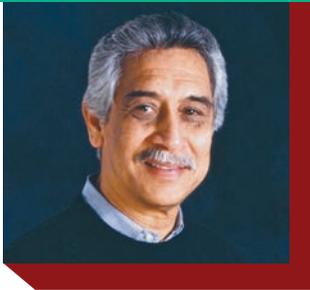


FROM THE DIRECTOR



Tatcho Mindiola, Ph.D.

In this issue of *Noticias*, we feature several of the faculty who hold tenured or tenure-track positions here at the University of Houston-Central campus. In reading their articles, it is possible to learn

their areas of expertise and also their backgrounds. They are a very talented and engaging group who are dedicated to their chosen professions and fields of study. The University as well as CMAS is fortunate to have them on campus.

Featuring them provides me an opportunity to delve into the significant role that Hispanic professors play throughout the U.S., more specifically, the significant role that Mexican American professors in the Southwest have when it relates to the Mexican American student population.

It takes a great deal of time and effort to obtain the credentials to become a professor. Usually, it takes a Ph.D. in a particular discipline, but not always. People can become professors based upon their accomplishments in the world outside of academia. This may include writing literary work or producing

art or music that receive high acclaim. Or even being an innovative entrepreneur. But, for the most part, a person must earn a Ph.D. to compete for a position at any university. Most of the Mexican American professors at the University of Houston central campus have a Ph.D. in the Humanities, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, or Education. Examples of their expertise include art, English, history, psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, Spanish, and education. There are also two Mexican American faculty in the UH Law School. There are very few Mexican Americans, if any, in areas like Engineering, Business, or the physical sciences, primarily because there are very few of us who have earned a Ph.D. in these areas.

Mexican American professors play an important part in integrating Mexican American-related courses and, therefore, our existence into institutions of higher education. Prior to the 1970s, there were not any courses taught at the university level that dealt with Mexican American history, art, psychology, literature, political behavior, culture, social issues, etc. This began to change in the 1960s when Mexican Americans began enrolling in institutions of higher education in large numbers. Many of them went on to pursue a Ph.D. By the end of the seventies, they constituted the first large intellectual class of Mexican Americans in the history of the U.S. Many of these scholars created and taught the initial Mexican American-related courses and were

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Juan Tello Comes Full Circle

As a busy analyst and world-traveler named a Principal in Deloitte Consulting's Technology practice only two years ago, Juan Tello could easily qualify as one of the Center's most inspiring success stories. That Tello chooses to spend valuable time both mentoring students and fundraising for the CMAS only adds to the amazing professional portrait of this young man who also coaches soccer and participates as a community volunteer for other Houston-area not-for-profit organizations.

Tello's relationship with CMAS extends back to his time at Westbury High School. Even though Tello's school didn't participate in the CMAS Career Days hosted at UH, he attended with another young friend. This brief exposure to practical knowledge about attending college also enabled Tello to meet Mr. Eddie Elizondo, the then Coordinator of what later became the CMAS Academic Achievers Program. This exposure to the CMAS programs and resources enabled Tello to later use the Center's conference room to meet other students and study



Juan Tello

even though, as a UH freshman in 1995, he was not yet an official member of the Academic Achievers program. It was this larger CMAS "family" which gave Tello a sense of belonging both at UH and in the Houston community. He relished his association with other students who were determined to achieve standards of excellence to obtain a college degree.

In Tello's second year at UH, he completed the Academic Achievers' application. Upon acceptance to the program, he immediately noticed benefits from the academic tutoring and other program-sponsored workshops. Says Tello: "There was so much more than the financial help that changed my life. I learned those qualities I would need to be successful in the corporate world: determination, leadership, dedication, and organization."

One of the direct benefits of Tello's hard work and adherence to those principles of determination and leadership is the fact that when he was named a Principal in his firm, he was one of the youngest to

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) at the University of Houston was established in 1972 as an interdisciplinary academic program encompassing the liberal arts, education, and social sciences focusing on the Mexican American and broader Latino experience in the U.S. Its mission is to advance knowledge, promote critical thinking, and foster the value of service to the community. This involves designing a broad spectrum of public and scholarly programs. Located within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, CMAS has evolved into an academic unit with several major components: teaching, research and publications, recruitment and retention, leadership training, academic advising, and community service.

JASON P. CASELLAS

Latino Representation in U.S. Politics

While most of the research in Latino politics is centered on the study of Latino political behavior, my research has focused on the examination of the origins, determinants, and implications of Latinos and other minorities serving in legislative institutions.

My research agenda seeks to ascertain under what conditions Latinos are elected to state legislatures and Congress, and the resulting policy implications of the growing numbers of Latinos in the U.S. with the presence of Latino legislators. I believe that the study of Latino politics is important because how well the nation's largest minority group is represented in our governing institutions is critical to our social, political, and economic advancement.

My first book, *Latino Representation in State Houses and Congress*, argues that Latino representation is dependent on intra-ethnic diversity, distinct political backgrounds, and nascent political experience. Its central argument is that Latino representation in U.S. legislative institutions is shaped not only by demographics but also by legislative institutional design and other features of the electoral system and the increasing mainstreaming of Latinos in American society. The election of Latino legislators in the United States is thus complex and varied.

