

## AWARDS (Continued)

mation culminated in the company's split into Marriott International, a hotel management and franchising company, headed by Mr. Marriott, and Host Marriott International, a hotel ownership company chaired by his younger brother, Richard Marriott.

Mr. Marriott has also worked to compile a family of 18 lodging brands that range from limited service to full service luxury hotels that meet the needs of any traveler.

Mr. Marriott serves on the board of The J. Willard & Alice S. Marriott Foundation. He is a member of the National Business Council and the Executive Committee of the World Travel & Tourism Council. He also serves as the chairman of the Mayo Clinic Capital Campaign. Mr. Marriott recently served on the Board of Trustees of the National Geographic Society, director of the United States Naval Academy Foundation, chairman of the President's Export Council (PEC) and member of the Secure Borders Open Doors Advisory Committee (SBODAC) and the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB).

Mr. Marriott attended St. Albans School in Washington, D.C., earned a B.S. degree in banking and finance from the University of Utah and served as an officer in the United States Navy. In 2006, Weber State University awarded him an honorary doctorate in humanities. At the ceremonies that year, Marriott delivered the commencement address. He is an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints. He is married to the former Donna Garff. They have four children and 15 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Based on <http://www.marriott.com/corporate-info/culture/heritage/JWMarriottJR.mi>

### NECTFL TRIBUTE

J.W. "Bill" Marriott, Jr. first came to the attention of the Northeast Conference Board and staff when we signed a contract to hold our annual conference in the Marriott Marquis on Broadway in New York City. He came to our attention through the demeanor of the associates working on all aspects of our conference in his hotel — no matter how hard we tried, we could not catch any of them looking unhappy, exploited, less than professional, or anything other than cheerful, responsive, competent, thoughtful — and glad to be at Marriott.

"What is this?" we wondered, "We don't like our jobs this much!"

On a site visit to the Baltimore Waterfront Marriott, where we will hold our conference in 2011 and 2012, we met a young man from China who was in the U.S. for a year to learn the hospitality business at the hotel. We learned from him that hundreds of young people from around the world are mentored through internships and jobs at the Marriott.

Then we heard the news that Marriott International, under Mr. Marriott's leadership, had received *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine's World Savers Award, which is, to quote the mag-

azine's website, "given to hotels, tour operators, and destinations that are considered stewards of social responsibility in their communities through their work in these five areas: education, health, poverty relief, cultural and environmental preservation, and wildlife conservation." Marriott's specific areas of focus are shelter and food, environment, readiness for hotel careers, vitality of children, and embracing global diversity and inclusion.

We explored further. We learned that under Mr. Marriott's leadership:

- the company was the first in the industry with a diversity program focused on human resources and development;
- Marriott has set specific goals for the number of minority- and woman-owned hotels, the number of diverse appointments to high positions in the company, and ;
- the company has sought to significantly increase the number of minority-owned suppliers it patronizes with a 2009 goal of spending 15% with minority-, women- and gay- and lesbian-owned U.S. suppliers;
- Marriott has worked to encourage the placement of properties in urban areas;
- Marriott has supported many associations such as the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Pan Asian Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Corporate Council, the National Urban League, and more;
- the company has received awards and recognition from Great Place to Work® Institute, India, *Black Enterprise*, the National Association for Female Executives, the Human Rights Campaign, *Hispanic Trends* magazine, the NAACP, and *Working Mother* magazine, among others.

Finally, we began to read Mr. Marriott's blog. We wondered whether his documented commitment to diversity and global outreach would include recognition of the value of speaking other languages (we knew that his parents' 1950s-era "Hot Shoppes" served tamales based on a recipe his mother had gotten by requesting them from the originator in the Spanish she spoke fluently). Mr. Marriott makes clear his position and beliefs:

*Posted: July 31, 2008 11:12:28 AM*

"I've found in all these years that the most important thing in success in life and in business is communication. Marriott is a very diverse company and our employees speak a lot of languages. Having hotels in almost 70 countries means our guests speak many languages too.

We're trying to bridge that gap, so we're rolling out several new tools to make sure nothing is lost in translation." Those tools include Sed de Saber®, a program that uses an interactive electronic book to teach languages. Initially offered at Marriott to help Spanish-speaking associates in the U.S. learn English, the program was such a success the company introduced a new version

to teach Spanish to English-speaking associates.

