

# UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN CHICAN@ LATIN@ STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR, DR. THERESA DELGADILLO

Dear Chican@ and Latin@ Studies  
Students, Faculty, Alumni, Friends, and  
Campus and Community Partners,

Given the rhetoric that characterized the election campaign that just ended, many in our communities have expressed concern about the implications of recent political events for the students we serve, the communities we live in, and for our area of study. As we contemplate the work ahead we invite you to join us in taking a moment to remember our strength. We deeply value all that you do to support our program and each other. We thank all the faculty whose research and teaching advances our knowledge and learning in our interdisciplinary field. We are grateful to the students and alumni who engage with this material, develop their own critical sensibilities and then take that out into the world to make a difference for Chicanx and Latinx communities. We appreciate the support of our friends who do all they can to ensure that this important area of study and these students can flourish. And we thank our campus and community partners for the productive collaborations we enjoy and for your dedication to uplifting our program whenever it is in your power to do so. We remain committed to embracing the diversity of Latinidad among our students, whether of race, gender, ethnicity/nationality, immigrant status, sexuality, age, or ability. Together, we will work to deepen our study of the complexities in our communities and the challenges faced by them. Our strength and success have always been grounded in this network of relations, and we invite you to continue to expand this network of relations in the days, weeks, and years ahead.



In this newsletter, we celebrate the first graduates of the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Major in 2024! We also share reports from our

undergraduates on the valuable research and study abroad opportunities they enjoyed this year. From our faculty and staff, you'll read about new research projects and accomplishments as well as important conferences we attended. Outgoing Director of CHICLA, Rubén Medina offers some closing words while Peter Haney shares a tribute to former CHICLA Administrative Manager Sylvia Garcia, who sadly passed away this summer. We look forward to your thoughts, comments, and news!

All best wishes,

Theresa Delgadillo

Director, Chican@ and Latin@ Studies

Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor of English and Chican@ and Latin@ Studies

## 2024 Faculty Updates



**Jorell Meléndez-Badillo** was selected as Vice President (2024-2026) and President-Elect (2026-2028) of the Puerto Rican Studies Association, which is the leading organization in the field of Puerto Rican Studies. Dr. Meléndez-Badillo is also featured in Episode 2 of John Leguizamo's *American Historia: The Untold History of Latinos in the United States* on PBS.

**Theresa Delgadillo** published *Geographies of Relation: Diasporas and Borderlands in the Americas* (U of Michigan Press, 2024). Dr. Delgadillo also participated in a Latine Leaders Panel on Tackling Climate Change and Environmental Injustice in Wisconsin at the Wisconsin Energy Institute organized by undergraduate student Lulu Fregoso. The panel shared insight and information on connecting Latinx communities to clean energy solutions and reducing energy burdens. Dr. Delgadillo spoke about research in Chicanx and Latinx studies on environmental justice and sustainability. The panel featured Justice Castañeda, Mario Garcia Sierra, Cristina Carvajal, and Victor Niño.



## 2024 Faculty Updates



**Diana Rodríguez-Gómez** received the Vilas Faculty Early Career Investigator award. Diana was one of fourteen professors to be recognized for their research and teaching excellence in faculty who are relatively early in their careers. Rodríguez-Gómez is an Assistant Professor in the Educational Policy Studies Department. Her work examines state-building and education policy-making processes in areas impacted by violence, particularly in Latin America.

**Christopher Saldana** recently won the Association of Education Finance and Policy's Outstanding Dissertation Award. Christopher and his colleagues received funding from the Wallace Foundation to conduct research to support equity-centered principal leadership pipelines. Saldaña is an assistant professor of K-12 educational leadership and policy analysis.



**Kathryn Kirchgasser** received the NAEd/Spencer Postdoctoral fellowship for 2024-2025! Kathryn's project explores how both problems stem from unexamined histories of segregated and colonial instruction. She investigates a paradox of conditional inclusion: in ascribing minoritized students the potential to become agentic citizens, research has tended to prescribe distinct interventions to bring them closer to cultural and linguistic norms universalized as scientific.

**Rubén Medina** had a public conversation with Danny Trejo on March 20th, as he was invited for the Distinguished Lecture Series, organized by the Memorial Union. Audience members also had the opportunity to ask Trejo questions after his conversation with Medina.





# 2024 Faculty Updates



**Alfonso Morales** is the cofounder of farm2facts.org, which is part of several grants and outreach efforts on his agenda from 2023-26. Morales is also participating in the USDA Southern Piedmont Climate Smart Project from 2022-2027, and a project with the National Science Foundation, AI Institute: ICICLE: Intelligent CyberInfrastructure with Computational Learning in the Environment from 2021-2026. He is continuing his research on Wisconsin Farmers Markets through Data Collection as well, ending in 2024.

**Benjamin Márquez** was interviewed by Wisconsin PBS for a story on immigration and the 2024 Presidential Election. Márquez has published extensively on Latinxs and American politics, and his research interests lie in the area of political sociology.



**Michael Light** participated in an interview with Emily Auerbach on Wisconsin Public Radio's University of the Ear program this summer. Professor Light shared his research on disproportionate incarceration rates for Black, Latinx, and undocumented persons as well as his research that shows that an increase in the undocumented population does not increase crime.

Congratulations to **Carolina Sarmiento** and **Armando Ibarra** for receiving a Reilly Baldwin grant for their project "Wisconsin Latino Immigrant-Serving Organizations Project."



