

UFLA

The Utah Foreign Language Association Newsletter

Volume 110, Issue 3



Tim Cannon
UFLA President

It is an honor to serve as the UFLA President this year. I am impressed and inspired by the incredible work our language educators are doing across the state. Whether it's organizing events, leading competitions, presenting at conferences, or creating immersive classroom

experiences, your passion and dedication is evident and deeply appreciated.

Teachers in general and special individuals, but language teachers take it to the next level. You go above and beyond—not just through your teaching, but through the empathy and understanding you show your students every day. You help them grow academically and personally, offering them the opportunity to explore new perspectives, cultures, and ways of thinking. The impact of your work can be profound and far-reaching.

This is an exciting year for UFLA as we work to enhance our visibility and better serve our members. You'll notice more activity on our social media platforms, where we aim to spotlight the amazing things you're doing with languages and cultures around the state. We are also in the process of launching a new and improved website for our organization. We hope it will be a valuable source of information and resources for our association.

While 2025 brings uncertainty for language programs nationwide, here in Utah we are fortunate to have support from our students, their families, and our colleagues. We are fortunate to teach in a state recognized across the nation as leaders in language teaching and language programs. Together we can continue moving forward with the certainty that what we do will help shape the lives of our students, improve language pedagogy, and promote cultural understanding.

Thank you for all you do. I look forward to a great year ahead for UFLA.
Sincerely,

Tim Cannon
UFLA President

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UFLA Conference/ASL News



UTASLTA Meeting Report

UTASLTA met in early August for our annual meeting. It was a full day of collaboration, learning, and sharing. We created a Google drive Toolbox for us to share resources and ideas statewide! Some things that were added into our Toolbox are Brain Breaks, Deaf History & Culture, Fingerspelling Activities, Games, Substitute Lesson Plans, and so much more. We look forward to adding to these folders throughout the year and continuing to build a welcoming, supportive community for all ASL teachers, new and experienced.

SWCOLT

2026 SWCOLT Conference



Stephen Van Orden
SWCOLT Representative

Howdy UFLA members! Our state organization is a member of the regional organization SWCOLT and the national organization, ACTFL. There are nine states in SWCOLT: Utah, California, Texas, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Hawaii, and Oklahoma. Each year SWCOLT holds a conference in one of the member states. This year the conference will be in Denver, Colorado. Next year, the conference will be in New Mexico. The SWCOLT conference is an excellent opportunity to build professional relationships, experience outstanding professional development, stretch your understanding of methodology, and build your teaching skills. Please take a moment

to visit www.swcolt.org to become more familiar with the organization. Please also consider attending the conference this year or start planning now for next year. It is always easier to get permission and funding to attend a conference when you start the process early.

Stephen Van Orden
UFLA Representative to SWCOLT

From the Plains to the Rockies... Reaching New Heights of Proficiency

February 19-21
2026

Denver Omni Interlocken
Broomfield, CO



AATG Language News

AATG Nachrichten:

Here is a sample of what is happening at the Secondary level for German:

- West, East and Highland High celebrated Oktoberfest in the SLC school district with at least 60 students and their families. We enjoyed German food, music, and a sense of belonging with each other.



- Copper Hills High celebrated Oktoberfest with students during the school day and later on in the evening with over 80 students and their families. They enjoyed German folk music, coloring contest, potluck German food, and dance instruction from Ellie Nelson Saunders (a BYU student). We ended the night with everyone singing and dancing along to the “Fliegerlied”



AATG Language News

- At Timberline Middle School Ms Mappin uses Oktoberfest and a school-wide competition to decorate drink coasters as a recruiting tool to promote her German program.



