A Global Initiative
This fall, Middlebury College announced the official beginning of the Middlebury Initiative—an ambitious effort to establish the institution as the global liberal arts college for the 21st century. Building on Middlebury’s established strengths—its human-intensive approach to education; its leadership in languages, international studies, and environmental studies; and its worldwide network of connections with other colleges and universities—the Initiative seeks to expand opportunities available to students in all its affiliated programs, including the Language Schools.

During the next five years, the College will seek to implement the recommendations contained in its new strategic plan. At the conclusion of this effort, says Middlebury President Ronald D. Liebowitz, “we will see a College that is stronger academically and financially, more accessible to a wider range of exceptional students, and considerably more visible and influential in this country and abroad.”

For more on the Middlebury Initiative, please visit www.middleburyinitiative.org.

Middlebury to Launch School of Hebrew
In cooperation with Brandeis University, Middlebury will establish the School of Hebrew in the summer of 2008, bringing the number of languages taught in the College’s summer programs to 10. The curriculum of the seven-week session will focus on modern Hebrew. Enrolled students will adhere to the Middlebury College Language Pledge. The School will also offer optional coursework for qualified students interested in developing their linguistic skills in classical Hebrew. Administrators anticipate an initial enrollment of approximately 40 students. The School will be directed by Professor Vardit Ringvald, of Brandeis University, who coauthored the standard textbook on modern Hebrew.

C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in the Middle East Opens
The new C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in the Middle East, located in Alexandria, Egypt, is up and running. In other Schools Abroad news, the School in Hangzhou, China, is currently operating at full capacity, so we are planning on establishing a second China site soon. An exploratory trip is planned for this academic year, with the hope of beginning operations at a second site by fall of 2009.

Middlebury Establishes Language Academy
Middlebury College will open a summer language immersion program for pre-college students. The result of a collaboration between the Language Schools and the Monterey Institute of International Studies, The Middlebury-Monterey Language Academy will begin in July 2008 and will offer Arabic, Chinese, French, and Spanish. The 2008 sessions will take place on the campuses of St. Michael’s College in Colchester, Vt.; and Menlo College in Atherton, Calif.

The Language Schools have long been a leader in the immersion approach to language learning, and Middlebury President Ronald D. Liebowitz says that the expansion of this type of programming is the result of a demand for high quality foreign language instruction for pre-college students. “The Middlebury-Monterey Language Academy is another way in which Middlebury College is strategically addressing the growing need for superior foreign language learning opportunities in this country,” says Liebowitz. MMLA is specifically targeted to meet the learning styles of middle and high school students while providing an enjoyable summer camp environment.
Kathryn Davis Fellowships, Round Two

The Middlebury Language Schools announced the return of The Kathryn Davis Fellowships for Peace: Investing in the Study of Critical Languages, a program greeted with great success last year. Striving to address an increased demand for language proficiency in today’s integrated world, these fellowships will cover the full cost of language study at any level in one of the following Language Schools: Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Japanese, Portuguese, or Russian. Each individual grant covers the full comprehensive fee (tuition, room, and board) for the summer of 2008, plus a stipend to assist in defraying program-related expenses.

The Davis Fellowships are merit-based and intended for exceptionally qualified individuals with demonstrated interest in one or more of the following areas: international, global, or area studies; international politics and economics; peace and security studies; and/or conflict resolution. Individuals in other fields, including working professionals, are also encouraged to apply if their field of expertise requires them to study one of the critical languages listed above.

Connect·Ed Conference

Middlebury College, in conjunction with its affiliate, the Monterey Institute of International Studies, hosted its first joint conference this January in Monterey, California. ConnectEd: A Conference on Global Education, convened leaders from professional and academic spheres to assess the state of international education. The conference focused on the role of technology in higher education, measures towards imbedding transnational issues into curriculum and research initiatives, and the future of English in non-English speaking communities.

New Director for Portuguese School

Dr. Maria Luci De Biaji Moreira, an associate professor of Portuguese and Spanish at the College of Charleston, has been appointed the new director for the Portuguese School. A native of Brazil, Dr. Moreira received her Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching Education from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Founding Portuguese School Director Retires

Carmen Tesser, the founding director of the Portuguese School, has retired. When the Portuguese School opened its doors five years ago, Tesser was an inspired choice to lead the instruction of the first new language added to the Language Schools’ roster in more than 20 years. During her tenure as director, Tesser steered the School through the challenges of its infancy to a thriving entity marked by robust enrollment figures and a passion for the Portuguese language. She will be greatly missed.

A New Record Set

Last summer, the Language Schools topped the previous year’s record-breaking enrollment numbers with 1,345 enrolled students (plus 20 high school teachers of Arabic and Chinese who came to Middlebury for two weeks on federally funded “StarTalk” grants, to study language teaching methodology). A significant part of the increase could be attributed to the Kathryn Wasserman Davis grant, which allowed 100 students in critical languages to attend the Middlebury Language Schools for free. This program alone generated more than 1,000 applications.