The decision to teach Spanish to monolingual English speakers among the hotel's employees was made after a blogger responded to Mr. Marriott's blog about Sed de Saber®, writing "I hope too that you will offer Spanish language programs for those who are English-only speakers — it helps to be fluent in both (...)."

It is only good business to take whatever steps must be taken to increase customer satisfaction. But the Marriott record, and Mr. Marriott's commitment to outreach, intercultural communication, the celebration of diversity, the value of other languages and the need for high standards of global citizenship distinguish him and his company. It is an honor and a privilege for the Northeast Conference Board of Directors to recognize the work of J.W. Marriott, Jr., as an advocate for teaching and learning other languages and other cultures.

### 2010 NECTFL Teacher of the Year: Maryann Woods-Murphy, Northern Highlands Regional High School (NJ)



**Maryann Woods-Murphy**

Maryann Woods-Murphy is a Spanish teacher and diversity educator at Northern Highlands Regional High School in Allendale. Maryann learned Spanish in Salamanca, Spain, where she lived with her husband, Joe, during Spain's transition to democracy from 1978-1982. "In the beginning,

I knew no Spanish at all, but my Irish-American husband and I had made a solemn pact to speak no English for our first year of marriage. My intense need to communicate quickly led me to fluency in Spanish." This experience helped Maryann see language learning as a key to intercultural understanding.

The Former Commissioner of Education of New Jersey, Lucille Davy, spoke of Maryann when she was awarded the New Jersey State Teacher of the Year award for 2009-2010: "Maryann Woods-Murphy represents all of the important qualities of a successful teacher," Commissioner Davy said. "She is enthusiastic, inspired and sensitive to the learning style of each of her students. She fosters communication and collaboration in her classroom while motivating her students to examine global issues from multiple perspectives. Her focus on international awareness and multiculturalism prepares her students for success in a 21st century global economy."

Maryann believes that language teachers must not only increase their students' proficiency, but must help them to learn to care about and build a better world. She has been the director of the "Teens Talk About Racism" conference for the last ten years, a safe forum for teens to talk about stereotypes and to find creative ways "to

## AWARDS (Continued)

become the change they want to see.” In addition, Maryann has run 26 trips abroad in the past 18 years for teachers and students. She believes that through personal connections, we increase cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Woods-Murphy holds a degree in philosophy, Summa Cum Laude, from Montclair State University and a master's degree in Spanish Literature, also from Montclair State. She earned a Diploma de estudios hispánicos from La Universidad de Salamanca in Spain. She lives in Teaneck, New Jersey with her husband Joe, daughter, Melynda, son-in-law, Billy, son, Joe, and her magnificent nine-month-old granddaughter, Olyvia Eryn.

### NECTFL TRIBUTE

The Board of Directors of the Northeast Conference is humbled and honored by the opportunity to name Maryann Woods-Murphy as its 2010 Teacher of the Year. Already recognized as the New Jersey State Teacher of the Year, she represents the best in our world language profession precisely because she has identified the aspects of language and culture learning that weave our work into the multicolored, multitextured fabric that is — or should be — an outstanding education. To push the metaphor one step further, her prolific and elegant writing, much of it shared in blogs and on websites, makes clear that seamlessness is a high priority: her lives as teacher, mother and grandmother, wife, daughter and sister, mentor, writer, bicultural world citizen and traveler are not fragmented or compartmentalized. Each element informs all the others. This integration may be achievable by anyone, but it should be a given for a world language teacher.

Maryann Woods-Murphy is also the rare awards recipient whose own words provide the best rationale for her selection and who highlights her beliefs without calling attention to herself. Visit her blogspot at <http://njtoytravels.blogspot.com/>, where she invites friends, colleagues and family members to contribute their own stories, while engaging her readers with incisive and observant reflections on her visits to New Jersey schools. For example, she praises her fellow New Jersey teacher (and much-lauded NECTFL presenter!), Priscilla Russel, and Princeton's public school district, for what Woods-Murphy saw during a visit to their language classes. She thus creates a portrait of “simply irresistible” people, programs, and practices without preaching or reducing a complex cultural event to a dry set of recommendations. She writes ...

“I saw:

1. An absolute belief in teaching fully in the target language from K-12
2. Content-area teaching at every level. Kindergarten kids learning math and science in the target language and high school students doing long, multidisciplinary units, specifically focusing on a country — like Peru — and having the students do research, create businesses and more.

