



THIS IS Central and Southwest Asia

The Newsletter of the Central and Southwest Asia Program
at The University of Montana

Online: www.umt.edu/cap

Fall 2010

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UM-Israel Exchange Visit June 2010

**Sandy Ross, Associate Dean, Graduate School
Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry**



Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies at Hebrew University, Jerusalem

The University of Montana (UM) is embarking on an academic adventure with four of Israel's eight universities: Hebrew University; University of Haifa; Bar-Ilan University; and Tel Aviv University. International Programs and the Graduate School at UM, the Montana World Trade Center, Governor Schweitzer, and U.S. Senator Max Baucus sent joint delegations to Israel in May 2010 to build business, academic and cultural ties with Israeli institutions. The delegation visited Israel following a November 2009 visit by Akiva Tor, Israeli General Counsel for the Pacific Northwest, who met with UM administration and faculty to promote academic ties between UM and Israeli academic institutions. The United States Commercial Service worked with UM to organize the mission and provided contacts. During the mission, the Montana delegations stayed in Tel Aviv.

On the first day, the Montana delegations toured Old and New Jerusalem. In the Old City, we visited the Western Wall in the Jewish Quarter and then proceeded to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter. Afterward, we lunched in the New City and finished the tour by visiting Yad Vashem, the Memorial Museum of the Holocaust.

On the following day, we returned to Jerusalem to visit Hebrew University, adjacent to Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus. Our contact was Matti Godfree, Director of Academic Programs, and we met with Yom Tov Assis, Chair, International Center of Jewish Civilization. Later, we visited the Agricultural Department of Hebrew University, located in Rehovot, 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem and fourteen miles south of Tel Aviv. At the Rehovot campus, our contact was Anat Gazit, Development and Public Relations, and we met with Professor Shmuel Wolf, Vice Dean for Research, Professor Moshe Coll, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, and Ms. Miri Ben Haim, Director, Division for External Studies.

In the afternoon, we went to Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, where Ruth Cohen, Director of VIP Visits and Guests, External Relations Division, conducted our visit. We met with Mrs. Judith Haimoff, Associate Vice President, and Professor Harold Basch, Vice President for Research. We learned that Bar-Ilan is rapidly expanding its research activities with strong emphasis on interdisciplinary programs; we toured the new Bar-Ilan Institute of Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials, which has five main facilities, including electron microscopy, fabrication, surface analysis, magnetic measurements, and

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fluorescence measurements. Bar-Ilan is developing a sixth facility in the institute, a synthesis laboratory. We also spoke with science faculty professors Dr. Elisha Haas, the Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences, and Dr. Amnon Albeck, Chairman of the Department of Chemistry. We have invited Dr. Albeck to visit UM later this academic year; he may be accompanied by colleagues from humanities and social sciences faculties.

The following day, accompanied by staffers from Senator Max Baucus's office, we traveled to the University of Haifa, about fifty miles north of Tel Aviv. The university is located on Mount Carmel, a steep, high hill overlooking the city. The student body is very diverse, and international relations is a major academic focus. Our contact was Mr. Dick Bruggeman, Coordinator of International Agreements, and we met with Professor Menahem Mor, Dean, Faculty of Humanities. We spoke about exploring the creation of programs in Judaic Studies, Hebrew Language, and Cultural Studies. UM's Associate Provost for International Programs has invited Dr. Mor to visit UM in November 2010. We also toured the campus and visited the International School, meeting with Dr. Ben Mor, Acting Head, and Mrs. Tamar Vital, Administrative Director.

After lunch, we returned to visit Tel Aviv University. Ms. Etti Mond, Head of the Visitors Office, Development and Public Affairs, our contact, greeted us, and we met with Professor Gideon Bohak, Head of the Department of Hebrew Culture Studies, and Professor Benny Chor, Office of Inter-Academic Affairs. Our discussion centered on the possibility that UM students might travel to Israel and spend several weeks participating in classes during Winter Session or Summer Session.

We concluded our visit on June 3rd with a tour of Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, and the Golan Heights, near the borders of Syria and Jordan. This tour, as well as the tour of Jerusalem, made apparent the very small size of Israel relative to the surrounding countries; it is about the size and shape of Vancouver Island, BC, and with the exception of Lebanon, smaller than its neighbors (Syria, Jordan, and Egypt).



