



# THE POLYGLOT

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER FROM THE  
WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES DEPARTMENT

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## Word from the Chair

As we entered the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the pandemic in the fall, we all started classes on ground, everyone wearing masks and ready to tackle the new semester. Unlike many other subjects, language classes hinge on the instructors' being able to see students' facial gestures and reactions; face masks, though protective, can and do muffle pronunciation and hide students' faces, so we don't know how well they are hearing us -- Did they understand what I said? Are they reacting favorably? Do they agree or disagree? Is their attitude one of questioning, shock, apathy, etc.? The good news is that the University decided that, after spring break, we were able to remove our masks in class – what a relief, at least from the faculty's perspective! It took a while to get used to seeing our students' bare faces, but it was a welcome change. Back we were in our grooves, enjoying the ... yes, unmasked *face-to-face* interaction, seeing the whole person. We could then teach better, adjust our instruction, make it more personalized.

In our departmental office, we are pleased that Lisa continues to be our energetic and hard-working University Assistant and we welcomed all bilingual new student workers, Diana, Natasha and Sophia, as well as new tutors, Ayla, Elisabeth and Jessica. Life is back closer to normal.

In relation to the outside world, especially now, when so many educators are retiring or leaving the profession, we are happy to be providing not only a global linguistic and cultural background to Eastern students, but also building the foundations for Connecticut's future workforce: many of our students double major in Spanish and Education, and go on to teach in public schools. As of this writing, there are 74 positions open in CT for Spanish classroom teachers (not substitutes!), 44 of which require a secondary school teaching certificate\*. We continue to teach courses in six languages – Arabic, Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese and Spanish, and hear once in while how much our alumni appreciate their classes in our Department have helped them in their careers, be they in communication and outreach, teaching children they never expected to, or selling alternative energy infrastructure in an area populated mainly by Spanish speakers. Nothing is more rewarding than to be of service to others and to see that the fruits of our labors are valued. \* [www.CTreap.net](http://www.CTreap.net) (compared to about 23 in May, 2021).

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-Dr. Kin Chan, Department Chair

## *The Best We Could Do: A Reflection*

By Sophia Gonzalez '25

The book, *The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir*, follows the life of Thi Bui and her family as they attempt to do the best they can do as Vietnamese refugees in America. Readers will find themselves immersed in the family's journey through Bui's beguiling illustrations and intimate storytelling.

*The Best We Could Do* was selected by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) as this year's BIG READ, a program to inspire communities to read works from all kinds of backgrounds and, by doing so, encouraging a range of conversations to understand one another better. Eastern was once again chosen as one of only 61 institutions nationwide to participate in the Big Read program.

On November 10, 2021 Thi Bui delivered *virtually* the BIG READ's keynote address. Through her presentation's images and words, Bui allowed audience members to glance into the creative process behind making her first graphic novel. Bui also touched on the lasting effects of colonization and spoke about her experience rewriting her own narrative as a Vietnamese immigrant making her presence—and the presence of her community—known in the U.S.

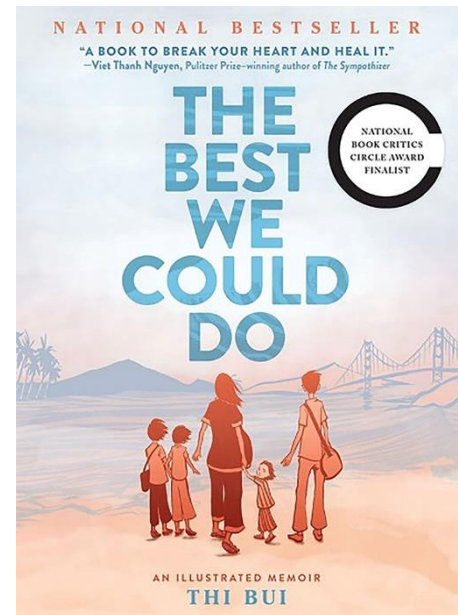
The author began her presentation with illustrations as she chaperoned the audience along her quest for creating a work of art that she described as her “gift to [the Vietnamese] community.” Bui mentioned that she wanted the book to become a conduit for understanding between her, a Vietnamese immigrant woman, and readers from all walks of life.

Bui revealed that oftentimes, when growing up, she found that she was forced to define who she was by first defining who she was not. The author admitted that, though the creation of the book was difficult, she felt a deep yearning to complete it because of the negative or lack of representation of Vietnamese stories in American media. “I made the book I wanted to read,” said Bui of her work.

