ISLAC NEWSLETTER 2016

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ISLAC: Where Passion and Excellence Encounter Knowledge!

THE JOURNEY of a Cultural Ambassador

READ MARTI IN TAMPA
U.S AND CUBA CLOSER THAN EVER
THE INTENSE STORY OF A STUDENT ABROAD IN ARGENTINA
ISLAC IN LASA AND CLACSO
Message from the Director

We have had a wonderfully eventful year (2015-2016) so far. Our international conference on José Martí, which we co-hosted with the University of Tampa, brought the world’s best Martí scholars to Tampa for an exciting exchange of new research and ideas about one of Tampa’s great historical icons. Collaborating with our colleagues at the University of Tampa was truly one of the highlights of my career. We also formally joined the new “School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies” (SIGS) this year, and this has opened up many new channels of collaboration. We look forward to strengthening our academic programs with new offerings, and also strengthening our mission as a research institute. This coming year promises to be even more exciting with our upcoming community forum on Caribbean immigration, our panel discussion on Afro-descendant movements and organizations in the Americas, and a mini-conference on post-conflict Colombia next spring. I hope you enjoy perusing our newsletter, and that you will join us in launching an exciting new chapter!

Warmly,

Rachel May

A SUCCESSFUL 2015–2016 YEAR

Film Screening * Cuba: The Forgotten Revolution

The Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean (ISLAC) presented the film Cuba: The Forgotten Revolution, directed by Glenn Gebhard. People had the opportunity to talk with Gebhard as well as USF Vice Provost Paul Dosal, professor of Latin American history, who was featured in the documentary.

The film tells the virtually unknown story of Cuban revolutionaries Frank Pais and Juan Antonio Echeverria – a school teacher and architecture student, respectively – whose names seldom appear alongside their more famous contemporaries, Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara. Through archival stock footage and exclusive interviews with Cuban revolution participants and observers, family members of the men, Americans who fought alongside Castro and Guevara, and a former CIA agent, we learn how these young men, who worked largely independently from each other, played critical roles in the eventual overthrow of Dictator Fulgencio Batista y Zaldiva.

To make a gift to ISLAC today, please visit http://islac.usf.edu or use the enclosed envelope.

We are very grateful for the generous support of our donors.
The myth of racial democracy is as much present in Colombia as it is in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. In the myth of racial democracy, Latin American societies are free from racial tensions and have a harmonious co-existence and mixing of different racial groups. This panel discussion took aim at this myth by illuminating the historical and social construction of racial identities in Colombia, which assigns lower values to individuals of black and indigenous descent.
From Blackface to Puckerface:
The ramifications of misrepresenting the black female body

By Barbara Melendez

How Black women are viewed and treated in Buenos Aires, Argentina was the topic of a talk by Prisca Gayles held on September 17th at the University of South Florida Library, Grace Allen Room. Titled “From Blackface to Puckerface: The ramifications of misrepresenting the black female body.” This event was open to the public, sponsored by the USF Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean (ISLAC) and the USF Institute on Black Life.

“I argue that the misrepresentation of the black female body relegates it to a site of injury,” Gayles said.

There is “a long standing practice of primary schools to paint children in blackface, who then mimic black female entrepreneurs of the 19th century as foolish and lackadaisical,” she noted.

“Puckerface refers to a term a friend used to describe the face that men make to suggest a desire to engage in sexual activity,” Gayles explained. “My line of questioning started with a conversation I had with four other Afro-descendant women who are currently visiting, living in, or are from Argentina. Aside from the catcalls we vented about the numerous times we were asked if we were ‘working girls’ or offered money for sexual acts.”

While acknowledging that catcalls are common in many Latin American countries, she examined the ways in which black women in Argentina are exoticized and hypervisibilized.

It may come as a surprise that black women exist in noteworthy numbers in this Latin American capital. Gayles pointed out that it is not widely known that of the almost 11 million Africans who arrived in the Americas during the Transatlantic Slave Trade, less than 10 per cent went to North America. Though the majority was taken to the Caribbean and to Brazil, a significant number entered the rest of South America.

Originally from Oakland, CA, Gayles is a doctoral student in Latin American Studies at the University of Texas, Austin, with concentrations in sociology, African diaspora studies, and women and gender studies. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Pittsburgh and her master’s degree from USF in Latin American studies and took many courses in the Department of Government and International Affairs.

Her interest in the topic was born on a study abroad trip to Argentina in 2012 with ISLAC’s Human Rights in Argentina program, led by ISLAC Director Rachel May. “It changed my life,” Gayles said. “I initially did not think I would be able to use my experience in Argentina for my master’s thesis, whose focus was Afro-Latin America because like many I was ignorant to the presence of Afro-Argentines.”

Gayles seeks to raise awareness “of the plight of Afro-Argentines, not only here in the U.S. but in Argentina as well. Although it is a growing field, there is still a great deal of ignorance about the subject.”

From left to right: Juan Cháves, Prisca Gayles, Rachel May, Silvia Garea and Nancy Cunningham.
Francisco Berreta provided important insights drawing lessons from the Argentinean experience.

In celebration of “National Coming Out Day,” ISLAC organized a workshop that examined the fight for equality in Argentina, one of the world’s leading nations in the fight for LGBTI Human Rights.

