



LANGUAGE & FRIENDSHIP NEWSLETTER

Fall 2023



INTRODUCING: MOROCCO!

This summer, we had two groups travel to Morocco on two very different but very equally amazing programs!

A group of French language students from Wyoming HS, OH, (above) experienced central Morocco, including Casablanca, Rabat, and Marrakech. The Hellgate HS, MT, group (right) saw the northern part of Morocco, including the cities of Tangier, Chefchaouen, and Fes. This group was comprised of Arabic, French, and Spanish language students. Together they traveled to Morocco after exploring France and Spain!



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The L&F team is welcoming the new school year with great enthusiasm and excitement! We're building on the momentum of a successful 2023 program year. L&F sent groups to Quebec, France, Spain, Argentina, and Morocco! Yes, you read that correctly - we launched a new program to Morocco this summer, and it was a huge success!

In other news, check out the latest videos on our website that capture some of the best moments from our [abroad](#) and [hosting](#) programs. They are short and sweet, perfect for sharing with students. Leah and Hannah did such a great job creating them that I got goosebumps the first time I watched them. See for yourself! And bonus, you may see some familiar faces!

Finally, we've already started planning the 2024 Leader Workshop with some fresh material we can't wait to share with teachers traveling in 2024.

Cheers to a great school year!

-Jennifer Beattie-Cramer, Director



MOROCCO HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from 2023 programs included a camel ride through the desert, staying in a luxury desert camp, visiting the Hassan II Mosque, exploring Chefchaouen, the "blue city", and hiking around the Akchour waterfalls. Groups also got to taste authentic Moroccan cuisine and stay in gorgeous riads.

Want to plan a trip to Morocco? Visit our website for a [sample itinerary](#) and to start planning today!



FRANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Summer 2023 France groups traveled to the Sud, Normandie, and the Loire Valley. Highlights included visiting the Châteaux de la Loire, exploring Monaco, seeing the calanques in Cassis, hiking along the cliffs of Etretat, boat rides on the Seine, and of course, all the fun adventures students got up to with their host families!

Above: Students from combined Wisconsin schools enjoyed a Seine dinner cruise on the last night of their trip.



ARGENTINA AND SPAIN HIGHLIGHTS

This summer, Indianola HS, IA, students that went to Argentina enjoyed hiking through Parque Nacional Quebrada del Condorito and connecting with Argentinian students at the school they visited in Carlos Paz. Cedar Falls HS, IA, students explored Spain: seeing Granada, Sevilla, and Madrid.

"Your host family will take you in and treat you like their own family member immediately, creating your very own Spanish family that you will cherish forever, as I have mine."

- Amelia Bryant, Cedar Falls HS, IA (below) enjoyed time (and the views) with her host sister in Toledo.



Left: Wyoming HS, OH, donned some traditional clothing.

Right: Lincoln HS, NE, at the iconic Louvre pyramid
Bottom (left and middle): Bellevue E HS, NE, Olympia HS, WA, and Middle Park HS, CO, students kayaked to the Pont du Gard.

Bottom (right): Billings W HS, MT, CR Wash HS, IA, and Garfield HS, WA, students at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris



CONTINUING CONNECTIONS



Top: St. Xavier and St. Ursula Academy students, OH, got to reunite with the students they'd hosted in the winter for some sightseeing in Paris.

Bottom (left): Northview and Southview HS students, OH, met up with students they hosted for a day in Annecy, France.

Bottom (right) : Ana, San Clemente HS, CA, stayed with the student she hosted last summer, Louise.



Do you have stories of continued connections? Send stories and photos to L&F to be featured in future newsletters.

friends



Eli, St. Xavier Academy, OH, visited a student his family hosted, Malo, for three weeks this summer, and they traveled to Chamonix, Mont Blanc, Paris, and Annecy.

"Malo's family was extremely gracious and generous in showing Eli the sights and experiencing France's culture and food. All this happened because of our relationships with the exchange students we have welcomed. This is an example of the friendships [students] can gain from opening their homes to an exchange student. It is a blessing and I would encourage [students] to be open to it! It is one of our most memorable experiences at St. Xavier!"

- Eli's mother, Angie



HOSTING HIGHLIGHTS

This summer, French and Spanish students stayed with families in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

Top (left): The Orszula Family, IA, welcomed their Spanish student, Irene, with a fun sign.

Top (right): Lou, who stayed with the Magnuson's, MN, became determined to convince her teachers to start a theater program at her school back home after seeing "Beauty and the Beast" at her host sister's school!

Middle: Hannah and the French students explored Chicago before they met host families the next day.

