

LTC CONNECTION

LANGUAGE TEACHING CENTER
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

January, 2008

Volume 2, Issue 1

Message from the Director



UMA SAINI
DIRECTOR OF LTC

I would like to wish you and your loved ones a prosperous and happy New Year. I also hope that 2008 will be a great year for the Language Teaching Center.

Thanks to all of your hard work and dedication, 2007 has been a productive year for LTC. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all students, staff and the faculty for your many contributions. You have all worked effectively and with great dedication toward making LTC a wonderful and unique place for learning and teaching. My special thanks to Mel Arevalo, Aaron Lazowitz, Jaclyn Lim and Jamie Tsui, our graduating student workers, for providing all the help with limitless tasks and projects. We will surely miss your contagious smiles and work ethics. For details, read page 5. Our students are among the brightest and dedicated young people. We have hard working staff and great faculty who are passionate about teaching.

The new year brings new faces to the LTC. Aijun Zhu will join the Chinese Program replacing Josephine Matthews who resigned in December. Jane Kamau will take over the Kiswahili classes that were being taught by Hannah Mugambi who has returned to Nigeria, her native country. Rika Seya will rejoin the Japanese Program and will teach Slow Paced Japanese this semester. Last but not the least, Radhi Dalta will join the Hindi Program and will be teaching Intermediate and Conversational Hindi.

As faculty members, in 2008, we must continue to be creative in teaching and ensure that students are excited about learning the languages and are able to function well in their perspective target languages. We look forward to the external review scheduled for the end of this month to provide suggestions/recommendations to further enhance our programs.

Thank you again for all your help and support.

With best wishes, Uma.

Cheers to a New Year at LTC

The LTC's annual holiday party was held this past December 11th in the Great Hall of Levering. In attendance were familiar LTC faces - faculty, staff, student assistants - as well as friends from the Academic Advising and IT offices.

Guests sampled a variety of foods and caught up with colleagues as we celebrated another successful year.

As we head into 2008, it is never too early to begin

planning for the next holiday party. It has been suggested by some that the gathering become an observance of the diverse holiday celebrations



LTC FACULTY & STAFF'S
SECRET SANTA GIFTS

of the season. Perhaps faculty could bring a dish or decoration that is special to them during the holidays and share it with their LTC family!

If you have any other suggestions on how to make the next holiday event a more spirituous one, please don't hesitate to share your ideas!

You can reach the LTC with any suggestions at ltc@jhu.edu.

**"A LANGUAGE IS AN
EXACT REFLECTION
OF THE CHARACTER
AND GROWTH OF ITS
SPEAKERS."
- GANDHI**

IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from Director	1
Cheers to a New Year at LTC	1
Language Lab Serves You	2
Class Happenings	2-3
Faculty in Focus	4
Student Spotlight	5
Student Articles	6
Faculty Happenings	7
Upcoming Dates & Events	8
Special Announcements	8

**LOOK FOR A
STAFF CHANGE
IN THE
LANGUAGE LAB**

As many of you know, Lab Technician Jesse Warford has moved on to a position in the Psychological and Brain Sciences department. Manreet Jassar will help fill his shoes on a part-time basis during the spring semester, providing faculty and staff with technological assistance.

Manreet joins us from the Carey Business School with experience in software development at Tata Consultancy Services in India.

Take a moment to visit the Lab website - www.langlab.jhu.edu - and check out the many

resources and useful links for your specific language.

With 31 workstations and a conference table that can seat up to 15 people, the Language Lab is also available to hold a class.

Please remember to coordinate all Lab activity and requests for IT assistance through Cindy Simpson by email at csimpson@jhu.edu.

Additionally, the LTC Lounge is available for a small group to meet or hold class on an occasional basis. It is only available during regular Lab hours and must be reserved through Carol Young at ltc@jhu.edu.

We look forward to serving you and your students this spring!



THE LANGUAGE LAB SERVICES ALL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AT JHU FRESHMEN OPEN HOUSE, FALL 07

Russian Happenings

The annual Russian Halloween Masque at Professor Olya's house kicked off the fall 2007 semester. The busy term concluded all too soon with a field trip to the Hillwood Museum, formerly the estate of the cereal heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post, whose husband served as ambassador to Soviet Russia in the forties. The estate is decorated in imperial Russian style and features an impressive collection of Fabrege eggs.

