

# News from current and former French students

*Using French and their intercultural skills to fuel their passion for law and human rights, international business and international criminal justice, the world of finance, economics, art, marketing, international security, medicine, teaching, special education, linguistics, nursing, public health, filmmaking, playwriting, publishing, library sciences, human resources, anthropology and haute cuisine, our students have gone to prestigious graduate schools (Columbia University, the New School, Berkeley, John Hopkins, University of Chicago and graduate programs in France, Belgium and England) and have jobs as attorneys, translators and interpreters for the State Department, doctors, nurses, teachers, administrators, professors, or hold positions at NGO's, the Library of Congress, the State Department and the Department of Defense. Their path has taken them to exciting positions in France, Belgium, Egypt, Mali, Cameroun, Uganda, the Ivory Coast, the Middle-East, Quebec and Guadeloupe. Here are some of the most recent stories.*

## Class of 2017



**Charles Hurt**, a double major in Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies and Chinese Studies with a minor in French, is one of the 22 grantees nationwide to be distinguished by a [Benjamin Franklin Travel Grant](#) from the French government. This grant will afford him the support to travel to France to pursue his studies at the prestigious Sciences Po Institute (<http://www.sciencespo.fr/en/home>) with which DePaul has an exchange agreement. There he will enroll in Social Science and Asian (Chinese) Studies courses, taught completely in French, to complement his undergraduate academic agenda at DePaul University. Charles has committed to a personal pledge to

communicate only in French and/or Chinese during his entire stay. In his own words, “by honoring this pledge, I want to maximize my linguistic and cultural growth in and outside of the classroom. This dedication to my target languages will help me cultivate a more authentic and linguistically-enriched experience.”

During his semester in France, he will be enrolled in 5 courses. Three of the courses he is considering are: “Inégalités, stratification et classes sociales” (Inequalities, stratification, and social classes), “Les grands défis de l'Asie contemporaine” (The great challenges of contemporary Asia), and “Droit et Humanité” (Law and Humanity). These courses will provide him with a beautiful balance between his passions for social justice, Asian cultural studies, and the French language and culture. Charles is also the recipient of a State Department’s Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship ([www.iie.org](http://www.iie.org)) to study at Beijing University this summer (2015) and a 2015-2016 Chinese Government Scholarship ([www.csc.edu](http://www.csc.edu)) to study abroad in a Chinese university of his choice in autumn semester 2015.

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During her freshman year **Madison L Bagby** traveled to Lyon, France as a French tutor for four boys. Through this experience, her French skills improved immensely. She was fortunate to have the opportunity to teach dance classes and an English class at the local school as well.

DePaul offers numerous chances to partake in French culture in Chicago. From watching French movies at the Cine Club or going to the French market Madison has taken full advantage of these opportunities. In addition, DePaul gave her the opportunity to submit her poem for the 2015 publication of Mille Feuille. Through this, she was able to participate in a poetry reading at the Alliance Française.

This past Spring, Madison worked as an intern at the French Consulate in Chicago. This experience allowed her to use her French skills in the work force. She is spending the 2015-2016 academic year studying at IES in Paris.



**Jacqueline Villagomez**, an accounting Major and French Minor at DePaul, is currently doing an internship in a company that has subsidiaries in Montreal. As such she has had to translate some 300 French documents into English in the field of "Law and Compliance." The company sent her to Quebec this summer to help out with their clients.

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**Natasha Maria Salinas** uses her French skills at work as a Patient Care Technician at two hospitals. She took an exam to obtain permission to use her French or interpret if a French medical interpreter is needed. Salinas has used her knowledge and ability to communicate in French while on duty. The French language is popular enough in Chicago that she gets to practice speaking it while at French and Francophone events, such as Bastille Day, or with her French and Francophone friends.

## Class of 2016



Thanks to [Babel Initiative](#), a student association based at the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Campus of Sciences Po in Menton, France, **Anna Fechtor** (French and Pax Major, International Politics Minor) and **Elise Manchester** (International Studies Major, Arabic Studies and French minor) were funded to conduct a research project in Istanbul entitled “Istanbul as an Emerging Global Commodity: Understanding Local Agency in the Face of Urban Regeneration.” Babel aims at increasing the understanding of the diverse cultures and countries of the Mediterranean and the MENA region and operates as a platform to support student-initiated research projects, taking on various forms – from interviews, to video reports to the experience of human interaction itself.

