

ISSUE 1 · SUMMER 2022

# NEWSLETTER

University of Akron Modern Languages Department

## NEWS TO BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY

Our first newsletter is here to keep you updated on some exciting happenings in the Department of Modern Languages!

Have you recently published an article? Attended a conference or given a presentation? Do you have outstanding student(s) work you'd like to highlight? Have you been able to travel lately and have some stories or pictures you'd like to share? All of these things are newsletter worthy and we'd love to showcase them in future issues!

Details found on Page 6 on how to submit your materials for the Newsletter.



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## A Letter from the Interim Chair

DR. MARY BIDDINGER

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings from Olin Hall, and I hope you are having a safe and enjoyable summer. Before I go any further, I must thank Distinguished Professor and Assistant Chair Dr. Alejandra Zanetta for her efforts in helping me acclimate to the role of Interim Chair of the Department of Modern Languages. It was truly a pleasure to join you, and I am grateful for the warm welcome.

As a newcomer to the department, I am impressed with all that you are doing, especially in terms of interdisciplinary efforts and community engagement. As a way to increase visibility for the department, and boost student recruitment, Theresa has helped expand our presence on multiple social media platforms, as well as working with faculty members to create course flyers to post online and around campus. One of my goals was creating a department newsletter, and I am grateful to Theresa for compiling and designing this. Much applause, and many congratulations, to our faculty on the various accomplishments showcased here.

The past academic year brought more faculty and students back to campus, and it was a joy seeing the halls busy. I commend the Modern Languages faculty for their creativity and perseverance as we addressed the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. While we have accomplished major strides toward restoring our presence on campus, I wanted to implement some small measures to bring warmth and positivity to our workspace. In the spring semester I was happy to create a shared coffee station (located in the English department), and will continue the new tradition of giving all faculty a free cup ticket at the beginning of the semester, and at the end of the semester, when we could all use a boost. Additionally, we now have a complimentary tea station in Modern Languages, and I encourage you to help yourself.

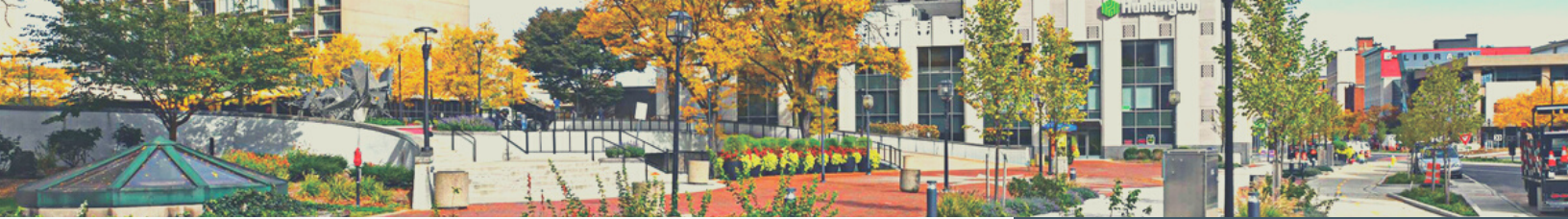
After noticing that my undergraduates were hungry in class, I made the decision to create and stock an Olin Hall cupboard where UA community members can help themselves to food as well as health/convenience items. With Theresa's help, we assembled the cupboard, located it in accessible spot in the DML lobby, and posted signs to spread the word. Thanks to those who have added supplies to our cupboard, and please make use of this resource should you ever need anything yourself.

This summer we have added some cheerful new plants to the office lobby, and are working on a updated bulletin board. We eagerly await the start of the fall semester, and seeing the halls bustling again. Thanks so much for your effort and support!

All the best,

Mary B.





## UA Spanish students take part in Community Engagement Program

BY DR. CAMELLE CRUZ-MARTES

Twelve students from the Department of Modern Languages volunteered in the Language Enrichment Program in March and April 2022. Sponsored by The Summit County Juvenile Court presided by Judge Linda Tucci Teodosio, the initiative was coordinated by Ms. Ruth Edge (Teacher of Integrated Social Studies, JDC).



The students assisted in lesson planning and delivery at the facility. Students at the Center were beginning Spanish students ages 10-17. Under the guidance of Dr. Camelle Cruz-Martes, Assistant Professor of Instruction, the students built rapport with their near-peers in detention, sharing cultural activities from the Hispanophone world. The program's goal was twofold: to enrich the juvenile students' studies while affording Akron students the opportunity to student teach and serve the community. The University of Akron students currently are taking Spanish courses at the intermediate and advanced level in the Modern Languages Department. One outcome, according to participants, was awareness-raising about the challenging realities many young people face in Akron. One valuable takeaway for students and detainees alike, according to Dr. Cruz-Martes, was the recognition of oneself in another, and the community and bonds that formed.