Other exciting news: Russian and Anthropology Major, sophomore David Marcus received the Woodrow Wilson Undergraduate Research Fellowship. Over the course of his junior year he will

be using this prestigious grant to study at the Far Eastern State University of the Humanities in Khabarovsk, Russia where he will pursue an anthropological research project on culture and identity among the indigenous peoples of the region.

Russian double-major Junior Elizabeth ("Liza") Hersey is getting ready to depart for St. Petersburg on an ACTR Fulbright Hays Scholarship. She plans to immerse herself in the study of the Russian language and culture.

Congratulations David and Liza! Your teachers at LTC are very proud of you!



**OLYA SAMILENKO
RUSSIAN**

Fall ESL Attracts Broad Audience

Astronomers and cell biologists, post docs and administrators, 20-somethings and 40-somethings speaking ten different native languages gathered on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings at Homewood in the fall to polish their English oral and writing skills.

In ESL classes taught by the LTC's Pat Palmer and part-time faculty Christine Waddail and Julia Yarmolinskaya and supported by Phyllis Steiner, 25 students analyzed sentences, corrected tenses, made presentations, and wrote papers in a language known for its exceptions to every rule and baffling

pronunciation system (or lack thereof).



ESL STUDENTS SAMPLE AMERICAN THEATER AT ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

In the tradition of all good LTC teachers, faculty kept the puzzling process lively and built community along with communication skills. Pat took 15 students to see the comedy *Arsenic and Old Lace* at Center Stage for a bit of American culture and language practice.

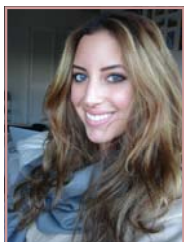
Christy invited her students to her home for a typical American dinner and Christmas tree trimming.

Students left with certificates of completion and new friends from around the campus and the world.



**PAT PALMER
ENGLISH AS A
SECOND LANGUAGE**

Arabic from a Student's Perspective



AISHA SABER
UPPER ADVANCED
ARABIC STUDENT

My love affair with the Arabic language started long before receiving my acceptance letter into Johns Hopkins University. However, it was my academic experience here at Hopkins over the past three years that truly solidified this appreciation and awe of Arabic. During this period, I have not only seen my acquisition of the Arabic language progress and develop, but the Arabic language program has also advanced and matured alongside me as well.

This past semester, as a student in Upper Advanced Arabic, my classmates and I saw a new facet of the Arabic language. During our first two years we studied the Al-Kitaab books and got to know our beloved subject, Maha, perhaps a little all too well. The course was laden with grammar and vocabulary drills and at times, it seemed rather repetitive and dull. Nevertheless, Professor Tahrawi assured us that it would instill the fundamental foundation necessary for developing our reading comprehension and writing abilities. And during this past semester, Professor Tahrawi's words rang true. What seemed like tedious homework and passages in the textbook, proved to be vital knowledge for fine-tuning our Arabic reading, writing, and comprehension.

Though we still studied grammar and acquired new vocabulary in Upper Advanced Arabic, we were not confined to textbooks and homework drills. Our class eagerly read and analyzed poetry from renowned Syrian, Lebanese and Egyptian poets. We also read literature from and biographies of esteemed and revered writers from all over the Middle East. The course was designed to bestow us with a better understanding of the Arabic language as it is seen through the eyes of its speakers. We sharpened our Arabic skills while simultaneously learning about the vivid and vibrant Middle Eastern culture. We discussed culturally relevant topics such as

marriage and dating in the Middle East, the academic system in Arab countries, cultural differences within the Middle Eastern region, in addition to cuisine and music as well. Our diverse classmates offered multi-faceted perspectives and truly enriched the discussions in which we participated and thoroughly enjoyed during class. Arabic class became more than language instruction consisting of memorizing grammar forms and vocabulary; it was about learning about the Middle Eastern region, its people, culture, music, literature, poetry, and overall beauty through the Arabic language.

Although I completed my final class this semester at Hopkins, I will always look back nostalgically at my experiences over the last three years at Hopkins studying the Arabic language. I am sure I will forever remember the Arabic presentations of Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz and the art of belly dancing, the delicious Middle Eastern desserts my classmates and I shared, the professor's encouragement and genuine interest in our academic progress, and the memorable discussions where we learned about different cultures, and even more surprisingly, about ourselves.