A View of Jerusalem from Hebrew University Campus

We are pleased with the outcome of the conversations that began last November with Ambassador Tor's visit to Missoula. The UM delegation's visit is the first step in developing relationships that are mutually beneficial to UM and academic partners in Israel. UM anticipates that scholars from arts and sciences disciplines from Israeli universities will visit Missoula in 2010–2011 to engage in discussions with faculty and administration to create academic exchanges at the faculty, graduate, and undergraduate levels. We look forward to developing this exchange and anticipate that it will include the greater community of Missoula. Finally, we note that the local Jewish community, Congregation Har Shalom, also visited by Ambassador Tor last November, looks forward to hosting Israeli visitors.

The Sapphire Trio's Visit to Israel and Palestine

Dr. Margaret Baldrige, School of Music

In December 2009, members of The Sapphire Trio, University of Montana Professors Dr. Maxine Ramey, clarinet, Dr. Margaret Baldrige, Violin and Viola, and Dr. Jody Graves, Professor of Piano at Eastern Washington University, were invited to Israel and Palestine to judge the Palestine National Music Competition and perform concerts in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah. On the recommendation of Katie Rowald, former University of Montana clarinet student and current woodwinds teacher at the Edward Said National Music Conservatory, the Trio was invited to be on the Woodwind, String and Keyboard panels for the music competition. Other panel judges came from Greece, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain and Jordan. The trio traveled to Jerusalem in April 2010. The competition was designed to give Palestinian youth from across Israel and Palestine an opportunity to perform classical and Arabic music for panels of judges. Students of all ages arrived in East Jerusalem for this competition. Because some portions of Palestine, such as Gaza, are closed to travel, the competitors from these locations performed via web cam. In addition, all students from Bethlehem and Ramallah who were over sixteen had to get special papers to travel, or competed using the web cam. Some students, as young as ten, traveled through the checkpoint crossing alone, because their parents were not allowed through the checkpoint into Jerusalem. Some teachers saved their Easter passes so that they could travel to hear their students perform. They then had trouble returning through the checkpoint into Bethlehem because they overstayed the time limit on the pass. In some cases these political and physical barriers affected the competition and the quality of the student performances.



The Sapphire Trio on Stage

The Sapphire Trio traveled freely to Bethlehem and Ramallah with the help of their former music student. The audiences and students were friendly, enthusiastic, appreciative and interested in the music and the instruction that the trio offered in performances and master classes at the different branches of the conservatory. The concerts were well attended. Classical music instruction is young, but thriving in Palestine, and the students welcome the diversion their music provides, from the daily politics, struggles and uncertainty. Teacher turnover and consistency of instruction is something that the Conservatory faces. Due to Israeli visa regulations, most teachers at the Edward Said Music Conservatory can only stay for 3 months. Those who do stay longer, leave the country for a short time and then return for another 3 months. After that, they risk being deported or not being granted another visa. Some teachers hold Palestinian passports or Israeli passports so that they can remain with the students.

The Sapphire Trio is committed to creating relationships through their music with communities throughout the world. And they enjoy the interaction with the students, local people and musical professionals that they meet during these trips abroad and the discovery of musical and cultural diversity and similarities. The trio would like to thank Mehrdad Kia, Associate Provost for International Programs, Stephen Kalm, Dean of College of Visual and Performing Arts, and the Music School for partial funding of this trip.

Fifth Annual Kyrgyz Military Cadet Training

Professor Jeff Renz, School of Law

On September 16, 2010, seven cadets from the High Military Academy of the Kyrgyz Republic visited The University of Montana. Since 2004 (with breaks in 2005-2006), sponsored by the Montana Army National Guard, these cadets have come to UM for training with the UMROTC program and the Central and Southwest Asia Program. Central and Southwest Asia Program's faculty taught classes on International Human Rights, Rule of Law, and Law of Land Warfare.