Oktoberfest Drink Coaster Competition

Design a drink coaster with Oktoberfest theme for a chance to join Timberline's Oktoberfest on September 22nd



- Pick up a coaster & info at the front office
- See Mappin, B107, if you have questions
- Scan QR Code for more info

Oktoberfest Drink Coaster Competition Details

- Pick up a drink coaster from front office
- Write your name & advisory on the back of the coaster
- Turn in finished coasters to office by September 17th
- If your coaster is among the BEST, then you will be able to come to Oktoberfest on September 22nd
- Any questions or concerns, email Frau Mappin at cmappin@alpinedistrict.org

Rules

- Must be school appropriate
- No reference to alcohol or beer
- Autumn/Oktoberfest/German themed
- Write name & advisory on back

- At Oak Canyon Junior High with Anna Robison as their teacher, students learned about the ACTFL proficiency levels using ice cream as the example topic. After that, they learned about German's love of Spaghettieis in the TL, before the students had a chance to assemble their own Spaghettieis using a potato press, mashed up strawberries, whoppers, white chocolate chips, and vanilla wafers.

Also happening:

- As part of Utah DLI's Memorandum of Understanding with the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation, we have agreed to provide a teacher exchange experience for 3 teachers from Berlin. The teachers will arrive on October 18th and depart on October 30th – report to follow.
- Christkindlmarkt at This is the Place Heritage Park December 3-6
- Our third annual educator retreat is scheduled at Capitol Reef the end of January
- Our AATG Utah Facebook page where we share our successes and ideas is growing

DLI Language News

Navigating the Test Season: A Focus on Our DLI Students

As the school year progresses, we find ourselves in the midst of a busy season filled with assessments and evaluations. This period is particularly significant for our Dual Language Immersion (DLI) students, who, like their peers, are diligently preparing for a variety of tests that mark their academic progress.

Among these students, our 9th graders hold a unique position. This year marks a pivotal moment in their DLI journey as they undertake the Advanced Placement (AP) exam in their immersion language. This rigorous assessment serves as a culmination of their years of dedicated study within the program. Successfully passing the AP exam not only demonstrates their advanced proficiency but also signifies the completion of their formal DLI curriculum.

For those students who achieve the required score on the AP exam, an exciting opportunity awaits: the Bridge program. This program is designed to build upon their strong foundation in the immersion language, offering advanced coursework and experiences that further enhance their linguistic and cultural understanding.

We also recognize that standardized tests can present unique challenges, and students progress at their own pace. For some of our dedicated learners, the 9th-grade AP exam might be an initial step in demonstrating their mastery. Therefore, we offer the option for students to retake the AP exam in their 10th-grade year.

Our dedicated DLI teachers are working tirelessly to support our students during this demanding time. They provide targeted instruction, review sessions, and encouragement to ensure each student feels prepared and confident as they approach these important assessments.

We commend all our DLI students for their hard work and commitment throughout the year, especially our 9th graders as they reach this significant milestone. We encourage them to remain focused, utilize the resources available to them, and approach their exams with confidence. We are incredibly proud of their dedication to bilingualism and biliteracy and look forward to celebrating their continued success.

DLI Language News

First Annual Read-Aloud Competition – Park City District

Reading aloud is essential in our pedagogy, fostering fluency, oral expression, and text comprehension. Inspired by the French national competition “Les Petits Champions de la Lecture” (The Little Champions of Reading), we adapted this project for the two 5th-grade classes in the French DLI (Dual Language Immersion) program in Park City.

The competition took place over two months. First, the students participated in a reading rally of children’s picture books, validating their comprehension through questionnaires. Next, they watched videos of former finalists to identify the qualities of good read-aloud: clarity, intonation, expressiveness.

Each student then chose an excerpt of approximately 1 minute 30 seconds, from the previous readings or other works, favoring passages rich in emotions. For three weeks, they practiced daily. The first selections took place in class, with peer evaluation based on defined criteria. Two girls and two boys were selected from each class. A second selection, conducted by the French-speaking teachers, designated the four school finalists.

The grand final was held on May 8th, in the presence of a jury composed of members of the DLI team. It was a highly emotional moment for all the participants.

This project allowed students to actively engage in their learning by choosing their own excerpt and practicing regularly. They thus developed their fluency and their ability to interpret texts, revealing a fine understanding of the emotions and intentions of the authors.

Encouraged by this enthusiasm, we plan to repeat the experience next year, involving the 4th-grade teachers and, we hope, other schools to organize an inter-district final, or even one at the Utah state level.

Sandrine Fernandez and Maxime Ambeza

For more information: lespetitschampionsdelalecture.fr

UFLA Awards

UFLA GRANTS

Each year there are two Grants available to world language teachers who are members of UFLA.

