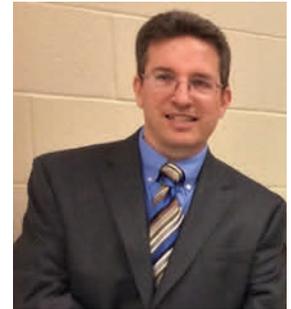




# The TTU Polyglot

Fall 2014

## A Message from the Interim Chair



Mark Groundland

The Department of Foreign Languages is proud to revive *The TTU Polyglot*, an annual newsletter that describes the activities and accomplishments of our students and faculty.

2013, the Department of Foreign Languages welcomed a new Spanish faculty member, Manuel Villalba. You can read more about him in the "Faculty Focus" section of this issue.

The department is itself in a transitional phase in several ways. After 10 successful years as Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages, Marketta Laurila has stepped down to resume her faculty duties of teaching, scholarship and service. Also, Karen Burdette, our foreign language pedagogy and Spanish linguistics specialist, retired in 2013, though she is participating in the post-retirement teaching program during spring semesters. In fall

In addition to these faculty changes, we have big news regarding South Hall. It is being renovated! Currently the main office and most of our classrooms, faculty offices and Euro Café have relocated to Foundation Hall. We are looking forward to returning to our home in South Hall in time for spring 2015!

In this issue of *The TTU Polyglot*, you will learn about what our current foreign language students and faculty

are accomplishing. You will also find updates on our graduates. Since this issue marks the return of *The TTU Polyglot*, we would certainly welcome your input. Please send us your own news and suggest points of information that were not included in this *TTU Polyglot* to be included in future issues. We would love to hear from you! Please contact Mark Groundland at [mgroundland@tntech.edu](mailto:mgroundland@tntech.edu) with your feedback.

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## Focus on Students

### Bethany Pinzur



Beth Pinzur in the Sacred Valley in Peru, Summer 2014

From studying Korean in South Korea, German in Berlin and Spanish in Peru, claiming that my college career has been exciting would be an understatement. I've worked as a Gilman scholar in an internship tutoring Korean college students in conversational English, completed an in-depth research project on the Sephardic Press in the late Ottoman Empire and

begun another on a related topic, and I passionately maintain an entertaining and informative travel blog for an international audience.

This interest in travel, however, commenced long before studying abroad enabled it. My first trip abroad to Mezquital, Mexico, more than 12 years ago, saw some pay-off for all those

**Please see "Beth," p. 2**

"I finally understood that seriously studying another language was the first step to realizing my dream of traveling the world and understanding the people I meet there."

**"Never stop learning,  
never stop  
exploring."**

**"Beth," continued from p.1**

early-morning Spanish cassette-tape marathons. Ten years later, I finally understood that seriously studying another language was the first step to realizing my dream of traveling the world and understanding the people I meet there.

My most recent study-abroad experience in Cusco highlighted

not only how competent I've become in Spanish, but how much more I have to learn. The afternoons I spent at a local orphanage also opened my eyes to the great privilege that's been given me in my knowledge of English, and inspired me to seek avenues by which I can share this gift. To this end I plan to spend the next few years teach-

ing English in developing Spanish-speaking countries. After gaining this experience, I plan to pursue my passion for languages and research at a graduate level. Whether back in the U.S. or abroad, however, I'll continue living out my motto: "Never stop learning, never stop exploring." 

## Meghan O'Donoghue



When I first started classes at Tennessee Tech University over four years ago, I had no intention of being a French major. At the time, I was double majoring in Political Science and Economics, with the full expectation of pursuing a career in international economic law.

Luckily, my intentions were not meant to be, and while taking the required language courses for my majors, fate intervened. I had the tremendous fortune of being in Dr. Debbie Barnard's French 1010 and 1020 classes. While she encouraged my pursuit of a degree in Foreign Languages, it wasn't until the spring semester that the idea became a reality. By allowing me, as a freshman, to take her Honors Colloquium class, "The Fallout of Civilization: Post-Colonial Issues in Francophone Africa," Dr. Barnard gave me the opportunity to go to Morocco in March 2011 while simultaneously introducing me to an

academic area of study that would affect the rest of my time at Tech.