During the open floor discussion with the audience members, Bui answered a question about the relationship between colonization and culture, saying, “I think I just sort of accepted the reality—the impact—of colonization is that culture gets muddled. Our waters have been muddied, and these are the waters from which we were born. In our existence we are huge puzzles and problems and that's OK.”

Prompted by a question, Bui shared that her favorite parts of the book to draw were the images of nature and revealed that the context behind the theme of water in the book was due to her viewing water “as a life-giving and life-taking force,” which is emphasized in her book through the depiction of her family fleeing Vietnam on the boat, as well as the backdrop for her son's bright future.

Bui's book allowed me, as an immigrant myself, to see my story being told too. Of course, there were many differences between my immigration story and Bui's, but within the parts that we share, I was able to find a sort of closure when I reached the end of her book. Bui expressed her discontent with the fact that these types of stories are often hidden, pushed into the back of a family's closet, left forgotten. Sadly, this is the reality for a lot of immigrant families. Immigration stories are not often told, and that is a shame because these are stories that carry the weight of a family's aspirations and values. They are stories of great loss and pain, but they are also stories that exemplify the tenacity and pride of a mother or a father. Those stories deserve to be told and heard.



## Special Events: Workshop with Marcelino Truong & Staged Reading of Linda Lê's *Kriss*



Marcelino Truong

For the second year in a row, under gallery director Julia Wintner's leadership, Eastern participated in the National Endowment for the Arts' BIG READ, an initiative aimed at getting Americans reading and talking about an array of literary works from a diverse slate of authors. This year's BIG READ selection was Thi Bui's *The Best We Could Do*, a graphic memoir documenting Bui's immigrant experience in the U.S., as well as a reflection on her family's roots in Vietnam and their journey to America. In celebration of the BIG READ, the World Languages and Cultures Department, led by Dr. Michèle Bacholle, co-sponsored two special events.

The first event, held on November 8, 2021, featured Marcelino Truong, a Paris-based artist, graphic designer and illustrator. Like Thi Bui, Truong has written and illustrated several graphic novels detailing family stories that stretch decades and continents. Two of Truong's graphic memoirs, *Such a Lovely Little War* and *Saigon Calling*, are set during the tumult of the Vietnam War era and complement this year's BIG READ selection.

Via Zoom, Truong connected with students and community members for an artist's workshop. Truong talked about his non-traditional artist background. He shared insights into the steps and processes behind developing a graphic novel from an idea and sketching, to responding to editor's comments and the last push to get it published.

This engaging workshop was made possible by the professional relationship forged between Bacholle and Truong while she researched and interviewed him for *Paroles d'auteurs Jeunesse* (2013), a book about multicultural representation in French children's literature.

Again, leaning into her network of talented French authors, Bacholle coordinated with Eastern's Theater Program and the University Art Gallery to present an immersive performance of Linda Lê's, *Kriss*, the one and only play by the renowned Franco-Vietnamese author. Complementing the themes and discussion ignited in a reading of *The Best We Could Do*, *Kriss* is a retelling of the Greek tragedy *Oresteia* set in California in the shadow of the Vietnam War.

On December 1 the Studio Theater on campus was transformed with sound, visuals and stage design by graphic design students, under the direction of Professor Kristen Morgan, to transport audiences back to the Vietnam War era and *Kriss*' impassioned world.

Under the direction of Professor DeRon Williams, Theatre students assumed the three main roles of the play. Senior Shalaine McCall, a Performing Arts major, captivated audiences with her fervent reading of the character *Kriss*. After the performance, Shalaine reflected, "When I



Eastern students reading of Linda Lê's *Kriss*, December 2021 (left to right): Rebecca Ristow as Famke, Shalaine McCall as *Kriss*, and Shaughn Maleryn as Stan.

was first introduced to the character and play *Kriss*, I thought that it was very powerful and deep. I myself lost my father at a young age. He didn't die, but he was no longer in my life. I pulled [on] the emotion of longing and spite and put it into *Kriss*. I truly enjoyed performing and I would love to read [more] work from Linda Lê."

Although there was only a single live performance of *Kriss*, a recording is available on [YouTube](#). The play itself can also be read in its original French (Bourgeois editions), or in English thanks to the unpublished translation by Michèle Bacholle and Dawn Cornelio.

