

Polyglot

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Pinellas County Schools

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Teachers of world languages use best practices and state standards to facilitate student success in the global community.

Welcome, New Teachers

The Office of World Languages is privileged to welcome another large group of new teachers, some of whom are brand new to teaching, some new to Pinellas County, and some who are returning to us after an absence.

Teachers who are beginning full-time teaching positions for the first time include: **Enid Blanco**, Madeira Beach MS (Spanish); **Sophie Champigny-Hotel**, St. Petersburg HS (French IB); **Joseph Corr**, East Lake HS (French); **Aribella Guerra**, John Hopkins MS (Spanish); **Rita Hensely-Damp**, Fitzgerald MS (Spanish); **Teresa Kessie**, Pinellas Park HS (American Sign Language); **Vanessa Lieberz**, Clearwater HS (Spanish); **Aida Mattalana**, Northeast HS (Spanish); **Lourdes Molina**, Bay Point MS (Spanish); **Lauren Murphy**, Sanderlin Elementary (Spanish); **Betty Rioux**, Bay Point MS (French and Spanish); **Ericka Reckenwald**, Largo HS (Spanish); **Alexandra Robalino**, Azalea MS (Spanish); **Yee-chen Robson**, Safety Harbor MS (Mandarin Chinese); and **Bill Yanson**, Tarpon Springs HS (Latin).

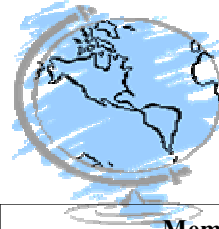
Several new teachers entered our classrooms sometime during the school year last year, and have returned to assume regular full-time positions. They include **Alexandra Basey**, formerly at Bay

Point MS and currently at Kennedy MS (Spanish); **Maricela Duarte**, Safety Harbor MS (Spanish); **Orietha Gnecco**, Bay Point MS (Spanish); **María González**, Lakewood HS (Spanish); and **Mary Kinsman**, Gibbs (Spanish).

We also welcome a very special group of colleagues who are returning to us after time spent teaching in other subject areas or after retiring. We are happy to welcome back to Spanish **Rick Amstutz**, Countryside HS (ESOL and Spanish), **Angie Jenkins**, returning from Spain to Palm Harbor University HS (Spanish); **Cathy Kelley**, Southside Fundamental MS (French); **Samantha Ring**, returning from Florida Virtual School to Lakewood HS (Spanish); **Mercedes Sanes**, coming out of retirement to Palm Harbor University HS (Spanish), and **Mercedes Suárez**, returning to us from full-time ESOL to Osceola HS (Spanish).

K-5 Immersion Programs Flourish

The office of world languages extends a special welcome to first-year teacher, **Ashleigh Smith**, who, along with **Beverly Gibson**, is implementing the district's first partial immersion program at Ridgecrest Elementary. Ashleigh works with two groups of first graders, teaching them content (math, reading, science, for example) for 50% of their day in Spanish. After six weeks, some of her students already enjoy reading in Spanish. Dual Language Immersion teachers at High Point Elementary now service two Kindergarten classes and two first grade classes. Assessment data show that these students



W L T A Seeks Support

Membership Report:

90 members x \$10.00 of dues = \$900.00

90 member x \$5.00 of dues = \$450.00

The treasury presently has \$450.00 towards the Carmine Zinn Senior Achievement Scholarship, with a goal of raising a total of \$1,000 for this purpose. The WLTA Board is hoping to raise the difference at the fall social, sponsored by Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Who: ALL TEACHERS OF WORLD LANGUAGES AND THEIR GUESTS

What: Fall Social and Fundraiser

When: Friday, November 2, 6:00-9:00 PM

Where: PCTA Building, Seminole Blvd.

Cost: \$10.00

(Please confirm your reservation by sending a check to Celia Rubi, Boca Ciega High School. See details in the attached flyer.)



are excelling in reading comprehension while acquiring Spanish language. Congratulations to teachers, **Jackie Lopez** and **Shanon Cianfoni** (kindergarten), and **Yadira Vega** and **Shanon Lopez**, (first grade).

