
DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE

CURRENT NEWS 27 SEPTEMBER 2010

Center helps DOD build international bonds

A graduation ceremony at the Defense Language Institute English Language Center is not what one would consider typical. As the students' names are read, they approach the stage wearing the uniforms of their respective countries. From privates through generals, across all the services, these men and women have traveled from around the world to attend classes for English proficiency, specialized English training or instructor development. Every Thursday, an average of 60 students graduate and return to their countries of origin or continue to follow-on training at U.S. military training sites, equipped with the English language proficiency necessary to adapt to the American and U.S. military cultures.

Military Specialists Aim to Improve Cultural Understanding

The specialists will build on their existing language skills and cultural understanding by gathering local knowledge and fostering contacts at bazaars, shuras and other places where local people gather. At full strength, the unit will have forty two members and is open to all trades in the three Services and will also support cultural training in the wider military and other government departments.

Training the Troops 'Hyperrealistically'

After she retired in 2005, she and her husband, Leroy, who is also a retired Army veteran, decided to form a business that did just that — provide the most realistic cultural awareness and military training to troops being transferred to these two inhospitable parts of the world. The key element missing from the Army's training was a more realistic approach to what soldiers should expect along with a cultural awareness and rudimentary language skills that could give them an edge in their mission, she said. To accomplish that, the Latshaws enlisted native Iraqi people to play residents of an authentically simulated Iraqi village.

Opportunity knocks ... for SMEs with language skills

Preparing to address the conference and participate in a round-table discussion on languages, competitiveness and employability, Androulla Vassiliou, the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, stressed the importance of overcoming linguistic barriers. 'Europeans are increasingly aware of the difference that foreign language skills can make in their lives,' she said. 'As well as being a practical asset for an individual's personal development, languages mean more business for companies, giving them a competitive edge and opening up export markets.' The European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme supports language activities and projects to the tune of EUR 50 million each year.

Cuts hurting language classes

Everyone is aware of the current budgetary crisis in Louisiana and its consequences for education in the state. What may have gone unnoticed is the damage that is being done to foreign language education in Louisiana. From the elementary to the university level, cuts have eliminated or reduced language programs. Parents, students and graduates recently had to rally in support of the highly successful immersion programs slated to be eliminated in Calcasieu Parish. Universities like LSU and Southeastern are dropping relatively inexpensive language programs in the name of budget cuts. Language skills are a necessity for the future success of this global generation. The Louisiana Foreign Language Teachers Association asks Louisiana citizens to consider how these widespread trends are closing doors of opportunity for our children.

Schools at below-standard level for languages

This is European Day of Languages [Sunday, September 26], which is this year focusing on language skills for business. Up to 11% of small and medium businesses in Europe have said they have lost contracts because of a lack of language skills. Ruth Deasy of the European Commission Representation in Dublin has said: "There should be more focus on foreign languages in Ireland's schools, starting at primary level."

PREVIOUS NEWS

Army Corps completes \$28 million school building for Defense Language Institute

Rising above the hills of the Presidio of Monterey is the Defense Language Institute's new general instruction building (GIB), completed in September by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Sacramento District. The \$28 million building will house 60 classrooms for military students learning foreign languages, the first of three scheduled for Corps construction to accommodate the growing DLI. "The GIB will be a state-of-the-art instruction facility that will add 9.5 percent classroom capacity," said Col. Darcy Brewer, garrison commander at the Presidio of Monterey.

Contractor helps troops gain conversation skills for war zone

In a mock Afghan village on the Quantico Marine base, Sloan Mann, a military contractor, guided several Marines into a sweltering concrete room. They came to meet a fake mullah, played by an Afghan American actor. Mann, a former Army infantry officer, watched as the Marines practiced the seemingly straightforward tactic of chatting up Afghan village leaders. But the Marines, weeks from deploying to Helmand province, stumbled through their conversations. Their encounters with the "mullah" felt like bad first dates, with the Americans posing robotic questions about the village. Sgt. Walton Cabrera, 25, an aspiring police officer from Southern California, sat before the mullah but couldn't ease into a groove. "So . . . how's everything in the village so far?" he asked. "Has the population changed?"

Rosetta Stone dropped for families as free language software choice

The Marine Corps is slated to replace the Rosetta Stone foreign language training program for active-duty family members with Mango Languages software beginning Sept. 29, 2010. The Rosetta Stone contract for dependents was not renewed due to the company's problems of meeting the Corps' usage demands. "We're a small base, so we didn't have as much of a problem with (wait-lists)," said Bonnie Miller, library technician supervisor. "With Mango, we don't have to worry about that." The Mango contract allows all dependents registered with the station library to sign up for a language course, whereas Rosetta Stone had a set limit of language course registrations available.