My fascination with the Arabic language is far from over and I will cherish the foundation that Hopkins has provided me. And in the near future when I find myself in the middle of the busy streets of Cairo or walking towards the sunset on a cool evening in Beirut, I will smile warmly reflecting on my days at Hopkins as an Arabic language student. I am certain that while it might be difficult to recall all of the tenses I have memorized and the vocabulary words from the exams that I have taken, I will always remember what the Arabic language meant in relation to the poetry, music, literature, and life in general for its native speakers. The lessons and homework of previous Arabic classes will have surpassed the fleeting significance of previous exams or oral presentations, for they will travel with me, as linguistic companions, along every step of my journey.

**“DIVERSE
CLASSMATES
OFFERED MULTI-
FACETED
PERSPECTIVES”**

A Special Treat for Japanese Students



SATOKO KATAGIRI
JAPANESE

Celebrating their accomplishments throughout the semester, the Upper Intermediate Japanese class met for an end of the semester dinner.

Students met with their instructor at Minato restaurant in Mount Vernon where they enjoyed traditional Japanese cuisine.

An excellent treat after a year of hard work!



SATOKO KATAGIRI AND STUDENTS ENJOY A JAPANESE MEAL

Recognizing LTC's Own ...

Faculty in Focus: Choonwon Kang and Dedication That Shows

One of the keys to the LTC's success is the hard work and dedication each faculty member brings to the teaching and diffusion of their language.

For over 20 years, Choonwon Kang has been the backbone of Korean language teaching at Hopkins. In this time, she has brought passion and creativity to the program and inspired many students to pursue further study in Korean.

All her life, Choonwon enjoyed studying and had the desire to teach. She began teaching in 1986 as Korean instructor during Intersession at Hopkins - before the creation of the LTC.

By 1990, she had completed her doctorate and received her PhD from Georgetown University. The very next day, she caught a plane to Korea where she continued to teach at the university level.

For the next seven years, Choonwon lived in two worlds. She lived and taught in Korea for half the year, and in the United States the other half, gaining valuable teaching experience and cultural understanding from both countries. In 1998, the LTC began offering Korean as a full semester course and it is here that she has made her mark on Hopkins.

Watching her program grow, Choonwon has learned many things about Hopkins. The Elements of Korean class always attracts the most students. As the level of Korean advances, the numbers decrease a bit but

overall each class has a dedicated number of students.

"Hopkins students are very serious," Choonwon remarks on language learning, "They are very competitive and work hard."

Over the years, Korean classes have not only gotten bigger, they have also gotten more diverse; with more non-heritage students than before.

Curse of Kim's Daughters (Homa & Sekey Books, 2004) by Korean author Park Kyung-Ni into English. She also penned a textbook of her own - *You Can Speak Korean* (Hollym International Corp., 1994) - which began as an accumulation of notes from Choonwon's years of teaching Intersession when there was no textbook for Korean.

With all the hard work Choonwon puts into teaching during the year, a proper holiday is well-deserved - but Choonwon has no specific plans.

A self-described "independent traveler," Choonwon tells us she may go to Korea to do some sightseeing with her husband during the summer break. If not Korea, she would also enjoy visiting some other country for 2 to 3 weeks. Last year, she had the pleasure of traveling through China for the holiday.

The LTC is richer for having faculty like Choonwon - whose passion for language teaching is an inspiration to

all. We know that her hard work will continue into this new year and we wish her the best of luck for a successful year.

As with all languages, it is the success of each class and the hard work of students that proves what we have believed from the beginning: LTC faculty have dedication that shows.



After so much experience with language teaching at Hopkins, Choonwon can't pick just one favorite memory. All she recalls is that teaching only Intersession was not enough.

"You like teaching!" Choonwon explains, "Dealing with students keeps me young; with a fresh ear and a different perspective."

Teaching, however, is not Choonwon's only passion. Working with three other colleagues, she helped translate the book *The*

Recognizing LTC's Own ...

