Fall 2014 - Spring 2015

University of Maryland
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER
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Director's Note
from Laurie Frederik

It has been an exciting challenge to take over as director of the Latin American Studies Center after two decades of successful initiatives and hard work by Saúl Sosnowski and Karin Roseblatt, along with Mary Kay Vaughn, Alejandro Cañeque, and the Center’s team of affiliate faculty members. I have been an affiliate faculty member myself since 2008. My graduate students have received research grants from LASC, and I have attended its conferences and Café Breaks, presenting my own papers in 2009 and 2011. The work of the Center has provided me with a network across campus and a strong interdisciplinary community that has been central to my fulfillment here at UMD. In spite of this participation, I was not previously familiar with the long history of the Center, the demands of maintaining its programming, or the actual components of the undergraduate certificate. I have learned that the longevity of the Latin American Studies Center demonstrates passion and purpose, as well its continuing significance at the University of Maryland. This significance holds true, now more than ever, as the population of the United States speaks Spanish in increasing numbers, accompanied by a growing UMD student population who recognize multiple homes— one of which includes a Latin American or Caribbean nation.

This past year, I have endeavored to continue the traditions that have made LASC a vibrant part of campus life, and have also taken a new look at undergraduate engagement and curriculum, tasks requested by ARHU Dean Bonnie Thornton Dill. The entire LASC staff has worked hard to assess the current needs of both undergraduate and graduate students interested in studying Latin America and the Caribbean, and we are working to create opportunities that will continue to benefit both student populations. Additionally, I have met with many of the affiliates to find out what faculty desire from their involvement with the Center.

A speaker series was initiated with the U.S. Latina/o Studies program in the spring of 2015 with the theme “Home.” The collaboration gave us the opportunity to discuss points of intersection between the two programs and to combine our ideas, goals, and resources, culminating in two dynamic panel discussions. One of these panels was also the keynote event for the annual LASC Graduate Student Conference— this year also including senior undergraduate and recently graduated certificate students. The 2015 conference theme pulled in a diverse group of students from UMD and other area universities.

In addition to academic events, LASC hosted several dance lessons and student socials, along with storytelling shows and a Brazilian capoeira demonstration— exposing new undergraduate and graduate students to the LASC program. These types of events attract students in large numbers and compliment traditional academic learning. Artistic performance is a visual and experiential way for students to discover some of the cultural expressions of Latin America and the Caribbean— whetting their appetite for further investigation. We will continue to incorporate these activities and other alternatives in recruitment and program development.

In my second year as director, I plan to continue to improve core curriculum and teaching staff to ensure quality instruction on a consistent basis. New experiential learning courses are being developed, including internships, and partnerships with area institutions. LASC is also collaborating with SPAP to start a Spanish translation course for graduate students with departmental language requirements. I plan to reinstall the Café Breaks in 2015-16 and to expand opportunities for graduate students to share their research in similar settings. As a Cuba scholar and Caribbeanist, I also hope to begin to include more events that consider that region’s role in our understanding of Latin American histories, identities, and its socio-cultural movements.

It has been a great year and I look forward to 2015-16. My door is always open to suggestions, and I welcome your participation on every level.

Adelante.
The Latin American Studies Center has a long history at the University of Maryland, but as modes of archiving change over the years (hard copy to floppy disk, DVD to flash drive to internet cloud), much of the chronological details have been lost in the movement of its members—students, staff, professors, deans, and administrators coming and going, socio-political contexts around the world shifting, and goals adjusting. We title this essay a “brief” history because it is only a segment of the whole, based mainly on the textual evidence available in our file boxes and computer discs. The author also conducted two short interviews with past directors, Dr. Saúl Sosnowski and Dr. Karin Rosemblatt. More informational detail, texture, and nuance is undoubtedly stored in the memories of past participants, and we look forward to conducting more diverse oral histories for a future “part II” of this story. —Laurie Frederik

The history of Latin American studies at the University of Maryland transcends the boundaries of the College Park campus. It is a history of scholars both at UMD and in partner institutions throughout Latin America. It was built as a research center dedicated to critical analysis of Latin America in a time of transition from military to civilian governments. It is a history that responded to developments within academia and politics, and it envisioned positive change in the region. As an aspiring historian, I delved into the archives of the Latin American Studies Center to analyze the paths that LASC has forged since its inception. I examined the local and transnational initiatives as well as the trajectory that brings us to LASC in the current moment. I drew upon founding documents and proposals, LASC newsletters (since 1991), LASC publications and conference proceedings, and interviews with some of the individuals that were the drivers behind the formation and maintenance of LASC over the years. The archive itself is incomplete and cannot capture the myriad ways in which UMD professors, students, and collaborators engaged in the running debates over Latin American society, politics, culture, and its resonance in the United States. Yet, with what we have, I offer this history as a modest contribution that documents part of the history of Latin American studies at Maryland and situates LASC within the world at large.

1959–1971: Revolutionary Turning Points

1959 was a turning point in Latin American history. Guerrillas led by Fidel Castro overthrew the Cuban dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in the first successful revolution since the Haitian Revolution. The U.S. government moved quickly to respond, and realized it had underestimated the strength and imagination of popular movements in the Americas. To fill gaps in knowledge, the U.S. government made funding available to academics, researchers, and institutions—prompting the establishment of many new Latin American studies programs around the country. Latin American studies had previously existed within the realm of U.S. scholarship, but never before had it received such attention and funding. The increase in degree programs and centers prompted the founding of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) in 1966. Howard Cline, the former director of the Hispanic Foundation at the Library of Congress, noted in a 1966 article on the history of Latin American studies in the United States that:

[LASA] might well erect a monument to Fidel Castro, a remote godfather. His actions in Cuba jarred complacency in official and university circles, dramatically revealing that all was not well in Latin America, and that something must be done about it. Revived national concern with Latin America again created a climate in which serious programs could begin and even flourish.¹

The University of Maryland was home to a number of professors who were working on Latin America, and they came together to propose the founding of a Latin American Studies Center in 1969. The founding committee drew scholars from across disciplines.

The committee submitted a proposal to the University Senate calling for a Latin American Studies Center and

certificate program to “be inaugurated as quickly as possible.” The faculty committee envisioned the certificate as a course of study open to any undergraduate major or graduate student who met program requirements, integrating existing course offerings on Latin America to build an area studies program. On April 8, 1969, the Senate approved the proposal, and on November 26, 1969, the Board of Regents also approved it. The Center and certificate program were scheduled to be initiated in 1971, but budget cuts removed its proposed allocation, and thus, it was never implemented.

1969 LASC Committee

George Levitine | Art
Everett Hesse | Spanish and Portuguese
Francis Haber | History
Aubrey Williams | Anthropology
Dudley Dillard | Economics
Robert Harper | Geography
Don Piper | Government & Politics

1971–1984: Coalition of Latin American/ist Faculty

In the 1980s, there was renewed interest by UMD faculty in establishing a Latin American Studies Center as a research institute. In the intervening years of the 1970s and early 1980s, Latin American studies at University of Maryland operated as a loose coalition of scholars working on Latin America, periodically collaborating on specific projects and initiatives.

The military dictatorships in the Southern Cone (Chile and Uruguay, 1973; Argentina, 1976) drove waves of exiles into the institutions of higher education in Mexico, the United States, and Europe. Saúl Sosnowski arrived at University of Maryland in 1970 before his home country of Argentina descended into military dictatorship and “dirty war” (1976 to 1983). Yet it was precisely the loss of democracy and the restriction on academic and literary speech that drove Professor Sosnowski to expand the ranks of Latin American and Latin Americanist faculty when he became chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese in 1979. The first hire under Chair Sosnowski was Ángel Rama, the acclaimed Uruguayan writer. The growing cohort of Latin Americanists in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, under Sosnowski’s leadership and with the full support of the university administration, began to reach outside of their department to organize the initiatives that would serve as the basis for future formalization.

