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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 28 SEPTEMBER 2010**

#### **Sing-A-Lingo Supports the Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act (H.R 6036)**

A bill, called The Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act (H.R. 6036), recently introduced into congress draws on what language experts have known for a long time: children are efficient language learners-- the earlier the better. This bill links our nation's underperforming k-12 language programs with risks to our national security and economic future. Sing-A-Lingo, whose award-winning products help children, parents and teachers bring language to young children, is proud to support this bill.

#### **Afghanistan adds female officers to swelling army**

Afghanistan's army got its first female officers in decades on Thursday when 29 women graduated in a class of new recruits who hope to help take the lead role in national security from foreign forces by 2014. President Hamid Karzai, NATO and the United States have been pushing to expand and train Afghanistan's army, police and other security forces to allow them to take over during a planned drawdown of foreign troops. "I am fully committed to serving my country, the same way as my Afghan brothers currently serving in the army. That is why I decided to join," said female officer Mari Sharifi after the graduation ceremony at the Kabul Army Training Centre.

#### **Latvians on top of EU by knowledge of foreign language**

A new survey by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, on perceived language skills of adults based on 2007 results showed significant differences in knowledge of a foreign language. By the percentage of people considering themselves as being proficient, Latvia was on top with 55%, followed by Slovenia (45%), Slovakia (44%) and Lithuania (41.6%). 28% of Estonians deemed themselves as proficient. The proportion of those declaring themselves as being good was highest in Sweden (40%), Estonia and Slovenia (both 33%), Finland and Cyprus (both 32%). While the rest of EU nations including Estonians chose English as their best known foreign language, for Latvians, Lithuanians and Poles it was Russian. For the British it was French and for Slovaks it was Czech.

#### **Holness Says Gov't Reviving Foreign Languages in Schools Policy**

Education Minister, Hon. Andrew Holness, says the government will revive its policy supporting the teaching of foreign languages in schools, to secure Jamaica's place as a viable trading partner with non-English speaking countries. Mr. Holness was addressing educators at the Foreign Language Workshop for Teachers at the Caenwood Centre, Kingston Friday (September 24).

#### **Award-winning teacher shares passion for language**

"My students constantly remind me of the value of language learning," Harkins said. "The ability to communicate with others is the single greatest skill which unites the human race. My students find joy in simple greetings to total strangers in another language."

#### **Turkish intelligence agency looks for new personnel with language skills**

The National Intelligence Organization, or MIT, is looking for new personnel with a command of various languages including Kurdish and Armenian. According to a job advertisement published in various newspapers including daily Hürriyet's human resources supplement over the weekend and on Monday, the other languages MIT is looking for in candidates are Arabic, Croatian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Farsi, Georgian, Hebrew, Macedonian, Russian, Sorani and Greek. The advertisement is also on MIT's website.

### **Kindergarten Teacher Launches Free Site to Introduce Children to Five Different Languages**

A new Web site called Chillola.com is giving parents a fun, safe learning environment where their kids can explore different languages. Chillola.com employs a playful, child-oriented theme to introduce children to five languages: English, Spanish, French, German and Italian. "Chillola.com is designed to give children all over the world the opportunity to explore foreign languages, and learn about different countries, cultures and people," said Tina Jack, a California-based kindergarten teacher who owns the Web site.

### **How a bright idea translates into success**

Ulster Language Services is a one-stop-shop for all foreign language requirements — translation, interpreting and tuition for businesses, organisations or individuals who need documents translated, require the assistance of an interpreter to communicate with their foreign clients or staff, or wish to learn a language for business or leisure purposes. My role is to identify what clients' foreign language requirements are and to select suitably qualified linguists who can meet these requirements.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

### **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."

### **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.