Student Spotlight on Graduating Seniors

Student workers have always been an integral part of the LTC and Language Lab team. Over the years, both centers have been fortunate to have dedicated students helping out with numerous tasks and projects. As the 2007-2008 academic year ends, our senior student employees leave JHU to pursue advanced studies at other institutions and careers in a variety of fields.

Applied Math major **Jamie Tsui** has worked in the Language Lab since his freshman year in 2004. Working closely with fellow IT student personnel, he is often seen managing the Lab's audio, video, and digital equipment. After graduation, Jamie plans to go into finance, finding work in a more Math-oriented setting. But Wall Street is far away from the place Jamie dreamed he'd be when he was younger. As a child, Jamie wanted to design cars and engines, but now he's more interested in the mechanics of finance. When asked what the best thing about working in the Language Lab was, Jamie replies simply "the people." Indeed, his most memorable experiences at Hopkins are at home in the different relationships he's developed.



Fellow Lab employee, **Mel Arevalo**, has made an impression despite only having worked in the Language Lab since her junior year. Always bright, attentive, and available to talk to, Mel is in charge of greeting Language Lab patrons as they arrive, assigning them to their appropriate stations, and maintaining Lab upkeep. After graduation, Mel plans to apply to medical schools and pursue a career in Biomedical Engineering. "I've actually always wanted to be a doctor," Mel recalls about her childhood days, "so that ambition is not so different, but I never once thought I would be an engineer; that is a surprise!" Mel's favorite thing about working in the Lab has been the variety of interesting people to talk

to, and the relaxed atmosphere of the Lab - a welcome distraction from the numerous lectures and labs she found most memorable of her experiences here at Hopkins.

Some student employees have, quite literally, "grown up" working at the LTC and Language Lab; having first come in early in their freshman years. **Aaron Lazowitz**, a Lab attendant and IT, has been the Lab's "go-to guy" in just about everything since the 2004-2005 academic year. Always available for any task, Lab coordinator Cindy Simpson can't recall a day when Aaron has missed work or hasn't given a project his full effort. His helpful and patient demeanor are sure to work in his favor as he leaves JHU for medical school in the spring. As a child, Aaron claims to have never known what he wanted to be when he grew up. Instead, he kept his



LTC faculty and staff will surely miss one of the Center's most helpful and dedicated student employees when she graduates in the spring. **Jaclyn Lim** has been student assistant to administrator Carol Young primarily, but a big help to all faculty and staff as well, since the spring of her freshman year in 2005. A Molecular and Cellular Biology major, Jaclyn will go on to graduate school and concentrate on Developmental Biology upon graduation. Completely dedicated to her research, Jaclyn humbly admits that her most memorable experience at JHU was presenting and discussing her project at an undergraduate research symposium. Over the years, she has put the same amount of passion and hard work into creating publications for the LTC, helping organize faculty and staff functions, and maintaining the LTC up-to-date. Even if her dreams have changed since she was a child - "I wanted to



become an actress and win the Oscar," she recalls - Jaclyn's enthusiasm and good humor are evident in everything she does.



LTC'S GRADUATING SENIORS: AARON LAZOWITZ, JACLYN LIM, AND JAMES TSUI (NOT PICTURED: MEL AREVALO)

options open up until his junior semester of college, where he narrowed his focus to the field of Psychology. When asked what the best thing about working in the Lab was, Aaron replies modestly, "The free food!" Language faculty, however, will remember Aaron as always hard-working and dependable.

While it is sad to lose such dedicated employees, we know that each of these students will continue to excel in what they do, wherever their path leads them. Best of luck in the future from LTC and the Language Lab!

Students Speak Out About Persian

Students in the beginning Persian class speak about their experiences in learning the language and culture.

"Persian is a beautiful and rich language that opened my eyes to the depth of the Persian culture. We learned not only how to converse in Persian, but another perspective on the world. We learned about food, shopping, time and family."
- Irina Barch

"In our Beginning Persian Class, we learned how to write in Persian and to converse about food, the weather, and various activities. Persian is a beautiful and simple language. Having a small class (eight students) made it very easy to get to know our classmates." - Keith Abrams

"In Farsi class, we learned ways to begin conversations with strangers and how to tell them about ourselves. Additionally, we learned to tell time,

identify colors, and conjugate verbs in all tenses."
- Christine Breiner

"Enrolling in Persian class had been a great bonus to me this semester. I've become more knowledgeable of the Persian language and its rich culture. The class could seem daunting at first, but the carefree atmosphere that is generated by those in class makes it a very enjoyable learning session."
- Yasmeen Alasaffar