In light of the Arab Spring of 2011, and with my political science background, I became passionately interested in the political culture and identity of post-colonial Francophone North Africa, specifically the ways in which these countries pursued democratic development. I did my senior capstone project on this subject, and, in January 2015, I will be entering the Peace Corps to serve as a Community Health Development Volunteer in Burkina Faso, a country in West Africa that was under the French colonial sphere of influence. If it were not for my introductory French classes at Tech four years ago, my life today would be completely different.

However, it was not just my time with Dr. Barnard that made my experience at Tech worthwhile. While French is one of the smallest majors at TTU, it gave me the chance to develop strong relationships with both Dr. Barnard and Dr. Hays as I took classes ranging from French Literature to Modern French Culture to Phonetics. I was challenged daily by my professors and encouraged to continually improve myself.

As a member of the varsity cross country and track teams, it was difficult at times to balance my studies around my arduous athletic schedule. My professors in the foreign language department, however, were never less than understanding of my situation.

I studied abroad in France the summer between my sophomore and junior years, and it was one of the best experiences of my life. I made several life-long friends and took my French to an altogether higher level. I took four semesters of Spanish at TTU, as well. I encountered so many enthusiastic, encouraging professors during those four semesters that, while I am not as fluent as I am with French, I have been able to travel and work abroad with the Spanish I have learned.

In short, it would be an insult to simply say that my experience with Tennessee Tech's Foreign Languages Department has been positive. It has been challenging, eye-opening, grueling, rewarding, and life-changing. Fate was kind when it put me in that French 1010 class many years ago. I know that, wherever life takes me in the near and far future, I will always be grateful for my time in South and Foundation Halls. 

**"It has  
been challenging,  
eye-opening,  
inspiring, grueling,  
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changing."**

## Olivia G. Hendricks



"Why are you learning German?" is a question I get asked frequently, and this question is usually followed by, "Wouldn't Spanish be more useful?"

I attended a middle school where Spanish was the only foreign language offered, so when I arrived at high school, I just continued on with my Spanish education. Frankly, I just did not care about the language. I believe that in order to do well or excel in something you have to love it and I had no *amor* for Spanish (nothing against the language, I just did not care to

continue on with my studies).

I had always had an interest in German, due to the fact that German is my largest ancestral group, but as a freshman in high school I thought it would be impractical to begin studying German when I had already begun studying Spanish. I finished my required two years of Spanish and later made the decision to take German 1 for my first semester as a senior in high school.

I absolutely fell in love with the language. Although it is a complicated and challenging language to learn, I immensely embrace the task(s)! Aside from German, I am also majoring in ESL. When I first started attending TTU neither

German nor ESL was my major, but throughout the amazing opportunity of meeting and befriending several international students, I discovered my passion for teaching and explaining a language, and not just learning one for myself.

I highly enjoy traveling and experiencing different cultures (hence my "passport selfie") and I foresee many more opportunities through my majors. I love the saying, "It's not always what your education can do for you but what you can do with your education." I also believe in studying what you have a true passion for, and I feel as if I am on the path of achieving both through my choices of majors. 🇺🇸

"I absolutely fell in love with the language."