Bottom: Jennifer, Michelle, Leah, Hannah, and the French leaders explored downtown Stillwater, MN, and had lunch at a classic American malt shop.



WINTER HOSTING

Check our website and your emails for dates, updates, and information on Argentinian and French students coming this winter!

[L&F Future Hosting Dates & Locations](#)

HEAR FROM OUR 2023 NAOMI THOMSEN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!



We asked our scholarship recipients to reflect on their various trips -- their favorite moments, struggles they overcame, or how they were impacted. Here's what some of them had to say:

"I made lifelong connections on this trip. I grew closer to my peers, as well as made many new friends. Staying with my host family was an enriching experience that was so much more immersive than if I had only been a tourist. When I first arrived in Avignon, I was nervous about meeting my host sister. However, we started talking and I knew that she was going to be someone I held onto for a lifetime. I cannot wait for my next travels to France, as this trip exposed me to a culture I can't help but miss. I truly appreciate the generosity of the Naomi Thomsen scholarship. This incredible opportunity was made so much more achievable for me thanks to this scholarship."

- Bailey Brabec, Chippewa Falls HS, WI



"I had an AMAZING time in Spain, it improved my Spanish greatly, and I got to learn a ton about the culture, and I mean CASTLES! Come on!

I enjoyed making new friends and eating tons of fantastic food. I appreciate all of you for awarding me the scholarship! Holy Week was amazing and I learned so much, and the family stay was AWESOME! Thank you for everything and making me excited to travel again!"

- Liam Spoehr, Appleton East HS, WI

We rely on the support of teachers, travelers, host families, and friends to keep the Naomi Thomsen Scholarship fund up and running each year.

Send your donation to:

Language & Friendship
c/o Naomi Thomsen Scholarship Fund
8011 34th Ave S, Suite C30
Bloomington, MN 55425



"The two weeks in France went by fast, and it was such a wonderful time. I made friends from neighboring schools that I never thought I would ever meet, and now we see each other and communicate every day! It's one thing to say, 'I went to France before I was 20!' but it's another to say 'I've made friendships and memories that I will never forget'. My time in France has made my perspective on the world change to a point where I didn't even know it was possible!"

- Paris Galletti-Arledge,
Truman HS, MO



"This trip was one of the most memorable and fun experiences I've had, and I was able to learn how to handle different situations that came up. For example, we had the bus break down, and our connecting flight was cancelled. This was an unexpected event that we all had to figure out how to handle. With that said, the trip gave me so many fun experiences and ways to practice my language skills. It was important for me to be able to talk to people I'm not familiar with in my second language to be able to improve not only my skills, but my confidence, as well. I also have a passion for French, and it made me so happy to be able to see it used in real life."

- Kayla Earp, Chippewa Falls HS, WI

OPPORTUNITY: YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

L&F staff recently completed MHFA Training on mental health and/or substance use challenges and crises in young adults. We encourage you to consider this free training to better understand and support your students both abroad and in the classroom. Click [here](#) to find out more about MHFA or click [here](#) to register for a session that works for you.

One thing we found beneficial and helpful is the acronym **ALGEE** for responding to a student's mental health crisis or challenge.

ASSESS for risk of suicide or harm

LISTEN non-judgmentally

GIVE re-assurance and information

ENCOURAGE appropriate professional

ENCOURAGE self-help and other support strategies



IN NEED OF SOME NEW READING MATERIAL?

Click [here](#) to purchase a great new read: "Going Global in the World Language Classroom: Ideas, Strategies, and Resources for Teaching and Learning with the World" on all things world language teaching written by longtime L&F teacher, Erin Austin!

You might notice as you read that she gave L&F a few shout-outs, too!

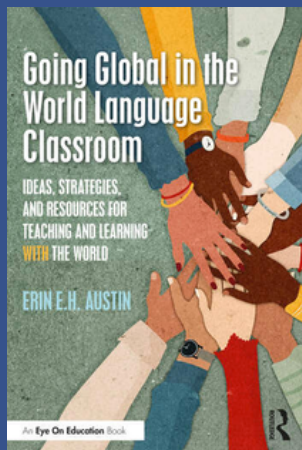


PHOTO CONTEST: HONORABLE MENTION

Keep reading to see the winners for all four Photo Contest categories: Hosting - Candid, Abroad - Language in Action, Abroad - Travel/Culture, and Abroad - A Moment with My Host Family. For now, check out some honorable mentions!

