



World Language Educators Unite, Share and Inspire at the FLENJ Annual Conference

"WOW! Show me how you did that!" remarked Roxbury Middle School teacher Marcia Cordeiro, who Boonton High School

teacher Christina Buck had mentored nineteen years ago. The two had worked side by side at BHS, prior to the impact of technology on their careers. Now they were excited about the organizational and other benefits of using Google Classroom with their World Language students. Señora Cordeiro was accompanied by her colleague Señor Merced Solis, who also uses this tool to help his students at Eisenhower Middle School stay organized, while building their Spanish language skills across the three modes of communication: Interpersonal, Interpretive and Presentational, providing multiple opportunities for learners to expand into the next performance range, developing stronger language control, vocabulary, communication strategies, and cultural awareness along the way. The annual conference of the Foreign Language Educators of New Jersey (FLENJ) was held April 13-14, 2018 at the beautiful APA Hotel Metro Park, in Iselin, New Jersey. This event embraces all levels of W.L. teaching and provides innovative



workshops, emerging trends, and research-based practices that in turn will benefit students in their language learning.



(Left) Mola textile.

(Right) The keynote address by Alyse Nelson, President and CEO of Vital Voices Global Partnership, speaks of global issues and touches the hearts of the FLENJ members.

She reinforced her organization's leadership model, that is grounded in a strong sense of mission, is tied to helping communities in conflict, bridges the lines that divide, takes innovative action, and demonstrates the charity to continue to pay it forward.

(Right) Dr. Lori Langer de Ramirez shares her teaching strategies for engaging her students, using authentic and self-manufactured manipulatives at her workshop. (Middle) Mola textile, provided by Dr. Langer de Ramirez.

Highlights from the Friday session featured the “**Unconference**” Luncheon, with discussion tables that included project based learning, and reinforced the themes of the workshops to be explored throughout the day.

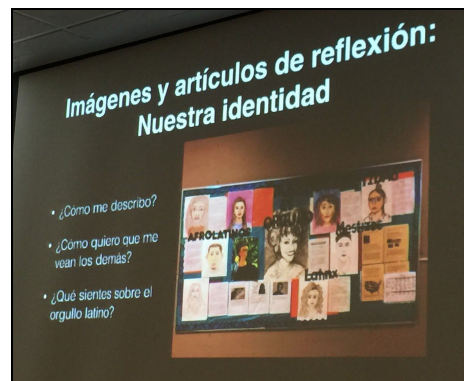
Señor Caleb Howard took the lead at one of the luncheon tables, initiating the conversation / “sobremesa.” His teaching methods have been recognized on the state and national levels, and “Señor Howard” was one of the five finalists for the 2017 annual ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year Award, representing the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL). “Señor Howard” teaches at Dr. William Mennies Elementary School, in Vineland, NJ. (Pictured on page 1, top right.)

During her afternoon workshop **Dr. Langer de Ramirez** focused on “Virtually There: Project-Based Learning and Fantasy Trips in the Language Classroom.” She shared many hand-crafted artefacts that she enjoyed making with her students, and during her free time. She encouraged her participants to “explore the potential of fantasy trips for teaching language, culture and content in the language classroom. Through a simulated virtual trip, teachers will learn about activities, realia and other important lesson tips that will enable them to design a fantasy trip for their own students.” Lori is currently the Director of World and Classical Languages & Global Language Initiatives at the Dalton School in NYC.

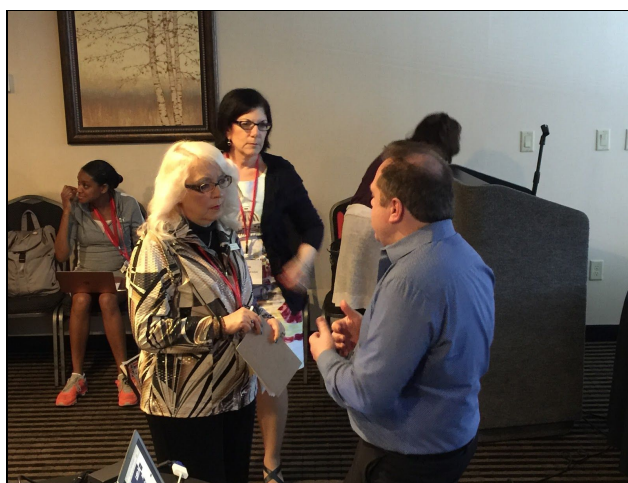
Dr. Frank M. Ruggiero (right), President-elect of FLENJ, wanted all members to come away from the annual conference empowered and energized. He stressed that the FLENJ organization needs our feedback to improve their program offerings for the future. He encourages his membership to contribute, and to be the change that starts and continues the “global ripple.”