1984–1989: Democratization Theme and Advocacy

By the mid-1980s, countries of the Southern Cone were successively transitioning from military dictatorship to democracy, prompting scholars to grapple with the possibilities of rebuilding society and democracy after traumatic experiences of disappearances, assassinations, torture, and a decimated political left. Conversely, Central America was caught in vicious internal armed conflicts, genocide, and waves of refugees fleeing state violence. What marked the renewed focus on Latin America was both the urgency of contemporary events as well as the need to historicize and contextualize current understandings of Latin America.

In 1984, a group of professors chaired by Saúl Sosnowski submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education seeking funding to establish a National Resource Center in Latin American studies at College Park. While unsuccessful, the experience did succeed in more formally bringing together the College Park community dedicated to research and scholarship on Latin America. Among the initial projects was “Latin America in the Eighties,” an eleven-day series of panels, films, lectures, and exhibits on cultural topics and policy issues. UMD professors and invited speakers discussed the contemporary challenges facing Latin America and engaged in debate and conversation with domestic and international actors on topics that included immigration, U.S. policy toward Central America and the Caribbean, and oil and natural resources. Professor Sosnowski described this event as “the opening salvo of a new focus on Latin America here at UMD.”
The budding Latin American studies collective defined itself as an advocate for democratization and launched a series of conferences that spanned 1984–1994. Eight conferences in total, located in College Park as well as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Paraguay, UMD and its international partners grappled with “repression and reconstruction of culture” in post-military dictatorship Latin America. The cultural focus of the conference themes reflected the still-informally-organized LASC’s home in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, but was interdisciplinary, drawing from scholars across the humanities and social sciences for a comprehensive evaluation of how to reconstitute the cultural, political, and social spheres of the Southern Cone in the wake of dictatorships.

To problematize the approaching 500th anniversary of Columbus’s encounter with the Americas, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese launched a working paper series entitled “Discovering the Americas” that was an interdisciplinary examination of the social, cultural, and economic aspects of Europe’s encounter with the Americas in 1492. The series was divided into three two-year blocks: 1987–89 on pre-Hispanic cultures, 1989–91 on Africa in the Americas, and 1991–93 on Spain in the Americas. The Latin American Studies Center hosted a series of visiting professors, classes, events, and lectures from fall 1987 through spring 1993, clearly demonstrating the vibrancy of Latin American research and interest that existed on campus at the time.

Using the momentum from the multiple conferences, events, and the working paper series, Sosnowski made a second attempt at formalizing the creation of a Latin American Studies Center in 1986. He promoted the “Discovering the Americas” working paper series as a model for the type of interdisciplinary research center that LASC sought to become. The campus events engaged graduate and undergraduate students, and the programming was a demonstration of the advanced level of cooperation and collaboration between colleagues and departments at UMD and other Washington-based and overseas research and teaching institutions. Determined to expand into an independent center, Sosnowski argued that the formalization and activation of LASC as its own unit and research center would also open opportunities for outside funding.


The approval process was long, beginning in 1986, but the Latin American Studies Center was finally formally constituted in 1989 with dedicated funding, graduate assistantships, and office space in Jiménez Hall. Professor Sosnowski directed the Center, housed in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. As hoped, formal reconstitution yielded success in attracting outside funding as the Center was immediately chosen by the Rockefeller Foundation as site for fellowships in the humanities, the first and only site (at the time) that the Rockefeller Foundation had funded in Latin American literature and culture. Sosnowski met representatives of the Rockefeller Foundation at a conference in Italy and opened discussion for expanding their grants. The Rockefeller Foundation ultimately agreed to a six-year funding stream for the Rockefeller Fellows, contingent upon University of Maryland’s promise to maintain funding for Fellows after the six-year term ended. The Rockefeller Fellows inaugurated a practice that would continue under various funding sources through 2010: the welcoming of both distinguished scholars as visiting fellows and rising young scholars as post-doctoral fellows to contribute to the research and teaching environment at the University of Maryland. The fellowship programs brought in high-profile academic names and also served as a route to faculty positions for some of our colleagues here at University of Maryland. Professor Regina Harrison (1991, Spanish and Portuguese), David Sartorius (2006, history), and Jacqueline Messing (2009, anthropology) were fellows with LASC prior to joining the UMD community as faculty and integral members of the Center.

Moving into the 1990s, LASC continued a variety of programming, maintaining a determined focus on democratization, human rights, and interdisciplinary methodology. LASC sponsored conferences and events such as the October 1994 panel, “The United States and Cuba: The Next Step,” co-sponsored with the Center for

Members of LASC built numerous bridges between College Park and Latin America—foraging formal partnerships with universities from Mexico to Argentina and Chile, inaugurating exchange programs for students, and collaborating on new research projects and initiatives. Professor Sosnowski strongly felt that these were the years during which LASC had its greatest influence both home and abroad. In his words: “My best memories with LASC were during the late 1980s and early 90s, knowing that we were able to hold a conversation internationally. Although our events and conferences were here in College Park, our vision, programs, and initiatives were aimed at the Latin American audience, and our publications were circulating throughout Latin America.”

In 1995, LASC began the approval process for the undergraduate certificate program that continues today. Director Sosnowski advocated in the program proposal:

Through this Certificate Program, students will be able to better pursue their interests in international studies with a regional concentration on Latin America. Interest in Latin America and the Caribbean continues to expand as regional pacts are developed and the U.S. establishes new relationships within the Western hemisphere. The Certificate Program will allow LASC to further integrate its existing resources in languages, literatures, and cultures, with their counterparts in the social sciences, public policy, environmental studies, and the professional schools (...) and establish new collaborative activities with peer institutions. In short, approval of our Certificate Programs in Latin American Studies will enhance the ability of students to pursue jobs and careers in fields that require knowledge of the region, while further consolidating the recognition of LASC as a significant regional and national resource in Latin American Studies.


The approval of the certificate program reflected the two interwoven missions of LASC: deep engagement with current events in Latin America and the provision of high-quality educational programs and courses by LASC affiliated faculty. This marked the first time that undergraduate students had been invited to participate in LASC outside of the events and lectures held on campus. The first students signed up for the LASC certificate program in the fall 1997 semester, among whom was current lecturer and undergraduate director in the Department of Geography, Dr. Ronald Luna.

In 2005, LASC hosted the first annual LASC Graduate Student Conference, organized by then doctoral students Leandro Benmargui (history) and Luciana Beroiz (Spanish/Portuguese and comparative literature). Although there had been graduate student conferences organized previously by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, this was the first one exclusively under the banner of LASC, seeking to bring together UMD students across departments as well as young scholars from across the country. This past spring’s 2015 event marked the 10th anniversary of the conference.

To capitalize on the increased involvement of both undergraduate and graduate students, LASC sought to expand the certificate program into a full major. Professor Sosnowski wanted a master’s program in Latin American studies, similar to those offered locally at Georgetown and George Washington University, but decided to first focus on expanding the undergraduate program. The application to form a new major in Latin American studies was submitted in September 2002 with the hope that the first students could enroll in the fall of 2003. However, Dean James Harris (ARHU) rejected the application with the argument that only full departments could offer a major as a course of study. Sosnowski noted that Jewish studies offered a major although it was not
its own department, but the argument did not change Harris’s mind. This denial marked a loss of support from the administration that LASC had previously enjoyed under University President Kirwin and ARHU Dean Robert Griffith. Although the major had been denied in 2002, Karin Rosemblatt commented that Dean Harris was otherwise a steadfast supporter of LASC and was quite receptive to increasing LASC’s budget in subsequent years.

