



## Fall 2018 Newsletter

### A Message from LACS Director César Barros A.



It is an honor and a pleasure to be serving as the new Director of our Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program! Along with our Faculty Committee, we have been working hard to continue providing our students with a unique interdisciplinary curriculum, and giving opportunities to our campus community to learn about and be involved with Latin America, the Caribbean, Latinx America, and South-North migration. I want to thank all our faculty members who show us every day their commitment with our longstanding mission. I also want to thank Natalie Aguilar, our program's Student Assistant, who has helped me so much in facilitating faculty and student initiatives and making my work easier as I learn the ropes of this new job. Finally, I want to express my gratitude to Dr. Andres Pletch for teaching our *Introduction to Latin American Studies* class this semester.

I am happy to announce that we have substantially extended our course offerings. Four sociology classes have been added to our roster: *Race, Class, and Gender*, *Race, Crime and Punishment*, *Immigration & Identity*, and *Mass Media and Culture*. This means that we also have new colleagues joining our team--Carolyn Corrado, Sunita Bose and Tyrell Connor. I'm also excited to share with you that there will be two more Theater classes that will be cross-listed with LACS permanently--*World Drama* and *Race, Gender and Performance*. Both of these classes are taught by our colleague Martine Green-Rogers. New selected topics in Spanish, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality, and History will be offered in the Spring semester of 2019 as well.

This semester we have been organizing a variety of events. With members of our faculty and students we created an installation commemorating the first anniversary of Hurricane Maria hitting our sisters and brothers in Puerto Rico. We hanged large posters created by Puerto Rican artists from the *AgitArte* collective and produced a sound piece with commentaries made by people in the archipelago read by faculty and students in both Spanish and English. We inaugurated the installation on September 20 with a touching vigil. We were able to donate the art pieces to El Museo Escolar's permanent collection. Working with students from the Spanish Club, LASU, El Museo Escolar and Amnesty International, we organized two film screenings, *Unnafraid* (2017) and *Dolores* (2017). For both screenings we had very interesting discussions with LACS faculty and students. We also had the privilege to have renowned Guatemalan film director Luis Argueta visiting our campus. He shared with us his visual and political work on the realities of deportation, exile and return.

We are also proud to announce that the Nation Residence Hall Honorary has awarded us with the Department of Excellence Award. LACS was awarded for its "constant support of its students and its inclusive and diverse environment." This newsletter is part of our effort to connect with alumni, current and prospective students. We want to highlight the accomplishments of our majors, minors, alumni and faculty. There are so many things to share that we have decided to start doing one newsletter per semester. Enjoy!



On the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Maria, the LACS Program mounted *Resiliencia y Resistencia*, a public installation of works by Puerto Rican artists members of the *Agitarte* collective, highlighting the Centros de Apoyo Mutuo (Mutual Support Centers), the grassroots organizations that are leading the rebuilding effort in many Puerto Rican communities.

## Events and Activities

The LACS Program works with students to organize cultural events that foster our awareness and understanding of Latin America, the Caribbean and the Latinx experience beyond the classroom setting. The program sponsors events such as movie screenings, art installations and cultural programs. (Right) This fall the Program held its annual fall reception at the Sojourner Truth Library on Oct. 24.

