

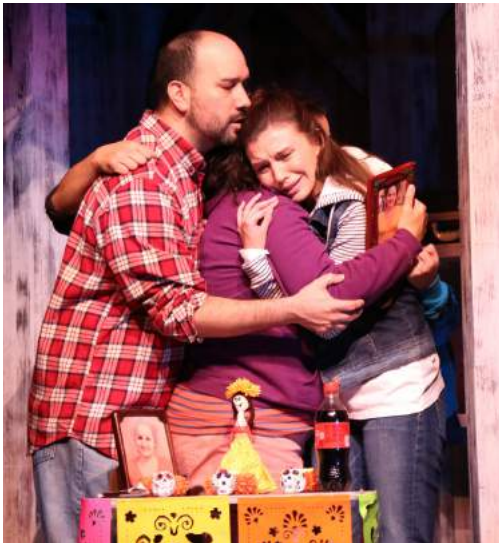


Center for Latin American Studies

volume 45

AY 2019-2020

CLAS Co-Commissions Play with Nashville Children's Theatre: Return to Sender



CLAS collaborated with Nashville Children's Theatre to commission a new production, *Return to Sender*, which debuted in October 2019 and sparked conversations across the community. Based on the novel by Julia Alvarez, the play examines the interdependent relationships that form between a family of farm owners in Vermont and a migrant Mexican family. Alvarez received the Pura Belpré Award for the book, as well as the Américas Award that is organized through Vanderbilt's CLAS on behalf of Latin American Studies programs across the country. Although published in 2009, the issues explored in the book continue to be just as relevant today. According to Amy Stumpfl of *The Nashville Scene*, "*Return to Sender* addresses contemporary themes with candor, while maintaining an unmistakable sense of hope and humanity."

The collaboration came about fortuitously when Ernie Nolan, NCT executive artistic director, reached out to CLAS about the project. CLAS was familiar with Alvarez's book as the 2010 winner of the Américas Award. CLAS co-coordinates this award for the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs. The award recognizes children's and young adult literature that authentically and engagingly portray Latin

America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United States on behalf of the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (see page 23).

Written by Marisela Treviño Orta, the play broaches topics such as patriotism, family separation, deportation, undocumented labor, and Mexican culture. For CLAS Director Ted Fischer, the play "beautifully captures the moral complexities of immigration and the nature of cultural and human exchanges in fraught circumstances. A powerful work, it speaks to young and old."

During its run from October 10–27, *Return to Sender* was seen by over 3,000 students as well as 198 teachers and 900 community members. "I know my students read and watch the news about what is going on with undocumented families, but this play really put it into perspective," said Anne Moctezuma-Baker, a Spanish teacher at Martin Luther King Jr. Academic Magnet High School. "After the play, my students and I discussed immigration and many of them shared their own immigrant stories. It was great to see my students feel so comfortable talking about difficult topics," she said.

To facilitate the inclusion of such conversations in MNPS classrooms, CLAS and NCT led an educator workshop the day of the premiere. Teachers at the workshop learned skills to help them address these kinds of issues with their students. For Rose Shelor, a Spanish teacher at Mill Creek Middle School, the workshop was "a moving experience." She says she has enjoyed seeing how the momentum produced by *Return to Sender* has continued in the classroom: "It has been a powerful conversation to continue in how we can engage across cultures and how we can engage emotionally and viscerally when we compare our own culture to another one and choose to enter into cross-cultural life together." A related Educator Guide is available on the CLAS website for teachers and the public.

In addition to the professional development workshop for educators, CLAS and NCT hosted a post-show discussion panel after the October 18 performance to encourage discussions among

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CLAS Supports Frist Museum Exhibit *Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Mexican Modernism*



The Frist Art Museum hosted a major exhibition featuring Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera in 2019. Open from May 24–September 2, "*Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and Mexican Modernism*," was attended by 126,000 and featured over 150 works by Kahlo and her husband Diego Rivera from the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection. The exhibit showcased several of their renowned contemporaries, including María Izquierdo, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco. It also featured rare intimate photographs of Kahlo and Rivera, a video of the two at their home La Casa Azul in 1941, an interactive gallery showcasing the style of Kahlo's iconic clothing and accessories, and several portraits of the Gelmans. The exhibition was organized by the Vergel Foundation and MondoMostre in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura (INBAL).

The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection, one of the most well-regarded private collections of Mexican art in the world, began in 1943 when Jacques commissioned Diego

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Crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic
widen already existing rifts in societies
as well as open up new opportunities for
communities coming together, bringing out the
best and the worst in individuals and political
systems.

As usual, Brazil gives us examples of both
extremes. If his actions were not so tragic,
Bolsonaro would be a farce. With his ability
to construct alternative narratives, Bolsonaro
was even more effective than Trump at writing
these narratives onto the real world, often with
devastating effects, as with the Amazon fires. But
the Covid-19 crisis is an intractable intrusion into
the narrative world Bolsonaro has constructed;
its deadly materiality is resistant to rhetorical
defenses, even if the president seems intent on
taking the ship down in denial.

At the same time, governors and mayors
across the country have stepped into the national
leadership void, putting in place evidence-based
policies to flatten the pandemic's curve. It is
particularly poignant that gangs in several of Rio's
favelas imposed their own shelter-in-place orders
to reduce transmissions. In times of such crisis,
local communities often come together in ways
that would be unthinkable in "normal" times. This
should give us hope.

Perhaps social trust is easier to forge in the
face-to-face proximity of smaller communities.
Social trust and faith in institutions are crucial
for the collective action required to halt viral
transmission. We have to coordinate our actions
in ways that are uncomfortable, inconvenient,
and even painful to individuals but crucial to the
collective. Latin American governments have long
been marked by a deficit of trust, although the U.S.
has been quickly catching up. We have long-known
that such lack of trust is bad for democracy, bad
for corruption, and bad for the economy. We now
know that it is also bad for our health.

In crises, transparency can build trust. Martín
Vizcarra in Peru, Alberto Fernández in Argentina,
and even Sebastián Piñera in Chile have shown
that clear and realistic communication of the
dangers (and steps to mitigate them) can quickly
build public trust even in unpopular regimes (and
AMLO in Mexico has demonstrated that the
opposite can hold as well).

The Covid-19 pandemic will leave its mark
on Latin American economies and politics for
many years to come. Let's hope we learn the
right lessons from it, and use the opportunity to
improve our societies' distribution of risks.

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Return to Sender (Cont. from page 1)

community members. The panel featured Conexión
Américas Executive Director **Juliana Ospina
Cano** and former Metro Council member **Fabian
Bedne**, and was moderated by CLAS Executive
Director **Avery Dickins de Girón**.

—with thanks to Erin Facer

Frist Museum Exhibit (Cont. from page 1)

Rivera to paint a portrait of his wife, Natasha. The
Gelmans continued to purchase and promote
works by Rivera, Kahlo, and other Mexican art-
ists, acquiring seven self-portraits by Kahlo long
before she became internationally renowned.

CLAS partnered with the Frist on community
outreach programming throughout the exhibit and
provided translations for the artworks and public
tours. Along with other community partners,
CLAS was invited to attend a preview of the
exhibit with Frist curator **Trinita Kennedy** in
early May. On opening night, Frist Art Museum
gave a free screening of the film *Frida*, with
former CLAS Teacher Advisory Board member

Anne Moctezuma-Baker (Spanish teacher at
Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet School) providing
a special introduction. Other community engage-
ment activities included a program for individuals
with early stages of dementia and their caregiv-
ers through the Alzheimer's Association, a studio
workshop "Introduction to Embroidery," and
a hands-on teacher workshop "Modernism,
Monsters, and Myths." This last workshop tied
together the themes of the Frida exhibit and
the concurrent exhibit "Monsters and Myths:
Surrealism and War in the 1930s and 1940s," and
included presentations by **Leonard Folgarait** (Art
History) and CLAS Outreach Coordinator **Colleen
McCoy**, as well as art activities and a tour of both
exhibits with a Frist Art Museum curator.

Elvira Aballi Morell (doctoral student in Spanish
and Portuguese) provided Spanish translations
for a lecture by **Lynda Klich** (Hunter College),
"I didn't know I was a Surrealist": Frida Kahlo
and Women Surrealists in Mexico." Aballi Morell
also presented a special gallery talk in Spanish,
guiding attendees through the collection and
highlighting selected works.

CLAS Receives Grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for the Latin American Garden

CLAS Executive Director **Avery Dickins de Girón** received funding from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust to enhance the educational impact of the Latin American Garden. The \$8300 grant will support the creation of permanent nameplates for each plant, improved signage, guide maps, and a pathway to the public sidewalk, with the goal of facilitating substantive self-guided tours for visitors.

The nameplates will denote the scientific and common names of each plant, and its native range. They will also display QR codes that link to the garden website that contains detailed information about each plant. Most of the plant descriptions were produced by first-year students through a Commons Seminar (ANTH 1001-01) in 2018 and 2019. Students researched the history and medicinal uses of plants using the VU Libraries and special

collections to create the descriptions. In addition, they created initial QR codes and interactive games for use by educators.

CLAS established the Latin American Garden in May 2017 to serve as an educational resource for Vanderbilt students, K–16 educators, and the general public. It houses approximately 50 species of plants native to Latin America; almost all of the plants are used for medicinal or culinary purposes. From May through October, CLAS offers tours of the garden for VU courses, student groups, and local school groups; over 150 people have toured



Latin American Garden Featured on Nashville Public Television

Nashville Public Television interviewed Dickins de Girón about the garden's medicinal plants in September, and featured the interview on their *Volunteer Gardener* in March 2020. The segment is available at <https://youtu.be/YJOaSQDP84A>

the garden since 2017. It has been the focus of two professional development workshops and serves as a lending garden for MNPS.

2019 TIPS Projects Led by LAS Faculty

In 2019, two new Trans-Institutional Programs (TIPS) awards included a focus on Latin America and involved LAS faculty:

The **Vanderbilt International Initiative for the Study of Slave Societies** responds to the University's Academic Strategic Plan, builds upon the internationally recognized Slave Societies Digital Archive (SSDA), and focuses on the history and modern legacies of slavery. Participants organize national and international research collaborations and conferences, coordinate public history and community outreach events, and develop training workshops and immersion possibilities for students. Project leaders are also collaborating on scholarly publications related to their mutual interests in slavery and its after-effects. Led by **Jane Landers** (History), several affiliated faculty members are participating in this project including **Brandon Byrd** (History), **Maria Campos-Pons** (Art), **Celso Castilho** (History), **Marshall Eakin** (History), and **Paula Covington** (Latin American Studies).

The **GlobalVU Initiative** supports and fosters international research by Vanderbilt faculty and graduate students. It also aims to bring more foreign scholars to campus and increase the prominence of Vanderbilt abroad. The initiative will strengthen and nourish existing units engaged in international activity and lower barriers to international work for all involved. The core mission is to enhance the quality of academic research, scholarship, and artistic performance in terms of global significance and impact. Participants are charged with identifying Vanderbilt's existing international strengths, supporting the work of faculty across the institution, and connecting to researchers, policy makers, and public intellectuals from around to the world to develop cutting-edge and intellectually diverse research. Collaborators include **Xiu Cravens** (Peabody) and **Carolyn Heinrich** (Peabody), and the lead faculty member on the project is CLAS Director Ted Fischer (Anthropology).

Vanderbilt Greenhouses Close

CLAS was saddened by the closure of the greenhouses and the departure of Greenhouse Manager Jonathan Ertelt in January 2020. Located on the top of Stevenson Center 2 since the 1930s, the greenhouses housed 1500 plant species and provided a unique teaching tool outside of the classroom. In addition to serving as an educational resource, they provided an oasis and stress reliever for students seeking a break from their studies and social activities.



A central part of the welcoming nature of the oasis, Ertelt is described by students as a mentor and had managed the greenhouses since 1996. Upon the announcement of the greenhouse closure and elimination of his position, student volunteers created a petition calling for the reconsideration of the closures; it had been signed by 1424 people and contained 524 positive anecdotes by the time the greenhouses closed in late January. Prior to his departure, Ertelt was able to find homes for all of the specimens in the collection, including the University of the South, the Nashville Zoo, and the New York Botanical Garden. Many students and community members also benefitted from plant giveaways.

Jonathan has been a key collaborator in the Latin American Garden initiative, providing botanical and gardening advice, as well as a place to store selected plants during the winter. CLAS will continue to call on Jonathan for his botanical expertise.

CLAS and FIU Host 2020 Global Studies Symposium for Minority-Serving Institutions and Community Colleges

In January, CLAS collaborated with Florida International University's Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center to host the 2020 Global Studies Symposium. The symposium brought together 40 faculty and administrators from minority-serving institutions and community colleges to share best practices for internationalizing their curriculum. FIU's president, Mark Rosenberg, kicked off the 2-day conference in Miami Beach with inspiring remarks on the importance of global awareness for today's students. Stephanie Doscher, Director of Global Learning Initiatives at FIU, followed with an interactive exercise that encouraged participants to think creatively and collaboratively.

The remainder of the symposium featured panel presentations: Cultivating Global-Minded Students On and Off Campus, Language as a Focal Point for Internationalizing Curriculum, Institutional Strategies to Internationalize Curriculum, and Innovative Strategies for Course Redesign. Specific presentations included:

- *Diaspora as Departure Point for Going Global in the HBCU Curricula* (Sara Busdiecker, Spelman College)
- *Politics, People, and Power: Developing Courses with a Country as "Text"* (Eileen DeLuca, Florida SouthWestern State College)
- *Increasing Minority Participation in Study Abroad: Effective Approaches to Internationalizing the Curricula* (Rhonda Collier, Tuskegee University)
- *Emphasizing Afrolatinidad in Spanish-Language Teaching: A Spanish-Language Curriculum Designed for HBCU Students* (Déborah Gómez, Florida Memorial University)
- *Building Global Curriculum at HBCUs: Spelman College, George Washington University, and the Role of NRCs* (Yan Xu, Spelman College)
- *Valencia Global Distinction: Goals, Achievements, and Challenges* (Aby Boumarate, Valencia College)
- *Rethinking Campus Globalization Efforts in the 21st Century: Augustine Ayuk (Nine University and College International Studies Consortium of Georgia) and Jodi Carver (Community College of Beaver County)*
- *Internationalizing the Classroom through Virtual Exchange: A Multidisciplinary Approach: Yungkul Kim, Dorcas E. McCoy, and Adelia E. Parrado-Otriz (Bethune-Cookman University)*
- *Engaging with Global Studies in the Community College Classroom: Course Redesign Best Practices: Isabel M. Scarborough (Parkland College)*

Panelists shared their achievements in incorporating global content into the curriculum, the importance of global awareness to community college students for future employment, and success stories of



institutional adoption of international content, and discussed financial and other administrative challenges. The symposium also included ample time for participants to engage with each other over meals and a reception on Thursday evening.

Feedback from participants during the closing remarks session was overwhelmingly positive: they indicated appreciation for being able to connect with colleagues at peer institutions, recognized that the small size of the symposium allowed for networking and an organic exchange of ideas, and noted that the content was useful and applicable to their individual institutions.

The symposium was supported with funding from National Resource Centers from various world areas. It was organized and moderated by **Liesl Picard** (FIU) and **Avery Dickins de Girón**, with **Lindsay Dudley** coordinating the events at FIU and symposium follow-up and **Colleen McCoy** overseeing evaluation.

Tuskegee and CLAS Introduce Portuguese Instruction for Tuskegee Students

Tuskegee students had the opportunity to study Portuguese for the first time in Fall 2019. The online course is the product of an initiative begun in 2017 by **Rhonda Collier**, Director of Tuskegee University's Global Office and CLAS Executive Director **Avery Dickins de Girón**. After an initial agreement between Vanderbilt and Tuskegee was realized in July 2019, Beginning Portuguese was introduced as a new course, expanding Tuskegee's existing language offerings of Spanish and French. The Portuguese course is taught by Vanderbilt's **Benjamin Legg** and provides a basic introduction to the language through an asynchronous format; it is housed under Tuskegee's Department of Modern Languages and supported by the Office of Distance Education and Online Learning. In Fall 2020, the course to a hybrid format, with weekly conversational sessions through Zoom. Plans to offer Portuguese 102, 201, and 202 are in place for the future, and as part of the broader CLAS-Tuskegee initiative, Collier is developing a course on Afro-Brazilian History, Culture, and Literature and opportunities for Tuskegee students to travel to Brazil.

