

Summer 2004

Taking Time to Teach

Laura Davis
Linfield College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine

Recommended Citation

Davis, Laura (2004) "Taking Time to Teach," *Linfield Magazine*: Vol. 1 : No. 1 , Article 2.
Available at: https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine/vol1/iss1/2

This article is brought to you for free via open access, courtesy of DigitalCommons@Linfield. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@linfield.edu.

Taking time to teach



Erin Annis '04, left, and Leanna Prax '04 will share American culture, along with the English language, with students in French classrooms next year after earning French government teaching assistantships.

Two Linfield College graduates will spend next year teaching in France after earning awards from the French government.

Erin Annis '04 of West Linn and Leanna Prax '04 of Fairbanks, Alaska, have both earned French government teaching assistantships for 2004-05, offered by the French Ministry of Education. Since 1999, five Linfield students have applied for and received French government teaching assistantships.

Annis, who earned a degree in French and English, will teach American English conversation and culture in a high school in Brittany. In addition to spending 12 hours a

week teaching, Annis hopes to take classes at the university to continue research on the topic of her senior thesis, "Breton History and its Influence on Regional Separatist Movements."

This will be Annis' fourth trip to France. She traveled to Brittany on a high school exchange program, spent a semester in Paris during 2001 and studied in Rennes for a semester last year. During her most recent visit to Paris, Annis looked upon the city as a second home.

"I knew how to navigate the city," she said. "I felt like there were secrets in that city that I knew about that only someone who lived there would know."

Since Annis began learning French in high school, she has hoped for the chance to explain American life and culture to French people.

"I am excited to talk with French high school students about what it's like growing up as a teenager in the United States," said Annis. "I'd like to bring some of the mainstays of American teenage culture to France."

Annis, a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta honorary and a past recipient of the Linfield Faculty Scholarship, said Linfield professors encouraged her to stretch intellectually and answer questions she's posed for herself.

"Erin's interest in France dates from her early childhood, and her enthusiasm for all things French is contagious," said Deborah Olsen, Linfield director of academic advising. "I'm especially pleased that she'll be able to return to Brittany to further explore her interest in the culture of that region."

Prax, who earned a degree in mass communication, will teach English in a secondary school on

Corsica, an island off the south coast of France. She's looking forward to bolstering her language skills while exploring the island's ancient culture.

"The city I come from in Alaska is only about 100 years old," Prax said. "It will be interesting to be in a place where thousands of years of history are right there in front of me."

With only two years of French study to her credit, Prax's award is significant, according to Olsen.

"Leanna is a very capable student with broad interests," Olsen said. "It's remarkable that she has gained sufficient fluency in French in two years to be selected for this award."

While at Linfield, Prax compressed her academic schedule to graduate a year early and still managed to fit in a January Term trip to London.

"Linfield has taught me to find the resources I need to live abroad and given me an appreciation for other groups of people," said Prax, a member of Pi Gamma Mu and Alpha Lambda Delta honoraries.

Following her teaching stint in France, Prax hopes to attend graduate school in media studies. She said the experience offers the added benefit of observing mass media in another culture.

The achievements of Annis and Prax come as no surprise to Margaret Krause, associate professor of French.

"Erin and Leanna are serious students of the French language," Krause said. "They competed nationwide with other undergraduates to win the teaching assistantships. It is a very great pleasure for me to see Linfield French students win these prestigious awards."

— Laura Davis