3. Truly buying into the fact that teaching language is NOT about grammar instruction. Teachers in Princeton don't teach a content-area topic with the goal of teaching the imperfect, but tenses are contextually integrated into instruction.
4. Performance Assessments are used at mid-term and final time in all classes INSTEAD of multiple-choice finals or other traditional assessments. This is true proof that this district is assessing what it teaches.
5. The consistent use of rubrics, pair activities and student-centered instruction.
6. The integration of culture as a natural part of the lesson.
7. A happy, open, interested and excited approach to learning. Students are really engaged and happy to be in their language classes.
8. Students can even joke in the target language!
9. World Language teachers as creators of intellectual content for the field either by publishing or creating workshops to share their good news and best practices.
10. Regular on campus sharing among colleagues in an atmosphere of enthusiastic, life-long learning.
11. Ongoing and meaningful professional development delivered by outside experts in the field to help the teaching cohort engage in reflective practice so that they might avail themselves of the latest pedagogies and tools for learning.
12. An integrated program World Languages which lives and breaths the belief that all children can and will learn a language!”

— *Posted by Maryann Woods-Murphy at 5:44 PM, Sunday, February 21, 2010*

In talking about her time at the National Teacher of the Year Conference in Dallas last month, she writes: “What does every single Teacher of the Year from every state in the union and territory have in common? Each teacher I met ... has a belief in children, a sense of gratitude for being in the classroom and a contagious enthusiasm about teaching, learning and leading” and also “If I think about my school ... I can think of walking down the hall and hearing my colleagues teaching their hearts out. When I hear them, I just wish that I could learn in those classrooms too, to be a part of their jokes and stories. I walk by classrooms to hear laughter, deep conversation and active debate. It's the real deal of learning.”

— *Posted by Maryann Woods-Murphy at 1:16 AM, Sunday, January 21, 2010*

Reflecting on the concept of culture, Woods-Murphy says, “...when I hear a story, I want to hear more. What did you feel when you did that? Was it what you expected? Did you want to get out of there? Were you the happiest ever in your whole life? Why?”

When I was small, I would sit down in the liv-

ing room at my father's knee and beg him for his stories. What did your apartment in Hell's kitchen look like? Can you draw it for me? Where was the teapot? What was your exact routine when you came home from school? Who was there in your house? What did it smell like?

I would close my eyes tightly and see it all. I saw the bathtub where my grandfather brewed beer. I saw the metal teapot on the iron stove and the endless corridor with the boys' bedrooms along it. I could hear my grandmother's Irish accent as she shoed the boys into their bedrooms to change from their school clothes.

For me, cultures are just gathered stories and traditions. We people all make up our own words and we dress in special clothes that remind us of times gone by. We agree to honor the mysteries of the universe in our own way. I think if we see things that way, it makes everything a lot simpler to understand. It also makes us more curious to listen to each other.

Sometimes you don't have to fly to travel far away.”

— *Posted by Maryann Woods-Murphy at 11:59 AM, Friday, January 22, 2010*

And finally, in reporting the news of her selection as NECTFL's TOY, she focuses again on others: “This is an incredible honor. I feel passionate about language teaching and learning and here is another opportunity to advocate for it in a larger region. (...) Special thanks go to the Board of the Foreign Language Educators of New Jersey and to our NJ State Department of Education, World Language Coordinator, Cheri Quinlan for encouraging me to create the portfolio needed to achieve this honor!”

— *Posted by Maryann Woods-Murphy at 4:58 PM, Thursday, February 11, 2010*

NECTFL congratulates Maryann Woods-Murphy on her remarkable ability to implement the lessons of the language classroom in so many disparate contexts and to such good effect. We wish her all the best as she moves forward to the level of national competition with the four other regional Teachers of the Year, and we look forward to working with her as she accepts this important role in the NECTFL professional community.

### **Congratulations to the SANS, Inc., Exclusive Licensor of Sony Language Learning Systems/ Mead Fellow for 2010: Alba Osorio, Vernon CT Public Schools!**

The SANS/Mead Leadership Program is a collaborative endeavor among NECTFL, our 14 state associations, and our generous sponsor SANS, Inc., Exclusive Licensor of Sony Language Learning Systems. It serves to identify and support potential leaders in the profession through mentoring and sustained engagement by the associations. Mead Fellows are selected on the basis of the quality of project they propose and their potential for bringing it to fruition.