Sciences Po in Menton focuses on political, economic and social issues in Mediterranean countries, the Middle-East and the Gulf. Coursework can be done in French, English and Arabic. It is one of the six campuses to which DePaul students have access through the Sciences Po exchange agreement with DePaul University. More information can be found at [www.college.sciences-po.fr](http://www.college.sciences-po.fr)

*\*Pictured above: Dana Jabri, Anna Fechtor, Elise Manchester, Angela Lorenzo (visiting from her study abroad program in Ireland) and Safia Elkhatabi (2012-2013 Sciences Po exchange student at DePaul)*

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The French program at DePaul has offered **Anne Malina** many opportunities. In 2012 she interned for 3 months at the Alliance Française de Chicago. Then in 2013 she took a translation class in which she and her classmates translated the historic Elysée Treaty's website from French into English in honor of the treaty's 50th anniversary. In the Spring of 2013, Malina studied abroad in Paris at the Alliance Française de Paris where she was immersed in French language and culture. In September of 2014, she also helped translate a French WWI soldier's work from French into English so that it could be presented at an exhibition at the National WWI Museum in Kansas City, MO. "Without DePaul's French program, I wouldn't have had any of these incredible experiences, so I encourage anyone thinking about majoring or minoring in French at DePaul to do it," says Malina. "You won't regret it!"

## Class of 2015



**Amelia Augustine**, a double major in French and Women's and Gender Studies with a minor in Russian, was chosen as a recipient of the Critical Language Scholarship Program, hosted by the US Department of State. She was assigned to the Russian program's Summer 2015 Institute in Vladimir, Russia June-August 2015. The program covers all costs, including full round trip airfare, accommodation, tuition, visa fees, group excursions throughout the summer, and an additional stipend to cover any additional living costs not provided by the program.

While at DePaul, Amelia participated in the Sciences Po exchange program in Dijon where her focus was Eastern Europe. She was also an intern at the French Consulate in Chicago, writing up reports on various educational matters in the Midwest. As part of the TAPIF program sponsored by the French government, she will be teaching English in Guadeloupe in 2015-2016.

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**Lauren Kuester Hamilton** graduated March 2015 and works for a company with offices in the US and Canada. While she is not required to speak French for her job, they have a number of francophone clients and contacts for whom her ability to communicate in French goes a long way toward closing any cultural gaps they may feel she has as an American working for Canadians. Speaking French, even if just in greeting, creates a “*rapprochement*” she says.



**Lauren Shuler**, an Honors student majoring in French, gave a presentation at the “Mayors for Peace Youth Forum” at the United Nations on April 29, 2014. The title of her presentation was “Internship of Mayors for Peace and the 2020 Vision Campaign.” This meeting was in preparation for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Lauren laid the groundwork for this honor while participating in DePaul’s short-term study abroad program in Kyoto, Hiroshima, Nagasaki in December 2012. While in Japan she met with the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the governor of Hiroshima, and visited the United Nation’s Institute for Training and Research.

Inspired by their efforts for the abolition of nuclear weapons, Lauren began working as an intern for Mayors for Peace European office while studying at Science Po (Paris) on another DePaul sanctioned study abroad program.

Shuler believes that her “French studies at DePaul have been essential for the academic and professional opportunities I have pursued throughout my undergraduate years.” As an exchange student at Sciences Po, Paris, she received the opportunity of studying law as an undergraduate, driving her intent to pursue a JD degree. Her studies at Sciences Po also offered her exposure to an array of international issues and stimulated her interest in the realm of global economic development as did an internship at the French Consulate in Chicago. Upon returning to DePaul, Shuler applied the knowledge she had gained from her studies at Sciences Po to an internship with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, where she provided research assistance to the Global Agriculture and Food Policy department for over eight months. She was later hired full-time as a Consultant to the Chicago Council’s Global Food Security Symposium 2015. Shuler moved to New York City to work as a Legal Assistant in the international banking practice group of the global law firm White & Case LLP.

