

For Immediate Release

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Resource Center for the Teaching of French Opens at Yale

October 14, 2003. New Haven, CT ♦ The Yale Center for International and Area Studies (YCIAS) has collaborated with the Connecticut State Board of Education and the Embassy of France to open a new Resource Center for the Teaching of French. The Center is a part of YCIAS' Programs in International Educational Resources (PIER) and the director's office is housed in the Teacher Preparation Program (TPP) at Yale University.

The mission of the Resource Center for the Teaching of French is primarily to support and enrich the teaching of French language, literature, and culture at the elementary, middle, and secondary (K-12) levels, as well as at the college level in the State of Connecticut. The Resource Center encourages the use of the best pedagogical practices, disseminates innovative curricular models and material at all educational levels in the State and contributes to the development of curricula and methods for the professional development of teachers.

The Resource Center draws upon Yale University's extensive resources and those of the French Government to develop and implement programs, services, and resources designed to advance the understanding of France and French-speaking areas of the world through outreach to education. Additionally, it promotes educational and cultural relationships and encourages and supports school exchanges and partnerships between Connecticut and the Académie de Toulouse in France.

"The Yale Center for International and Area Studies is very pleased to welcome the Resource Center for the Teaching of French to Yale," said Gustav Ranis, YCIAS Director. "It will serve to further strengthen the teaching of the French language and culture in the New Haven community, as well as in Connecticut generally. Hopefully it will also strengthen frayed relations with France through the partnering of schools here in Connecticut with schools in France."

"The Resource Center for the Teaching of French at Yale will provide needed resources and opportunities for teachers and students," said Mary Ann Hansen, State World Language Consultant, Connecticut Department of Education. "Already, 70 schools in Connecticut have requested a partner school in France for email, video-conferencing and the exchanges. The enthusiasm and collaborative potential bode well for the overall success of the Resource Center."

"We at the French Embassy are very enthusiastic about this new resource center at Yale," said Chantal Manès, Director of the Education Department, Embassy of France, Washington, DC. "The approach it advocates to training teachers is in tune with our own mission, as it brings together culture, language and international relations. We believe our partnership with this interdepartmental team which includes PIER, TPP, the Beinecke Library, and the French Department, to name a few, will provide the right mix to make the Resource Center a successful tool for the promotion of French in the State of Connecticut."

Mireille Dechelette has been appointed as Director of the Resource Center. She holds a Licence ès Lettres (B.A.) and a Maîtrise d'anglais (M.A.), from the University of Lyon, France. She graduated in French Language and Literature and received her teaching certificate from the University of Amsterdam, Netherlands. She completed research and pre-doctorate Didactic Studies in World Languages and Cultures from the Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris III. She has taught French in the Netherlands, English in France, has developed teacher training plans, and has supported several exchange projects between schools in the United Kingdom and Bulgaria while she served as Attachée de Coopération pour le Français at the University Cyril and Methodus in Bulgaria and later at the French Institute in London. Prior to coming to Connecticut, she worked for the past three years as a teacher of English in a junior high school in South Burgundy.

"I'm delighted to open the Resource Center for the Teaching of French at Yale for the educational community in Connecticut," said Mireille Dechelette. "The response from teachers to the announcement reveals a great demand and high expectations to find new materials for their classrooms. Films, videos, CD-ROMs, CDs, pedagogical reviews, as well as magazines for children and teenagers of the francophone world, will provide current and authentic perspectives on a variety of subjects, such as art, archeology, language, literature, and science. The Resource Center will offer a wealth of workshops and outreach programs. Teachers are welcome to make this their Resource Center!"

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