Notes from the Chair to Our Graduates

The 2013-2014 academic year has been a very exciting and productive one for the Spanish and Italian Department. I have been continually amazed at the energy and commitment you have shown both inside and outside the classroom. You remind us daily of the reason we have chosen college teaching as our profession and you bring great joy and satisfaction to our lives. So often we find ourselves immersed in administrative details and decisions that weigh heavily upon us, and then we walk into the classroom and get energized and renewed by your thoughts, questions, and engagement with the topic at hand. We not only teach you—you teach us! Maybe you don’t realize that, but it is absolutely true. You help us to sharpen our critical insights, think beyond the confines of our disciplines, and find those important links between theory and practice, text and experience.

Beyond the classroom, your desire to contribute to the campus community through your extra curricular service is a model for the entire university and we are duly proud and grateful to you for all the support you have given us. You come to our events, you co-sponsor our events, and your sponsor your own activities! This newsletter bears testimony to the tremendous work done by our three student organizations: Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society; the AMICI della Cultura Italiana Student Organization; and the Portuguese Language and Culture Club. Montclair State University benefits and grows from the rich source of cultural diversity and energy you bring to the campus. It is difficult to imagine how we could have held so many events this year without your continual presence and leadership. On behalf of the entire department—Gracias, grazie, obrigada!

I am grateful to Dr. Anne Edstrom for the idea of assembling this newsletter to highlight our graduates. It gives all of us an opportunity to extend our sincerest congratulations to all our graduates in Spanish and Italian and to highlight those who sent us information about their current activities and future plans. We will miss you dearly!!! But we celebrate the brilliant, creative, and productive future you have ahead of you, and want you to know that we are behind you every step of the way. Our involvement with you does not end after graduation. One of the greatest pleasures a teacher has is serving as mentor. Please allow us to continue to share in your successes, uncertainties, and plans for the future.

I hope you can all join us for the reception we are holding in your honor following the CHSS Convocation on May 19. I look forward to greeting you and your families and to celebrating your graduation!

All best wishes always,

Linda Earl Berre

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Meet Some of Our Graduates

Marcela Acosta (Spanish) completed her Spanish major with certification as a K-6 teacher and a concentration in translation in December 2013. She student taught at Charles H Bullock Elementary School in Montclair and is currently working as a 3rd grade Title One Teacher at Passaic Arts & Science Charter School Elementary. She looks forward to having her own classroom in September after traveling to Colombia over the summer.

Katherine Bermeo (Spanish) is graduating with a major in Spanish and a minor in Latin American and Latino Studies. She works in the Guidance Department at a high school in Paterson and in the future hopes to teach Spanish. Eventually, she plans to pursue a Master’s Degree and become a vice-principal.

Fulya Arici (Master of Arts in Teaching Spanish) finished her degree in December 2013 after student teaching at Passaic Valley Regional High School. Her future plans are to teach in an urban high school. As a mother of twins and a trilingual teacher, she believes strongly in multilingualism and wants to make a difference in her students' lives.

Sebastian Cano (Spanish--Teacher Education) spent spring semester student teaching at Bloomfield High School where he will continue as a substitute through June. He is looking for a teaching position in Spanish or ESL for the fall. In the future he plans to continue his education, pursuing a position as a departmental supervisor or school principal.

María del Carmen Castrejón (Spanish--Translation) was an intern at Corazón Puro spring semester and was since offered a full-time position. In the future she hopes to pursue MSU's Graduate Certificate for Legal Translation and Interpretation and serve the Spanish-speaking community, a passion awakened in her at Montclair State.

Jennifer Balarezo (Spanish--Translation) is graduating with a major in Spanish and a minor in Linguistics. In the fall she will start the Master of Arts program in Speech-Language Pathology at Montclair State to pursue a career as a bilingual Speech Therapist.
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Carolina Chia (Spanish--Translation) combined her Spanish major with a minor in Paralegal Studies. She is currently an Executive Assistant at Care Plus NJ, Inc. and in the future hopes to be a Federal Certified Court Interpreter.

