

GRANT FOR NATIONAL FRENCH WEEK 2003

On October 30, 2003, the Department of European Languages, Literatures and Cultures launched National French Week festivities by hosting *Consul général* Harry Fouché of the *République d'Haïti*, Nicole McKinnon, Director of Governmental Relations, and Dr. Maryalice Mazzara, *Attachée aux affaires éducatives*, the latter two of the *Gouvernement du Québec*, for a day of events on the Stony Brook University campus. These events included an informative presentation by *Consul général* Fouché on the history of Haiti and its ties to the French-speaking world. Mme McKinnon then presented valuable information on "Living, Studying, and Working in Québec." These presentations honored the 2004 AATF/FIPF conference theme of diversity in the French-speaking world by exposing students to some of the diversity of French found in such close proximity to our borders. These presentations were then followed by performances of French musical selections by students from Stony Brook's Music Department and by local French artists.

Approximately 250 Stony Brook students and faculty, regional high school students and teachers, as well as community members participated. Our celebration concluded with a reception for all of the students, faculty, and guests.

Our promotion of National French Week was made possible by a grant from AATF which allowed us to cover expenses related to the reception. Additional funding for posters and flyers was provided by the Office of the Provost of Stony Brook University. The Department of European Languages, Literatures, and Cultures funded mailing information about our event to all local French teachers and hosted a luncheon for our guests and for representatives of the faculty and student groups.

One of the unanticipated results of this event was a commitment on the part of *Consul général* Fouché to return to the campus this spring to host an event in honor of Haiti's bicentennial. We have a large population of Haitian and Haitian-American students on campus, so we are particularly interested in serving their needs.

Another unanticipated benefit of this event was an agreement to develop an exchange partnership through the *Gouvernement du Québec* to promote French study opportunities for our students and faculty. We have not, in the past, had a formal "study abroad" agreement with Québec. This exchange partnership will allow us to offer unique opportunities to our students to study in a Francophone context without leaving the North American continent. We believe that this will be especially

appealing to students whose budgets do not permit travel to France. It will also facilitate French study by non-traditional students with families since possibilities exist for summer study in Québec including family housing and activities.

We believe that the event we were able to host has contributed in the broadest possible way to the promotion of the learning and teaching of French in our region. This event would not have been possible without the financial support of AATF nor could it have occurred without the determination and dedication of Monique Watts who sought out presenters, secured their participation, and made all necessary arrangements for the event.

We would like to thank AATF for helping us to promote National French Week, and we would like to encourage all AATF members to seek out ways to promote French during National French Week and throughout the year.

Sarah Jourdain
Suffolk, NY Chapter