In my conversation with Professor Sosnowski, I asked him what he would have changed about his time as the director of LASC. He replied, “I would have pushed harder for a major and an MA program. It would have further positioned LASC to receive outside funding and would have increased our influence.” He interpreted the administration’s denial as yet another missed opportunity that dated back to the initial attempt to create the Center when “UMD really missed the boat for area studies in the 1960s, when all of these programs were starting and there was plenty of funding available for it.”

During this time, the Center began to include more community outreach as part of the expansion into undergraduate programming and the launch of the LASC certificate. For example, LASC and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese developed a series of Saturday workshops for parents of high school students on how to prepare for college, and the two departments inaugurated mentoring programs with local high schools that matched high school students with LASC and Spanish and Portuguese undergraduate students. Longstanding initiatives also continued to operate, as LASC affiliates had been involved in community programs well before 1997, most notably Professor Bill Hanna’s Langley Park Project operating out of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

In the 2005–2006 academic year, building on the relationships strengthened through mentoring programs, LASC, the UMD Latino Student Union, and local police departments worked together in an education campaign in Langley Park, Edmonston, Hyattsville, Greenbelt, Wheaton, and Gaithersburg schools (communities with large Latina/o populations) to promote safe street crossing practices. Additionally, Professor of anthropology Dr. Judith Freidenberg began working on the Community Museum Project in Langley Park.

### Notable LASC Events, 1998–2008

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<td>1999</td>
<td>Two-part conference: “Reconstructing Central America: Los pueblos de maíz en la era de globalización” (LASC, Spanish &amp; Portuguese)</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Conference: “Romance Languages and Linguistic Communities in the United States” (LASC, Unión Latina)</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>LASC receives Title VI funding from the Department of Education to expand undergraduate education in Latin American Studies</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Transnational collaborative research program: “Agenda Cultura y Democracia”</td>
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### 2008–2014: New Director and New Projects

Dr. Karin Rosemblatt (history) took over as director of LASC in October 2008. She looked to build upon the successes of the past as LASC transitioned from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese into the Department of History. In the first newsletter, Dr. Rosemblatt proposed an updated mission statement for the Center: “LASC stimulates and supports interdisciplinary teaching and research that serves local and regional communities as well as policymakers and the broader public in the United States and Latin America.” She said that she recognized the change in conditions that LASC would have to adapt to, and in 2009, she wrote, “It has been intensely gratifying to see how active and engaged our faculty and students are. That gives us the strongest possible base from which to move forward. At a time of economic gloom and programmatic stasis, I am decidedly optimistic about LASC.”

With Rosemblatt directing, LASC entered an era that included both change and continuity. LASC continued to support graduate students and work internationally, signing collaboration and exchange agreements with Latin American institutions and universities such as the

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Brazilian Universidade Federal da Bahia. The agreement, signed in 2011, sent three UMD graduate students to Bahia to participate in a symposium, “Fabrika de Ideias.” Many of the exchange programs previously inaugurated continued to operate, both bringing Latin American students to Maryland as well as sending UMD undergraduate and graduate students on both short- and long-term exchange opportunities.

In 2010, LASC launched a program to support graduate student summer research projects. By providing crucial funding for graduate students, LASC furthered its reputation as a supporter of interdisciplinary research, sending students from history, sociology, comparative literature, biology, art history, theatre and performance studies, Spanish and Portuguese, among other departments, to Latin America for field research. These students credit LASC for the opportunity to engage in preliminary research that would later become dissertations, journal articles, and conference papers. The summer research grants successfully sent four cohorts of graduate students abroad.

LASC continued to host visiting scholars and post-doctoral fellows during Rosemblatt’s tenure as director, which served to give graduate students and faculty an opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary dialog with cutting-edge scholars working in Latin America. Starting in 2012, LASC shifted from semester or year-long fellows to instead focus on attracting prominent international academics for shorter-term visits (one week to one month) around whose work LASC hosted lectures, workshops, and symposia. In spring 2012, LASC hosted the first short-term visiting scholars, Carlos Pabón of the Universidad de Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, and Juan Castillo Cocom of the Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo, Mexico.

In 2010 and 2011, director Rosemblatt and professor Mary Kay Vaughn (history) planned and hosted two important conferences. The first, LASC’s XX Anniversary Conference, “Reconfiguring Latin America: Conversations for the 21st Century,” was held in spring 2010 and included nineteen scholars who presented from various institutions and organizations including the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), University of Pennsylvania, New York University (NYU), University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), local universities, and l’Université d’État de l’Haïti, among others. The second, “The Aesthetic of Revolt: Latin America in the 1960s” took place in the spring of 2011, showcasing twenty-four presenters, who addressed topics such as: cultural vanguards; popular culture; social movements and indigeneity; protests and counterculture; cinema, theater, and popular music; and bodies, gender, and sexualities.

"Latin America in the 1960s" conference poster.
In the spring of 2011, Mary Kay Vaughan became interim director while Director Rosemblatt was on research leave. During this year, Professors Vaughan, Regina Harrison, and Janet Chernela organized an Americas Workshop on “Knowledge and Interculturality,” intersecting with the work of Distinguished Visiting Scholar Daniel Mato (Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero, Buenos Aires).

In 2010-2011, LASC remained involved in community outreach programs, co-hosting a forum on the Maryland Dream Act with the Center for the History of a New America at UMD. The forum and panelists responded to current events and critically engaged with the student body, policy-makers, and the surrounding community. LASC also partnered with The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and Prince George’s County middle schools to work with students on oral history projects around the local experiences of immigration. LASC continued its annual Graduate Student Conferences and engagement with area universities by co-hosting events such as the Washington Area Symposium on the History of Latin America (WASHLA). Involvement in Maryland Day and co-hosting events with organizations such as School of the Americas Watch (SOAW) ensured that LASC remained engaged in the wider communities beyond academic initiatives for scholarly production.

Director Rosemblatt instituted a speaking series called Café Breaks, which hosted UMD faculty and periodically brought in visiting academics and scholars to give afternoon lectures throughout the school year. LASC had long organized speaking events and lectures, but the Café Break Series created consistency and further strengthened the bonds of community among scholars of Latin America on the UMD campus. Over twenty Café Breaks have been held since their inception in 2009.

2013-2015: Transitions

In the 2013-2014 academic year, LASC once again entered a period of transition. Professor Alejandro Cañeque (history) took over the Center for one year as interim director. Under his watch, LASC continued the Café Break series, funded graduate students for summer projects, and continued the annual Graduate Student Conference.

At the end of Cañeque’s term, LASC moved from the Department of History into its own unit in the College of Arts and Humanities. This move brings us to the current moment when LASC finds itself under new leadership with the appointment of Dr. Laurie Frederik (performance studies). In the spring of 2014, the ARHU dean and administration assigned new goals to LASC and Director Frederik: to focus on undergraduate education and the certificate curriculum, increase student recruitment, and build up the Center. This shift meant putting some of the previous graduate research programs temporarily on hold. The shift in Center strategy prompted us to look at our past as we reimagine our future, and upon her appointment, Frederik understood that there would be different challenges—we would need to investigate where LASC fits into twenty-first century university culture and how it should align with new student interests.