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## Class of 2014

**Stacey Bear**, class of 2014, double majored in French and Political Science at DePaul. She was one of the first students to partake in DePaul's Sciences Po Paris exchange program and studied in Paris for an academic year. While at DePaul, she worked in the After-School and Summer Camp Programs at the *Lycée Français* de Chicago. She also interned for the National Immigrant Justice Center's Asylum Project where she worked with French-speaking asylum seekers. Stacey is now working full-time in the Admissions Office at the *Lycée Français* de Chicago where she uses her French skills on a daily basis. In her free time, she studies Spanish and hopes to become as fluent in Spanish as she is in French!



**Veronica Lalov** graduated magna cum laude from DePaul University in the spring of 2014 with a double major in French and Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Upon completion of her bachelor's degree and after one year of studies in IES Paris, she moved to Haskovo, Bulgaria to work as an English Teaching Assistant with the Fulbright Program. Veronica's adventures abroad, however, are not over just yet. In the fall of 2015, she moved to Paris, France to pursue her master's degree in International Human Resources Management at Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris II). She is one of the 24 students who were accepted out of 300 applicants. As part of her Masters, she will be an apprentice in the Human Resource Department at the headquarters of LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy), with tuition paid and a salary! And things get even better: she will also work as an RA for the IES program in exchange for free rent.



## Class of 2012

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**Keara Lee Engelhardt** has definitely been using French since her graduation from DePaul. She majored in French and Sociology at DePaul. During her junior year she spent a semester in Paris with IES, and learned how edifying it is to immerse oneself in a foreign language and culture; “I highly recommend it to anyone considering it, even if it’s only for a couple weeks,” says Engelhardt. After graduation, she enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to work on a masters in translation. Engelhardt earned a TA appointment, meaning that her tuition was covered by the university in exchange for teaching introductory French classes to underclassmen. It was important for the French department at UWM to teach culture as well as language, so she spent a lot of time encouraging students to get out of the classroom and find different ways to practice French. This past year, Engelhardt has been living in Paris and working as a *lectrice*, a conversation language assistant, at Paris III-La Sorbonne Nouvelle while finishing her masters. “I’m staying on in Paris for another year, and I hope to explore more of France and Europe after I’m done with my studies. After that, I’m not sure if I’ll stay in France or return to the US” says Engelhardt. “It’s all down to the job hunt, I suppose. But either way, French is going to remain a huge part of my life.”



After studying French in high school, **George Overton** began his major in economics at DePaul in the fall of 2008. “While economics suited me well, it was only a matter of time before I realized that something was missing from my coursework. It felt like I wasn’t working out my whole brain—kind of like skipping leg day,” says Overton. “I missed learning French and regretting abandoning it as a life project.” The French Translation classes at DePaul are workshops for the thinker. Translation is a special kind of course because it is both academically rigorous yet free and expressive. These courses have permanently changed the way he thinks.

After studying abroad in Paris, Overton taught English in the southern town of Cahors through the TAPIF program and then returned to Chicago to work for a year. He recently finished his first year of graduate school studying economics at the Sorbonne in Paris. The Sorbonne’s economics department—1st in France, top 50 in the world—welcomes students of all nationalities. “You actually don’t even need to speak French—they have a special English-only program. The cost? 6,500 euros. Otherwise, if you can prove you speak French, you are charged the same rate as a French student. That cost? 400 euros,” says Overton. “Not many Americans can say that they paid for grad school with a debit card. So, the interest of a second language? Aside from any other benefit, of which I personally feel there are many, well, I guess I owe DePaul’s French Program 6,100 euros—*toutes choses égales par ailleurs*.”