Montana and the Kyrgyz Republic have a relationship that dates back to the mid-1990s when the Montana National Guard was partnered with the Kyrgyz National Guard under the Defense Department's Partnership for Peace program. Influenced by that relationship, UM's relationship with Kyrgyzstan has grown. UM faculty have taught and conducted research there, UM alumni have lived and worked there, UM students have enrolled in Kyrgyz Universities, and Kyrgyz students and faculty have come to The University of Montana for education and teaching.



Central and Southwest Asia Program Welcomes MCPS Arabic Teachers

The Central and Southwest Asia Program (CSWA) at The University of Montana is expanding its collaboration with the Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) through the Montana Arabic Summer Institute (MASI) and the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP). CSWA welcomes two new members of MCPS, Mr. Wael S. Elkahateeb and Dr. Fadi Elhin, who will lead the efforts in introducing Arabic to Missoula public schools. Wael Elkahateeb who is a native of Cairo, Egypt, is a participant in the Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP) which is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Culture Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and administered by American Councils for International Education (ACCELS) in Washington DC. In addition to teaching Arabic at Hellgate High School, Wael will focus on building bridges between various educational and cultural institutions in the Arab world and the greater Missoula community. Wael will also make presentations in MCPS classrooms and at various venues in the greater Missoula community. Dr. Fadi Elhin joins MCPS as the Arabic teacher for the FLAP project. Born in Tripoli, Libya, Dr. Elhin is a citizen of Jordan where he received his Ph.D. in 2009 in Islamic Studies. Prior to joining MCPS, he taught Arabic for five years in private Islamic schools and in a community college in New Jersey.



Dr. Fadi Elhin



Mr. Wael S. Elkahateeb

UM Renews Its Academic Ties with Georgia



A delegation from the Free University of Tbilisi (FUT) visited The University of Montana in May 2010. The delegation headed by Professor Guram Chikovani signed a partnership agreement with The University of Montana, which provides exchange opportunities for UM students, faculty, and staff. During their visit, the members of FUT delegation participated in UM commencement as well as a certificate ceremony, which was held for Georgian scholars and students studying at The University of Montana.

STARTALK Montana Arabic Summer Institute (MASI) 2010

Dr. Khaled Huthaily, Assistant Professor of Arabic

The Central and Southwest Asia Program (CSWA) at The University of Montana (UM) received its third STARTALK grant to host the Montana Arabic Summer Institute (MASI) for high school students. STARTALK is one of the programs of the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) and is administered by the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland. The main goal of STARTALK programs is to expand and improve the teaching and learning of strategically important world languages for US national security, such as the Arabic language.

STARTALK MASI 2010 had two levels: Level 1 (for new students with no previous knowledge of Arabic), and Level 2 (for students who took STARTALK MASI in 2008 or 2009). The institute was open to students from the seven high schools in Missoula and the surrounding rural areas. Nineteen students participated in level 1 and six in level 2. Students developed Arabic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and cultural knowledge at the novice-mid (for level 1) and novice-high (for level 2) proficiency levels based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (ACTFL's) guidelines. Instruction was conducted in a fun and academic environment.