Reflecting on the visible and concrete missions of previous directors, the push for democracy in Latin America under Director Sosnowski, the support for and focus on graduate student research under Director Rosemblatt, we see not only past successes but also future opportunities to maintain LASC’s reputation as an incubator of student research. This past spring, the 10th Annual Graduate Student Conference was opened up to undergraduate students and also recent alumni who had completed the LASC capstone thesis-writing course. Inviting undergraduates pushed them to develop their research at a more advanced level and to prepare them for future graduate studies and professional careers. The capstone course similarly has required LASC undergraduate students to undertake original research about Latin America and the Caribbean, and the success many have had in their post-graduate studies has in part been a result of their research experiences with LASC.

A new speaker series with the U.S. Latina/o Studies Program (USLT) was launched in 2014-2015, promoting intellectual collaboration on and discussion about the transnational issues and challenges that face both
Latin American and Latina/o communities (see panel discussion descriptions in this newsletter, page 14). LASC looks forward to the future and continuing to critically engage with Latin American and Caribbean communities in interdisciplinary perspective.

The current focus on undergraduate students has been facilitated by the innovative interdisciplinary work of LASC affiliates, instructors, and our previous directors. Perhaps most important of all of LASC’s achievements has been the development of a Latin American studies curriculum that draws upon the strengths of the affiliate faculty across the humanities and social sciences. Beyond the introductory courses (LASC 234/235, Latin American Issues I-II), LASC is proud to have the longstanding involvement of professors such as Dr. Janet Chernenla, who has been a LASC professor since 2004. Dr. Chernenla has welcomed LASC students into her explorations of the Amazon and Brazilian indigeneity and has led very popular study abroad programs. Another long-term lecturer for LASC has been Dr. James Maffie, who has regularly taught classes on Aztec sacrifice and Latin American philosophy. In tracing other long-term faculty affiliates, at least twenty-five have been members of LASC for ten years or more. This demonstrates the strength of the Latin American and Caribbean community on campus. Other influential individuals in the recent history of the Latin American Studies Center include Dr. Ivette Rodríguez-Santana (associate director to Karin Roseblatt and instructor), Dr. Jacqueline Messing (academic advisor and instructor), Leticia Goulas (program coordinator), and Winslow Robertson (program coordinator). And of course, our current program coordinator, Jennifer Sanchez.

Professor Sosnowski cautioned me that I may be too optimistic in my current assessment of LASC as compared to what he judged to be the height of LASC in the late 1980s and early 1990s. I asked what he hoped to see from LASC as we move forward, he replied: “We need to recognize that Latina/os and Latin Americans have a great role to play in the United States, and USLT and LASC have to come back together and stop playing turf battles.” We are indeed living in an increasingly globalized world in which scholars are rethinking geographical conceptualizations and the usefulness of international boundaries as defining characteristics for academic work. Yet, this interdisciplinary and collaborative work is proceeding apace and during my tenure as the graduate assistant for LASC; it has been quite the pleasure to work with my graduate student colleagues from departments across campus (including the USLT graduate assistant, Cassy Griff). In my opinion, the relationships between LASC and USLT have been quite collaborative and open. While LASC may not have the resources and international reach that it once had, it is clear to me that many are intent on fostering the collaborative space of Latin American studies.

In reflection upon the history of LASC, it is increasingly clear that we would not be the center we are today without the countless hours of groundbreaking research, programming, coordinating, and initiatives pursued by former LASC directors, staff, and affiliated faculty. The leadership of LASC Directors Saúl Sosnowski, Karin Roseblatt, Mary Kay Vaughn, Alejandro Cañéque, and now Laurie Frederik has guided the Center through the ups and downs of funding and visibility. But LASC is quite clearly a community of scholars and students who have shaped the Center into its current form precisely through collaboration, adaptation, innovation, and a firm belief that scholarship can be harnessed to promote positive social change.
Interview with Leticia Goulias
by Jennifer Sanchez, LASC Coordinator

If you talk to anyone who has been around the Latin American Studies Center for a number of years, inevitably you will end up hearing about Leticia Goulias, previous coordinator of the Center from 2003–2010. I heard from many people, both faculty and staff, about the fabulous job Leticia did during her time here, keeping the Center running like a well-oiled machine and being instrumental in putting much of the programming together. Since I am personally aware of how many different pieces there are to juggle when attempting to keep a center operating smoothly and of how much was accomplished during the years Leticia was coordinator, I was excited to speak with her. Maybe she could pass along some pointers and a few of her trade secrets.

The first thing you notice when speaking with Leticia is that she is a people person—warm, approachable, enthusiastic, and easy to talk with. She started off the interview saying how much she enjoyed working at LASC and what a great experience it was. When asked what a typical day at LASC was like, Leticia laughed and said there was no “typical” day. She expressed that every day was very busy, a challenge, and new and different. She frequently organized events and conferences, reached out to contacts in the area, and helped to bring in visitors or post-docs from abroad. Leticia had been well prepared for the coordinator position, having previously worked as a manager at the Mexican Consulate in New York. She had many contacts both in New York and Washington, D.C., facilitating partnerships with different organizations such as the Mexican Cultural Institute, the Smithsonian, and several of the Latin American embassies. It was evident that Leticia shared a vision for LASC, one that was bigger than just its tiny corner on campus.

Leticia looked to make new friends on campus also. “I wanted to be the cross-roads of everything involved with Latin America,” she said. When Leticia found out about a new faculty member working in or on Latin America, she would reach out to them to see how LASC could offer support and how they could collaborate. By the end of her time at LASC in 2010, Leticia had connections across UMD’s campus. She worked with a variety of faculty and academic departments, as well as Living and Learning programs such as the Language House and Global Communities. She helped introduce different Latin American musicians to the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and frequently worked with Gloria Aparicio-Blackwell in the Office of Community Engagement.

When asked about her best memories, she talked about the time she spent with students. She said she loved working in the community and taking students off campus for trips into Washington, D.C. On several occasions, she rented a van to bring groups to visit the Mexican Cultural Institute, Peruvian embassy, or just to walk around the Mall. Leticia said that to this day she still keeps in touch with many graduate and undergraduate students with whom she was close during her time at LASC, checking in with them and hearing about their milestones.

Leticia also greatly enjoyed planning and participating in Maryland Day at UMD each spring. During the years she was coordinator, LASC put on quite a show for the event. There was always music and dancing, she reminisced, as they often invited dance groups and DJs to perform. She remembered everyone having a great time and showing off their Latin dance moves—faculty, staff, students, adults, and kids alike.
Another highlight during her time at LASC was helping to bring in visiting scholars from abroad. “The post-docs were incredible people. Very talented and intelligent. They were eager to share with students. They amazed me.” She felt the post-docs played an important role in teaching undergraduate and graduate students—bringing vibrancy, insight, and different perspectives to the classroom.

Near the end of our conversation, I asked Leticia whether she had any tips for me. She told me to always do my best and I would do great. I know that is what she always did. It is evident that Leticia loved her job and gave it 100 percent. She said she “worked because she loved the work and for no other reason.” Part of what made the experience so enjoyable for her was working with Dr. Saúl Sosnowski, director of the center from 1989–2008. She said she appreciated his hands-off management style. In their years together she had considerable freedom to be creative and search out new opportunities for the Center. She would bring new ideas to Dr. Sosnowski, get his feedback, and then hit the ground running. “When people appreciate what you do, you can keep doing it,” she said.
During spring semester 2015, the Latin American Studies Center and the U.S. Latina/o Studies Program at the University of Maryland worked together to develop a speaker’s series with the theme “Home.”