In particular, I find that Latino candidates benefit from higher percentages of Latino citizens in a state combined with higher percentages of turnover in the state legislature, as well as the presence of "citizen" legislatures (which meet part-time and have part-time staff). Highly professionalized legislatures (which meet full-time and have full-time staff) are not conducive to the election of Latino candidates. Second, Latino candidates can and often do win in non-Latino majority districts, and strategically adapt their campaigns according to district characteristics. Most Latino representatives also verbalize a sense of linked fate with other Latino politicians and say that being Latino helps them represent their Latino constituents.

My results also suggest that roll call voting behavior does indeed vary among state legislatures, as well as members of Congress. Because of their larger more heterogeneous constituencies, state senators tend to be less responsive to the percentage of Latinos or African-Americans in their districts. Lower chamber legislators, however, are more likely to be liberal as the percentage of Latinos and African-Americans increases. One thing that is common to the Colorado and Texas legislatures and Congress is that the political party of the member is consistently significant, meaning that Democratic members are more likely to have liberal ideology scores and Republican members are more likely to have conservative ideology scores, as partisan polarization has increased in recent years.

I am also working on a series of papers that assess congressional responsiveness to Latinos on education policy by examining major congressional key votes since 1968, including No Child Left Behind and other major amendments dealing with Latino educational policy. This



Jason P. Casellas, Ph.D.

project is a logical outgrowth of my first book, because it more narrowly focuses on the public policy issue Latinos say they care the most about. I contend that the 1960s and early 1970s marked a departure from traditional notions of American liberalism's emphasis on individualism. In particular, desegregation and a focus on racial and ethnic groups have yielded to an understanding of measuring individual achievement outcomes.

Another new collaborative project I am working on will investigate how attitudes towards representation vary across racial and ethnic groups within the U.S. Traditionally, political scientists have thought about representation in various ways. For instance, descriptive representation occurs when a member shares the same race, ethnicity, or gender as an individual. Substantive representation refers to the actions of the legislator on behalf of constituents. The purpose of a representative is to act as a liaison between individuals and institutions within government. Members must navigate the legislative process while advocating on their constituents' behalf in addition to cultivating constituencies who will support them in re-election.

This project examines what types of behavior are important to the people who the elected members represent. In particular, this study is centered upon minority attitudes and how they may differ from the Anglo majority population. This angle of representation is important given the history of discrimination and exclusion of minorities in the political process. How individuals view their relationship with representatives and the degree to which they believe their policy interests are represented are therefore critical for a truly representative democracy.

I have also worked on several collaborative projects—one examining congressional roll call votes on immigration bills from the Spring 2006 period, and another which examines the extent to which Latino voters based their vote choices in the 2012 election on candidate traits. Immigration policy will continue to be a major concern for policy-makers, especially as Congress reconvenes this Spring. While immigration has not traditionally been a partisan issue, it has increasingly become that way. Since Latino voters often base their votes on candidate traits with compassion being a key concern, how Republicans adapt to their party's perceived weakness on this trait will prove to be a ripe area for future research.

In conclusion, my research seeks to incorporate what we know about legislative politics, state and local politics, Latino politics, and public policy to address the representation of the nation's largest minority group. My first book provides a systematic, comprehensive, and theoretically informed account of the determinants of the election of Latinos to state legislatures and Congress. It also specifies that we must look beyond simple demographics. I continue to be interested in how America's largest minority group is faring in our representative democracy.

CAROLINA A. JIMENEZ

Counseling Latino and First Generation Students

As a native Houstonian, I was on the path to the University of Houston as an obvious choice for college. I remember being recruited to attend UH as a 17-year-old high school senior; half of my life later, I remain at my alma mater as a Ph.D. on the counseling staff.

My parents were proud that I was the first person in both of their extended families to obtain bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. But the journey towards the Ph.D. was not easy. As a first-generation college student, I had to learn to navigate the many intricacies of higher education as I went along. I quickly realized the importance of a support system to assist me in coping with the various demands of academia. Many challenges stemmed from my differences. I remember being referred to as "the Mexican girl" during my master's program, when I was the only Latina in a class of 30 students. I was also the only "person of color" in my doctoral cohort, which provided various opportunities for discouragement, growth, and self-reflection. These factors made a difficult path more challenging and complex. Nevertheless, my desire to assist others who might share some of my experiences lead me to specialize in counseling first-generation college students.

My interest in counseling was sparked as an undergraduate research assistant for a study investigating domestic partner violence. Subsequently, my master's level research led me to focus on diversity and multiculturalism through an analysis of the college's adaptation to historically underrepresented international students.

Later I studied predictors of depression among Mexican and Central American immigrants. My doctoral dissertation examined predictors of well-being and depression among Latino college students at the UH. The common denominator in these studies' findings was the importance of having the right resources and available social support. My current work as multicultural coordinator and staff psychologist at the University of Houston's Counseling and Psychological Services provides the opportunity to develop services aimed at increasing the resources and support necessary to assist students in graduating.

As part of this effort, we are excited to be able to offer individual, couple, group counseling, and other psychological services in both English and Spanish. My hope is that by assisting Latino, first-generation, and other underrepresented students in graduating, they can in turn have a positive impact in the greater community and serve as role models and mentors for younger students.

