

Rookie Spanish teacher hopes to open doors for students to excel

CHRISTOPHER ERBIN
Staff Reporter

First year Spanish teacher Curt Collingwood returned from the heat of Spain and arrived in the damp Pacific Northwest with high expectations. He had already picked up on the rumors around the staff room: West Linn High Students excelled in the World Language Department.

Although the students' high test scores were an added perk, Collingwood was most intrigued with the job offer because of the students' willingness to learn.

Teaches: Spanish II/III
Degrees received: Undergrad and Masters in Spanish from Bowling Green State University

Year(s) of experience: Taught several courses at various Ohio high schools

Hometown: Canton, Ohio
Interests: Loves the

outdoors and is picking up the game of tennis

Childhood obsession: Big Ghost Busters fan

First exposed to Spanish: "My hometown is predominately Caucasian, so there were very few people I could practice speaking Spanish with. However, my parents were not fluent in multiple languages, but they definitely promoted speaking Spanish around the house. They had many dictionaries that converted English to Spanish and that is where I got most of my practice."

First day expectations: "It was probably more hectic preparing and getting ready for the students. You know, from what I had heard, I was expecting hard working and dedicated students; not really your typical high school student. In all seriousness though, they are very bright kids."

First day problems?: "I learned kids like to talk, no matter how old they are. I

respect them as long as they respect me, and if they insist on talking, they can hang out in the hall and make up the work on their own time. But when I say this, I am talking about a very select group of individuals. The majority of my students have been awesome so far."

Outside of school he is most likely: "Recently I've tried picking up tennis, I am in the beginner stage for sure. I also enjoy Indian food a lot. However I haven't found a favorite (Indian) restaurant in Portland. Then again, maybe I just haven't looked in the right place. Also, because I love nature and the outdoors, the first thing I did when I moved to Oregon was go to Multnomah Falls. It is well known everywhere in the country and it is really an exhilarating thrill to see in person."

Over the summer: "Well, I spent a lot of time, two months I think, in Madrid, Spain. I loved the people,



After returning from Spain and moving from Ohio, new teacher Curt Collingwood received his first teaching job. His practice in learning Spanish came from his parents who always gave him the proper materials to pursue his love in the language.

Photo by Cole Fiala

the city, the food; I loved all of it. The weather is awesome as well, there was never a cloud in the

sky and the temperature was constantly pushing the hundreds. I actually had the most embarrassing moment of my life while I was in Spain. I was a pretty fluent speaker, but I didn't know how to pronounce the Spanish accents. Anyway, I was going to see a movie and on my way in I asked a young lady working at the theater, "Did you like the movie you saw?" Apparently my accent was not accurate and I really asked her, "Do you like what you see?" She must of thought I was some kind of insane pervert, but whatever she thought, it was really embarrassing.

His students say: "He is a really interesting person and gets along well with his students. When he showed us he had two different colored eyes, one blue and one brown, I thought to myself; "Spanish will be a lot more interesting now." Avi Levy, Spanish III Student, sophomore, said.

Freshman/AlM counselor brings experience from around world

SYDNEY MACNAUGHTON AND CHRIS GARFIELD
Staff Reporter

Megan Runyan, freshman counselor, is here to help and guide the freshmen. Hired after her experience as an intern at this school, she enjoys relating to high school aged students while guiding and serving them. With many hobbies, travels and interests, she has some experience that could not be found anywhere else.

Position: Freshman counselor
College Attended: Oregon State University
Interests: traveling, snowboarding and running

Applied to be a counselor because: "I applied for this position because I have always wanted to work with kids. I had always thought that I would become a teacher, but I like being a counselor better because I interact with the kids more and get to know them better on a one on one basis."

Looking forward to: "I am looking forward to getting to know familiar faces and the incoming freshman. It will be nice to help out the new students in their first year of high school. I'll be able to guide them in academics, colleges and social problems."

Different from other counselors because: "Each and every person is an individual, and in the same way, each counselor has their own style of counseling. I

Counseling history: "This is my first year as a



New freshman counselor Megan Runyan interned at West Linn last year and was hired because of her skill and expertise. Runyan loves her new job and getting to know the freshman.

Photo by Cole Fiala

licensed counselor, though I was an intern for two years. I worked in Boise Elliot Elementary in north Portland, Sellwood Middle School, and West Linn High School, which was my favorite."

Advice to one wishing to be a counselor: "Be flexible and patient. Always be ready and willing to take on the challenges of each day. Work hard to relate with the kids."

History: "I was born and grew up in Yakima, Wash. to

a loving family. After high school I attended Oregon State University as an undergrad but then went to grad school at Lewis & Clark College." She has a younger brother, Nathan, and an older sister, Elissa, but no pets.

Beeson: will he make history?

HILLARY KRIPPAAHNE
Staff Reporter

Stephen Beeson brings his love of history to his work as a student teacher in the Educational Resource Center. According to Beeson, academics have always been his drive, but not always his passion.

Cooperating teacher: Judy Nowlin, ERC
College attending: Portland State University
Interests: Guitar, music, outdoors, traveling to the beach and the mountains

Family: wife, Kathryn
Reason for teaching: "It's complicated, but I feel like a kid, and I love kids. I'd like to go into history or French teaching later. I majored in history and minored in French. This program is great though; I'm really excited to start."

Favorite part of teaching: "I love it when students take their own initiative to learn. I love it when students discover themselves."



Stephen Beeson, student teacher in the Educational Resource Center isn't nervous about his new job teaching students. His main concerns will be staying organized during his first year at the high school.

Photo by Nicole Hutchinson

In high school: "I liked watching sports, but I didn't play them. I was very academic. My senior year I was in the Model United Nations. I was also in the French Club."

Family: "I'm a newlywed and my wife's name is Kathryn. We married last June. We don't have any pets yet, but Kathryn

Mexico. I loved traveling to Australia from October to December 2002. I began by flying into Sydney, then backpacked for three months up the coast to Cairns. I went snorkeling and stopped in different coastal towns."

would love to get a Yorkie. We babysat my wife's parents yorkie and the dog is very attached to people. He'd always sleep in their bed and follow them around, so we had him everywhere."

Previous jobs: "I worked at Target after high school. Then I worked with my church youth group and played in their band."

Passions: "I enjoy music. I have been playing guitar for the past 12 years. I also have fun outdoors. Biking is another one of my hobbies. I minored in French, but have never been to France. For our honeymoon I would have loved to go, but we went to Cannon Beach instead."

Challenges of teaching: "I am not too nervous because I student taught for a little bit. My main problem will be staying organized. I want to be a fun teacher, but have a serious class. I don't want to be the mean teacher everyone hates."