These two special events highlight the resourcefulness, dynamism, and collaborative spirit of the World Languages and Cultures Department and the Eastern community. Alumni and friends of the Department are encouraged join us for future special events.

Solemn note, in May 2022, Linda Lê passed away unexpectedly at the age of 58.

## Guest Speakers in Medical Interpreting



*Francesco Pagano of Interpreters & Translators, Inc talks to students, November 2021.*

In support of one of Eastern's newest minors, Medical Interpreting in Spanish, the World Languages and Cultures Department and the Department of Health Sciences hosted guest speakers from the field of medical interpreting.

The Medical Interpreting in Spanish minor is an 18-credit program that develops the critical skills that future healthcare providers can pursue to improve communication with Spanish-speaking patients.

In November 2021, Francesco Pagano, the president of Interpreters & Translators, visited our campus to talk to students about the field of translation and interpreting, highlighting the essential role of

contractors, such as his Glastonbury-based firm, in the healthcare sector. Pagano opened his talk with an introduction to the differences between interpreting (real-time spoken communication) and translation (focused on written content). He outlined key tenets in interpreting, such as interpreting for meaning and using a first-person voice, i.e., speaking as if the interpreter were the patient or the medical provider. As a language services contractor, he stressed how firms like his own support a variety of healthcare providers via in-person, telephonic and video conferencing formats. Students were free to ask questions and were encouraged to contact Interpreter & Translators with any questions in the future.

To provide an in-house perspective on language services in the effective delivery of healthcare, members of the Language Services Department at Yale New Haven Hospital (YNHH) were invited to speak to Eastern students in late March 2022. Crystal Jeter-Prince, Department Manager, and Mohamed Mohamed Hegazi, Lead Interpreter, delivered a team presentation.

Jeter-Prince detailed the regulatory framework behind interpreting and translation services and noted that Yale New Haven Hospital is dedicated to, "providing an interpretive resource to non-English speaking patients who have identified their preferred language as other and have requested use of an interpreter." Staffed with dozens of interpreters, covering more than 20 languages, including American Sign Language, the Language Services

Department at YNHH handles thousands of requests for services each year, answering calls with the three modes of interpretation delivery mentioned above. In addition, YNHH also assesses bilingual staff (nurses, doctors, medical technicians) and utilizes their services for straightforward interactions, such as the taking of vital signs.

Lead Interpreter, Hegazi highlighted the unique role of the interpreter as the voice of the patient, as well as a bridge spanning cultural barriers that may, at times, lead to medical misunderstandings, misdiagnoses, or worse. As the lead interpreter with years of experience, Hegazi provided real-life examples of working as the intermediary between patients and providers. These detailed (but anonymous) examples allowed students to not simply come away with a generic list of responsibilities for interpreters, but rather, come to see the endeavor through the eyes of an actual interpreter.

As more students choose to pursue the Medical Interpreting in Spanish minor at Eastern, the World Languages and Cultures Department and the Department of Health Sciences plan to continue to bring professionals from the field to Eastern's campus to provide a real-world perspective, and jump-start students' career networking.

### Spanish Table – *La Mesa de Español*

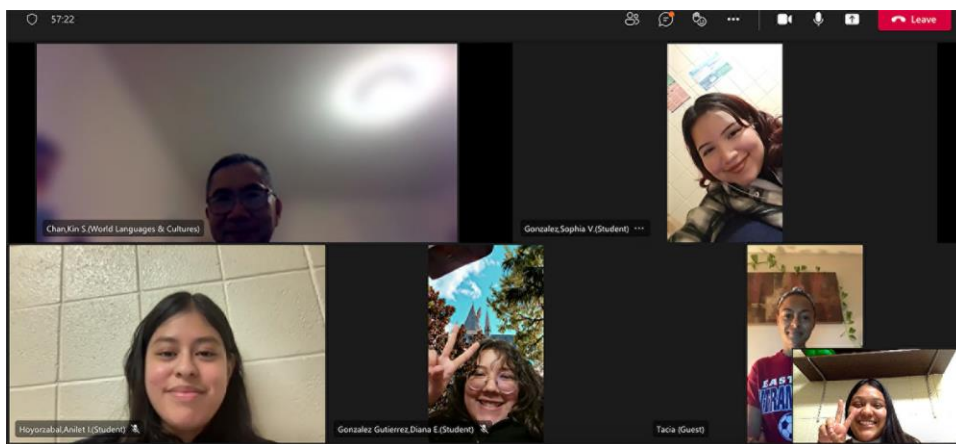
By Diana Gonzalez Gutierrez '25 and Sophia Gonzalez '25

We were raised in a Hispanic household, but we were never taught Spanish in school or at home and we've always been too embarrassed to speak our native tongue. Unfortunately, our Spanish-speaking skills are not the best because of just that--lack of practice. However, we understand Spanish fluently; it is just a matter of practicing and overcoming that mental block.