Glen Irvin was another Friday presenter, offering his strategies for “Successful Gamification and Game-Based Learning in World Languages.” A Technology Integrationist for his school district, and an avid gamer, his classroom is a gamified, quest-based, mastery learning environment where Glenn and his students enjoy the potential of using games, with an educational twist! On the way to this workshop, Señora Buck bumped into **Madame Kunert**, French teacher at Lincoln Park Middle School, who was attending a round-table discussion on TPRS!



Saturday morning began with inspiration from the keynote address, **Alyse Nelson**, President and CEO of Vital Voices Global Partnership. Ms. Nelson opened our eyes and touched our hearts with her incredible stories of empowered women and global citizenship, and paying it forward! She has been supporting women in developing nations and areas of need to help others, since she discovered her personal mission in the 1990's. While still in college, she travelled alone and with limited resources to China to hear Hillary Rodham Clinton give a speech at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. “Women's rights are human rights...” is the most recognized line from her Beijing speech of 1995, when the First Lady advocated for women and social justice.



Saturday session standouts, after the keynote, included **Kevin LaMastra and Rocio Horpeza** of Linden Public Schools who presented “Courageous Conversations in the World Languages Classroom.” Mr. LaMastra, a department supervisor, remarked that the Latino Studies class “uses carefully selected authentic media drawn from pop culture, current events and student lives, World Languages teachers can engage students in learning that counters racism... and other forms of discrimination. Through highly participatory methods grounded in SLA (second language acquisition) theory and comprehensible input, the presenters will demonstrate how to engage students through the three modes of communication while developing the knowledge, skills and ethical disposition of a global citizen.” **(Above, middle)**

FLENJ Board member Madame Dr. Joan Jensen congratulates Mr. LaMastra on his school's dynamic presentation. Rocio Horpeza (not pictured) discusses the top slide (above, top) and the themes for her high school's Latino Studies curriculum.



Odette Vovra (bottom, middle), an elementary World Language educator from the Teaneck Public Schools, is completing her doctorate in Information Technology at Capella University. She is also an avid Google Classroom user, and she contributed her expertise in the Tech Garden, offering technical support for those interested in adding the Google Suite applications to their teaching repertoire.

(Photo, right) Colleagues Señor Merced Solis and Señora Marcia Cordeiro of Eisenhower Middle School discuss the advantages and the challenges of using Google Classroom, in the Main Ballroom with Señora Buck, who included the application “Kami” in her Google Classroom Presentation in the FLENJ Tech Garden-- So that participants would have another option for their students that would include voice and video annotation for their PDF activities.



“Google Classroom will be used as a platform to promote world language proficiency and global citizenship, using 21st century skills that are critical to college and career-readiness. Participants will build skills for fostering dialogue, through ‘virtual collaboration.’ Students are seen as active partners who contribute to the learning dialogue, sharing in a creative atmosphere accessible to a virtual audience. Spanish language projects are by high school students. Participants will connect with their creative spirit, to share their love of languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and to engage them in the lifelong process of language and cultural acquisition in their academic, professional and personal lives, and in the globalized world,” described Señora Buck.

(Photo, middle) Using Google's G Suite of apps including Google

Building skills that foster dialogue through virtual collaboration

“Go Google Classroom!”

Docs, Google Slides, Google Forms and Google Sheets, Señora Buck shares samples of her students' work, featuring collaborative projects by Olivia Niuman and Michelle Tolochko (Sinterklaas y la Navidad en Holanda; Las tradiciones navideñas de Holanda), as well as Fahad Rashid and Jawad Shafiq (La arquitectura gótica). “Participants will ideally create and share their project links using assorted Google Applications in Google Classroom; please come to this workshop with the aforementioned applications already installed on your devices.” At the end of this session, interested participants were also introduced to Kami, a PDF and Document Annotation and Markup Tool, that works with Google Drive and Google Classroom. Audio and video annotation are possible with this Application. The Tech Garden allowed for informal drop-ins during the 60 minute block.

Photographs & article by Señora Christina Buck, BHS World Language Educator and Spanish Club Co-Advisor. For further information on the above, please contact christina.buck@boontonschools.org. ¡Muchas gracias! ¡Hasta pronto!