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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 27 APRIL 2011**

#### **First Group of Deployed AFPAK Hands Returns From Afghanistan**

The first group of AFPAK Hands returned from Afghanistan on 19 APR. This marks a unique point in a program billed as a personnel priority. The Pentagon's AFPAK Hands program trains military and civilian personnel from all services to serve as a cadre of subject matter experts in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The AFPAK Hands are part of the military's transition strategy, building enduring relationships between US services and local populations in theater. Hands develop expertise and insight into the complexities, internal dynamics, and challenges facing these countries through language, culture, and counter-insurgency training, graduate education, and experience working directly with Afghan and Pakistani officials.

#### **DARPA Launches Translation Software Initiative**

The research arm of the Department of Defense (DoD) is working on new technology that will allow U.S. military to translate face-to-face conversations in real time, as well as accurately decipher intelligence and communications data in voice, video, and print. The Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) is seeking proposals for its Broad Operational Language Translation (BOLT) program, which aims to build software specifically to translate various dialects of Arabic as well as Mandarin Chinese.

#### **Challenging language's universality**

A recent analysis of humanity's major language families has cast doubt on the long-held notion of language's universality, which was said to be dictated by common linguistic structures in human brains. Michael Dunn, an evolutionary linguist at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands, teamed up with Russell Gray, a computational linguist at the University of Auckland, to test the universality of language. They used powerful computational tools to calculate the most likely relationships among sets of data. Dunn and Gray treated features of language such as subject-verb order as traits, analyzing Austronesian, Indo-European, Bantu and Uto-Aztecan language groups. These groups span thousands of years and contain more than 2,400 of about 7,000 human languages.

#### **High school consider AP foreign language option**

Higher-level foreign-language courses - known as Level 5 and Level 6 now - would be converted into a two-year Advanced Placement test preparation program, giving students a better chance of doing well on the AP test and receiving college credit. "We've been doing a really pretty good job with rigor and a demanding curriculum, but this just adds an extra layer and provides ... a lot more options for our students in terms of getting credit for what they've studied in high school," said Eva Tuinstra, a German teacher at Wauwatosa East High School.

#### **Boomers and Seniors Learn Spanish Online with Live Instructors**

Boomers and seniors learning to speak Spanish are seeing real advantages in working one-to-one with personal Spanish tutors via the Internet. These adult students love the convenience, personalized curriculum, and fun of conversing with a native Spanish speaker in Central America using online videoconferencing. Students have used Speak Shop, a seven-year-old company, to take more than 20,000 lessons online from Spanish tutors in Guatemala. Using their personal computers, students reserve a 50-minute lesson that fits their schedule and then videoconference with their tutor using the free software application, Skype.

#### **The New School Continuing Education**

The On the Go language immersion curriculum is designed for busy people who wish to acquire knowledge of a foreign language for professional or personal reasons, especially to increase their

enjoyment of travel. In just one weekend, beginners master interactions in many common situations, such as ordering in restaurants, asking directions, handling currency, and shopping. At more advanced levels, participants hone and refresh their conversational skills.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

### **Earmark ban puts University of Montana language and cultural program in jeopardy**

Earlier this year when Congress banned earmarking - direct spending for specific projects - Don Loranger became rightfully concerned. Loranger is director of the Defense Critical Language and Cultural Program, a program, established in 2007, that teaches soldiers Pashto, Dari, Arabic and Chinese languages and about Afghanistan and Iraq prior to deployment to those war zones. It is funded by an earmark. Now funding is in jeopardy for a program that Loranger says is critical preparation for United States soldiers deploying to war. U.S. Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., recently sent a letter to the Department of Defense urging the administration to include the program's \$2.25 million annual operating budget in the defense budget, saying the training is "the difference between life and death, and I am proud that UM is a part of making our troops and our country safer."

### **Russian students visit Huntsville schools as part of exchange program**

Some American and Russian teens recently discovered there are a lot of differences between them - and a lot of similarities. A group of 17 students and three adults from Sochi, Russia, visited Huntsville last week, staying with local families and attending classes at the Academy for Science and Foreign Language and Columbia High School.

### **Former Spanish teacher's foreign-language education business carves out job-training niche**

A former Spanish teacher in Atlantic County schools, Stacey Kammerman's business started from the concept of teaching simple phrases to help schools communicate with Spanish-speaking parents. From there, she saw an opportunity to expand the business to English-speakers who could benefit from learning functional Spanish as it related to their jobs, including bankers, construction workers and park rangers. "The thing that was the most desirable is that (the program) was specific to their particular needs. They didn't learn the whole language, which takes the average person five years," she said. "They learned what they needed for their job so they could use it immediately."

