

LAGS Annual Report

2023-24



EVENTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS,
COLLABORATIONS

Our 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 the 2023-24 year. I want to start by thanking the outgoing Assistant to the Director, Nicolas Allen (PhD student, History), who was such a hard-working, good-natured, and community-oriented ally. Please extend a warm welcome to his successor and my new LACS partner, Beatriz Solla Vilas (PhD candidate, HLL). A longtime supporter of LACS's initiatives, Bea has hit the ground running. We are very lucky to have the continued administrative assistance of Lauren Donovan (Migration and Mobilities Hub) as well.

During the 2023-24 academic year, my goals were to increase the visibility of understudied groups of Latin American descent, and encourage cultural curiosity. To that end, LACS sponsored two new initiatives: a Portuguese book club (led by HLL Visiting Prof. Monica Panigassi Vicentini), and a "Sound Studies" workshop (led by Prof. of History Eric Zolov). It was so great to walk into our lounge and see the book club chatting over coffee and pastries on some days, and then large groups crammed on the couches and floors, eager to listen to historical bossa nova, jazz, and folk music on vinyl. We also sponsored two talks on the fascinating histories of Arab Latinos: "From Beirut to Santiago, Chile" in Fall 2023 and "Transnational Palestine" in Spring 2024.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, our \$2,500 Sánchez Award went to undergraduate Thaily Ribadeneira, a thoroughly impressive scholar of health science, Spanish, and chemistry. In December, we joined the rest of the University in honoring longtime LACS Advisory Board member Lynda Perdomo-Ayala, a charismatic powerhouse in the fight to support Latin American and Caribbean students and studies at Stony Brook.

In spring 2024 we awarded three PhD Summer Research Fellowships, funded in part by the money we raised during Giving Day. I curated a "30 Years of LACS" exhibit, now mounted in our Gallery, with the help of Kristen Nyitray and Lynn Toscano in Special Collections. We were thrilled to be featured on Stony Brook's community "Art Crawl" during our opening reception. I also organized an "Oral History Night" of former LACS directors and alumni to record and edit a short film about the Center/Program's place at the University.

As we say goodbye to our graduating LACS minors, we look forward to recruiting new ones. We're also excited to highlight our newly-affiliated faculty across a variety of departments. LACS is entering our 30th year in a pivotal time in national and world politics. The Center's anniversary agenda will be to illuminate and support the needs of undocumented/immigrant students on campus, and continue hosting events that reiterate how important Latin America and the Caribbean have been, and continue to be, in our world.

Lori A. Flores, LACS Director



LACS SCHOLAR TALKS/PANELS

“From Beirut to Santiago: The Arab Diaspora in Chile During the 20th Century” (Francisco Rodriguez, History PhD student)

“Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Military Coups In Chile & Uruguay” (facilitated by Prof. Eric Zolov, History)
Panelists: Vania Markarian, Alfonso Salgado, José Manuel Baeza, Nicolás Barrientos, Samuel Espíndola

“Contesting Indigeneity in Colonial Cuba” (Prof. John Paul Paniagua, Cal Poly)

“Best Practices for Gathering Latinx Oral Histories” (Prof. Sandra Enriquez, University of Missouri-Kansas City)

“Building Amphibious Homes: Free People of Color and Colombia’s Magdalena River-World” (Valeria Mantilla-Morales, now SBU Assistant Professor of History)

“Vissungo Culture: Surviving Slavery and its Afterlives in the Diamond Mines of Brazil” (Prof. Victoria Broadus, Oberlin)

“Ethical Relationship-Building with Indigenous Populations and Climate Change” (Prof. Yuria Celidwen, UC Berkeley)

GRADUATE STUDENT-LED SERIES

“Inclusive Spanish: A Language Workshop” by Maria Medin-Doce and Beatriz Solla Vilas (Hispanic Languages/Literatures)

“North America at the Brink: Challenges for Mexico and the United States In a Crucial Electoral Year” by Jacques Coste Cacho (History)

“Crafting Girlhood” by Alexandra Velez (History)

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

LACS Oral History Night, filmed in conjunction with HIS 557 seminar “Oral History: Ethics and Craft”

Student oral historians: Nicolas Allen, Megan Knighton, Christopher Pascale, Sarah Ahmedani, Ian Abraham, Francisco Rodriguez, Matt Fiorillo, Lauren Johnson, Jedial Peterson, Taylor Bolesta

Latebreaking Book Talk, *Transnational Palestine: Migration and the Right of Return Before 1948* (Dr. Nadim Bawalsa)

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Flower partnership with the Long Island Farmworker Flower Cooperative (LIFWC) for Día de los Muertos (marigolds, mums)

Long Island Museum, *SOMOS: We Are Latinx Artists From Long Island* Private Tour

Participation in Communiversity Day (led by Romyna Ubeda-Ferreira, LACS Undergraduate Intern)

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE....

Our goals for this academic year include:

- Instituting new student awards for undocumented undergraduate and graduate students
- Modernizing our book and media libraries and making the collection more accessible to borrowers
- Creating new community partnerships with Long Island organizations for internships and event collaborations
- Creating a short film about LACS’s past, present, and future from oral histories with former Directors and alumni