

**SWCOLT
Regional Teacher of the Year
Candidate 2017**

Caleb Allison

Oklahoma

When I first started my journey to be an educator I wanted to be a theater and competitive speech teacher. I loved to see people get on stage and blossom, but I was pretty good at Math and OU didn't have a theater education program so I started on my path as a Math teacher. While at OU I would often substitute in the Norman schools. And that is when I walked into Darcy Pippin's Class. I was amazed at what her students could do. Specifically, I remember the video that I watched in high school, [La Catrina](#), and how her students were able to understand the video and I couldn't. That is when I transitioned to being a Spanish teacher.

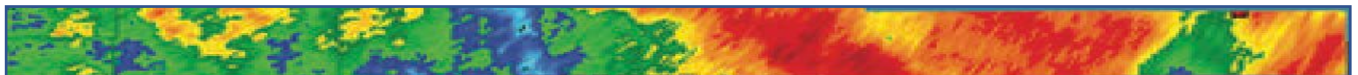
My first official teaching job was as a Geometry teacher at Southmoore High School in 2009. I was commended by my mentor teacher for being able help students "translate" word problems into mathematical equations by using many of the same techniques that I learned at CI workshops.

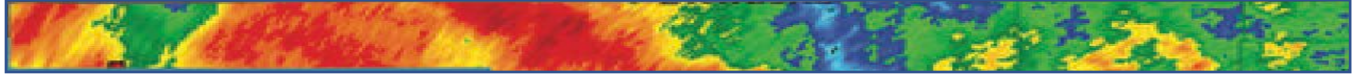
The 2009 school year I was hired as a Spanish teacher at Westmoore High School. It was particularly challenging as I didn't have a room but I had a great set of colleagues to support me and learn from on a daily basis such as, Lindsay MacDonald, Elise Robillard, and Audrey MacDonald. My district even let me observe Whitney Stafford-Najibi's French class to learn from her classroom management techniques.

Since then I have presented to various elementary schools in my district to help teachers understand the struggles of ELL students and how to best help them through the silent period. I have also presented CI strategies at OFLTA and technology strategies at my district, OFLTA, and SWCOLT as well as a summer workshop with Dr. Donna Shelton.

In my class I enjoy getting to know my students personally through language. I use music and other pop culture to engage them and get them excited about learning Spanish. I also read two to three books as a class and have students read an easy reader as their year final.

I have been married for 8 years to Breana Allison. She is a K-6 music teacher and makes my teaching better because she is constantly reminding me that my students are elementary Spanish students regardless of their age. I have a 3 year old daughter, Hope, that demonstrates the need for comprehensible input daily and I'm adopting a son from Nicaragua. I enjoy spending time with my family, reading, watching movies and sports, playing sports, and recently coaching football.





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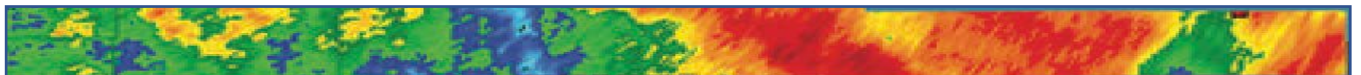
Chantal Esquivias-Argelaguet

Utah

Chantal Esquivias-Argelaguet, awarded Teacher of the Year for Secondary Education by the Utah Foreign Languages Association. She is currently a University of Utah instructor that works for the Bridge Program. This program offers Upper Division University Language classes to high school students in 10th, 11th and 12th grades that have passed the AP Spanish and Culture test with a 3 or higher. This year she is co-teaching together with the high school instructor *SPAN 3116: Pop Culture: the role of media, film and entertainment in the Spanish speaking world.*

She feels this course is a dream come true for any language educator who wants to teach language and culture through content using current media, events and technology. Her goal is to inspire and support her students so by the time they leave the Bridge Program (3 years) they achieve an Advanced Low oral proficiency level in Spanish that can help them not only in their personal but professional lives.

She also worked 7 years teaching Spanish at a Dual Language Immersion Charter school in Utah (North Davis Preparatory Academy) at the Junior High Level. She was the president of the AATSP-Utah Chapter for several years, and has presented her work in several state and regional conferences (UFLA and SWCOLT).



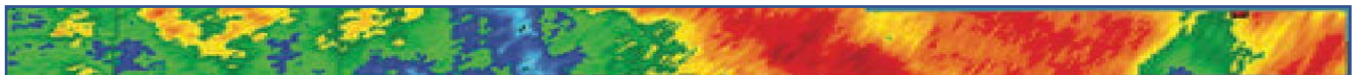


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Glenn Fetzer

New Mexico

Representative from the State of New Mexico, Dr. Glenn Fetzer is Head of the Department of Languages and Linguistics at New Mexico State University, Professor of French, member of three Common Course Numbers Subcommittees of his state's Higher Education Department, moderator of a newly-inaugurated Pi Delta Phi chapter at his institution, director of a study abroad course, and author of two books and over fifty scholarly articles on contemporary French poetry. His approach on mentoring and on developing language and cultural competency has helped produce dozens of undergraduate majors in foreign languages.





