**Tips for a Successful Future in Foreign Languages**

- **Be flexible!** Sometimes the original plan we have does not work the way we thought it would. If we keep an open mind, an unexpected opportunity will show up that could very well be better than the original plan! (In my case, I had planned to go from my Masters in Spanish Literature straight into a PhD in the same thing, but it didn’t work out that way. Instead I took a detour which led me to a PhD program more suited to my goals, the starting up of my company, and a positive experience working at a liberal arts college I would have missed otherwise.)

- **Be persistent!** Success does not happen overnight, and sometimes it feels like it might never happen. Be persistent. If one way isn’t working out, look for a different avenue and keep asking questions until you find the answers.

- **Diversify!** The more knowledge you have in other areas besides the languages and cultures you study, and the more connections you can make between them, the easier it will be for you to find a job.

**Career Tracks in Foreign Languages**

- **Academia:**
  
  If you know you want to teach or research a language at university level, you will most likely choose to go into one of three main areas: Literature, Linguistics, or Foreign Language Pedagogy. There are numerous related areas as well, such as ESL, Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies, Film, Folklore Studies, and so forth.

- **Education:**
  
  If you want to teach a foreign language in K-12, you will most likely go on for a Masters of Education. ESL pairs nicely with this degree as schools have had to develop ESL programs to meet the needs of a large immigrant population.

- **Interpretation and Translation:**
  
  Interpretation programs are not common yet in Ohio universities. Kent State, however, offers a degree in this area. For a list of institutions both in the U.S. and worldwide that offer interpreter certifications, visit the American Translator’s Association: [http://www.atanet.org/certification_eligibility_approved.php#us](http://www.atanet.org/certification_eligibility_approved.php#us)

  If you are interested to know more about Legal Interpretation, the Supreme Court of Ohio offers free training seminars and a legal interpreter certification program at a relatively low cost:
  
  
  Certification/ other resources: [http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JCS/InterpreterSvcs/](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JCS/InterpreterSvcs/)

- **Military / Government**
  
  Both the military and government agencies are in need of people who are proficient in foreign languages.

- **Business/ Law / Medicine / Social Work**
  
  Companies want to hire professionals who are proficient in a foreign language, have high levels of cultural competency, and who have experience abroad in addition to their knowledge and experience in Business. Legal, Medical and Social Work professionals in the U.S. are coming in frequent contact with immigrants and find that knowing at least one other language and having knowledge of other cultures helps build rapport and deepens their understanding of those with whom they work.
Study Abroad / Scholarships

Studying abroad is necessary to really become proficient in a language and understand another culture. Wright State offers study abroad opportunities in numerous countries: http://www.wright.edu/ucie/abroad/

CLS: The U.S. government has realized that education in foreign language is critical and the Department of State has allocated funds to train people in what are known as “critical languages”, or languages spoken in conflict areas or are of some interest to the U.S. government for other reasons. This scholarship provides funding for U.S. students to go abroad for a summer to study in an intense, immersion-based program.

Fulbright: http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org/about/fulbright-us-student-program

For those interested in research or teaching abroad, the Fulbright scholarship is a possible source for funding. The student Fulbright awards are designed for recent graduates or people working on a graduate degree.

FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies): http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpsflasf/index.html

FLAS is a Fellowship awarded to graduate students working in a variety of languages and related area studies and you can apply through the institution you attend.

Experience in your own community

- Volunteer: Keep developing yourself by seeking opportunities to connect with native speakers in your community. Dayton, OH has a large immigrant population, including speakers of Spanish, French, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Italian, Portuguese and German. The Welcomedayton.org website has a full list of languages spoken in Dayton: http://www.welcomedayton.org/about/immigrant-communities/languages-of-dayton/ and describes its role providing resources for immigrants. By volunteering your skills and time in one of the service areas (health, social services, government/legal, community, etc.) you will gain valuable experience and make important connections.

Search for opportunities through welcomedayton.org, the multicultural center at WSU, or by calling community organizations such as ABLE (Advocates for Basic Legal Equality) or Catholic Social Services.

- Internships: Look for internships through Wright State’s Asian/Hispanic/Native American Center: http://www.wright.edu/administration/ahna/, or search for internships through law firms, government agencies, healthcare organizations, etc. that have numerous immigrant clients/patients.

Concetta M. Blechschmidt, M.A. Spanish

KILM Director
24 Ascension Hall
Kenyon College
Dayton, OH 43442
(740) 427-5877
blechschmidt@kenyon.edu

President, Traveling Professor, Inc.
1203 Highland St.
Columbus, OH 43201
(614) 439-2186
info@thetravelingprofessor.com
www.thetravelingprofessor.com