CUBA AND CUBA-AMERICA

Set to the backdrop of colorful paintings by Latin American artists, the Cuba panel was held on March 27 in the Art Gallery of the University of Maryland. It was a full house, standing room only, as guests participated in the vibrant discussion. Panelists included an activist, non-profit worker, journalist, and university professors. A video of the event can be found online at LASC’s YouTube channel.

- **Mavis Anderson**, Senior Associate, Latin America Working Group
- **Netfa Freeman**, Coordinator and Activist, Institute for Policy Studies
- **Rafael Lorente**, Associate Dean, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, UMD
- **Nancy Mirabal**, Associate Professor, American Studies and U.S. Latina/o Studies, UMD
- **Ricardo Ortiz**, Associate Professor, English, Georgetown University
- **Laurie Frederik**, Associate Professor, Latin American Studies and Performance Studies, UMD

Rafael Lorente comments on the significance of the panel:

Cuba and the United States have been stuck in diplomatic and economic neutral for more than half a century. But recent events, symbolized most clearly by the raising of the American flag in Havana, demonstrate that big changes are afoot. Negotiating our way through those changes will require the two governments and their people to engage with each other on issues ranging from security and migration, to sovereignty and trade. Panels like the one held by LASC and USLT are one way for the University of Maryland to do its part to advance the conversation in a direction that will hopefully lead to a more productive and peaceful relationship over the next half century.
MAKING HOME: CENTRAL AMERICAN TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

A second panel focusing on Central America was held on May 1 and was also the keynote event of LASC’s student conference. This lunch-time discussion brought up issues that hit close to home as many in the Washington, D.C., area come from Central America. The panelists included an activist, a Nicaraguan-American PhD student, and university professors. A video of the discussion can be found on LASC’s YouTube channel.

- Adrienne Pine, Associate Professor, Anthropology, American University
- Alexis Stoumbelis, Executive Director, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador
- Ana Patricia Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, UMD
- Daniel Vivas, PhD student, Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership, UMD
- Ronald Luna, Undergraduate Director, Department of Geography, UMD

Randy Ontiveros comments on the significance of the panel:

During the panel, “Making Home: Central American Transnational Communities,” participants talked about a range of topics, among them: the causes and effects of anti-black racism throughout the Americas; the past and present impact of U.S. militarism on the western hemisphere; opportunities for greater collaboration between the university and grassroots activist groups; the importance of transnational cultural and social ties; and much more. We had a full audience and a lively conversation! My personal hope is that events like this one help build closer ties between our two programs, especially since we are at a moment when many in Latin American Studies are looking to move away from the discipline’s Cold War origins, and when scholars in Latina/o studies are increasingly committed to a transnational vision of the field.
One of the highlights of the year was LASC’s 10th Annual Student Conference, themed “Home,” which took place on Friday, May 1, 2015, in the Special Events Room of the McKeldin Library. This year’s conference invited undergraduate students for the first time, none of whom had ever before participated in a conference or presented their work in a formal setting. Participants came from the University of Maryland as well as outside institutions and included ten graduate students, three undergraduates, three LASC alumni, and two artists. Students were encouraged to present their research in a variety of ways including multimedia and poster presentations.

The call for papers asked students conducting research in Latin America or the Caribbean to connect their studies to perceptions of home. An excerpt from the call:

Home is a concept that is both personal and political, one that provokes nostalgia and warmth or division and violence. A home is never simply or purely conceived, but is always constructed through a hybrid of national, racial, political, gendered, and other identities, which are alternately performed according to context. Home is embodied in practices of hierarchy, defined by space and time, and is composed of both members and exiles. Diverse understandings of home around the world have power—ininstinctual and learned—strong enough to inspire compassionate offerings of protection and shelter, as well as unleash horrific genocidal movements. The structure of the global economy, well-worn migratory paths, cultural digitalization, and mass and social media have changed our understandings of what and where home is found and how it is expressed. Dislocation and mobility (of people, labor, capital, language, culture) are facts that call for careful reflection and analysis as we rethink historical context and contemporary meanings.

Scholars were invited to consider how the conceptualization of home by particular groups or populations construct notions of racial/ethnic identity, indigeneity, political ideology, land rights, poverty and wealth, citizenship and (un)documented status, nationalism and transnationalism. While the conference had the Americas as its point of departure, work that made links between Latin Americans, U.S. Latina/o communities, and people, politics, art, and culture in other parts of the globe was encouraged.

In conjunction with the theme, the Latin American Studies Center and the U.S. Latina/o Studies Program hosted a keynote discussion panel, “Making Home: Central American Transnational Communities,” which brought in sixty to seventy attendees. The day was capped off by an evening reception which featured live Brazilian music by the group DC Choro and special artisan beer with Latin American flavors, compliments of Olive and O’Higgins Brewing Company. Winners of the first Capstone Research Paper Competition were announced that evening and were awarded 300 dollars each for their outstanding work.

Conference panels and presenters:

**EDUCATION AND IDENTITY**

**Tom Sabella**, PhD candidate
Higher Education and Special Education, UMD
“Teachers’ Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Rural El Salvador”

**Stephanie Hall**, PhD student
International Education Policy, UMD
“University for All: A Critical Analysis of Higher Education Access in Brazil”
Matt Aruch, PhD student
International Education Policy, UMD
“Community Voices: Participant Perspective on Short Term Service-Learning Program in Ecuador”

Estefania Silveri, BA student, (LASC capstone)
Secondary Education and Spanish, UMD
“Not Just Black and White: Brazil’s Affirmative Action Quota Selection Process”

COMMUNITY AND JUSTICE

Rebekka Paisner, BS student, (LASC capstone)
Biological Sciences–Neurobiology, UMD
“Cultivating Identities: Cooperativity as a Response to Neoliberalism in Indigenous Mexico”

Shalynn Pack, MS student
Biology, UMD
“Protected Areas in Brazil: The Threat of Short-Term Political Pressures to the Long-Term Persistence of Natural Areas”

Jihan Asher, MA student, (LASC alum)
Latin American Studies, University of Connecticut
“Microgeopolitics of Sovereign Power: Community-Based Policing and Territoriality in Kingston, Jamaica”

Elizabeth Unger, BS student, (LASC capstone)
Marketing, UMD
“Certifying Justice: An Examination of the Fair Trade Movements in Southern Mexico”

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE

Kate Spanos, PhD candidate
Theatre and Performance Studies, UMD
“The Festival Calendar of Montserrat: How Embodied Performance Creates Memories of Home”

Mary González, MA student
Spanish/Bilingual and Multicultural Education, Modern/Classical Languages, George Mason University
“The Construct of a Puerto Rican Imaginary through Film”

Eleana Velasco, MA student
Modern/Classical Languages, George Mason University

Victor Hernández-Sang, MA student
Ethnomusicology, UMD
“New and Changing Performance Contexts for the Dominican Fiesta de Palos”

TRANSNATIONALITY: BODIES, SOUNDS, AND OBJECTS

Patricia Vergara, PhD candidate
Ethnomusicology, UMD
“Mexico-Colombia Musical Migrations: Imagined Belongings and Contested Cultural Heritages”

Rachel Zimmerman, PhD candidate
Art History, University of Delaware
“Dress, Porcelain, and Hammocks: Local Wealth and Global Aspirations in Eighteenth-Century Minas Gerais, Brazil”

Pamela Márquez, Cultural Orientation Coordinator
International Organization for Migration, Quito, Ecuador, (LASC alum)
“The Impact of Left-Behind Children: Migration, Remittances, Transnational Ties: Case Studies of Ecuadorian Left-Behind Experiences”

Sandra Shaker, Donor Relations Assistant
Coptic Orphans, (LASC alum)
“Brothers and Underdogs: The Palestinian Conflict as Understood in Latin America”

ARTIST TALKS

Eloy Areu, Artist and BA student
Art History, UMD
“Getting Close and Personal with Cuba through Art,” paintings

Eben Levey, PhD student
History, UMD
“The Art of Latin American Homebrewing,” documentary photos
Conference Photo Gallery

Education and Identity panel: Stephanie Hall, Estefania Silveri, Tom Sabella, and Matt Aruch.