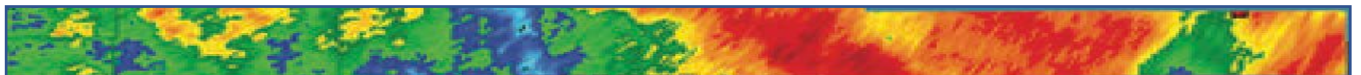
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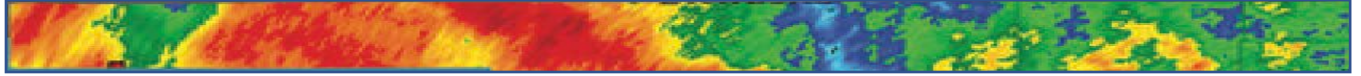
Sabrina Sebban-Janczak

Colorado

Sabrina Sebban-Janczak is a Master teacher who currently teaches French for Denver public School, as well as at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Sabrina was nominated Colorado Teacher of the Year 2016-2017. Sabrina regularly presents at national and international conferences on various topics related to teaching using Comprehensible Input.

Sabrina is a Teacher Leader who coaches, mentors and trains World Language teachers. She has edited and written graded readers, teacher guides, curricula, as well as the Denver Public School World Language Assessments. She has also recorded audio books for language learners. Her passion and commitment to teaching and acquiring foreign languages continues to be a driving force in her life.





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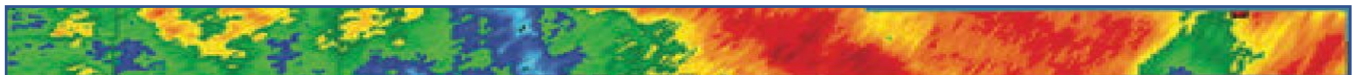
Ying Jin (金瓔)

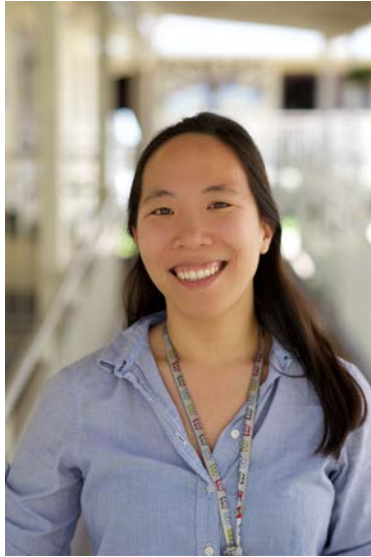
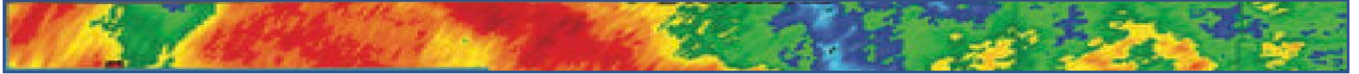
California

Ms. Ying Jin has more than 15 years Chinese language and culture teaching experience in diverse settings, including middle schools, high schools, and colleges in both the U.S. and China. She is currently a teacher of all levels of Mandarin Chinese at the Fremont Union High School District in Cupertino, California.

Ms. Jin received her MA degree in Instructional Technologies from San Francisco State University (1998), and BA degree in Chinese Language and Literature from Peking University, China (1986). Additionally, Ms. Jin volunteers for numerous educational and cultural organizations in the SF Bay Area. Ms. Jin has presented many times in conferences, such as ACTFL, CLTA (California Language Teachers Association), and STARTALK. She enjoys interacting with other teachers and promoting Chinese language teaching in the K-12 realm.

Ms. Jin has received 2016 Teacher Of the Year from CLTA (California Language Teachers Association), 2015 Outstanding Teacher Award from CLTA (California Language Teachers Association) and 50th Annual Murphy Educator of the Year Award in 2014.



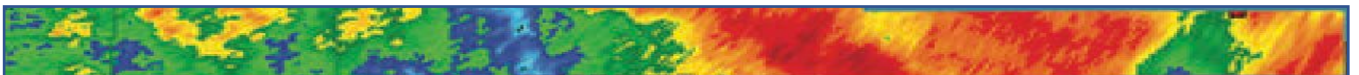


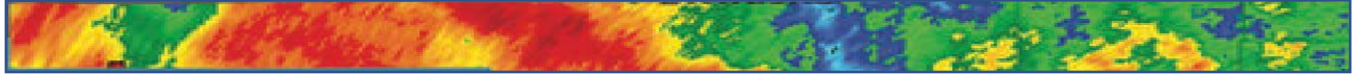
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Connie Soong

Texas

Teacher of the Year for TFLA, Connie Soong is the lead Mandarin Chinese teacher at Doss Elementary School in Austin, Texas. She helped launch the first-ever Mandarin Chinese Foreign Language Immersion program in Austin ISD. Her roles include kindergarten and first grade teacher, immersion program team lead, innovative technology teacher, campus advisory board member, and mentor to both visiting teachers from China and new teachers. She frequently networks with local-area Mandarin Chinese programs to provide her students with more opportunities to engage with other Mandarin Chinese speakers. Her summers are spent curriculum writing and recruiting the help of vertical team teachers and high school students to facilitate an annual two-week summer camp that focuses on Chinese culture and language. In June 2017, she along with the Anderson High School teacher, Kelly Long will accompany Doss immersion students and their parents on a trip to China. Her primary teaching style involves creating a rich, differentiated environment that engages her students to gain new perspectives, become critical thinkers, work creatively and cooperatively, and develop a lifelong interest in language learning and appreciate the many joys of language acquisition.





