

# School of Languages & Cultures

Spring 2024



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## GREETINGS FROM THE SLC HEAD



The spring semester always flies by, and now we are already well into summer as this newsletter is heading to press. One of the highlights of my spring this year was another visit to Taiwan with two other CLA department heads and SLC's own Professor of Chinese and Senior Associate Dean **Wei Hong**. While in Taiwan, we visited three universities in Taipei and Tainan, strengthening our existing partnerships and establishing some new ones. I am excited about the research and teaching collaborations that will come about as a result of this visit! I also thoroughly enjoyed a long weekend spent with Professor **Li Wei** and her study abroad students, who participated in an intensive language program at the world-renowned Mandarin Training Center at NTNU (National Taiwan Normal University). These Purdue students' intellectual curiosity and positive energy was nothing less than inspiring! We had a lot of fun too, as evidenced by the photos below . . . Best wishes to all, Jen William



*SLC Professor Li Wei, Comp Lit alumna Chao-Mei Tu, and SLC Head Jen William entertained the study abroad students with their karaoke skills in a boat on Sun Moon Lake, the largest lake in Taiwan.*



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**IN THE SPOTLIGHT:**  
**TED SCHMITT**  
**Chair of the SLC Advisory Board**

*"My German Language and Culture degree from Purdue and the year I studied in Germany as an undergrad had a lasting impact on my career. They helped me understand what a purpose-driven career meant to me that has served as a lifelong North Star. While the road has been winding, the options and opportunities available to me were only possible because of the knowledge and skills I gained by studying language and culture. The experience I gained truly makes every day richer."*



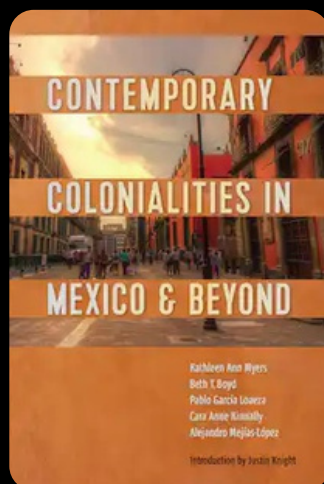
Ted Schmitt is the Senior Director, Conservation at the Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence (AI2) and Director of Skylight, AI2's technology platform for addressing illegal fishing. Prior to AI2, Ted spent over 15 years leading efforts to bring fit-for-purpose technology for good solutions to a range of terrestrial and marine conservation issues at Vulcan Inc. He led the EarthRanger program from its inception and has worked extensively in Africa with field organizations applying technology to secure and manage protected areas. He also worked as a Senior Program Officer for the Computer Science and Telecommunications Board at the United States National Academies of Science. He served as Business Development Director at several technology start-ups in Germany, Sweden, and the United States, leading the application of technology for impact on a range of issues. Ted started his career as a software engineer for IBM, earning patents and several technical achievement awards.

Ted was a Degree+ student before there was Degree+! He holds a Master of Arts in International Science and Technology Policy from George Washington University, a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering as well as a Bachelor of Arts in German from Purdue University.

***SLC thanks Ted for his wonderful dedication  
and continuing service to our School as Advisory Board Chair!***

**KUDOS TO THESE  
SLC RESEARCHERS  
ON THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Cara A. Kinnally**, Associate Professor of Spanish Literature and Culture, published her co-authored book *Contemporary Colonialities in Mexico & Beyond* with the University of Toronto Press!



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Two SLC faculty published Op-Eds in *Time* magazine's "Made by History" series this Spring!

- **Dr. Paula Leverage**, Associate Professor of French Literature and Culture, published "*Napoleon Has Something to Teach Viewers*" (March 8th, 2024).
- **Dr. Daniel J. Olson**, Professor of Spanish Linguistics, published "*Multilingualism Is an American Tradition*" (March 13th, 2024).

*Many more publications can be found  
on the SLC Bookshelf for your enjoyment!*





## CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!

**Lori Czerwionka**, Associate Professor of Spanish Linguistics, was endorsed unanimously by the WIP (Wisconsin-Indiana U-Purdue) consortium colleagues as the next Director for the WIP in Madrid program for the academic year 2025-26.

**Sayuri Ogiuchi**, Lecturer in Japanese, became the President of AITJ (Association of Indiana Teachers of Japanese) in November 2023.