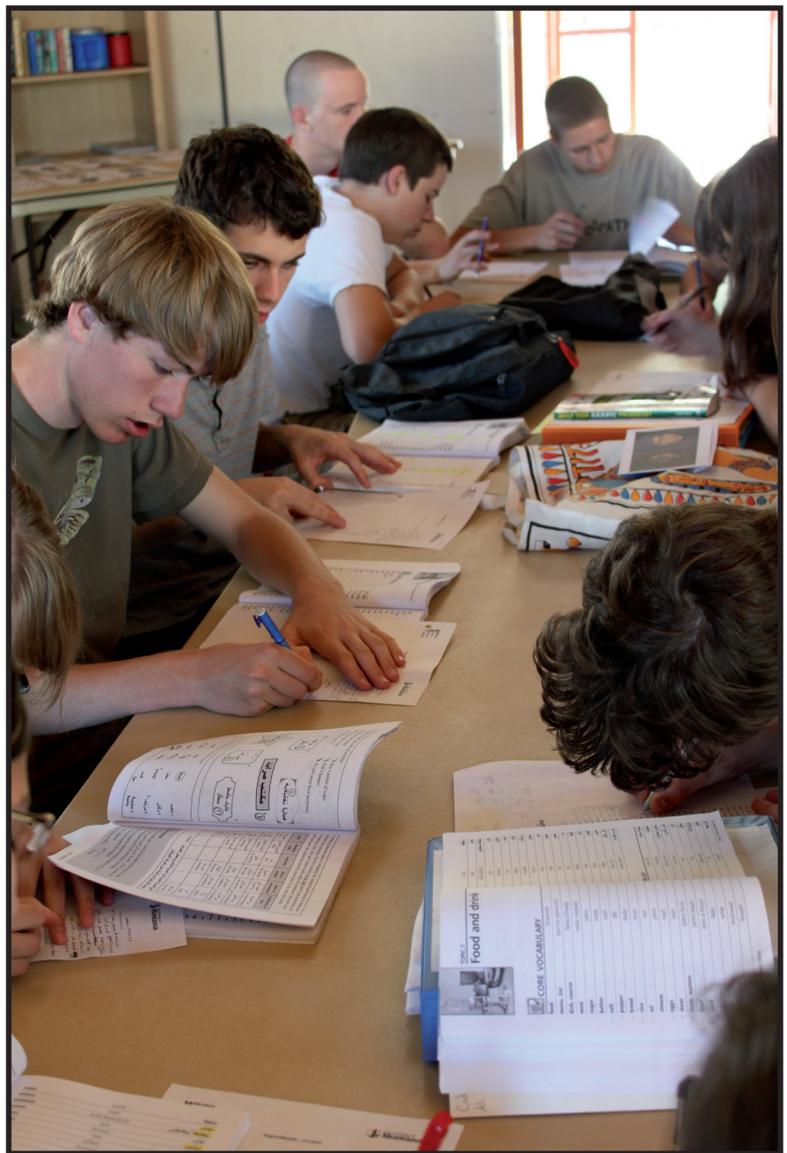
Technology was an important component in the curriculum to equip students with the tools needed to be successful and independent language learners in the 21st century. The students learned Arabic keyboarding and created PowerPoint slides in Arabic as part of their final project. Students were also instructed on how to enable Arabic on their home computers and received a set of Arabic keyboard stickers for their home computer.

STARTALK MASI 2010 ran for five days a week (Monday to Friday) for four hours a day, from June 21 to July 16, 2010, for a total of 75 contact hours. Students received 5 college credits. The courses were taught by UM's Arabic faculty members: Professor Samir Bitar, who also served as the outreach coordinator, and Dr. Khaled Huthaily, who also served as the director and curriculum developer. The instructors were assisted by Elizabeth Higgins and Jared Markland, two of the advanced students of Arabic at UM. UM student, Nick Bowman served as the photographer and Mr. Brian Lofink, International Programs' liaison, served the administrative coordinator. The team was headed by the institute's PI, Dr. Mehrdad Kia, Associate Provost for International Programs and Director of CSWA.

In-class activities consisted of instruction that combined listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students learned about the cultures, history, geography, and religions of the Arab world. They were involved in extracurricular cultural activities to gain an understanding of the Arab cultures through meeting and interacting with UM students of Arabic as well as native speakers. Ashleen Williams, ASUM President, was present in a number of activities in and outside the classroom. Turki Ismail, President of the Saudi Club, played Arabic music and gave a presentation on the Arab world. Other members of the Saudi Club and the Mount of Olives Arabic Language and Culture Club had an active role in participating in the cultural activities conducted by STARTALK MASI 2010.

The grant allowed the institute to pay for tuition fees, instructional materials, and transportation for field trips. A \$100 gift card and a T-shirt were awarded to each student who successfully completed the institute. A Middle Eastern cuisine was served on the graduation day, during which parents/guardians and siblings joined the STARTALK MASI team to honor our 2010 graduates.

Some of the STARTALK MASI 2010 are now taking Arabic courses at Hellgate and Sentinel high schools, as part of the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), for which CSWA is providing educational and technical consultation.