Artistic Production and Performance panel: Mary González, Elena Velasco, Kate Spanos, and Victor Hernández-Sang.

Transnationality: Bodies, Sounds, and Objects panel: Sandra Shaker, Rachel Zimmerman, Patricia Vergara, and Pamela Márquez.

Shalynn Pack presents “Protected Areas in Brazil: The Threat of Short-Term Political Pressures to the Long-Term Persistence of Natural Areas.”

LASC Certificate student Rebekka Paisner presents her capstone research paper, “Cultivating Identities: Cooperativity as a Response to Neoliberalism in Indigenous Mexico.”

LASC alumn Jihan Asher presents “Microgeopolitics of Sovereign Power: Community-Based Policing and Territoriality in Kingston, Jamaica.”
Brian Sarginger chats with presenters Rachel Zimmerman and Patricia Vergara.

Members of DC Choro, Pablo Regis de Oliveira, Steve Sachse, and Tim Lee, take a break between sets.

Eben Levey and Ethan Katz serve up their specially brewed, Latin American inspired beers, “La Rubia Xalapeña” and “Cerveza Oscura Andina,” during the reception.

Eloy Areu stands by his paintings The Land That Time Forgot and Nuestra Patrona on display at the conference.

Shawn Moura, Joshua Walker, and friends chat at the reception.

Two LASC Certificate students, Elizabeth Unger and Rebekka Paisner, enjoy the reception after presenting in their first student conference.
Art and Performance

Salsa Dance Lesson and LASC Welcome Back Party
Fall reception to welcome back the LASC community with a dance lesson taught by Director Laurie Frederik.
September 24

LASC Latin Dance Social
Event for undergraduate and graduate students to relax during finals week.
December 10

Rotis, Tortillas & Wonder Bread: A Night of True Stories about Culture and Identity (Part I)
Professional storytellers from Story District performed in the Caritz Theatre of the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center on the theme of cultural identity. A coach from this organization co-taught a storytelling course for the University of Maryland during the spring 2015 semester.
March 3

A Night of True Stories about Culture and Identity (Part II)
UMD graduate and undergraduate students from the spring 2015 course “True Storytelling and Cultural Identity” took the stage to tell their stories.
May 11

Latin Rock Concert: La Santa Cecilia
Concert at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center by Mexican-American band, La Santa Cecilia. Named after the patron saint of musicians, this modern-day creative hybrid of Latin culture, rock, and world music utilizes Pan-American rhythms like cumbia, bossa nova, rumba, bolero, tango, jazz, rock, and klezmer music.
September 20
*Co-sponsored with The Clarice, CLSO, and MICA

III PRAGDA Spanish Film Festival
For the third year in a row, this festival brought the very best in contemporary Spanish and Latin American cinema to UMD with the aim of introducing students to the language and cultures of these territories.
October 6 - November 17
*Co-sponsored with SLLC & SPAP
Art and Performance Photo Gallery

Professor Laurie Frederik leads a group of students in some beginning salsa steps at LASC’s Salsa Dance Lesson & Welcome Party.

Professional storytellers from Story District in a Q&A after their performance “Rotis, Tortillas & Wonder Bread: A Night of True Stories about Culture and Identity.”

PJ Andrews tells his story in front of an attentive audience.

UMD students who told true stories about their lives in part two of “A Night of True Stories about Cultural Identity,” sponsored by LASC and the previous director, Karin Rosemblatt.

Cara Snyder enthusiastically relates her story to the crowd.
**Academic Talks**

**Making Films in Argentina, Yesterday and Today**  
*Christopher Moore, Research Fellow, Smithsonian Institution*  
Moore examined the story behind the making of *Valle Fértil* (1972), a short film about Jorge Prelorán, a young Argentine filmmaker, which suggests that the politics of film and art are determined by much more than content.  
October 14

**Narratives of Violence and Human Rights in Local Communities of Southern Chile, 1990-2012**  
*Claudio Barrientos, Associate Professor of Modern Latin American History, Universidad Diego Portales, Chile*  
Dr. Barrientos addressed the production of indigenous people’s oral narratives during the transition to democracy in Chile in the 1990s and 2000s.  
November 14

**Dance of the Disorderly: Capoeira, Gang Warfare, and How History Gets in the Brain**  
*Greg Downey, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, Macquarie University, Australia*  
The Afro-Brazilian dance and martial art, capoeira, was once associated with individuals who lived on the margins of Brazilian urban society. Dr. Downey examined capoeira practitioners whose careers in the art straddled the divide between quasi-illegality and growing respectability. Talk followed by a live capoeira demonstration by the UMD Capoeira Club.  
December 2

**Struggles for Dignity and Self-Determination in Mexico**  
*Simón Sedillo, Mexican Activist, Independent Journalist, and Documentary Filmmaker*  
Sedillo presented a breakdown on the supposed “war on drugs” with updates from Michoacán and Guerrero as well as a broader analysis of the effects of the U.S. military political economy on Mexico and the Mexican people.  
April 23

**Rights and Realities: Indigenous Peoples of Latin America**  
*Franco Tulio Viteri Gualinga, President, Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE)*  
Viteri spoke about indigenous Sarayaku people’s vision for their ancestral territories and their paradigm of “buen vivir,” living well in harmony with nature, and the visionary living forest initiative for the conservation of their sacred rainforests.  
April 13

*Co-sponsored with Anthropology*
**Academic Talk Photo Gallery**

Christopher Moore and UMD student Tomás Deza during the talk "Making Films in Argentina, Yesterday and Today."

Dr. Claudio Barrientos packed the Merrill Room with his talk "Narratives of Violence and Human Rights in Southern Chile, 1990-2012."

Dr. Greg Downey gives the talk "Dance of the Disorderly: Capoeira, Gang Warfare, and How History Gets in the Brain."

Dan Campbell and Matt Strobel demonstrate capoeira.

Greg Downey plays the berimbau while Kate Spanos and Matt Strobel give a capoeira demonstration. Ethan Walters plays the pandeiro and Pablo de Oliveira plays the atabaque. Michaela Gramzinski and Dan Campbell get ready to take their turns.

Mexican activist Simon Sedillo, who spoke on "Struggles for Dignity and Self-Determination in Mexico" at UMD.
Festivities

First Look Fair
September 17 & 18

LASC Certificate Student Graduation Celebrations
December 12 & May 13

Maryland Day 2015
April 25

LASC Graduate Assistant, Eben Levey, gives out information at UMD’s First Look Fair.

LASC Certificate graduates, Amanda Aragon, Randolph Tidd, and Camila Lavandez Bueno, pose with Laurie Frederik at the fall 2014 LASC graduation celebration held in their honor.