Many first-generation students experience challenges in the pursuit of a college education. While they also tend to have unique strengths, many of them may have to learn to adjust to the academic culture, while maintaining the culture and traditions of their family of origin. They may require support in balancing the demands of academic, personal, and family responsibilities. They tend to



Carolina A. Jimenez, Ph.D.

experience doubts about whether or not they will graduate or need assistance in learning how to talk to their families about college. I am committed to supporting and nurturing students' intellectual, social, personal, and professional development by maximizing their use of available resources within the university and in the greater community.

I also coordinate outreach events, train other clinicians, and develop support programming. Our past programming has included a support group and workshop series for first-generation college students, and a film screening depicting the experiences of first-generation students. Current projects include the "First in the Family" stories, a forum to

recognize the strength, determination, and support needed to be the first in the family to graduate from college. Students are encouraged to share their experiences in a written format to encourage, inspire, and motivate others.

I believe there is something powerful when a student finds his or her voice on the written page, and I want to let students know that their voices, their experiences, their lives, and their education matter. I feel privileged to be in a position that allows me to work with students as they voice their concerns, goals, and hopes and engage in a process of growth and self-discovery. All these projects are led with one goal in mind: to create a support system for students as they continue their educational paths.

As part of my own self-discovery process, I am excited to start a project to write my memoir during my time as a doctoral student. As I reflect on being the only Latina in my doctoral cohort, I realize I am often the only Latina in professional meetings. Every time I look around and see that I am "the only one," I have a renewed sense of commitment to my work in assisting other Latino and first-generation students in graduating.

I remember how I was tempted to discontinue my doctoral studies, but every time I would hear the words of Dr. Tatcho Mindiola echo in my head "There are not enough Latino Professors." Dr. Mindiola was correct, 17 years after I first heard those words, there are still not enough Latino Ph.D.s. Latinos are projected to account for 25 percent of the United States population by the year 2050; however only 10 percent of them currently possess a college degree.

We have a responsibility to promote higher education among Latinos and provide them with the necessary resources and support to graduate. Assisting Latino students at the undergraduate level is crucial in order to promote their interest in graduate and professional programs. I end this note with the hope that one day I will not be the only Latina at professional meetings, with the hope that one day there will be "enough" Latino doctors and professionals.

ARTURO SANTANA

Researching and Teaching the News

I'm a former newspaper journalist who spent 14 years as a reporter and editor in newsrooms across the country, including the San Antonio Express-News, The Seattle Times, and The Washington Post. I've been the recipient of journalism awards from the D.C. Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalists, and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Coming from a newspaper background, much of my research examines the convergence taking place as print newspapers continue their migration online and what it means to the newspaper industry in general.

A native of Corpus Christi, Texas, I moved to Houston in 2012 to accept my current position as an assistant professor of communication at the Jack J. Valenti School of Communication to help train the next generation of reporters and to conduct research on the changing landscape of journalism.

In 1993, I received my B.A. from The University of Texas at Austin. I received my M.S. in 1996 from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in New York, and in 2012, I received my doctorate in Communication and Society from the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication in Eugene, Oregon.

I'm happy to be back in Texas at the University of Houston, one of the three Carnegie-designated Tier One research universities in the state, where student diversity is greatly valued. As the country's fourth largest city, Houston is also home to a vibrant media market, which makes for wonderful opportunities for students entering the field of journalism.

While in Oregon, I took the opportunity to reach out to the small but growing Latino population by teaching English as a second language to mostly immigrant Spanish speakers at the local community college. I also volunteered at Centro Latino Americano, a private non-profit organization serving Latino families in Lane County, Oregon.

While a doctoral student in Oregon, I also followed a small group of Latino immigrants as they created a new bilingual newspaper. The research paper that followed, "Experiment and Adapt: The Mantra of Survival for One Start-Up Latino Newspaper," was presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) annual conference in Denver in August 2010.

I have also looked at newspapers from a historical perspective. In March 2010, I presented a paper, entitled "Speaking for La Raza: A Reconceptualized Historiography of the U.S. Spanish-Language Press: 1808–1958," at the AEJMC Midwinter Conference in Norman, Oklahoma. In 2013, I published a book chapter entitled, "The New Role of Bilingual Newspapers in Establishing and Maintaining Social Group Identities Among Latinos," in *Identity and Communication: New Agendas in Communication*.

Much of my other research examines the vital issues of the day concerning the evolution of journalism. I am particularly interested in online anonymity, interactive/participatory media as well as news industry trends, including professional roles and the institutional structure of media. As a doctoral student, two of my research papers were awarded top student paper awards at the AEJMC annual conference.



Arturo Santana, Ph.D.

One of my first published papers looked at the extent to which reader comments were affecting journalism. The paper, "Online Readers' Comments Represent New Opinion Pipeline," concluded that newspaper journalists were finding the commenting forums of online newspapers somewhat helpful in making connections with readers.

Other research has looked at the differences between newsreaders of the print newspaper and the online newspaper. The research paper, "Print Readers Recall More Than Do Online Readers," concluded that online newsreaders are apt to remember less news than print newsreaders because they generally are not being told what to read via story placement and prominence—an

enduring feature of the print product.

