Every year, the World Languages Department invites high school students from across the region to compete in events in French and Spanish. The high schoolers compete by participating in skits, performing music, reciting poetry, speaking extemporaneously, explaining tasks ("how-to"), describing props ("show-and-tell") and battling in quiz bowls, separated for native and non-native speakers.

On March 15, WCU welcomed students and teachers from Robbinsville High, Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy, Henderson County Early College, Carolina Day, Asheville Middle, North Henderson High, and Franklin High. WCU faculty and students as well as volunteers from the local community worked to judge the students’ performances in their respective events and to help students stay on track when moving from event to event.
STUDENT PROFILES: DARIÉN HEWETT

Where are you from?
I was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. When I’m not at college, I live on Oak Island at the coast.

Where have you traveled?
Traveling is so important to me! I started seeing the world during the summer between 9th and 10th grades when I was a student ambassador for People to People – an organization started by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1955 that promotes world peace through understanding different cultures. At that time, I was the first person from my family to travel outside of the country (before me, it was my great grandmother when she traveled to America from the Czech Republic) and it truly opened my eyes. With People to People, I went to Australia for two weeks. A few years later, I traveled to Madrid, Spain. I fell in love with the city and the country, which influenced me to study in Valencia during my first summer in college. During a free weekend in Valencia, I traveled to Paris and after the Valencia trip ended, I went to Rome for a week. A few years later I went to Ecuador with a friend to meet his family. It was beautiful and definitely off the beaten path! The most recent trip I took was with my sister to Reykjavik, Iceland for spring break, and it encouraged me to live with the Earth, not against it. Throughout my traveling experiences, I’ve realized something very important about myself: I cannot live a fulfilling life without traveling. I believe that the real motivation behind each of my travels is to stay mentally healthy while seeing the world. There’s something peaceful about meeting new people and learning different cultures, and I believe I leave a piece of myself wherever I go.

You study Mechanical Engineering and Spanish. Why did you choose this combination?
I am a double major in Mechanical Engineering and Spanish and I always get asked why. I’ve known I wanted to go into engineering since I was in third grade when I visited the NASA space station in Houston. I wanted (and still want) to be an astronaut and the easiest way to do that is to become an engineer and work for NASA. It wasn’t until my first trip to Spain that I knew I wanted to learn Spanish, and I declared a minor. When I went to Valencia, we were having lunch at a castle when we learned that the Spanish program was in danger of being cut. I decided to show my support for the Spanish program by changing my minor in Spanish to a major. I don’t believe that this combination of majors was one I really meant to make, but instead it chose me. I’m more or less just chasing my dreams to one day live in a Spanish-speaking country and also go on the ultimate trip to outer space.

Tell us about your role in on-campus organizations.
I’m a member of the co-ed National Honors Fraternity Phi Sigma Pi. I also conduct undergraduate research in engineering with the SPIRIT program. I also work for residential living as a Residential Assistant in Scott Hall.

How do you spend your time when you’re not doing school-related stuff?
I’m a total foodie. When I am not doing homework or research, I’m traveling to Asheville and learning more about their food scene. I feel like I haven’t even cracked the surface, but I know where some great places to eat are.

Tell us about your motivation to study Spanish.
It started in Madrid. I started off hating Spanish in high school, and it wasn’t until I witnessed the language outside of a classroom that I instantly fell in love with it. Now I am motivated to communicate in Spanish because I realize where it can take me and I am ready to revel in the possibilities.

How do you use your Spanish most now?
I use my Spanish when I travel, in class, with friends and ironically job interviews. I am not fluent but I am constantly taking small steps and doing my best to expose myself to the language in order to learn new vocabulary and practice speaking. In the future I want to retire in Ecuador (hopefully) and open a pizza shop.

