oportunidad única de estudiar en el extranjero. Aprendes mucho sobre ti mismo y sobre el mundo que no aprenderías en el aula.

Genesis Escobedo



I would like to say thank you to the donor of my scholarship, Dr. Irma Lopéz. I am very thankful to have such an amazing gift, and I am excited to be able to use my scholarship for my study abroad trip to Burgos, Spain in the fall of 2023. Another thank you goes out to all of my Spanish professors who have done a great job teaching me. Especially, to the ones more recently who have pushed me to work harder. I am so grateful to have amazing professors.



Sydney Grenier

BM Candidate Music Education;

BA Candidate Spanish (2023)

Al momento, estoy enseñando a Watervliet Elementary Schools como un “Student Teacher” en las clases de música. En el otoño voy a Burgos para estudiar en el extranjero. Estoy muy agradecida al Profesor Pastrana y a la Profesora Pérez porque en mi primer año universitario me guiaron en la lengua española. Muchas gracias al Dr. Wolfenbarger, my non-Spanish speaking trombone professor, who has always pushed me to be a better student in the practice room and beyond.

Antonia H. Rostami Award

(Presenter: Prof. Michael Millar)

The **Antonia H. Rostami Award** celebrates the life and work of Antonia H. Rostami, who was born in Mexico and lived in Portage, Michigan for many years, where she was a Spanish teacher. This award recognizes the dedication of students who also plan to become educators.

The recipients of the 2023 Antonia H. Rostami Award are:

- **Jonathan Amezquita**
- **Roland Bissonnette**
- **Rory Campbell**
- **Erin Chase**
- **Jillian Hawley**

Jonathan Amezquita



- To future Spanish majors, I hope that you remain determined throughout your college career even when times get rough. The amazing staff and faculty are here to help you and I believe that you'll have what it takes to succeed. Most importantly, never give up because you are here for a reason, you are special and it's time everyone gets to see you shine.
- Muchas gracias a todos.

Roland Bissonnette



I am incredibly honored to be a recipient of the Antonia H. Rostami Award to aid me in my study of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture worldwide.

Since the first time I went to Spain understanding nothing anyone said to me, I knew I wanted to learn everything I could to be able to communicate with millions of fantastic people around the world. Thank you to WMU and the Spanish faculty for giving me a place to hone these skills.

And for future students I have only one piece of advice: practice. Travel somewhere and leave your phone at home, ask for directions incorrectly, embarrass yourself, and learn. Muchas gracias a todos.

Rory Campbell



In the future, I hope to have an advanced degree in the field of Exercise Science, specifically working with individuals with disabilities. My Spanish-language skills will enable me to reach and work with a larger group of clients or patients. To all future Spanish majors, I recommend putting yourself out there to your fullest extent. All the Spanish classes here are a safe environment, we become a little family over the semester. Thank you to all the donors and Spanish professors who made this opportunity a reality for me!



Erin Chase



Jillian Hawley

Thank you to the donors that have given me the opportunity to study abroad this summer! I have fallen in love with Spanish because of the wonderful professors here at Western. After undergrad, I plan to attend medical school and use my Spanish skills when working with patients.

Suzanne M. Wheatley Scholarship

(Presenter: Prof. Michael Millar)

The **Suzanne M. Wheatley Scholarship**, much like the Award with the same name, is made each year to honor the memory of Suzanne M. Wheatley, who attended WMU from 1985 to 1988 and passed away before completing her studies. It is given to undergraduate students who embody some of Suzie's remarkable qualities, such as her love for the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures, as well as her zest for life.

The recipient of the 2023 Suzanne M. Wheatley Scholarship is: **Tate Wierda**.



Tate Wierda

Ruth Kirby Scholarship

(Presenter: Prof. Michael Millar)

Ruth Y. Kirby was a life long educator who taught French and Latin for many years in both the Portage and Kalamazoo Public School systems before joining the faculty in the College of Education at Western Michigan in 1945. For the 23 years of teaching that followed, Professor Kirby served as an inspiration to her classes and colleagues alike. Her mastery of languages was second only to her unwavering dedication to her students. Because of her very generous bequest in 1990, Ruth Kirby's devotion to our students continues today by supporting them in their studies on campus and abroad.

The recipients of the 2023 Ruth Kirby Scholarship are: **Emily Bosak, Valeria Cusumano, Audrey Dorman, Eva Fotieo, Gabrielle Francois, Madeleine Geiger, Jessie Isaacas, Piper Meldrum-Roy, Aleks Slotwinski, Hannah Wettlaufer, and Katelyn Whitehead.**



Emily Bosak



Thank you to the donors and for my professors for making this scholarship possible for me. The time and effort they make to help students is incredible. I plan on using my Spanish in the medical field to help patients feel more comfortable. In May, I will also be going to Mexico to work with immigrants and hear their stories.

Valeria Cusumano



Thank you to everyone who helped me to receive this award, so I can further my studies in Spanish.

Can't wait to see some of you in Burgos!