Kanagawa to open language center

The Kanagawa Prefectural Government is opening a language and cultural institute in Yokohama in January to help foreign residents learn basic Japanese, while assisting schoolteachers and local government officials as they try to deal with foreign residents. Kokusai Gengo Bunka Akademia will also offer training to English- and other foreign-language teachers as well as lectures on foreign languages and cultures.

Australian DoD: Care not lost in translation in Pakistan

"The language spoken in Pakistan is a combination of three languages - it is mainly Saraki which is a combination of Urdu and Punjabi," WO2 Singh said. "Punjabi is my native language by way of background, I am Indian, and Urdu is something I have learned." During his deployment WO2 Singh has been dealing with contractual work, he communicates daily with local staff, and translates in the medical facility and with the Pakistan Military.

Critical Language Scholarship Program

Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) institutes provide fully-funded group-based intensive language instruction and structured cultural enrichment experiences for seven to ten weeks for U.S. citizen

undergraduate, Master's and Ph.D. students. Arabic, Persian: Advanced beginning, intermediate or advanced level; Azerbaijani, Bangla/Bengali, Hindi, Indonesian, Korean, Punjabi, Turkish, Urdu: Beginning, intermediate or advanced level; Chinese, Japanese, Russian: Intermediate or advanced level.

Baby Fingers Partners with the ROC: Resource Opportunity Center

Lora Heller, founding director of Baby Fingers LLC, now partners with the ROC, a resource center for NYC families and students who are home-schooled. American Sign Language (ASL) is the 3rd most used language in the United States. Many schools are now adopting ASL as a foreign language requirement, and kids in NYC are jumping on board. At the ROC, Baby Fingers offers classes for parents and babies, as well as school age children to enhance their language development and supplement their overall educational experience. Learning American Sign Language (ASL) provides an opportunity to express oneself through a creative, visual language while opening up the opportunity to interact with another culture right in one's own community.

Foreign language for grades K-3 in Saugus

Foreign language has been introduced as an encore subject for students at the elementary level in Saugus. School Committee members approved a fiscal 2011 budget that adjusted the elementary school schedules to offer foreign language in grades K-3. A K-3 Spanish teacher was brought on board to work with students. Executive Director of Finance and Operations Sam Rippin said the plan is to alternate semesters, with students taking music for half the year and then foreign language for the other half.

Building language skills more critical for boys than girls, study finds

Developing language skills appears to be more important for boys than girls in helping them to develop self-control and, ultimately, succeed in school, according to a study led by a Michigan State University researcher. The researchers examined data on children as they aged from 1 to 3 and their mothers who participated in the National Early Head Start Research and Evaluation study. As with previous research, Vallotton and Ayoub found that language skills – specifically the building of vocabulary – help children regulate their emotions and behavior and that boys lag behind girls in both language skills and self-regulation. What was surprising, Vallotton said, was that language skills seemed so much more important to the regulation of boys' behavior. While girls overall seemed to have a more natural ability to control themselves and focus, boys with a strong vocabulary showed a dramatic increase in this ability to self-regulate – even doing as well in this regard as girls with a strong vocabulary.

Oberlin College students make foreign language elementary

These kindergartners are part of a program that began six years ago in the Oberlin school system to expose foreign language to younger children. "It seems like the younger they are, the more they pick up the language," said teacher Mari Castaldi. "We don't speak any English, but the kids have been open and receptive to it. "There's times when we use hand gestures as we're telling them to do something in Spanish and even though it's never explained to them what we're saying, by year end they can tell you exactly what it means." Castaldi, 21, is a politics and Latin American studies major at Oberlin College, and she is one of about 50 college students who teach Spanish to kindergarten through fifth grade at Oberlin's public elementary schools. Students teach the courses for college credit through a program started in 2004 by Kim Faber, a linguistics professor at the college.

How to Find the Time to Learn a New Foreign Language

With the frenetic rhythm of nowadays, it often seems impossible to fit a(nother) foreign language into your busy schedule. But when you think of the benefits this new knowledge entails, it also seems impossible not to try, right? So, what can you do to bring in the magic and conjure up enough time to start learning a language? Here are seven of my favorite strategies...

Gathering around la Mesa

Paul Worley, who played a large part in resuming the meetings after they disbanded several years ago, says that programs like La Mesa Española are great for students who would like to improve their language skills. One of the definite advantages of these meetings is the informal atmosphere; the

conversation, instead of classroom topics like history and culture, tends to be about things like family, summer vacations and the big game the weekend before.

It's Never Too Late To Learn

Every day in Pickens County we have adults who are struggling with literacy or language skills, who struggle to find or keep a job, or who are not prepared to enter college or vocational training. Progress is being made through the Adult Learning program.