1. [THE TEACHER VITALITY GRANTS](#)

Three annual grants may be awarded for the purpose of research, study, workshops, or projects for improving the quality of teaching. Award amounts will typically range from \$500 to \$1000.

2. [THE PAT BUCKNER COLLABORATION GRANT](#)

One award of up to \$1000 is given annually to facilitate collaboration between two or more language teachers in the same department, school, or in different schools, districts or across the state.

Teacher Vitality Grant recipient December 2024 –

Congratulations, Fabiana Hansen!

Fabiana is a Portuguese DLI Teacher at Hidden Valley Middle School in Jordan School District. SWCOLT selected her presentation proposal for the upcoming conference, January <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZDc-69PL5b2NJAYF4pb4N1Yt8gBl93eE/view> 2025. At the conference, she will highlight her students' inspiring collaborative projects and her school's partnership with the U of U Portuguese Department.

She will use the grant funds to offset the costs of attending the annual SWCOLT conference.

UFLA Awards / Language News

2024 Award Winners

Teacher of the Year - Secondary

Gwen Cannell – Junior High Spanish teacher, Davis School District

Teacher of the Year – Post-secondary

Jeff Peterson – Assistant Professor of Japanese, BYU

Friend of the Profession

Allyson Chard – Founder of the Christkindlmarkt

Candice Pierucci – Utah legislator

Lifetime Achievement

Carolyn Sandstrom- German teacher, Weber School District

Dr. Bryan Eldredge – Chair of the Department of Languages and Cultures, Professor of Deaf Studies, UVU

Dr. Fernando Rubio – current director of the Yale Center for Language Study and former director of the Second Language Teaching and Research Center at the University of Utah

UVU Language Department

The UVU department of Languages and Cultures currently teaches 8 different languages, including Russian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Japanese, Chinese, and American Sign Language. We welcomed two new faculty members this year: Tim Stout for Japanese, and Thierno Diallo in French. This summer we sponsored Study Abroad programs to Germany, China, Brazil, France, Japan, and Spain. We also celebrated the Grand Opening of our new Language Hub, a new approach to language and cultural enrichment that takes the place of our traditional language lab.

UFLA INFO

UFLA needs YOU

To find out more about how to become more involved in our UFLA organization, complete this survey. (click here)



Would you like to nominate a Teacher of the Year? As a reminder, applications are accepted on our website at ufla.net.

In addition to [Teacher of the Year](#), UFLA also awards the following grants:

[Teacher Vitality Grant](#)

[Pat Buckner Collaboration Grant](#)

Thank you for the many nominations for the UFLA Teacher of the Year Award. Our state is blessed with an abundance of exceptional world language educators. We will announce this year's Teacher of the Year winners and other award recipients during the upcoming SWCOLT conference.

UFLA Mission

The Utah Foreign Language Association exists to promote the learning of world languages and cultures in the state of Utah and beyond. Specifically, the mission of UFLA is to:

- Support world language teaching and acquisition at all academic levels, including traditional instruction and dual language immersion programs
- Disseminate information and provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and resources to support language teaching and learning
- Offer professional development opportunities for language teachers
- Recognize excellence in language teaching and learning
- Collaborate with regional and national language teaching organizations
- Advocate for public policy that promotes language learning and supports the needs of language teachers and students

UFLA WEBSITE

The UFLA Website has now moved to <http://ufla.net>

It's a new name, but with all the content we have always had on the site. If you only visit once a year to register for the conference, come see what else we have on ufla.net (including copies of the newsletters going back over twenty years.) We will also post handouts from presentations at our upcoming conference on the new UFLA website.

We also hope you will join [UFLA on Facebook](#) and on our new Instagram account ([@ufla_utah](#)). Come participate in the conversation!



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Advertising Information

The UFLA Newsletter is published three times each year in September, January and May. All issues are distributed via e-mail to UFLA members as well as posted on the UFLA website.

Advertising rates are available at:

[UFLA Sponsorship Opportunities](#)

Contact Branden Lansing at blansing@dsdmail.net with any questions or to place an ad.