AEE is “the-place-to-go” when you need a book, need tutoring, or host meetings. This working space has become the students’ best provider of support and guidance throughout this quarter.

This year, AEE hosted various events on campus. In April 2009 was the Modern Language Month. AEE had the honor to co-sponsor with the Department of Modern Languages and Literature, a bilingual talk on poetry with Cuban-born author Nestor Diaz de Villegas. Mr. Diaz has published in numerous newspapers and literary magazines in the U.S. and abroad. He is the winner of the 2004 Latino Book Award for best book of the year. With such an important author visiting CSULA, it was no surprise that there was a full audience waiting for him to talk about his work.

Mr. Diaz reminisced about his early days in Florida, when he used to work in a small store writing poetry on old cardboard boxes as thoughts came to his head (and as long as the boss was not around). It was so easy for him to create a connection with the audience (as if all of us were personal friends) that we easily laughed with him as he shared some of his most intimate moments. By the end of his presentation, everybody present felt they got to know the author, the husband, and traditional folkloric dance, games and music of Cuba. It was very successful event. AEE looks forward to having this great poet back at CSULA.

Last fall, AEE hosted Periodismo en Español with radio journalist Pascual Menutti. The goal of this workshop was to provide the students majoring in Spanish to explore career options and an opportunity to speak with professionals already in the workforce.

Mr. Menutti, an important radio personality in Argentina, had an open meeting with the students. He shared his experiences and answered questions from the students. He also offered a radio broadcasting workshop here at the university. Mr. Menutti encouraged students to prepare and work hard to achieve their goals.

It is through events like this that AEE wants to promote the Spanish language and encourage the students to continue their education so they can discover all the things they can do once they graduate. It will be a great idea to have a Spanish Journalism program here at CSULA and AEE is doing all it can to help it become a reality for our students.

AEE is very proud and excited for its participation on this year’s Cinco de Mayo Celebration. Helping promote cultural awareness on campus has been one of AEE’s main emphases. AEE was honored to have participated in this collaboration with other campus organizations — planning, organizing, and promoting the event.

The very successful event included delicious food, folkloric dance, traditional games and music. AEE members had a fantastic experience in supporting this event, where our campus community had the opportunity to learn about and enjoy the Hispanic culture.

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Jesús Gastelum and Adán Pereira shared the first place, and Jardiel Ferreyra won the second place of the contest. AEE looks forwards to sponsoring more contests and/or events of similar nature.

AEE is proud of everything it has accomplished, not only in this last year, but everything that it has accomplished since it was revived two years ago. All of the members have worked hard to make every event possible, but it is not time to stop. Next year will present new challenges, but from those challenges will come the opportunity to become stronger as a group and to achieve even more.

Among AEE’s plans for the 2009-2010 school year is to continue what has been started. Ideas do not live only on paper. It is for that reason that we must go on with the hard work that we have done until now. AEE must continue reaching out into the community and into our fellow students. If we intend to grow as an association we need more than ever the support of all of the Spanish section, the MLL department and of all of those who believe in what AEE stands for. The AEE library will continue, the workshops will continue, the guest speakers will continue. The association and community building will continue. We have come a long way and the only plan we can guarantee is that we will stay true to what we believe in and bring the best out of every student and every person who crosses paths with AEE.

(Written by Raúl González, Thania Muñoz, Heriberto Orea, and Melina Sánchez)

Our alumnus Cristián H. Ricci has won the 2009 Distinguished Early Career Research Award from the Academic Senate of the University of California at Merced, for his recently published book El espacio urbano en la narrativa del Madrid de la Edad de Plata (1900-1938) (Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009). His book assesses the cultural history of Madrid and its relation to the cultural history of Spain through examining the literature written in and on Madrid in the first four decades of the 20th Century, from the so-called Generation of 98 (Modernismo) to the Spanish Civil War. Cristián H. Ricci traces the history of this writerly consciousness in the early twentieth century, combining historical, biographical, and literary sources. Ricci’s study of Madrid as a place to which writers migrated at the turn of the century, as well as a subject of their writing, forges a new direction in twentieth-century Peninsular studies.