LASC was at Maryland Day 2015 with candy, t-shirts, Latin American trivia, and a photo booth. Graduate Assistant Eben Levey quizzes a crowd on their knowledge of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Daryle Williams, Associate Professor of History and LASC affiliate, takes a turn at the trivia table.
Festivities Photo Gallery

Jenn Sanchez, LASC coordinator, still at trivia after many hours and long lines.

Christopher Perez, Associate Director of Diversity and Inclusion at the Graduate School, talks with guests while Jennifer Sanchez directs people to the photo booth.

Students, faculty, and families were excited to get their chance to step into a photo with Lorenzo the llama.

Paula Barriga Sánchez, Administrative Coordinator, Office of Civil Rights & Sexual Misconduct.

Yvette Lerma, Coordinator for Latina/o Student Involvement & Advocacy, and her partner, Sara Jones.

UMD undergraduates and officers of the Maryland Latin Dance Club, Marcella Goldring, Roger Lin, and Celena Yancy.
Capstone Students 2014–2015

Amanda Aragon
Major: History
“What is ‘Racism’ in Nicaragua? Revealing Racial Discrimination among the Pacific Low-Lands and the Caribbean Coast”

Linda Herrarte
Major: Communication
“The Invisible Worker”

Camila Lavadenz Bueno
Major: Sociology
“Brown Child Left Behind: Racism in American Education”

Meagan LeBlanc
Major: Anthropology
“Kayapo, Guardians of the Amazon: Indigenous Rights in Brazil”

Tristan Marquez
Majors: History, Government & Politics
“China in and out of Brazil: An Overview of a Complex Relationship”

Lorena (Magi) Muñoz
Major: Community Health
“United States Intervention in Guatemala: An Analysis on U.S. Presence and its Effect on Guatemalan Society”

Aleesha Onta
Major: Economics
“Gender Wage Gap in Chile”

Rebekka Paisner
Major: Biological Sciences–Neurobiology
“The Everlasting Roots of a Community: Indigenous Response to Neoliberalism through Cooperativism”

Estefania Silveri
Majors: Secondary Education, Spanish
“Not Just Black and White: Brazil’s Affirmative Action Quota Selection Process”

Randolph Tidd
Major: Government & Politics
“Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement: The Long Struggle for Home”

Elizabeth Unger
Major: Marketing
“Certifying Justice: An Examination of the Fair Trade Movement in Southern Mexico”
ASC inaugurated an annual Capstone Research Paper Competition this spring. It was opened up to the students who have taken the Senior Capstone Course (LASC458) both this year and last. Two $300 prizes were given out to the best two papers submitted. The winners (below) were chosen by a committee of LASC faculty and were asked to present their research at LASC’s Student Conference on May 1, 2015.

**Sandra Shaker**  
Class of 2014, History, Government & Politics  
“Brothers and Underdogs: The Palestinian Conflict as Understood in Latin America”

My LASC capstone paper looked at the historical similarities and legacies of colonialism present in both the Middle East and Latin America to determine if and how Latin America would have a more sympathetic response to the Palestinian side of the Conflict.

The most surprising and powerful thing I found was that instead of looking at the different Middle Eastern communities in Latin America as just Palestinians or Lebanese or Brazilians, they often identify as a hybrid of both, such as Chilean-Palestinians. Realizing this about the communities I was researching allowed me to look at the conflict in a new way and not assume that their responses to it would be built from a single political or cultural identity. I also found that there was a lot of solidarity and potential for solidarity with the Palestinian cause. This makes me excited because there is a lot of opportunity for future research here!

**Elizabeth Unger**  
Class of 2015, Marketing  
“Certifying Justice: An Examination of Fair Trade Movement in Southern Mexico”

I chose to do my LASC capstone on the effectiveness of fair trade at improving farmers’ livelihood. I studied marketing in the Smith School of Business but I am extremely passionate about social justice and equality. I chose to research this topic because I wanted to examine how effective market driven approaches can be at helping producers. I want to believe that the private sector can be a driver for social good rather than always a force of exploitation and this lead me to explore fair trade. During the research process, I learned that coffee production in Mexico has a long history and the current coffee trade is a very complex international issue.

I enjoyed the experience of sharing at the conference in front of a larger academic audience and being able to present the research I had dedicated so much time and effort to completing. I also enjoyed answering the thoughtful questions from the students, faculty, and public who attended the event.
Christina Getrich is an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology. Her research has principally been based in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands in the Southwest. One of Dr. Getrich’s areas of focus is Latina/o immigrant health disparities. She has worked on projects focused on cancer screening (colorectal, cervical, and lung), behavioral health (depression), and primary care practice transformation through team-based approaches involving promotoras and patient navigators. Her current health disparities project examines how the exclusion of immigrants from health care reform has impacted how health care providers in safety net clinics in New Mexico provide care to different categories of immigrant patients. Dr. Getrich is more broadly interested in questions of belonging and citizenship. In her work, she highlights lived experiences of exclusionary health and immigration policies and enforcement practices in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands and how immigrants, their children, and advocates (including medical practitioners) fight for their inclusion. In this vein, another current project examines how second-generation Mexicans forge their identities and conceptualize social belonging while living in an increasingly anti-immigrant U.S. society. This longitudinal study has followed high school-aged youth living in San Diego as they have matured into adults, chronicling their complex identity negotiations and emergent forms of cultural citizenship. A recent publication stemming from this project examines the effects of racialized immigration enforcement practices on these youth. (“Too Bad I’m Not an Obvious Citizen”: The Effects of Racialized U.S. Immigration Enforcement Practices on Second-Generation Mexican Youth. *Latino Studies* 2013; 11(4):462-482.)

Dr. Getrich loves traveling throughout Latin America and the Caribbean and learning about the vast cultural diversity of the region; in addition to interacting with people, she also enjoys getting to know the region’s underwater sea creatures by scuba diving.

Lucinda Grinnell is an instructor for LASC. She teaches the Capstone Course in Latin American Studies and also the introductory courses, “Latin American Issues I-II.” She holds a PhD in Latin American History and a Graduate Certificate in Women Studies from the University of New Mexico. Her book manuscript, titled “Lesbianas Presente: Lesbian Activism, Transnational Alliances, and the State in Mexico City, 1968-1991,” examines the emergence of lesbian movements in Mexico City in the context of the Cold War and the onset of economic neo-liberalism. She has an article in the *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* that analyzes the significance of Mexican lesbian activist artwork, displayed in movement ephemera such as posters, fliers, and pamphlets, to the construction of ideological positions and expressions of solidarity. In her free time, she enjoys travelling (especially to Latin America!) and spending time with her three-year-old daughter.
Reid Gustafson in an instructor for LASC. He received his PhD in History from the University of Maryland, College Park, in May 2014. His research asks how ideas of class, gender, and cultural politics intersect in twentieth-century Mexico. Specifically, he examines how gender dynamics changed over time among working-class families in postrevolutionary Mexico City. His dissertation, "'He Loves the Little Ones and Doesn't Beat Them': Working-Class Masculinity in Mexico City, 1917-1929," was completed under UMD professor, Dr. Mary Kay Vaughan. He has recently taught the LASC introductory courses (LASC 234 & 235), surveys of Latin American history, classes on Mexican history, and will inaugurate LASC’s first semester of experiential-based courses. Dr. Gustafson is a native Pacific Northwesterner and an avid hiker.