The workshop reviewed the historic and legal hurdles that culminated in the 2010 Marriage Equality Reform and the groundbreaking Gender Identity Law of 2012, which created new legal protections for LGBTI people in Argentina for the first time. Berreta also discussed judicial decisions, policy considerations and backlash. The workshop culminated in an overview of LGBTI activists’ strategies and case law.

Francisco Berreta has an LLM from Columbia University School of Law, and has academic experience in International Human Rights and Public International Law and Human Rights of the LGBTQ Community. He currently works for Human Rights Watch in New York.
On May 13, ISLAC’s graduate assistant Mariela Noles Cotito presented her work at the first Conference of Gender and Feminist Studies held by the Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLACSO) in Quito, Ecuador. The event included more than three hundred attendees and thirty-two thematic tables. The thematic focus was the intersectional reflection on inequalities. Some of the topics explored were: gender and history, feminist research methodology, postcolonial feminism and epistemology, feminisms from the ground-up, and citizenship and state. Noles’s presentation was part of the panel: “Contested Citizennships: Governmental Answers to Diversity and Resistance Efforts.” She explored the social standing of Afroperuvian women vis-à-vis the enaction of a robust public policy framework protective of the rights of Afroperuvians, and the national policy efforts to achieve gender equality in the country. She argued that Afrodescendant women are not only affected by racism, but also sexism. She discussed how these women are not being considered within the policies protective of Afrodescendants, nor are they sufficiently considered within the national gender equality policies.

ISLAC Graduate Assistants were invited to hear the Vice President deliver remarks on U.S opportunities in the Western Hemisphere. Biden talked about the importance of expanding relationships with Latin American and Caribbean countries, and he emphasized that these relationships have to be created with respect for the dignity of all. The event was hosted by the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and the University of Tampa.

"Build Relationships, not Walls"

Joe Biden, U.S. Vice President

Mariela Noles (USF), Sofía Santacruz Zambrano (Universidad de Nariño, Colombia), Ximena Ron (Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Ecuador), Eshe Lewis (Florida University, Ph.D Student).

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016 GRADUATES

Michelle Dantas, Yudelka Santana and Rebecca Blackwell are our Summer 2016 graduates. ISLAC staff wish you a wonderful new chapter in your professional lives.

Happy Bulls Graduation and Best Wishes!
As part of ISLAC’s efforts to contribute to the strengthening of democracy in the Latin American region, this year members of the team organized a panel for XXXIV International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association held in New York City in May 2016. The name of the panel was “Miradas Transnacionales sobre Estudios Latinoamericanos”, and was moderated by Dr. Rachel May, director of the institute. ISLAC researchers Paula Lezama and Rebecca Blackwell presented papers related to, respectively, human development and political propaganda. Dr. May also participated in the panel titled “Conflictos y movilizaciones sociales en América Latina y el Caribe contemporáneos: tensiones, debates y perspectivas.” This year the conference featured a talk by Noam Chomsky and a concert by the renowned New York-born Puerto Rican musician Willie Colon.

The Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO) or the Latin American Council of Social Sciences is an international NGO which was founded in 1967. As one of the largest academic networks of Latin Americanist scholars, it includes 542 research institutes as member organizations. Member centers and institutes are drawn from all over Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Europe and North America, but membership by North American centers and institutes is still fairly rare. In 2015, ISLAC was accepted as a full member in the CLACSO network. Our Institute has been involved with a CLACSO working group on social movements in the Caribbean Basin for several years, but we have only recently become a CLACSO institute. In November of 2015, ISLAC Director, Rachel May, and Rebecca Blackwell (an ISLAC graduate student) participated in the 7th International Conference and Meeting of member institutions. The Meeting was held in Medellín Colombia, and included the participation of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (former President of Brazil), and José Mujica (former President of Uruguay). Both May and Blackwell presented papers and attended working group meetings. We look forward to further opportunities for collaboration through CLACSO in the coming years.

Dr. Miriam Abramovay, Dr. Rachel May, Dr. Alejandro Schneider

Dr. Rachel May, Alma Guillermoprieto (Keynote Speaker LASA-GALA) and Paula Lezama.
In December 2015, a group of fifteen USF students and Honors College Dean, Dr. Charles Adams, journeyed to Cuba for a week thanks to the generous donors and USF alums, Brad and Terry Holcombe. The students participating in the trip were all “Holcombe scholars,” first generation students representing a variety of majors and years.

The United States only recently restored diplomatic relations with Cuba, so the Holcombe scholars were one of the first recent groups of students from a Florida public university to visit the country and study its history, government, and culture first-hand.

The eight eventful days in Cuba showed the students a different political atmosphere and way of life. By communicating with the locals, the scholars gained meaningful experiences and learned about Cuban history.

During this most recent academic year, ISLAC Director Rachel May joined together with Steve Tauber (from the Department formerly known as Government and International Affairs) and Cheryl Rodriguez (from both the Institute for Black Life and the former Department of Africana Studies) to integrate our programs into a brand new “School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies” which will also be known as “SIGS.”