## Class of 2011

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**Daniel Navarro** graduated as a French major in 2011. During his studies at DePaul University, he was an intern for the Deputy Attaché in the Department of Cultural Affairs at the French Consulate for a quarter. As a student, he also worked as a supervisor for a diverse logistics company where he had to use French because there were clients from French-speaking Canada. After graduating, Navarro traveled to Europe and worked as a freelance translator, interpreter, and language teacher. Later in 2012, he decided to embark on an internship in Brazil. He was involved with 1 of 2 projects that consisted of overseeing over 60 different trainees from around the world, with a third of the trainees being Francophonie. Living and working in Brazil for over 3 months was an amazing experience where language skills were utilized in participation of many team exercises and project management for various NGOs. His French-speaking coworkers were from France, Belgium, Switzerland, Morocco, and Algeria.

Navarro held the position of Client Program Coordinator for Spanish, French, and Italian speaking clients. He worked with international intended parents, national gestational surrogates and egg donors, their physicians, fertility clinics, attorneys, and with finances.

Recently, Navarro was offered another job position at a different company, the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. He began working there in May 2015 as the new International Administrative Assistant for both the International Manager and Marketing Manager of the international department of the academy. The role entails a lot of project management, travel, and support to superiors. In addition, he uses various languages, French being one of the principal ones.

“French is still a very big part of me; it’s a part of who I am, what I do, and what I like,” says Navarro. The use of foreign languages has opened many doors after his graduation from DePaul and it continues to open many more.

After finishing her BA at DePaul and completing a Fulbright scholarship in Egypt (<http://us.fulbrightonline.org/>), **Aileen Byrne** spent two additional years in France and Belgium. She obtained her master's in European Politics at Sciences Po



Strasbourg, ([www.college.sciences-po.fr](http://www.college.sciences-po.fr)) and carried out two internships in Brussels, including an internship with the European Commission. Throughout these two years, Byrne spoke French every day and hopes to have a career that allows her to continue using the languages that she has studied.

*\*Photo: Aileen in Brussels, Belgium*

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**Leah Johnson** graduated from DePaul with a minor in French translation and a major in Economics in March 2011. She applied for the Teaching Assistant Program in France and was accepted for the 2011-2012 school year. Johnson was assigned to three primary schools in Bergerac, France, a tiny town about an hour outside of Bordeaux. Her year working as an English Assistant taught her a lot about instructing English as a second language and her French skills vastly improved. She had the opportunity to travel around Europe and explore other cultures.

While Johnson was teaching in France, she applied for the Professional French Studies Masters Program (PFMP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was drawn to this program due to its emphasis on an international internship in a Francophone country during the second year of the program and the opportunity to spend half the time taking useful business and marketing courses in UW's business school during the first

year. The skills she gained in her undergraduate French courses at DePaul aided her in her master's level French courses.

As part of the program's requirements, Johnson had the opportunity to complete an internship abroad during the second year of my program. The PFMP had a great internship placement contact who was able to find her a unique *stage* at Pôle Sud, a contemporary dance and jazz theatre in Strasbourg, France. Throughout her four month *stage*, she worked with the communications team on managing their new website, translating artist biographies, taking pictures and film of events, and many other tasks. It was her first time using French in a very professional setting, which was difficult, but her coworkers were supportive and open to teaching her everything about the theatre.

Since graduating from the PFMP in May 2014, Johnson has been working as a marketing coordinator at an international architecture firm in Chicago. While she doesn't get to use her French every day, her intercultural communication skills are always useful in working with coworkers and clients from around the world. "I believe that both my knowledge of the French language and my experience working abroad have set me apart as a job applicant and employee," says Johnson.

*\*Photo: Johnson in Bergerac (TAPIF, 2011-2012)*



**Shelby Lasaine** is a French to English Translator since the beginning of 2013. He has been working professionally as a freelance French to English translator, working mainly with legal and financial documents. He received a BA from DePaul in 2011, having double majored in International Studies and French, and spent the last two quarters of his senior year in Paris for study abroad. It allowed him to participate in the IES program and attend a course at *l'Institut Catholique de Paris*.

Lasaine also has a post-graduate certificate in Translation Studies from the University of Chicago Graham School and is currently completing another professional program in Leadership in Sustainability Management. Between 2011 and 2013, he volunteered at the

DePaul Law School's Asylum and Immigration Law Clinic as an interpreter and translator for cases involving francophone African clients and continues to be active with their program as a translator. He was just hired at DePaul as the Coordinator for the Volunteer Corps of Translators and Interpreters, a joint venture between the Department of Modern Languages and the Legal Clinic of the Law School.