## Foreign Language Clubs

### French Club (*Avant-Garde*)

Avant-Garde organizes several different activities each year, from conversation hours to benefits for different charities. Each fall, Avant-Garde hosts a Zombie Potluck at Halloween where club members get together for dinner and a French horror film. In 2013, with funds from TTU's Student Government Association, the club teamed up with

the residents of New Hall South, the Service and Leadership Learning Village, and with TTU's Service Learning Center to turn the Zombie Potluck into a benefit for Blessings in a Backpack. Avant-Garde also hosts regular conversation hours so that French-speaking members of the community and club members can get together

and practice their language skills. Avant-Garde occasionally has club dinners in Nashville, Atlanta, or Cookeville. Depending on cinema and museum offerings, the club also takes one trip a year to a screening or exhibition. Our annual fundraisers include workshops on how to make crêpes, as well as a booth at TTU's international festival, Window on the World. 🇫🇷

**Faculty Advisor:**  
Debbie Barnard, Ph.D.  
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### German Club (*der Deutsche Klub*)

TTU's German Club sponsors several events every year. *Stammtisch* is a weekly meeting organized by students where all levels can practice their language skills and meet local German speakers in a supportive, informal environment. Each month, our club screens a documentary or a German-language film so that students can learn more about German history and

Contemporary culture (*Filmabend*). Our main outreach event and fundraiser is our annual Oktoberfest celebration that regularly draws 100 attendees from the university and the Cookeville community. German students and club members also bake a variety of German confections to sell at TTU's annual international festival, Window on the World.

We organize a number of cultural excursions to the opera or art museums in Nashville; the German Club pays half of the cost for club members. Additionally, in the past, club members have also organized a *Faschingsparty*, a *Wander-tag*, a Curry Wurst competition and an Easter Egg painting activity. Come join the fun! 🇩🇪

**Faculty Advisors:**  
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## Spanish Club (*Amigos*)

This was an exciting year for the Spanish Club. In both semesters, we organized a successful Spanish film festival. We watched movies from different countries about a variety of subjects. The movie that had the biggest impact on the audience was "*Mar adentro*." This provocative movie from Spain discusses the social problematic of euthanasia. Another movie that caught the attention of the students was

"*El hijo de la novia*." This movie displays a story about relationships and the need for love. The Spanish Club also regularly meets to practice our Spanish communicative skills. Our conversation hour is open to all students and the community at large. This activity allows the participants to practice their Spanish in a friendly and informal environment. In April 2014 we participated in Window on the World. Professor Laurila

helped us by hosting our table at the event. Our mission was to help the community have a better understanding of Hispanic cultures. We distributed information on a variety of cultural points, such as how to prepare Argentinian empanadas, how the Panama Canal was built, and who built Machu Picchu in Perú. Spring 2014 was a successful semester, and we are looking forward to next year's activities for the Spanish Club. ■

### Faculty Advisors:

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Marketta Laurila, Ph.D.  
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## Senior Capstone Experience

All of our foreign language majors take the Senior Capstone course (4920) in their senior year. It is their culminating experience in the Department of Foreign Languages. In addition to assessing their language proficiency in this course, students work one-on-one with faculty members to research a literary or cultural topic, produce a 15-20 page paper, and give a 20-minute presentation in front of faculty and students at the end of the semester.

Below you will find the names of some of the students who have successfully completed their capstone experience in the last few years, their topics, and the faculty members with whom they worked.

### **FRENCH**

Lydia Brown (w/Barnard), "*Cinéma des aigles noirs: l'Occupation comme une renaissance du film français*" ["Cinema of the Black Eagles: The Occupation and the Renaissance of French Film"]  
Jessica Cole (w/Barnard), "*Le multiculturalisme en Suisse*" ["Swiss Multiculturalism"]

Chase Finley (w/Hays), "*Un conte de deux écoles: Une comparaison entre les systèmes d'éducation de la France et des États-Unis*" ["A Story of Two Schools: A Comparison of the Education Systems of France and the United States"]

Chad Lack (w/Barnard), "*Les catégories de défaillance en France*" ["Categories of Bankruptcy in France"]

Mary Mannes Schmidt (w/Hays), "*Un regard au français et au Québécois*" ["A Look at French and Quebecois"]

Meghan O'Donoghue (w/Barnard), "*Le rôle des médias dans la Révolution tunisienne*" ["The Role of the Media in the Tunisian Revolution"]

Halee Young (w/Hays), "*Le mouvement anti-pub en France*" ["The Anti-Advertisement Movement in France"]