The new school will promulgate a vision of global studies that is broadly interdisciplinary and transcends traditional geographical definitions. The new academic unit brings together the disciplines of political science, international studies, Africana studies, and Latin American & Caribbean studies to foster a deeper understanding of globalization. Our understanding of global studies is premised on the commitment to recognizing the linkages between our diverse local community and the world. The School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies is founded on the principle of collective respect for diverse perspectives on a very broad array of global issues and problems. We, in ISLAC, are so excited to be an integral part of this new initiative.
ISLAC DEGREES

Master of Arts (M.A.) Program in Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies
♦ The Masters program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies offers an interdisciplinary approach to students with interests in academia, the private sector, government service, and international development agencies. Each student’s degree, tailored to individual needs and interests, prepares graduates for professions that require an understanding and appreciation of multicultural and Latin American and Caribbean settings.

Graduate Certificate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies
♦ The graduate certificate program offers interdisciplinary, graduate-level study of Latin America and the Caribbean. It prepares students to undertake further graduate work as well as professional opportunities.

Graduate Certificate in Global Health and Latin American and Caribbean Studies
♦ This certificate is intended to create a unique interdisciplinary professional training experience for students interested in global health issues among Latin American and Caribbean populations. Through this graduate certificate program, students will be exposed to current challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean and reach an understanding of the way global public health issues unfold in the region.

Undergraduate Certificate in Latin America and Caribbean Studies
♦ The Certificate of Concentration is a short-term program for students who are interested in taking a series of Latin American and Caribbean studies courses. The Certificate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies is designed for the student who wants to learn more about the region and have that knowledge formally recognized in his or her academic record.

ISLAC to establish cooperative ties with ICESI University in Colombia

The University of South Florida is in the final stages of the signage of a General Agreement for Collaboration with ICESI University in Cali, Colombia. The purpose of this agreement is to facilitate academic and research cooperation between the universities through the exchange of visiting scholars, and the undertaking of joint educational and research activities, particularly with its Center for Afro-Diasporic Studies.

Last April, Ms. Paula Lezama, ISLAC’s Assistant Director and Academic Advisor attended the US-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality (CAPREE) Plenary Meeting in Cali, Colombia. As part of the Education Subcommittee, ISLAC at USF is committed to keep supporting the US efforts to promote social and economic inclusion of Afro-Colombians, recognizing that access to quality education is key to promoting racial and ethnic equality. ISLAC has been awarded the Faculty-Community Partners Grant from the Office of Community Engagement at USF. The grant will be used for the initial stages of the project:

“The Colombian Peace Process and Grass Roots Organizing in Afro-Descendant Communities, Sustainable Enterprises with Ethno-racial Identity: the Case of ‘Rios Unidos’”. This project aims to bring together a group of ISLAC researchers with leaders of the community of ‘Rios Unidos’ in Guapi, Colombia, to analyze their “peace with identity” initiative and develop an articulated agenda for collaboration.

“The Center of Afrodiasporic Studies Center in Colombia was established to create a platform to articulate the research, teaching and extension needs related to the Afro-descendent population in Colombia. In the proposal’s consolidation process we found that we could build alliances between different observatories and research centers of the College of Law and Social Sciences and with the University in general.”
The conference featured a keynote address by the Honorable E.J. Salcines, a retired judge in the Florida Second District Court of Appeals, an authority on Florida history and one of Tampa’s most revered community leaders. Salcines spoke on “The Pueblo Fiel: José Martí’s 20 Visits to Tampa, 1891-1894.”

The keynote address included also remarks from local dignitaries. In addition to celebrating Martí and Tampa, the conference was the first USF-UT International Conference on José Martí. The conference included scholars from around the country and Cuba, presenting topics as diverse as Martí in literature, art and criticism, Tampa’s role in the Cuban movement for independence, and the decontinentalization of Latin America. For these presentations USF and UT made a strategic alliance with the Center for José Martí Studies (Centro de Estudios Martianos) in Havana. The Center for José Martí Studies (CEM) is an accredited research institution under the Ministry of Culture in Cuba whose mission is to promote the life, work and thought of Cuba’s greatest hero, José Martí. Since 1977 CEM has sponsored graduate research, academic conferences, published scholarly work through its academic journal Anuario and publishing house, and overseen the editing and printing of Martí’s collected works. There are currently 36 CEM affiliates worldwide, but none in the U.S. This affiliation allowed academic exchange opportunities that are beneficial to USF and UT students and faculty as well as the larger Tampa Bay community.

The Martí ceremony and conference was preceded at UT’s Scarfone/Hartley Gallery with an art exhibit featuring seven of the most renowned and provocative contemporary Cuban artists. The exhibit was designed to reflect the everyday concerns that weigh upon the Cuban community, especially focusing on the problems Cuban society faces as it moves toward the future.

See pages 22 and 23 for more conference pictures.
Martí is the namesake of José Martí Park on Eighth Avenue in Ybor City, which is a 0.14-acre plot of land that has been owned by the Cuban government since 1956. Martí did much of his planning and fundraising for his movement for Cuban independence in the late 19th Century in Ybor City, which he called his “faithful little town.” Martí died in the Cuban War of Independence in 1895.
On-Site Faculty News


Dr. Vanden also accepted the offer to be an observer at an international conference jointly sponsored by the Joint Special Operations Command University and the Centro Regional de Adiestramiento Contra el Crimen Organizado Transnacional"Contrarrestando el Extremismo Violento" held in San Salvador, El Salvador in May, 2016.