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## Class of 2010



**Brittany Gignac** currently works for Language Stars as a Multi-Center Director. They teach foreign language classes for kids ages 1-10, and while her foreign language skills were not a requirement to be hired, they were a huge plus during recruitment. Her responsibilities include parent communication and customer service, teacher management, curriculum oversight, sales and marketing, and in-center operations. The teachers are all native speakers which lets Gignac use her French on a daily basis, as she also does with native Francophone families coming in for their services. In addition, she often uses her own personal language background as a testimony for parents to show them how the skill opened up doors for her both personally and professionally. Finally, Gignac assists from time to time with translation work for their curriculum development team.

Gignac started at LS in 2011 as Assistant Center Director, then Center Director, then Assistant Regional Director, and now Multi-Center Director. Her path to Language Stars was due to her experience with the Modern Language department (administrative skills), her workload as a working student and learning how to organize and prioritize, and, finally, her connection with the *Lycée Français de Chicago* where she helped run their summer camps and after-school programming while a student at DePaul.

Gignac graduated from DePaul in 2010 summa cum laude with a BA in French and minors in Italian and Art History. She was also part of the Honors program.



**Genevieve Pocius** a former French Major just received her French MA program at the University of New Mexico where she received full funding for her studies. She was an instructor for 2 sections of French each semester, which was intimidating at first, but ended up being a lot of fun, she says. As part of the program, she attended Université de Savoie, in Chambéry where she taught essay writing in English, as well as worked in the language labs helping students with pronunciation. While at DePaul, Genevieve studied at IES in Paris, did an internship at the French Consulate and went on to teach English in France with the TAPIF program. She is currently deciding whether she wants to pursue a career in teaching.

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**Samantha Mowry** is a freelance French to English translator. She has translated on a volunteer basis for a number of non-profits (including a couple branches of the UN Volunteering Program) and an asylum case for the DePaul Law School Asylum Clinic as well as becoming involved with CHICATA. In June 2015 she finished her last class towards a Certificate in Translation Studies from the University of Chicago's Graham School, which has been amazing for gaining confidence. She'll be finishing with the Advanced Certificate, which pre-qualifies her to take the ATA Certification Exam. She is also a member of NAJIT, as one of the five NAJIT Scholars in 2012 and of the French-American Chamber of Commerce in Chicago. She still lives in the city and holds a position in the library at the University of Chicago, though her hope is to become a full-time translator.

## Class of 2009



Studying abroad in Paris in the spring of 2009 before her graduation from DePaul changed **Vanessa Armand's** life. Upon her return he applied for the Assistantship program with the French Ministry of Education and was accepted.

Armand moved to the south of France in the late summer of 2009, completed an academic school year as an Assistant in a French high school, and returned to the States only to reapply for the program for a second year. Later she returned to the States to study her MA TESOL at University of Illinois at Chicago.

After completing her MA, Armand returned to her *alma mater* to teach in the English language Academy at DePaul in the Loop alongside colleagues who were also mostly bilingual and who had lived abroad. Having had the studying and living abroad experience helped her relate more easily with her students at DePaul, who were acclimating to life in a foreign setting and who needed as much cultural guidance as they did language support.

After 1.5 years teaching at the ELA, Armand packed her bags again and headed abroad--this time for Japan where she works for The Global Teaching Institute as a Teaching Fellow and Lecturer at Tokyo International University. While the majority of her solid teaching experience was gained at DePaul's ELA, she can relate to the EFL experience of her students here too. "I often recall activities and projects that I did in my French studies and use them as a base for activities that I develop for my students here in Japan," says Armand.

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**Alex Hamady**, graduated from DePaul in 2009 with a degree in French. After moving out to San Francisco to pursue a career in tech almost four years ago, he decided last September to dedicate himself to becoming a French teacher.

He currently works as a tutor/substitute and teacher/academic aide at the French-American International School in San Francisco and is able to speak French every day. Hamady also tutors privately in the city. "It's been the best experience I could've hoped for so far, and I intend on getting credentialed sometime within the next 3 years to be able to teach K-12," says Hamady.



