

WCU SPANISH GRADUATION PROFILES

Nine WCU students just finished their degrees in Spanish! See some of their profiles below:



TISHA CARVER



What programs did you complete here at WCU?

I majored in History and Spanish.

Where do you call home?

Waynesville.

What are your plans for after graduation?

In the fall, I'll be at [Simmons College](#) (Boston, MA) pursuing a dual masters degree in History and Library Sciences.

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life?

I've fancied the idea of getting a masters in Spanish linguistics or literature. If nothing else, I will live a few years in a Spanish speaking country.

How do you use it now?

I read children's books in Spanish for fun. I also play a game with my friend who speaks French and German, where we talk in our languages and try to understand each other.

What is the single most meaningful Spanish-related story in your life?

Definitely Cuba. (Tisha participated in the WCU en Cuba 2013 trip, which was linked to SPAN 493.)

Anything else?

I try not to think of my time at WCU as already over. It's gone by waaaaay too fast!



CLEIS BONHAM



What degree(s) have you earned?

I majored in Spanish and Education and graduated from the Honors College with a B.A. in Spanish and a B.S.Ed. in Spanish.

Where do you call home?

Statesville, North Carolina.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I am still trying to figure out future plans. My immediate plans include moving back home and getting settled back in for the summer. I want to learn how to garden with my mom and pick the wild berries that grow around our house. I hope to find a teaching job for this fall. If that doesn't work out, then I would like to possibly travel to a Spanish speaking country this fall. On May 26th I will fly to Nicaragua for a month. I am going with some missionaries to do some home

improvements there, and I will get to work with kids on their reading and writing skills in a local school.

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life, and how do you use it now?

I plan to use it the same way that I have since I began to take an interest in it: I use it to make me smile! :) Professionally, I am not 100% sure that I want to be a teacher, but I use it personally when I read, listen to music, watch TV, go to church, and when I run into Spanish speakers every day. The language has become a part of me, a part of whom I am and what I love. I use Spanish when I read my Bible and other books that I am interested in. I use it when I need to think out loud and don't want others to understand me. I use it to speak to people at my Spanish language church and on several occasions I have used it to mediate between two people.

What else do you like to read in Spanish?

I like any story in Spanish, any story at all, just so I can read the language. I like kids' stories and Latin American lullabies.

Anything else?

To be able to read something besides English and not only understand it but thoroughly enjoy it, to be able to laugh at the funny parts and learn new words through the context of what is being read, to be surprised at how your mind remembers something that you only saw once or twice before, to be able to look back and see the growth when at the time it wasn't apparent that growth had happened, to meet sweet people who don't speak English and be able to speak and laugh with them, to cross barriers... taking on a new language is one of the best things that has ever happened to me.

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SARA FURR



What degree(s) have you earned?

Entrepreneurship and Spanish.

Where do you call home?

Locust, North Carolina.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I'm moving to Florida!

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life?

I plan to be a translator in a hospital or medical setting as well as use it in my salon business.

How do you use it now?

I use it with my friends who know Spanish and whenever I meet someone who knows Spanish to help me learn and hone my skills.

What is the single most meaningful Spanish-related story in your life?

When I traveled to Costa Rica two years ago, my host family did not speak English except for the oldest son and daughter-in-law, who came over twice during my stay there. I learned so much in the eight days that I was there and it was such an enriching experience!

Anything else?

After working three jobs, finishing my Spanish minor two years early and deciding to go for a double major in

Entrepreneurship and Spanish, and then finding out that I will be graduating on time, I wonder where the time went. My time here at WCU was definitely well spent and although I am going to miss it dearly, I cannot wait to start this new chapter of my life!



MATTIE HORINE



What degree(s) have you earned?

I majored in Spanish with a Business Law minor.

Where do you call home?

Asheville or wherever my daughter and I are together.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I plan to travel across the country and accept a temp job as a Google ads quality rater for Spanish ads.

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life?