Dr. Rachel May has been actively involved in the implementation of the new School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies during the most recent academic year. She also published “International Studies and Area Studies in the Context of the North American University” in the first volume of the *Revista Aula Maria Zambrano de Estudios Transatlanticos*. She presented her most recent work on armed movements and the Colombian peace process at the 7th International CLACSO conference in Medellin in November of 2015, and at the 50th Anniversary LASA conference in New York in May of 2016. She also presented the newly released book-- Sociedades en conflicto: Movimientos sociales y movimientos armados en América Latina – at the LASA conference. This book, published by ImagiMundo and CLACSO in 2016 is the latest product of Dr. May’s CLACSO working group.
Dr. Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman’s (Assistant Professor of Sociology and ISLAC) book, *The Color Of Love*, was awarded the American Sociological Association’s Section on Emotions “Recent Book Contribution” Award. Dr. Hordge-Freeman also edited a new book with Gladys Mitchell-Walthour, *Race and the Politics of Knowledge Production: Diaspora and Black Transnational Scholarship in the USA and Brazil*. She also received several awards (see below). This year Dr. Hordge-Freeman was also the thesis advisor for Michelle Angelo Dantas, who wrote a great thesis on human trafficking in the U.S.

**Bernd Reiter** (Professor of School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies and ISLAC) was promoted to full professor this year. Dr. Reiter has also been working on the book *Bridging Scholarship and Activism: Reflections from the Frontlines of Collaborative Research*, with Ulrich Oslender (co-editor). Likewise, He has published several articles such as: “Alternatives to Representative Democracy and Capitalist Market Organization: The Wintukua, Guardians of the Earth,” *Anarchist Studies*; “Los Wintukua: Guardián des del Mundo,” *Revista Memorias*; and “Palenque de San Basilio: Citizenship and Republican Traditions of a Maroon Village in Colombia,” *Journal of Civil Society*. Dr. Reiter is teaching this Fall “Qualitative Research Methods, and for Spring 2017 “Democracy and Citizenship: Seminar in Comparative Politics”.

**Dr. Hordge-Freeman’s Awards**

- USF Outstanding Faculty Award 2016
- USF Black Heritage Celebration Outstanding Faculty Award 2016
- USF World Small Event Grant 2015
- USF World Faculty Mobility and Travel Grant: “#BlackLivesMatterBrazil” Week (co-sponsored by ISLAC, Sociology and WGS); signed a General Agreement with Instituto Cultural Steve Biko (Ms. Jucy Silva).
- 2015 USF World Global Achievement Award, International Research (inaugural recipient)
- 2015 Florida Campus Compact Special Award for Global Engagement (inaugural recipient)
College of Arts and Sciences

Christian Wells (Professor, Anthropology) had several publications this year: “The Grandest Challenge of All: The Role of Environmental Engineering to Achieve Sustainability in the World’s Developing Regions,” Environmental Engineering Science 20 (co-author); “The Impacts of Tourism Development on Perceptions and Practices of Sustainable Wastewater Management on the Placencia Peninsula, Belize,” Journal of Cleaner Production; and “History: Implications for Understanding Global Environmental Change,” Oxford Handbook of Historical Ecology and Applied Archaeology. This year Dr. Wells is teaching “Applied Anthropology” and “Quantitative Methods in Anthropology.”

Rebecca Zarger (Associate Professor, Anthropology) recently received an award from the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico for a National Science Foundation Research Team Seminar, co-organized with colleague Keith Pruner (Univ. of New Mexico), titled, “Linking the Past to the Future: 2000 Years of Human Resilience and Socioecological Change in the Central American Tropics,” held January 26-28, 2016. Dr. Zarger is teaching “Research Methods in Applied Anthropology” this Fall and is working with doctoral students, Meredith Main (research in Brazil) and Rachel Grabner (research in Haiti). Both students anticipate graduating during the next academic year.


Elizabeth Aranda’s (Professor, Sociology) recent publications include: “Puerto Rican Families in Central Florida: Prejudice and Discrimination and Their Implications for Successful Integration” with Fernando Rivera (2016); “Women, Gender, and Families of Color” (co-authored); and “Personal and Cultural Trauma and the Ambivalent National Identities of Undocumented Young Adults in the U.S.” Journal of Intercultural Studies. Dr. Aranda also worked with the students Girsea Martinez and Rodrigo Serrao, whose research is about Latin America and the Caribbean.

Johnhenry Gonzalez (Assistant Professor, History) is teaching “History of the Caribbean” and “Latin American Civilization” this fall. His research focuses on Haiti and the Dominican Republic. His scholarship grows out of his own efforts to comprehend the history of Hispaniola – the initial site of European conquest and African slavery in the New World.

College of Education

Barbara Cruz (Professor, Social Science Education) has been working this year on her book César Chávez: Civil Rights Activist (Influential Latinos). American farmworker, labor leader, and civil rights activist César Chávez cofounded the United Farm Workers labor union and fought to increase immigrants’ rights in the United States. Through a captivating narrative of his life, readers will learn what made Chávez an influential Latino.