**Christine Wehman** is an Illinois Certified French teacher. She is currently teaching 2 children's classes part time at the Alliance Française de Chicago (under the direction of Philippe Schaller) and recently took a long term sub position at Julian Middle School in Oak Park, IL. Prior to this, and a 6 year break from work to stay home with her children, Wehman taught French for 3 years for CPS at the Murray Language Academy in Hyde Park.

## Class of 2008

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**Agnieszka Szymanska** double majored in Art History and French, making extensive use of the French skills that she gained at DePaul. Currently, Szymanska is a PhD candidate in Art History at Temple University where she is in the process of writing a doctoral dissertation about a late fifth-century monastic church located in Upper Egypt. A lot of scholarly literature pertinent to her project is written in French, and the ability to read this language quickly and with comprehension is essential. Although she has not yet had the chance to visit France, she has attended an international conference in Rome at which several speakers presented their talks in French. Had she not been able to understand French, she would have missed out on exciting information

about a very important archaeological site in Egypt, where a team from France has been working and making discoveries. Szymanska's French reading and speaking skills were also necessary when she conducted archival research at the Institut français d'archéologie orientale in Cairo. On a side note, she is also a fan of Asterix and Obelix and has enjoyed being able to read the comic book series in its original text. The knowledge of the French language has substantially enhanced her intellectual pursuits as a graduate student, and no doubt will remain a key element in her future endeavors. In addition to Egypt, Szymanska will travel to Croatia, Italy, and Greece for nine months. She is also a research fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

*\*Photo: Agnes at the Temple of Hatshepsut in Egypt*

## Class of 2005



**Rachel Ahern**

The combination of French language training and study abroad experiences during Rachel's time at DePaul instilled an interest in travelling and learning more about the world. She was inspired to seek out opportunities to live and work abroad. Her first full time job after finishing her degree was with an American subsidiary of a multinational insurance and financial services company headquartered in Germany. After working in Chicago for nearly two years, she came across some opportunities to live and work in Munich, Germany. Her French language skills gave her an edge in the interview process and may have even been the deciding factor when the hiring manager offered her the job, she says. The role in Munich was to work on an international team and with colleagues all over Europe and Australia. She became more and more involved in projects with her French colleagues, sometimes serving as an interpreter for French colleagues and her English speaking manager. At other times she translated documents into English for use by other teams. She was even asked to serve as the key point of contact for projects outside of her department. The French

colleagues were appreciative of someone who could speak their language and understand their culture. During the project, she travelled to Paris on a monthly basis and really developed an excellent rapport and level of trust with her French contacts.

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**Annie Brancky** completed a B.A. in French at DePaul University in Chicago, and went on to receive her M.A. and Ph.D. in French literature at New York University. Her teaching and research interests include 19th- and 20th-century French literatures, women writers, feminist theory, criminality and literature, and literature and the media.

Professor Brancky is currently working on a book project on Marguerite Duras and the *fait divers* entitled *Marguerite Duras: Rewriting the Crime*. Majoring in French at DePaul empowered her to participate more fully in a global world. After spending a year abroad teaching English in a French high school in Nantes and working on freelance translations, Brancky moved to New York. She is now a Visiting Assistant Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Vassar College, where she teaches language, literature and civilization. Her career involves regular travel to France and other parts of the francophone world, a global network of friends and colleagues, and exciting and often collaborative research and translation projects across disciplines. Brancky believes that “speaking French has proven to be a valuable asset in my life that I will take with me wherever I go.”

**Anthony Paul Smith**, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion at La Salle University in Philadelphia, claims that he is where he is today because of the 2004 DePaul study abroad trip to Paris. He reports having struggled a great deal with language learning, thus, being immersed in French was a great help. With his professors’ recommendations, he was

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led to a position with Dr. Heneghan in Environmental Studies. It resulted in a research assistantship with the Institute for Nature and Culture the year before he started graduate school.