"Persian is one of the easiest languages to learn. The grammar is

very simple. I enjoy all of my classmates."
- Jackie Sofia

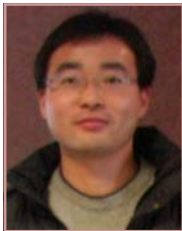
For more information about Persian language please get in touch with Dr. Dariush Dehghan at ddehghan@jhu.edu. You can also visit his web site at www.dariushdehghan.com/poems.



ALL SMILES IN THE BEGINNING PERSIAN CLASS

**PRACTICE
MAKES PERFECT
WHEN IT COMES
TO LANGUAGE
LEARNING**

How to Learn English Well in the United States



**HU GUANGLI
ENGLISH FOR
ITAs STUDENT**

Dedicated to the 2007 Chinese JHUs

I have been in the United States for nearly three months. The first impression I got was that there were so few people on the road; the sky was clean and blue and the environment was good. However, everything does not always go very well. The language barrier is one of them.

English in the US is totally different from what I learned in China. In China, I do believe my English level is top 5%. However, the first day I came to my lab, I could not get what the officemates talked about and could not express my ideas clearly. They were sitting around and talking about their research and I felt like a dummy. The situation really frustrated me. During the following four weeks, I tried several ways to improve my English. I list them below. Hope you can find something helpful.

- ◆ First, in order to improve listening capability, you have to listen to a lot of English. I recommend one radio station, FM-88.1, National Public Radio. I listen to it while I am walking, reading and cooking. For example, you can get the most recent news on the Morning Edition and

you can get a variety of stories on All Things Considered. It really helps to get accustomed to the way Americans speak English.

- ◆ Then, in order to improve speaking capability you need to speak a lot. This does not limit you to in the English class. You have to speak with either your friends from your own country or native English speakers. I usually chat with my officemates during lunch time. We talk about everything, from the recent news to cultural differences, from how to study Applied Math to how to cook a Chinese dish, from how to raise a baby to how to raise a pet, and so on. It really helps to express your ideas in English style.
- ◆ Finally, in order to improve writing capability, you have to write a lot. Take this essay for example: write it, read it and turn it in. Ms. Shiffman will give you some great advice on your writing.

In conclusion, practice makes perfect. "You can't learn American English if you do not go to the United States," I recall my English teacher of Senior Middle school saying. I think now it is time for me to learn American English.

New Faces in the LTC

As the 2008 Spring semester begins, LTC welcomes new, and some familiar, faces to the teaching team.

Aijun Zhu joins the Chinese program from the University of Maryland, where she earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature. She is currently a lecturer of Chinese at University of Maryland and George Mason University, and will teach Intermediate Chinese in the upcoming semester.

The Kiswahili program will have a new instructor now that Hannah Mugambi has accepted a position at the American University of Nigeria in Yola. Beginning in Spring 2008, **Jane Kamau** will be the new instructor. Jane, a former Hopkins alumna, is a current adjunct professor at the Community College of Baltimore County in the Department of Continuing Education. She will teach both Beginning and Intermediate levels of Kiswahili.

A familiar face to the LTC, **Rika Seya** rejoins the Japanese program as instructor of Slow-Paced Japanese. Rika first came to LTC teaching Beginning Japanese in 2001 and again in 2006. She is currently a lecturer of Japanese at American University, George Washington University, and University of Maryland University College.

As many will recall, **Radhi Datla** was set to teach Hindi in the 2007 Fall semester but was unable to due to the birth of her first child. Radhi now joins the program for the Spring semester. She will be teaching Intermediate and Conversational Hindi.



A big welcome to all faculty new and old as we look forward to a successful and productive semester!

LTC WELCOMES
FACULTY—NEW
AND OLD—TO A
NEW YEAR

LTC Open House to Attract Students for Fall 2008

At the end of the spring semester, JHU students begin the process of choosing classes for the fall.

The LTC's annual spring Open House looks to attract students at this time and encourage them to register for language courses.