### **Philippine's DepEd holds summer program for foreign language teachers**

The Department of Education Bureau of Secondary Education is holding simultaneous summer training courses for high school teachers based on the Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL). The training aims to capacitate the teachers on the diverse aspects involved in learning a second or a foreign language. SPFL is among the department's efforts in enhancing not only public school teachers' but also students' foreign language proficiency and global competencies.

### **Soldiers prep to pave new path in war**

The brigade's Schweinfurt-based elements-172nd Support Battalion, 9th Engineer Battalion and 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment-will provide most of the female personnel for the teams. They will be led by FET officer-in-charge 1st Lt. Jennifer Montgomery, who recently transferred from Schweinfurt's 12th Chemical Co. to the brigade staff, and still resides here. She will command the collection of several four-woman teams, circulating among them as they are dispersed throughout the brigade's region of responsibility during the deployment. "Their primary purpose is intelligence gathering from Afghan women," said Montgomery. "The women might tell the FET members 'our water is bad here, we have no sewage disposal, help us.' Or, they might say 'that guy over there, he's corrupt.'"

### **Plainfield School Board mulls Chinese language program**

For \$50 a student, Plainfield School Board is looking at offering Chinese immersion classes during summer school for students in grades 7-11. The two beginner Chinese classes will be offered through a federal grant which will pay for the teachers. Glenn Wood, director of high school curriculum, said

STARTALK asked the district to participate in the program which purpose is to provide students exposure to Chinese language and culture. STARTALK is the newest of the component programs of the National Security Language Initiative, seeking to expand and improve the teaching and learning of important world languages that are not widely taught in the United States, including Persian, Arabic, Pakistani (Urdu), Indian (Hindi) and Chinese.

### **Employers, workers find multilingualism brings multiple assets**

Proficiency in multiple languages can open doors to enriching opportunities and experiences. With today's global economy and dynamic demographics, multilingualism is considered a critical asset for some companies and organizations. Schools, businesses, health care providers and law enforcement agencies are just some of the places that rely on employees who can speak languages other than English.

### **Expanding Language by (Online) Degrees**

Arabic is not a universal language, least of all in Pennsylvania. But by developing a [fully online undergraduate degree](#) in Arabic language and culture, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) will soon make Arabic universally available across its 14 colleges and universities — with other online language programs to follow.

### **Government Budget Cuts May Kill Language Programs**

To the dismay of administrators, faculty, and students, Cornell's 11 "critical language" programs — which offer students instruction in lesser-known languages that hold national importance, like Khmer and Burmese — are facing significant budget reductions and potential elimination after federal lawmakers agreed to a \$1.3 billion reduction to the Department of Education on April 15.

### **Madison Schools Aim to Add More Language Classes**

Video discussing Madison County's (VA) desire to increase language courses to all students.

### **Army, Navy Add Citizenship Option To Boot Camp**

(*Yahoo.com*)...Susanne M. Schafer, Associated Press

Military service has long been one route to U.S. citizenship. Now the Army and Navy, in need of specialists and language skills in wartime, are speeding things up by allowing recruits to wrap up the process while they're still in basic training.

### **DLIFLC Alumni support Operation Tomodachi**

Col. Craig J. Agena, Chief of the Bilateral Coordination Action Team's U.S. contingency at Camp Sendai, visited the Nobiru and Rikuzen-Ono train stations in Higashi Matsushira with other U.S. and Japanese military members, as well as city officials. Agena, who attended the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center's Japanese school as part of the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program in 1991 and 1992, was called to duty in support of Operation Tomodachi shortly after the disaster struck.

### **California Guard linguists bridge language gaps in Salvadoran exercise**

"Tener otro idioma es de poseer una segunda alma." In English, it reads: "To have another language is to possess another soul." To understand that quote in both languages means more than possessing two souls. It can also mean the ability to bridge the barrier between people, countries and, sometimes, armies. That is what soldiers of the 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, California Army National Guard, are doing as linguists in El Salvador. "It's not as easy as people think," said Spc. Charles Chang, of the 223rd. Chang put his translating abilities to the test last month during the opening ceremony of Beyond the Horizon 2011, a training exercise to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of El Salvador most affected by Hurricane Ida in 2009.