College of the Arts

Noel Smith (The Institute for Research in Art and Graphic Studio) curated the exhibitions “Histórias/Histories: Contemporary Art from Brazil,” and “Sandra Cinto: Change and Necessity,” for the USF Contemporary Art Museum. She is curating the exhibition “Cuba/USA: Climate Change” for USF CAM in the Fall of 2017. Smith also translated some essays from Cuban critics Antonio Eligio “Tonel” and Orlando Hernández for a catalog of exhibition from “Cuba: Ficción y Fantasía,” at Casa Daros, Rio de Janeiro.

Patrick Finelli (Professor, School of Theatre and Dance) is teaching three fascinating courses this year about performance: “Contemporary Performance Theory,” “Sport as Performance” and “Great Performances on Film” His recent publications include the textbook Sound for the Stage, and the book Worlds Away, electronic coursework for online teaching. Dr. Finelli toured Derek Walcott’s “Pantomime” in The Bahamas and Grand Cayman during October 2015. Two guest faculty and one student toured with the show. The student was enrolled in a study abroad program just for this tour.

College of Behavioral and Community Sciences

Guitele Jeudy Rahill (Associate Professor, Social Work) received the Obama-Singh Grant- a collaborative grant from the US Department of State and the Indian government. The USF team was comprised of Dr. Manisha Joshi (PI), Iraida Carrion, Dr. Guitele Rahill, and Dr. Nancy Romero-Daza from the Department of Anthropology. Her recent publications include “Religious Beliefs, PTSD, depression, and Resilience in Survivors of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake,” Journal of Affective Disorders (co-authored); “Assessing the Development of Cultural Proficiency among Upper Level Social Work Students,” Journal of Social Work Education; and “In Their Own Words: Resilience among Haitian Survivors of the 2010 Haitian Earthquake,” Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved (co-authored).

Dr. Rahill’s research interests concern the reduction of health and mental health disparities for Haitians (HIV prevention, Sexual Violence against Women, Interaction of Traditional Beliefs and Practices and Wellness/ Disease, Health issues post-disasters). This Fall, Dr. Rahill is teaching “Foundations of Human Behavior and the Social Environment.”
Iraida Carrion (Associate Professor, Social Work) has had a busy and rewarding academic year. Dr. Carrion was awarded the “India-US 21st Century Knowledge Initiative Awards ($190,000 for a three-year period) by the United States Department of State and India’s University Grants Commission (UGC). The aims include encouraging mutual understanding, educational reform, and economic growth, as well as the development of junior faculty at U.S. and Indian universities. Dr. Carrion’s recent publications are: “I Told Myself to Stay Positive: Coping among Latinos with a Cancer Diagnosis Living in the U.S.” American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine; and “Exploring Healthcare Providers’ Views about Initiating End of Life Care Communication,” American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (co-authored). 

College of Marine Science

Frank E. Muller-Karger (Professor, Biological Oceanography) participated in the “Technical Workshop on Monitoring of Marine and Coastal Biodiversity” organized by the Convention on Biological Diversity in collaboration with Australia’s Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (MBON).

On July 6-7, at the GEO MBON meeting in Leipzig, Germany, Frank Muller-Karger lead a workshop on “Developing Regional MBONs: Approaches and Lessons Learned.” The workgroup discussed progress towards developing and linking regional MBONs.

The 2015-2016 academic year was full of enriching professional activities and opportunities. After participating in the National Endowment of the Humanities summer institute, I presented a co-authored paper at the Human Development and Capabilities Association Annual Conference (HDCA), which took place in Washington D.C. in September of 2015. The paper entitled, “Recognition before Capabilities: Early Childhood Justice Aspirations” was a collaborative effort with Dr. Maribel Castillo Caicedo, Chair of the Department of Economics at the Universidad Javeriana, in Cali, Colombia. Also, in April of 2016, I attended the First Civil Society Plenary of the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality (CAPREE). This also took place in Cali, Colombia and I was the representative of the ISLAC Afrodescendants Working Group, which is part of the CAPREE Education Committee. During my time in Cali, I was able to meet with representatives from Universidad ICESI to develop a collaboration agreement with their Center for Afrodiaposic Studies. Said agreement is in the processes of being signed. Most recently, I presented a paper entitled, “Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and Climate Change: Inclusion or Commodification?” This paper was born out of my participation in the NEH summer institute and, after positive feedback, I expect to further develop it. My work on ethnic and racial minorities and development issues has led me to work more closely with these communities. Precisely because of these relations, Dr. May and I obtained a USF Office of Community Engagement Grant. This seed money will be used to develop a partnering agreement with a community organization in the Colombian Pacific to develop mutually beneficial activities. Last but not least, I will be spent a week in July 2016 at the Universidad Javeriana of Cali as part of their Partnership Mobility Opportunities. During this time I furthered my collaborative work with Dr. Castillo Caicedo while seeking to develop a collaborative agreement USF-Javeriana Cali.
Hi! ¡Hola! ¿Qué tal?

My name is Joseph Anastasio, and this newsletter entry is coming all the way from a little pueblo named Paracuellos de Jarama, outside of Madrid, Spain!

