

**Press Release, 2006: Children's Social Services Forms Partnership with the
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures**

Dr. Shelley Thomas (department of Foreign Languages and Literatures) and Dr. Stacey Borasky, (department of Social Services) have formed a partnership to help bring Spanish language training to the 4,000 employees who work for the Department of Children's Services around the state. Dr. Borasky is the executive director of a 17 million dollar grant made up of a consortium of 12 other universities whose goal is to restructure and improve the Department of Children's Social Services. She and Patricia Craft, her administrative assistant, approached Thomas in early March about the idea of funneling their employees through the five-day Summer Language Institute, which Thomas began with seed money from a *Special Projects Grant* in 2003. "I am grateful to Trish Craft who worked with me on an *Eisenhower Grant* and knows my research. She saw the rapport between what Stacey and I do and how connecting our projects could benefit the community."

Thomas presented a proposal to the state commissioner for the creation of a new position, "a language development specialist," which was immediately approved and began in June. Thomas serves as the official supervisor of the language development specialist, creating curriculum and materials that reflect the new brain-based methodologies she uses in mentoring the future teachers in her graduate class for the M.A.T. program in her department. The language specialist is a type of satellite, giving five-day language trainings around the state similar to the ones Thomas began at MTSU in 2003.

The first group of DCS employees were trained at the end of June in the Paul W. Martin Honors building. Kasia Urban, one of the participants, is a current Master's Candidate in the Psychology Program at MTSU. Originally from Poland, she has studied several other languages, but stated that the methods used in this new class were "the most efficient methods of studying a foreign language that I have ever seen."