Seventeen Medical Students Complete Month-Long Clinical Rotations and Research in Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Peru

The Vanderbilt University School of Medicine's Integrated Science Course in Global Health, led by **Dan Guiles, Elizabeth Rose** and **Marie Martin**, provides medical students an opportunity for a month-long clinical rotation at partner sites in resource-constrained settings around the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean. During the course, students work in a clinic or hospital during the day and complete online didactic modules on global health topics in the evenings. Most students live with local families and many take Spanish lessons. Over the past year, seventeen medical students have completed this course in Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Guyana, or Peru. Some of their experiences and reflections are highlighted below.

Eva Niklinska, Jake Ramsey, Kia Quinlan, and Sneha Rajendran (MD, 2021) traveled to Guatemala for a month-long clinical rotation with Vanderbilt's long-time partner, Primeros Pasos. As part of this rotation, the students worked alongside physicians, nurses, medical students, and other team members to learn about health conditions, health systems, and health disparities particular to the rural region of Quetzaltenango and to Latin America as a whole. Students also had the opportunity to engage in programs outside the clinic. Kia was present during the organization's strategic summit and goal planning sessions at the beginning of the new year and Sneha had the opportunity to join Primeros Pasos' nutritionist in community visits. Unfortunately, Eva and Jake had to cut their rotations short due to COVID-19, but they were able to continue their engagement with the clinic by developing Spanish language resources about the virus for Primeros Pasos and the communities it serves.

During one of the community visits, Sneha participated in a mobile clinic in Chuicavioc, which is one of the largest primary schools that the clinic supports. The mobile clinic visit provides free medical and dental consults and treatments, and for many kids, the two annual mobile clinics are the only times they see a doctor due to the many barriers to access that still exist in the Palujunoj Valley. In a reflection about her time at Primeros Pasos, Sneha wrote "This was my favorite course so far in medical school! It was an incredible and unique learning experience to work alongside Guatemalan medical students and physicians, especially in a clinic like Primeros Pasos which serves patients in an area with limited access to healthcare."

Josh Anderson (MD, 2020) and **Victoria Anderson** (MD, 2020) traveled to Lima for a month-long clinical rotation. Josh spent time in radiation oncology clinics including Clínica AUNA Oncosalud, AUNA Clinica Delgado, Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Neoplásicas, and Hospital Nacional Edgardo Rebagliati Martins. While in these clinics, he learned from radiation oncologists, resident physicians, nurses, dosimetrists, and physicists about how radiation is delivered to treat cancer in Peru. Victoria rotated at Atención Domiciliaria Integral, an outpatient palliative care clinic. She spent time with physicians, nurses, dietitians, and social workers learning about palliative and primary care in Peru. During these experiences, they also gained knowledge about health disparities, medical education, and the healthcare system in Peru as well as broader Latin America.

Over the past year, eight medical students (**Emily Moore, Kari Fossum, Katie Frost, Lauren Barr, Molly Eckman, Samuel Trump,**



Sydney Payne, and Yuxi Zheng) participated in the International Health Central America Institute in Costa Rica. This month-long program provides students an opportunity to hone their medical Spanish, experience the Costa Rican health system, and study tropical diseases. Students visited the Tortuguero Rainforest to better understand tropical medicine and spent time at various hospitals to learn about the Costa Rican hospital system and practice conducting patient interviews in Spanish. After participating in this course, students are better able to communicate with their Spanish-speaking patients in Nashville.

Andrew Rees (MD, 2021) had the opportunity to rotate in the orthopedics department at the Hospital Nacional Arzobispo Loayza in association with the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru. In Andrew's words, "I learned so much during my time in Lima and had a tremendous experience. In addition to the great learning I got to do online via the (Vanderbilt) course, I learned very specific orthopedic Spanish vocabulary that I believe will be an asset to me for the rest of my career. I got to participate in care in a variety of settings, including clinic, the emergency room, and the operating room. It was a truly horizon-expanding rotation. The residents and attendings at UPCH were all terrific to work with and were so willing to teach me the unique pathologies and

Seventeen Medical Students (cont.)

challenges seen in Peru. It was a first class global health rotation!”

Daniel Pereira (MD, 2021) completed a rotation in orthopedic surgery and trauma in Colombia at Fundación Santa Fe de Bogotá, which is one of the most academically rigorous and advanced hospitals in the nation. In Daniel’s words, “This opportunity afforded me the chance to not only broaden my professional networks, develop unique surgical skills, but it also created a venue for further self-realization. The puzzle pieces fell in place and I felt that, in a month, I was able to more fully assume my Colombian identity as my own. The experience also allowed me to develop a love for global health. As a third-world child, global health is knit into the very fibers of our beings, but this rotation was unique in its allowance for rigorous academic consideration. I encourage anyone to consider going to Colombia for both enjoyment and for academic exploration. It was the land where magical realism, the genre of literature, was born. And, it lives true to its legacy, as a magical place.”

Other clinical rotations in the Integrated Science Course in Global Health included:

- **Peter Bryant** (MD, 2021) spent a month working in the Emergency Department at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation in Guyana.
- **Nate Yohannes** (MD, 2020) spent two months in Lima at Cayetano Heredia National Hospital collecting data on pregnant women and children affected by HIV. The focus of his research project was to evaluate the incidence of women retained in HIV care after delivery and determine the risk factors associated with retention in HIV care after delivery. In Nate’s words, “I had an amazing experience that I wouldn’t trade for the world and it wouldn’t have been possible without the support of the Caribbean, Central and South American network for HIV epidemiology (CCASAnet) and our Vanderbilt team at Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia: Dr. Catherine McGowan, Dr. Stephany Duda, Dr. Fernando Mejia, Fernanda Maruri, Dr. Eduardo Gotuzzo, Bryan Shepherd, and many others.”

—Contributed by Elizabeth Rose

CLAS Offers Medical Spanish and Cultural Content for VUSN and Meharry Students

Avery Dickins de Giron (LAS) and **Chalene Helmuth (Spanish)** co-taught a class for Vanderbilt Nursing students and Meharry Medical College students. Now in its third year, the Medical Spanish and Central America Seminar is in high demand, enrolling 8 VUSN and 6 Meharry students in Fall 2019. Students in the class delved into medical vocabulary, practiced intake exams and patient interviews, and learned about the history and culture of Central America with a focus on issues of health and access to care. This effort is part of a larger CLAS initiative to support inter-professional learning and provide

medical Spanish to Meharry and Vanderbilt students; it is coordinated by VUSN’s **Shelza Rivas**.

Six of the nursing students enrolled in the class chose *Primeros Pasos* as the focus of their quality improvement project, which is the cornerstone of VUSN’s required Community Health course. Led by Rivas, the group had planned to travel to Guatemala during Spring Break to gather data for the final phase of their project. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the trip was cancelled; however, the students continued to work with *Primeros Pasos* staff to develop resources for improved nutrition.

Public Health and Medical Students Travel to Guatemala

Harriett Myers (MPH, 2020) and **Sarah Rachal** (MD/MPH, 2021) each spent three months in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala where they worked at *Primeros Pasos* Clinic for their Master in Public Health (MPH) practicum, Harriett in the summer and Sarah in the fall. *Primeros Pasos* is a primary care community clinic and outreach center that serves ten rural majority-indigenous Mayan communities. Their practicum projects grew from a MPH



course, *Essential Skills in Global Health*, in which their small group collaborated with clinic staff to enhance *Primeros Pasos*’ monitoring and evaluation protocol for the outreach program’s *Healthy Schools* program.

While on the ground in Quetzaltenango, Harriett and Sarah supported the outreach program by accompanying the Community Outreach Director/Nutritionist to visits in the four highest-need communities in the Palajunoj Valley to deliver interactive workshops to primary school classrooms and groups of local mothers. They developed curriculum manuals for the clinic’s robust volunteer program to utilize during these workshops so the Outreach Director can focus more effort on tracking mothers and children who are at risk for malnutrition.

Harriett and Sarah also helped with *Primeros Pasos*’ strategic planning efforts, interviewed

staff, and observed field work to generate recommendations on how the outreach program can improve individual-level tracking and evaluation efforts while reducing the burden on full time staff. They worked in the clinic’s reception and pharmacy when needed, assisted with mobile clinics, applied for grants and donations, re-painted the clinic, and cared for the clinic’s four-legged mascots, Frijol and Canela.

CLAS Collaborations with Law

CLAS Executive Director **Avery Dickins de Girón** continues to work closely with **Karla McKanders** who directs Vanderbilt Law School’s Immigration Practice Clinic. In recent years, students in the Practice Clinic have prepared a number of cases for Central Americans seeking asylum or guardianship with relatives in the United States.



Engineering Students Put Their Skills to Work through Service Learning Projects in Guatemala

Approximately 20 Vanderbilt engineering students had the opportunity to travel to Guatemala this year, where they put their skills into practice and learned from our partners on the ground. CLAS provides pre-departure orientations and logistical support for these programs, as well as Curriculum Development grants for Engineering faculty leading the programs.

Vanderbilt Students Return to Mam Maya Communities through Engineers Without Borders

In December 2019, undergraduates **Calvin Beck**, **Sofia Starkey**, **Sam Leville**, and **Courtney Howarth** traveled to rural Guatemala through Engineers Without Borders (EWB) as part of an ongoing project. This is the third time Vanderbilt students have traveled to the villages of Paxoj and Txemuj, which are both Mam-speaking aldeas located near Huitán along Quetzaltenango's border with San Marcos. Their project aims to reduce erosion to the primary school and thus make it more accessible during the rainy season. The students met with the community, shared meals, and played games of pick-up soccer to learn about the needs of their community.

Junior Calvin Beck described his experience: "I especially enjoyed hearing the community speak in Mam, which is vastly different from English and Spanish. Visiting in December gave us the opportunity to experience the holiday season in Guatemala. In Antigua, the churches were draped in lights and an orchestra played in the street under the Santa Catalina Arch. We even got to watch a nativity procession as it made its way down the cobblestone streets. Along the road from Guatemala City to Quetzaltenango, hundreds of children from the local Mayan villages lined the highway waiting for small gifts from churches and businesses in the larger cities. We saw groups delivering trucks full of toys to children whose parents couldn't afford to buy them Christmas gifts themselves. All in all, we are very grateful for the opportunity we

had to visit Guatemala and to experience the overwhelming warmth of Guatemala and its people. We look forward to traveling again this May to finish our project."

Biomedical Engineering Students Repair Hospital Machinery in Guatemala

In March 2020, **Cynthia Paschal** and **Nick Adams** led another group of biomedical engineering students to Guatemala where they repaired machinery in resource-limited hospitals in Guatemala City and Antigua. Vanderbilt students worked throughout Spring Break week at Hospital Materna Infantil de Juan Pablo II, Obras Sociales del Hermano Pedro, and Hospital Nacional Pedro de Bethancourt. They also visited Universidad del Valle de Guatemala and shared project presentations with engineering students there. Paschal has worked with Prof. Carlos Esquit at UVG to start a biomedical engineering program there in order to help build capacity in the country. Under the supervision of Paschal and Adams, Vanderbilt students have created 11 how-to videos, five which have been translated to Spanish with support from CLAS. The Spanish language videos have been viewed over 16,000 times, and are available here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaHTBR7DKuG1ZhWKbg7YPHQ>

Based on ongoing collaborations with **Cynthia Paschal**, **Carlos Esquit**, Director of Electronic, Mechatronic and Biomedical Engineering at the Universidad del Valle, successfully launched a new biomedical program at the Guatemalan university in 2019. The new program is the first of its kind in the country, and will fill a significant need by training students to repair biomedical equipment used in hospitals throughout Guatemala.

“100,000 Strong in the Americas” Grant Helps Bring Sustainable Solutions to Rural Guatemala

Hiba Baroud and graduate student Daniel Perruchi led civil engineering students to Guatemala during Spring Break through the **100,000 Strong in the Americas** grant awarded to Universidad del Valle (UVG) and Vanderbilt. The grant supports exchanges between students and faculty around the topic of water and wastewater sustainability, with a specific focus on water and wastewater. To qualify for the trip, Vanderbilt students had to be enrolled in CE 3705 Water Resources Engineering, ENVE 3610 Sustainable Development, or ENVE 4700 Energy and Water Resources. Students selected to travel were **Cyan Baker, Kyra Owensby, Jade Clarke, and Tobias Houghton**. After this initial Vanderbilt trip to Guatemala, UVG students and faculty will visit Vanderbilt in Fall 2020.

The trip began with a tour of UVG’s facilities and a historic conference celebrating Guatemala’s first space satellite. The following day, the group visited the mountaintop village of San Cristóbal El Alto, where they tasted natural honey, learned how to make tortillas, sampled kak’ik and pepian, and met with the village cooperative. These experiences informed the students’ research project, which aims to improve the management of water and energy sources in San Cristóbal El Alto. The longer-term goal of the initiative is to increase tourism and provide a sustainable economic benefit to the community, known as the “Village of Flowers.” During the rest of the week, the VU-UVG team analyzed the town’s water supply and treatment plant, municipal solid waste processes, and delivery of electricity, and compared them to other locations around Guatemala.

However, the biggest impact that the VU-UVG team made is through a series of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) activities for the local school.

This included a dancing robot, a K’Nex structure competition with a simulated earthquake, and other activities. Given the high attrition rate in San Cristóbal El Alto, the activities were designed to engage local students and encourage them to continue their education. The trip wrapped up with a coffee plantation and a meeting with United States Consulate officials, during which the students shared their research and discussed future work.



Vanderbilt Accelerator Program Inaugurates Immersive Experience in Antigua

The Vanderbilt Accelerator Program, in partnership with Owen’s Turner Family Center and CLAS, inaugurated a new immersive experience in Antigua in December 2019. Led by **Greg Harvey**, the program focused on social enterprise and business in emerging markets, and gave students the opportunity to examine ways businesses can impact their communities. Students engaged with several of these businesses and organizations across the social impact continuum, ranging from pure commercial enterprise to an operational charity.

Students spent mornings studying business models and sustainable practices, and then examined the practical application of such theories through site visits to organizations such as Grønn, Ecofiltro, Antigua Cerveza Company, and De la Gente. These experiences allowed students to understand how workforce development translates to a bigger home for coffee farmers like Julio at De la Gente, and how improved access to clean water improved attendance rates at local, rural schools. Other activities included a lecture by Julio Martínez from Pomona Impact, who spoke to students about how impact investing in Guatemala might differ from investing elsewhere in the “so-called” developing world. Jershem David Casasola Lemus, from the Kirzner Center for Entrepreneurship at the Universidad Francisco Marroquín, discussed the ecosystem of entrepreneurship in Guatemala based on his research with Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM).

Junior **Kayla Eason** noted the value of the immersion program for translating classroom lessons to the sites and companies they visited. Sophomore **William Takes** explained the importance of the model of social enterprise and its relevance to his studies: “Guatemalan social enterprises...treat the poorer classes as consumers and allow a transaction to occur, instead of simply giving them a hand-out.”

—Contributed by Megan Skaggs

Ryan Middagh Awarded with 2019 Chancellor's Cup



Director of Jazz Studies, **Ryan Middagh**, was awarded the 2019 Chancellor's Cup in October for his visionary leadership of the Blair School of Music's jazz program along with his inspiring teaching and mentoring skills.

Middagh was completely surprised when Provost Susan Wenthe interrupted a rehearsal of the Blair Big Band that he directs to present him with the award. Wenthe noted in her remarks that Middagh has elevated jazz studies at Vanderbilt to a completely new level since being named director in 2014: "You are described as a 'triple threat': an internationally recognized performer, an outstanding leader and an extraordinary mentor," Wenthe said when presenting the award to Middagh. "We are grateful that you're here on the Vanderbilt faculty and leading this amazing big band."

The Chancellor's Cup, established by the Nashville chapter of the Vanderbilt Alumni Association in 1963, is presented annually to a professor for "the greatest contribution outside the classroom to undergraduate student-faculty relationships in the recent past." "Ryan Middagh is as an accomplished jazz saxophonist who has toured around the world, but he's also revolutionized the jazz program since his arrival at Vanderbilt five years ago," Wenthe said. "The Blair Big Band has been invited to very special opportunities to perform, extending the faculty-student interactions and partnerships beyond the classroom."

Among the accolades for Middagh, *DownBeat* magazine recently named the Blair Big Band the best undergraduate large jazz ensemble in the world. The Blair Big Band completed its first studio album in 2015. "Ryan Middagh has set hugely ambitious goals and more than achieved them," said Mark Wait, the Martha Rivers Ingram Dean of the Blair School and professor of piano, who was among those commenting on the nomination. "He has recruited Grammy-award-winning artists to teach in the program, and the Blair Big Band recently completed a tour of South America this summer."

Middagh, an Iowa native, first came to Nashville as a student teacher at Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet High School. He completed his master's degree at Middle Tennessee State University and a doctor

of arts in jazz studies, with a secondary emphasis in composition, at the University of Northern Colorado.