In past years, the Open House has consisted of presentation stations advertising each language program, as well as food and live entertainment. Prospective students have the opportunity to speak

with language faculty directly and learn more about each program before registration begins.

This year's Open House will be held tentatively in early April at a forthcoming location.

Faculty should take this time to come up with ideas on how to attract undergraduates for the fall, and contact Carol Young (lrc@jhu.edu) with any questions and/or suggestions.

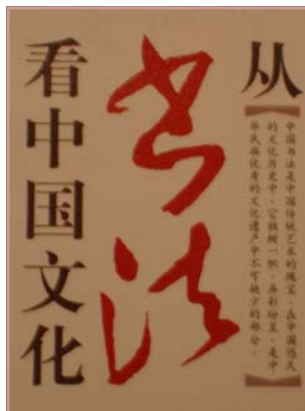


ONE OF THE MANY BOARDS ON DISPLAY AT THE 2007 OPEN HOUSE

Becky Hsieh Strokes New Publication in Chinese Calligraphy

A new Chinese calligraphy book (Chinese version), co-authored by Rebecca Hsieh, was published in April, 2007 in China. The title of the book is *Chinese Calligraphy: Window to Chinese Culture*. The English version is planned to be published sometime next spring.

When Becky was looking into the possibility of offering a course on Chinese calligraphy at Hopkins back in 2004, she found very limited teaching materials for the course. That summer, when she attended a Chinese Calligraphy Education Workshop in China, this subject came up. One of the presenters, Mr. Han Jiaia Ao, who was teach-



DETAIL FROM COVER OF
CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY:
WINDOW TO CHINESE
CULTURE

ing at the Qinghua University at the time, was interested in the subject. After many discussions, Becky, Mr. Han, along with Dr. Richard Hsieh, decided to collaborate and write a bilingual textbook on Chinese calligraphy.

The book, both Chinese and English versions, was finished early this year. The Chinese version was snatched right away by a publisher in Beijing, China. It was published and in the bookstores within a few months. Becky is now negotiating to have the English and the bilingual versions published sometime next spring.



REBECCA HSIEH
CHINESE

Language Teaching Center

Johns Hopkins University
3400 N. Charles Street, 511 Krieger Hall
Baltimore, MD 21218

Tel: 410-516-4466
Fax: 41-516-8008
E-mail: ltc@jhu.edu
Web: www.ltc.jhu.edu



The *LTC Connection* is published twice a year, in January and August. Send us your articles, announcements, photos, or just an update on your language program. We'd love to hear from you!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY FROM LTC!



UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS:

January

1st - Alhussein Hussein
3rd - Liman Lievens
4th - Cynthia Simpson
22nd - Annalisa Czczulini
24th - Wesley Sudduth

February

4th - Satoko Katagiri
6th - David McNeal
9th - Jane Kamau
14th - Stephanie Cogan
21st - Rebecca Hsieh
Aijun Zhu

March

9th - Chapin Dupree
6th - Jiming Shi
18th - Jillian McNaughton
24th - Jesse Warford

April

1st - Jamie Tsui
12th - Olya Samilenko
23rd - Choonwon Kang
24th - Fadel Abdallah
25th - Christine Waddail

May

19th - Julia Yarmolinskaya
21st - Manreet Jassar

June

20th - Mehreen Merchant
28th - Kazue Zon
29th - James Rappo

July

17th - Doris Y. Shiffman
24th - Uma Saini

Upcoming Dates & Events

January 28th - First day of classes, Continental Breakfast in LTC Lounge

March 17-23 - Spring vacation

TBA in April - LTC Open House

April 7-13 - Student Appreciation Week

April 14-25 - Undergraduate registration for fall term

TBA Week of April 28 - Senior Farewell Reception

May 2 - Last day of classes

May 5-7 - Reading Period

May 8-15 - Final examination period

May 22 - University Commencement

Helpful Links

Many helpful links can be found at the LTC website under

Faculty Resources such as:

Academic Calendar ♦ Course Rosters (jhed login required) ♦ Final Exam Schedule
♦ Classroom Equipment List ♦ Proficiency Exam Form ♦ Academic Advising ♦
Registrar ♦ Admissions ♦ and much more...

Visit <http://www.ltc.jhu.edu/resources.htm>

Special Announcements

Congratulations to Radhi Datla on the birth of her first child!