One of our personal goals for starting our higher education journey was to improve our Spanish. But as first-year students, we had no idea how to practice our native language of Spanish on campus. Luckily, we found *La Mesa de Español* or Spanish Table. Joining *La Mesa de Español* was the best thing we could've done for ourselves, prior to taking our first official Spanish course. It was held every Tuesday evening at 7 pm, as a virtual meeting, through Teams. Spanish Table was a safe space for us, a place to practice Spanish without being graded or having to be correct. We always looked forward to speaking with the



Representatives from Yale New Haven Hospital talk to students about medical interpreting. Crystal Jeter-Prince on left. Mohamed Mohamed Hegazi on right.



Screenshot of La Mesa de Español

people at Spanish Table. It felt like we are speaking Spanish with a big, at times dysfunctional, Spanish family! Taking part in Spanish Table not only showed us that we are not alone, but really improved our Spanish speaking abilities and our confidence.

The meetings were always entertaining, funny, thought-provoking and challenging, language-wise; we always learned at least one new word or phrase after every meeting. We also really appreciated how Professor Chan, the Department Chair, facilitated the conversations. Professor Chan is a very kind and patient man, which is perfect for the meetings because when we stumbled over our words, we knew he was there to help us piece the sentences together. We are very grateful to have had the opportunity to have been a part of *La Mesa de Español* this semester and we are both looking forward to being a part of the group next semester! We hope to see old and new faces there. We're still not perfect, but we're very happy and grateful for the progress we've made, and we owe it all to Dr. Chan and the friends we've made in Spanish Table!

*Nosotras nos criamos en una familia hispana, pero nunca nos enseñaron Español en la escuela o en casa y por eso siempre hemos sido avergonzadas al hablar nuestra lengua nativa. Como estudiantes de primer año, no teníamos la menor idea de como practicar el Español en la escuela, a mas de hablando con otros hispanohablantes. Desafortunadamente, nuestro Español no es el mejor, y la razon por eso es exactamente porque no hay muchos con quien podemos practicar. Aun así, entendemos el Español con fluidez, solo es cuestion de practicarlo y superar ese obstáculo mental.*

*Una de nuestras metas personales mas importante cuando empezamos nuestras carreras de education era remediar eso. Lo mejor que podríamos hacer para lograr esta meta, ademas de tomar clases de Español, era ser parte de la Mesa de Español! La Mesa de Español se junta todo los Jueves a las 7pm, como junta virtual, en Teams. La Mesa de Espanol ha sido un espacio seguro para nosotras. Siempre esperemos a hablar con les chiques en la junta de Mesa de Español, se siente como hablar con una gran familia, aún a tiempos una familia disfuncional, en Español! Participando en la Mesa de Español no solo nos ha enseñado que no estamos solas, sino también nos ha ayudado a mejorar nuestra confianza y nuestras habilidades de Español.*

*Las juntas siempre son entretenidas, chistosas, estimulantes y desafiantes, por el idioma; siempre aprendemos por lo menos una palabra nueva, o una frase nueva, al final de cada junta. Tambien apreciamos mucho como el Professor Chan, el Jefe de el Departamento de Lenguajes y Culturas del Mundo, facilita las conversaciones. El Professor Chan es una persona muy amable y paciente, y por eso es perfecto para las juntas porque cuandos nos tropezamos con nuestras palabras, los miembros saben que el Professor Chan estará ahí para ayudarnos juntar los pedazos de la frase. Somos muy agradecidas que hemos tenido la oportunidad de haber sido parte de Mesa de Español este semestre y estaremos esperando el proximo año para que podremos ser parte de Mesa otra vez! Esperemos ver caras familiares y tal vez unas nuevas en las proximas juntas de el semestre que viene. Todavía no somos perfectas, pero estamos muy feliz y agradecidas por todo el progreso que hemos logrado, y lo debemos todo al Professor Chan y les amigos que hemos conocido gracias a La Mesa de Español!*

## Students Make a Positive Impact

Students at Eastern have a proud history of helping others. That tradition continued this fall with the work of students in Michèle Bacholle's Perspectives on Women's Issues class (FRE/WST 331).