In 2011, I graduated with my Masters of Arts in Latin American, Caribbean and Latino studies with a concentration in Diversity in Education. Immediately after graduation I was lucky enough to land a job with USF in the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. Have you ever held a job where you know you've had a part in the changing of someone's life and circumstances? I was lucky enough to say that for four years I had that opportunity, and ISLAC helped me get there.

Last year however, after eight plus years as a graduate student and employee at USF, I decided I wanted to try something new. Even though I was happy at USF, I started to feel like an open bag of potato chips. A little stale and soggy, I was in major need of some freshness. In January of 2015, I applied to the Cultural Ambassador Program for the country of Spain, and four months later received my acceptance to teach English in Madrid through the Spanish Ministry of Education.

In August, I made my way across the ocean to Madrid and I was in excitement overload. I remember taking in a nice big whiff of air to immerse myself into my new setting, only for my lungs to be filled with cigarette smoke. Yes, major adjustments needed to be made, but I had a little help.

Eight years ago, as part of an independent study towards my Masters degree, ISLAC allowed me to spend an entire semester in Salamanca, Spain as part of a Study Abroad program. To say that semester abroad changed my life would be very cliché, but it was true. In those three months, I traveled Europe, met international students, lived with a Spanish family that was as “Archie Bunker” as you can find, and had a great time. Oh, and of course, I studied!

So what made me apply? It was the comfort of knowing friends who went through the program. I have suggested the program to numerous friends over the years and have kept tabs on their development, travels and adventures. I began asking the question why not me? Why should I continue to follow the adventures of others through my computer screen and not take part in some myself? Fast forward to the present day, what exactly do I do? I primarily work with 2nd graders who are between seven and eight years old. It has been a great experience thus far. The differences are stark, and you quickly realize this isn’t the USA when children run up to you to hug you. We’d jump out of a window before a child touches us in the States. It’s just a different ball game here. I have witnessed the truth in the saying about young people having the ability to learn a language faster than adults. The development in most of the students is remarkable.

The best part of working abroad as a “profe de inglés” are the hours. I work 9am to 4pm, which translates roughly to about 18 hours per week since they do not count my two hour lunch break. And there is also a coffee break! It serves as a little pick-me-up for the teachers, and a little put-them-down for the kids. This happens an hour and a half into the day. Yes, as soon as we start we literally stop to have coffee. It’s great. Then, an hour later we stop for a lunch break which lasts 2 hours. Oh, and you can go to a bar and have lunch, with wine, beer, or water at your disposal. No wonder teachers here are so relaxed!

I knew I wanted to spend at least two years in Spain. The first year I focused on seeing as much of Spain as possible; the second year I’ll focus on international travels. I’ve been lucky enough to have made Spanish friends who have cars and love to road trip.

As a song made popular by the ‘80’s movie Dirty Dancing says, “I’ve Had The Time of My Life,” and I look forward to the next year(s) to come in Madrid, Spain, and Europe. I’ve criss-crossed Spain, and the diversity is stark. The north is Seattle-like, green pastures, constant drizzle, ports and fishing villages. There are mountains which meet breathtaking cliffs and beaches. In the south, deserts meet mountains. There are Mediterranean coastal villages and Moorish palaces. The east is a beach lovers’ paradise. From paellas and the ear-jarring sounds of the Las Fallas festivals found in La Comunidad Valenciana, to the wonderful and distinct sights of Gaudi’s architectural wonders in Barcelona. The west is where a preserved Roman Empire calls home. From Roman aqueducts to Roman amphitheaters, it’s a history lover’s delight.
Joseph Anastacio

The Journey of a Cultural Ambassador in Spain

I implore all ISLAC students to consider living abroad for a year once finished with your degree. Try it out, take a risk, see a bit of the world. Come to Spain and teach English! It's been a very rewarding year full of personal growth and adventure. This has easily been one of the best decisions I've ever made and everyday I thank those who pushed me to seek this opportunity, but most importantly, I thank the Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean for giving me a global education and showing me that the world is a lot bigger than I ever imagined. Travel while you are young; move around; learn some new things. Learn to dance salsa or swing. Go to a country where you don’t speak the language. Visit a country for more than 2 weeks. Just take advantage of your days on earth and see as much of it as you can, while you can. Do not let finances or fear hold you back from living.
A Student’s Perspective in Argentina

Alicia Barraqué Ellison, ISLAC, MA student.

A month abroad, in a Southern Cone city as European in look and feel as it is Latin American, and six credits earned at the end: how could I not take this opportunity? USF’s Argentina Human Rights Study Abroad in June 2016 proved to be all this and more, an intense and intensive learning experience on many levels.

Intense, in that throughout those four weeks we attended classes Monday through Thursday mornings, and on many afternoons undertook some form of community-engaged research or internship with local human rights groups. We also went to places important in Argentina’s ongoing healing from the state-sponsored terrorism of the 1976-83 military dictatorship.