UA students now are more apt to link Spanish to the helping professions, and to the idea of service. One is considering working as a counselor, and another as a lawyer. One project for the future now under consideration is to develop a Book Talk with the teens, centered on readings that touch on issues in their lives, including urban studies, race, gender, and social justice. The program is ongoing, and anyone who wishes to participate, please contact Dr. Cruz-Martes.





## Yuki Fujiwara Sigler wins BCAS Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Award

“

In all the years Mrs. Sigler has been at The University of Akron, she has been an excellent colleague and a constant source of inspiration.

--DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR  
DR. MARIA ALEJANDRA ZANETTA

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YUKI FUJIWARA SIGLER AND DR. MITCHELL MCKINNEY, DEAN OF BUCHTEL COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



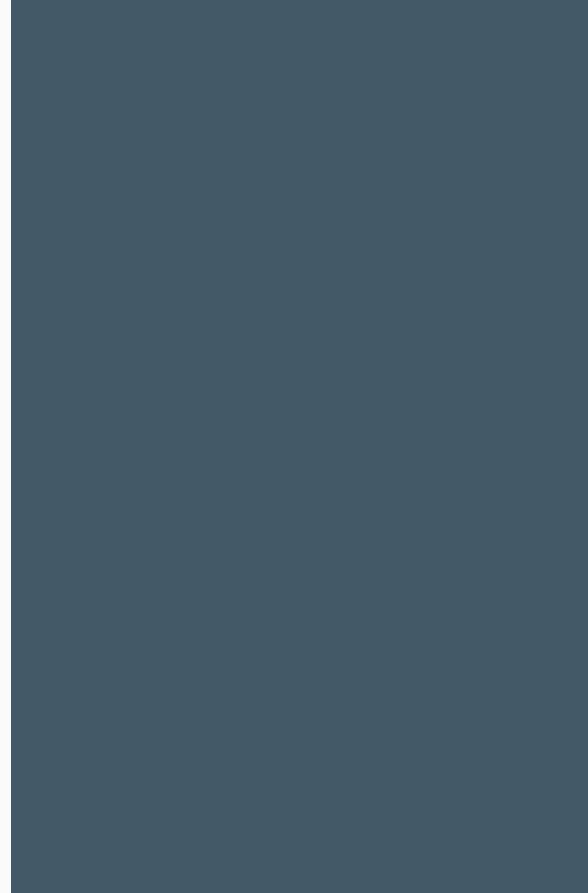


## Faculty Publications

Dr. Parizad Dejbord-Sawan's article on Uruguayan writer Cristina Peri Rossi, "Recuperación del espacio edénico en Once de Septiembre de Cristina Peri Rossi", was recently published in the 2022 January-March issue of Revista Iberoamericana (Vol. LXXXVIII No. 278 ). In 2021, author Cristina Peri Rossi won the prestigious Premio Cervantes and is only the 6th woman to ever receive the most important award in Spanish-language literature.

Earlier this year, Dr. Maria Alejandra Zanetta was interviewed on Spanish National Television. A special segment was aired to honor Maruja Mallo's 120th birthday. The program, Objetivo Igualdad, ("Objective Equality") is a pioneering program on Spanish Public Television (RTVE) that seeks to address sexist stereotypes and enhance women's visibility. As an internationally recognized expert in the art of Spanish women artists of the Avant Garde period, and in Maruja Mallo, Zanetta was asked to offer her insights on the importance of Maruja Mallo's art and legacy.

Dr. Alexis Ortiz's article titled "¿Liberal radical o romántico? Ignacio Ramírez y el pensamiento romántico" was recently published in A Contracorriente in the Spring Issue (Vol. 19 No. 3). If you would like to read the entire article, please follow the link provided below.  
<https://acontracorriente.chass.ncsu.edu/index.php/acontracorriente/article/view/2050>





## Announcements, Events, and Updates

### Announcements

Irene Kotyk, Spanish Major and Honors student, graduated this Spring.

Rae Irons, Anthropology Major, French minor, Arabic minor, and French tutor for the Department, also graduated this Spring.

### Updates

Course codes are in the process of being changed from numbers to letters.

3501 --> ARAB: Arabic  
3502 --> CHIN: Chinese  
3510 --> LATN: Latin  
3520 --> FREN: French  
3530 --> GERM: German  
3550 --> ITAL: Italian  
3560 --> JAPN: Japanese  
3580 --> SPAN: Spanish

Brightspace will update accordingly and the University is working on merging the correct pages but if you notice anything amiss or it has not merged correctly, please feel free to contact Theresa or [ddshelp@uakron.edu](mailto:ddshelp@uakron.edu) directly.

## What's Happening?

**Olin Hall Community Cupboard is now open!**

**Located by the entrance to the Department there are a variety of food and hygiene products. Take what you need.**

**Want to submit material for the Newsletter? You can do so by scanning the QR code below for the submission form or e-mailing Theresa at [tmp77@uakron.edu](mailto:tmp77@uakron.edu)**