### **GERMAN**

Everett Dahl (w/Sheehan), "*Die Sprachmauer: Ideologie und Sprache in der DDR*" ["The Linguistic

Wall: Ideology and Language in the GDR"]

Cathrin Stewart (w/Baker), "*Bilinguale Kindererziehung, Vor- und Nachteile*" ["Bringing up Children Bilingually—Advantages and Disadvantages"]

### **SPANISH**

Michael Parkison (w/Burdette), "*Una comparación fonológica y morfológica entre el español y el japonés*" ["A Phonological and Morphological Comparison of Spanish and Japanese"]

Jamhile Abud-Moreno (w/Groundland), "*La guerra civil a través de las novelas de Cela y Matute*" ["The Spanish Civil War in the Novels of Cela and Matute"]

Angela Najera (w/Laurila), "*Machismo en Latinoamérica*" ["Machismo in Latin America"]

Isaiyas Marroquín (w/Laurila), "*El desarrollo de la sociedad maya en Guatemala*" ["The Development of Mayan Society in Guatemala"]

Martin Martin Tomás (w/Burdette), "*El efecto de la glob-*

*alización en las lenguas indígenas*" ["The Effect of Globalization on Indigenous Languages"]

Kaitlyn Woods (w/Groundland), "*La evolución de la mujer gitana*" ["The Evolution of the Gypsy Woman"]

David Hixson (w/Groundland), "*La inmigración ilegal de España y su impacto*" ["Illegal Immigration in Spain and Its Impact"]

Hailey Hughes (w/Burdette), "*La importancia del bilingüismo y lenguas extranjeras en la educación primaria*" ["The Importance of Bilingualism and Foreign Languages in Elementary Education"]

Hannah Rutherford (w/Burdette), "*Bilingüismo y la mente*" ["Bilingualism and the Mind"]

Rosario Angel (with Villalba), "*La construcción psicológica del personaje en la obra novelística de Miguel de Unamuno*" ["Psychological Characterizations in Select Works by Miguel de Unamuno"] ■

## Alpha Mu Gamma



On April 3, TTU's local chapter of Alpha Mu Gamma, a national foreign language honor society, inducted 16 new members. Each new member was recognized for his/her outstanding achievements while learning French, German, or Spanish here at Tennessee Tech:

### FACULTY INDUCTEES

Manuel Villalba  
Angelica Galvan

### FRENCH

Marina Shayne Johnson  
Ariel Rebecca Reno-Demick

### GERMAN

Erin Atkinson  
Olivia Glenn Hendricks  
Erica Hohne

### SPANISH

Timothy Cohen Brown  
Melissa Griffiths  
Mara Beth Keeling  
Madison Aleen Keyes  
Jerry Dakota Lowhorn  
Bethany Ruth Pinzur \*  
Shannon Rountree  
Kenneth Joe Walker  
Brett Windrow

*\*Inducted for both German & Spanish*

Faculty Advisor:  
Martin Sheehan, Ph.D.  
msheehan@tntech.edu

## Study Abroad

### German Students Have Annual Opportunity to Study Abroad with Julia Gruber



*Berliner Dom (Berlin Cathedral)*

The German program at TTU has been taking students on a Spring Break trip to Germany since 2009. While in Berlin, students stay with host families for a real-life cultural experience. For many students, this is their first trip abroad and the first time in a big city. They learn to navigate through Berlin with Julia Gruber and Stefano Rutigliano, a German teacher and native Berliner, as well as in small groups by themselves. They

visit interactive museums, such as "The Story of Berlin" and the "DDR Museum," travel to castles in Potsdam and the former concentration camp in Sachsenhausen, and learn about the wall and life during the Cold War. Another highlight is a train ride to Hamburg where students take bus and ferry tours through the harbor. Overall, this trip offers students many opportunities to apply what they have learned in the classroom. 