Pinellas Teachers Honored at FFLA Conference

The 39th annual Florida Foreign Language, Association, Inc. Conference was held October 18-20, at the Rosen Centre in Orlando. Nearly 600 Florida teachers of world languages participated in the conference, attending workshops and sessions organized around the theme, “Rejuvenating World Language Education by Rejuvenating Teachers: Mind, Body and Spirit”. The event is also the site of annual awards of excellence designed to recognize outstanding talent and dedication to the profession. This year, many Pinellas County teachers were among those recognized. Each year, the Florida Department of Education’s Office of Academic Achievement Through Languages selects a recipient of the prestigious **Irving Wershow Award** for outstanding leadership in the field of world language education. This award is the highest honor presented annually at the Florida Foreign Language conference. We are pleased to announce that a Pinellas world language educator has received this honor for **three consecutive years**. **Sylvia Amaya**, a teacher of Spanish and ESOL in Pinellas for 33 years, was this year’s recipient. Sylvia has been a pioneer for early language programs in Pinellas County. She designed the curriculum and taught in the district’s first K-5 Spanish program and continues to serve that program as coordinator of the grant for the partial immersion program at Ridgecrest Elementary and the dual language immersion program at High Point Elementary. She is also the current president of WLTA, chairs the local committee of FFLA special board appointees and serves as the regional representative for the National Network for Early Language Learning. We are certainly proud of Sylvia and her accomplishments and congratulate her on this fine honor. **Livia Wein**, the 2006 Wershow Award winner, was one of three teachers inducted this year into the newly formed and highly selective “**Teachers’ Hall of Fame**”. Livia has

been a Pinellas teacher of French and Spanish for 31 years. She is the world languages department chair at Seminole High School. She has served on the board of directors of the Florida Foreign Language Association for 4 years. Livia was also named the 2006 Seminole Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year. Teachers recognized as “Most Valued Teachers”, who are working towards eligibility for the Teachers’ Hall of Fame”, were also recognized and treated to a special dinner celebration. Pinellas honorees included were **Regina Bringas**, **Esther González-Wright**, **Aixa Ruch** and **Linda Santiago**. Two additional teachers were also state winners. **Sandra Rosado**, Spanish teacher at Perkins Elementary, was named the **K-5 Florida Teacher of the Year** by the Florida chapter of the National Network of Early Language Learning. Sandra is well known for her skill in teaching language using technology and for teaching creatively using original and engaging songs, drama and activities. The **Teacher of Promise Award** is a special recognition presented to a teacher who has taught for less than three years. Nominations are received for teachers who early in their careers exemplify the qualities of a successful world language teacher. We are proud to congratulate **Michael Eby**, recipient of this year’s Florida Teacher of Promise award. Mr. Eby began teaching Spanish in December, 2006, at Seminole High School after interning at Palm Harbor University High School. He has already distinguished himself through his

engaging instruction and tireless dedication to help individual students find success. Several successful sessions were also presented by Pinellas teachers at this year’s conference. **Sylvia Amaya**, **Nilsa Gómez**, **Lilly Lewis**, **Sandra Rosado**, and **Maria Wyatt** presented “Música, Maestro”, a session that modeled lessons built around the team’s original songs. **Geri Craven** received high accolades for her session on engaging classroom games activities, entitled “Better Than Coffee”. **Gloria Muñoz** and **Joanna DeLeón** shared the framework and activities of their successful *Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica* chapter in their workshop. Finally, the entire conference was possible largely due to the dedication and effort of Pinellas’ own **Linda Santiago**, executive director of FFLA. The registration desk was manned throughout the weekend primarily by Pinellas teachers. Many of these teachers have committed to leadership roles for the coming year as the organization plans to join with ACTFL for next year’s conference to be held November 20-23 at the Swan/Dolphin Conference Center in Orlando. Congratulations to the following 2008 members of the FFLA Board of Directors from Pinellas: **Jan Kucerik**, president; **Linda Santiago**, executive director; **Pam Benton**, parliamentarian; **Esther González-Wright**, registrar; **Sylvia Amaya**, local committee chair; **Maria Wyatt**, NNELL representative; **Livia Wein**, director of region 6; **Alan Blessing**, **Danny Boulieris**, and **Diana Cano**, special appointees.

Pinellas Teacher Accepts AATSP Board Position

Congratulations to **Gloria Muñoz**, elected Region II Director of the *Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica*. Gloria will bring her experience and enthusiasm to chapters in Alabama, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. As regional director, she will also have a

seat on the board of the *American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese*. Gloria’s own chapter of SHH, “Capítulo Sancho Panza”, won Chapter of the Year honors earlier this year. She accepted that award at the AATSP annual conference in San Diego, California this summer.