For the past four years, Professor Bacholle has built a service-learning component into her course. The intent of the service project is for students to apply their academic curriculum—in this case, the crucial role of education



Students in FRE/WST 331 at bake sale in Student Center.

in arming women against forced marriage, childbirth mortality and financial dependency—to a real-world challenge or problem. In these projects, *students* are the drivers of change.

In November 2021, FRE/WST 331 students held a bake sale in the Student Center to raise money for young women in Haiti to attend the College Jean Bruny, a secondary school in Las Palmes, Haiti. Sales from the delicious muffins, cookies and brownies raised over \$327. With an annual tuition of \$180, the efforts of the students in FRE/WST 331 helped pay for nearly two full scholarships to College Jean Bruny.

Rigorous and explorative academics are a hallmark of courses at Eastern, but so is making a positive impact in the wider community. Bon travail, les étudiants! Bon travail, etidyan!

## Conversation with Dr. Bacholle

In mid-November, Dr. Michèle Bacholle, a distinguished CSU French professor at Eastern, was invited by Dr. Bertrand Bourgeois, a Senior Lecturer in French Studies at the University of Melbourne, to discuss her [Annie Ernaux e-Museum](#).

The *Annie Ernaux e-Museum*, launched in February 2021, is the result of years of research and of a personal pursuit. It was called an “intertwined autobiography” by Ernaux herself.

Dr. Bourgeois is a French literature scholar and his current research interests center on the houses and museum(-like) spaces of French poets, authors and artists. Through his research, Bourgeois found and was intrigued by the virtual space that Dr. Bacholle created. He wanted to learn more about Bacholle’s creative process in the formation, design and maintenance of this unique online space.

In a casual question and answer format, Bacholle and Bourgeois discussed physical and virtual museum spaces, their focus and feel, and dove into the aesthetics, functionality and creation of the *Annie Ernaux e-Museum*.

As part of this interview, Dr. Bacholle created an introduction and virtual walk-through of her *Annie Ernaux e-Museum*. Both, the [introduction](#) and [entire interview](#) are available on YouTube.

## Alumni Forum

As part of the World Languages and Cultures Department’s annual Alumni Forum series, we warmly welcomed back alumna Ashley Smith on April 5 for a conversation about her budding career.



Screenshot of Bacholle and Bourgeois’ virtual conversation, November 2021.



Screenshot from Alumni Forum, April 2022.

The Alumni Forum is a recent tradition in the World Languages and Culture Department where alumni come back—virtually or in-person—to share their insights on their careers and educational journeys. It is an informal and relaxed conversation among alumni and current students, which helps current student think about and plan for their future careers, as well as provide an opportunity to maintain relationships with alumni.

Ashley earned a Bachelor of Arts in 2020, majoring in Spanish and minoring in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and earned a

Master of Science in Early Childhood Education in 2021 through Eastern's Early Start education program. She quickly found a job as 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher in a Spanish-English bilingual program in Stratford, CT.

As a recent graduate, Ashley was able to share with current students a fresh perspective on the transition from college to the work force, and offered details about the application and interview process for a K-12 teaching position. Along with recounting some ups and downs of a first-year teacher, Ashley also reflected on what was most helpful about her time at Eastern (Prof. Chan's Conversation and Composition class) and what she wished she had learned more of (classroom management). The easy-going question-and-answer format allowed students to make real, albeit virtual, connections to Ashley and everyone felt comfortable sharing their emails for future follow-up.

One attendee, Kathryn Kubisek, a Spanish major expected to graduate in 2024 said, "I enjoyed speaking with Ashley about her employment in a dual language classroom, as well as hearing about her study abroad experience. It's good to know that I can reach out to her if I have any questions about my own plans to study abroad and become a teacher."

The World Languages and Cultures Department is committed to its annual Alumni Forum as it helps connect current students to alumni for meaningful, beyond-the-classroom guidance and creates the conduit to maintain relationships with graduates of the Department.

The Department is always eager to hear from alumni and include them in our forums, newsletters and social media. Feel free to reach out and connect at [WorldLanguages@EasternCT.edu](mailto:WorldLanguages@EasternCT.edu) or on Instagram @EasternWorldLanguages.

