Dear Friends,

It has been a busy year in the life of the department. In the fall, in addition to the talk presented by our Alumni Achievement Award winner Jason Albaugh, we had the pleasure of hosting poet Takako Arai and playwright and novelist Yoshizumi Higuchi. In the spring, poet and translator Zack Rogow and poet-translator-anthologist Jerome Rothenberg each came for speaking engagements. We sent 33 students on study abroad programs (in China, France, Germany, Japan, and Jordan) and taught over 1,700 students here in Kalamazoo. Our dual-enrollment Chinese program at Forest Hills Northern High School in Grand Rapids was inaugurated, and we welcomed two new faculty members to the department: Dr. Shu Yang and Dr. Li Xiang, both in Chinese.

The department now has fifteen active faculty members teaching, writing, and conducting research on linguistics, pedagogy, literature, culture, and translation. The list of conferences and events that faculty members attended in 2017-18 is much too long to include here – suffice to say that locations include Canberra, Australia; Paris, France; and Bilbao, Spain, as well as the island of Martinique; Cologne, Germany; Tokyo, Japan, and over a dozen venues in the United States.

Wherever you are, we send you our very best wishes from Kalamazoo, and we hope to hear from you soon. Please let us know if you are in the neighborhood!

à bientôt,

Molly Lynde-Recchia
Chair
Joshua J. White, Presidential Scholar

Our 2018 Presidential Scholar is Joshua White, from Paw Paw, Michigan. Joshua also received the distinction of being the Presidential Scholar for the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He is graduating with majors in Japanese, computer engineering, and applied mathematics; and minors in Asian Studies, global and international studies, and computer science.

As a student in the accelerated bachelor's/master's degree program in computer engineering, Joshua is receiving his bachelor's degree in April 2018 and expects to graduate with a master's degree in April 2019. This summer, he will study in Japan on a full scholarship from the highly competitive U.S. Government critical Language Scholarship program. He plans to obtain a doctoral degree in electrical and computer engineering, focusing on research in electro-neurophysiological interfacing. Joshua plans to relocate to Japan eventually and work to develop advanced prosthetics that interface directly into the human nervous system to help improve the quality of life for amputees.

Joshua is a veteran of the United States Army. He is a member of several student and academic organizations, including but not limited to WMU’s Lee Honors College, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, and the student chapter of the institute of Electrical Engineers.

I look upon truth:
The mouth of a volcano

which neither sand
nor water can fully satiate.


In 2013, the department began publishing Transference, a peer-reviewed journal featuring poetry in English translation from the languages of our major and minor programs. The journal is freely accessible at https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/transference/. Every issue includes short commentaries written by the translators to accompany their poems. It is our hope that the works published in Transference will lead readers to appreciate the complex interplay of language and culture that is brought to bear in poetic translation. Hard copies of the journal are available for $10 each.
Jason Albaugh, Alumni Achievement Award Winner

This past year, the department recognized Jason Albaugh (class of 2003) at Homecoming with the Alumni Achievement Award. Jason has been a Latin teacher at East Grand Rapids High School since 2010. He teaches all levels of Latin language and has also developed advanced literature courses that include Vergil, Caesar, Catullus, Cicero, Horace, Ovid and Lucan. He serves as Principal Examiner for Paper 2 of the International Baccalaureate Standard Level Assessment in Latin.

In his teaching, he modifies materials and curricula for a wide range of student abilities, including students with severe visual/auditory impairments, mental and emotional difficulties, and extreme reading deficiencies. Jason has been active in the Michigan Junior Classical League since his high school days. As Latin Club Advisor, he now leads students to the MJCL conventions and assemblies. He received the Glenn M. Knudsvig Award for Outstanding Latin Teaching in Michigan Secondary Schools in 2016.

Students enjoyed the talk that Jason gave to the department, in which he described the “(Maybe) Hidden Skills of the Language Learner,” including the ability to take risks, the development of a sense of empathy, and a sense of curiosity.

Mark your Calendars!

Next year’s Alumni Achievement Award winner will be Sarah Murray, Associate Director of the Office of International Development at Indiana University. She will give a presentation at 3 p.m. on Friday, October 5, in 3025 Brown Hall. All are welcome.

Honors and Awards: Dr. Rika Saito and Elizabeth Riegler, recipient of the Rodger Swan Memorial Award

It would be wonderful to hear from you! Please drop us a line at molly.lynde-recchia@wmich.edu and tell us where your path has taken you.
Contribution Opportunity

Wednesday, October 3 has been designated as WMU Giving Day 2018. Your tax-deductible contribution may be designated for scholarships, specific language sections, and other activities. Visit https://wmich.edu/languages/giving to learn more and make a donation.

Honors and Awards...

Award recipient Marissa Weller reciting in Arabic

Dr. Vivan Steemers, Kyle Vankrimpen, Ivory Cat Van T. Hoang, Bennett Shelley and Cinthia Mendoza Medina, award recipients in French

Dr. Shu Yang and Rowan Estenik, recipient of an Excellence in Chinese Award

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