Kasey DeGasperis (Italian) is graduating with an Italian major in Spring 2014. She is also studying and working in the wine industry. Her future plans include continuing her studies in both Italian and wine and one day working for a major Italian wine importing company.

Joanna De Los Santos (Spanish--Teacher Education/Italian) is graduating with a double major in Spanish and Italian. She student taught at Grover Cleveland Middle School in Caldwell last fall and has been hired to teach Spanish and possibly Italian there next year. In addition to teaching, she will be getting married in 2015.

Amy Engelmann (Spanish) is graduating from the Literature track of the Spanish program. This summer she plans to work part time before continuing her education or getting a full-time position. She is looking forward to pursuing a wide variety of professional and personal opportunities in the future.

Maria-Francesca Gaccione (Italian) completed her Italian major in December 2013. She is currently working in childcare and in the future plans to utilize the knowledge and skills acquired during her studies at Montclair State University for any job opportunities that come her way.

Elvía García (Spanish) is graduating with a Spanish major. In the future she hopes to get a Master’s Degree in Education and teach in a bilingual classroom.

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**Alisa Gennarelli** (Spanish) combined her major in Spanish with a minor in Business. This summer she will spend some time traveling throughout Europe. She is considering working overseas in international business in the future.

**Maribel Guardia** (Master of Arts in Teaching Spanish and Teacher of Students with Disabilities) student taught at Panther Academy in Paterson, NJ. Her future plans are to work as a teacher in an urban school district. She loves the culturally diverse environment and wants to make a difference in students’ lives, equipping them to use Spanish in their communities and in their future careers.

**Janet Lara** (Spanish) is graduating with a double major in Spanish and Mathematics. She is currently applying for a Master of Arts in Teaching program and in the future would like to become a teacher.

**María Gracia Martínez** (Spanish) completed the requirements for the Literature track of the Spanish major in December 2013. She is currently working as an English teacher and in the future plans to become a screenwriter.

**Karel Machado Hernández** (Spanish) is graduating from the Literature track of the Spanish program, but he won’t be leaving Conrad Schmitt Hall for long; in Fall 2014 he plans to continue his study of literature by beginning coursework for the Master of Arts in Spanish.

**Adrián Marte** (Spanish—Translation) plans to collaborate with colleague Rob Ottogalli to start a language institute that provides professional translations and citizenship services as well as classes in ESL and Spanish as a Second Language. He wants to continue his education and pursue a Master’s Degree in Education with a concentration in Spanish.

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**Alina Mcknight (Spanish)** is graduating with a Spanish major. She is currently working as a part time ESL teacher and a substitute teacher at an elementary school. In the future she plans to pursue her goal of becoming a writer. She also hopes to open her own school and teach Spanish as a Second Language.

**María Montero (Spanish)** is graduating with a double major in Spanish and Linguistics. She is currently working with children and in the future she hopes to be a Spanish or ESL teacher in her own classroom, working with children or with adults.

**Edimary Morales (Spanish--Teacher Education)** student taught at Montclair High School during spring semester of 2014. During the summer she plans to work as a Spanish tutor and enjoy a graduation trip to Spain. She loves working with students and is looking for a position teaching Spanish in an elementary or high school.

**Magaly Y. Novoa (Spanish--BA/MA)** is completing the BA component of her combined BA/MA Degree in Spanish. She is currently a freelance translator and in the future plans to start her own translation business.

**Natalia Ocampo (Spanish--Translation)** completed her Spanish major along with a minor in Spanish and International Business in December 2013. She is currently studying French and working on freelance translations. In the near future she hopes to travel and enroll in a Master’s program.

**Juan Ortiz Argueta (Spanish--Translation)** graduated in December 2013 with a major in Spanish and a minor in Business. He currently works for United Airlines as a Customer Service Representative and was recently promoted to the Global Service Department. In the future he would like to continue his education in Communication or Literature and become a writer.