Anything else?
I’d also like to share a little piece of advice (especially for first-year students): travel and take your liberal studies courses seriously. I say this because it’s easy for students to get stressed out. I became so anxiety prone in college and the only way for me to escape was to travel and see the world. I think the only thing I will regret is not taking the time to study abroad and travel more. The reason I say take liberal studies seriously is because through my travels, I’ve been able to witness how well rounded people in other countries are. Learning about something you’re not necessarily interested in (at first) gives you a new perspective. My second piece of advice is to never give up on your dreams. If you truly want something, you won’t take no as an option, but at the same time, don’t get frustrated if your plans don’t work out; there’s more than one path to where you’re headed. My third and last piece of advice is a recycled one. As a freshman, Spanish overwhelmed me immensely and I basically had a meltdown in Dr. Oxford’s office. She gave me a piece of advice I have held on to for four years: if you’re stressed out, step away from your work and get your favorite snack and drink and relax. When you’re no longer stressed, finish your work. This advice is one that I always share with others and I am forever grateful for it.
Santiago García-Castañón will present a paper on “La iconicidad en Don Quijote de la Mancha: representaciones plásticas de lo monstruoso” at the International Conference on Comparative Literature (April 5-8) in San José, Costa Rica. In addition to his conference presentation, he will also give two invited poetry readings of his own works at the main Auditorium of the College of Humanities of the Universidad de Costa Rica and the Poetry Lounge of El Lobo Estepario.

He recently finished his Spanish translation of the complete sonnets by John Milton, the first time they are translated into Spanish maintaining the rigid metric structure of the sonnet. Here is the most famous one, “On His Blindness”...

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide;
“Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?”
I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need
Either man’s work or His own gifts. Who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state

Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

—at left: Trevor with Dr. Lori Oxford in front of the José Martí Memorial in the Plaza de la Revolución in Havana, Cuba when Trevor participated in *WCU en Cuba 2013.*
In February 2015, Garrett Fisher organized WCU’s first Romance Languages poetry reading in observance of Valentine’s Day. This year, Fisher expanded the event, sponsored by the Department of World Languages, to include poetry in any language of the WCU community. Students and faculty read works of well known poets as well as some original compositions in Spanish, Japanese, Persian, and Catalan.

Pictured below are students and faculty at the World Language Poetry Event 2016.

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**WaLC to Offer Spanish Refreshers and Reviews - Now on a Drop-In Basis**

The **Writing and Learning Commons** will offer a new service this month: drop-in tutoring, specifically designed for general review for students in levels 300 and up, plus language preparation for students planning to participate in an upcoming Spanish study abroad. Seasoned tutors **Sara Clark** and **Ashleigh Gay** will offer reviews of verb tenses, conjugations, vocabulary review, and other issues as needed. They will also provide conversation practice for students who need it.

These special drop-in sessions will take place:

- **Monday, April 11th** from 7pm to 8pm
- **Thursday, April 21st** from 5pm to 6pm

Questions? Contact either of the tutors (emails in the above link) or click [here](#) to schedule an appointment in the WaLC.
ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS
WCUSPANISH

COME PRACTICE AT TERTULIA
Anyone in the WCU community is welcome to come practice speaking Spanish with us at our weekly conversation hour at Tuck’s Tap & Grille:
• Monday, Apr. 4 at 5:30
• Tuesday, Apr. 12 at 5:00
• Thursday, Apr. 21 at 4:30
• Monday, Apr. 25 at 4:30

UPPER-LEVEL SPANISH OFFERINGS FOR FALL 2016:
SPAN 301 - Conversation and Composition I (García-Castañón)
SPAN 310 - Intro to Hispanic Literature (García-Castañón)
SPAN 321 - Hispanic Cultures and Civilizations I (García-Castañón)
SPAN 432 - North American and Caribbean Literature (Couture)
SPAN 462 - Spanish Syntax and Morphology (Centeno-Pulido)
SPAN 471 - Translation and Interpretation (Fisher)

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 with your news.

“Like” us on facebook: WCU Spanish
Follow us on twitter: @SpanishWCU
Come by and talk to us in McKee or check us out on the WCU Spanish program’s webpage.

¡Muchas gracias!