### Marketta Laurila and Melissa Geist Take TTU Spanish and Nursing Students to Cuba

After two years of planning, Marketta Laurila, Professor of Spanish, and Melissa Geist, Dean of the College of Interdisciplinary Studies and Associate Professor in Whitson-Hester School of Nursing, were able to wade through the necessary paperwork and licenses to take a group of students to Cuba, currently under a U.S. economic embargo. The group, comprised of Spanish and Nursing majors, set off to learn about the Cuban health care system in May 2013. With Spanish majors translating for nursing students, the group visited a senior citizens' wellness center, where they interacted with seniors and learned about Cuba's holistic approach to health care. In addition, the students visited an orphanage and other communi-

ty centers. During their eight-day visit, the group traveled to Ernest Hemingway's estate along the coast and his favorite



*Historic District in Havana*

the coast and his favorite hangouts in Havana. Other highlights included a performance by the renowned Buena Vista Social Club and a visit to an organic farm, where

students learned that Cubans have shifted to organic farming since the embargo, which makes it difficult to obtain pesticides or fertilizers. In spite of no cell phone service, internet or ATMs, the group adjusted well to their new surroundings and reluctantly left the island. They were impressed by the health care providers' focus on the happiness of their patients and the Cubans' innovative ways of addressing the shortages of critical goods. Students concluded that perhaps we can learn from the Cubans as they can from us. Laurila and Geist will return to Cuba with a new group of students in July 2015. Interested students are encouraged to contact Laurila at mlaurila@tntech.edu. 

## Focus on Faculty

### Barnard and Hays Participate in National Endowment for Humanities Institute

"I'd like to pursue, as either an edited volume or a book-length study: the intersection of politics and literature in the regions as a whole."

— Barnard

"I have not stopped thinking about what I have learned there, and I am excited about continuing my studies and sharing what I have learned with students."

— Hays

Debbie Barnard and Colleen Hays, French faculty in the Department of Foreign Languages at TTU, attended the 2014 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Institute entitled "Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia: Literature, the Arts, and Cinema since Independence" at Oregon State University from June 23 to July 11, 2014. The aim of the Institute was "to investigate the significance of North African artistic expressions today. These forms include the literary, visual and music arts that find origins in Berber, Arabic, and European idioms; expressions that have adapted to modernity, post-colonialism, the reality of globalism, and advances of social media." Only a select few were awarded the privilege to participate in this prestigious collaborative learning experience. The Institute's faculty included the world's foremost experts on North African and Francophone Studies.

"My time at the Institute — besides the wonderful contacts and things-for-further-study list — resulted in three primary things for me," said Barnard. "The first is a syllabus for

a gen-ed course on the Peoples and Cultures of North Africa that I developed in collaboration with Dr. Victoria Steinberg, who teaches French and Cinema Studies at UTC. We liked the idea of having a course that could be taught in both of Tennessee's university systems. Secondly, I've been working on a proposal for an Honor's Colloquium on alienation and identity in Maghreb literature and film, so participating in the Institute gave me several titles that I hope to use in that course. Finally, gaining a better understanding of the social, artistic, and political aspects of Algeria Morocco gave me an idea that I'd like to pursue, as either an edited volume or a book-length study: the intersection of politics and literature in the regions as a whole."

Hays also had a fruitful experience at the NEH Summer Institute.

"As someone who has researched French-Algerian colonial studies and the evolving French concept of nationality, I wanted to broaden my horizons to include the North African

perspective in my research, as well as in my teaching. In every respect, this NEH Institute was transforming for me. I have not stopped thinking about what I have learned there, and I am excited about continuing my studies and sharing what I have learned with students. My new knowledge and perspective will inform courses that I teach, from French 1010 to French Civilization, although admittedly to differing degrees due to time limitations. Although I learned much at the NEH Institute, there were two major shifts in my thinking. I now have a more complicated understanding of the French-Algerian relationship and of Islam, and I am thankful to have had the opportunity to attend.