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**Robert Ottogalli (Spanish)** enjoyed an internship at Impacto Latin New in NYC during Spring semester and in Fall 2014 he plans to pursue the Graduate Certificate in Translation and Interpreting at MSU. This summer, together with friend Adrián Marte, he is starting a language service business that offers translation, tutoring, ESL classes, and US naturalization test preparation. In the future, Robert’s goal is to work in Translation/Interpretation at the international level.

**Danielle Paduch (Italian--Teacher Education)** completed a double major in Italian and Spanish in December 2013 after a semester of student teaching at Passaic Valley Regional High School. She is currently seeking a teaching position and hopes to be a great inspiration to her students in the future.

**Kelsey Paolini (Italian)** is graduating with an major in Italian and a minor in French. In the future, she will be attending Thomas Jefferson University to obtain her BS in Nursing. She hopes to use her language skills in French and Italian to provide quality care to as many patients as possible.

**Lillian A. Payero (Spanish--Translation)** is currently working for Iglesia Bautista Reformada, a Hispanic church that is involved in various translation and interpretation projects that extend beyond its location in New Jersey. After graduating this spring, she plans to be of greater use as a certified translator in her community and in the future hopes to become involved in the publishing industry.

**Sandra Pulgarín (Spanish--Teacher Education/Translation)** graduated in December after student teaching at East Side High School in Paterson, NJ. She continues working there as a Spanish and ESL teacher. In the future she plans to pursue a Master’s Degree in Spanish and in Bilingual Education. She is also interested in working as a Supervisor for World Languages or ESL.

**Guadalupe Rodríguez (Spanish--BA/MA)** is completing the BA component of her combined BA/MA Degree in Spanish. She is currently working as a Sales and Service Specialist at Bank of America while fully concentrating on her goal of obtaining a Master's degree and becoming a Spanish professor.

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**Catherine Rojas** (Spanish--BA/MA) is completing the BA component of her combined BA/MA Degree in Spanish. This summer she will have a second wedding celebration in Lima, Perú, and is going to visit Cusco for the first time. She plans to finish her MA degree next year and, in the future, teach Spanish.

**Maryann Russo** (Italian--Teacher Education) student taught at Elizabeth Upper Academy in Elizabeth during the Fall 2013 semester and graduated in December. She is currently teaching Italian I and Italian II Honors at Hackensack High School in Hackensack, NJ. Her future plans include completing her ESL certification and earning a Master’s degree in administration.

**Bárbara San Martín** (Spanish) is completing a Spanish major with certification as a K-6 teacher. She student taught at Nishuane Elementary School in Montclair, NJ. In the future she plans to work as both a Spanish and an elementary teacher and looks forward to traveling and learning about the different countries of the world.

**Gaetano Sollazzo** (Italian) graduated with honors with an Italian Major in December 2013. He is currently working as a student aide at a Randolph Township Elementary School, His future plans are to teach Italian at the High School level, and to spread knowledge about Italian language and culture to anyone who will listen. Gaetano is married to Andrea Sollazzo and the two recently had their first child, a baby boy named Kristian.

**Joseph Valentino** (Italian) completed his Italian major in December 2013. He is currently employed in the restaurant industry and in the future hopes to continue on a successful path towards a bright and promising future. He is overjoyed to have received his college degree and could not have gone this far without the love and support from his mother, father, relatives, friends, "amici italiani", professors, but above all, his inner strength. Auguri a tutti! È l’ora di condividere la nostra passione della lingua e cultura italiana con il resto del mondo!

**Jennifer Zirkel** (Spanish) is graduating with a double major in Spanish and Linguistics with certification in Teaching English as a Second Language. She student taught at Elementary School 12 in Clifton and in the future plans to get a job as an ESL teacher. She also plans to seek certification to teach Spanish and Bilingual Education.

