

Fall 2018

Issue 31



LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDIES AT UOFL

CAMINOS

Dr. Abby Córdova Presents the LALS Heritage Lecture on Central American Migration

On October 3, 2018, Dr. Abby Córdova, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Kentucky, presented the 17th Annual LALS Heritage Lecture, which focused on the controversial and timely topic of migration from Central American countries to the United States. During her engaging presentation, “Crime, Violence and Migration: Consequences for Democracy in the Americas,” Dr. Córdova provided facts and trends concerning immigration and deportation, explained the reasons for migration, and discussed the criminalization of Latino immigrants and the impact of migration on democracy in Latin America. The next day, she spoke to students of Dr. Tricia Gray’s LALS 310 Introduction to Latin American Studies class about gang warfare in her native country of El Salvador, focusing particularly on the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and Mara 18 gangs. She explained how gang members have taken control of neighborhoods and become political players, making it more difficult for government representatives and political candidates to visit neighborhoods and mobilize residents to play an active role in their communities. During this lecture, Dr. Córdova dispelled myths about undocumented immigration of gang members to the United States. My classmates and I were very impressed by Dr. Córdova’s enthusiastic and informative presentation, because it came from the perspective of a native of El Salvador who has a personal interest and stake in research on Central American migration. Dr. Córdova’s campus visit was co-sponsored by CODRE: The Commission on Diversity and Racial Equality; the Department of Criminal Justice; the Hispanic Latino Faculty and Staff Association; the A & S Office of International, Diversity, and Engagement Programs; the Department of Political Science; the Student Success Center; and Latin American and Latino Studies.

— Mariela Ramírez, LALS Major



LALS Welcomes New Assistants: Maria Shields & Jake



The LALS Program is thrilled with our new LALS Student Assistant and LALS Club President, Maria Shields! Maria is a double major in LALS and Public Health, and began working as the LALS Student Assistant in August, thanks to a generous scholarship from the A & S Dean’s Office. You can thank Maria for designing this lovely newsletter, keeping the LALS website and Facebook page up to date, and sending important messages through our LALS Service Account. As a 2018 Panama Scholar, Maria also serves as an Ambassador for that program. She promoted our Panama Program at the *Celebremos* Hispanic Heritage Festival this September, with assistance from Jake the LALS Therapy Dog. Jake joined the Buchanan household on March 15, 2018, and began working at the LALS Offices in April. He greets everyone who comes to visit us in Stevenson 305-306 with much enthusiasm, not to mention everyone he sees outside at the LALS Tranquility Garden. Is it a coincidence that there has been a marked increase this semester in the number of students enrolling in the LALS Major, Minor, and Graduate Certificate degree programs? After months of training with Mary Beth Sherwood (“The Dog Lady”), Jake will soon earn an official certificate himself as a real Therapy Dog. Stop by and see Jake to lower your stress! ¡Bienvenidos María y Jake!

Latin American and Latino Studies Co-Sponsored Events

7th Annual South Fourth Street Day of the Dead Celebration



For the past seven years, on the first Friday in November, the Latin American and Latino Studies Club has organized an “army” of volunteers to assist with the activities for children at the Annual SoFo Day of the Dead Celebration. This year, the turnout for volunteers was magnificent! More than 50 volunteers signed up to help, including LALS students, my classmates from Dr. Buchanan’s Spanish conversation class, and Spanish Club students from St. Francis H.S. and Sacred Heart. Many Mexican families came to celebrate *el Día de los Muertos*, providing a great opportunity for volunteers to speak Spanish. Despite the cold weather, many families came to celebrate *el Día de los Muertos*,

some with children whose faces were already painted. If not, the LALS Club had a table for face-painting, which ended up being our most popular! We also had stations for decorating sugar skulls, making dancing skeletons, creating beautiful paper flowers, and coloring. To make things even more awesome, there was live entertainment, authentic Mexican food and drinks for sale, and festive Day of the Dead items to buy in the retail shops, especially in Craft[s] Gallery and Mercantile.