"In the future, I hope to teach a Special Topics French course, 'Colonization, the Algerian War of Independence, Immigration, and National Identity,' and further my research on the way that colonization and the Algerian War of Independence are currently taught in France and Algeria." ■

### An Interview with Manuel Villalba, Assistant Professor of Spanish



*Manuel Villalba, our newest faculty member in the Department of Foreign Languages, began teaching Spanish language, literature, and culture courses in Fall 2013. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience that he is eager to share with our students. He an-*

*swered the following questions in August 2014.*

#### **Please tell us where you are from and your educational background.**

I am originally from Aranda de Duero, an old town in the middle of Old Castile (Spain). I studied Hispanic Philology, a specialization that mixed Hispanic Linguistics, Culture and Literature, at the University of Valladolid. After I graduated, I came to the U.S. to complete my Ph.D. in Spanish at the University of California, Davis.

#### **What are your research interests?**

My research interests include modern and contemporary Span-

ish literature, Spanish cinema, critical theory, film theory, psychoanalysis, trauma, memory, exile and migration. At present I am working on two related areas: the relationship between history and exile and the "diasporic" elements of the Spanish exiled culture.

#### **How do you combine your research with your teaching?**

I have the conviction that my research has a direct impact on my students in the classroom. First, adding my current research can help improve my lectures and convey to students the usefulness of what they are learning. Second, including some research into my

*Please see "Villalba," p. 7*

"... along with the Department of Foreign Languages, I am exploring the possibility of developing an abroad program in Spain starting next Summer."

**"Villalba," continued from page 6**

lectures inspires students to feel curious about the topic we are working with. Finally, the research included in lectures increases the respect that the students have for what we do.

**How has your first year at Tennessee Tech been?**

The biggest challenge I experienced in my first year of teaching was ad-

justing my material to the students' level. Also, I wanted to challenge my new students with questions that would reveal deeper connections between the topics we covered.

**What plans and /or ideas do you have for the Department of Foreign Languages and our TTU students?**

At present I am working on a

course for the Honors Program to be taught during the spring semester. This course will introduce the students to the main concepts of Marxism as cultural ideology. Also at present, along with the Department of Foreign Languages, I am exploring the possibility of developing an abroad program in Spain starting next Summer. ■

**Select Faculty Scholarship Achievements in Department of Foreign Languages**

**Debbie Barnard** published "The necessity of having it both ways: Tradition, modernity, and experience in the works of Hélé Béji." Ed. Fatima Sadiqi, *Women and Knowledge in the Mediterranean*. London: Routledge, 2012. 73-85.

**Mark Groundland** prepared the following student edition of a seventeenth-century Spanish play and a contemporary treatise on how to write Spanish plays: *Vega, Lope de. Arte nuevo de hacer comedias / El mejor alcalde, el rey*. Ed. Mark Groundland. Newark, DE: European Masterpieces, 2012.

**Julia Gruber** published "From Other People's Houses into Shakespeare's

Kitchen: The Story of Lore Segal and How She Looked for Adventures and Where She Found Them." Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies. *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39: New Developments in Research*. Volume 13. Eds. Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012. 185-205.

**Colleen Hays** presented "The French Colonial Spirit in Gaza" at the American Comparative Literature Association meeting at NYU in March 2014.

**Marketta Laurila** published "Disintegration of the Female Self in the Work of Marta Traba" at the *Thirteenth Annual Marquette Women's Studies*

*Conference: Women and Creativity 9* in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in March 2007.

**Martin Sheehan** published "A Sense of Place, a Place of Sense: The Comedic Function of Setting in Herr Peter Squentz." *Earthly and Spiritual Pleasures in Medieval Life, Literature, Art, and Music: In Memory of Ulrich Müller*. Ed. Sibylle Jefferis. *Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 779*. Göppingen: Kümmerle Verlag, 2014.