Currently, Cristián H. Ricci is finishing a book on Moroccan literature written in Castilian and Catalan, entitled ¡Hay moros en la costa! (Forthcoming in 2010) and a new anthology on Moroccan writers of Castilian expression entitled Letras Marruecas (Ed. Verbum. Forthcoming in 2010). He is the author of more than thirty articles and two other anthologies: one co-edited with Dr. Gustavo Geirola on Argentinian literature ¡Dale nomás! ¡Dale que va! and the other one on Israeli and Arabic writers of Castilian expression Caminos para la paz. Escritores israelíes y árabes en castellano. Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 2008). The latter was co-edited with UC, Merced professor, Ignacio López-Calvo. Ricci completed his BA in Spanish (Magna Cum Laude) in our department in 1998, and then his Ph.D. in Spanish at UC Santa Barbara in 2003. While at CSULA, he won the Florence Bonhard Scholarship, the Sigma Delta Pi Gabriela Mistral prize, the 1998 Alumni Certificate of Honor, and he was a recipient of the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund from 1997 through 2003. He was also a recipient of the Forgivable Loan/Doctoral Incentive Program of the CSU system for 2001 through 2003. Since 2004, he has been teaching in a tenure track position at UC Merced.

Congratulations, Cristián, we are very proud of you and wish you the best in your brilliant academic career.

FACULTY NEWS

During the 2008/2009 academic year, Prof. Pablo Baler published, in cooperation with Dr. Matt Losada, a series of translations in two issues of the literary magazine Golden Handcuffs Review (GHR).

In January 2009, Baler’s essay book Los sentidos de la distorsión: fantasías epistemológicas del neobarroco latinoamericano was published by Editorial Corregidor’s Nueva Crítica Hispanoamericana collection (Buenos Aires, Argentina).

Also in January, Baler’s article “Del perro andaluz al fantasma de la libertad: la evolución del surrealismo en Luis Buñuel” was published by online magazine KARPA, Journal of Theatrical and Visual Culture Criticism. (2.1. January, 2009).

In February, Baler gave a presentation at the Huntington Library in Pasadena. The lecture, entitled “The bionic man, the blind poet, and the utopia of absolute representation” was part of the Powerful Vision Series organized by Cal State L.A.’s College of Arts and Letters. Participants included Professors José Cruz González, Suzanne Regan, and Hae-Kyung Lee.


In October 2008, Baler invited veteran broadcast journalist Pascual Menutti to a two day, highly successful event on campus. Menutti, one of Argentina’s most recognizable radio voices discussed his career and the secrets of his trade during a presentation entitled “Periodismo en Español.” The following day, Menutti offered a workshop on radio journalism skills.

Also, as part of the Spanish 417 class “Latin American Short Story,” Prof. Baler, in cooperation with students Alicia Joya, Luis Vargas and Laura Escarcega, edited a collection of short stories written by students and published through Blurb.com. CUATROCIENTOSDIECISIETE can be acquired through that same website.

Prof. Baler is currently working on a translation of poetry written by Eduardo D’Anna forthcoming Fall 2009 by Golden Handcuffs Review (Vol. 1 No. 12). And as promised last year after the Imposturas event, an Imposturas 2.0 is in the works for Fall 2009, featuring four Latin American poets reciting and sharing their views about the art and magic of poetry.

Domnita Dumitrescu deserves congratulations for having been elected for a three year term to the Executive Council of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, representing the College/University constituency.

She published the article “Interrogative allo-repetitions in Mexican Spanish: Discourse functions and (im)politeness strategies,” in the journal Pragmatics, vol 18, No.4 (2008): 659-680 (invited contribution to a special issue dedicated to The Discourse of Politeness in Spanish). She also published “El español en los Estados Unidos: La controversia sobre el Spanglish dentro (y más allá) del mundo académico” in Estudios hispánicos, vol i: Lingüística y didáctica, ed. by Sandra Reinheimer Ripaeanu & Mihai Iacob, Bucuresti: Editura Universitatii din Bucuresti, 2008, 137-164. Two more chapters in scholarly books and one contribution continued on page 4
For the 2009 annual meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese which was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in July 2009. She organized a session on Current Forms of Address in the Hispanic World for the, to be, and she is preparing the Fall meeting of the Southern California chapter of this organization, to take place at Cal State L.A., in October 2009.

It is also worth mentioning that her upper-division course, Spanish 402 (Spanish in the United States) was approved and she taught it for the first time in Spring 2009, to a group of Spanish majors and graduates interested in this new subject.

Finally, and on a different note, she was featured, as an Obama fan, in an interview filmed on campus, a few days before the elections, and broadcast in Romania, on the national network.