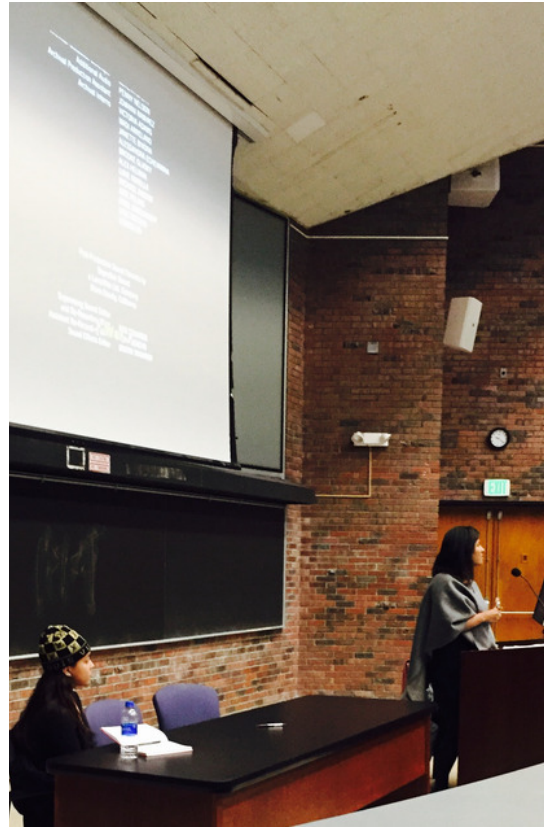


(Left) LACS teamed up with the Amnesty International Student Group for a screening of *The Unafraid*, a feature documentary on the lives of DACA recipients in Georgia, followed by a panel discussion with LACS Director Cesar Barros, and Sociology professors, Sunita Bose and Roberto Vélez-Vélez. Students in the picture from left to right: Eleanor Pena-Humes, Amina Tipu, and Camilla Trischetti.





Día de los Muertos altar at the Sojourner Truth Library, organized by the Spanish Club.



Discussion lead by Professor Cruz Bueno and LACS major Michelle Tejada after the Screening of *Dolores*, a film that follows the life of Dolores Huerta, co-founder of United Farm Workers of America.

## Events and Activities



With Prof. Porras, students donate clothing items for local drives and sell jewelry that help local Guatemalan women. Zoe Supina, Camille Murphy, Luz Porras, Melissa Frasco, Alexis Latin



Genesis Fernandez, Marlena Cabrera, Luis Argueta, Romina Jaramillo-Romero, and Maria Elena Santana at the event *Life After Deportation*.

# Faculty Highlights

## Dr. Jessica Pabón releases her book *Graffiti Girlz*



We are so proud of our colleague and professor Dr. Jessica Pabón for the release of her highly awaited book *Graffiti Girlz: Performing Feminism in the Hip Hop Diaspora* (NYU Press, 2018). Dr. Pabón is Assistant Professor in the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and part of our Faculty Committee at LACS. She teaches classes on Feminist Theory, Feminist Art & Subculture, Gender and Sexuality in Hip Hop, Performing Feminism and Latina Feminism.

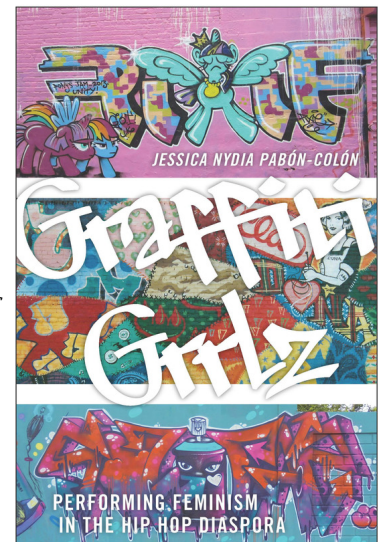
In *Graffiti Grrlz*, Dr. Pabón interrupts the notion that graffiti is a “boys club,” and introduces us to the world of women graffiti artists. Drawing on the lives of over 100 women in 23 countries, she argues that graffiti art is an unrecognized but crucial space for the performance of feminism. She demonstrates how it builds communities of artists, reconceptualizes the Hip Hop masculinity of these spaces, and rejects notions of “girl power.” *Graffiti Grrlz* also unpacks the digital side of Hip Hop graffiti subculture and considers how it widens the presence of the woman graffiti artist and broadens her networks, which leads to the formation of all-girl graffiti crews or the organization of all-girl painting sessions.

A rich and engaging look at women artists in a male-dominated subculture, *Graffiti Grrlz* reconsiders the intersections of feminism, hip hop, and youth performance and establishes graffiti art as a game that anyone can play.

*Bitch Magazine* has said that Dr. Pabón’s “dedication to detail and thoroughly researching is evident throughout the book. She . . . makes a compelling case that graffiti subculture is a place where feminists come into their own”. *StreetArt NYC* has praised her book saying that Dr. Pabón’s book is an “impeccably researched study of the grrls who have paved their way into the predominantly male graffiti culture, claiming their own space.”

The book is on sale in many bookstores online and offline, and available at the Sojourner Truth Library. Check it out!