**Gabriel Ríos Rojas**, Assistant Professor of Spanish & Global Engineering, for being recognized as one of Fall 2023's Outstanding Engineering Teachers.

**Dawn Stinchcomb**, Associate Professor of Spanish Literature, was selected for the competitive ACTFL Facilitators-In-Training Cohort Program.

**Jessica Sturm**, Associate Professor of French Linguistics, was appointed as the new Editor of the *AATF National Bulletin*, a widely read publication of the American Association of Teachers of French.

**John Sundquist**, Professor of German Linguistics, was appointed as the new Editor of the esteemed *Journal of Germanic Linguistics* with Cambridge University Press.



Congratulations to these SLC faculty on being honored at the service recognition luncheon in November 2023: Prof. Bob Channon, 35 years; Prof. Kazumi Hatasa, 35 years; Prof. Jessica Sturm, 15 years; Prof. Mariko Wei, 25 years; Prof. Wei Hong, 30 years. These faculty have dozens of years of combined teaching and research experience at Purdue!





## GRADUATE ALUMNI UPDATES

- **Dr. Sydney Dickerson** (PhD in Spanish Linguistics, 2023) is an Instructional Designer for Soomo Learning.
- **Dr. Robert "Tyler" Gabbard-Rocha** (PhD in Spanish Literature, 2020) has started as tenure-track Assistant Professor of Spanish at the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.
- **Dr. Daniel Carrillo Jara** (PhD in Spanish Literature, 2022) has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at the University of North Texas.
- **Dr. Eduardo Huaytán-Martínez** (PhD in Spanish Literature, 2023) has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at West Texas A&M.
- **Dr. Ayaka Matsuo** (PhD in Japanese, 2024) has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at Middle Tennessee State University.
- **Dr. Masaki Minobe** (PhD in Japanese, 2024) has accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Utah.
- **Dr. Nancy Reyes** (PhD in Spanish Linguistics, 2024) holds a Visiting Assistant Professor position at Indiana Wesleyan University.
- **Dr. Bruno Garcia Staszkievicz** (PhD in Spanish Linguistics, 2024) is a full-time Lecturer at Indiana University, Bloomington.
- **Dr. James Stratton** (PhD in German Linguistics, 2022) has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at Penn State University.



## MORE ALUMNI UPDATES



**Dr. Katherine "Katie" Roseau** (PhD in French Literature, 2018), Associate Professor of French, and Libertad Aranza, Senior Lecturer of Spanish, both at Mercer University, were awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant in the amount of \$150,000 to develop curriculum on immigrant and refugee experiences and to organize faculty workshops on incorporating oral history and the creation of open educational resources (OER) into humanities courses. Their NEH Humanities Initiatives project is titled "Integrating Voices of Refugees and Immigrants: Faculty and Curriculum Development." Roseau and Aranza and their students will produce an oral history repository and OER content. They will address the following topics: the lived experiences of refugees and immigrants; transnational identities; and the diversity in Georgia created in part by recent waves of immigration from Francophone and Hispanic countries. Students will encounter these topics in literature, photography, art, film, and scholarly articles, as well as during conversations with a film director, an author, NGO representatives, and refugee and immigrants themselves. Roseau and Aranza will teach these topics through a dynamic place-based approach, drawing on scholarship in place-identity and place-attachment theories from the fields of environmental psychology and human geography.

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**Dr. Ricardo Quintana-Vallejo** (PhD in Comparative Literature, 2020), Assistant Professor at Rhode Island College, returned to SLC in April for a talk on his new scholarly book *Growing Up in the Gutter, Diaspora and Comics* (University of Arizona Press, 2024), as well as a reading from and discussion of his literary work *I Hunt for Stars Alone* (North Meridian Press, 2023), which has been nominated for a BookLife Prize in Fiction award!