### Special Event: *Explora Español*

Many students at Eastern are heritage Spanish language speakers. For some, their families speak Spanish at home; others came to the U.S. as children from Spanish-speaking countries, but never formally learned Spanish in school; still others hail from a Spanish-speaking communities.



Professor Chan with students at Explora Español, March 2022.



The World Languages and Cultures Department held a special event this March to talk to heritage language students about the benefits of pursuing a Spanish degree in college. Over *tamales* and *dulces*, Department Chair Kin Chan discussed, with about a dozen students, the enhanced career opportunities that a Spanish major or minor can offer. He highlighted how studying Spanish can assist students to not only be conversationally fluent, but also biliterate and primed for employment in professional bilingual settings. As most students at the meeting were already pursuing other degrees and interests, Professor Chan touted the ease and reward of a double major as well as the opportunity to connect--or reconnect--with Hispanic cultures.

Current students that are heritage Spanish speakers are encouraged to reach out to Professor Chan ([ChanK@EasternCT.edu](mailto:ChanK@EasternCT.edu)) to discuss the benefits and feasibility of a Spanish degree.

## Connecticut Council of Language Teachers Conference: A Student Perspective

By Yenifer Serrano '22

This year I had the honor and privilege to attend the 2022 Connecticut Council of Language Teachers (CT COLT) conference. CT COLT is local professional organization that advocates for diverse learning in World Languages departments. I attended the virtual conference this spring.

One seminar I attended was "Social Justice in the PK-5 World Language Classroom" led by Sarah Hall. This session was perfect for me because I am a current senior working on my Early Childhood and Spanish degree. I learned how to develop diverse and inclusive lesson plans to be used on a weekly basis for my class. Sarah Hall shared a PowerPoint presentation in which she included a lesson plan base. With this base, I will able to work diversity and inclusion topics into my lessons for second language learners.

Attending the conference and becoming a member of CT COLT has allowed for me to see my future. I saw many language teachers much more experienced than me sharing their excitement and experiences with others. After attending the conference, I began to see myself years from now, happy and passionate about my career.



Yenifer Serrano '22

## Sigma Delta Pi Welcomes New Members

By Elisabeth Graves '22

After two years of virtual ceremonies, the World Languages and Cultures Department once again hosted an in-person induction for the newest members of Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society. Sigma Delta Pi strives to honor its members for their outstanding academic achievement in Hispanic studies, including the study of the Spanish language and the study of the literature and culture of the Spanish-speaking world.



2022 Sigma Delta Pi Inductees (left to right): Kathryn Kubisek, Elisabeth Graves, Julianna Gray, Evelyn Musto.

The motto “*Spanías Didagéi Proágomen*” means “Let’s continue forth under the teaching of the Spanish language.” My fellow inductees and I repeated this motto at the ceremony on Saturday, April 30, 2022. Along with Julianna Gray ’23, Kathryn Kubisek ’24, and Evelyn Musto ’22, I had the honor of being inducted into the *Nu Chi* Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi.

When we walked into the ceremony on Saturday, we were met by a silent room and more than a dozen eyes focused on us. Because the group of inductees was so small and I was the first one in alphabetical order, I was feeling a bit nervous because I would have to lead the group on the walk in, the lighting of the candles, and the signing of the book. However, once I walked into the ceremony, I could tell that everyone was there to

support us and they were all just excited to see us receive this honor.

I took a deep breath as the ceremony began. It was conducted entirely in Spanish which, in my opinion, made it all the more fun. I was thinking of my parents, James and Darcy Strauss, who had come to support me and were probably very lost as to what was being said. The current President of Eastern’s Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, Lizbeth Macías, led the ceremony. She and Vice President, Yenifer Serrano, began the ceremony with some opening remarks. These were followed by readings from the other officiators including several poems and a reading from “*Don Quijote de la Mancha*.” As an English major and someone who appreciates literature, this was my favorite part. The speakers included many distinguished guests—Dr. Carmen Cid (former Dean of Arts and Sciences), Dr. Kin Chan (World Languages and Cultures Department Chair and Advisor to the *Nu Chi* Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi), Dr. Ana Funes-Maderey (Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Assistant Department Chair of the Philosophy Department at Eastern), Dr. Sonia Cintrón-Marrero (emerita professor in the World Languages and Cultures Department) and Ms. Ashley Smith ’20 \*21 (member of Sigma Delta Pi).

