Students linked inner tubes while speeding down a hill

Activities in Burchfield Park

ELC Students Enjoy Winter

“Apres ski” featured hot chocolate, donuts, coffee and a variety of board and card games, so anyone taking a break from the cold was able to enjoy some English conversation practice while making new friends. This outing was chaperoned by several ELC teachers, most of whom could also be seen flying down the hill as well. An excellent time was had all around!

Families

By Carol Wilson-Duffy

This summer, the ELC has students visiting from a variety of countries and with a variety of goals. Some are here for teacher training; others are here to learn about American culture and improve their English, and still others are working on specific language skills like business English or medical English.

Jazan University, Saudi Arabia (pre-service teachers)

Takenaka Corporation, Japan (construction & architectural firm)

Panamá Bilingüe Program, Panama (K-12 EFL teachers)

Medical English, Japan & Korea (pre-med university students)

In order to help our students and participants better understand American culture, we are looking for local families and individuals who would be interested in joining in a BBQ, teaching our students about a hobby, or even hosting a student on a weekend. If you are interested in learning more about these programs, or if you would like to participate in activities with us, please email us at specialprograms@elc.msu.edu

Language Exchange Program Continues in Its Third Successful Semester

By Laura Ballard

In an effort to broaden opportunities for domestic and international students to develop their language skills, the Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA) and the English Language Center have partnered to create a place where students can come together and put their classroom language skills to real use. This semester marks the beginning of the Chinese-English group began meeting this semester and is facilitated by Dr. Yingfei Chen, a professor in the Chinese Studies program. This group was formed after a successful year of Arabic-English exchange, now lead by Hewa Showany, a Fulbright Fellow teaching Arabic at MSU. The largest of the language exchanges is the Portuguese-English group, which is highly attended by domestic Portuguese minors and Brazilian study abroad students. This group is facilitated by Natalia Gioria, a Fulbright Fellow who teaches Portuguese in MSU’s Portuguese program. Plans are in the works to begin a Japanese-English exchange program for the 2015-2016 academic year. Each exchange group provides students with a place to meet and mingle with students who speak their language of study. The meetings often include friendly language competitions, language games, and culture-related activities.
ELC Hosts English Teachers from Panama

By Amy Kroesche

Twenty teachers from Panama came to study at the ELC for Spring semester 2015. They were part of the Panamá Bilingüe Program, a program implemented by Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela. The program was designed to improve the teachers’ English language proficiency and English language teaching skills. The teachers studied at the English Language Center for eight weeks and took speaking/listening and reading/writing classes, along with an English as a Foreign Language teaching methodology class.

They also participated in special seminars on EFL methods with a focus on K-12 instruction. One Panamanian teacher commented, “After this program, I consider that my listening, writing, reading comprehension and speaking skills have been improved in a great percentage, compared with my proficiency before this training.” Another teacher added, “I consider that this program has really helped me to improve my proficiency in the English language, as well as my teaching methodology and it has also improved my vision of the teaching style.”

The local elementary, middle, and high schools also gave the teachers several opportunities to observe how curriculum and classes are organized in American public education. The teachers gave several teaching demonstrations to the elementary school students. They also participated in the Wilcox Elementary School International Night by giving cultural presentations about Panama. Though the teachers were very busy with their coursework, they also enjoyed a lot of winter activities. From ice-skating at Munn, sledging at Burchfield Park, a visit to the Michigan Historical Museum, seeing the Snow Festival at Frankenmuth, shopping at Burchfield Park, a visit to the Michigan Historical Museum and classes are organized in American public education.

The twenty teachers are now back in Panama and teaching English as a Foreign Language. When asked to evaluate the program, a second group of 21 faculty members attended the 10-week program. The faculty members were sent to Michigan State as part of Gazi University’s efforts to establish itself as an international university. The program was focused on the kind of English that higher education professionals use, such as academic and research writing, giving academic presentations, and publishing in academic journals. The Turkish professors were also able to observe and experience how college courses are taught at Michigan State. One of their assignments was to choose a course in their field at MSU and sit in on one or two classes. They discovered several differences and similarities in the teaching approaches between their university and MSU.

MSU and Gazi University have plans to establish a joint research center, and the professors from Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 paved the way for initial research partnerships. Aside from taking academic English courses at the ELC, the Gazi professors were making contacts with MSU faculty and researchers in their respective fields for academic research and other scholarly activities. Ebru Toruner, from the Fall 2014 group, has been collaborating with the College of Nursing at MSU since November. She has given short lectures about Turkish nursing practices to the students in seminar courses. She has also joined the Girls on the Move, an intervention project lead by Professor Lorraine Robbins from the College of Nursing. Meyrem Kaya, a professor in the Applied Mathematics department in Gazi University, worked on several math projects with MSU’s Professor Peter Bates during the spring semester. She is planning to continue collaborating on projects with her MSU peers now that she is back at Gazi University.

