

LACS Annual Report

2022-23



EVENTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS,
COLLABORATIONS



Year In Review

Dear LACS Advisory Board Members, Affiliated Faculty, Students, and Friends:

As we begin a new academic year, I wanted to summarize LACS's events, accomplishments, and community collaborations during 2022-23. As Director since summer 2022, I gratefully acknowledge the dedication and conviviality of our previous director, Prof. Lena Burgos-Lafuente, who acquainted me with the details of operating such a robust Center and Program. Likewise, former Graduate Assistant Camilo Rubbini graciously guided our current (and fantastic) Graduate Assistant José Manuel Baeza Zúñiga. We are very lucky to have the administrative assistance of Lauren Donovan (from the Migration and Mobilities Hub). We also want to thank our longtime supporter, Amelio Sánchez, who funded the repainting of the revived Director's office.

LACS has long provided a stimulating and supportive community for faculty and graduate students, but increasing undergraduate engagement was one of my primary goals. I hosted a New Student Welcome Week mixer, which was a great success with 50+ undergraduates attending to meet and mingle. José and I also visited dozens of classes at the beginning of term to talk about LACS and its minor degree. The diversity and enthusiasm of our Latin American and Latinx undergrad population is wonderful to see, and their attendance at events like our monthly cafés and movie nights has been consistent.

We experimented with programmatic themes, with Fall 2022 focusing on "Afro-Latinidades" while Spring 2023 centered on "Food and Food Justice." Wonderful speakers on each theme joined us in person and online.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, we distributed a community poll about adding "Latinx" to LACS's name (2/3 of respondents were in favor), and held an accompanying community plática about terminology (Hispanic, Latino, Latinx/e) led by a panel of HLL graduate students. We also collaborated with Melville Library on a panel about the photoexhibit "Deported: A Family Divided." The \$2,500 Sánchez Scholarship was awarded to undergraduate Christopher Luna.

In the spring, we welcomed an Undergraduate Intern, Sheilly Martinez, who organized social events during the semester. LACS awarded three Graduate Research Fellowships for Summer 2023, which were funded in part by the \$1,750 we raised during Giving Day.

By the end of the academic year, LACS recruited 15 new minors. This is exciting growth, and we aim to keep increasing these numbers. I was also able to lift our annual operating budget back to the levels they were a decade ago, but strongly believe LACS deserves even more support from Stony Brook's administration. I will continue advocating for that, particularly as we approach our 30th anniversary of existing at--and enriching--this university.

Lori A. Flores, LACS Director



Highlights

LACS SCHOLAR TALKS

Saudi Garcia (The New School), “Unearthing Blackness: Race, Mining Toxicity and the Biogeopolitics of Health in the Dominican Republic”

Kaysha Corinealdi (Emerson College), “Panama in Black: Afro-Caribbean World Making in the Twentieth Century”

Lana Dee Povitz (Middlebury College), “A Taste of Power: What Can We Learn From the Food Activism of United Bronx Parents?”

Natasha Gordon-Chipembere, “The Legacy of Afrodescendants in Costa Rica”

Stony Brook Faculty:

Miguel Muñoz-Laboy (School of Social Welfare), “Influences of Masculinity and Context on the Severity of Substance Use and Mental Health for Latinx Men”

Nancy Hiemstra (WGSS), “Venezuelans in Neoliberal Ecuador and the Value of Migrant Illegality”

Cristina Khan (WGSS), “Theorizing Thickness: On Bodies and Capital”

Elizabeth Newman (History) and Ashley Black (CSU Stanislaus) “The Spanish-Aztec War: A Classroom Adventure in Five Acts”

GRADUATE STUDENT-LED SERIES

“Understanding Today’s Central America” by Zinnia Capó-Valdivia (History)

“Los caminos de la Ilustración en las Américas” by Jesús Jiménez Valdés, (Hispanic Languages & Literatures)

“Esta democracia ya no es democracia:” Protesta, Poder y Represión Estatal en Perú” by Jose Miguel Muñive (History)

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

“Celebrating Afro-Peruvian Artist Victoria Santa Cruz,” organized by José Manuel Baeza Zuñiga (PhD student, History)

Field trip to the Nuyorican Poets Café, organized by Sheilly Martinez (undergraduate intern)

Invited lecture and wine tasting led by Steve Velasquez, Curator, National Museum of American History (The Smithsonian), “The History and Future of Latinx Winemakers”

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Catering partnership with Home Sweet Home (Chilean-owned business, Oyster Bay) for monthly LACS Cafés

Flower partnership with the Long Island Farmworker Flower Cooperative (LIFWC) for Día de los Muertos (marigolds) and holiday market (poinsettias)

On campus:

Artist panel, “Dos Mundos” at the Staller Center and “Deported” Exhibit Panel at Melville Library, both moderated by LACS Director Lori Flores

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE....

We look forward to:

- Modernizing our film library (mostly VHS, some DVD) and making the collection more accessible to borrowers
- Updating and broadening our community internships for LACS Minors, and strengthening student-to-alumni connections
- Mounting a new gallery exhibit of LACS memorabilia to commemorate 30 years of existence
- Adding new members to the LACS Advisory Board