Next Spring semester, Dr. Pabón will be teaching *Feminist Perspectives of Decolonization*, which will explore the legacies of colonialism in different regions of the world using postcolonial, decolonial and indigenous feminist framework that center gender, sexuality, race/nation, and class struggle.





# LACS Majors Spotlight

## Michelle Tejada



When Michelle Tejada took Introduction to Latin American Studies she realized that before she had been deprived of the opportunity of learning her own history and that she should take advantage of being a college student to learn more.

Now in her her third year and as a double major in LACS and political science, she is the president of the Latin American Student Union and a sister of Corazones Unidos Siempre, Chi Upsilon Sigma National Latin Sorority, Inc. She is also a part of the Scholars Mentorship Program and the Honors Program and has participated in SUNY New Paltz's Latino Week.

“These organizations and programs have provided me with an outlet to bring the narratives of Latinx people to the New Paltz community and hopefully cultivate change amongst the communities of color,” she said to us.

Michelle has found it fulfilling to learn about influential Latin American and Latinx figures that “unfortunately have not received the credit that they deserve. It shows me that I am too very capable of making history.” To learn about the narratives of people of color after previously learning history from a Eurocentric perspective has brought Michelle a sense of community and inspiration. She would like to pursue a law degree and fight for the rights of immigrants and all Latinx people.

## Melissa Twomey

Fourth-year student Melissa Twomey is a double major in International Relations and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Before coming to New Paltz, she studied Spanish and was involved in local activism in support of the DREAM Act. After travelling to Ecuador in 2015 and forging relationships there, Melissa immersed herself in the culture and politics of the region and was interested in learning more. The LACS program at New Paltz offered her the interdisciplinary perspective that she desired.

In her third year at SUNY New Paltz, she spent the first half of the year studying abroad with an Argentine family in Buenos Aires. There, she made long lasting connections with political activists and learned more about the economies and histories of the Southern Cone. She also had the opportunity to backpack through Bolivia and Peru. “These trips, which SUNY New Paltz made possible, made me into a more confident and independent person,” she said. “The professors of the LACS department have been nothing but kind, and thought provoking and I’d absolutely recommend the program to anyone.”



# LACS Minor Spotlight

## Kevin Martinez



Second-year student Kevin Martinez declared a minor in Latin American & Caribbean Studies to learn more about his own cultural upbringing and to learn about the complexities of the region, something that also complements his Spanish major. Originally from Honduras, Kevin wanted to study his country of birth and how economic and societal issues affect it. He is also interested in the Latin American region as a whole. “LACS for me represents my roots and beyond, because it is not only about Latin America and the Caribbean but also the connection and its importance in the world.”

Kevin is an active member of the student body. With an interest in Journalism and Communications, he is the Spanish News Director at WNPC-TV, the student run television station at SUNY New Paltz, as well as the President of the Spanish Club. In addition, he is a committee member of Men Valuing Professionalism, an EOP program that develops leadership skills and encouraging positive campus and community engagement. He also volunteers to run the Spanish *Mesa de Conversación*, a weekly activity that help foster student’s Spanish speaking skills and creativity in communication. Kevin appreciates the diversity of the program, which “breaks down many false stereotypes” and he also says the faculty “are very welcoming people that make you feel like a family.”

## Alumni Update: Luis Lopez '14

After graduating from SUNY New Paltz in 2014, Luis Lopez decided to further his knowledge by pursuing an MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies at Columbia University. He focused his graduate work on Political Economy and migration within the Caribbean. He maintained his connections with LACS faculty while completing his degree and states that his relationship to the faculty guided and pushed him into studying the experiences of communities in Latin America. While studying at SUNY New Paltz “Many of them knew where I aligned and would recommend books, films, research topics, and even forwarded information on opportunities for students across campus and the country,” Luis told us. During his time at SUNY New Paltz, Luis was also able to study abroad in Mexico, with the Mexico Solidarity Network: “It was there I learned how valuable a quality education is and what sacrifices human beings will make to educate themselves and those around them.” The positive experience with faculty under the LACS program, and his discovery of the importance of an education abroad, propelled Luis to work on education. He currently serves as a student advisor and counselor at New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.