INC was important for his dissertation as it explored the history of philosophical and theological conceptions of nature using the methodology of the French philosopher, François Laruelle. Smith undertook the translation of one of Laruelle's books, which was published in 2010. He has just seen the publication of his fifth translation of Laruelle's work. These translations led Smith to co-edit the first English-language edited volume on Laruelle's work. Later he was invited to take part in a colloquium on Laruelle's work at Cerisy in September 2014. Smith continues to work in contemporary French and Francophone philosophy, theology, and literature and is very thankful for how DePaul's French program prepared him.

## Class of 2003



Last year **Andrew E. Johnson** left the comforts of stable government work with the Department of Defense to start his own company with another colleague called Mimir Health Intelligence. The industry is going through a transition from paper to digital records, and healthcare providers are now asking what to do with all this new data in terms of reducing cost but also improving population health.

DePaul has been on Johnson's mind and his company has recently launched a partnership with his former graduate school, the University of Denver. The partnership will be exploring implementation of Mimir at select sites in the developing world, the first at St. Luke's Hospital in Haiti.

"It has always surprised me how French comes back into life in unexpected ways, and hopefully with this opportunity I will once again be able to use the language," says Johnson. While at DePaul, Andrew spend a year at IES in Paris (<http://www.ies.org/>) followed by a year of teaching English in Marseille. While the partnership is at its early stages, Johnson hopes to possibly collaborate with DePaul and the Modern Languages Department down the line if the opportunity arises.

## Class of 2000

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**Sandra Arreguín** currently works at Northwood Junior High School in Highland Park, IL. She minored in French and enjoyed the opportunity to study in Paris. Her travels abroad also motivated her family to visit Paris, an experience they never imagined. Learning French expanded Arreguín's worldview, which now helps her with understanding different viewpoints. This is important in her current job as principal. Although she doesn't use the French language every day in her position, it has still helped in many ways. For example, her first job was as a French/Spanish teacher – "I would have NEVER gotten this job without knowing French," says Arreguín. "I quickly learned that there was a demand for world language teachers who spoke more than one language, but not many of us out there." French also played an important part when she became a World Languages Specialist for CPS. She used her French to work with various teachers and with external partners. It was also thanks to French that Arreguín understood grammar better in her first language,

Spanish.

French has continued to serve her as a way to impress people – it has come up in every job interview. Also, she has used it to communicate in unexpected situations. For example, a student arrived from Senegal and although the family reported speaking Wolof, she recalled from her French studies that French was also spoken in Senegal, and started speaking French to the student. Arreguín was thus able to help the student during his first days of school in the United States.

"French allows me to enjoy more of everything - more music, more poems, more art, more history, more books, more film, more food, more places, and more people," says Arreguín. "Studying French taught me that we are all more alike than different. It is a part of my life because it fulfills a part of my being." It has been an essential component of her experience.



**Teresa Villa-Ignacio** graduated in 2000 and has been using her French skills ever since. After finishing her double major in French and English, she went to Paris to complete a year-long M.A. in French Cultural Studies in Paris through Columbia University. Later she moved to Providence, Rhode Island, where she earned a Ph.D. in comparative literature at Brown University. Since then, Villa-Ignacio has taught French and Francophone literature, language, and culture at Harvard University, Boston University, and Tulane University, where she currently teaches in the English department and holds a Visiting Scholar position in the French and Italian department.

In addition to teaching in French and teaching French and Francophone works in translation, Villa-Ignacio uses French on a daily basis in one or more of her capacities as scholar, literary translator, and documentarian. She is also the author of several articles, published and in progress, and a book monograph in progress on issues of ethics and translation in contemporary French-American poetic exchange. She has co-edited and contributed translations to an anthology of Moroccan creative and critical writing from the post-Independence journal Souffles-Anfas (<http://www.laabi.net>), forthcoming from Stanford University Press in Fall 2015. Finally, she is producing a series of podcast interviews with poet-translators.

# News from current and former French students

"I deeply appreciate the ways in which my knowledge of French allows me to communicate more widely and to help others to extend the range of their communicative abilities, whether through teaching students valuable language and cultural skills, or by writing about, translating, or interviewing authors whose ideas would otherwise not be available in English," says Villa-Ignacio. "Working in and on another language also leads to wonderful travel opportunities – I often spend several weeks each summer in Paris, doing research and re-connecting to French culture. I am infinitely grateful to all the professors in Modern Languages at DePaul who gave me so many opportunities to build my confidence in French and inspired me to follow in their footsteps!"