I speak Spanish at home with my daughter, I work as an interpreter, and I am strongly considering pursuing a masters degree in Madrid.

What is the single most meaningful Spanish-related story in your life?

The other day we were at the park and my daughter was trying to explain to another child (in that emphatic two-year-old sort of way) that the shovel was hers. In fact, it was not. It was there when we arrived. When she realized the little boy spoke Spanish she didn't miss a beat and explained to him "¡es mío, no lo toques!" without missing a single beat as if it were

the most normal thing in the world. I suppose it was, since possession is a universal concept at two. However, I felt like I had achieved a truly bilingual mindset for her in order to communicate with so many more people and experience the conceptual-linguistic differences in the world that would allow her to expand her thinking. (It's funny how she always reverts to Spanish when something spills even though she is constantly telling me, "They are *stars*, Mama, not *estrellas!*")

(WCU Spanish would like to note that Mattie was this year's recipient of the [Dean's Outstanding Scholar Award for Spanish.](#))



HALEY MADDEN



What degree have you earned?

I majored in Spanish with an Applied Program in Elementary Education.

Where do you call home?

Home sweet home for me is Waynesville.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I will be working at Residential Living at WCU for the summer.

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life?

I plan to use Spanish everywhere I can! I can't think of anything that I would

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delight in more than teaching it to my children, but I would love to go to graduate school to further my understanding of Spanish Linguistics and hopefully teach one day as well.

How do you use it now?

I try and speak Spanish as often as possible. In the area where we live it's easy to find people that speak the language. I'm also trying to teach it to my husband, which is helping me, too!

What is the single most meaningful Spanish-related story in your life?

One event that stands out to me regarding Spanish is being able to travel to Honduras and communicate with the people there. They knew that I loved them in years past, but being able to speak with them about their lives made all the difference in the lasting friendships that I've had the privilege of keeping.



ERIC WRIGHT



What programs did you complete here at WCU?

Spanish Education.

Where do you call home?

Candler, North Carolina.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I am currently working at The Biltmore House while I search for a teaching job.

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life?

I plan to use Spanish to teach eager high school students wanting to learn the language. I also have been on a few mission trips to Nicaragua so I will be using Spanish in villages I go visit there. I also plan (if my budget allows) to travel to many Spanish speaking countries learning language, culture and of course the most important thing food!

How do you use it now?

Right now I use Spanish when I go to small Spanish stores in my hometown and I speak to people who work there. Once a year I try to make a trip to Nicaragua for mission work I use it there and I have also created relationships with people there and we send facebook messages back and forth.

What is the single most meaningful Spanish-related story in your life?

My most memorable Spanish experience is when I went to Nicaragua for the first time in March 2010. I was at a point in my life where I did not know what I wanted to do and I had an opportunity to travel abroad for my first mission trip. At this time my Spanish was horrible I didn't really know much more past basic introduction conversation. What I took from this trip was the love from the Nicaraguan people, even though I could not speak their language they welcomed me with open arms and showed me love I've never felt or seen from strangers. After this trip it inspired me to learn Spanish and teach Spanish to students here in the United States hoping that maybe one day, one of the students I teach has this kind of experience that I did.

Anything else?

I just want to thank WCU for an incredible experience of learning the Spanish language as well as allowing me to travel to Costa Rica and live for 5 months as well as travel to Cuba for an incredible week on the island!



EMILY MELROSE



What degree(s) have you earned?

I have a B.A. in Spanish and a B.S. in Business Administration.

Where do you call home?

I am from Waynesville but grew up in Cullowhee until the 8th grade.

What are your plans for after graduation?

Right after graduation I will be working as a raft guide on the Nantahala River. I am really excited to learn some new skills and have a fun summer. It is something I have always wanted to do and now I have the opportunity!

How do you plan to use Spanish in your life?

