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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 1 NOVEMBER 2010**

#### **American female troops engage Afghan women**

Some great work being done by our female service-members. In the Afghan culture, it is only accepted that women would work with women. Across Afghanistan, "Female Engagement Teams" of U.S. military women are working to [strengthen relationships with rural Afghan women](#). It's something that their male counterparts aren't able to do given the cultural roles of women in the country.

"Very rarely are [women] allowed to go outside the compounds without a male escort, so it's imperative that we get the female Marines to go to them," said 1st Lt. Quincy Washa, a Female Engagement Team platoon commander.

#### **Navy College enacts changes in Southwest region**

Due to reduced staffing, Defense Language Proficiency Tests (DLPT) and the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) are now offered at 10 locations worldwide. In the Southwest region, these defense language tests are available at Naval Base San Diego.

#### **Mandarin Chinese taught in Berks from remote site: BCIU uses electronics to link teachers, students in 5 school districts**

The BCIU is using three guest teachers from China, each a college student pursuing a degree in education. And part of a \$900,000 federal Foreign Language Assistance Program grant was spent to hire a full-time teacher, although that money will run out in 2012. The idea behind the distance-learning program is that by joining forces, cash-strapped districts can still provide a multitude of options to their students. "A small group of teachers can service a large group of students," said William F. Miller, the BCIU chief information officer. "It's really very cost effective."

#### **NHS Checks on EU Doctors to Get Centralized**

The control of evaluating the competence and language skills of doctors will be handed over to the NHS in England from EU, as some imperfections have come out in the current system of inspections. As per the plans of the Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, the management and control of primary care services will be shifted to GP consortium from local NHS trusts, but for the checks on foreign doctors, which are currently carried out by Europe, a new central board will be established.

#### **Learn as many languages as possible**

I refer to "History must be balanced," (*The Star*, Oct 2) in which MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek suggested Malaysians master three languages, namely Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mandarin. I fully support his idea and share his sentiment. Malaysia is a unique country blessed with a variety of religions, races, languages, cultures and ways of life. All the world's major religions can be found here.

#### **Parents agree: Foreign language skills are valuable**

The Williamson County School Board has been developing a strategic plan that would serve as a road map for the district during the next five to seven years. One aspect of the vision statement regarding student programs sets as a goal that the county will graduate students fluent in English and at least one foreign language. It doesn't state what language that might be, or how the district will go about growing a program that would move children toward fluency in a second language. County middle schools offer foreign language, and high school students are required to take at least two years. Some of the offerings include Spanish, German, French and Latin.

### **OVU expands Chinese language course**

In 2011-12 OVU will offer Chinese courses ranging from I-IV to allow students to continue their foreign language education. "Statistics show that one fourth of the planet's population speak Chinese as their first language and by speaking both English and Chinese you will be able to converse with one-half of the entire human race," said Steven Hardy, OVU dean of the college of arts and sciences. "OVU requires a diversity experience before graduation, and two semesters of Chinese can fulfill this requirement."

### **First in Print: Police officers find uses for foreign language abilities**

When a local restaurant was robbed at gunpoint recently, Springfield police faced a daunting task: interviewing employees who speak only Mandarin Chinese. Fortunately for those detectives, Springfield Police Officer David Tan is fluent in the language and was able to translate. Tan is one of three city officers who can speak languages other than English. That is the highest number of bilingual officers in the department's history, according to Deputy Chief Cliff Buscher.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

### **Teaching for a Shared Future: Think Global**

American students' lack of knowledge about the world is unsettling. According to surveys by the National Geographic Society and the Asia Society, young Americans are next to last in their knowledge of geography and current affairs compared with peers in eight other countries, and an overwhelming majority of college-bound seniors cannot find Afghanistan, Iraq, or Israel on a world map. Fewer than half our high school students study a foreign language, and while a million U.S. students may study French, a language spoken by some 80 million people worldwide, fewer than 75,000 study Chinese, a language spoken by some 1.3 billion.

### **American female troops engage Afghan women**

Across Afghanistan, "Female Engagement Teams" of U.S. military women are working to [strengthen relationships with rural Afghan women](#). It's something that their male counterparts aren't able to do given the cultural roles of women in the country. "Very rarely are [women] allowed to go outside the compounds without a male escort, so it's imperative that we get the female Marines to go to them," said 1st Lt. Quincy Washa, a Female Engagement Team platoon commander.

### **Woman to Woman in Afghanistan**

In February 2009 Marine Capt. Matt Pottinger set out to do something about that. He helped organize and train a team of women Marines to meet with Afghan women, just as male soldiers had been meeting with Afghan men for years to drink tea and discuss those ill-conceived "infrastructure" projects. A handful of female Marines and a civilian linguist, led by Second Lt. Johanna Shaffer, formed that first Female Engagement Team (FET). Its mission was a "cordon and search" operation in Farah province that included "engaging with" Pashtun women and giving them some "humanitarian supplies"—known in COIN jargon as PSPs, or Population Support Packages, which might contain anything from a crank radio to a teddy bear—to earn their "goodwill." That's the point of protecting the populace—to win them over to our side so the forsaken insurgents will shrivel up and die. These tactics failed miserably in Vietnam, and they appear to be failing in Afghanistan, but with counterinsurgency as our avowed "strategy," Pottinger's idea of engaging the hidden half of the populace was way, way overdue.