*Congratulations to our talented graduate alumni!*

# UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH NEWS

## SLC Success at the 2023 Fall Purdue Undergraduate Research Expo!

Winners of Literature, Linguistics, Languages, and Culture (LLLC) Colloquium

### RESEARCH TALKS

- **1st Place:** "Steven Spielberg's Bridge of Spies as a Russian Tale" by **Umbert Caseres** (Mentor: Dr. Amina Gabrielova)

### POSTERS

- **2nd Place:** "Baroque Era in Germany - Musik and Architecture" by **Roxanne Schwab** (Mentor: Dr. Beate Allert)



### Student Research Published

**Evan Landau**, our recipient of the 2023 SLC's Outstanding Sophomore NISO award and a Wilke Scholarship intern, after getting the 1st prize for his poster at the 2023 Fall EXPO, was invited to publish a "research snapshot" at JPUR (The Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research). His article "Changes in Russian Media Language in Turbulent Times" is published [here](#).



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## UNDERGRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES ON THE HORIZON

SLC Head **Jen William** and Associate Head **Elena Coda** toured the International Center in Indianapolis in early February to find out more about internship opportunities for our students, both with international companies in Indiana as well as with the International Center itself. The mission of the International Center is to be "a catalyst to inform, convene, and connect public, private and civic global objectives in Indiana." SLC is excited to collaborate with the IC!



## ADAPTING AND THRIVING: SLC IN *THE EXPONENT*

World language course enrollment has dropped nationwide in recent years in higher education. However, thanks to our dedicated instructors, along with initiatives such as Degree+ and innovative curriculum, the School of Languages and Cultures at Purdue is defying the national trend of lower enrollments. *Exponent* reporter Norah Wills covered SLC's efforts in the February 28th issue.

Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) marks another challenging trend affecting higher education nationwide. In SLC, we are embracing A.I. technology and using it to our advantage. SLC's intermediate Spanish courses introduce their students to A.I. with a scaffolded approach developed by Senior Lecturer **Lourdes Barranco Cortés** to help students reflect on their own writing processes, and to encourage the use of A.I. as a tool to improve their communication skills while also better understanding A.I.'s limitations and honing critical A.I. literacy.



## COMMUNITY, CAREERS, AND OUTREACH

- SLC is lucky to have flexible and welcoming faculty and instructors who are happy to host prospective high school students in their classrooms so they can have a real college experience before they (we hope!) become Boilermakers. A group of students from Elwood High School visited our campus and joined Lecturer **Lourdes Barranco Cortés'** SPAN 202 class in November 2023. They were very impressed by the beauty of our campus and grateful for the opportunity to participate in a college-level class. It was a full day of Spanish-language immersion for them—they even made a stop at a local Mexican grocery store!
- Connected by the Global and Intercultural Scholar-in-Residence office in the Honors College, several of our instructors hosted a group of visiting students from Peru on November 13th. This was an event that required the coordination and participation of multiple classes and instructors, including **Carolina Alvim Ferreira, Kely Páez Urbano, Santiago Parra, and Megi Papiashvili**. Each class had a different lecture plan for the day; SPAN 301 taught by Kely and Megi had a discussion on the text "Apocalypses" that students had read in advance.
- Led by **Jessica Sturm**, SLC hosted *Fabulous Friday* on Feb. 23rd at the LGBTQ Center, where students participated in an engaging activity about gender-neutral pronouns in different languages. Janay Rentas, LGBTQ Coordinator was excited about SLC's participation: "That is such a cool idea and is different than anything we have done before! I love it!"



Elwood HS students joined SPAN 201 class in November with Senior Lecturer in Spanish **Lourdes Barranco Cortés**.



Students from Peru with graduate TA **Santiago Parra** in SPAN 202.



**Prof. Jessica Sturm's** activity on gender-neutral pronouns in different languages was well received at the Fabulous Friday hosted by SLC.