ELC Students Enjoy Contra Dancing

By Stacy Sabraw

It was contra night! Contra is a style of folk dance in which couples dance in two facing lines or in a group of four while a live band plays and a caller tells the dancers what to do. For each dance, you can pick a different partner and, during a dance, you might do-si-do (pass back-to-back around another dancer and return to your original position) with a 6-year-old girl one minute and a 70-year-old man the next. No one cares if you forget a move or accidentally step on someone’s foot. It was a lively atmosphere that January evening and everyone enjoyed themselves. The visitors got to meet the wider community and the Americans got to share one of their favorite cultural traditions.
Jennifer Brooke is Awarded 2015 Marckwardt Grant

Congratulations to Jennifer Brooke for winning the 2015 Michigan Marckwardt Travel Grant! This award honors Albert H. Marckwardt, a distinguished educator from the University of Michigan and Princeton University who helped shape the community of language scholars and teachers.

Jennifer Brooke is in her first year of the Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages at MSU, where she serves as a teaching assistant in the English Language Center. She earned her B.A. in Linguistics and Music from the University of Iowa. She is interested in second language writing, and has also done research in the areas of vocabulary acquisition and interaction in SLA. She is honored to be the recipient of the Michigan Marckwardt Award, which enabled her to attend and present at the 2015 Master’s Student Forum at TESOL International in Toronto, Canada.

Patricia Walters Wins David Horner Award

Patricia Walters, an Associate Director of the English Language Center, was presented with the David Horner Award by the Michigan Association of International Educators. The award is given to an educator who demonstrates exceptional service and dedication to International Education in the State of Michigan and for their positive influence on colleagues and students. Patricia was nominated for the award by professional colleagues from across Michigan. Her achievement was announced at the annual MAIE conference after a committee of past award winners named her the recipient.

By Austin Kaufmann

The 3rd annual National Geographic and Michigan State University Learning Symposium was held on Saturday, April 11th, 2015, in Brody Hall on the MSU campus. With this year’s theme of “Grammar and the Four Skills: Exploration and Integration,” the 2015 Learning Symposium offered more than 160 English language teachers and administrators from around Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio a full day of high quality professional development. Presentations focused on links between grammar and other aspects of ESL instruction because contemporary models of language instruction favor the integration of grammar with the four skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Dr. Keith Folse, author of many ESL textbooks, gave the keynote presentation on the topic of how to integrate grammar and writing. National Geographic also invited Emerging Explorer Asher Jay to share her work with symposium attendees. Asher Jay is a talented and politically motivated artist who uses graphic design, art, and social media to fight for the protection of endangered wildlife species around the world. The English Language Center’s own Stacy Sabraw, Carlee Salas, and Laurel Waller also presented.
Students at the English Language Center come from all over the world and speak different languages. They each have a different experience when they come to MSU, but they all have something in common: they want to improve their English. We sat down with two ELC students and asked them to tell us about their experience studying English at the ELC and living at MSU.

Raquel Carvalho is from Angola. She is a freshman majoring in Chemical Engineering.

**How has the ELC helped you prepare for your academic courses?**

The ELC classes helped me to improve my English because before I came to MSU, I had a little knowledge about English. Here, I could improve my listening and speaking skills, and my grammar. I’m in Level 5, and this level is very academic. My listening speaking classes are related to academic lectures, how to focus on what the lecturer is saying. Also, I learned how to give a public speech for an American audience. My reading class is focused on how to interpret an essay or a specific article. And my writing class is very focused on grammar and how to write an essay in American way. In America, they have a different way to write an essay, very different from my country. So I have to learn to structure an academic essay in the American way.

Kazuhiko Watanabe is from Japan. He works for Takenaka Corporation, a Japanese construction company. He attended the ELC in Summer 2014.

**How has living at MSU helped you practice your English?**

When I came here in May, it was difficult to understand what native speakers say. So I wanted to improve my listening skills. So I tried to speak with native speakers in my dormitory. For example, I ask them “How’s it going?” and “What are you watching now?” I tried to talk actively. So now my listening skills are improving. When I have to order at a restaurant, I can understand the waiter’s question correctly. It is easier now.

**Tell us about your ELC classes.**

I have four classes in each day- listening speaking, reading writing, and content. Content means studying some subject, like U.S. history. First I was surprised because I am studying English but my teacher is teaching U.S. history. In content class, we read and study American history, but we use our English skills to learn. I am planning to go to Washington D.C. this weekend. It will be very easy to recognize famous historical places in Washington DC because I learned about U.S. history. It will be a good experience for me. I didn’t plan to go to Washington D.C. before coming here, but when I learned about U.S. history and U.S. immigration, I wanted to go to Washington D.C. I will also go to Ellis Island in New York City to see where American immigrant entered the country.