### **A language barrier of our own making**

When it comes to foreign language instruction in America, there is a lot we don't seem to understand. Nationally, the share of elementary schools offering language classes fell from 31 percent to 25 percent in the 11 years ending in 2008; the share of middle schools dropped from 75 percent to 58 percent. The percentage of high schools offering language classes was about the same. The numbers come from a survey published this year by the Center for applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C.

### **Call for Students to Take Up Many Languages**

Students should be encouraged to learn many languages to help motivate them in their careers, Deputy Higher Education Minister Dr. Hou Kok Chung said Friday.

### **Big powers "imposing" their culture on others**

"If Arabs were in a position of power and strength we would not have seen this big engagement in learning the English language....moreover, learning the Arabic language serves the interests of the students, irrespective of the consequences of imposing a foreign language." But she stressed the need to become proficient in foreign language in order to be open to other cultures.

### **The English-only movement in America**

A conversation about making English the only official language in the United States. Tim Schultz, lobbyist with Washington-based [US English](#) makes the case for this, ahead of an English-only vote in Oklahoma. This is not the usual fare on *The World in Words*: we don't often offer the microphone to people who discourage the use of other languages. But Schultz argues that English is what keeps America — a land of immigrants and therefore of many languages — intact.

### **Science Grows on Acquiring New Language**

Recent studies on how language learning occurs are beginning to chip away at some long-held notions about second-language acquisition and point to potential learning benefits for students who speak more than one language. "We have this national psyche that we're not good at languages," said Marty Abbott, the director of education for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Alexandria, Va. "It's still perceived as something only smart people can do, and it's not true; we all learned our first language and we can learn a second one."

### **Teachers train for bilingual program**

The curriculum is the same; Cristina Ortega's kindergarten class at McCormick Elementary only sounds different. Ortega constantly switches between English and Spanish. She tells the students the lesson in English, and when a student asks her "Por qué?" she clarifies in Spanish. At their desks the 5- and 6-year-olds sometimes pause from their coloring books to translate their teacher's English to each other.

### **Rockford's language programs excelling**

In 2007, Rockford Public Schools was awarded \$550,000 in federal grant money to start up its Mandarin Chinese and Spanish Immersion programs. The district is now reaping the rewards of these programs as its students have begun to excel - matching or surpassing native speakers at various grade levels. The funding has now run dry for these programs. The district had three years to use the money to get the courses up and running, which included financing books, teachers' salaries and assessment costs. The Spanish Immersion program has grown from 143 pupils in 2007-2008 to 246 pupils this year, while the number of students enrolled in Chinese 1 grew from 54 to 96 students during that same time period. A recent study shows, 95 percent of Rockford's first-year Spanish Immersion students have oral fluency and listening comprehension skills consistent with other immersion programs around the country.

### **A Chinese immersion school may become a first in Boston**

Language immersion programs have become increasingly popular in cities and towns across the country. If approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Boston Chinese Immersion Charter School (BCICS) will launch in the Fall of 2011 and become Boston's first Chinese immersion school program.

### **At Sugarland Elementary, language lessons are key to all learning**

On its surface, it might have seemed like the start of a typical fourth-grade lesson, but the key elements of the activity -- focusing on vocabulary, hands-on interaction and working with partners -- are components of a teaching method known as Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol. SIOP emphasizes language and interactive activities and encourages teachers to build a contextual background before delving into a lesson's content, said Angela Robinson, 46, Sugarland's principal. The model was developed as a national research project funded by the U.S. Department of Education from 1996 through 2003 to help

nonnative English-speaking students succeed in school, according to the Center for Applied Linguistics [Web site](#).

### **Language immersion school expands**

The International School of Louisiana is expanding to the West Bank, becoming the first language immersion school in an area known for its Vietnamese and Hispanic enclaves. The new campus will also be the first in the state to offer a Mandarin Chinese immersion program. Beginning next fall, the West Bank campus will open for as many as 92 kindergarten students, adding a grade level each year until it is the same size as the original kindergarten-through-eighth-grade Lower Garden District location. The waiting list for kindergarten spots is typically three times longer than capacity, so an eventual doubling of the school's size should go a long way toward meeting demand, said Pamela Stewart, the school's director of institutional advancement.

### **Preschool announces grant from ALCOA**

Dover's El Primer Paso, Ltd. has announced a partnership with ALCOA which includes a grant of \$20,000 for the school's Preschool Initiative for English Language Learners. The grant funds will support El Primer Paso's program to build school readiness and English language skills in at-risk children from the local Latino community.

### **AMC announces nominee for 2010 Air Force Language Professional of the Year**

Tech. Sgt. Ahmad M. Adi, from the 62nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., is AMC's nominee for the award. Adi is versed in two languages and was "pivotal" in supporting his unit on a recent deployment. "His outstanding enthusiasm for the mission and unrivaled professionalism led to his selection as the linguist department non-commissioned officer in charge," stated the announcement for his nomination from Headquarters AMC. Managing a 41-member team, he coordinated "around-the-clock" manning support for 2,400 linguist support requests and translated 700 high-priority documents while maintaining 100 percent department coverage with five less personnel assigned than previous deployments, the announcement stated.

### **A Comprehensive Approach to Local Engagement in Afghanistan**

Currently there are three successful bottom-up local engagement programs from which to conduct further research and analysis: 1) the former Special Forces Local Defense Initiative program and the current Village Stability Operations program, along with the Afghan Local Police program; 2) the United States Marine Corps (USMC) Female Engagement Teams (FETs); and 3) the Non-Government Organization (NGO) Central Asia Institute's methodology.