

SHCHS instructors represented at foreign language event in NYC

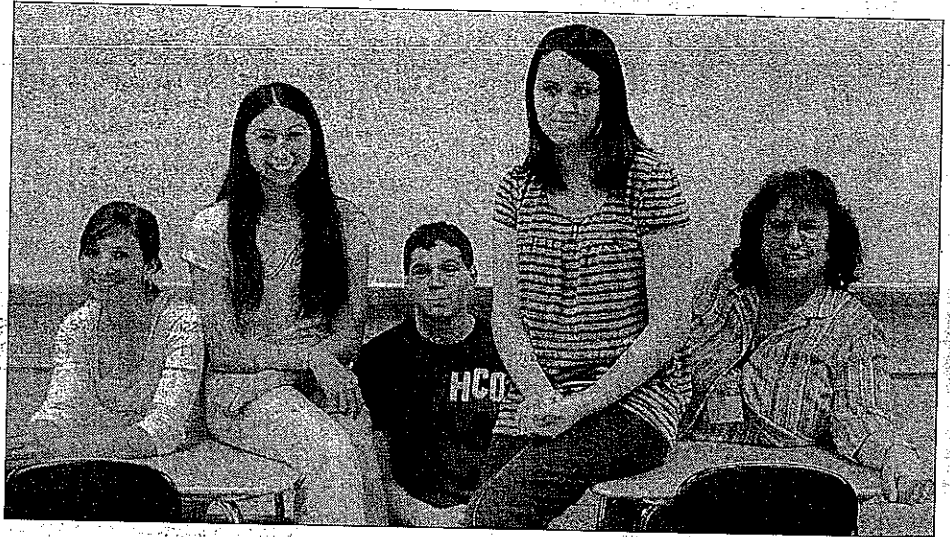
By ASHLEY SAMPLE
SHCHS Reporter

They came from all over the world to attend this event Sounds of Spanish, English, French, Russian, Arabic and Chinese filled the air. Some traveled from distant lands and states, others were local. Despite their differences, all had a common desire. They worked to share their love of foreign languages and desire to instill in young people (the 'T' generation) a passion to study languages.

The event brought more than 2,500 people together at the 55th Annual Conference for the Teaching of Foreign Languages in New York City at the Marriott Marquis Hotel March 27-29. With the theme, "The I Generation: Turning Instruction Inside Out," it appears that many educators dreams were fulfilled.

Three local educators and a college student were fortunate to have attended this event. Christine Maxwell, SHCHS Spanish teacher, Heather Thompson, JVHS Spanish teacher, Dr. Deborah Roney, Juniata College Language In Motion director, and Bouchra Koubab, a Juniata College student from Casablanca, Morocco, represented our county.

"I attended the conference through Juniata College's Language in Motion program. This program sends speakers, who are from other countries or have been abroad, to area schools to speak about the benefits of knowing other languages. The program had a 'scholarship' for teachers to attend the conference. I wrote an essay for the scholarship and won, so I was able to attend the conference," Maxwell explained.



Submitted photo

From the left, Southern Huntingdon Spanish students Marie Revercomb, Tiffany Hall, Frankie Kling and Kendra Rosenberry learn with some of the new techniques Christine Maxwell picked up at the Northeast Convention for the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

For Maxwell, it was two days of seminars, each of which was one hour and 15 minutes long. She attended five seminars: lesson planning, technology, methods, hands-on activities and singing and chanting in teaching foreign languages.

"The session on lesson plans was geared toward making class more exciting. The seminar on singing discussed how to use music and rhythms to teach vocabulary and grammar, among other uses," Maxwell remarked. "The technology session taught how to use presentations and other technologies in teaching languages. Because of this experience, I will be speaking at the Cultural Language Institute at Juniata College August 7-8."

"The sessions at NECTFL were most engaging. They offered perspectives on teaching and learning languages, theory and practical classroom activities to use. In addition to the session on Juniata's Language in Motion, the session I found personally most interesting was teaching different types of communicative situations and how they differ from one language and culture to another, such as how to offer appropriate apologies in English and in Russian," Dr. Roney explained.

"Having two teachers from our county and a Juniata College student attend the conference with me was terrific. The ideas they got and the information they learned will positively impact all the students they teach and the other language teachers in our area as they share what they learned," Dr. Roney remarked.

"I hope to try the innovative techniques in my classroom that I learned at the conference. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet people from all over the world. I think these conferences really help make us better teachers," Maxwell summed up.