My doctoral dissertation, "Civility, Anonymity and the Breakdown of a New Public Sphere," examined the extent to which people are more apt to be uncivil in their online comments when they are anonymous. I also found that news topic matters when accounting for civility. Examining comments following news stories about a racialized topic – Latino immigration – and a non-racialized topic, I found that people are more apt to be uncivil in their comments when the topic revolved around race and ethnicity.

My research has found that newspapers, which are struggling with weighing the benefits of free expression versus rampant incivility in their commenting forums, are choosing to do away with anonymous commenting. My research in this area has received extensive media coverage, which included The New Yorker and the Associated Press.

My current research examines the extent to which newspaper reporters are using social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, as a new channel of information for doing their jobs. I am also collaborating with a colleague on research that looks at Facebook as a campaign tool for politicians.

I am also currently engaged in research that is looking at the motivations and expectations of students in journalism and mass communication around the country and why they are choosing to enter the communications field despite modest job prospects in a rapidly changing media landscape.

With the help of research assistants, I'm also currently gathering data that will look at how newspapers present the news in three different media—print, online, and smart phone. Anecdotal evidence thus far shows that the way newspapers present their same-day news varies widely by media—an indication that the agenda-setting role of newspapers is changing in a new digital era.

At the School of Communication, I teach a variety of courses in journalism, social issues in journalism, and participatory media. The two graduate level courses I teach revolve around Web 2.0 theories and issues and social media effects.

In the summer 2013, I was awarded a Scripps Howard Foundation/AEJMC Social Media Fellowship at C-SPAN in Washington, D.C., in which I studied C-SPAN's use of social media.

CHRISTINA SISK

From the Border Region to the Borders of Research and Teaching

My research straddles disciplinary borders much like my identity does. I am a mixed ethnicity/race Mexican American whose first language was technically English but who had to relearn English in my elementary school's ESL program. Growing up in El Paso, the crisscrossing of borders was a normal part of my family life as we celebrated birthdays and holidays or just went shopping in Ciudad Juárez. Once in graduate school, I began to think about how my family fit or did not fit into what I was reading in the academic literature.

My mother's family had made their way from Mexico City to Ciudad Juárez. My mother later came to the United States with my aunt and traveled to California and Illinois to work before settling in El Paso. Despite living the majority of their lives in the United States, my mother and my aunt have never lost touch with our family in Ciudad Juárez and in Guadalajara.

I began to think of the role of emigration within the sending communities in Mexico, and that led to my research for my dissertation. As a scholar, I use the social sciences as a tool to read literature, film, and music, but I also study the boundaries between Mexican and Mexican American cultural studies. My goal is not to be classified as a specialist in one of these areas but both at once.

My first major publication was *Mexico, Nation in Transit: Contemporary Representations of Mexican Migration to the United States*, which was published by the University of Arizona Press (hardcover in 2011 and paperback in 2013). In my book, I explore the ways that migration, as represented within a variety of cultural production methods, affects Mexicans living in Mexico and the United States.

My book traces a path from Mexico to the United States analyzing Mexican film, literatura de la frontera (literature about the border), texts by migrants and their children, and Hollywood films made by Mexican directors. As a response to academic discussion about post nationalism, I argue that Mexican national identity is thriving transnationally and that it functions within global processes. Although, some see global processes undoing national structures and national identity, I see these processes working in conjunction and not in opposition.

In 2010, I signed the contract for the publication of my book with the University of Arizona Press. It happened just before the anti-immigrant bill was passed in Arizona. Its passage added an unexpected meaning behind the publication of my book. It also made me reconsider the future direction of my research. Prior to this, I was planning to work on several projects that were only tangentially related to migration, but I realized that I needed to continue with this line of research. I am committed to continuing my research on migration, because I see the urgency of changing the mainstream perceptions about the role of immigrants in U.S. society.

I am currently working on a book project that I am calling, *The*



Christina L. Sisk, Ph.D.

Criminal Alien. This project starts by exposing the ways that mainstream U.S. media depicts migrants and drug traffickers to argue that these representations are used to justify the current segregation of minorities. The rest of the project explores the ways that Mexicans contest and denounce the segregation caused by U.S. immigration laws and the War on Drugs. While I am principally analyzing Mexican and Mexican American cultural production, my project engages in a dialogue with African American studies because the current system of segregation is a transformation of the Jim Crow laws. The main texts that I analyze, mostly films, all point to the states' complicit role in the globalization of the black market of drugs and the unnecessary detention of minority subjects.

In this project, I engage in the academic discussions surrounding Mexican American heroes and bandits, narco-trafficking in Mexico, and undocumented Mexican migration to the United States. My aim is to demonstrate that the current concepts of criminality are social and legal constructions that must be questioned.

While doing the research for my book project, I started following various immigrant activist groups online. What caught my attention was their use of the Internet and the arts to capture the attention of supporters and to widely distribute petitions. The film director Alex Rivera, for example, has been actively involved in support of immigrant rights by making music videos that feature undocumented immigrants. He has teamed up with Mano Chao, La Santa Cecilia, and Aloe Blacc to create music videos. The collaborations are just one example of how the arts, immigrant activism, and the Internet are coming together to support a movement that goes beyond social media in an attempt to change the political outlook in the United States. This research may come together in the future as an article or even as part of a larger book project.