At first **David Maruzzella** began studying the French language at DePaul in the summer of 2013 as a foreign language requirement for his PhD program in philosophy at DePaul. Though he had taken many years of Spanish in high school, Maruzzella never studied any foreign languages during his undergraduate studies at NYU. An intensive summer French course and a year of French reading classes later, he found himself in Paris studying at the *École normale supérieure*, where he has been since the fall of 2014, taking graduate classes and working completely in French thanks to the exchange program DePaul's Philosophy department has with ENS. He will stay at the ENS another year to write his thesis or "mémoire" in French before returning to DePaul to write his dissertation on contemporary French philosophy. "Needless to say, DePaul's French program was an extremely rich environment that prepared me well for my *long séjour* in

France," says Maruzzella. "France and the French language, it now seems, will stay with me for the rest of my studies and long into my future!"

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## French and accounting add up to fulfilling career

By Jennifer Leopoldt

French and accounting may not seem like the most compatible courses of study, but together they have helped Lorraine Evanoff (LAS '87) maintain a long and fruitful career in the international film and entertainment industry. Today, as the director of finance for CineSky Pictures, Evanoff draws on both her areas of expertise.

A Chicago native, Evanoff worked as a model and actress in several long-running local commercials to help pay for college. She transferred from Triton College to DePaul, and though she first began studying accounting, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in French. "Putting myself through college was a challenge that required me to work full time. Accounting was not an exciting subject to me—I was taking it for practical reasons," Evanoff explains. "For some creative respite, I used my electives to take French classes. It turned out to mean much more than I had ever imagined."

That French degree is what enabled Evanoff to take a big leap after graduation and move to Paris, where she worked as an English teacher and American phonetics coach for French actors. She balanced coaching with taking classes toward a Licence en Lettres Modernes (degree in modern literature) at the University of Paris Censier. Evanoff also did contract work for Cannon France, translating films from English to French for subtitling. This work led to her role as a founding member of Sideral Productions, the French distributor of New Line Cinema and other studio films. She also continued to dabble in acting, including being cast as the lead of Sideral's "Dark at Noon," helmed by famed Chilean director Raúl Ruiz, which competed in the 1992 Cannes Film Festival.

Evanoff was fueled on her journey by lessons she had learned at DePaul. "The professors

taught me to use my own resources and my intelligence, and that I could get through any situation if I just thought it through. It sounds simple, but it really was a revelation for me," she says. In 1993, Evanoff returned to the United States, first settling in Los Angeles and later moving to San Francisco to be part of the dot-com boom and continue her accounting studies. While studying for the Certified Management Accountant and Certified Financial Manager exams, she held jobs at Internet start-ups and other Silicon Valley tech companies.

Evanoff returned to Los Angeles in 2005, this time combining her skills in accounting and entertainment. She was chief financial officer for National Lampoon Inc. and director of finance for Element Pictures before becoming director of finance for CineSky Pictures, an international film distribution company that licenses in-flight movies. Evanoff enjoys working in entertainment because of its flexibility, which allows her to work from home and travel. She enjoys taking multiple trips a year with her husband, producer Robert L. Levy, and has been to every continent except Australia. That flexibility gives her time to pursue other passions. "Accounting keeps my mind sharp, but I also need to use the left side of my brain and do creative things. Otherwise I'll get bored," she muses.

Her latest creative project is her first novel, "Foliage," a spy thriller set in the international banking world that is loosely based on actual events and inspired by her years living in France. "Over the years, when I spoke of my experience in France, people always encouraged me to write about it. There was always a glimmer of an idea for a novel in the back of my mind."



### Lorraine Evanoff's tips for recent graduates:

**Interview as much as possible.**

You learn more about what you want and

**Don't accept "no."**

If you want a job in entertainment, take the best one you can find

**Work sideways.**

If you can't find a job directly in entertainment, find one in advertising

**Have a great work ethic.**

Don't be afraid to take on any task, no matter how menial, and always do your