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Rachel Tillotson

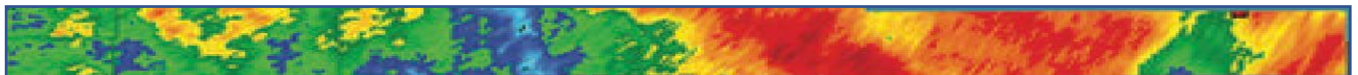
Nevada

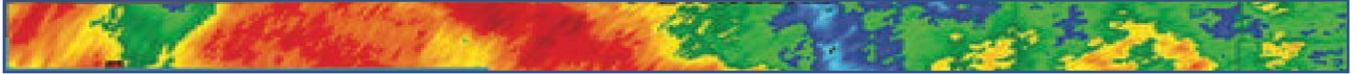
Rachel Tillotson is a Spanish teacher at Galena High School in Reno, Nevada and is the newly elected Professional Development Committee Chairperson for the Professional Language Association of Nevada.

She developed a true love of languages at a young age through middle school language classes and experiences within her community and then later while attending Weber State University in Ogden, Utah where she had the opportunity to participate in a study abroad program in Tarragona, Spain. Following this experience, she graduated from Weber State University with a Bachelors Degree of Arts and a dual major in Criminal Justice and Spanish. After working in the court system, while teaching community college language classes, she moved to Reno, Nevada where she earned her Master's Degree in Foreign Languages and Literature and then her Professional Degree in Secondary Education at the University of Nevada, Reno.

For the last fourteen years she has taught language courses for private businesses, in elementary after-school programs, in alternative and public high schools, and in community colleges. She has also taught a variety of humanities, education, ethnicity, and language courses at the University of Nevada, Reno. Tillotson has chaperoned student travel abroad and has participated in numerous teacher training seminars abroad as well. She is a member of *The Flying Doctors (Los médicos voladores)*, a community group of professionals that provides medical services for less privileged areas of Mexico and Central America. She has presented at district and state conferences and is working towards her National Board Certification in World Languages.

Tillotson currently teaches all levels of Spanish at Galena High School where she has served as a lead teacher for university practicum and intern students and continues to participate in alternative education programs, club advisories, individualized student growth programs, and is a strong advocate for the AAPPL Seal of Bi-literacy that was adopted by Nevada in 2015. Tillotson believes that learning one or more languages in addition to one's native tongue is absolutely essential to understanding the diverse and multi-cultural world in which we live and that language educators are forefront in advocating worldwide communication and cultural understanding.





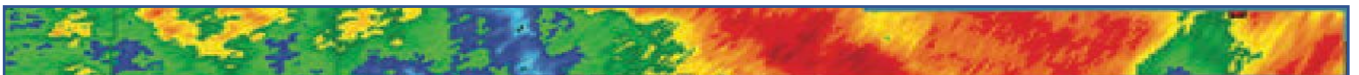
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Carla Whitehead

Arizona

Carla A. Whitehead received a B.A. in Secondary Education - Spanish from the Arizona State University and is currently teaching Spanish I and II at McClintock High School in Tempe, AZ. A strong advocate of hands-on and cultural learning, she involves her students in a variety of activities that provide them with opportunities to use their Spanish and learn to understand and respect others. She is currently the Spanish Club Sponsor and an AVID Collaborator/Mentor. In addition, she is also a member of different groups at her school such as the Spanish 1-2 Cadre, PLC Leader, Engagement Team, and Site Based Council.

Carla is a member of the American Association of Teachers of Portuguese and Spanish and the Arizona Language Association. She was recently honored with the AZLA Outstanding Young Foreign Language Educator Award for her work in the first three years of her professional career. She has also been nominated for the Shining Star Award and the Excellence in Education Award at her current district, Tempe Union High School District.





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Nancy Wysard

Hawaii

Teacher of the Year for Hawaii Association of Language Teachers, Nancy Wysard teaches High School Spanish at Mid-Pacific Institute, where she strives to inspire others with her passion for language learning and teaching. As the Spanish teacher, program coordinator and department chair, she leads and mentors members of her department for opportunities of learning for the students. She gives back to the craft by holding yearly workshops on educational technology in the language classroom as well as serving as the treasurer for the Hawaii Association of Language Teachers and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. As a member of the Puerto Rican Heritage Association of Hawaii, she brings opportunities to connect the students with the community. Each year she finds ways to connect her students with peers of other Spanish speaking countries through projects or collaboration in order to motivate engaging connections of the students with the Spanish speaking world. Her students have unforgettable experiences, make new friendships, apply and improve their skills while learning about different perspectives, tolerance, cultural diversity and multiculturalism. Her motto: "The more languages we learn, then the more friends we will make around the World".