Dr. Gaston Alzate traveled to Mexico City in June 2008 in order to attend the 7th International Cabaret Theater Festival. At this event he and Professor Paola Marín received the Cabaret Theater Research Award from Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret Company.

In 2008, Dr. Alzate mentored Thania Muñoz, graduate Spanish student, apply for a very prestigious Sally Casanova pre-doctoral fellowship. Miss Muñoz successfully obtained the fellowship and will be attending UC Irvine in the Fall 2009.

In 2009, Dr. Alzate mentored two more graduate Spanish students, Paola Gómez and Luis Vargas for the same fellowship.
Dr. Alzate and Professor Cruz-Gonzalez prepared a staged reading of a play written by Cruz-González and translated by Alzate into Spanish (Mariachi Quixote).

Faculty and students of Spanish, music, and theater collaborated in this effort. It was presented to the public at the State Playhouse on June 1, 2009, with an excellent response from the audience.

The production featured 32 actor/readers and Cal State L.A.'s new Golden Eagle Mariachi Band – or Mariachi Aguila de Oro. Inspired by Miguel de Cervantes’ tale of Don Quixote penned four centuries ago, Cal State L.A. Theatre Arts Professor José Cruz González rewrote the story, placing it in a backyard in the east Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights. González co-directed the production with Professor Alzate. The play was a 2000 regional finalist in the Kennedy Center’s American College Theatre Festival. Cindy Flores was the musical director.

According to González, “In the story, everybody in the neighborhood thinks that Don Quezada is crazy because he believes he’s a mariachi. Trouble soon follows when Don Quezada’s next door neighbor, Sanchi, a 16-year-old girl starts to believe him.”

In the fall 2008 he attended two academic conferences. One on Mexican Theater at U of Texas at El Paso (November 12-15, 2008), and another one in UCLA, November 20-23, 2008.

In the spring 2009 Dr. Alzate became co-director of the theater research seminar founded by Professor Juan Villegas at UC Irvine. Participants are faculty and graduate students who meet monthly in order to share and discuss recent works, theoretical frameworks, and research endeavors.

At the beginning of June 2009 his research article entitled “Cuatro dificultades para entender el cabaret mexicano” appeared in Conjunto magazine No. 148-149 (Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba). He also submitted three more that have been approved for publication. One on Jesusa Rodriguez’ recent work (to be published in a volume on Mexican theater to be released by Universidad Veracruzana and edited by Prof. Claudia Gidi), another one on contemporary Colombian Cinema to be published in a special issue of Nuestra America dedicated to Colombia (Universidade Fernando Pessoa, Portugal), and a third one on Tito Vasconcelos that will appear on a volume edited by Dr. Beatriz Rizk, Director of the International Hispanic Theater Festival of Miami.

Revista Karpa is a new journal on theatricalities, visual arts, and culture co-edited by Professors Marin and Alzate. The department is very glad to inform articles published in KARPA are already being indexed in the MLA International Bibliography. The second issue was released in July 2008, and the third issue in January 2009.

In November 2008 Professors Paola Marin and Gaston Alzate gave a plenary presentation on KARPA as part of Women’s Performance in the Americas at UCLA. This conference was organized by the Department of Performance Studies and co-sponsored by the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics from NYU.

In October 30, 2009, journalist Rubén Luengas, the Emmy Award-winning anchor of En Contexto, Los Angeles Chanel 52, (Telemundo) brought En Contexto to campus for a live late-night newscast.
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Luengas conducted live interviews with Cal State LA faculty members Beth Baker-Cristales (Anthropology), Michael Soldatenko (Chicano Studies) and Gastón Alzate (Modern Languages and Literatures).

In November 2008, Professor Paola Marin participated in A Bi-National Celebration of Mexican Theater (UTEP-Ciudad Juarez) conference. He presented a paper entitled “Cuerpo e Historia en FOSA de Alvaro Villalobos.”

Professor Marin also published a review of Cervantes y el mundo del teatro in GESTOS (UC Irvine, May 2009) and has another one forthcoming in Cincinnati Romance Review dealing with Dr. Dana Bultman’s book on the Golden Age of Spain (Heretical Mixtures). Her article on Colombo-Mexican Performance artist Alvaro Villalobos will be published in a volume on Hispanic theater edited by Dr. Beatriz Rizk, director of the International Hispanic Theatre Festival of Miami.