Audrey Dorman



I am grateful to receive the Ruth Kirby Scholarship to help support my studies in Santander, Spain this summer!

I will be studying in Santander, and then staying for the fall semester to study in Burgos, Spain.

Thank you very much to the donors for making this opportunity possible for me.

A special thank you to all of my wonderful Spanish teachers, and I appreciate the continuous cultivation of my love and appreciation of all things Spanish.

I'm excited to experience Spain, and can not wait for all of the new opportunities and memories!

Evanthia Irini Fotieo



Gracias a todos mis profesores en WMU por el apoyo constante y para animarme a hacer lo mejor en mis estudios siempre. También, gracias a los donantes que hacen posible este premio, estoy muy agradecida.

After studying abroad in Spain this summer to complete my Spanish degree, I am going to graduate in December with a Bachelor's in Spanish and Social Work. I hope to use Spanish daily in my field so that I can help and connect with as many people as possible.



Gabrielle Francois

Le quiero agradecer al departamento de español por darme este premio Rosario Castellanos. También un gran agradecimiento al profesor Pablo Pastrana y a cada uno de mis profesores de español por crear una experiencia académica emocionante y de apoyo aquí en Western. Acabo de completar mi primer año en el programa de maestría acelerada y enseñaré mi primera clase de SPAN 1000 el próximo otoño. Espero aprender más sobre la enseñanza y sumergirme completamente en el programa.



Madeleine Geiger

I am very lucky to have received the Ruth Y. Kirby scholarship. It is a huge honor, as well as a great help for my trip to Santander, Spain this summer. I want to extend my thanks to all of the donors who make studying Spanish at WMU and studying abroad possible for so many students. I would also like to give a huge thanks to all of the Spanish professors I have had over the years; you all have made studying Spanish at WMU a wonderful experience and I could not have asked for better professors. I cannot wait to travel to Spain this summer and practice all that I have learned for the past four years!



Jessie Isaacs

Words hardly begin to express the gratitude I have towards all the donors and WMU members that have helped me in reaching my goals.

A special thanks to...

The Wheatley family for sharing the financial freedom to study abroad with me.

Dr. Michael Millar for helping me sort out the details in achieving a degree in Spanish.

Dr. Mercedes Tasende for being with me throughout my WMU Spanish journey, for creating such a welcoming classroom environment, and for believing in me even when I doubted myself.

Mil gracias a todos.

Piper Meldrum-Roy



This is my third-year as a Music Education and Spanish major at Western, and I am so grateful for the experiences I've had through these programs, as well as the financial assistance provided through the Spanish Department. **Post-graduation**, I would like to get my Master's degree in Cello Performance. Following these studies, I will teach music in a French or Spanish speaking country.

Thank you to all my Spanish professors for being engaging, compassionate, and committed to our Spanish learning. A special thanks to Professor(s) Tasende and Pastrana-Pérez for being encouraging and supportive throughout my time here at WMU.



Aleksander Slotwinski

- Quiero expresar mi más sincero agradecimiento a la familia Wheatley por su generosidad con respecto al Premio Suzanne M. Wheatley. Este es un honor increíble, y esta inversión en mí será reinvertida en las conexiones de por vida que hago con mis habilidades de español en el mundo académico y más allá.
- Además, aunque se supone que debo reconocer a un profesor especial, es imposible para mí no reconocer el impacto legendario que todos mis profesores de español me han dejado. Por lo tanto, debo dar un reconocimiento especial a la Dra. Tasende, Dr. Vann, Dra. Pérez de la Cruz, Dr. Pastrana-Pérez, Dr. Isea, y Dra. Tubino-Blanco por cambiar mi vida para siempre al darme las herramientas para apreciar plenamente la belleza y el poder sobre la lengua, la historia y la cultura española.

Hannah Wettlaufer



Estoy muy agradecida de haber recibido el premio de Michael Braun. Es un honor recibir un premio en su nombre.

Me gustaría agradecer a todos los profesores que me inspiran. Quiero mencionar a la Dra. Mariola Pérez de la Cruz en particular por apoyarme durante mi estancia en España. No podría haberlo hecho sin ti.

Me graduaré en el Otoño después de mis prácticas de educación y al graduarme, me gustaría enseñar Español en San Francisco, California. Estoy deseando compartir mi pasión por el español con mis estudiantes.



Katelyn Whitehead

Major(s): Biomedical Sciences and Spanish

Minor: Chemistry

What's Next?

- Study Abroad in Santander
- Graduation in Fall 2023
- Pursue a career in biomedical research

Advice to Future Spanish Majors:

- Take advantage of the small Spanish class sizes, it's a much less intimidating way to make friends than lecture halls.
- Be vulnerable! Don't be afraid to express yourself in Spanish.
- Enjoy every moment in college. The four years will fly by.

Special thank you to my family, Spanish professors, donors, and everyone else who has supported me along my college journey. I am eternally grateful for your constant support.

