

HIGHLIGHTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE ACTIVITIES

January 2007 - Present

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF MAY 1, 2007

English Language Fellow Gives Seminar on American Culture and Idioms in Turkey: 30 English Teachers at Mugla University, including members of the Materials Office and School of Foreign Languages administration, attended a seminar on April 26, 2007, presented by English Language Fellow Suzie Sims-Fletcher. The topic "American Culture in English Idioms: As American as The Flag, Baseball, and Mom's Apple Pie" exposed participants to the basics of American history and cultures. Through examination of The American flag, The Star Spangled Banner, Memorial Day, and the rudiments of baseball, teachers took a short tour of the United States in song, holidays and national pastime. The presentation led to a lively discussion about similarities and differences between the U.S. and Turkey. *Celebrate! Holidays in the U.S.A.*, a publication by the Office of English Language Programs in Washington, was presented to the school's staff library as a culmination of the day's events. The donation was met with applause and immediate requests to borrow the text.



Caption:
ELFellow Suzie Sims-Fletcher donating the Office of English Language Publication *Celebrate! Holidays in the U.S.A.* after her presentation to teachers of the School of Foreign Languages at Mugla University April 2007.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF APRIL 24, 2007

New Access Teachers Meet for Orientation in Turkey: On April 21 and 22 2007, thirteen Turkish teachers chosen to teach in the Access Program in 8 cities throughout Turkey met in Ankara for a two-day program orientation at the Turkish American Association, organized by National Coordinator for English Language Fellows Jill Cargile and TAA's Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator Aysen Yucel. English Language Officer Maria Snarski presented the overview and history of the Access Program, demonstrated a variety of ways to use OELP materials to promote communication in English and a better understanding of American culture, and encouraged collaboration with English Language Fellows throughout Turkey. Workshops on Using Authentic Materials, Integrating Skills, and Teacher Collaboration, led by Jill Cargile, provided new techniques and communicative activities for teachers to try out in their classes and showcased the advantages of teacher collaboration in the program. The new Access teachers expressed enthusiasm in learning new ways to spark better

communication in English and integrating American culture in their classes. The Access Program provides free English classes to less advantaged youth in Muslim communities and begins its third year in Turkey.



Caption: ELFellow Jill Cargile during her presentation on Using Authentic Materials during the Access Orientation in Ankara April 2007



Caption: English Access Teachers from eight cities in Turkey, Access Coordinator Aysen Yucel, ELFellow Jill Cargile, and ELO Maria Snarski in a group photo during the Access Orientation in Ankara April 2007.

EL Fellow Joins with Turkish Colleagues to Present *Shaping the Way We Teaching English Material*: English Language Fellow David Mulvihill and Turkish colleagues Hasan Bedir and Rana Yildirim from Cukurova University in Adana presented three modules from the new Office of English Language Program product " *Shaping the Way We Teaching English*" to the instructors of Turkish American Association (TAA) in Adana. Principle Officer Eric Green gave opening remarks at the afternoon workshop and presented the teaching staff with a copy of the *Shaping* materials. Twelve English instructors participated in the three-hour workshop and expressed an eagerness to apply the principles presented.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF APRIL 10, 2007

Presentation on Critical Thinking in Ankara: On April 3, 2007, English Language Officer Maria Snarski and National Fellow Coordinator Jill Cargile delivered two presentations on Critical Thinking and Writing at Baskent University in Ankara to an audience of 65 English teachers of first through fourth year university students. The audience engaged in activities they can use to help students critically analyze literature and use academic language to report on literature in their writing.



Caption: ELF Jill Cargile during her presentation at Baskent University in April 2007.

ELO and Senior ELFs present at Ministry of Education ELT Seminar: On April 5th, 2007 English Language Officer, Maria Snarski, and senior ELFs Jill Cargile and Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert gave presentations at the ELT seminar hosted by the Ministry of Education, Directorate of Educational Technologies. The seminar was an initiative of senior fellow, Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert, whose host institution is the Ministry of Education. There were 100 people in attendance, including primary and secondary school teachers and ministry staff. The seminar was opened by Mr. Mehmet Altinsoy, deputy general director of educational technologies. The presentations focused on the use of technology and the Internet in the teaching of English. The interactive presentations covered relevant topics as the use of Internet radio and CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) resources to foster critical thinking and FlashAce for listening exercises.



Caption: ELF Jill Cargile during her presentation **Caption:** ELF Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert at THE Ministry of Education, Directorate of during her presentation at The Ministry Technologies in Ankara April 2007. of Education, Directorate of Technologies

in Ankara April 2007.

Shaping the Way We Teach English in Ankara: Senior English Language Fellows Jill Cargile and Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert are delivering 8 sessions of the OELP and University of Oregon's *Shaping the Way We Teach English* course to 17 English teachers from public and private schools and universities in Ankara on eight Saturdays during March, April, and May 2007. The teachers experience hands-on training of the fourteen module teacher training course, exchange ideas online during the week between sessions, and complete a final project as a culmination of their learning and application of the course into their own teaching.



Caption: Teacher participants in the Face to Face course for Shaping the Way We Teach English in Ankara facilitated by ELFs Jill Cargile and Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert April 2007.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF MARCH 6, 2007

ELO and Senior ELFs Give Support to New Prep Program in Turkey: English Language Officer Maria Snarski and Senior English Language Fellows Jill Cargile and Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert traveled to Nigde University on March 2, 2007 to give presentations to the English Preparatory and First Year Instructors who are in the process of developing a new English Language Program, the first at the university which was established in 1992. The presentations on Learner Autonomy and Curriculum Objectives, Feedback on Academic Writing, and Integrated Skills were well-received as assistance in shaping the new departmental curriculum.