As advisor to AEE, Professor Marin wants to congratulate all members for the many successful events related to community building, tutoring, and the promotion of Spanish language held throughout this academic year, including two events co-sponsored by the Department of Modern Languages: a poetry reading by Cuban author Néstor Diaz de Villegas and the Spanish Poetry Contest.

It is worth emphasizing that students in programs other than Spanish (such as Latin American Studies and TESOL) submitted poems to this contest, thus proving that many students on campus are eager to participate in cultural activities in the Spanish language.

Thania Muñoz, who served as president of AEE will be doing her doctoral studies at UC Irvine. AEE sends heartfelt thanks for a job well done and wishes much success in her endeavors.

The remaining officers and close collaborators of AEE will continue doing their best to enhance the academic, social, and cultural opportunities of all students interested in the Spanish language at CSULA.

The newly elected president is Raúl González; vice-president, Heriberto Orea, Francelia Hernández, Yvette Verdin, Jardiel Ferreyra, and Albert Price will continue in their current positions.

Special appreciation and thanks goes out to everyone who participated and contributed generously their time and effort to make AEE what it is today.

MODERN LANGUAGE LAB

Dr. Shijuan Liu
Lab Director

For the 2008-09 academic year, Dr. Liu in collaboration with Dr. Kylie Hsu submitted a grant proposal for the Discipline Research Project (DRP) grant in which they received funding from the CSU Chancellor’s Office 2009-2011. This project involved Chinese faculty from three CSU campuses. Dr. Liu also partnered with Dr. Sachiko Matsunaga in January 1009 for another proposal in which they would study the use of virtual worlds (e.g., Second Life) to teach Chinese and Korean language courses online. The proposal was submitted to the National Endowment for Humanities for review.


Dr. Liu also presented at two local
Modern Language Lab

The 2008-09 academic year was an exciting year for the Modern Language Lab. In Fall 2008, the Department regained control of the lab through the hiring of a faculty lab director, Dr. Shijuan Liu. The functions and services of the lab have been greatly improved and expanded under Dr. Liu’s leadership.

Services Offered by the Lab

Each quarter the lab serves about 4,000 visits on average from students who study in the lab for more than 40,000 hours in total for the language courses offered by the Department. Students report that they like studying in the lab. As one student said, “I liked going to the lab because there were no outside distractions stopping me from doing my work.” Most instructors teaching lower level language courses like to track their students’ weekly attendance in the lab. The attendance report used to be handled manually. From Fall 2008, the lab began to use the software Time Clock Manager Pro to track and report student lab attendance, and has been sending to about 20 instructors weekly reports and quarter reports of the time spent by each of their students.

The lab also helps to administer placement tests and other tests requested by faculty. In 2008-09, the lab administered the tests to about 250 students. In winter quarter the lab initiated a Language Exchange Partner Project to help interested students to find a partner for language practice. The lab has received several applications since then, and continues to provide the service to students in the Department and the University. When assistance was available, the lab also provided extra services, such as moving tech carts to classrooms for faculty, helping videotaping events organized by faculty, making copies of software programs and materials available in the lab that do not infringe upon copyrights for students. An increasing number of faculty has shown interest in using the lab and integrating technology into their courses since Fall 2008. The lab was reserved for faculty who needed to use it for some class meetings, e.g., Dr. Alzate’s oral tests and quizzes for his Spanish classes; Dr. Koike’s online activities that she designed for her Japanese classes.

Modern Languages and Literatures

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conferences: TechEd 2009 International Conference & Exposition held at Ontario Convention Center, CA. The title of her two presentations were: Integrating Technology into Language Courses: Issues & Recommendations; Assessing Students Online Versus Face to Face: Similarities & Differences. Language Technology Conference held at Pomona College, CA. The title of her presentation was Enhancing National Standards for Foreign Language Learning with web 2.0 technologies. Additionally, Dr. Liu attended the following workshops and professional events: Workshop on Using Web Resources in Teaching Chinese, California State University at Long Beach; 2009 Annual Convention and Spring Gathering of the Chinese Scholars Association; Discipline Research Project Leaders Planning Meeting and workshop for participants organized by the California State University Chancellor’s Office; and the 2009 USC Symposium on Chinese Language Instruction: Standards and Evaluations in Curriculum and Classrooms.