The selection for the Chancellor's Cup is made by the chancellor, based on recommendations from Mortar Board, Omicron Delta Kappa, deans of the undergraduate schools and various administrators. The award includes a cash prize of \$2,500 contributed by the Nashville Vanderbilt alumni chapter, an engraved pewter cup as a permanent trophy, and one year's custody of the Tiffany and Co. silver bowl that bears the names of past recipients.

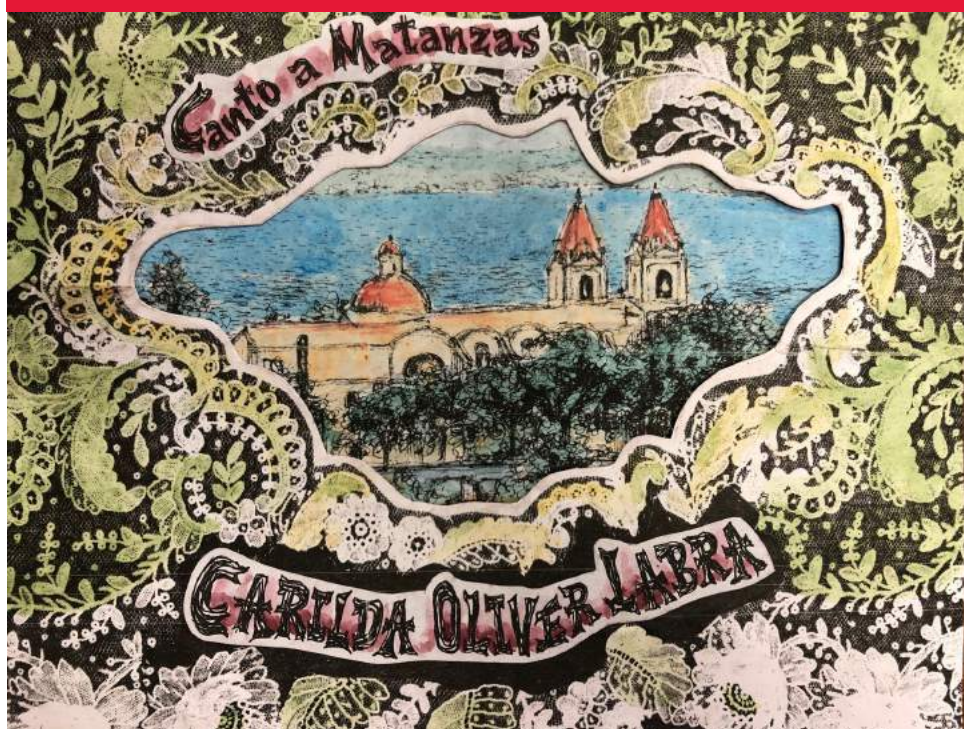
CLAS has worked closely with Middagh to support numerous trips to Latin America he has led for undergraduate students, as well as to engage Blair students in educational outreach in Metro Nashville Public Schools.

—Anne Marie Deer Owens



CLAS Collaborates with the Blair School of Music to Host a Concert Featuring Venezuelan Music

In November 2019, Vanderbilt's Director of Wind Ensembles, **Tom Verrier**, hosted "Espíritu Inquebrantable: A Tribute to the People of Venezuela." The afternoon event featured Venezuelan chamber music, art, and a photography exhibit. Blair students performed a recital of chamber music by notable Venezuelan composers, including composer-in-residence **Ricardo Lorenz** who applauded the students' performances. During the intermission, the audience viewed an exhibit by documentary photographer Betty Zapata that showcased varied scenes of daily life in Venezuela. Later that afternoon, Tom Verrier led the Vanderbilt Wind Symphony in a spirited performance with **Manuel Rangel** (on the maracas) and Ricardo Lorenz (visiting composer). The program included Luis Pérez Valero's *Cumanagoto*, Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*; visiting composer Ricardo Lorenz's *Pataruco*—Concerto for Venezuelan Maracas and Wind Symphony, and the world premiere of Lorenz's *Caminantes*, Moisés Moleiro's *Joropo*; and Pedro Elías Gutiérrez's *Alma Llanera*. Following the performances, the audience was treated to a reception featuring Venezuelan food. This event was supported by CLAS and is part of our ongoing collaboration with the School of Music: ¡BLAIR! (Blair's Latin America Initiatives and Resources).



Vanderbilt's Jean and Alexander Heard Libraries Celebrate the Year of Manuel Zapata Olivella

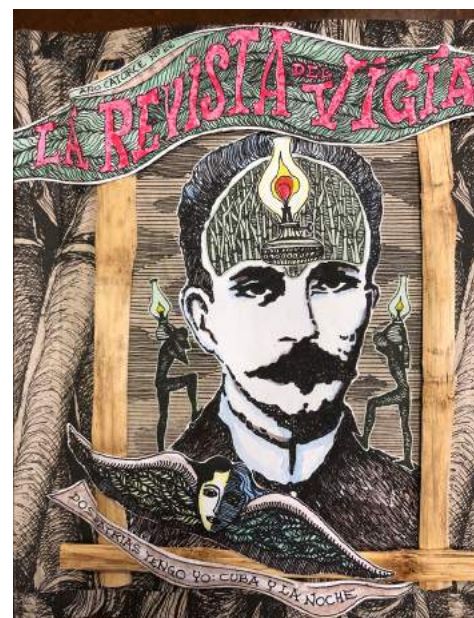
The Colombian government and Ministry of Culture have named 2020 El año de Manuel Zapata Olivella. As the custodian of the bulk of his papers, we are particularly happy that he is being recognized for his many contributions especially to Afro-Colombian life, culture, and to preserving that history. Vanderbilt is contributing to the preservation of that history through organizing and digitizing his collections to make them available not only to resident and visiting scholars but to students and researchers worldwide. We are doing this through digitizing projects, seeking grants for preserving manuscripts and audio cassettes, creating metadata for the websites and organizing his manuscripts, correspondence and other collections as well as his personal library.

Following a pilot project and a small grant from the Latin Americanist Research Resources Project (LARRP) of the Center for Research Libraries, the library recently received a \$46,000+ grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) for "Opening Access to Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Voices: Manuel Zapata Olivella's Recordings of Marginalized Cultures and Traditions." The

grant will allow us to digitize and preserve the Afro-Colombian and indigenous interviews conducted by Manuel Zapata Olivella and his team of anthropologists and ethnographers. The tapes include ethnographies from the 1960s-70s and records of his World Congresses of Black Culture.

Undergraduate and graduate students have been at work in Special Collections to make his collections more accessible. This requires sifting through the many boxes and organizing unpublished manuscripts, press clippings, screenplays and other writings. They have been helping to create an online finding aid so that scholars can have meaningful access to these materials. They are also describing and preparing the audiotapes for shipment for baking, preserving and digitizing. And they are creating online records for the website to be able to link the digitized collections for open access.

Meanwhile, we are planning an international conference at Vanderbilt to celebrate the life and accomplishments of Manuel. We hope to have more materials accessible by the time of this conference. Colombian and US scholars will present on topics ranging from



Handmade Cuban artist's books on exhibit in Vanderbilt Library's Special Collections

literary themes to black activist social movements; there will also be a panel to discuss the collections in Colombia and the US relating to Zapata Olivella and the potential for library collaborations.

The library is not forgetting other parts of Latin America. We have organized an exhibit this spring in Special Collections on Cuba: "Found in Cuba: The Ingenuity and Creativity of Ediciones Vigía." A curator's talk by Paula Covington was followed by multiple classes and visitors who have toured the exhibit. The handmade artist's books from the Vigía workshop in Matanzas were designed from found objects in Cuba. Over the years we have collected almost 150 of their works through trips to Cuba and Mexico.

Much progress is being made and many thanks to the students who are making these projects accessible!

—Contributed by Paula Covington, Latin American and Iberian Bibliographer and Senior Lecturer in Latin American Studies

Brazil Week 2019 Addresses Justice and Equity

This year's Brazil Week focused on the theme of "Justice & Equity." Held September 9–13, the week featured **Dr. Ana Lucia Araujo**, Professor of History at Howard University, as the keynote speaker. Her talk, "Slavery, Memory, and Reparations in Brazil," was adapted from her recent book, *Reparations for Slavery and the Slave Trade: A Transnational and Comparative Study*. She addressed the debates surrounding the legacy of slavery and public history projects in Brazil. Later that afternoon, CLAS hosted an opening reception, complete with *feijoada* and a live performance from the local musical ensemble, Choro Nashville. The reception was attended by faculty and students from across Vanderbilt, as well as students visiting campus from the FIA Business School EMBA program in São Paulo. The following day, **JuLeigh Petty** (Medicine, Health, and Society), **Liz Zechmeister** (Political Science), and **Jessica Castilho** (Medicine) participated in a roundtable discussion addressing "HIV/AIDS in Brazil: Politics, Policy & Public Health" from an interdisciplinary perspective. Dr. Petty examined the norms and stigmas surrounding sexuality in Brazil from a historical perspective, Dr. Zechmeister addressed the puzzling gap between the effectiveness of the health system and negative public opinion about medical services, and Dr. Castilho presented the current data on infection and treatment rates in Brazil.

Wednesday featured a study abroad roundtable with Vanderbilt students who recently studied in Brazil. **Stacy Horton**, an undergraduate LAS and CMA major, described her summer research experience working with

indigenous filmmakers in the Amazonian town of A'Ukre. **Michaela Peterson**, a PhD candidate in Earth and Environmental Sciences, shared her research on white-lipped peccaries in Central Brazil, which was supported by a summer grant for pre-dissertation summer research from CLAS. **Tam Wheat**, an undergraduate LHS major, was the recipient of a Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) grant that enabled him to participate in an intensive Portuguese program during Summer 2019. In the evening, 15 people attended a screening of *Only When I Dance*, which was followed with a discussion by **Ana Christina da Silva** (Peabody) on education and upward social mobility issues in Brazil.

On Thursday, **Benjamin Legg** (Portuguese) led a cooking class and group discussion on "Reclaiming Origins through Street Food: Tapioca, Acarajé, Pão de Queijo and Brazilian History" at the Student Recreation Center. Students learned about the history of key ingredients in Brazilian cooking, helped make some traditional dishes, and then sampled their creations. This was the first time Brazil Week included a cooking class event and it was a huge success, with over forty people in attendance!

The week-long celebration concluded with a roundtable discussion on historical preservation featuring **Marshall Eakin** (History) and **Jane Landers** (History). Entitled "Guerrilla Archiving: The Preservation of Afro-Brazilian History," the discussion focused on the Societies Digital Archive (SSDA) project, which digitizes secular and ecclesiastical records connected to the history of African slaves and their descendants in Brazil and across Latin



BRAZIL WEEK 2019
JUSTICE & EQUITY

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

DISCUSSION OF "SLAVERY, MEMORY, AND REPARATION IN BRAZIL"
FEATURING: ANA LUCIA ARAUJO, PROFESSOR AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY
BUTTRICK HALL 101 | 12:00 PM

BRAZILIAN DINNER & CONCERT BY CHORO NASHVILLE
BUTTRICK HALL TERRACE | 6:00 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

YU FACULTY ROUNDTABLE: "HIV/AIDS IN BRAZIL: POLITICS, POLICY & PUBLIC HEALTH"
FEATURING: ELIZABETH ZECHMEISTER (PSCI), JULIE PETTY (MHS) AND JESSICA CASTILHO (MDCI)
BUTTRICK HALL 101 | 10:30 PM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

STUDY ABROAD ROUNDTABLE FEATURING YU STUDENTS
BUTTRICK HALL 101 | 10:30 AM

SCREENING OF "ONEN WHEN I DANCE"
FEATURING: ANA CHRISTINA DA SILVA (PEABODY)
CRAWFORD HOUSE AT THE COMMONS | 6:00 PM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

"RECLAIMING ORIGINS THROUGH STREET FOOD: TAPIOCA, ACARAJÉ, PÃO DE QUEIJO AND BRAZILIAN HISTORY"
COOKING CLASS AND DISCUSSION
FEATURING: BEN LEGG (PORT)
YU RECREATION CENTER | 6:00 PM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

"GUERRILLA ARCHIVING: THE PRESERVATION OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN HISTORY"
FEATURING: JANE LANDERS (HIST) AND MARSHALL EAKIN (HIST)
BUTTRICK HALL 101 | 10:30 PM

Center for Latin American Studies
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

WITH SUPPORT FROM:
THE GOVERNMENT OF URBINO, SLAVE SOCIETY OF URBINO, THE SOCIETY FOR WORLD HISTORY, THE DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE LITERATURE, SCHOOL OF WARREN, GLOBAL EDUCATION OFFICE, THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDY ASSOCIATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: CLAS@VANDERBILT.EDU

America. In many cases, these documents run the risk of disintegrating or being destroyed before entering into the historical record.

The Vanderbilt College of Arts & Science supported the event series with day-to-day coverage, capitalizing on the importance of Brazil Week as an example of trans-institutional collaboration on campus. The full report, with images, can be found here: <https://as.vanderbilt.edu/news/2019/09/18/center-for-latin-american-studies-hosts-annual-brazil-week-celebration/>.

CLAS Assistant Director, **Nicolette Kostiw**, organizes Brazil Week with support from Alma Paz-Sanmiguel and Colleen McCoy.





Haiti Week 2020

CLAS hosted the fourth annual Haiti Week February 3-6 to highlight Haiti's history, language, literature, and culture, as well as the study of Kreyòl on campus.

The week began with "Cooking and Kreyòl" led by **Danielle Dorvil**, doctoral student in Spanish and Portuguese, and **Wilna Taylor**, Assistant Director of the Curb Center. Vanderbilt students, faculty, and staff learned the history and preparation of Soup Joumou, a traditional Haitian dish. Dorvil also led participants in a conversational Kreyòl lesson.

On Tuesday, Haiti Week Keynote Speaker **Marlene Daut** (University of Virginia) engaged a full house with her lecture, "Beyond Trouillot: Unsettling Genealogies of Haitian



Thought" in the Black Cultural Center.

The following day, Vanderbilt alumna **Megan Myers** (Iowa State University) returned to campus to speak about her research "In Transit: Memorialization, Reconciliation, and Remembrance at the Haitian-Dominican Border." Later that day, **Brandon Byrd** (History) explored his work with "Reconsidering the Archives and History of Haitian Emigration."

Haiti Week concluded on Thursday evening with the International Lens screening of *Fatal Assistance*, a documentary by Raoul Peck, with discussion led by **Nathan Dize**, doctoral student in French and Italian.

CLAS also hosted Kreyòl instructor



Jacques Pierre during the week. Pierre is based at Duke and provides distance Kreyòl instruction for Vanderbilt students through a Vanderbilt-Duke-UVa partnership. Pierre met with Kreyòl students and interacted with Vanderbilt faculty and visiting speakers; both Myers and Daut are former students of Pierre.

CLAS thanks the following groups for co-sponsoring Haiti Week 2020: The Curb Center, African American and Diaspora Studies, Robert Penn Warren Center, Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center, Latin American & Caribbean Student Association, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, International Lens, and the Center for Second Language Studies.

Guatemala Scholars Network Hosts Fifth Conference in Antigua

The Guatemala Scholars Network conference took place July 11–13, 2019. The conference occurs in odd years in Antigua at the Cooperación Española; this year marked the fifth time the international conference was held. Attended by over 200 people, the theme of this year's conference was migration, with panelists offering perspectives of migration from both sides of the border, as well as workshops for those serving as expert witnesses for asylum cases. Other panels focused on historical memory and linguistic diversity, health and access to care in indigenous communities, and graduate student research highlighted in our New Scholars sessions. **Aracely Martínez** (Universidad del Valle) and **Lisa Maya Knauer** (University of Massachusetts) organized the 2019 conference, with support from 2017 conference organizers **Tatiana Paz-Lemus** (Universidad del Valle) and **Kedron Thomas** (University of Washington). CLAS Administrator **Alma Paz-Sanmiguel** worked closely with the GSN Board to provide logistical

support and manage on-the-ground logistics.

GSN Coordinator, **Avery Dickins de Girón**, welcomed attendees to the conference on July 11. Later that day, participants gathered at a beautiful reception hosted by CIRMA (Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica), which featured a photographic exhibit documenting the experience of migrants around the world as well as a talk by two of the photographers.

The following evening, the keynote talk featured Guatemalan congresswoman **Sandra Morán**; she is the first openly LGBT person elected to Guatemala's national legislature and has been a longtime feminist activist and artist. In her spirited talk, she discussed the political climate in Guatemala prior to the presidential election, which took



place in August 2019. Following the keynote, attendees participated in a candlelight vigil protesting the detainment of child migrants in detention centers in the United States; the vigil was an international effort organized through Lights of Liberty.

Conference participants had ample opportunities to interact with colleagues and meet new ones during the opening reception, frequent coffee breaks, and a closing dinner at the Calle de la Fonda Real.

