



clockwise from far left: Spanish student Madison Goode recites a Cuban poem from memory; Raymond Maxwell, a research and instruction librarian in Hunter Library, reads a poem in Portuguese; Spanish major Victor Ubaldo reads a poem from Spain.

“Romance” at Multilingual Poetry Event

Just before Valentine’s Day, folks from all over the WCU community gathered to share their love for Romance languages and their interest in poetry. The term “Romance” describes languages derived from Latin, and three of these languages (Spanish, French, and Portuguese) were used at the event, which was sponsored by both the [Modern Foreign Languages Department](#) and [L.A.S.O.](#), the Latino Appreciation Student Organization.

Romance languages seemed especially appropriate, given that Valentine’s Day was right around the corner. Participants read or recited poems written by others and even some original works, and many were moved to

tears by the beauty and sincerity of the poetry. One attendee won a dedicated copy of one of Dr. Santiago García-Castañón’s poetry collections as a prize.

The university community is already asking when the next poetry event will take place, so watch for WCUSpanish’s announcement on social media so you won’t miss it! Contact [Garrett Fisher](#), the event’s organizer, to share ideas or ask questions.



(Did you miss the poetry event? No worries — you can catch up on a few of the readings with [this video!](#))

WCUSPANHISH STUDENT PROFILE: CASEY TREJO

Where are you from?

¡Soy mexicana! My parents are both from Mexico. My dad is from San Luis Potosí, my mother from Zacatecas, and I was born in Marion, NC. (Yeah, how did that happen?) Although we have a house in San Luis, I have lived in NC all of my life. My dad has always had the desire to one day go back and stay, but for now our house in Mexico is used mainly for vacationing.



What are some places you have traveled?

I usually travel to Mexico at least once a year. I've been to different states in the US and the Bahamas. I've also been to Quito, Ecuador with the purpose of working with children in an orphanage. I worked in their school by helping students with English/Spanish. I also got to experience their daily lives by staying at the orphanage.

Your majors are Spanish and Communication Sciences and Disorders. Why did you choose these, particularly in this combination?

I have always been very passionate about healthcare. My sister has severe autism and has never been able to speak. My parents did everything and more to go from specialists to doctors in and out of the country. She is only a year younger than me, she depends on us one hundred percent, and so we grew up and did absolutely everything together. The first time I ever separated from her was when I moved to college.



Being my sister's keeper is what made me decide to go into this field. I want to be a bilingual speech pathologist one day. I want to go above and beyond to change someone's life, particularly in healthcare. I chose Spanish as well, because I feel that being a native speaker just isn't enough. As much as I want to go into healthcare, I also want to give back to my Hispanic community, and I know having the education will only

open more doors.

Tell us about your role in student organizations or other on-campus events.

I am a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success (Sigma Alpha Pi) and part of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSHLA) chapter. I am the Vice President of the Latino Appreciation Student Organization (LASO) here on campus, and I volunteer with Vecinos health clinics.

How do you spend your time when you're not doing school-related stuff?

I work all the time! I have been a nurse assistant at Skyland Care Center, a nursing home in Sylva since 2013. When I am not working I like to spend time with family, friends, and

rest up. I enjoy reading, watching movies, and traveling to new places.

How much of your motivation to study Spanish has to do with your heritage and how much is your own personal interest?

A lot of my desire to study Spanish has to do with my personal interest. Although Spanish is all I've ever known, it almost seems like two different worlds. Sometimes people wonder why I study Spanish if it is already my first language, but they don't realize it's completely different. It's interesting to learn things you've never been taught, and I find it quite difficult sometimes. It can sometimes even be a disadvantage because my classmates have had to study it, and I might not be able to quickly answer something without having to think about it. There are a lot of things I've had to

learn, simply because I've been doing it all along without thinking about it.

How do you use your Spanish most now? How do you foresee using Spanish in the future?

I use Spanish in my household more than I do English. It's always been English at school and Spanish at home. An interesting thing is that no one ever sat with me to teach me how to read or write... it just happened. I think that during my childhood I translated and interpreted more than anything else. At 15, I got my first job working with the doctor who delivered me. I did office work, but I mainly interpreted. In the future, I can see myself working with patients of all backgrounds, and it brings a smile to my face



knowing I'll be able to have Spanish speaking patients and not have to depend on an interpreter. I wish people would realize how much more of a connection there is between the patient and the caregiver when they can speak directly to each other. I just love language!



¡Vengan a practicar el español con nosotros!

The Spanish Program organizes a weekly *tertulia* (conversation hour) for students, faculty, and anyone in the community to boost their language proficiency by being immersed in Spanish. Watch the Modern Foreign Languages Department's [website](#) for updates on a new *tertulia* schedule after spring break. Until then, you can come practice with us on Thursday, March 5 at 5:30 at Sazón on Old Cullowhee Rd. Just look for the orange and white ¡Tertulia! sign and join us!



from top left: *tertulia* group in Tuck's Tap & Grille; Dr. García-Castañón and Troy Eckles; Hernán Álvarez-Aguirre, Víctor Ubaldo, and D'Myia Gause.

Spanish upper-level courses set for Fall 2015:

- **SPAN 302 - Conversation and Composition II.**

This course focuses on production-based skills like speaking and writing, based on topics relevant to the Spanish-speaking world. (It is not necessary to have taken 301 to take this course — they are complementary but not sequential!)

- **SPAN 321 - Hispanic Cultures I.**

This course explores the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world, including geography, history, gastronomy, art, music, politics, and economics, among other related topics.

- **SPAN 461 - Spanish Phonology and Phonetics.**

This course covers the sounds of Spanish.

- **SPAN 493 - Cuban Culture.**

This course examines Cuban history and cultural production, with a focus on the revolutionary period (1959-present). **(This course will include the opportunity to travel to Havana over Fall Break.)**

Any questions? Talk to your advisor or to [Dr. Lori Oxford](#) about what Spanish courses are best for you in Fall 2015.

Do you know a student in the Spanish program or an alumnus/alumna with an interesting story? Is there an event of interest to Spanish study that we should announce here? Let us know! Contact Lori Oxford at lfoxford@wcu.edu.

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