Nathan Kraft has been working in the field in the Ecuadorian Amazon (Yasuní National Park) for most of his research career, though recently his lab has been exploring branching out in new research directions in Costa Rica. A number of lab members also work on floristic diversity across the Americas, with an emphasis on understanding the factors that lead to higher plant diversity within tropical regions in Central and South America. His recent publications include: “Plant functional traits and the multidimensional nature of species coexistence,” in Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, 112: 797–802, with Oscar Godoy and Jonathan Levine, 2015; and “Functional trait space and the latitudinal diversity gradient,” in Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, 111:13745-13750, with Christine Lamanna, Benjamin Blonder, and Cyrille Violle, 2014. Dr. Kraft teaches BSCI 361 Principles of Ecology as a general ecology course, but includes many theories and examples relating to species diversity in tropical regions, including Latin America.

When asked what he most worries about when working in the Amazon, he says, perhaps surprisingly, it is not snakes or jaguars or peccaries (which are all wonderful to see), but it’s actually the ants, which can make life unpleasant very quickly if you happen to stumble across the wrong nest at the wrong time.
Ryan Long is associate professor in the Department of Spanish. His research focuses on culture and politics in Mexico and Latin America, with an emphasis on the twentieth century. He has published articles on a range of topics, including the conflict in Chiapas, Mexican cinema, and a number of writers, including Álvaro Mutis, Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, José Gorostiza, María Luisa Mendoza, Juan Villoro, Laura Esquivel, and Roberto Bolaño. His book, *Fictions of Totality: The Mexican Novel, 1968, and the National-Popular State*, was published in 2008 by Purdue University Press. He is currently working on two new book projects, one about the writer Roberto Bolaño and another about the Swiss architect and one-time Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer, who lived and worked in Mexico from 1939 to 1949. A recent publication of note is his interview with the Chilean poet Bruno Montané Krebs, which is published in the print edition of *World Literature Today* (November-December 2014). He has a forthcoming chapter about mid-twentieth-century Mexican literature in *The Cambridge History of Mexican Literature* and is the contributing editor of Mexican Prose Fiction for the *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, published by the Library of Congress.

Dr. Long teaches classes about the Mexican student movement of 1968; detective fiction in Latin America; transnational culture and theory; representations of childhood and adolescence in Latin American and U.S.-Latino fiction and film; and surveys of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Latin American literature. Dr. Long is a hobbyist photographer, especially interested in traditional black-and-white film developing and printing.
FACULTY

Judith Freidenberg (Anthropology) received a Graduate Research Board Award (RASA) for completion of her book on immigrant experiences in Prince George’s County with Lexington Books. She is the new director of the Graduate Certificate in Museum Scholarship and Material Culture and the new co-editor of Practicing Anthropology.

Sandra Messinger Cypess (Spanish) is the co-editor with Valérie Orlando of the book Reimagining the Caribbean: Conversations among the Creole, English, French, and Spanish Caribbean, Lexington Books, 2014. Her chapter in the volume is titled “Approaching the Caribbean from a Latin Americanist Perspective.” She was interviewed on NPR for Latino USA about La Malinche, and by Literaral, Latin American Voices about her book Uncivil Wars: Elena Garro, Octavio Paz, and the Battle for Cultural Memory.


Regina Harrison (Spanish) co-directed and produced the short film Gringo Kullki (2015), which features Runa people from the mountains of Ecuador as they comment on the government’s decision to use U.S. dollars as legal tender. The film explores the economics of currency conversion from the perspective of Ecuador’s indigenous communities, in their language (with English subtitles), distributed by Berkeley Media, 2015. She also published a book: Sin and Confession in Colonial Peru: Spanish-Quechua Penitential Texts, 1560-1650, University of Texas Press.


Rafael Lorente (Journalism) was promoted to Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Journalism.

Randy Ontiveros (American Studies and U.S. Latina/o Studies) is the recipient of the 2015 University System of Maryland Board of Regents Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching.

STUDENTS

Jesse Zarley (PhD candidate, History) returned from fourteen months of field research in Chile and Argentina to present a paper, “Redrawing the Fronteras Mapuche: Space and Power in the Araucanía, Valdivia, and the Pampas, 1793-1862,” at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association in January 2015. He participated in a panel entitled “Rethinking Territoriality: Indigenous Power in North and South American Borderlands, 1700-1900.” Zarley was also accepted to participate in the week-long 2015 Summer Institute on contested global landscapes at Cornell University in May. The year’s theme was “Occupation: Violence and the Long-term Control of Land and People” and he shared a chapter of his dissertation entitled “The Secretaria of Mariluán: Mapuche Writing and Power in Chile’s War to the Death.”

Estefania Silveri (LASC certificate graduate 2015) accepted a full-time teaching position in Houston with YES Prep Fifth Ward Charter School. She will be teaching AP Spanish to native Spanish speakers who have not had the chance to take their first language in school.

LASC ALUMNUS

In Memory of Professor Bill Hanna
by Dr. Judith Hanna

William John Hanna

William John Hanna (Bill), resident of Bethesda, Maryland, was born in Cleveland and later moved to Los Angeles. He passed away from cancer and was buried in Hollywood Forever Cemetery near his parents’ graves.

After being a world competition bridge player, he earned a PhD at UCLA in political science. Bill and his anthropologist wife conducted research on students and politics and the relationship between urban areas and the national governments in Nigeria and Uganda. His films and audio recordings for his wife’s research there and in Kenya are archived at the Library of Congress.

Bill taught at Michigan State University, the City University of New York, University of Texas at Dallas (where he was also a dean), and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD), from 1978 to 2013. At UMD he was in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, emphasizing the challenges of planning and policy-making when crossing cultures. He was devoted to his students, some of whom have remained family friends over the years. He took students to Mexico for summer field work. A student field research project in Langley Park, a community near the university, led to Bill’s long term involvement with the immigrants from Central America, Africa, and Asia.

Bill was an activist fighting injustice at the university and Langley Park. Not infrequently he went out in the middle of the night to help a student or immigrant in distress. An advocate for minorities, against bureaucracies and gentrification, he supported preserving neighborhood schools, affordable housing, food trucks, health, and small businesses. He took up the cause of neighborhood Salvadoran women street vendors who sold fruit and soft drinks and provided social settings and home-country cultural continuity. Bill founded the neighborhood non-profit Action
Langley Park in 1998 and organized annual health and job fairs and folklorico performances. He wrote the biweekly newsletter *Barrio de Langley Park*. He gave many lectures on Latino health at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. The Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission gave him awards for distinguished community service.

In 2005 Bill became editor of the quarterly *Faculty Voice* (distributed to the 10,000+ faculty members on Maryland’s 13 campuses). He solicited and wrote articles, including occasional restaurant reviews, and did the page layout and copyediting.

In the U.S. Bill loved meeting people from different parts of the world and tasting their food. He traveled to Canada, Italy, France, UK, Norway, Sweden, Finland (place of our au pair daughters), Estonia, USSR, Israel, Turkey, Jordan, Mexico, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Ecuador (where he tried to learn Spanish), Japan, Korea, and Indonesia. Music was salve to his soul, and he was a theater buff. New operas and folk music were of special interest. He wrote poetry and created Photoshop art, work that appeared in his self-published booklets. Bill was a big sports enthusiast; he played tennis and followed basketball, soccer, tennis, and golf. He coached his sons’ soccer teams and when they went off to college, a girl’s team. A sense of humor and optimism carried him through life.

Bill is survived by his wife of 53 ¾ years, Judith Lynne Hanna, their son Shawn, daughter-in-law Aletha, grandsons Merrick (10 years) and Sagan (5 years), and his son Aaron, daughter-in-law Florence, and fraternal twin grandsons Emil and Adrian (6 years).

Bill Hanna lived a rich and varied life. He touched the lives of many all over the world.
Latin American Studies Center

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