Updates on FLAP

Professor Samir Bitar, Lecturer of Arabic Language

With assistance from the Central and Southwest Asia Program (CSWA) at The University of Montana (UM) in spring 2008, the Missoula County Public schools (MCPS) submitted a proposal for and received a Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant to introduce Arabic language and culture courses to MCPS middle and high schools.

The grant is a five-year project with year one dedicated to planning. In the planning phase, the following main goals were accomplished:

- Search for and hire an Arabic language teacher for the project
- Apply for and secure another teacher of Arabic through the Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP) whose main task is to serve as a resource for MCPS and the community at large
- Design an Arabic Language Summer Camp (ALSC) for Missoula area students entering grades six to eight to launch our joint efforts during the summer preceding the commencement of instruction at Hellgate and Sentinel
- Tailor curricula to meet the goals for MCPS students particularly addressing cultural proficiency and achievement levels.



ALSC participants, Professor Bitar, Hellgate teachers D. Hendricks & L. Moser, TA J. Markland, and MASI alumni H. Syrenne

The UM's team of individuals with diverse backgrounds, skills, and areas

of focus has been working closely with its counter part from MCPS to stream line the work needed to ensure the success of the program. We are very well situated to implement the instructional experience gained over the years towards the goals and priorities of FLAP. In summer 2010, CSWA assisted MCPS in creating the curriculum outlines for the academic year 2010-2011 and in designing and implementing the Arabic language summer camp.

The following is a synopsis of the intensive and activity-filled week of the summer camp. ALSC was designed to give the participating students who came from several middle schools an essential and basic understanding of the Arabic language and culture as a head start for their future Arabic studies.

Introduction: Arabic is both an Asian and an African Language. It is the fifth most widely spoken language in the world and the sixth official language at the United Nations. There are approximately three hundred million Arabic speakers in the Middle East and North Africa. Most importantly, Arabic is the liturgical language for 1.4 billion Muslims throughout the world. Arabic was being taught in the U.S. over a century before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, introduced to complement the study of Hebrew and the Old Testament. Harvard was the first U.S. college to introduce Semitic languages, offering Hebrew, Chaldaic, Syriac in 1640 and Arabic in 1654. The Arabic writing system dates from about 500 AD. It developed and evolved from the Aramaic script through the Nabataeans, Arab tribes who were living to the north of Arabia (the area known today as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) in pre-Islamic times.

Content: The students were introduced to the Arabic alphabet and guided to learn the sounds particular to Arabic and not familiar to speakers of English. Additionally, students received instruction in the following subject areas:

- Greetings and Basic Expressions
- Arabic Names & Numbers
- Map of the Arab World, Country Names
- Pronouns & Days of the Week
- Prepositions, Question Words & "I like" Phrases
- Home, Family, Friends & Pets
- Body Parts, Animals
- Food and Colors, Poems/Songs

Outcome: on the last day of the ALSC the students each in turn gave an oral presentation in Arabic using realia they developed to introduce themselves, their families, and their homes. After the successful presentations in Arabic, the students along with the teaching staff prepared and feasted on a traditional Middle Eastern meal of hommus and fattoush salad. Along with the language which is part and parcel of preparing food the students learned about cultural traditions, hospitality, and blessings (Muslim and Christian).

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The University of
Montana

Central & Southwest Asia Brown Bag Lecture Series

All presentations are held from 12:00 noon to 1:00 PM in the Central and Southwest Asia Program seminar room (Old Journalism 303) and are free and open to the public.

Tuesday, September 28

Teachers of Critical Languages Program

Presenter: Wael S. Elkahateeb,
Missoula County Public Schools

Wednesday, October 20

Arts and Artistic Creation in the
Islamic Republic of Iran

Presenter: Nancy Matthews,
Meridian International Center, Washington, DC

Wednesday, November 3

Challenges and Opportunities for
Reconstruction in Afghanistan

Presenter: Dr. Faez Akram,
Defense Critical Language and Culture
Program,
at The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center

Tuesday, November 9

The Sapphire Trio: American Women in the Arts

Presenter: Dr. Maxine Ramey and
Dr. Margaret Baldrige
School of Music

Tuesday, November 30

Israeli higher education and the University of
Haifa

Presenter: Dr. Menahem Mor
Visiting Scholar, University of Haifa

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