Visionary Aponte *Reimagines the* Lost Book of Paintings Created by 19th Century Afro-Cuban Revolutionary Leader José Antonio Aponte

Vanderbilt's Fine Art Gallery kicked off 2020 by hosting an extraordinary exhibit that brought together historians and artists to tell the story of José Antonio Aponte, the revolutionary leader of a 19th century antislavery movement. "Visionary Aponte: Art and Black Freedom" featured 20 contemporary artists to interpret the lost "Book of Paintings" created by Afro-Cuban artist and activist Aponte and lost after his public execution in 1812. During his trial, Aponte was forced to describe his book in detail; participating artists for the exhibition used his testimony to reimagine the lost book for today's audience. The exhibit was curated by artist **Edouard Duval Carrié** and historian **Ada Ferrer**, Julius Silver Professor of History and Latin American and Caribbean History at New York University. "With this exhibition, the artists experiment with ways to mitigate the violence of the colonial archive and invite us to think about the role of art in envisioning and making social change," said Ferrer. Duval Carrié and **María Magdalena Campos-Pons**, the Cornelius Vanderbilt Professor of Art, launched the show with a gallery tour on January 9.

Artists who contributed to "Visionary Aponte" include Grettel Arrate Hechavarría (Santiago, Cuba), José Bedia (Miami), María Magdalena Campos-Pons (Nashville), Juan Roberto Diago (Havana), Édouard Duval Carrié (Miami), Alexis Esquivel Bermudez (Cuba/Spain), Jöelle Ferly (Guadalupe), Teresita Fernández (New York), Alberto Lescay (Santiago, Cuba), Tessa Mars (Port-au-Prince, Haiti), Emilio Martínez (Miami), Emilio Adán Martínez (Miami), Nina Angela Mercer (New York), Clara Morera (North Carolina), Glexis Novoa (Miami), Vicki Pierre (Miami), Marielle Plaisir (Miami), Asser Saint-Val (Miami), JeanMarcel Saint-Jacques (New Orleans) and Renée Stout (Washington, D.C.).

The exhibition also incorporates—and the art engages—scholarly research on Aponte and his world by Ferrer and art historian Linda Rodríguez, curator of Digital Aponte.

Other events in conjunction with the exhibition included:

- A talk by **Paula Covington**, Latin American and Iberian bibliographer and senior lecturer in Latin American Studies, on January 23 on a concurrent exhibit she curated, "Found in Cuba: The Ingenuity and Creativity of Ediciones Vigía Publishing House," in the Jean and Alexander Heard Libraries' Special Collections (see page 10).
- On February 20, **Alejandro de la Fuente**, Robert Bliss Woods Professor of Latin American History and Economics and professor of African and African American Studies and History at Harvard University, discussed "New Perspectives on the Black Atlantic" sponsored by the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities.
- On February 27, **Ada Ferrer**, NYU Julius Silver Professor of History and exhibition co-curator presented an engaging lecture on her historical research of Aponte, which ultimately inspired the creation of "Visionary Aponte," and the process of the inspiration and creation of the exhibition. **Jane Landers**, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of History and director of the Slave Societies



Clara Morera, *The Preboste King (King Juan)*, 2017, mixed media on canvas, 72 x 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Dorfsman Fine Arts; Miami; photograph by Yolanda Navas.

Digital Archive, provided an overview of the historical sources for the life and death of Aponte, which were recently discovered in the archive she leads.

CLAS supported the production of the catalog for the exhibit. Co-sponsors of the exhibition included the Departments of Art and History, Center for Latin American Studies, Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities, and Heard Libraries. The exhibition was also made possible with support from New York University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, New York University Provost's Global Research Initiatives, Green Family Foundation, Art Basel Miami Beach, Knight Foundation, Little Haiti Cultural Complex, The Haitian Cultural Arts Alliance, Miami-Dade County, New York University King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center, and Duke Forum for Scholars and Publics.

—With thanks to Anne Marie Deer Owens



Nopalitos de Amor



Roaming Along Humantay

Sixth Annual Latin American Images Photo Competition

Led by **Alma Paz-Sanmiguel**, the sixth annual Latin American Images competition took place in January. Each year, CLAS invites Vanderbilt students, faculty, staff and visiting scholars to submit their favorite original photo taken in Latin America for the contest. This year, CLAS received 43 submissions representing 14 countries. Judges **Mareike Sattler** (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology) and **Ashley Heaton** (Assistant University Registrar) selected the top twenty photos to be printed and displayed in Buttrick Hall Atrium.

CLAS held a reception to announce the winners, awarding first place to **Keitlyn Alcantara** (Anthropology) for “Nopalitos de Amor,” second place to **Maya Krause** (Anthropology) for “Roaming Along Humantay” and third place to **Catherine Gonzalez** (Peabody) for “A Tale of Two Stories.” The People’s Choice Award went to undergraduate **Alex Ismodes** for “The Observer.” The award is given to the photo with the most “likes” received on social media; Ismodes’ photo received 389 “likes” by the day of the award ceremony.



CLAS donated several photo prints from previous exhibits to the University of Georgia in Athens to be permanently exhibited in their Latin American and Caribbean Studies Institute. In addition, a photo from this year’s competition will live in the College of Arts and Science Dean’s Office in Buttrick Hall.



The Observer



A Tale of Two Stories

CLAS Hosts Myriam Moscona for the Distinguished Lectureship in Spanish and Portuguese

CLAS initiated its new series of Distinguished Lectureships with Myriam Moscona in February 2020. A distinguished poet, journalist, and visual artist, Moscona appeared on Mexico's literary scene in 1983 with a book of verses, *Último jardín*. In 1989, she received the most prestigious recognition in Mexican poetry, the Premio Aguascalientes de Poesía, for her book *Las visitantes*. Moscona was awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 2006 for a poetry project in Judeo-Spanish, which culminated in her first novel, *Tela de sevoya*. She later received the Xavier Villaurrutia Prize, the highest literary award in Mexico, for *Tela de sevoya* in 2012. Her work has been translated into Chinese, Arabic, Bulgarian, Swedish, German, Greek, Hebrew, Dutch and almost all Romance languages.



Even though she is best known internationally for her poetry, Moscona's work is versatile and ambitious; she has published ten books of poetry, a novel, an anthology of texts from the Sephardic diaspora, and a series of visual poetry objects. Other visual art adventures have led Moscona to experiment with the forms and meanings of tortillas and to create translucent rain sticks with embedded texts. In addition to working as a poet and artist, Moscona presents a daily cultural broadcast for Mexican TV Canal 22 and directs the radio station of the Instituto de Bellas Artes in Mexico City.

During the last decade, Moscona has devoted herself to finding her Bulgarian Sephardic roots, which has led her to explore the Judeo-Spanish language. When the Jews were expelled from the Iberian peninsula in 1492, they took their Judeo-Spanish language, which is also referred to as Ladino, Judezmo, and Espanyolit. This archaic Spanish was filled with terms from liturgical Hebrew and idioms from Sephardic diasporic communities. Although it was spoken in Jewish communities throughout the Ottoman period and later in modern states, it is an endangered language today.

Moscona's paternal and maternal families lived in present-day Bulgaria until shortly after World War II, when they migrated to Mexico. Using the passage from the Balkans to America as a departing point for *Tela de sevoya*, the author follows the various border crossings of her protagonists as they travel through time and space. Moscona intentionally challenges her readers in her 2015 *Ansina* ("That's it"), which is a compilation of poems in Judezmo. With this collection, she follows Argentine poet Juan Gelman whose poems were published in Ladino (*Dibaxu*). However, in *Ansina*, Moscona refuses to provide full translations of the text for the average Spanish speaking reader and, instead, offers a "Glossary" to help the reader understand.

During her visit to Vanderbilt, Moscona spoke about the Judeo-Spanish language and history, with a public talk on February 17 titled "Judeo-Spanish: A Torch Lit 500 Years Ago that is Extinguishing in my Hands." Later that day, Moscona led a Poetry Writing Workshop conducted in Spanish and open to students and faculty from across campus. The following day she participated in a graduate seminar, "Modern Hispanic Poetry and Poetics," where she gave readings from *Ansina* and spoke with graduate students about being a poet, a journalist, and an artist in Mexico. All the events were free and open to the public.

Thanks to Associate Professor of Spanish **Christina Karageorgou-Bastea** for hosting Myriam Moscona and providing the content for this newsletter.

History, Earth and Environmental Science, and CLAS Host Brazilian Scholars

In January, CLAS and the Department of History invited **Rodrigo Camargo de Godoi**, Professor of History from UNICAMP in Campinas, to Vanderbilt. Hosted by **Celso Castilho** (History), Godoi spent ten days meeting with faculty and students, conducting research in the library's Brazilian collections, and working with the VU Press on the launch of his forthcoming book, *Francisco de Paula Brito: A Black Publisher in Imperial Brazil*. He also gave a public talk based on his new book, "A Black Publisher in Brazil."

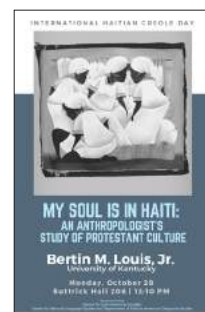
Juarez "Juca" Pezzuti, Professor with the Center for Amazonian Studies at UFPA in Belém, was invited by **Malu Jorge** and the Department of Earth and Environmental Science and **Richard Pace** at MTSU. A self-described ethno-ecologist, Pezzuti gave a public talk on January 31 about "Participatory research and wildlife management in Xingu River Basin, Brazilian Amazon" that generated a lively discussion from the nearly fifty attendees.

CLAS Invites Bertin M. Louis, Jr. to Vanderbilt in Recognition of International Creole Day

CLAS celebrated International Creole Day on October 28 with a visit from anthropologist **Bertin M. Louis, Jr.** (University of Kentucky). Louis presented findings from his recent book *My Soul is in Haiti: Protestantism in the Haitian Diaspora of the Bahamas*,

combining multi-site ethnographic research in the United States, Haiti, and the Bahamas. The work explores why Protestantism has appealed to the Haitian diaspora community in the Bahamas, demonstrating how devout Haitian Protestant migrants use their religious identities to ground themselves in a place that is hostile to them as migrants.

Louis is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Kentucky and the inaugural Director of Undergraduate Studies in African American and Diaspora Studies. He teaches courses in Black Studies and Cultural Anthropology. While at Vanderbilt, Louis also gave a lecture on the Haitian Diaspora in Nathan Dize's Intensive Introduction to French in the World class, and met with faculty and graduate students.



2019 Summer Research Awardees



Alex Allison (MA in LAS, 2021) is from Fort Wayne, Indiana, and graduated from Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) with a B.A. in History with honors. During his undergraduate studies,

Alex developed a strong interest in Latin American history which led him to participate in a semester-long study abroad program at the Universidad Católica de Valparaíso in Chile. In 2016, Alex's interests in Colombia's civil conflict led him to serve as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant at the Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó located in Quibdó, Colombia. Throughout his role as an ETA, Alex developed a strong admiration of Chocoano culture and gained a unique appreciation of how geographic isolation, government abandonment, racial injustice, and poverty enable armed groups to operate within the department of Chocó. Alex intends to use his time as a master's student at Vanderbilt to study the history of the armed groups in Chocó and other departments along Colombia's Pacific coast and to explore how racial attitudes, social marginalization, and geography impact the peace-building process. Additionally, Alex was excited to receive an AY FLAS fellowship to study Haitian Creole at Vanderbilt and looks forward to expanding his understanding of the Black Atlantic.



Lorely Chavez (MA in LAS/MPH, 2022) is a first-generation college student from the Central Valley of California. Lorely is a dual-degree masters student in Latin American Studies and Global Health, and is interested in exploring

health equity in underserved populations. She obtained her Bachelors of Arts at the University of California-Merced where she studied Psychology and Public Health. She has served her community in various capacities through community-agency collaborations such as in healthy equity and anti-tobacco coalitions. Lorely's experiences involve working with Latinx migrant farm laborers, developing health workforce programs, and creating avenues for communities to utilize local data for their own projects or initiatives through community-based participatory research

methods. Lorely received an AY FLAS fellowship to study K'iche' Mayan at Vanderbilt, and will focus her research on immigration experiences, women's health, and health access in Central America.



Isaac Schlotterbeck (MA in LAS/MPH, 2022) was born and raised in Fort Myers, Florida, and graduated *cum laude* from Dickinson College with a B.A. in Political Science and Latin American Studies. During his undergraduate studies,

Isaac studied abroad in Ecuador and Argentina. At Dickinson College, Isaac developed an academic interest in marginalized groups in South America, with a focus on indigenous peoples in Ecuador and Bolivia. After graduating in the spring of 2016, Isaac moved to Washington, DC where he worked for Polaris Project, a NGO that fights human trafficking, and later for Advisory Board/Optum, a healthcare technology, consulting, and research firm. Isaac is a dual-degree masters student in Latin American Studies and Global Health programs, and received an AY FLAS fellowship to study Portuguese. He intends to integrate his interests in Latin America and public health through a thesis project that examines improvements in the access and quality of healthcare in Latin America through technology.



Margaret Kelly (PhD, Spanish & Portuguese, 2023) is from Atlanta and is a doctoral student in the department of Spanish and Portuguese. She obtained her undergraduate degree in Romance Languages (Spanish and French)

from the University of Georgia in 2013. After living and working in Paris, France for a year, she moved to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where she worked as a Teaching Assistant and obtained her Masters of Arts in the Teaching Languages with a triple emphasis in Spanish, French, and TESOL from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2017. She received an AY FLAS award in Portuguese and plans to develop a dissertation project that engages an eco-critical and feminist approach to contemporary Latin American literature.

2019 Summer Award Research Summaries

CLAS coordinates student research roundtables in September and January to highlight research carried out by our summer award recipients.

The Fall 2019 roundtable presenters were:

- **Meg Frost** (CLAS Summer Research Award), doctoral student in Political Science, investigated the connections between public opinion, violence, crime, and the state in Aguascalientes and Mexico City.
- **Maria Paula Andrade Diniz de Araujo** (CLAS Summer Research Award), doctoral student in History, looked at how modernity, national building processes, and the rise of the public health system influenced the lives of the poor in Recife in the 19th century.
- **Allison Booher** (Simon Collier Travel Award), undergraduate Latin American Studies and Neuroscience double-major, traveled to Tegucigalpa and Santiago, Chile to do a comparative study of emergency medicine structures, resources, and physicians.

In Spring 2020, roundtable presenters were:

- **Michaela Peterson** (CLAS Summer Research Award), doctoral student in Earth & Environmental Sciences, tracked the thermoregulatory behavior and foraging patterns of white-lipped peccaries in the state of São Paulo.
- **Milton André Ramos Chacon** (CLAS Summer Research Award), doctoral student in Spanish & Portuguese, analyzed archived legal cases in Cusco to uncover homicide, adultery, and other colonial scandals.
- **Nathan Frisch** (CLAS Summer Research Award), doctoral student in Anthropology, examined public transportation as a way to understand political currents and shifting urban landscapes among the residents of El Alto, Bolivia.
- **Stacy Horton** (Simon Collier Travel Award), undergraduate Latin American Studies and Cinema Media Arts double-major, used film to study outside cultural influences and change over time among the M'begokre people of A'Uk're, Brazil.

Outstanding Undergraduate Student Profile: Allison Booher

In middle school, **Allison Booher** (BA'21) already knew she wanted to be a doctor. Since then, she has been working to make it a reality. When Booher enrolled at Vanderbilt, she charted out a traditional path to medical school as a biochemistry major—but then a Spanish class changed her life.

Before arriving at Vanderbilt, Booher had already spent about half of her life learning and speaking Spanish. When she was nine years old, her parents adopted a daughter from Colombia, and the family quickly embraced the new sibling's Latin American heritage. At Vanderbilt, rather than continue with Spanish classes that focused on grammar and vocabulary, Booher decided to take a class in her second semester that focused on Spanish culture. That was the spark that ignited a new path for her—one that combined a deep interest with her greatest ambition.

That one Spanish class led her to Latin American Studies, along with classes in anthropology, race, and politics that moved Booher to switch majors and embark on a new journey. Today, Booher is a junior and double-majoring in Latin American Studies and Neuroscience, a track that she was able to carve for herself because of the interdisciplinary opportunities and support she found through CLAS and the College of Arts and Science.

She has also taken every opportunity she can, both on and off campus, to expand her understanding of the medical field and Latin American culture and issues. While interning at a health clinic in Honduras this past summer, Booher received a Simon Collier Travel Award from CLAS. She used the grant to create her dream project; she took the data she'd already been compiling in Honduras, traveled to Chile, met with doctors and nurses, and even observed a surgery, while compiling research on Chile's health system. The end result was a comparative study of the disparities in emergency medicine between two major hospitals in Tegucigalpa and Santiago, including ways to close the gaps between them.