After the readings, my fellow inductees and I took part in the candle-lighting ceremony, the signing of the membership book, and the receiving of our pins and certificates. At that point, we were officially inducted into Sigma Delta Pi.

As a student who greatly values her education and takes pride in her commitment to academics, I am greatly honored that I got to become a part of Eastern’s Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi. Language learning is a passion of mine and I am glad that I was able to be recognized for that through my membership in Sigma Delta Pi. My hope is that my fellow inductees and I will continue to follow our passion for learning about the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures.

### **New Course: Spanish In and Through Social Media**

Like languages and cultures themselves, the World Language and Cultures Department is consistently evolving. In the fall of 2022, the World Languages and Cultures office is introducing a new course, SPA 365: Spanish In and Through Social Media.

The introduction of this course reflects the centrality of social media discourse in our modern lives, as it permeates not only popular culture, but also sports, politics, economics, and more. As an educational institution, we look to not only teach foundational language skills, but also to prepare our students to examine, reflect and respond to language use and its impact in a variety of contexts.

Geared for advanced Spanish language learners, this new course intends to explore the Spanish language through the lens of a myriad of online platforms, such as Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook. Using a *Communicative approach*, students will continue to expand and deepen their knowledge of Spanish through task-based assignments. By watching, listening, reading and creating their own social media content, students will learn and practice advanced grammar, explore global Hispanic perspectives, and improve their communication and composition skills.

This new course will be taught by a creative and vibrant Spanish language and culture academic, Eilyn Lombard-Cabrera. Originally from Cuba, Lombard-Cabrera is currently a doctoral student at UConn. She joins the World Languages and Cultures Department as an adjunct faculty member after teaching Spanish language courses and innovative topical courses like SPA 365 at UConn and Clarkson University, as well as a number of universities in Cuba.



## Alumni Update

**Kristen (Pavlik) McCallie '04**, who combined an Individualized Major in French-Women's Studies with an English major, is the Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Center in Chattanooga, TN, an organization that helps child abuse victims. The Children's Advocacy Center was recently awarded the Double Cola Non-Profit of Year distinction by the United Way of Greater Chattanooga. Check out the acceptance video on [YouTube](#).

**Lindsay Laprise '14** is currently teaching ESL at an elementary school in North Carolina. Prior to her move south, she taught ESL in Torrington and West Hartford, CT. Of her current position, she said, "My students for the past two years have immigrated from countries like Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, El Salvador, Venezuela, and Brazil. Majoring in Spanish allowed me to easily communicate with them (once I brushed out the cobwebs)! It has created a safe space for them to learn, and I felt like I could help them learn the [English] language easier."

**Elana Wojenski '18** graduated from the University of Illinois in May 2021 with a Master of Arts in Translation and Interpreting Studies. Of her graduate work, Elana noted, "I loved the experience that my master's program provided me. I was able to practice translating legal, medical, and scientific documents. I even translated a short story, which I have been trying to get published. The most fulfilling thing I got from studying for my master's was that I became a part of an amazing project called, 'Memory & History: Transforming the Narrative of the Spanish Civil War and Francoist Dictatorship.' I gained experience in transcribing Spanish testimonial interviews and have been translating those interviews into English with a wonderful group of people."

**Jocelyn Santiago '20** is teaching Spanish and English at a nature-based outdoor classroom in Storrs, CT. She also continues to stay connected to Eastern as a Reading Coordinator at the Center for Community Engagement at Eastern.

The World Languages and Cultures Department likes to stay in touch with alumni, please give us a shout at [WorldLanguages@EasternCT.edu](mailto:WorldLanguages@EasternCT.edu).

## Photos from the World Languages & Cultures Department 2021-2022



*Welcome Back Social, Fall 2021.*



*Professor Aussicker sharing Japanese food bento box style during JPN 216, Fall 2021.*



*Dr. Armstrong teaching SPA 211, Spring 2022.*



*Students enjoying Japanese food in JPN 216, Spring 2022.*



*World Languages and Cultures Dept's end of the year celebration, Spring 2022.*

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## World Languages & Cultures Department

Eastern Connecticut State University  
 Webb Hall, Room 223  
 83 Windham Street  
 Willimantic, CT 06226-2995  
 860-465-4571

WorldLanguages@EasternCT.edu

 @EasternWorldLanguages