Migration is not just a mere research topic for me, it is an important issue that affects the people around me, including my students. Before coming to the University of Houston, I wanted to teach in a public institution, especially one that reflected the diversity of its community. As I searched for an academic job, I wanted to work with students who were more like me and to help them navigate university life as my professors had done for me. Working at the University of Houston is very gratifying. While I am able to connect with Mexican American students as I expected, I also find it very rewarding to work with first and second generation immigrant students from across the globe. My students relate to the materials that I teach in a very personal level, and they use their lived experiences to engage in the discussion and apply that knowledge to the world around them. Teaching this diverse group of students has enriched my research in more ways than I ever imagined.

ELIZABETH FARFAN-SANTOS

Bodies of Exclusion in Brazil and the United States

Over the past decade, my research has focused on identity formation and the anthropology of public policy, particularly the politics and lived experiences of racial exclusion. In 2005, I obtained my B.A. in sociocultural anthropology and international studies from Trinity University in San Antonio. Subsequently, I completed an M.A. and Ph.D. in Medical Anthropology from the University of California Berkeley. As a medical anthropologist and critical race scholar, my theoretical engagements are situated in theories of the body, including race and racism as embodied experiences, and social and individual narratives of health and illness. Although my work is theoretically grounded, it is ethnographically driven and committed to politically engaged scholarship.

For the past eight years, I have conducted research on the political recognition and distribution of land rights for rural, black communities in Brazil. My book manuscript, *Black Bodies, Black Rights: Quilombola Identity and Blackness in Brazil*, is currently under contract with the University of Texas Press. The book examines the political recognition of thousands of black Brazilians as the modern descendants of quilombos (historically known as runaway slave communities) under a provision in the Brazilian constitution. The quilombo provision has been hailed as a success for black rights, particularly the right to cultural difference and access to land ownership; however, rights for quilombo descendants are highly controversial and in many cases have led to violent social conflicts. This book describes the socio-cultural process of becoming a “quilombo descendant community”—a political process of identity re-formation and racial affirmation. I have scrutinized the intellectual work of Brazilian anthropologists to the extent that they help re-define the political boundaries of black identity for the quilombola and for the state. This book presents the individual narratives of one quilombola community in their struggle for rights; it also seeks to explain how a well-intentioned constitutional provision resulted in violent disagreement, and to a new quilombola resistance movement that uses the language of racial justice and affirmative action to demand land rights.

Recently, I have built upon my extensive race and policy work in Brazil, focusing on similar theoretical questions of identity, representation, and rights discourse, to begin a new ethnographic study on the right to health care in the United States. The expansion of access to affordable health care has been a highly emotional issue since the Affordable Care Act was first implemented. Discussions about access to affordable care, however, have turned into heated debates about the right to health and who has the right to a healthy life in the United States. As a Visiting Scholar in the Center for Mexican American Studies, I will be conducting research on the particular situation of Mexican American, mixed-status families, in Texas as they work to navigate health care reform vis-à-vis the legal status and exclusion of some of their family members.



Elizabeth Farfan-Santos, Ph.D.

According to Enroll America, over 16 million people live in families in which some are undocumented, others are legal residents and some are citizens. I have found that these mixed families have avoided signing up for the Affordable Care Act out of fear of exposure and deportation. The Affordable Care Act has become a real and immediate reminder of their status of exclusion—even in their right to a healthy life. My project provides a critical ethnographic perspective on the ethics and bio politics of U.S. health care reform—where mixed-status families are forced to make sense of the inclusion of their “citizen bodies” as part of a healthy nation and the simultaneous exclusion of the “foreign bodies” of their loved ones.

I believe that we are in a contemporary socio-political moment where the Latino community is being promoted as the impending ethnic majority, becoming a focus group of government politics, media spectacle, and market interests. However, the exclusion of undocumented immigrants within comprehensive healthcare reform illustrates a persistent misrecognition of the extant reality of many Latino families in the U.S. Although I am generally supportive of health care reform, it is important to think critically about how this reform is unfolding and what it means for different members of society, especially those who are socially and politically “outsiders” and “illegals.”

The Affordable Care Act has been marketed through a campaign of extending access to health care as a matter of constructing a healthy nation and re-imagining health care as a human right. The brazen exclusion of millions of undocumented immigrants (who I might add, are legally required to have car insurance, yet legally opted out of health insurance), and the alienation of mixed-status families, is a contradiction that should not be ignored. Current health care reform in the United States provides an important opportunity for thinking about transforming political ideologies and social beliefs regarding “universal health care” and “health care as a human right” in a contemporary neo-liberal state.

Committed to understanding the social and political positioning of historically excluded racial and ethnic groups within transforming state policies and ideologies, my research reflects my own subject position as a Chicana raised in Texas within a Mexican immigrant family. With a dual outsider-insider’s grasp of the nation and its constant state of changing self-definition, I understand race as both an embodied social and cultural reality and as a shifting category dependent on history, recovered memories, and political transitions. As a Visiting Scholar with CMAS, I plan to go beyond the limits of policy analysis to reveal the importance of access to health care for millions of Mexicanos in the U.S. I will highlight how easily the nation excludes and dehumanizes certain bodies, already defined as “illegal,” as a matter of state policy and national “well-being.”