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The Portuguese Language and Culture Club has hosted numerous activities this year, ranging from soccer games and bake sales to cultural events, in addition to their regular club meetings. They are planning an end-of-semester dinner at a Portuguese restaurant. Check their Facebook page for the date!!

This semester they offered conversation practice “Hora do Bate-Papo” (bate-papo = chat) and taught students new phrases and expressions at club meetings.

The Portuguese Language and Culture Club organized an African Cultural Dance Event at which a Brazilian dancer (Janete Silva) taught students the samba and even capoeira, a Brazilian martial art dance form.

2013-2014 Executive Board
President: Ana Carolina Silva
Vice President: Steven Santos
Secretary: Annri Araseki
Faculty Adviser: Dr. Michele Kettner

Contact Information
FB MSU PLCC
Dr. Kettner: kettnerm@mail.montclair.edu
In 2013-14 the Amici Italian Club has had a particularly strong program of events. Highlights include two off-campus tours related to Italian classes: a trip to the Botto and Paterson Museums shed light on the important immigrant labor history in NJ* and a guided tour of famous architect Renzo Piano’s work in NYC* (Morgan Library Expansion, NYTimes Building) demonstrated the contemporary relevance of Italian creativity in our area. The NYC tour concluded with a stop at one of the best freshly made pasta places in town (Rana in Chelsea Market). A Spring film series included Nanni Moretti’s The Caiman and Paolo Sorrentino’s The Great Beauty (2014 Academy Award winner), both engaged with internationally debated issues regarding Italian politics and social mores.

The club has also offered support to a lecture on Italian American food, a play on immigration in the Mediterranean (Le Albe), a concert of Sicilian music (Fratelli Mancuso), and a theater workshop presented by the Inserra Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies** as well as the Teaching Italian Symposium and Italian Language and Culture Day offered through the Coccia Institute.

*News Items
tinyurl.com/ItalianClubBotto
tinyurl.com/ItalianClubPiano

** Videos
tinyurl.com/ItalianClubAlbeMancuso
tinyurl.com/ItalianClubFood

The gatherings “Italian Jeopardy,” “Una serata in piazza,” and “Carnevale celebration” provided playful environments to enhance language and general cultural skills, while the traditional party “Una serata elegante” festively marked the end of the year. The Club was able to successfully secure SGA funds in Spring, and has also received support from the Inserra Chair at MSU as well as the Coccia Foundation.

2013-2014 Executive Board
President: Cassandra Carollo
Vice President: Stephanie Ridge
Secretary: Alexia Stabile
Treasurer: Emilia D’Albero
SGA Representative: Angelo Tirone
Faculty Adviser: Dr. Teresa Fiore

Contact Information
amicimusu@gmail.com
FB Montclair Amici Club

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The 2013-2014 academic year was full of activity and service for the members of Sigma Delta Pi. On November 12, they assisted Dr. Levine in hosting 900 high school students for the play *La Gringa* by the Repertorio Español and on March 28 helped Dr. Edstrom welcome 400 students for Spanish Day. They facilitated many guest lectures throughout the year including Orlando Hernández and Reyther Ortega and a dramatized reading of *Don Gil*.

Their service off the MSU campus was also significant. They worked with Community Foodbank of New Jersey and participated in the celebration of Three Kings Day with the Latino Ministry of Bloomfield, New Jersey.

Sigma Delta Pi was pleased to welcome 20 new members at an induction ceremony on May 1, 2014.

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**2013-2014 Executive Board**

President: Dragana Bozinova  
Vice President: Katherine Bermeo  
Secretary: Guadalupe Rodríguez  
Treasurer: Jennifer Balarezo  
Faculty Adviser: Dr. Valentín Soto

**Contact Information**

FB: Sigma Delta Pi Hispanic Honor Society – Montclair State Univ.  
Dr. Soto: sotov@mail.montclair.edu