— Autumn Robinson, Spanish Major



Witness for Peace in Cuba: “Cuba, You Can’t Blockade Hope”

On October 18, 2018, Alicia Sévila Hidalgo, from Havana’s Martin Luther King Center for Peace and Justice, gave a lecture about Cuban history, from its origins to the Cuban Revolution, the blockade, and the current situation on the island. She works in Matanzas, Cuba as a pastor, ecumenical leader and prison educator focusing on gender and liberation theology. Sévila Hidalgo is optimistic about recent changes because she says that Cubans are now finally moving forward after the collapse of the Soviet Union, known as the “Special Period,” which took a huge toll on the island’s economy and rationing policies in the 1990’s. She explained that Cubans want social and economic changes to result from the island’s own will power as a sovereign nation. Cuba is big on giving social services, such as healthcare and education, which are free to all Cubans; however, with the new reforms, citizens are fearful that those benefits may be taken away from them. Now there is a good opportunity to have a more civil and democratic conversation in which the general public has a say. Sévila Hidalgo advocates these changes because she wants to see a Cuba that’s not the playground of other countries or a nation tainted by the stereotype of the communist “Red Scare” of 50’s and 60’s. As a Cuban born during the “Special Period,” and later raised in Louisville, I hope these changes do improve Cuba; however, I’m not convinced it will happen in the near future because change take time.



This lecture was co-sponsored by the Braden Institute, LALS, the Cultural Center, the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies Program, The Liberal Studies Project, and the Commonwealth Center for Humanities and Society. — Amaray Coca-Venegas, LALS and Spanish Major (pictured to the left, with the speaker and LALS Major, Mariela Ramírez to the right)

LALS Internship Research Forum and LALS Club Drive for Doors to Hope

On Monday, December 3, 2018, the Fall 2018 LALS Interns gave presentations about their experiences volunteering for local internship sites that serve the Latinx community. Their PowerPoint presentations focused on a research project that addresses specific challenge their organizations face. We appreciate the guidance the site supervisors provided our interns at the following LALS internship sites: Adelante Hispanic Achievers - María Alejandra Martínez (Dustin Bishop, Director of AHA); Backside Learning Center - Kylie Nethers (Sherry Stanley, Director of BLC); Doors to Hope - Austin Williams (Lorena Miller, Director of Doors to Hope); and The Kentucky Racing Health Services Center-Marina Sasnau (Dedra Hayden, Director of KRHSC). The LALS Internship Research Forum coincided with the end of the LALS Club's Book and Winter Clothing Drive for Doors to Hope. We are very grateful for the many donations we received from the UofL community. Lorena Miller, Director of Doors to Hope, was happy to receive so many coats and books for the children and their parents. If you clear out your closets and bookshelves over the Winter Break, we will gladly take your donations to Doors to Hope!



News from Our LALS Alumni

Raven Byars—2018 LALS Major



I am currently living in Málaga, Spain as an English Teaching Assistant with the North American Language and Culture Assistants Program. which allows the Spanish government to employ thousands of English speakers from various countries to teach in schools all across Spain. I work at a secondary school and my students range from ages 11-16. I assist in Social Studies, Science, and P.E. classes. My roles range from small group tutoring to class presentations to U.S. cultural activities. This has been such a great experience and I am excited to grow as an educator in the coming school year!

Jessica Williams—2015 LALS Major

Oi de Goiânia, Brasil! I am about to complete my Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Brazil, where I have been teaching at the Universidade Estadual de Goiás, located in the small town of Morrinhos. Here I teach English classes to future Brazilian English teachers and give weekly English classes to community members as well. Because Brazil is in the Southern Hemisphere and has a different school schedule than the US, I was able to take the entire month of July off! I took advantage to travel all over North and South of Brazil. Here is a picture from one of the most beautiful places I've ever been to in my life: the sand dunes of Lençóis Maranhenses. If you get the chance, travel to Brazil! It's worth the trip!