**Manuel Villalba** published "*Coincidencias y divergencias del arte narrativo de Max Aub con el Existencialismo*." *Bulletin Hispanique* 116.1 (2014). 381-99. ■

**Alumni News**

**Camron Rudd** (Mechanical Engineering & German, 2005) is vice president of operations for a German-owned manufacturer in the Chicago area.

**Avery Edwards Westrich** (German, 2007) teaches German at a middle school in Wisconsin.

**Aaron Waggoner** (Spanish, 2007) is a doctoral student in the Department of History at the University of Texas at El Paso, studying religious and socioeconomic changes and gender in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands; he has also taught middle and high school in Korea and Mexico.

**Lindsey Grissom** (French, 2008) is currently pursuing a

degree in Mechanical Engineering, while also participating in a co-op program with Southern Nuclear Operating Company in Birmingham, Ala.

**Amanda Dennis Harrell** (Spanish, 2009) is working on her graduate degree in the public affairs program at the University of Alabama at Huntsville; she hopes to work for a non-profit helping the Spanish-speaking population or for the government in an area such as immigration reform.

**Jake Vidourek** (German and Music, 2010) is completing his master's degree at the University of Oklahoma and was recently selected as a Fulbright Alumni Ambassador.

**Rebecca Hillebrand Matson** (French and Spanish, 2011) is a French and Spanish teacher at Avery Trace Middle School.

**Beth Douglass** (IBAC & Spanish, 2012) is an international customer representative for an international medical company.

**Stephen Henson** (French and Spanish, 2012) is in his second year of teaching French at Livingston Academy in Livingston, Tenn.

**Joshua Martin** (Spanish, 2012) is teaching undergraduate Spanish courses at the University of Kentucky while working on his Ph.D. in Hispanic Studies; after graduating from TTU he was

a recruiter and tutor with a migrant educational program, and also a Spanish medical interpreter.

**Jessica Cole** (B.S. in Education with French concentration, 2013) is a French teacher at Sequatchie County High School; after graduating from TTU, she was also offered an international flight attendant position.

**Lydia Brown** (French and History, 2014) was selected as a French government teaching assistant for the 2014-2015 academic year and will begin teaching English in France in October.

**Chase Finley** (French, 2014) is currently pursuing his master's degree in Education at TTU.

# Department of Foreign Languages

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## What Can I Do with a Foreign Language Degree?



*Daniel Alfaro (Averitt Express) addresses a captivated audience of more than 150 TTU and Cookeville High School students in the Tech Pride Room.*

In order to address this crucial question, the Department of Foreign Languages sponsored two symposia during the 2013-2014 academic year. In Fall 2013, three guest speakers discussed how they incorporate their foreign language skills and cultural knowledge in their workplaces. The symposium was entitled, "Careers and Foreign Languages."

Jessica Cole, a 2012 TTU graduate with a degree in French, described her experiences as a French student and her enviable position of having to choose between three job offers

last summer. She is currently teaching French at Sequatchie County High School. Colin Alford, a TTU graduate with a degree in German, shared how his German courses not only enabled him to communicate in German, but also how this knowledge enhanced his creative thinking abilities, leading him to apply his German-language skills to innovative e-commerce initiatives. Finally, Daniel Alfaro, Mexico Area Manager for Averitt Express, shared his work experience in the agriculture and transportation business sectors and emphasized the marketability of applicants with fluency in Spanish.

In Spring 2014, the Department of Foreign Languages and the College of Business co-sponsored a roundtable discussion on "French in the Tennessee Business Marketplace," where business professionals spoke to the importance of knowing French in today's global marketplace.

Representatives from Flowserve, Cummins Filtration, and Schneider Electric explained the importance of understanding foreign cultures (French culture for this program) and foreign languages (French) in today's global, business marketplace. There were more than 100 students, faculty and guests in attendance and the presentations and discussion period were very informative and stimulating.



*Wassam Abdalla (Cummins Filtration), Margie Myers (Schneider Electric) and Ben Lee (Flowserve) receive our heartfelt appreciation for sharing their time and wisdom with our TTU students, faculty and guests.*