JULIAN OLIVARES Pursuing Scholarship

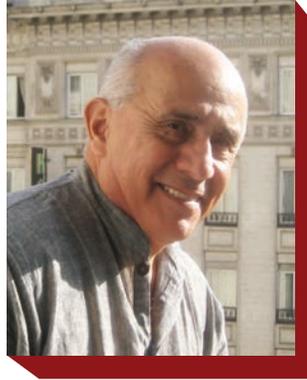
I was born in San Antonio, Texas. My father, Julián Olivares Duque, was born in Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and raised in Río Grande City. The first Olivares came to the region in the 18th century, from Olivares, a village near Sevilla, thus he was called José Antonio de Olivares. My mother, Benicia Carrillo Vidal, grew up on a farm in Floresville, Texas. Her antecedents came from the Canary Islands, who colonized San Antonio de Béxar in 1716. In 1718 padre Antonio de Olivares (my brother insisted that he was a relative) founded the mission San Antonio de Valero, that later became known as “The Alamo” (under the stewardship of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas). Thus, whenever a “fellow Texan” asks me when my family came to this country, I reply: “Before it was a country.”

After high school, I joined the Navy, attaining the rate of Hospitalman Second Class. Later, after various stints in junior colleges, and dropping out of a minority-resistant college, I graduated from California State, Los Angeles, 1968, with majors in Spanish and Latin American Studies. I lived in Los Angeles and experienced the Watts Riots and the East LA High School walkouts, while I worked at night at an industrial medical clinic, on the edge of Watts and attended college full-time. Although a Vietnam era veteran, I protested the Vietnam war.

While in Los Angeles, I asked my Dad to send me an application to work at the newly-completed HemisFair in San Antonio. I filled it out and returned it to him. He took it to the HemisFair personnel office, and a lady told him: “We’re going to give him a good job when he gets here.” When I got there, I was given blue overalls, a rake, a sack, and a stick with a nail at the tip for stabbing trash. I had become a dive-bomber! I looked me over in my accoutrement, and said to myself: “Bienvenido a Texas.” As a college graduate, however, I quickly became the crew chief of a group of *indocumentados*. I recall that my first paltry paycheck had an attached stub that said: “You have the right to work.”

A scholarship, or financial aid, would have made life easier for me during my undergrad and postgraduate studies, but there were none back then for Chicanos and other minorities. At the University of Texas, I concentrated on Spanish Renaissance and Baroque literature. Then, I received a Ford Foundation Dissertation Grant for Minorities and completed the dissertation on *The Love Poetry of Francisco de Quevedo*, which, with a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies, I published with Cambridge University Press in 1984.

I came to the University of Houston in 1981 and worked with Arte Público Press for 12 years, where I was the editor of *Revista Chicano-Riqueña*, later called *The Americas Review*. I published various editions of Chicano authors and literature, particularly *Tomás Rivera: The*



Julian Olivares, Ph.D.

Complete Works, and *Cuentos Hispanos de los Estados Unidos*. I left Arte Público to return to Spanish literature, but I remain committed to Chicano literature and enjoy teaching it. I also collect Chicano art and photography.

With the aid of a Ford Foundation Post-Doctoral Grant for Minorities and a National Endowment Award in Spanish paleography at the Newberry Library, I began research on Spanish women’s poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, and in Spanish convents. I enjoy my conversations with the cloistered nuns through the locutorio. This is a recess in the wall that has a double set of bars, through which

one glimpses darkly the figure of a nun. On the side of the *locutorio* is a *torno*, which is like a large lazy susan. One puts an object—fruit, lace, letters, at times even a baby—in the *torno* and gives it a twirl, and the nun removes it on the other side; and she does likewise. This is how I received manuscripts. The outcome of my research was a critical anthology: *Tras el espejo la musa escribe: Lírica femenina de los Siglos de Oro* (Behind the Mirror the Muse Writes: Women’s Lyric of the Golden Age). This book provided a new area of scholarship, such that there are now articles, dissertations, conferences, and books on the anthologized female poets.

I have continued my textual scholarship with the aid of a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, a critical edition of María de Zayas y Sotomayor (1590-ca. 1650), *Novelas Amorous y Ejemplares* (Amorous and Exemplary Novellas), containing 10 narratives within a Boccaccian frame. Zayas, a protofeminist, was the first Spanish female author of fiction. I am now working on her sequel, *Desengaños Amorous* (Amorous Disillusions). I also teach Golden Age literature, including the women’s literature of the period.

I also research and teach the Spanish Civil War. My latest publication was an edition and study of a testimonial by a Spanish Civil War veteran, *Huyendo del fascismo* (Fleeing from Fascism), by Juan Jesús González Ruiz. He recounts the fascist siege of Barcelona, the perilous odyssey of 500,000 refugees from Catalonia to the French frontier, and his incarceration with other Republicans in the French concentration camp in Argelès-sur-Mer, from which he escaped, and soon after began writing his testimonial. Two years ago, with his consent, I donated the manuscript to the Spanish Civil War Archives at the Biblioteca de Catalunya.