## EXCITING NEWS FROM AROUND STANLEY COULTER HALL

- **Delta Sigma**, Purdue University's chapter of **Sigma Delta Pi**, founded in 1960, is now reactivated! On December 8th, 2023, the Spanish Honor Society's Delta Sigma chapter held a reactivation ceremony according to their traditional ritual during which new members were inducted. Professor **Yonsoo Kim**, the current faculty advisor of the chapter, officiated the ceremony for the six new inductees: **Thiago Brito Santos**, **Anderson Camilo Carmona**, **Carmen del Maestro**, **Andrés Obando Taborda**, **Laura Solano Escobar**, and **Lorena Piña Palacio**. They all took the traditional oath "Spanías Didagéi Proágomen," an ancient Greek phrase that translates into Spanish as "Precedamos con nuestro estudio de España" ("Let's proceed with our study of Spain").
- German wine royalty visited Purdue on February 5th, and SLC was lucky to host them during *Kaffeestunde*, the German conversation hour. *Weinköniginnen* Jessica Himmelsbach and Julia Noll, German Wine Princess and Queen, shared their extensive knowledge about German wines and their warm personalities with us. We learned that the German Wine Queen (*Deutsche Weinkönigin*) and her Princesses represent the national German wine industry. The Wine Queen is supported by two princesses (*Deutsche Weinprinzessin*); together they serve as German Wine Ambassadors. Regional Wine Queens are elected as representatives of the thirteen German wine regions, and they serve their regions for a year. Regional Wine Queens compete for the crown of the *Deutsche Weinkönigin*. We were honored that they visited us during their short stay!



New Delta Sigma Chapter members inducted during December ceremony.



German Wine Princess and Queen met with students during Kaffeestunde.



## MORE EXCITING NEWS FROM AROUND STANLEY COULTER HALL

Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures (PSRL) was proud to host Dr. Joshua Enslen of West Point Military Academy to present his research on Brazilian culture and literature on April 17. His recent book was published by Purdue University Press in the PSRL series; *Song of Exile: A History of Brazil's Most Popular Poem, 1846–2018* is available [here](#). PSRL is also thrilled that his book is the first one to have been published as an open-access e-book, as we work toward increasing access to academic scholarship without paywalls. This and all subsequent books are available at the same link for free.

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## Stanley Coulter Hall Construction Projects Update

Renovations are nearly complete as we welcome the Department of English to Stanley Coulter this summer!

SC 146 Complex and Twyla's new office



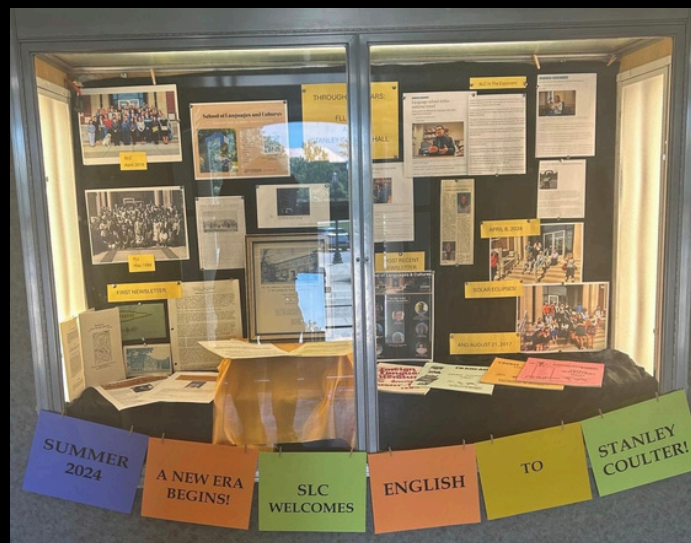
New office space in the prior computer lab SC180



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# STILL MORE EXCITING NEWS FROM AROUND STANLEY COULTER HALL

The new graduate hub on the ground level  
(previously G069)





## IN MEMORIAM



*SLC extends its deep and heartfelt condolences to the friends and family of our recently deceased colleagues.*

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**Dr. Channing B. Blickenstaff**, Professor Emeritus of Spanish, passed away on October 30, 2023 at University Place. Channing taught at Purdue for 20 years (1964-1984). He was the first Resident Director of the WIP study abroad program in Madrid, which is still going strong today. Channing also held multiple leadership roles at the university, including serving as Assistant Head in the department. In addition, he was a talented musician and composer. We are happy that Channing's daughter Marianne Blickenstaff currently teaches Biblical Hebrew in our School.

**Dr. William "Bill" David Buffington**, Professor Emeritus of Russian, passed away on May 19, 2024 at Westminster Village. Bill taught Russian at Purdue for 34 years (1961-1995), and during that time he served as language placement testing director for 25 years and also directed our language lab. Bill was active in what we call today the "public humanities," having created dozens of educational television shows on Russian language and culture.







### **GIVING TO SLC**

enriches our students' experiences  
by funding many activities and  
events that enhance their learning  
of languages and cultures.

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!*



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