Combining neuroscience, medicine, and cultural studies is something Booher believes she can apply here in the United States, with the country's growing Latin American and Spanish-speaking populations. Her work as an interpreter at the Siloam Health Clinic is already giving her experience serving immigrants, refugees, and other marginalized groups in the community. Booher said those interactions with patients at Siloam have given her even more motivation to pursue her work with health equity in the local community. Booher said she hopes to continue her career path toward medicine with that perspective in mind. With medical school and residency still ahead of her, she knows that some parts of her path may still change, but she is grateful to have taken some risks and experienced amazing things so far.



Graduate Certificate in LAS

The Center for Latin American Studies offers a graduate certificate in Latin American Studies for doctoral and professional students. The certificate allows students to document their regional specialization and to engage with the broader community of Latin Americanists on campus, as well as encouraging them to study outside their home discipline. Requirements include: 1) 12 credit hours in coursework on Latin America, with at least 6 hours coming from outside the home discipline; 2) demonstrated conversational or reading proficiency in Spanish, Portuguese, or an indigenous Latin American language, 3) participation in a minimum of 5 extracurricular activities sponsored by CLAS.

2019 LAS Graduates

Congratulations to our 2019 graduates!

MA in Latin American Studies:

Alejandro Botia completed his degree in August 2019 and his thesis was entitled, "The Venezuelan Diaspora: Toward a New Understanding of Forced Migrations." He recently started a degree program at MTSU in Curriculum and Instruction.

Demetrius Murphy graduated in May 2019 with an MA thesis entitled, "Doing Business in the Black: Afro-Brazilian Entrepreneurship as Resistance to Anti-Blackness in São Paulo, Brazil." He is now a doctoral student in Sociology at the University of Southern California.

Undergraduate students with majors/minors in Latin American Studies:

Morgan Marquez, a double-major in LAS and Economics, wrote an Honors thesis entitled, "Promoting Food Security in Argentina Through Small Farmer Support Programs."

Daniel White, a Philosophy major with a LAS minor, is currently enrolled as a masters student in Philosophy at Vanderbilt.

Ian Herrera, a Blair composition major and LAS minor, plans to attend law school.

Graduate Certificates in Latin American Studies:

Damien Domenack received a Masters of Divinity degree and will remain at Vanderbilt to complete a Masters of Theology as well.

Taylor Matherly received an MEd in IEPM and an MPH degree with an emphasis on Global Health.

Kayla Somerville received an MPH degree with an emphasis on Global Health.

David Vila Diéguez completed a PhD in Spanish and is now Assistant Professor in the Department of Languages and Linguistics at the University of Texas-El Paso.

Elsa Young graduated from the MHS 4+1 program.

In addition, **24 affiliated graduate students** with an emphasis on Latin America completed their studies and received degrees in 2019 (MBA/LLM, MD, PhD, MEd, MDiv).

CLAS Grants \$75,000 for Summer Research and Study of Latin American Languages

CLAS awarded a total of seven **Summer FLAS fellowships** for 2020. Four went to Vanderbilt students planning to attend the Summer in Brazil program in São Paulo hosted by Tulane and Vanderbilt: **Brayan Serratos** (doctoral student in Spanish & Portuguese), **Margaret Kelly** (doctoral student in Spanish & Portuguese), **Isaac Schlotterbeck** (LAS and MPH), and undergraduate **Taylor Oshana**. **Loirely Chavez** (LAS and MPH) and **Joanna Beltrán Girón** (PhD student in Social Psychology at CUNY) received FLAS fellowships to study K'iche' through the Mayan Language Institute, and **Andrea López** (Spanish & Portuguese) received funding to study Quechua at Centro Tinku in Peru.

Three students were selected to receive Simon Collier Travel Awards to conduct summer research. **Lela Udry** (undergraduate major in Spanish) will travel to Peru to do research on human trafficking among young indigenous women, and **Carlota Martínez-Don** (undergraduate major in Law, History, and Society) will travel to Mexico to investigate US-Mexico trade relations. **Maren Loveland** (doctoral student in English) will travel to Argentina to research dams and digital media.

With funding from the Tinker Foundation and Vanderbilt's School of Arts and Science, CLAS awarded eight Field Research Grants for pre-thesis and pre-dissertation study in Latin America.

- **Alex Allison** (LAS): "Chocó, Colombia: Peace, Violence and the FARC"
- **Miguel Cuj** (Anthropology): "K'iche' Mayan Women's Income and Food Access in Iximulew (Guatemala)"
- **Vilmaris González** (Peabody): "Identity development, U.S. immigration policy, and the political relationship between the United States and Mexico"
- **Maya Krause** (Anthropology): "Life and Death in the Inka Heartland, Peru: A bioarchaeological investigation of imperialism"
- **Steven Rodríguez** (History): "Cuba, US Immigration Policies, and Foreign Student Migration in Interwar Years"
- **Samantha Turley** (Anthropology): "The Catholic Church, labor reorganization, and architecture in southern Peru during the early colonial period (1530–1630)"
- **Richard Sakamoto-Pugh** (History): "A History of Policing in Northern Mexico"
- **James Zimmer-Dauphinee** (Anthropology): "Colonialism, Food Production, and Agricultural Deintensification in Arequipa, Peru"

Twenty-Six Students Attend "Summer in Brazil" Intensive Language Program

Tulane University's Stone Center for Latin American Studies and CLAS collaborated again to host the "Summer in Brazil: Portuguese Language and Culture" immersion program in 2019. This six-week intensive academic program is eligible for students with Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships, and is offered in partnership with CET Academic Programs at the Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP). Students enrolled in the program took advanced or intermediate Portuguese language courses taught by CET faculty, and a course on current social issues in Brazil, led by **Chris Dunn** (Tulane University). Students lived with Brazilian host families in the Perdizes neighborhood of São Paulo and explored the city and its surroundings through excursions to museums, landmarks, and historic sites. In 2019 a total of 26 students attended the program. CLAS awarded summer FLAS fellowships to four Vanderbilt students to attend the program in 2019: undergraduates **Calvin Beck**, **Katelyn Reneslacs**, **Kayla Vine**, and graduate student **Courtney Young**.

Tinker Foundation Awards Funding to CLAS to Support Graduate Student Research in Latin America

CLAS received \$20,000 from the Tinker Foundation to support graduate student summer research for the next two years. The grant is matched by funding from Vanderbilt's College of Arts and Science, and targets students conducting pre-dissertation or master's thesis research in the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries of Latin America. Awards are for approximately \$2500 each and are intended to support travel expenses related to summer research. CLAS issues a call for applications each December, and announces award recipients in February. Since 2009, CLAS has supported 71 students with Tinker Field Research Grants.

Summer Funding Opportunities through CLAS

For more information on CLAS funding opportunities, visit <https://as.vanderbilt.edu/clas/graduate-programs/financial-aid/student-summer-awards/>

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships

CLAS receives funding from the U.S. Department of Education to support Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) awards for intensive studies of Portuguese or indigenous Latin American languages. Fellowships provide up to \$5000 for tuition expenses and a stipend of \$2,500. Any graduate or undergraduate student who is a U.S. citizen or permanent U.S. resident with interest in these languages is eligible to apply.

Tinker Field Research Grants

CLAS receives funding from the Tinker Foundation, matched by funds from the College of Arts and Sciences, to support graduate students conducting pre-dissertation research in Latin America.

Simon Collier Travel Award

A historian of Chile with an expertise in Argentine tango, Simon Collier was director of Vanderbilt CLAS and Chair of the Department of History. Simon Collier Travel Awards preferentially fund research in Chile and Argentina, but may also be used elsewhere in Latin America. These awards are available to both undergraduate and graduate students.

CLAS Welcomes Three Latin American Humphrey Fellows

The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program was initiated in 1978 to honor the late senator and vice president and his lifelong commitment to international cooperation and public service. The program brings accomplished educational leaders from developing nations and emerging democracies to the United States for an academic year to study, gain related professional experience, build their leadership capacity, and foster mutual understanding. The program provides a basis for lasting ties between U.S. citizens and the fellows while strengthening the global exchange of knowledge and expertise. Humphrey fellows are selected based on their potential for leadership and their commitment to public service in either the public or the private sector.



Patricia García is a social innovator committed to rural schooling. She has served as the Executive Director of Misiones Rurales Argentina, an NGO focused on educational development in the rural communi-

ties of Argentina. Ms. García also co-founded Edu Rural, an organization composed of 30 NGO's with the purpose of fighting inequalities and raising awareness on the needs of the rural sector. With Edu Rural, she has led numerous campaigns to fulfill the needs of educational institutions in rural areas. Currently, she works for Varkey Foundation, where she is responsible for the review of innovation projects in primary public schools of Buenos Aires province.

During her time at Vanderbilt, Ms. García will focus on conflict resolution, emotional learning, and educational innovation support, as well as public advocacy and public policy. When she returns home, she hopes to bring equity to the rural education sector and increase the visibility of the needs of indigenous and rural communities. Her long-term goals involve governmental action that pursues quality education in rural and vulnerable areas as well as vulnerable communities in urban areas.



Rowena Rosheen Nicolette Pascascio of Belize is the vice principal for Anglican Cathedral College, where she leads the evaluation and monitoring of curriculum implementation, and provides professional development oppor-

tunities. She led the creation of their successful School Improvement Plan that has helped the most at-risk students in Belize advance educationally. She has 20 years of experience in the field of education as a teacher and vice principal at both the primary and secondary levels. In addition to her professional efforts, Ms. Pascascio works to improve the lives of the students through community service; her volunteer efforts have included waterways cleanup, life-skills coaching for at-risk females, and providing food for the homeless. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Primary Education from University of Belize as well as a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of North Florida.

At Vanderbilt, Ms. Pascascio will focus on the importance of teacher training and leadership effectiveness in education. She looks forward to connecting with public and private educational institutions to share best practices in primary and secondary school leadership as well as educational quality and equity. Upon her return to Belize, Ms. Pascascio intends to engage Belizean governmental agencies with the goal of improving educational strategies and policies that enable Belizean students to become productive members of society.



Maika María Dorantes Moguel serves as the Supervisor of Education for the Secretary of Public Education in Mexico. She oversees 11 schools from three municipalities, including some of the most improv-

erished areas in the state of Yucatán. Ms. Dorantes provides a link between educational officials and schools by assisting principals and teachers in working towards a higher quality of education for their schools; she offers workshops, courses, and guidance to the staff she oversees at the 11 different locations. Ms. Dorantes studied primary education at Normal Rodolfo Menéndez de la Peña in Mérida and has a master's degree in educational research from the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán.

During her time as a Humphrey Fellow, Ms. Dorantes will explore teacher-training approaches from a human development perspective. She is especially interested in the use of resources, classroom management, gamification, and others strategies to engage students and formative assessment. She also hopes to create a non-governmental organization centered on teachers' needs, as she believe that teachers are important agents of social change.

Both **Ms. Pascascio** and **Ms. Dorantes** have been active participants in CLAS programming during their year at Vanderbilt. Ms. Dorantes helped represent Mexico along with Alma Paz-Sanmiguel for the "Cos-MOORE-politan" celebration at Moore College in October 2019. Ms. Dorantes and Ms. Pascascio served as guest experts for their respective countries during the CLAS Pre-Travel Orientation session on Latin America in February 2020.

Norma Antillón Award

In April, **Alexander Allison** was honored with the 2020 Norma Antillón Award. Established in 2013 by LAS faculty in honor of beloved Administrative Assistant at CLAS, Norma Antillón, the award goes to the MA in LAS student who best exemplifies the traits we most admire in her: a joyous spirit, concern for others, and collegiality. Alex was recognized for his positive attitude, motivation to help others, and important contributions to the CLAS mission during 2019-2020. Award recipients receive a cash prize and their names are engraved on a plaque housed in CLAS.

As a Peace Corps volunteer in the Colombian Chocó, Alex became deeply interested in the historical, political, and social connections between countries in the Black Atlantic. Alex has been an enthusiastic participant in a wide range of CLAS activities this year, including courses in Haitian Creole, Haiti Week, the Latin American Film Festival, and Brazil Week. In addition, he has been an enthusiastic contributor to the digitalization project for the Manuel Zapata Olivella Collection working with Paula Covington.

Study Abroad

Vanderbilt students have an increasing number of opportunities to learn and travel in Latin America including Spring Break trips, Maymester programs, and semester/academic year study abroad programs.

Over 100 Vanderbilt Students Spend Spring Break in Latin America

During Spring Break 2020, 107 Vanderbilt students had the opportunity to participate in immersive or service learning projects in Latin America.

Owen sent twenty-seven graduate students from across the university to work with partners in Mexico and Guatemala on social entrepreneurship initiatives through Project Pyramid.

Ana Regina Andrade (ECON) took a group of 13 graduate students in the GPED 7930 Field Experience in Economic Development Seminar course to Costa Rica to explore issues of poverty, inequality, eco-tourism, and migration. While in Costa Rica, the students met and interviewed policy makers at the World Bank and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), as well as citizens and entrepreneurs in the manufacturing and pharmaceutical industries. This year's trip also included a visit to a coffee plantation, a volcano, and Manuel Antonio National Park, a renowned nature preserve. After returning to campus, students prepared a summary report that focused on Nicaraguan migrants living in Costa Rica, anti-poverty programs currently being implemented, and the central role of eco-tourism within the Costa Rican economy. This is the third year that GPED 7930 has taken graduate students to Latin America for an immersive learning experience, with previous years exploring related topics in Paraguay and Chile. Students will present the findings of their research at a roundtable event in Fall 2020.

For undergraduates, **Cynthia Pascal** (Biomedical Engineering) led 12 students to Guatemala, and **Hiba Baroud** (Civil and Environmental Engineering) led another 4 students to Guatemala through the 100,000 Strong in the Americas grant for exchanges between Vanderbilt and the Universidad del Valle (see pages 7–8). Other students participated in projects through student-led service organizations: 30 students traveled with Manna Project International to Belize, Ecuador, and Guatemala, and 21 students with an interest in medicine traveled to Honduras through Global Brigades.

Semester Study Abroad Programs in Latin America

Long-term academic programs are available for one or two semesters in eight countries across Latin America. In collaboration with the Global Education Office (GEO), CLAS has established four semester abroad programs through the Consortium of Advanced Studies Abroad (CASA). CASA's programs are immersive and focus on improving students' oral and written skills in the local language; facilitating students' knowledge of the region; and providing students the opportunity to enroll in leading institutions of higher learning in Latin America. CASA

offers four sites in Latin America to Vanderbilt students for study abroad: **Havana, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, and Buenos Aires.**

GEO offers programs through the School for International Training (SIT) (**Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico**) and the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) (**Dominican Republic and Chile**) that provide a thematic focus for students interested in a deeper exploration of one topic. CIEE also offers Open Campus programs (**Argentina, Mexico, Costa Rica, Brazil, Chile**) that allow for individualized plans of study and meet the VU Immersion requirement. In Fall 2019, five Vanderbilt students studied in Chile and one student studied in Argentina.

More information on these programs can be found on GEO's website: vanderbilt.edu/geo.

Project Pyramid Partnerships in Latin America 2020

The Project Pyramid course is designed and managed by student leaders at the Turner Family Center for Social Ventures, housed in Owen Graduate School of Management. The program enables students from across disciplines to work together to utilize market-driven forces to create positive social change, in partnership with local and international organizations. Interdisciplinary student teams collaborate in address specific challenges presented by their partner organization, and travel to meet with the partner during Spring Break.

This year's Project Pyramid teams worked with organizations in Mexico, Guatemala, and Nigeria. Two teams traveled to Mexico City to work with MassChallenge, a start-up accelerator, and a MassChallenge winner, Abeja Reyna. The latter is an organic beauty line supporting bees and Mexican beekeepers.

Four Guatemala-based teams worked with various organizations, several of which have local affiliates or ties in Nashville.

The Soles4Souls team was focused on helping S4S tie their partnership with Street Business School to their economic impact goal of \$1 billion by 2030, specifically by scoping opportunities for expansion in Guatemala.



The Primeros Pasos team explored the feasibility of the clinic implementing a Chronic Care Follow-Up Program.

The Hanes Green Coffee Team worked with a budding corporate social responsibility consultancy within the coffee industry to provide a brand audit, create customer personas, and to ensure clarity of impact and beneficiaries.

The Impact Hub team worked with the Nashville Mayor's Office and Economic and Community Development team to explore plans for a business co-working space and support services to engage entrepreneurs from economically disenfranchised populations of Nashville. Their research involved benchmarking the Impact Hub in Antigua, Guatemala and the region's entrepreneurship ecosystem.