Caption: Senior EL Fellow Jill Cargile during her presentation at Nigde University on March 2, 2007.

Caption: Senior EL Fellow Monica Wiesman-Hirchert during her presentation at Nigde University on March 2, 2007.

Standing Room Only for First Seminar at Newly Opened Turkish American Association in Konya: English Language Officer Maria Snarski and Senior English Language Fellow Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert facilitated the first teacher development workshops at the Turkish American Association in Konya March 3, 2007. The presentations, *Using Pictures in the Classroom* and *Getting the Most of Your Fun Activities* both featured ideas found in the Office of English Language Program publications *Bright Ideas* and *Forum* magazine. The workshops were well received and attracted teachers from as far away as Kahraman, a city 100 kilometers south of Konya. The workshops were covered by the Konya Post with an article and photos appearing in the March 4, 2007 edition.



Caption: English Language Officer Maria Snarski giving a picture dictation to the teachers during her presentation at the Turkish American Association in Konya on March 3, 2007.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

Turkish American Association Hosts Teacher Seminars in Ankara: On February 24, 2007 The Turkish American Association hosted 140 English Language teachers for presentations by English Language Officer Maria Snarski, Senior English Language Fellows Jill Cargile and Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert, and Bilkent University's Bengu Yurtseven for a day of teacher training seminars. Topics included Role Plays, Internet Radio Listening, Getting the Most from Fun Activities, and Classroom Observations. Participants were actively engaged in a variety of hands-on activities. The event was organized by Senior ELF Jill Cargile, whose host institution is the Turkish American Association in Ankara.



Caption: EL Fellow Jill Cargile demonstrating an exercise using a podcast during her presentation at TAA Ankara February 24, 2007.

Film Series Highlighting Critical Thinking Begins in Turkey: On February 20, 2007, English Language Fellow at Gaziantep University, Kevin Mullen, began a series of 16 American films that critically explore the biggest challenges facing American society. These films, which focus on issues of race, gender, economics, the environment, and politics, all exhibit the important role the arts play in a society's progression towards a higher level of justice and equality. This film series, which takes place on Tuesday evenings and is free and open to the public, will be used to facilitate a semester-long discussion of "Critical Thinking": its definition; its role in art; and its importance to society.

ELF Goes Back to High School in Turkey: On February 22, 2007, Senior English Language Fellow, Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert, visited a local Anatolian high school as part of an ongoing school visitation program, which has included four different schools in Ankara. During the 10-week visitation program, the ELF serves as a guest speaker, teaches demo lessons, and helps students and teachers set up English Clubs. The program is part of an outreach initiative to speak to high school students and answer their questions on American culture, life, language, and environment. Many of these students are members of English Clubs, and the ELF program provides OELP reference materials to be displayed in language club rooms and on bulletin boards in the schools. This initiative also aims at encouraging teachers to do more peer observation as a means of professional development as well as introducing them to new teaching techniques as they observe the ELF deliver lessons and then engage in post observation discussions.



Caption: EL Fellow Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert checking on group work during one of her high school visits in Ankara February 2007.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF FEBRUARY 20, 2007

Presentation on Teaching Critical Thinking Draws a Large Crowd of Students and Faculty in Southeast Turkey: On February 16, 2007, English Language Fellow Kevin Mullen gave an hour-long presentation on the importance of encouraging Critical Thinking in the classroom to over 150 students and faculty members at Gaziantep University in Turkey. Using Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci's ideas as a symbolic definition of Critical Thinking, Mr. Mullen's presentation outlined key aspects of Gramsci's life and philosophy, and illustrated the affect he has had on academia since his death in 1937. The presentation also served as an introduction to an upcoming film series that showcases films which have dealt with different aspects of American society. Its aim was to highlight the importance of Critical Thinking in a democratic, open society, and to introduce methods of encouraging it in the classroom to both present and future educators.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF JANUARY 31, 2007

English Language Fellows from Turkey Swap Ideas at International Conferences: Ten ELFs, the ELO and ELO Assistant and four Turkish university instructors traveled to **Cairo** January 20 -25, 2007 to facilitate sessions, give presentations, and participate in workshops focused on English language teaching and training. The conference held during the first three days brought together over fifty participants from the pilot online course based on the new Office of English Language Programs product "**Shaping the Way We Teach English**" and the thirty-three English Language Fellows based throughout the Middle East and Central Asia to introduce and swap ideas on the new materials. During the second half of the visit, the English language professionals participated in the 12th annual **American University in Cairo (AUC) International Skills Conference**. With over 1500 attendees from twenty different countries educators shared and exchanged ideas on how to introduce new ideas on testing assessment, teaching literature, critical thinking, and independent learning into the language classroom.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF JANUARY 16, 2007

ELF Presents iBT TOEFL to Educators at Istanbul Technical University: On January 9th, 2007, English Language Fellow **Laraine Altun** gave a presentation on the new iBT TOEFL to 15 academic administrators at **Istanbul Technical University**, including the professors and vice-rectors who coordinate the Dual Degree program with the State University of New York, and Lori Thompson and Ben Balkaya, SUNY staff based in Ankara. Ms. Altun was able to bridge the gap in communication and actions

needed among the Turkish and American staff concerning the specialized curriculum and equipment necessary to run a successful program.