Intensive, in that the four weeks were focused on the history of Argentina, with particular emphasis on events and cultural/sociological phenomena leading up to, during and after that regime. These studies, however, illuminated much about the whole region, and were thus a primer on issues confronting all of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Indeed, this is why I am even enrolled in ISLAC; I want to understand the forces that have shaped the Western Hemisphere. In addition to the excellent course content taught by our professors, the Argentina program was a multifaceted immersion, even if just for a month, in another country in our part of the world. We lived in a regular apartment and not on a campus. We had to quickly learn how to navigate the many daily details of living in a large, cosmopolitan city in a foreign country.

Dr. Rachel May gave us invaluable tips on local customs in advance, and she was available for consultation at any time on practical matters as well as academic. We were very soon feeling competent as dwellers in our home away from home.

Meeting and being with some of the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo (who, although time has diminished their ranks, still march every Thursday in front of the Casa Rosada), spending time with other human rights workers, getting involved in projects, visiting significant sites of memory—these encounters added a powerful, personal dimension to what we were learning in class.

With all of these educational experiences packed into four weeks, we still had time for fun group excursions, plus free time to explore the city’s vibrant culture on our own. In all, Argentina Human Rights was a thoughtfully planned program, and I am grateful to have been a part of it.

--Alicia Barraqué Ellison, MA Student (USF-MLIS 1995; Librarian with Hillsborough Community College)
KNOW MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM!

Human Rights in Argentina focuses on various topics including human rights abuses under the military dictatorship, transitional justice in Argentina and elsewhere in Latin America, the codification of international human rights standards, and the relationships between socio-economic justice and human rights.

The course is taught in English. The program also includes visits to important human rights sites in Buenos Aires, including ESMA, various memorials, NGOs and other “sitios de memoria.”

In addition to the academic content, students are exposed to the culture and beauty of Argentina through organized weekend excursions, including an asado and gaucho show, and the Tigre river delta.
Thaddeus Broward Ryan was a passionate student at the University of South Florida where he immersed himself in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. He was originally introduced to the field when reading *The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey*. Its author, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, was an Argentinian physician, diplomat, and guerrilla leader who became a principal figure of the Cuban Revolution.

At USF, Ryan was thrilled to study under the tutelage of his academic mentor and idol, Latin American history professor, Paul J. Dosal, now USF’s Vice Provost for Student Success. Dosal is the author of four books: *Doing Business with the Dictators, Cuba Libre, Comandante Che, and The Rise of Guatemala’s Industrial Oligarchy*.

Ryan was about to begin his MA Thesis at the time of his unexpected passing in 2007. His love of the subject lives on today through the Thaddeus Broward Ryan Endowed Memorial Scholarship in Latin American and Caribbean Studies created by his mother and four siblings, Joy, Nick, Tony, and Fay. While honoring his memory, this award will open the door for deserving USF students.

This past July, a luncheon was held in Tampa to present the scholarship to its first recipient, Marquela Zepeda, who is pursuing her master’s degree in Latin American and Caribbean studies. Also in attendance from USF were Dr. Paul Dosal; Kelly Addington, Director of Development in the College; and Dr. Rachel May.

Zepeda is working on her own thesis, focusing on the plight of incarcerated Latinos. Upon hearing that she had been chosen for the award, she described how much receiving the scholarship means to her in a letter to Thaddeus’ mother, Susan Fay Ryan, Ed.D.

“I am honored to receive this scholarship and grateful for the opportunities it will provide. In pursuing my master’s degree ... I hope to become an advocate for disenfranchised Latino populations in the United States. The knowledge that I will gain from this program will allow me to articulate the histories, motivations, barriers and goals of the Latino community. Without a doubt this scholarship will play a key role in helping me achieve my educational dreams. Because of your generosity, the financial burden placed on me to pursue my education will be reduced.”

Zepeda grew up in a Florida household, where her Panamanian and Nicaraguan parents endeavored to maintain their values, traditions and language while she immersed herself in modern technology and life in America among her peers. But during her undergraduate studies at USF, Zepeda says she gained a greater appreciation of the old customs her parents fought to uphold in a new world.

“I began to understand that in order to best serve the Latino population, traditions, languages, struggles and histories need to be examined, evaluated and interpreted,” she wrote in her scholarship application. “My dream is to find ways to revise community programs that aim to benefit Hispanic populations.”

No doubt Thaddeus Ryan would have appreciated the commitment and determination of the first person to earn the scholarship in his name. Two of his siblings were able to attend the July luncheon, and each came away highly impressed after talking to Zepeda. “Both Fay and Tony found her to be most intelligent and charming with a delightful sense of humor, and all of my children believe that she represents the program well,” wrote Dr. Ryan in a letter to Kelly Addington. “This arrangement brings me great joy.” And of her son, the youngest of the five Ryan children, she added:

“Thad’s diligent work is being rewarded. His memory will live on at the University of South Florida in the Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean, in the program so dear to his heart. I know he would be happy about that.”