Abroad - Language In Action:
Sophia Woods,
Cedar Falls HS, IA



Abroad - A Moment with My Host Family:
Clover Kraft, Académie Lafayette, MO



Abroad - Travel/Culture:
Nathan Shyy,
Walnut HS, CA



Hosting - Candid:
The Ravinski Family,
Duluth, MN



CREATIVE LANGUAGE CLASS

We're "collabing" with Creative Language Class on several lessons for you to use in the classroom that will also work to help promote hosting in your community! Watch for news of new lessons from L&F! Explore their website, blog posts, resources, and activities here:

[Creative Language Class](#)



WHAT DID L&F STAFF GET UP TO THIS SUMMER?



Jennifer

(Director):

I celebrated my oldest daughter's graduation from high school, enjoyed a two-week trip to Europe with my sister and nieces, got to see the Colosseum in Rome for the first time, took a trip to Michigan to see family, then sent my daughter off to college.



Michelle

(France and Hosting Coordinator):

I spent a lot of time with my family, playing board games and supervising dog zoomies. Our favorite games this summer have been Gloomhaven and Everdell.



Leah

(Registrar):

I had a beautiful summer connecting with family and friends. Many gatherings surrounded by fresh garden produce, love, and friendship--fueled by lots of coffee and Diet Coke.



Hannah

(Program Assistant):

I celebrated my birthday, enjoyed two concerts that were 'a long time coming', and had a lot of fun showing the French students around downtown Chicago!



MAIL BAG

"[My student] seems more independent and more aware of her daily surroundings. She clearly learned that life is not the same everywhere and that many of her cultural habits are not practiced around the world in the same manner. She developed a respect and admiration for the culture and environment that she was able to experience for a short period of time."

- Parent from St. Ursula Academy, OH

"I am excited to continue my French education and feel that my comprehension of the language has improved a lot."

- Student from Sehome HS, WA

"[My host family] took me to see great things everyday, never a dull moment, and were some of the friendliest and most welcoming people I've ever met."

- Student from Eau Claire Memorial HS, WI

"This trip impacted my son and our family in many ways. He was the first to go to France! It has opened his mindset to a bigger world outside of his environment and community."

- Parent from Académie Lafayette, KS

"This voyage was a huge success. We've explored an outstanding amount of places. I've learned so much not just about France and its history but also about myself. I've reached into my inner emotions, strengthening relationships with friends. I waited in excitement for over a year, but it was definitely worth it."

- Student from Sehome HS, WA

"[The most rewarding parts of the trip were:] the students' reports of their breakthrough language skills, a student's excitement in going to the place/site they've dreamed about for years, some students' new understandings of themselves and the world and their skills."

- Teacher from Billings West HS, MT

"I loved getting to experience their daily life and ended up getting way more attached to them than I thought I would."

- Student from Chippewa Falls HS, WI

"[I loved] watching them grow personally and in their language. I also loved sharing this place that means so much to me and watch their excitement as they discover it."

- Teacher from Central HS, OR

"The best part of my family stay was experiencing the different lifestyle. I learned that I value different cultures and enjoy being in different countries."

- Student from Middle Park HS, CO

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



ABROAD - LANGUAGE IN ACTION

First Place: Haley Nelsen, Maple Lake HS, MN
Second Place: Ana Benito, San Clemente HS, CA
Third Place: Noah Gregoire, IC Liberty HS, IA



ABROAD - A MOMENT WITH MY HOST FAMILY

First Place: Rylee Hunt, Lakeville North HS, MN
Second Place: Amelia Bryant, Cedar Falls HS, IA
Third Place: Geraldina Jeronimo Simon, St. Ursula Academy, OH



ABROAD - TRAVEL/CULTURE

First Place: Peyton Kyle, Wyoming HS, OH
Second Place: Haley Nelsen, Maple Lake HS, MN
Third Place: Paris Galletti-Arledge, Truman HS, MO



HOSTING - CANDID

First Place: The Johnson Family, Minneapolis, MN
Second Place: The Magnuson Family, Minneapolis, MN
Third Place: The De Simone Family, Bettendorf, IA



COME SEE US!

We'll be at the following conferences:

IWLA - Ankeny, IA: Oct 6-7, 2023

WAFLT-COFLT - Mount Vernon, WA: Oct 14-15, 2023

MCTLC - Minneapolis, MN: Oct 27-28, 2023

WAFLT - Appleton, WI: Nov 2-4, 2023

CSCTFL - University of Minnesota: Mar 14-16, 2024

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Language & Friendship provides educational programs including short-term travels, language-immersion family stays, and hosting opportunities.



- ARGENTINA - COSTA RICA - FRANCE - HOSTING - MOROCCO - SPAIN - PERU - QUÉBEC -