

URSULA WILLIAMS GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

Molly Godwin-Jones
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Five graduate students were awarded Ursula Williams Graduate Student Conference Grants to support participation in the 2017 IALLT Conference hosted by Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. This grant honors the memory of Ursula Williams, former Associate Director of the Center for Creative Computing at Notre Dame University, who served as host for IALL '95 and was the IALLT President Elect at the time of her death in 2004. Her continuing impact on the organization and the spirit of conviviality that she brought out in others is still evidenced in the passionate memories that members shared with awardees.

Becky Lawrence recently graduated with an MA in Linguistics from the University of Oregon, and is currently teaching English as a Foreign Language at Tokyo International University in Kawagoe, Japan; she also assists in running the English PLAZA, which is an English-only international center on campus. Her conference presentation included an overview of content creation with Augmented Reality Interactive Storytelling (ARIS) and showcased the results of her project “A Multiliteracies Approach to Language Teaching: Using ARIS in a Language Classroom,” which used ARIS in a creative writing course to elicit student-authored interactive story-games. Lawrence, who was attending her first IALLT conference, said that she highly valued the opportunity to “connect with professionals in the field that [she] might not have otherwise had the chance to get to know.”

Paul Sebastian, another first-time conference attendee, successfully defended his dissertation last October, and has since taken a tenure-track position as an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics and Director of the new Language Acquisition Resource Center at Appalachian State University. His presentation, “Massive Open Online Courses Within and Beyond the University Setting,” examined the potential democratization of MOOC providers and how such a process might serve to disrupt the current model of MOOC teaching and learning. Sebastian described his first IALLT experience as “by far the most relevant conference” that he had ever attended, a sentiment shared among this year’s awardees.

Xin Chen is a PhD candidate in Literacy, Culture and Language Education at Indiana University, whose is currently working on a dissertation proposal on learning transfer in writing courses. Her recent publications include an article in *INTESOL Journal* (November 2017) and co-authorship of an article in *ITAIS Newsletter* (July 2017) and two chapters in *Teacher Training and Professional Development of Chinese English Language Teachers* (Routledge, 2017). In her IALLT presentation, “Computer-Assisted Peer Review and Multilingual Students' Motivation in ESL Writing Class,” Chen discussed her use of the Canvas LMS to facilitate computer-assisted

peer review; her findings have clear implications for ESL writing teachers seeking to motivate effective peer review with multilingual students. Chen, along with other graduate student IALLT members, commented on the feeling of a “big family” that was immediately evident at the conference.

Judson MacDonald recently completed an MA in Romance Languages (Spanish K-12 Teaching) at Appalachian State University and is currently teaching high school Spanish in Durham Public Schools while also working at a global fitness company. His presentation with Amanda Romjue, a 2015 Ursula Williams Grant awardee, focused on their “Intercultural Classroom” project, which allows students to experience Costa Rica through free video storytelling modules and supplemental materials created by MacDonald and Romjue during time abroad. MacDonald appreciated the opportunity that IALLT 2017 gave him to learn “from and with other incredible educators.” He looks forward to beginning new collaborative research projects over the next year.

Molly Godwin-Jones is a graduate student in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Kansas. Her presentation with IALLT Secretary Shannon Spasova, “Connecting to the Textbook: Real-life Tasks and Real-life Tools in the Beginning Language Classroom,” presented ways to incorporate authentic online tools into beginning language classrooms. Godwin-Jones described the conference as “the most practical and supportive” she had ever attended.

All awardees thoroughly enjoyed their experiences at the conference and are hoping to become more involved in IALLT activities in the future. After experiencing the opportunity to network with more senior colleagues in the field and to learn about new tools and research, all are looking forward to attending the 2019 IALLT Conference at the University of Oregon.