In the last five years, I have published four books. I remain committed to scholarship and research. This is in part, why I applaud the scholarships and financial aid given to Chicanos and other Latinos by the Center for Mexican American Studies.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS - UH Program Update

The Academic Achievers Program at UH graduated 11 students in the spring 2014 semester. These proud students and their majors follow: Mandy Acevedo in Psychology, Karen Calderon in Psychology, Hannah Do in Biology, Julia Fernandez Del Valle in Chemical Engineering, Roberto Paulin in Electrical Engineering, Marisol Bustamante in Biology, Kimberly Do in Chemical Engineering, Tzaddi Garcia in Human Development and Family Studies, Ashley Lara in Biology, Brenda Rojo in Management and Entrepreneurship, and Sergio Silva in Construction Management Technology.

The spring 2014 semester was an overall success with the average GPA for the program at 3.1 and with 28 AA-UH students earning a place on the "Dean's List." These academically high ranking students were: Itzel Avila, Melissa Barron, Karen Bravo, Hadill Calderon, Johan Casella, David Cervantes, Kimberly Do, Diana Estrada, Nery Gamez, Anisleidy Garcia, Myrna Garcia, Cristian Gonzalez, Iliana Gonzalez, Karina Hernandez, Maria E. Hernandez, Ashley Lara, Maria Lugo, Marcia Martinez, Alberto Pena, Jaira Pereznegron, Mayela Rodriguez, Melvin Rodriguez, Bryan Salazar, Sergio Silva, Jesus Trevino, Cynthia Vasquez, Jennifer Velasquez, and Jessica Varela.

The ongoing work of AA-UH resulted in 23 new students chosen through a competitive selection process for the current fall semester. Of these, 18 are freshmen. This brings the total AA membership to 86. All the new students and their parents participated in the New Member Orientation sessions on July 25, 2014.

Two different summer 2014 programs were attended by AA-UH students. Specifically, Mario Cisneros, a sophomore in Mechanical Engineering, and Jorge River, a junior in Electrical Engineering, attended the 2014 NASA Summer Intern Program at the Johnson Space Center. This program offers an opportunity for undergraduate students to work with an assigned NASA mentor for 10 weeks. To his credit, Jorge Rivera received the Outstanding Intern Award and was the only intern chosen for this honor.

The second summer program was the Fifth Annual Harvard Latino Leadership Initiative held at Texas A&M International University in Laredo, Texas in the second week of June. Four AA-UH students participated in this program, which gives a yearly total of 35 rising college seniors the opportunity to learn and enhance leadership developmental skills. Workshops are taught by celebrated Harvard, MIT, and Georgetown faculty such as Dr. Marshall Ganz, Ms. Allison Shapira, and Dr. Andy Zelleka. The four UH students participating in the 2014 summer sessions were Iliana Gonzalez, Karina Hernandez, Isidro Melendez, and Cynthia Vasquez.

In addition to all the regular program activities of tutoring, meetings, and other instructional sessions, the AA-UH students participated in two jobsite visits, one per semester. In the fall 2013 semester, the students visited Trendsetter Engineering, and in the spring 2014 semester, the students visited CITGO Petroleum.



Suzanne Foxworth, George Salazar, Jorge Rivera and Diego Rodriguez



Isidro Melendez, Cynthia Vasquez, special guest speaker, Mr. George P. Bush, Karina Hernandez, Iliana Gonzales, and Andrea Beattie



Isidro Melendez, Rebeca Trevino, Karina Hernandez, Andrea Beattie, Cynthia Vasquez and Iliana Gonzalez. Picture taken during the Closing ceremony for the Latino Leadership Program.



Mario Cisneros-AAP UH

ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS PROGRAM - AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL

Program Update

This past summer brought a flurry of activity for the 34 students at Austin High School who had been chosen for the CMAS Academic Achievers Program. These students spent the month of June involved in both academic and skills workshops and training, augmented by leadership and social mentoring.

The summer session began on June 2nd. Included in this year's activities was a Reading Club which read and discussed four books. This club was facilitated by AAP mentors. In addition, Ms. Sandra Ontiveros taught a class in creative writing which presented the steps of invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.

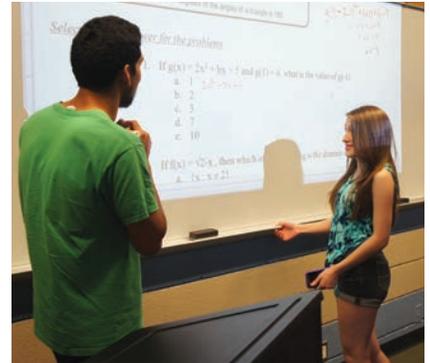
The students also participated in an SAT math preparation class taught by Mr. David Cervantes. Both practice activities and projects helped the students develop critical mathematical skills necessary for success on the SAT.

UH Counseling and Psychological Services presented three

workshops on the following topics: Dating 101, Consent is Sexy, and Conflict Management. The topic of motivation was addressed through presentations by former AAP students who have graduated from the University of Houston and are now working. Guillermo Velasco talked about his career in accounting; Carla Gonzalez spoke about her career at NASA; and, Sandy Lopez told the students about her career at Manifold & Pipeline System. In this way, the high school students were given a glimpse into what might become their own futures through hard work and scholarship.

Each Friday, the students participated in field trips to locations such as the UH Game Room for bowling, a Houston Dynamo Game, and the UH Outdoor Pool.

After a hectic and hard-working month, the students ended the summer session with a closing award ceremony and talent show. Later in the summer, they all attended a one-day leadership retreat at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas.