I hope to eventually work for a business that has Spanish-speaking clients. I would also like to be do professional medical translating. I studied abroad in Granada, Spain for a semester and hope to go back to Spain in the next year to continue practicing my Spanish and teach English.

How do you use it now?

I currently use my Spanish as a volunteer English teacher to Spanish-speaking adults in Haywood County. I have been volunteering for about two years now and love it. The students are from many different countries, such as Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador. It has been fun to see their English improve. I have learned a lot about their cultures and

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have made some really good friends that are always willing to help me practice my Spanish. I also use it anytime I get the chance around town.

What is the single most meaningful Spanish-related story in your life?

This past summer I had the opportunity to spend the summer volunteering at the [Kory Wawanaca Children's Home](#) in La Paz, Bolivia. I had gone for a short trip in high school and loved the people and the place. The trip really made me decide to major in Spanish, so I could

return and better understand the kids and the culture. During the summer there I really became part of the family in large part thanks to my Spanish skills. We were able to share jokes and stories, which is something I missed out on before due to the language barrier.

Anything else?

I would really encourage anyone reading this to study abroad! It was one of the best decisions I made in college. You will be able to use the Spanish you have learned at Western Carolina to make friends and travel.



The students profiled here are not the *only* WCUSpanish grads who finished up this semester! **Julie Popelka** and **Cameron Ward** also completed their degrees in Spanish in Spring 2014. The faculty and staff of the WCU Spanish program are immensely proud of all of these accomplished graduates!

¡Enhorabuena!



CORZA WINS KNEEDLER SCHOLARSHIP

Antonio Corza, a junior, was just awarded the [Jay I. Kneedler Scholarship](#) for his academic achievements, leadership, and civic activities. Antonio's scholarship will total \$5235 towards his tuition at WCU.

¡Enhorabuena, Antonio!

**“POP COUTURE A LA MEXICANA”:
WCUSPANISH PROFESSOR
PRESENTS WORK TO STUDENTS**

Dr. Mark Couture recently gave a talk about his research on Mexican pop culture. The presentation, which was well attended by students and faculty, included examples from pop art, film, music, and even *lucha libre* (wrestling). Couture's presentation was part of the Department of Modern Foreign Language's "Intercultural Dialogues" sessions, in which students can get a peek into their professors' research.



PROF. GARCÍA-CASTAÑÓN RECOGNIZED FOR TRANSLATIONS OF EARLY AMERICAN SONGS

Santiago García-Castañón traveled to Spain in mid-April to present his Spanish translations of early American songs in front of a large audience that included a delegation of US politicians, business (wo)men and diplomats. This is part of his collaboration with a research group that includes Dr. Kevin Kelly, a prestigious musicologist from the University of Georgia, Dr. Laura Nannette Mosley, also from UGA, and Javier Menéndez, a Spanish librarian specializing in old books. The poems are included in *The Yankee Songster's Pocket Companion*, a rare volume published in 1824, of which only three copies are known to exist, two of them in university libraries in the US (Harvard and Brown) and one in Spain. One of the songs included in this volume is "The Star-Spangled Banner," by Francis Scott Key, which became the national anthem of the United States. While the original poem by Key has four stanzas, only one is usually performed as our national anthem. García-Castañón's translation of the complete poem was highly praised and received ample media attention.



at left:
Dr. García-Castañón is pictured along with Dr. Laura Nannette Mosley, of the University of Georgia. This article appeared in *La Nueva España*, a daily newspaper in Asturias, the region of Spain from which Dr. García-Castañón hails.

WCUSPANHISH PROFESSOR WINS TEACHING AWARD

Dr. Lori Oxford, a **WCUSpanish** professor, is the 2014 recipient of the [College of Arts and Sciences Teaching Award](#).



above: Oxford with students in her SPAN 332 class (Sara Furr, Kaitlyn Howard, Bryce Payne, Quincy Goode, Oxford, Natalie Hylton, Tisha Carver, and Cola Williamson)

¡Muchas gracias! ¡Hasta agosto!