# Faculty Highlights

## Prof. Luz Porras Implements Service-Learning Class



In an effort to bridge the barrier between the classroom and the community, Prof. Luz Porras teamed up with Vida Real, a church in the city of Kingston to implement English classes for the local migrant community.

Starting this semester, professor Porras' class *Communication and Culture in Spanish* has a service-learning component that allows students to teach English, while native Spanish speakers teach beginner Spanish to indigenous residents, such as indigenous Guatemalans who speak Q'eqchi. "Our goal is to make them feel like they are not alone," Professor Porras said to us. "We want to take away that feeling of isolation and give their presence recognition."

Besides language lessons, other initiatives include enrolling children into local public schools, helping them fill out lengthy paperwork and organizing coat and bra drives for local shelters. Each class is prepared by New Paltz students according to the level and necessity of the person they are teaching to. There are 18 students in the role of tutors and four working with children. This project is connected to the work professor Porras has been doing in Guatemala, where she leads the Cultural Engagement Study Abroad Program.



# Faculty-Student Research Initiatives

In the summer of 2018, Franchesca Arcy (Spanish and Communication Disorders) participated in the SUNY New Paltz Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) sponsored by the Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities program. SURE allows students and faculty mentors to collaborate in a research project. Franchesca worked with Professor Deyanira Rojas-Sosa (Spanish, LACS) in a project named: *Ideologies about race and bodies in Latinas' discourses about hair and beauty*. Professor Rojas-Sosa and Franchesca are writing a research article about their findings. Franchesca presented preliminary results at the *Penn State Undergraduate Exhibition in Hispanic and General Linguistics (PSUxLing)* in October 19th, 2018. Additionally, Dr. Rojas-Sosa and Franchesca will present another section of their research at the *Simpósio Internacional de Linguística, Cognição e Cultura (LCC)*, to be held in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in March 2019. Congratulations to this amazing faculty-student team on their success!



Franchesca Arcy presenting her poster at the PSUxLING conference

A graphic with a blue background. On the left, a white speech bubble contains the text "Follow us" in large blue letters and "Latin American &amp; Caribbean Studies" in smaller red letters below it. On the right, there are social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, each followed by its respective handle: "LACS\_newpaltz", "/LACS.SNP", and "@LACS\_newpaltz". At the bottom right is the New Paltz State University of New York logo.

**FOLLOW LACS ON:**  
**INSTAGRAM,**  
**FACEBOOK**  
**AND**  
**TWITTER**



# LACS CLASSES OFFERED IN SPRING 2019

LAM270	Introduction to Latin American Studies	César Barros Arteaga
LAM493	Human Rights in Latin America	Philip Mauceri
BLK205	The Black and Latino Experiences	Esther Val
BLK345	Black and Latino Leadership	Edward Lawson
BLK325	History of Slavery in the Americas	Cruz Caridad Bueno
ECO309	Economic Development of Latin America	Laura Ebert
ENG230	Women in Literature	Sarah Wyman
HIS278	Latin American History Since 1825	Christopher Albi
HIS377	History of Mexico	Christopher Albi
HIS393	Environmental History of Latin America	Christopher Albi
POR102	Elementary Portuguese 2	Luciana Damasceno Kreutzfeld
SED358	Education Across Borders	Susan Books
SOC362	Race, Class, and Gender	Carolyn Corrado
SOC375	Race, Crime and Punishment	Tyrell Connor
SOC431	Mass Media and Culture	Roberto Velez-Velez
SPA202	Intermediate Spanish 2	Javier Planxart Perez-Santalla
SPA301	Communication and Culture in Spanish	Luz Porras
SPA315	Spanish for Native Speakers	Deyanira Rojas-Sosa
SPA361	Communication and Writing in Spanish	Pablo Guerra Casado
SPA372	Culture of Latin America	César Barros Arteaga
SPA376	Survey of Latin American Literature	Ligia Aldana
SPA493	Spanish in the US	Deyanira Rojas-Sosa
THE323	World Drama 3	Martine Green-Rogers
THE327	Race Gender and Performance	Martine Green-Rogers
WOM393	Feminist Perspectives on Decolonization	Jessica Pabón

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