

Good evening, *Buenas noches, Bonsoir, Magandang gabi. Guten abend.* My name is Walter Jones. I represent the Jones Family Foundation, The Plasma Fellows and the Marian Greenblatt Foundation, presenting the “Excellence in Foreign Language” Award.

This is a group of plasma physicist. If you do not know what that is, Google it. Two hints: it has nothing to do with blood; and it is related to the sun, fusion and fluorescent lights.

All of us in the group believe that knowledge of a foreign language has become extremely important as we function in this flat world. This year, the number of non-native speakers of English has surpassed those who speak English as a native language. This is a reminder of how important cross-cultural communication has become. It requires an understanding of the people with whom we interact, and the most important factor that fosters understanding is the ability to read, write, and speak their language.

Both science and business benefit from an expanding global economy. While English is the language of business, in order to connect with others (to sell them something), it is crucial to be able to communicate in the language of those customers.

We believe that the foreign-language program at Watkins Mill is a great beginning towards this goal, and the reason we sponsor this award.

The winner of the “Excellence-in-Language” award is an outstanding junior, Caroline Stokes. Caroline, would you please come up and join me on the stage?

I have the distinct honor of presenting Caroline with a check for one thousand dollars (\$1,000). Additionally, when she applies to colleges later this year, we will sponsor up to 2 applications. Congratulations, Caroline. Keep up the excellent job in all of your endeavors, and make sure to practice your Spanish any chance you get.

And congratulations to all of our Watkins Mill idols! Go Wolverines! Thank you, *Gracias, Salamat po, Danke schoen.*