About the Scholarship:

USF students who are pursuing an MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies will be eligible to apply for the academic year 2017-2018. The award will be up to $1,000 ($500 per semester). To be considered, a student must be enrolled and in good standing in the MALACS program with at least a 3.5 GPA. New incoming students are exempt from the GPA requirement. Applicants must submit a 500-word essay illustrating why they are passionate about Latin American and Caribbean studies, and why they are pursuing the degree, as well as two letters of recommendation from professors who are familiar with their academic performance. The scholarship will be based on merit and financial need, so discussing how the scholarship could make a difference in your ability to move forward in the MA program will be helpful. Priority will be given to tuition-paying students who are in their second year of study.
Rebecca Blackwell (2014 MA Student and ISLAC Graduate Assistant) I entered the interdisciplinary master’s program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies with a very eclectic academic and professional background. I had experience in linguistics, translation, didactics, business and human rights. Over the course of the last two years, the experiences both as a student and as a teaching assistant for ISLAC have helped me find a definite route I wish to pursue. The program gave me exposure to theories and methodologies from political science and sociology and gave me the opportunity to combine key elements from my previous background to consolidate a concrete area of study. This allowed me not only to enter a Ph.D. program in Sociology, but also to attend important international conferences to present my work. So far, I have been able to attend conferences organized by CLACSO in Medellín in Nov. 2015 and New York in May 2016, as well as by LASA in May 2016. As a Teaching Assistant to Dr. Bernd Reiter and Dr. Rachel May I have acquired valuable knowledge and was thus able to accept an adjunct teaching position with the History Department at USF. The academic networks and theoretical tools that I have been exposed to in this program have been accompanied by deep reflections on contemporary cross-cultural dynamics. I feel equipped to undertake the systematic study of social structures in which I was always naturally interested.

Yudelka Santana (2014 MA Student and ISLAC Graduate Assistant) This year has been full of great experiences not only working for ISLAC, but also in my academic development. In ISLAC I have been able to continue working on the coordination of different events, and in the promotional design of each one of them. The Institute focused on working with academics whose research covered South America to the Caribbean. One of the events that I enjoyed the most was the International Conference, “Marti in Tampa,” which required a major communication strategy. In fact, we achieved excellent visibility in local media like the Tampa Tribune and Tampa Bay Times. Also, throughout this year I was immersed in my research project “Changes and Challenges in Diplomacy: An Evaluation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Dominican Republic,” where I explored the topic of patronage, corruption, and law and reality, under the guidance of Dr. Bernd Reiter, Dr. Rachel May and Dr. Johnhenry Gonzalez. The research began with my empirical observations about how the nation responds to criticisms by the international community. I argued that the government uses intense and widespread nationalism to hide institutional weaknesses and state corruption. As I have defended my thesis, and prepared this edition of the newsletter, my work at ISLAC is coming to an end. I say goodbye knowing that big opportunities and interesting challenges will arise for ISLAC as for me. Definitely, the best is yet to come!

Mariela Noles Cotito (2015 MA Student and ISLAC Graduate Assistant) Joining the ISLAC team last fall, I was full of expectations and excitement. I was to support the Institute’s efforts regarding the many events scheduled for the year, along with the activities of the Afrodescendant Working Group, and my own classes. A year later my balance is very positive. I have participated in very interesting events that have pushed my own ideas and academic boundaries, and I have had the opportunity to represent the Institute in University-wide diversity events where we were able to showcase not only our academic programs but also the richness of Latin America and the Caribbean region. One of the highlights of this year has been my participation in the first Gender and Feminist Conference in Ecuador, an event I could attend thanks to ISLAC’s support.

Ana Lucía Mosquera (Incoming fall 2016 MA student and ISLAC Graduate Assistant) I have a degree in communications and public relations and I was the Director of the Communications and PR in the nonprofit organization “Makungu para el Desarrollo,” which works in Afrodescendant communities in Peru, emphasizing the development of social projects for youth. I am also a photographer and I have been documenting cultural events related to the cultural heritage of the Afrodescendant population in Latin America. I have developed my professional career in the Department of Policies for the Afroperuvian Population in Peru’s Ministry of Culture. I was responsible for developing strategies of dialogue with Afro-Peruvian organizations, providing technical support in the implementation of data-gathering workshops for designing policy guidelines, and providing communication support for the activities, products and events executed by the Department. I firmly believe in the power of communication to transform attitudes and to contribute to a better society. I hope to continue the work that I have been doing with the Afro descendant community while pursuing my degree in ISLAC. I look forward to starting this new academic experience that will surely strengthen my abilities.
Photo Gallery

Marti in Tampa Conference
Photo Gallery

Marti in Tampa Conference

Honors College Trip to Cuba
OCTOBER 3, 2016. * TALK 2:00 – 4:00 PM
CONTESTING WHITE SUPREMACY IN THE AMERICAS: NEW APPROACHES AND REFLECTIONS
Grace Allen Room, 4th Floor, USF Library
Open to the Public

NOVEMBER 10, 2016 * TALK 6:00 PM
COMMUNITY FORUM ON ISSUES FACING THE CARIBBEAN DIASPORA
Traditions Hall of the Alumni Center, USF Tampa Campus
Open to the Public.

JANUARY 2017 * CONFERENCE
PEACE PROCESS IN COLOMBIA
(For more information about this conference, please check ISLAC webpage in the upcoming weeks).

For more information on our upcoming events, please visit ISLAC webpage
http://islac.usf.edu/

ISLAC
Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean
University of South Florida
College of Arts and Sciences
4202 East Fowler Avenue, FAO 270
Tampa, FL
(813) 974– 3772
http://islac.usf.edu