—Contributed by Megan Skaggs and Kathleen Fuchs Hritz



Mayan Language Institute

Vanderbilt and Tulane embarked on a new partnership with Antigua-based **Proyecto Lingüístico Francisco Marroquín** (PLFM) to host the 2019 Mayan Language Institute (MLI). Founded in 1969, PLFM is the oldest language school in Guatemala and is dedicated to teaching and preserving Guatemala's Mayan languages, as well as teaching Spanish.

The MLI offers six weeks of immersion in K'iche' and Kaqchikel Mayan languages. It is the only intensive program in the United States for the study of these languages, which are two of the most widely spoken Mayan languages. Approximately 1 million people speak K'iche' and 500,000 people speak Kaqchikel. Due to the recent influx of emigrants from Central America to the United States, demand for speakers of Mayan languages, particularly Mam, K'iche', and Q'anjob'al, has increased dramatically in immigration courts; the situation was described in the *New Yorker* in early 2020: [newyorker.com/magazine/2020/01/06/a-translation-crisis-at-the-border](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/01/06/a-translation-crisis-at-the-border)

In 2019, 10 students attended the Kaqchikel program, and 11 students attended the K'iche' program. The K'iche' program, led by **Mareike Sattler** (Vanderbilt University) and **Malcolm Miguel Botto** (Brigham Young University), began with a week-long orientation in Antigua and then took place in Nahualá. Students lived with host families in Nahualá and received daily classes from local language instructors. Vanderbilt graduate student **Megan Skaggs** (MA in LAS) and undergraduate **Alexa Bussman** received FLAS fellowships to attend the K'iche' program. **Judie Maxwell** (Tulane University) and **Ambrosia (Ixnal) Cuma Chavez** led the Kaqchikel program, which took place in Antigua. Other students enrolled in the MLI came from institutions across the country, including Tulane, University of Florida, University of Texas, Duke, University of Kansas, University of Virginia, Yale, University of North Carolina, Penn State University, Oregon State University, University of New Mexico, and University of California – Santa Barbara.

This year, MLI students had the opportunity to attend the Guatemala Scholars' Network conference, which brings approximately 200 academics, students, and professionals who study Guatemala to Antigua for a 3-day conference every other year. The theme for the 2019 conference was migration (see page 12).

ALUMNI NEWS

Andrea Delgado Galvez (MA, 2018) is a 1L law student at Emory University School of Law and plans to concentrate on immigration law.

Nicole Duciaume (B.A., 2000) is the Director of Sponsorship Programming at World Vision in Seattle, WA. World Vision is the largest child-focused NGO in the world and aims to provide humanitarian aid, improve living conditions, and advocate for children and families around the world.

Heather Ewing Ogle (MA in LAS/MPH, 2018) is a Health Communications Specialist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, GA.

Marvin Figueroa (BA, 2007) is the Legislative Director for the Office of Governor Ralph Northam in Richmond, VA.

Amanda Ketner Weissman (MEd, 2017/LAS certificate) is a PhD candidate in Quantitative Research Methods in Education at the University of Michigan. She recently published an article in the *Forum for International Research in Education* entitled, "Striving to Include the Excluded: A Case Study of a Special Education Initiative in Rural Honduras" about her CLAS-funded research experience in Central America.

Morgan Maxwell (MA, 2010) is a Post-Doctoral Fellow researching social determinants of health for ethnic minorities with the Center for Cultural Experiences in Prevention at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Jay Moody (BA, 2015) is an Emerging Markets FX Trading Associate at CITI Bank in New York City where he manages clients and risk in Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Chile.

Kevin Muñoz (BA, 2018) is the Nevada Press Secretary for the Biden for President Campaign.

Bryan Pitts (MA, 2006) is the Assistant Director of the Latin American Institute at UCLA.

Natasha Vaz (BA, 2015) is a Corporate Social Responsibility Analyst with Deloitte in Bogotá, Colombia.

CLAS thanks alumni **Laura Delgado** (MA 2010), **Morgan Maxwell** (MA, 2010), and **Dora Saclarides** (4+1/MA, 2017) for participating in this year's "Careers in Latin American Studies" video conference discussion as part of the core course for majors and graduate students, LAS 4901/5901.

Miguel Cuj (MA, 2018) is currently a doctoral student in Anthropology at Vanderbilt. He recently published "K'iche' Mayan Food Groups and Its Implications for Guatemalan Food Guidelines" in the *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*. The article concludes that the cognitive structure, understanding of food groups, and their uses communicated through K'iche' language differ significantly from the hierarchical, technical description of food groups communicated through Guatemalan national guidelines. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0379572120912161>

CLAS Hosts 32 Educators for K-16 Summer Institute on Central America

In June 2019, CLAS hosted the interdisciplinary summer institute “Central America: People and the Environment” to help K-16 and pre-service teachers incorporate environmental themes into their classrooms. This was the first of a four-year series of institutes designed to integrate area studies content and STEM topics, and is a collaboration with the University of Georgia and Tulane University. Each partner institution will host a summer institute, and will culminate in a trip to Central America in 2022.

Led by CLAS Outreach Coordinator **Colleen McCoy**, Vanderbilt hosted the first of this series from June 24–27. The 2019 institute focused on the impacts of deforestation, water access, environmental politics and sustainability in Central America, and received support from Florida International University, as well as the partner institutions. The institute was supported by the partner institutions and Florida International University.

“We are intimately connected to Latin America in so many ways, from trade and migration to the environment and our common histories,” said **Ted Fischer**, Cornelius Vanderbilt Professor of Anthropology and director of CLAS. “In this context, it is more important than ever that our students learn about the larger world to which our shared futures are linked.”

Throughout the four-day program, teachers attended lectures led by scholars from Vanderbilt, University of Georgia, Texas State



University, Tulane University, and the University of Oregon, engaged in hands-on activities, and created curriculum based on the content.

Claire Evans, graduate student in political science, kicked off the institute with the presentation “Public Opinion and Survey Data: Understanding Climate Change through People.” Evans introduced participants to the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) and shared strategies for using the collected data and survey process across a variety of K-12 courses.

Vanderbilt’s **Ashley Carse** (Peabody) explored his multi-disciplinary approach to the study of the Panama Canal with “Beyond the Big Ditch: Global Shipping and Water Politics Around the Panama Canal.” CLAS Executive Director **Avery Dickins de Girón** led the group on a tour of the Vanderbilt Latin American Garden, and later presented “Central America: History, Culture, and Emigration” to provide attendees with a historical context from which to approach their study of environmental issues.

Sharing his experience working with Zamorano University in Honduras, **John Crowley** (University of Georgia) examined “Sustainability Out of Necessity,” highlighting innovative strategies for the development of water and energy systems in rural communities. **Katherine Wright**, a Hillwood High School student and participant in the School for Science and Math at Vanderbilt (SSMV), presented her project “A Solar Oven for Replication in Developing Countries,” and later showcased the functional solar oven she built with fellow SSMV students and Vanderbilt engineering faculty.

The institute also featured interactive presentations with **Jennifer Devine** (Texas State University), who explored “narco-deforestation” and the environmental impacts of drug trafficking in Central America, as well as current models of sustainability in Guatemalan forestry communities. Devine also led a hands-on conceptual mapping session. Working in groups, the educators created visual projects to represent Central American migration paths, push-pull factors, and historical context.



Other presentations included “Connecting STEM through Children’s and Young Adult Literature” with **Denise Woltering-Vargas** (Tulane University), and examples of successful curriculum connections to environmental themes, shared by institute participants **Emily Baughman** (McGavock High School) and **Kelli Bivens** (Cedar Shoals High School). Following the institute, Bivens was awarded the Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms Programs grant and plans to focus on themes studied throughout the institute, including climate change.

The institute also featured daily curriculum development sessions led by **Stephanie Knight** (University of Oregon), who shared her research and passion for the incorporation of digital tools and intentional play in the classroom. The week concluded with participant presentations to share the new curriculum resources they had begun to develop during the institute.

According to the external evaluation of the institute, all participants indicated that they were “very likely” to use the ideas and materials provided by the program, and noted high satisfaction with the organization and structure, as well as the facilitation of their learning, and integration and applicability into their existing curricula. “This institute was the most useful professional and personal development I have engaged in,” reported one participant.

The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Institute at University of Georgia will host the next summer institute June 8–12, 2020 as an online program due to COVID-19.

Islandborn by Junot Díaz and Undocumented: A Worker's Fight by Duncan Tonatiuh Win the 2019 Américas Award

The 2019 Américas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature was awarded to *Islandborn*, written by **Junot Díaz** and illustrated by **Leo Espinosa** (Dial Books for Young Readers, 2018), and *Undocumented: A Worker's Fight*, written and illustrated by **Duncan Tonatiuh** (Abrams Books, 2018). Honorable mention went to *Auntie Luce's Talking Paintings*, written by **Francie Latour** and illustrated by **Ken Daley** (Groundwood Books, House of Anansi Press, 2018), and *The Poet X*, written by **Elizabeth Acevedo** (Harper Teen, 2018). The awards were presented at a ceremony in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., on September 27. Authors Latour and Tonatiuh spoke at the ceremony, as well as **Suzanne Schadl**, Chief of the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress. Nearly 70 K-12 teachers, students, and community members attended the ceremony.

In addition to the evening award ceremony, CLAS, Tulane University, and the Library of Congress held two other public events on September 27 to highlight the 2019 Américas Award. Latour gave a reading of *Auntie Luce's Talking Paintings* and explored her writing experience, making connections to her background in journalism. Following the award ceremony, Tonatiuh led more than 40 participants in a hands-on makerspace workshop, sharing his artistic inspiration from the tradition of Maya codices. The codex project created by the workshop group was displayed in the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress through October.

The Américas Award review committee selected twelve commended titles for 2019:

- *Alma and How She Got Her Name* written and illustrated by Juana Martínez-Neal. Candlewick Press, 2018.
- *Carmela Full of Wishes* written by Matt de la Peña and illustrated by Christian Robinson. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2018.
- *Dreamers* written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales. Neal Porter Books, 2018.
- *La Frontera: My Journey with Papa* written by Deborah Mills & Alfredo Alva and illustrated by Claudia Navarro. Barefoot Books, 2018.



- *A Gift from Abuela* written by Cecilia Ruiz. Candlewick Press, 2018.
- *Jazz Owls* written by Margarita Engle. Atheneum, 2018.
- *Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish* written by Pablo Cartaya. Viking, 2018.
- *Merci Suárez Changes Gears* written by Meg Medina. Candlewick Press, 2018.
- *Photographic: The Life of Graciela Iturbide* written by Isabel Quintero and illustrated by Zeke Peña. Abrams Books, 2018.
- *Puerto Rico Strong: A Comics Anthology Supporting Puerto Rico Disaster* written by Vita Ayala (Author), Hazel Newlevant (Editor), Desiree Rodriguez (Editor). Lion Forge, 2018.
- *They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems* written by David Bowles. Cinco Puntos Press, 2018.
- *When Angels Sing: The Story of Rock Legend Carlos Santana* written by Michael Mahin and illustrated by Jose Ramírez. Atheneum, 2018.

The Américas Award is sponsored by the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs and coordinated by Vanderbilt's Center for Latin American Studies and Tulane's Stone Center for Latin American Studies. The award recognizes children's and young adult books that authentically portray Latin America and the Caribbean, with a specific emphasis on potential for K-12 classroom use. The award also receives support from Florida International University, Stanford University, The Ohio State

University, Tulane University, University of Florida, University of New Mexico, University of Utah, UNC-Duke Consortium in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Vanderbilt University. For more information about the Américas Award, including related teaching resources and upcoming programming, visit claspprograms.org.

CLAS Provides Latin American Content for ReadWorks to Support Reading Comprehension for Students Across the United States

Since 2017, CLAS has partnered with ReadWorks, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving reading comprehension for K-12 students. Readworks is home to the largest library of curated nonfiction and literary articles in the United States, providing open access to content, curriculum, and training to educators.

As of October 2019, nearly 42,000 teachers across 21,613 schools engaged with the content produced by CLAS, and more than 100,000 students have received CLAS content as part of an assignment.

This year, CLAS produced new content in both English and Spanish, now providing more than 80 articles to the public through ReadWorks. All articles are available on readworks.org.

Day of the Dead

CLAS and Cheekwood teamed up to host our annual K-12 professional development workshop addressing themes of Día de los Muertos in early October. The workshop, “It’s OK to Make Mistakes: Exploring Culture with Day of the Dead,” featured a presentation and integrated activities by **Diana Ruggiero** (University of Memphis).

Ruggiero led educators in an engaging morning of content and reflection on the cultural and historical context of Day of the Dead in Latin America, incorporating themes of cultural awareness and unconscious bias with hands-on activities. Participants worked in groups to share their knowledge and learn from others, presenting to all attendees throughout the morning. The afternoon session highlighted hands-on art activities based on Mexican traditions and tailored for classroom use. One participant summarized how important the workshop is to her and for her students: “As always, it was a wonderful workshop full of useful ideas; I cannot wait to teach what I have learned.”

Later in October, Cheekwood’s annual Día de los Muertos festival featured traditional music and dance, vibrant art activities, a marketplace, altar displays, and Latin American cuisine from regional vendors. CLAS works



closely with Cheekwood to provide educational materials, including a bilingual booklet on the history and customs of the holiday, for festivalgoers, and **Colleen McCoy** serves on the festival’s advisory board. 6500 people attended the celebration in 2019.

CLAS staff and Vanderbilt graduate students joined other community organizations in creating an altar for the festival, and shared their knowledge of Día de los Muertos celebrations. This year’s display was a traditional

Mexican altar, with *pan de muerto*, sweet Mexican pastries, incense, candles, orange marigolds, Mexican embroidery, baskets, chocolate tablets, small bottles of alcohol, catrina figurines, and baskets. The offerings also included *fiambre*, a dish of pickled meats and vegetables made in Guatemala for Día de los Muertos. Many attendees sampled the unusual dish.

NCSS Conference and Area Studies Outreach Symposium

The 99th National Council for Social Studies Annual Conference was held November 22–24 in Austin, TX and featured the themes of “Informed Action; Agency, Advocacy, Activism.” CLAS, along with other centers from the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP), hosted a booth at the conference, reaching many of the 3,500 teachers who attended.

CLASP exhibited in the “International Alley,” highlighting the Américas Award for Children’s and Youth Literature for librarians and teachers, as well as the Américas Award Toolkit, curriculum, teaching materials, and professional development opportunities such as workshops and summer institutes.

CLAS Outreach Coordinator **Colleen McCoy** gave a presentation at the conference with **Denise Woltering-Vargas** (Tulane University), **Nicole Means** (West Feliciana



High School) and **Sharlyn Scott** (Desert Vista High School): “Off the Beaten Path: Teaching Migration and Megacities with Brazil.”

Means and Scott shared interactive social studies curriculum developed from their experience in Brazil attending the 2018

summer educator institute “Teaching Brazil: Expanding Perspectives on Colonial History” hosted by CLAS and Tulane. Institute coordinators McCoy and Woltering-Vargas made connections between the curriculum and the development of the institute, including the history, geography, and culture of the cities chosen for the trip.

Prior to the conference, McCoy attended the day-long Area Studies and Outreach Conference hosted by Hemispheres: The International Outreach Consortium at the University of Texas at Austin. This annual conference connects more than 50 outreach professionals from institutions across the country, providing them with the opportunity to share diverse perspectives and best practices for developing programming to engage educators and the general public in area studies.



Metro Nashville Public Schools and CLAS Partner to Provide Series of Professional Development Workshops on Central American Emigration

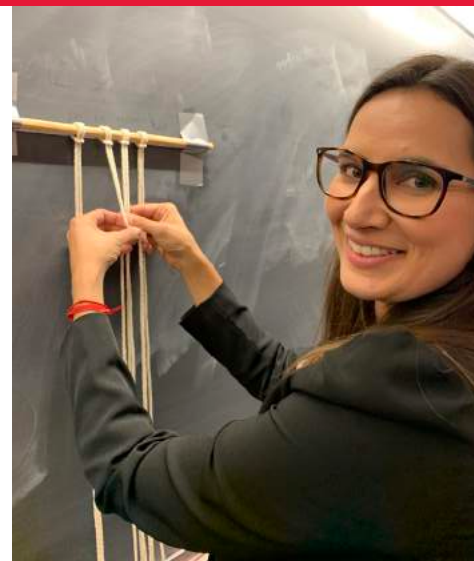
As part of a continuing partnership with Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS), CLAS collaborated throughout the year with the MNPS Office of English Learners to provide professional development to local K-12 educators. The collaboration began in January 2019 and has impacted more than 300 teachers.