Lt. Colonel Michael Stevens—2016 LALS Major



From April 2017 to April 2018, I was assigned as the Operations Officer for the Warrior Transition Battalion at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The Warrior Transition Battalion provides complex care to the Army's wounded and injured soldiers. During that year, I also served as the lead planner for the Pacific Regional Trials Warrior Games, which offer wounded and injured soldiers and veterans a chance to compete in 8 different adaptive sports events. After my promotion from Major to Lieutenant-Colonel in the U.S. Army, in October 2018, I was assigned as a Planning Officer at the 84th Training Command Headquarters at Fort Knox, Kentucky. I will be working on developing training plans and exercise for the US Army Reserve. And, I've recently been selected as the Deputy Commander for an upcoming overseas mobilization with 391st Military Police Battalion in June 2019. I just applied to the Graduate School at UofL to pursue the LALS Graduate Certificate while I'm stationed at Fort Knox!

Congratulations!



LALS Graduating Students



¡Felicidades!

LALS Majors

Raven Byars (May 2018)
Megan Lenahan (August 2018)
Chelsea Flint (December 2018)
Bianca Vélez (December 2018)

LALS Minors

Olivia Campbell (May 2018)
Kayla Kress (May 2018)
Taylor McKnight (May 2018)
André Rochet (May 2018)

LALS Graduate Certificates

Marie-Elena Ottman (August 2018)
Sharron Barnes (December 2018)



2018 Lewis Scholars

Taylor Bryant-Spain	Chelsea Flint-Peru
Reagan Bunce-Peru	Betty Henríquez-Costa Rica
Evan Clark-Peru	HeeJue Hong-Costa Rica
Seth Drake-Spain	Katelyn McDowell-Spain
Megan Eichert-Costa Rica	Alexandra Wright-Costa Rica



2018 Panama Scholars

Ashley Batliner	Sarika Polcum
Lauren Diel	Nicholas Reid
Sarah Draud	Tristin Schifferdecker
Megan Lenahan	Maria Shields
Lexus Little	August Wilcox
Marie-Elena Ottman	



Desde los Cuatro Caminos



From the Crossroads

¡Saludos amigos! It's been a year since I wrote a letter for the last issue of *Caminos*, so this newsletter will do double-duty for the Spring 2018 *Caminos*. In this issue, we congratulate all our students who graduated in May and August of 2018, and those who are about to graduate this month. We also wish to celebrate our 2018 Lewis Scholars and thank Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Connie Lewis for their generosity. To date, 203 students have studied abroad as Lewis Scholars. Shortly after Thanksgiving, we notified the 2019 Lewis Scholars about their Lewis Scholar Awards. We're also making plans for the 17th Annual Study Abroad Program in Panama and still have a few spots available! You can be the next Panama Scholar if you act fast! To date, 362 students have studied abroad in Panama with our program, which is co-sponsored by the Department of Communication. I'm happy to report that students have been flocking to LALS to declare degrees in our three programs and for advising, and I do believe that credit must be given to Jake the LALS Therapy Dog (pictured on p. 1). This semester, Jake worked the crowds in the Humanities Quad at the Celebremos Hispanic Heritage Festival, organized by the Spanish section of the Dept. of CML, and the Major Fair. Many students come over to study in the LALS Resource Center in Stevenson 401, but stop by my office first to get some love from Jake. When he goes outside for a walk, he attracts students like a magnet and provides the perfect opportunity to tell them about the LALS program and invite them to visit the LALS Offices in Stevenson Hall.

I'm very proud of our 2018 LALS Interns who contributed so many hours to local organizations that serve our Latinx community, and I'm grateful to members of the LALS Club who volunteered at the Annual South Fourth Street Day of the Dead Festival and organized the Winter Clothing and Book Drive for Doors to Hope. Finally, the LALS Program would like to extend a warm *bienvenida* to our new President, Dr. Neeli Bendapudi, and wish her much success in leading the UofL family.

¡Felices Fiestas! Rhonda Buchanan, LALS Director



Latin American & Latino Studies



Latin American and
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