

December 2008

Salaam `aleykum!

This is our fifth occasional “salamat” letter. In July we complained about it being hot and miserable and now we complain about it being cold and miserable! As they say, if you don’t like the weather, wait a while and it’ll change. What has not changed, however, is our continued enthusiasm and delight in the growth of Arabic language teaching and learning in K-12 across the country. You are integral to this growth and for your efforts and your continued interest, we are thankful.

It is not possible to include all of the information that we have been collecting or have been sent in a short letter such as this. We have been sending out notices about possible jobs, new publications, conference announcements, and so forth over the last few months. It did turn out that you were not receiving them because there was a problem resulting from the university’s e-mail system. That has been fixed and Mike Greer has contacted you about that. We will include some of that previous information in this letter.

ACTFL Convention: It was a pleasure to see many of you at ACTFL in Florida in November and also a pleasure to see the presentations on Arabic programs, materials and research. Several of us noted, however, that there were fewer Arabic presentations than last year. Again, we encourage you to submit proposals to ACTFL for the coming year. The deadline for submissions is January 9, 2009. The information is posted on the ACTFL Web site at www.actfl.org. If you have not submitted a proposal before and would like some assistance, please let us know and we will put you in touch with someone who can help you write your abstract.

The most important activity at ACTFL this year was the formation of the Arabic Special Interest Group (SIG). This was done in conjunction with the American Association of Teachers of Arabic. For several years we have been discussing ways to develop a more supportive relationship between ACTFL and the AATA. To create a working relationship is a bit difficult since the AATA meets at MESA (Middle East Studies Association) and those of us who are in K-12 foreign language education generally attend ACTFL which tends to take place at the same time in different cities!

The creation of the Arabic SIG was a wonderful occasion. We elected three officers, Dr. Salah Ayari (Texas A&M), Chair, ayari-s@tamu.edu; Dr. Shereen Tabrizi (Dearborn Public Schools), Vice-Chair, tabrizs@dearborn.k12.mi.us and Dr. Hanada Taha-Thomure (San Diego State University), Secretary, hanada@arabexpertise.com. Many of you have already received information from Hanada encouraging you to participate in ACTFL. The cost of being a member of the SIG is \$5/year that you can add to your regular membership. Please join. We need to continue to make our voice heard and this is a good venue. We will have two sessions next year that will be under the auspices of the SIG and the AATA. If you have a good idea for a joint session, please contact one of the officers ASAP!

So now we have another group that is forwarding the teaching and learning of Arabic. In May of this year, The National Arabic Language Conference attendees committed to developing state-based groups that will contribute towards the professionalization of our field through

conducting workshops in Arabic. If you are interested in this initiative, please contact Dr. Nesreen Akhtarkhavari at NAkhtark@depaul.edu.

The next conference that some of you may want to attend is the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) in New York City from April 16-18, 2009. See <http://alpha.dickinson.edu/prorg/nectfl/conf.html> for more details. The NECTFL board has made a conscious effort to provide an Arabic strand in its schedule.

Support from the federal government: Many of you participated in the summer teacher training institutes funded under the STARTALK program. Or you taught Arabic in one (or two!) of the programs. This program has spread from a focus on high school to including middle school kids this past summer and will extend down to the elementary level in the summer of 2009. We invite you to visit the STARTALK Web site <http://www.startalk.umd.edu/> as soon as possible and look for the guidelines. Information on the application process, eligibility and priorities has just been posted!

The Department of Education funded 4 Arabic language programs under its Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) this year. The Minneapolis Public Schools, through its ACES Project (Arabic and Chinese Extended Sequences) will establish model programs to improve and expand study of these two languages in six elementary, middle, and high schools. The School District of the City of Dearborn will create an articulated pipeline that will mesh with the district's secondary course offerings. This is also a program model that will include professional development and partnerships with community organizations. The Glastonbury (CT) Town School District, in partnership with several other organizations, will establish innovative assessments systems that will help students move to superior level proficiency in Arabic, Chinese and Russian by the time they graduate from colleges and universities. This project includes developing an electronic portfolio system. The Memphis (TN) City Schools project will focus on engaging large numbers of minority students in the study of critical languages, of which one is Arabic. Elementary courses will be whole-school, and middle school courses will become credit-bearing sequential courses that will lead students to enroll in more advanced courses at the high school level. Information on this competition will be posted at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/OELAprograms/4_FLAP.htm at the end of January 2009. For general information on applying for government grants, see <http://www.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml?src=rt>. Or contact Rebecca Richey at Rebecca.Richey@ed.gov. She is also a good source of information on how your school system can apply for a FLAP grant.