In May 2019, CLAS Executive Director **Avery Dickins de Girón** and **Mareike Sattler** (Anthropology) explored Central American languages, culture, history, and emigration with more than 220 teachers at the EL Summer Advocacy Summit, “Extending Your Sphere of Influence,” held at Martin Professional Development Center. Other sessions included presentations by MNPS leaders, scholars from Ithaca College and Kennesaw State University, and representatives from Metro Nashville Police and Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC).

Dickins de Girón and Sattler provided a similar workshop for 50 educators at Antioch High School in October, and offered a half-day professional development workshop at Martin Professional Development Center in February. The latter workshop included a hands-on activity tailored for classroom use, as well as an in-depth group discussion following the presentation.

Over 25% of MNPS students have limited proficiency in English and are classified as English Learners. Spanish is the most widely spoken language of foreign-born students, but a number of MNPS students speak Mayan languages, with Achi, K’iche’, Chuj, Mam, and Q’eqchi’ most represented. “Working with CLAS has been pivotal in providing our English Learner, content and administrators with professional learning directly related to their daily experience in their diverse classrooms,” said **Megan Trcka**, MNPS EL Coordinator. “In collaborating with CLAS, we’ve been able to bridge our gaps in background to strengthen how we work with newly arrived families, approach outreach and improve relationships with our important stakeholders.”

CLAS, MNPS, and the Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE) had planned to collaborate on the 2020 EL Summer Advocacy Summit in May. The annual event, which reaches regional educators, administrators, and pre-service teachers, has been postponed to November 2020.



Women Weavers of Chiapas Workshop

In October, CLAS hosted 25 teachers, students, and community members for the Spanish language workshop “Women Weavers of Chiapas,” featuring visiting scholars **Fátima González Solano** and **Rodolfo Sánchez Zamarrón** (Universidad de Guadalajara). González and Sánchez presented their research on female weavers in San Juan Cancuc, Chiapas, Mexico, exploring the history, economic system, and inter-generational culture of the weaving tradition in the rural community. The workshop also featured an interactive weaving lesson with González, who led the participants in the creation of their own macramé wall hangings.

The following day, **Graciela Mayagoitia Viramontes** (Universidad de Guadalajara) shared her work with the presentation, “La Disciplina del Diseño Aplicada al Ámbito de las Artesanía Mexicana.” Mayagoitia examined the incorporation of indigenous artisanship into mainstream design pedagogy and balanced approaches to deriving inspiration from other cultures.





Celebrate Nashville

Metro Parks recognizes the diversity of cultures and traditions in Nashville with their Celebrate Nashville festival, which takes place in Centennial Park each October. The festival celebrated its twenty-third year in 2019, featuring a marketplace, food, dancing, and live music from cultures around the world, as well as a global village. CLAS hosts a booth at Celebrate Nashville each year to highlight the unique characteristics of a country in Latin America.

This year, the CLAS booth showcased Guatemala, highlighting the country’s history, culture, language, and traditions, and recognizing the deep relationship between CLAS and Guatemala. CLAS graduate students and staff shared information about the recent CLAS K-12 and community outreach initiatives focused on Guatemala, the indigenous Maya languages of Guatemala, and displayed items from the extensive Guatemala Culture Box. Visitors also received *muñeca quitapenas*, or “worry dolls.”

Frank Robinson Shares His Knowledge of Cuba with Students at Jackson State Community College

In February, **Frank Robinson** (History) visited Jackson State Community College in Jackson, TN to present a talk, “Ties of Singular Intimacy: Changing Dynamics of Cuba-United States Relations,” attended by 70 students, faculty, staff, and community members. Robinson gave the talk to help prepare a group of 10 of Jackson State students and their professors for a study abroad trip to Cuba in March. The trip was led by Jackson State professors **Tammy Prater** and **Anna Esquivel** who attended the 2019 CLAS teacher workshop “Cuba con Amor: Creative Bridges through Literature and the Arts” (co-sponsored by Western Kentucky University); they later received a grant to internationalize their coursework. Robinson’s presentation was given as part of the Jackson State Community College Programs of Excellence series and was open to the public.



CLAS Collaborates with the Global Education Center and OZ Arts Nashville to Bring Music and Dance to Nashville

This year, CLAS teamed up with the Global Education Center and OZ Arts Nashville to provide outreach to the community through the arts, reaching thousands of community members.

In November, Brazilian dance troupe **Companhia Urbana de Dança**/Urban Company of Dance engaged Nashville with street dance styles of Rio de Janeiro. Blending contemporary movements with hip hop and Afro-Brazilian traditions, the group led a dance workshop for 60 teachers, students, and community members at the Global Education Center and gave several performances at OZ Arts Nashville.

Later this year, CLAS will collaborate with the Global Education Center to host a residency for Brazilian classical and jazz guitarist **Carlos Barbosa-Lima**. The Latin Grammy award-winner will lead workshops at Nashville School of the Arts and the Global Education Center. He will also teach a master class at MTSU and perform concerts at Blair School of Music’s Ingram Hall, Room In The Inn, Davidson County Juvenile Detention Center, as well as locations in Knoxville and Oak Ridge. Originally scheduled for April, the residency was postponed due to COVID-19.

Third Annual Global Read Webinar Series

Area studies centers from across world regions again collaborated to host a monthly webinar series on children’s and young adult books. Each sixty-minute interactive webinar features the author of an award-winning title and guides educators through incorporating the book into the classroom.

The May 11 Américas Award webinar featured author Francie Latour and her book *Auntie Luce’s Talking Paintings*, a 2019 Américas Award Honorable Mention title. Other Spring 2019 webinars were hosted by the South Asia Book Award, the Middle East Book Award, and the Africana Book Award; the Freeman Award will wrap up the series in June. All webinars are open to educators, free of charge, and available online for classroom use.



CLAS Educator Book Club

In 2019, the Outreach Coordinator **Colleen McCoy** inaugurated the CLAS Educator Book Club as a new way to support the incorporation of diverse literature into the K-12 classroom. She organizes a monthly meeting for K-12 teachers to critically consider the portrayal of Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx culture in young adult literature, as well as social, political, and economic themes. Teacher participants discuss the opportunities and challenges of using the selected books in their classrooms, sharing their teaching experience and best practices.

This academic year, K-12 teachers from Davidson and Rutherford Counties participated in the book club, representing a variety of disciplines including English, Spanish, English Language Learning, Math, Social Studies, and Library. Participants discussed the following titles: *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo, *I'm Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika L. Sánchez, *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez, *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo, *Firefly Letters* by Margarita Engle, and *Mexican WhiteBoy* by Matt de la Peña.



CLAS Educator Book Club Virtual Meeting, April 2020

Fall 2019 Latin American Film Festival

CLAS partnered with the Martha Rivers Ingram Commons for the third annual Latin American Film Festival in Fall 2019. The film series introduces first and second-year students to Latin America as a region and to LAS as a discipline of historic strength on campus. CLAS Assistant Director, **Nicolette Kostiw** and **Chalene Helmuth**, Faculty Head of Sutherland House and Senior Lecturer in Spanish, select Latin American films that showcase a variety of themes, countries, and genres. Each film is hosted by a different house in The Commons, accompanied by a Latin American dinner, and concludes with a faculty-led discussion. The theme of the 2019 film festival was "Bodies in Motion." The first film, *Only When I Dance*, addressed poverty and upward mobility through ballet in Brazil and was followed by a discussion led by **Ana Christina da Silva** (Peabody). **Candice Amich** (English) introduced students to the important role that female guerrilla fighters played in the Nicaraguan Revolution with the film *¡Las Sandinistas!* in September. **Gilbert Gonzales** (Medicine, Health, and Society) offered a multi-dimensional look at the Cuban health system and its free, international medical school (ELAM) for the screening of *Community Doctors*. Closing the series, **Anna Castillo** (Spanish) explored gender, sexuality, and LGBTQ rights in Puerto Rico through her discussion of *Mala Mala* in November.

Join the Center for Latin American Studies and The Commons as they present a film series focused on Latin America! Each of the four film screenings will also feature a **free dinner** and a group discussion led by a YU faculty member specializing in the themes presented in the film.

For more information, check out our event page: al.vanderbilt.edu/clas/fest19/

Center for Latin American Studies
VANDEBILT UNIVERSITY

THE MARTHA RIVERS INGRAM COMMONS

Dr. Nicolette Kostiw
Faculty Head of Sutherland House
n.kostiw@vanderbilt.edu

Hiba Baroud (Engineering) received a 2020 NSF Faculty Early CAREER Development grant to boost community resilience and sustainability through a three-pronged project that starts with a better understanding of how people and infrastructures interact during hazards. The five-year grant of \$500,000, "Policy-Infrastructure-Community Interdependencies: The Next Frontiers in Dynamic Networks," begins July 1, 2020. The Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program offers the most prestigious awards in support of early-career faculty who have the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the mission of their department or organization.

Jada Benn Torres (Anthropology) received a grant from National Geographic Society's Committee for Research and Exploration in the amount of \$30,000 in support of her project, "A community-based analysis of Afro-Puerto Rican genetic ancestry and cultural identity." **Gabriel Torres** (American Studies/Anthropology) and community partner, **Maricruz Rivera**, are co-investigators on the project, which is a continuation of work begun through a seed grant from Vanderbilt's Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in 2017.

Benn Torres also received a Partnership Development mini-grant in the amount of \$2000 from the Meharry-Vanderbilt Community Engaged Research Core. This grant will fund the development of a project around the theme of resilience with her community partner, Maricruz Rivera, Director of La Corporación Piñones se Integra (COPI) in Loiza, Puerto Rico. Her piece entitled "Anthropological perspectives on genomic data, genetic ancestry, and race" was published in December 2019 in the *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology*, and she was an invited participant at the tenth annual *Atlantic Festival* in Washington, D.C. in September 2019.

Carwil Bjork-James' (Anthropology) first book, *The Sovereign Street: Making Revolution in Urban Bolivia*, has been published by University of Arizona Press. It is an on-the-ground account of how people can revolutionize their society by taking over public space. His article on "Unarmed Militancy: Tactical Victories, Subjectivity, and Legitimacy in Bolivian Street Protest," appears in *American Anthropologist* in June 2020.

Paula Covington (LAS) received The Jean & Alexander Heard Award for Distinguished Librarianship in 2019. She was also awarded a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) in October 2019 for "Opening Access to Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Voices: Manuel Zapata Olivella's Recordings of Marginalized Cultures and Traditions" in the amount of \$46,694.

Shannon Daniel (Peabody) published a number of articles:

- Daniel, S., Pray, L., & Pacheco, M. Pacheco (online early view). *Cultivating teacher responsiveness with emergent bilinguals through the videotaped lesson analysis*. *TESOL Journal*. doi: 10.1002/tesj.475
- Daniel, S. (2019). Writing our identities for successful endeavors: Resettled refugee youth look to the future. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 33(1), 71–83. doi: 10.1080/02568543.2018.1531448.
- Daniel, S., & Zybina, M. (2019). "Resettled refugee teens' perspectives: Identifying a need to centralize youths' "Funds of Strategies" in future efforts to enact Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. *The Urban Review*. doi: 10.1007/s11256-018-0484-7.
- Daniel, S., Jiménez, R., Pray, L., & M. Pacheco (2019). Scaffolding to make translanguaging a classroom norm. *TESOL Journal*. doi: 10.1002/tesj.361.

Avery Dickins de Girón (LAS) was awarded a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Foundation to enhance educational aspects of the Latin American Garden in the amount of \$8300.

Tom Dillehay (Anthropology) received an award from the Trond Mohn Foundation in Norway in recognition for his outstanding research relating plant genetics to human health and nutrition. The research on ancient maize and potato remains from Huaca Prieta, Peru was carried out with a team of geneticists from the National Institute of Genetic Research, Mexico. Dillehay's new book, *The Hispanic-Mapuche Parlamientos: Interethnic Geo-Politics and Concessionary Spaces in Colonial America* by Jose Manuel Zavala, Tom D. Dillehay, and Gertrude Payas was published in Fall 2019 by Springer Press, Berlin and New York.

Earl Fitz (Spanish & Portuguese) was interviewed by *Prensa Iberica* for an article about the Brazilian author Nélide Piñon and the translator Gregory Rabassa. He was also interviewed by a professor from the Universidade de São Paulo for her research on the topic of "Teaching Brazilian Literature in Translation in the United States." Fitz's publications included the book chapter, "The Importance of a Combined Spanish and Portuguese Degree in the Twenty-First Century," in *Itinerarios de Lectura* and the guest editorial, "Why Journals Dialog with Each Other," in the journal *Spanish and Portuguese Review*. Professor and Mrs. Fitz are being awarded the Dr. Gail Addlestone Community Building Award for their work at Gilda's Club Middle Tennessee, a cancer support community.

Lesley Gill (Anthropology) and **Carwil Bjork-James** (Anthropology) have chapters on Colombia and Bolivia, respectively, in *Beyond Populism: Angry Politics and the Twilight of Neoliberalism*, a new edited volume by Vanderbilt faculty member **Sophie Bjork-James** (Anthropology) and Jeff Maskovsky.

Ted Fischer (Anthropology) received a \$600,000, three-year award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for a collaboration with WHO to examine the Cultural Contexts of Health and Wellbeing.

Jon Hiskey (Political Science) published a number of articles:

- Hiskey, Jonathan T. and Mason W. Moseley. Forthcoming. *Life in the Political Machine: Dominant-Party Enclaves and the Citizens They Produce*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Scheduled release July 2020)
- Hiskey, Jonathan T., Mary Fran Malone, and Alejandro Diaz-Dominguez. Forthcoming. "Authoritarian Recall: Mexico's Drug War and Subnational Patterns of Opposition to Democracy." *Journal of Politics in Latin America*.
- Córdova, Abby and Jonathan T. Hiskey. 2019. "Development Context and the Political Behavior of Remittance Recipients in Latin America and the Caribbean." *Political Behavior*, FirstOnline, Oct. [<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-019-09574-5>]

Jane Landers (History) was given the Distinguished Scholar in African Diaspora Studies Award by Tennessee State University for 2019, and she received the Alumni Education Award from Vanderbilt University for 2019. Landers also received \$187,541 through a Trans-Institutional Program grant from Vanderbilt: "An Initiative for the Study of Slave Societies" for 2019-2021.

Ryan Middagh (Blair) was awarded the 2019 Chancellor's Cup for his contributions to undergraduate education beyond the classroom (see page 9). He also released a professional jazz orchestra record: Ryan Middagh Jazz Orchestra "Live from Nashville" which includes a Latin Jazz composition "Marina Arena." Listen here: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/1I5ORXztprkaCdP341hdk>

Philip D. Rasico (Spanish & Portuguese) published "Un lingüista catalán al otro lado del mundo: Joan Corominas y los años de exilio en la Argentina (1939-1946)." In *Junta de Estudios Históricos de Mendoza* (ed.), *80 Aniversario Universidad Nacional de Cuyo: In Spiritus Remigio Vita*, Mendoza (Argentina), 2019, pp. 101-121.

Norbert Ross (Anthropology) finished building a cultural youth center (Centro Cultural Juvenil la Finca Argentina) in a slum just outside San Salvador, to support children and youth with workshops, after school programs, and provide a meeting space to organize, as well as provide support for single mothers. He founded a NGO, Foundation ACTUEMOS! to serve as the legal structure and hired a teacher to work with the children. Ross also finished a Fulbright grant and continued work on a NSF grant in El Salvador, focused on children and violence. He conducted two weeks of theatre work in refugee camps in Tijuana Mexico with a group of Salvadorian youth actors.

Thomas Verrier (Blair) has continued his active involvement in improving music education in Latin America. During the 2019-20 academic year, Dr. Verrier travelled to the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Peru to train concert band directors and to assist in improving youth and community band programs. On campus, he devoted time to projects under the umbrella of ¡BLAIR! (Blair's Latin America Initiatives and Resources) including a concert event in November 2019 dedicated to the people of Venezuela (see page 9). In the coming school year, Dr. Verrier will again host the ¡BLAIR! Conductors Symposium, a bilingual event dedicated to providing learning opportunities to Latin American directors, and he will organize a program of Latin American dance music by the Vanderbilt Wind Symphony at Nashville's Plaza Mariachi!

CLAS Welcomes Three New Regional Faculty Affiliates

This year, CLAS brought three colleagues on board as regional faculty affiliates:

Matthew Blair is Research Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at Tennessee State University. Both a plant breeder and molecular geneticist, he specializes in the common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) and amaranth, both of which are important staples native to the Americas. Blair works closely with Avery Dickins de Girón on the Latin American Garden, providing plants and participating in professional development workshops featuring the garden. Blair holds a PhD in Plant Breeding from Cornell University and an MS in Agronomy from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez; prior to joining the TSU faculty in 2013, he lived and worked in Colombia.