2014 Summer Session and Leadership Development Retreat

From the Director *continued from page 1*

instrumental in establishing the Chicano and Mexican American Studies Programs, Centers, and Departments that exist on campuses today. They have also been important in generating research and publishing about our community to fill in the void.

The role of Mexican American faculty on campuses cannot be overstated. When students encounter professors who look like them and have similar backgrounds, they feel they can relate to, then they seek assistance and guidance from these professors. This helps the students integrate into the university environment, which in turn helps promote academic success and graduation. When Mexican American professors are absent or so few as to be almost invisible, the students may feel isolated and unattached to the university community. This may hinder their success and lower their probability of graduating. On several occasions, I have counseled students who dropped out of other colleges to enroll at the University of Houston where Mexican American faculty, students, and related courses can be found. As one student relayed, “I feel at home here.”

It is difficult to know exactly how many Mexican American faculty with a Ph.D. there are in full-time positions here on campus, because the University of Houston, like many other public institutions, collapses Mexican Americans and others who have a Spanish heritage under the umbrella term of “Hispanic.” The latest official statistic, for example, shows that there are 63 full-time Hispanic professors on campus, but this number also includes people from Spain and South and Central America. My colleagues and I estimate that perhaps up to 25 may be Mexican American. Thus, while we are not invisible and many, if not most, of the Mexican American faculty are involved in teaching courses related to our existence, there is still a lot of improvement that can be made.

I am pleased to report that recently the University has taken steps to increase our numbers. A fund was set up to increase the number of Mexican American tenure track or tenured professors and also the number of other underrepresented groups. Given that the campus has been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution, primarily because of the growth of Mexican American students, increasing the number of Mexican American faculty has become crucial. We are determined that the funds set aside for this effort will lead to an increase in faculty, which in turn will further student success. The University has also agreed to disaggregate the Hispanic category into the various groups that compose it. This is essential to monitoring progress. Our task is challenging, because the number of our population who have a Ph.D. nationwide remains relatively small, and competition to hire them is high.

Yet, I’m sure we will succeed for three very important reasons. One, the University of Houston is a very attractive place to work given its Tier One status and its location in a dynamic city that offers diversity in culture and lifestyle and affordability of living well. Two, Houston has a large Mexican and Latino population. Three, the faculty associated with the Center for Mexican American Studies and the Latino Faculty Council are determined to make a mark on this issue. Our dedication to the cause is high, and we have a vision of what the ethnic makeup of the faculty should be in order for the University of Houston to continue to move forward. Without a vision, there is no action and without action, no results. ¡Si se puede!

Tatcho Mindiola, Ph.D.
Director

Juan Tello *continued from page 1*

attain this honor. Presently, he is the Energy and Resources Analytics Leader for his firm and publishes articles covering a broad array of topics, such as Oil and Gas Technology Trends, Analytics in Oil & Gas, and Financial Insight for Upstream Operations. About his role as a consultant, Tello says: “I enjoy the constant change. Every day there is a new problem to solve for a client. What excites me is that the problems are always changing; I love solving problems.”

Tello serves on the CMAS Scholarship Committee. For him, this has been a series of inspiring and heartfelt experiences. From the beginning of this service, he found himself thrilled to be working with so many of Houston’s successful Latinos, who through decades of hard work had built solid careers for themselves but also made time on a consistent basis to help other Latinos. Working on this committee with others he had admired for years, such as Gracie Saenz, was both exciting and humbling says Tello.

There are quite a few other rewards Tello experiences as a result of his ongoing work with CMAS both on the Scholarship Committee and on an ad-hoc basis for other CMAS projects. For instance, Tello is inspired by the life narratives of the young people the Center helps. These stories of hardships overcome and deep-seated resolve to obtain an education serve to stoke Tello’s own passion to help CMAS reach more young kids in need of an education. Says Tello: “I want the CMAS programs to grow and grow. Seeing the impact that scholarships have on the kids’ lives encourages me to do more

and more to help raise funds. I am committed to ensuring the Center continues in its role.”

Tello was one of five siblings. While he wasn’t specifically encouraged to go to college, he learned early on that his quality of life would be radically affected by whether or not he obtained a college degree. To put it in Tello’s own words: “Education is the great equalizer. Without it, your opportunities are extremely limited. The Center’s programs help ensure Latino students’ success. The kids that are in these programs should realize the importance of what they are given. I would ask that the CMAS students continue to push themselves to be successful.”

In closing, Tello recalls with a small smile his own college career at UH and the many ways that his association with CMAS helped him learn and hone his skills. He says that his choice of a degree in the Business School has served him well. Yet, the intangibles he learned in the CMAS programs—time management, leadership, dedication, determination—were and are crucial to his success. His advice to young students? Work harder. “Remember that the better a student performs academically, the easier it is for me and others to continue to raise funds for scholarships.”

Tello then pauses and says: “I’ve come full circle—from being a recipient of funds to becoming a provider and conduit for other providers of funds to the Center. It’s a testament to what the Center stands for. You can do the same.”

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Keynote Speaker: Art Rascon-Reporter/Anchor ABC-TV

**Saturday, October 25, 2014
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

**University of Houston Hilton Hotel
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**For more information contact Sonia Ramirez at:
smramir9@central.uh.edu or 713-743-3136**

**Proceeds benefit students in the Center for Mexican American Studies
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