Finally, one of our staff members at the NCLRC, Mary Claire Peroutka, worked with Egyptian teachers who are in the U.S. for one year teaching Arabic as part of a State Department program, the Teachers of Critical Language Program. For one week, she demonstrated various teaching techniques with the cooperation of high school students from Montgomery County. This program is very interesting and well-run. For further information, you may want to check it out at www.tclprogram.org or contact Ben Dunbar at Dunbar@americancouncils.org.

New at ArabicK12.org:

1) *Survey of schools teaching Arabic K-12:* After many phone calls and much intensive follow-up with administrators and teachers, we have finally posted the survey results on our revamped website, www.arabick12.org/schools.html. New to the list this time is a greatly expanded section on private schools teaching Arabic based on schools with readily accessible websites. We encourage you to please go to the website, check out your school, and see whether the information we have posted is indeed correct. And tell us about any other schools that we have missed. Our funding for this activity is miniscule, so we are very much dependent on the goodwill and the cooperation of our readership to provide us with updated information.

2) *Useful Websites for Arabic Teachers:* I'm pleased to announce the completion of one of our most recent projects. We have created a new section of our website to provide you with the most useful websites for teaching and learning Arabic. Visit this site at www.arabick12.org/materials/websites.html. There are four main sections: Websites for Arabic Teachers, Websites for Arabic Students, Supplemental Websites for learning Arabic, and Websites in Arabic. Each listed website includes a brief description of the site in addition to comments on the site's usefulness. If you have suggestions for website descriptions, additions, or deletions, please let us know.

3) *Professional Development:* The Professional Development section of the ArabicK12 website is constantly growing as more becomes available for Arabic teachers. This page currently contains 9 upcoming conferences, 3 workshops/institutes, and 9 Fellowship/Funding Opportunities. We're especially pleased to offer the 6th International Language Teacher Educator Conference in May 2009. We strongly encourage Arabic teacher educators to submit proposals for sessions, but please do so by the December 31 deadline! See all Arabic professional development at www.arabick12.org/profdev.html.

4) *Arabic/English Glossary:* We have now included a comprehensive Arabic/English glossary on our site with translations/approximations of teaching terminology. You can download it from our homepage: www.arabick12.org.

New Publications & Resources

1) The Teaching of Arabic as a Foreign Language. (revised) edited by Mahmoud al-Batal.
<http://press.georgetown.edu/detail.html?id=9780962153099>

2) As-Salaam Alaykum! Beginning Modern Standard Arabic. by Hussein and Abou-Dib.
http://www.cheng-tsui.com/store/products/salaam_alykum | jennifer@cheng-tsui.com

3) Encyclopedia of Computer and Internet Terms English-Arabic. by Author: Dr. Alam E. Hammad
<http://www.dunwoodypress.com/products/-/276>

4) The website www.siraj.com offers Arabic books and language materials for all ages. Syraj claims to be the first bookstore to offer some of these titles for audiences outside the Middle East.

5) CJK Institute launches Database of Arabic Names: <http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/dan.htm>. CJK specializes in the compilation of large-scale CJK, and Arabic lexical resources, including proper nouns and variants.

Arabic in the Media

We collect articles about Arabic on a regular basis, but are providing you with only the ones which have active links, since the others have now been archived and are less accessible.

Charter school offers Arabic classes, diverse atmosphere. *Arab American News*. 9/26/08.
<http://www.arabamericannews.com/news/index.php?mod=article&cat=Community&article=1531>

Shifting Winds in Arabic Teaching. By Elizabeth Redden. *Inside Higher Ed*. 10/1/08.
<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/10/01/arabic>

Yeshivas Say Salaam Aleikum To Arabic. By Jonathan Mark. *The Jewish Week*. 8/20/08.
http://www.thejewishweek.com/viewArticle/c224_a13210/Special_Sections/Education_Careers.html

This letter is getting to be much too long! As we end the year, we at the NCLRC would like to wish you all Happy Holidays and a wonderful New Year. Kul `aam wa antum bisalaam wa khayr. Let us know about your activities and accomplishments. Remember to visit our website at www.arabick12.org for the latest updates on resources, and keep up the good work.

Dora Johnson
Catharine Keatley
Michael Greer
Mary Claire Peroutka