Spanish Advancement Scholarship

(Presenter: Prof. Michael Millar)

This is one of our newest awards. It was established through the generosity of Dr. Irma López, a longtime Professor and Chair of Spanish who is now the Dean of the Lee Honors College, and recognizes the promise of a Spanish major or minor with a scholarship to support their continued studies at Western Michigan University.

The scholarship winners for the 2023 academic year are: **Delaney Brockmyre, Sophia Bucko, Angely Delgado Ibarra, and Genesis Escobedo.**





Delaney Brockmyre

Thank you all of those who cheered me on and helped me achieve my goals. I appreciate all the educators and advisors who guided me. Thank you for pushing me to pursue my dreams.

I hope to spend a year abroad to become fluent, as well as experience the people and the culture of Spanish speaking countries. After graduating with a major in Spanish and Global and International Relations with a minor in Political Science, I plan to live abroad for a few years.

My advice to my peers is to challenge yourself both academically and personally. Go out and try new things! Open your mind up to the possibilities.

Sophia Bucko



I would like to firstly thank the Spanish department for awarding me with this scholarship as it will help me as I study in Santander, Spain this summer while I work on completing my Spanish minor.

I also would like to thank Professor Mariola Pérez de la Cruz for supporting me and encouraging me in my decisions to study abroad. With her help, I now have the opportunity to study in another country surrounded by an amazing language and culture.

Gracias Señora!

Angely Delgado Ibarra

Genesis Escobedo



I would like to say thank you to the donor of my scholarship, Dr. Irma Lopéz. I am very thankful to have such an amazing gift, and I am excited to be able to use my scholarship for my study abroad trip to Burgos, Spain in the fall of 2023. Another thank you goes out to all of my Spanish professors who have done a great job teaching me. Especially, to the ones more recently who have pushed me to work harder. I am so grateful to have amazing professors.

Spanish Student Support Scholarship

(Presenter: Prof. Mercedes Tubino-Blanco)

The Spanish Student Support Scholarship is awarded to those students who have plans to study in the Quito, Ecuador, study-abroad program and have yet to declare a Spanish major or minor. It is meant to help them defray the costs associated with our study-abroad programs.

These are the students receiving a 2023 Spanish Student Support Scholarship: **Olivia Brown, Logen Crandall, and Abigail Ward.**





Olivia Brown

I would like to thank the donors for their generous consideration. This scholarship will be used towards my summer study abroad in Quito, Ecuador where I will further my education in Spanish studies. I hope to better my understanding of the Spanish language and culture while abroad. This will help me gain experiences that allow me to keep improving my Spanish speaking ability. I want to also thank my professors Irene Miguelez Moran and Martha Addo Preko for their continued support and guidance throughout the last two semesters.

Logen Crandall



I'd like to express my gratitude to the donors of the Spanish Student Support Scholarship, as well as to Dr. Mariola Pérez de la Cruz for being an incredible professor and encouraging me to earn a Spanish minor. I'd also like to thank Dr. Mercedes Tubino-Blanco for informing me of this opportunity to learn in Quito, Ecuador. Although I haven't chosen a specific career for the future, I am committed to using my English degree to create positive change in my community. For future Spanish majors or minors, I would advise you to surround yourself with Spanish culture in any form possible. The exposure will make you fall in love with this language and group of people, just as I have.



Abigail Ward

Prior to this semester, I never could have imagined that I would have the opportunity to sign on to two incredible study abroad programs for the coming summer semesters. After a long intermission in my study of the language, the faculty members of the Spanish Department have been so overwhelmingly supportive and uplifting in my goals to re-engage and go further with my studies. I cannot express how thankful I am to them and the donors kind enough to

Recognition of Department Service-Learners and Volunteers

We honor all of our students participating in Service learning opportunities in our community schools, hospitals, legal offices, immigrant services, and administrative posts.

Abby Adams, Lauren Brainard, Jaqueline Cortes, Anna Davidson, Yossi Diaz, Gia Evans, Marcos Gomez, Jessie Isaacs, Magglé León de Bautista, Marysol Millar

Phi Beta Kappa

The oldest and most prestigious honor society
for the university's top liberal arts students

**(Presenter: Prof. Pablo Pastrana-Pérez,
Theta of MI Chapter Vice-President and Interim Secretary)**



The **PHI BETA KAPPA** *Society*

THE NATION'S OLDEST ACADEMIC HONOR SOCIETY

— Founded December 5, 1776 —

Abby Adams,
Seth Allred,
Sydney Conway,
Sydney Davidson,
Jessie Isaacs
Cameron Palmer
Vanessa Scheel
Katelyn Whitehead

THANK YOU!!!

We would like to thank all our volunteers. Special thanks to **Maya Willertz** and **Albert Asiedu-Larbi**, graduate students who have been helping with today's ceremony.

And our heart-felt gratitude to an essential person in our Department, who is always willing to lend a hand and does it with grace and generosity, our Administrative Assistant, **Mrs. Colleen Sante**.

*¡Enhorabuena y
nuestros mejores
deseos para todos!*

Congratulations,
students!

We wish you all the best!