Gustavo Goldman is Professor in Ciencias Farmaceuticas at the Universidade de São Paulo. His areas of expertise include molecular biology, fungal genetics, and microbiology. A world-renowned expert on fungi and fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, his current research focuses on *Aspergillus fumigatus*, one of the most common *Aspergillus* species to cause disease in individuals with an immunodeficiency. He collaborates closely with Antonis Rokas and his lab at Vanderbilt on the genomics and evolution of pathogenic fungi in Brazil. Goldman holds a PhD in Molecular Biology from Rijksuniversiteit Gent in Belgium.

David LaFavor is Assistant Professor of Latin American History and Digital Humanities at the University of Texas Arlington. He coauthored *The Third Century: A History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2017) with Michael LaRosa and Mark Gilderhus. His second book manuscript, "Prizefighting and Civilization: Race, the Public Sphere, and Identity in Cuba and Mexico, 1840s-1940s" is under review. LaFavor is an accomplished photographer of Latin America; his work has been exhibited in dozens of venues and published by the Huffington Post, NBC News, and other national and international publications. He recently collaborated with CLAS and Tennessee State University to feature his photographs of Cuba and related professional development workshop. LaFavor is the director of the multiyear Digital Humanities project *Siete Villas de Cuba*, which locates, digitizes, preserves, and publishes endangered colonial documents pertinent to the African diaspora in Cuba from the 16th to the late 19th centuries. He earned his PhD in History from Vanderbilt and continues to collaborate closely with Jane Landers.

The Regional Faculty Affiliate program formally recognizes colleagues at other institutions that have close relationships with CLAS through research, engagement in local K-16 outreach, or other ties. Faculty affiliates are approved by the CLAS Steering Committee and appointed by the Dean of Arts & Science; they have access to Vanderbilt's library as well as other privileges.

John Janusek, 1963–2019

C LAS was deeply saddened by the passing of one of our close colleagues and collaborators, archaeologist John W. Janusek, in October 2019. Known for being an outstanding teacher and mentor, his research interests focused on the development of complex societies and cities in the South American Andes, and included political ecology, urbanism, iconography, ritual practices and materiality. John had been a member of the Vanderbilt faculty since 1998.

“John profoundly influenced a generation of Andean archaeologists with his large-scale projects in Bolivia,” said Beth Conklin, associate professor of anthropology and department chair. “He was a beloved colleague and popular professor among our students, especially with his enthusiasm and passion for innovative teaching and discovery. He was playing a key role in our department’s emerging focus on the anthropology of food with his keen interest in the history of fermentation and feasting.”

John devoted more than three decades of research to the pre-Columbian world, primarily focused on the Tiwanaku civilization and its formative precursors in the Bolivian highlands. He had long-term projects at the sites of Khonkho Wankane and Iruhito in the southern Lake Titicaca basin of Bolivia.

“John was always deeply committed to the Bolivian communities that hosted his research projects, and he was a devoted participant in Andean rituals and celebrations,” Conklin said. “One of his proudest moments was in 2007, when he had the honor of serving as the preste sponsor of the Festival of Saint James procession in the community of Qhunqhu Liquiliqui.”

During the 2011-12 academic year, John co-directed the Sacred Ecology Fellows Program at the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities with Betsey Robinson, associate professor of history of art and classical and Mediterranean studies, and Tracy Miller, associate professor of history of art and Asian studies. John had explained in an interview that examples of sacred ecology in Nashville would include the Ryman Auditorium and Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge, as both are rich in references to the history of country music. He returned to the Warren Center during 2017-18 to take part in another fellows program with the theme “Telling Stories: Modes, Media and Meanings.” In September 2019, John and the

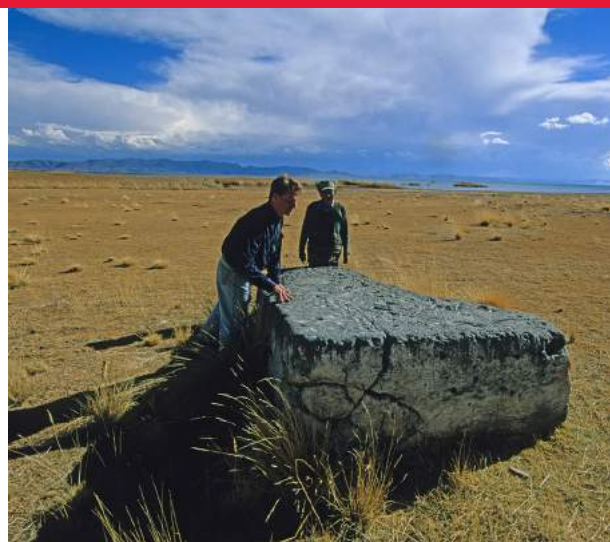
other fellows showcased their work from the 2017-18 program at the Southern Festival of Books.

Since 2017, John co-taught a popular University Course called The Science and History of Brewing with Bruce Carter, professor of biochemistry. “John was always bubbling over with ideas about expanding the course, from putting together lecture series and conferences on brewing to creating a brewery on campus,” Carter said. “His passion ran deep for any topic that interested him.” The cross-disciplinary course provides students with a cultural, historical and religious perspective on the use and abuse of alcohol, an understanding of the neuroscience of reward and addiction, and the science of biochemical processes involved in brewing and consuming beer. Students also learn about how fermented products play into the rituals and practices of various religions, and the environmental effects of brewing around the world over the centuries. John had been scheduled to teach a Maymester course in 2020 during which students would conduct an archaeological dig at a downtown Nashville site where beer was believed to have been brewed in historic cellars and tunnels during the 19th century.

His recent research projects focused on the mystery of what he called “stone giants,” or Andean monoliths, supported by a Research Scholar Grant. He was also co-directing a trans-disciplinary project in the eastern Lake Titicaca basin and Andean valleys.

John’s books included *Identity and Power in the Ancient Andes* (Routledge, 2004), *Ancient Tiwanaku* (Cambridge, 2008), *Khonkho Wankane: Archaeological Investigations in Jesus de Machaca, Bolivia* (University of California, Berkeley, 2018), and as co-editor (with Steve Kosiba and Tom Cummins), the forthcoming *Sacred Matter: Animacy and Authority in the Americas* (Dumbarton Oaks Press, 2019).

“John was a true intellectual, driven by his roving curiosity, deep scholarly engagement and commitment to the highest ideals of humanistic and scientific inquiry,” said Tiffany Tung, associate professor of anthropology. “He passed those ideals on to the many students who had the privilege of working with him in



the classroom, field and laboratory.”

“I will miss how John’s sense of humor and passion for anthropology made our department that much more a collegial and fun place to work,” said Jada Benn Torres, associate professor of anthropology. “In a department as small as ours, every member, in their own way, adds to our community, and John will be dearly missed.”

In addition to being an associate professor of anthropology, John was a research associate with the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. His memberships included the Society of Archaeology, the American Anthropological Association and Breweriana Collectors of America.

John was born in Chicago Heights, Illinois, on Sept. 20, 1963. He was raised in a musical family and was a talented musician who played everything from brass instruments to guitar and bass. Janusek majored in anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees. He earned a doctor of philosophy from the University of Chicago in 1994.

John’s many hobbies included beer can collecting, which began early in his life when he found some old cans in vacant lots near his home in the Chicago area. He became a nationally renowned expert on the history of beer and beer cans in the collectors’ community.

John is survived by his wife, **Anna Gueng-erich**, research assistant professor of anthropology, with whom he shared many research interests in the historical ecology of South America. Other survivors include his mother, Carol Janusek, his brother, Mike Janusek, and his nephew, Andrew Janusek.

—With thanks to Anne Marie Owens

Christina Karageorgou-Bastea



Christina Karageorgou-Bastea is Associate Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Born in Athens, Greece, she holds a PhD in Hispanic Literature from El Colegio de México, and her research focuses on modern poetry of the Spanish speaking world. She is the author of *Creación y destrucción del Imperio: nombrar en Tirano Banderas de Valle-Inclán* (Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas/Minnesota University Press, 2013) and *Arquitectónica de voces: Federico García Lorca y el Poema del*

cante jondo (México: El Colegio de México, 2008), as well as numerous articles and book chapters. She is the co-editor of two volumes of essays: *A Journey in Readership. Essays on Hispanic Literature and Culture in Honor of Cathy L. Jrade* (Vigo: Editorial Academia del Hispanismo, 2019), and *Poetics of Hispanism* (Madrid: Iberoamericana Vervuert, 2012).

During the last few years, Christina has worked with CLAS to bring scholars to campus and support our outreach program. In 2017, she moderated a workshop by acclaimed poet Xánath Caraza as part of the Global Education Center's Third Root series. Also in 2017, she organized a symposium, sponsored by CLAS, where national and international scholars discussed the latest trends in Hispanic poetry and lyric theory. Most recently, Christina invited Mexican poet Myriam Moscona on behalf of CLAS, for the CLAS Distinguished Lectureship in Spanish (see page 13). For our 2020 Faculty Profile, CLAS asked Christina to share her passion for the Spanish language and poetry, and how it led to her career path.

If I am learning, for instance, [Spanish—Russian in the original], I am confronted by an authoritative structure which commands my respect. The task is difficult and the goal is distant and perhaps never entirely attainable. My work is a progressive revelation of something which exists independently of me. Attention is rewarded by a knowledge of reality. Love of [Spanish] leads me away from myself towards something alien of me, something which my consciousness cannot take over, swallow up, deny or make real. The honesty and humility required of the student—not to pretend to know what one does not know—is the preparation for the honesty and humility of the scholar...

—Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good Over Other Concepts*

It all started with music, a song that I heard back in 1984. It was in Spanish. I started learning Spanish in Athens, while I was also majoring in Byzantine and Modern Greek Philology. Five years later, I left home with a ten-month scholarship to Mexico, and stayed for nine years. I studied Mexican Literature in the Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa and Hispanic Literatures at El Colegio de México, in Mexico City (when we still called it DF). I did not intend to become a scholar of poetry; I think what attracted me to poetry was the challenge of texts that pushed my knowledge and perception of this language into which I was not born but which I have always felt was and still is my home.

My research in poetry goes against a fundamental feature attributed

to the genre by all major trends of literary interpretation and theory: its monological nature. The poets I deal with, very different in style and aesthetic orientation, write always in relation with the other, they weave words into acoustic fabrics made of rich dissonances, noise, harmonies, contrapunto. One might say that Xavier Villaurrutia, Abigael Bohórquez, Gloria Gervitz, Myriam Moscona, Federico García Lorca, Luis Cernuda, Cristina Peri-Rossi, and Pablo Neruda have little in common, and that the commitment to political causes of some lies far from the intimate pitch of others. I've read their poetic texts within the vibrant social and discursive environments that give words great depth of symbolic and pragmatic meaning, as tokens of a relentless utopian desire for a better world, where beauty and justice are possible because they are inseparable.

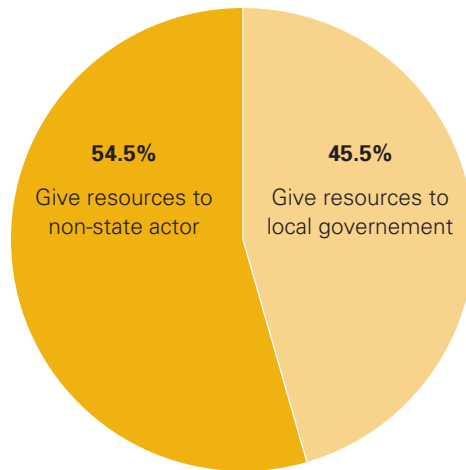
Two concepts structure my interpretive attitude towards literature, although I very seldom speak of them in *voz alta*. The first is the “ethical deed,” Mikhail M. Bakhtin's idea that the word—and therefore the work of art—is an act always carried out within the space between self and the other, and thus is, first and foremost, a moral praxis. The second is “promiscuity,” a concept by which Maurice Merleau-Ponty refers to a mode of perception and cognition that is bodily and that embraces reality and otherness in a tumultuous way. We perceive a world that is heterogeneous, hybrid, multifaceted, promiscuous; and we do it in a promiscuous way. As I think of the poets that I teach in class at Vanderbilt and write about in my research, I hear words that emerge agonistically amidst social rumor, asking questions, responding to others, harmonizing, running away or embracing. These fragments of thought that struggle to become audible create a world in effervescence, whose organizational reality is rooted in polemic encounters with others.

Remaining within poetry's space in the world and in the Humanities is a commitment that I have in common with a few brave people, not all of them literary scholars. The Center for Latin American Studies has been my constant ally in this effort, by availing the opportunities and the institutional and intellectual frame for events that place Hispanic lyric creation and reflection at the forefront of discussions on human rights, migration, and justice.

I share my passion for words with my students, my friends, my sister, and most deeply with my daughter. Kyana has grown up bilingual and yearns for more languages; she is now taking her first steps in Spanish. I recognize in her openness to the magnificence of language learning—same that Murdoch describes as she confesses her love for Russian—this leap of faith that must have been also mine, when I started learning Spanish. I could have never known what it entails to be-*ser* and be-*estar*, or how it feels to wake up in *desamor* and in this being unable to ask something of somebody that comes as a result of *haberse despedido de alguien*; much less did I know about the richness and the miseries of demanding, needing, begging, ordering, wanting the bond with the other that the subjunctive patently revealed to me. Different poets, César Vallejo is the first who always comes to my mind, have taken this beauty of and in itself, and have multiplied it exponentially for me. What fuels my commitment to the study of poetry is this primal love for Spanish, now heightened by the gratitude I feel for the amazing horizons its literatures, cultures, and people have opened before my eyes.

Spotlight on Environmental Policy Preferences in Brazil

As the largest and most populous country in Latin America, Brazil's environmental policies carry particular regional and global significance. LAPOP's 2014 AmericasBarometer estimated that 62% of Brazilians prioritize the environment over economic growth. But who do Brazilians trust to carry out environmental policy? The 2018/19 AmericasBarometer asked respondents whether they prefer that hypothetical funding for environmental protections be given to local governments or non-state actors such as NGOs or community organizations. In Brazil, public opinion on the matter is split. A slight majority prefers that non-state actors be put in charge of executing environmental protections (54.5%), while a slim minority favors transferring funds to local governments (45.5%).



Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, v.20190627_E

Preferences over Environmental Policy Implementation, Brazil 2019

Who prefers non-state actors to local governments when it comes to environmental policy implementation? In Brazil, women are more likely to prefer non-state actors, while older cohorts are more likely to favor local governments. Analyses of the data also show that education, wealth, urban versus rural dwelling, and regional location are not related to preferences over environmental policy implementation in Brazil. Importantly, preferences for non-state implementation appear to be shaped by evaluations of government. As individuals' trust in local governments decreases, the likelihood of preferring non-state actors increases. Furthermore, when asked who they would vote for if national elections were held at the time of the survey, those who express their intention to vote for the opposition candidate/party or cast a null vote are more likely to prefer that resources for environmental protection go to non-state actors.

Understanding Brazilians' opinions on the implementation of environmental policy is vital for understanding how to move forward with environmental protections. The 2019 Brazil AmericasBarometer study reveals an opinion divide over whether government or non-government actors should take the lead in managing public resources for environmental protection. If leaders of local governments wish to increase demand for their involvement in environmental protection efforts, they will need to increase confidence in public institutions and administrations.

—*Claire Q. Evans, Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at Vanderbilt University and a LAPOP-affiliated researcher*

LAPOP's **Claire Evans** defended her dissertation on the determinants of public opinion and policy preferences related to the environment, specifically focusing on the ways in which different types of context shape these attitudes in March 2020. Using qualitative and quantitative data from the Latin America region, she finds that political, economic, and geographic differences that people have influence their attitudes on these issues. The committee included Liz Zechmeister (chair), Noam Lupu, Jon Hiskey, and Erica Simmons. Claire has been a key contributor to the LAPOP Lab's AmericasBarometer, including the piece featured here spotlighting how Brazilians think about environmental policy. You can find this brief report in the *2018/19 AmericasBarometer Regional Report: LAPOP's AmericasBarometer takes the Pulse of Democracy*. Evans shared her expertise at the K-16 Summer Institute hosted by CLAS in June 2019.

Announcement of an upcoming call for proposals: "Coming soon is a call for proposals for the LAPOP Lab's second annual conference, "The Public and Democracy in the Americas." The conference is scheduled to take place on October 23-24, 2020 in Lima, Peru. The LAPOP Lab is also preparing to host a virtual conference if travel and in-person meetings of this kind are not possible due to the COVID-19 outbreak."

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¹ See Evans, Claire Q. (2015). "Rethinking Environmental Attitudes in Latin America and the Caribbean." Insights Series. No. 118, LAPOP, Nashville, TN.

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