**Aurora Santiago-Ortiz** was interviewed by WPR regarding the disparaging comments made about Puerto Ricans at a Trump campaign rally. She explored the long history of neglect of Puerto Rico by mainland US politicians and analyzed the joke's potential effect on the Puerto Rican vote.

## What Has Our CLS Advisor Been Up To?



This spring 2024, I had the opportunity to attend NCORE. I first attended the conference back in 2012. More than a decade later, I was fortunate to travel to Honolulu, Hawaii for the 36th Annual National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Higher Education. I value the information gained at the conference from people at the forefront of their fields. I learned about mentorship, native Hawaiian people and history, leadership advice for BIPOC individuals, how to navigate tricky situations, confidence building, and so much more. I left NCORE feeling revitalized and

ready to tackle the next year at CLS.

There are a few themes that stood out. The keynote speaker(s) and several other sessions were presented by Native Hawaiian students and historians. They opened my eyes to their histories and truths. I knew very little about Hawaii's history prior to attending the conference. In one session in particular, I was able to hear from Hawaiian students from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa via their Native Hawaiian Student Services Office. They talked about UH Mānoa's strategic plan (and opportunities for growth) and the resources/services their office provides native students. I hope to be able to implement some of their programming ideas at CLS.

The second theme that stood out was the importance of mentorship. I ran into some of my UW colleagues (and CLS alumni) at the conference. Some of whom graduated before and after me. The conference made me grateful for the relationships I have built and showed me the ways in which I have been both a mentor and a mentee. I was fortunate to be able to catch up with CLS alumna, Dr. Marla Delgado-Guerrero. She and some UW Posse students presented

their Posse mentoring program. One of our CLS rising seniors, Maria Stakem, presented alongside Dr. Delgado-Guerrero. They informed us of the power of mentorship and how “Bigs and Littles” are selected. A mentorship relationship works well when the mentor is in a similar academic field, from a similar background or hometown and when the mentor discloses some personal information. I plan to use these ideas when considering upperclass student mentors for our younger CHICLA students.



The final theme was speaking up for oneself. Another CLS Alumni, Arturo ‘Tito’ Diaz, co-presented regarding unpacking identity and belonging in higher education leadership. He and his co-presenter talked about their challenges in their work spaces and how to navigate tricky situations. They normalized speaking up for oneself even in tricky situations. What they said resonated with me and I plan to use their tips when addressing workplace conflicts going forward. They really stressed the importance of knowing your self worth and respecting your own boundaries.





The NCORE conference was more than I could have hoped for. My eyes were opened to many new ideas and thoughts. I got to meet some new colleagues from various universities. I want to thank the UW Academic Staff Professional Development Grant, the Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies Program, the Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program, and of course the SOMOS Faculty/Staff Development Award for allowing me the funding to attend. It truly was life changing. Mahalo!



## Award Spotlight

### Somos Student Development Award

The Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program offers the Somos Undergraduate Development Award annually to students enrolled in its academic programs who belong to minority groups historically underserved by higher education in the United States for professional development initiatives. The award is supported by the generosity of Dr. Andrea-Teresa Arenas with proceeds from the sale of her book *Somos Latinas*, and by her husband, former Chancellor John Wiley.



**CONGRATULATIONS!**

To the 2024 Chican@ & Latin@  
Studies Jesús Salas Academic Activist  
Scholarship recipient



**Yanci Almonte Vargas**

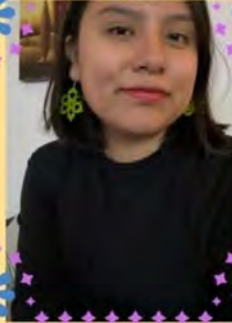
**Jesús Salas Academic  
Activist Scholarship**

The Jesús Salas Academic Activist scholarship is awarded annually to a Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program Undergraduate Certificate student who has excelled in academic pursuits and has made outstanding service contributions to the Chican@ and Latin@ Community. The award is named in honor of longtime activist Jesús Salas for his continuous commitment and dedication to the advancement and wellbeing of the Chican@ and Latin@ community.

**Congratulations Valedictorians and Salutatorians!**



**GABRIEL SANDERS  
CO-VALEDICTORIAN**



**MARIA JIMENA MORALES GRANDE  
CO-VALEDICTORIAN**



**CUAHITEMOC GUIZAR  
CO-SALUTATORIAN**



**JULIA GOZDZIEWSKI  
CO-SALUTATORIAN**





# CLASS OF 2024



# **HAPPY** **GRADUATION**

**to our first official class of the CLS Major!**

**Odilon Aranda**

**Jennifer Bautista Frias**

**Jose Catalan**

**Cristian Cruz-Montes de Oca**

**Angeles Flores Ruiz**

**Michelle Góngora**

**Andi Hernandez Ruiz**

**Isabel Hernández White**

**Kim Huete Galeano**

**Luvia Herrera Montoya**

**Elias Moore-Barbosa**

**Crystal Murillo**

**Karina Perez**

**Nallely Pineda-Ortiz**

**Carmen Raya**

**Danitza Rodríguez Jiménez**

**Lenzy Xelhua-Ledezma**



*happy*  
**GRADUATION**  
to our CLS certificate Class of 2024!

Yanci Almonte Vargas  
Angel Alonso Cuevas  
Julio Andrade  
Jisselle Ayala  
Paula Caviedes Salazar  
Lily Chavez  
Lindsey Colin  
Mariana Cortes Pineda  
Alejandra Espino  
Gisselle Garduño-Nuñez  
Tanya Garnica  
Charlie Genis-Dominguez  
Sarai Gonzalez Perez  
Isaiah Gonzalez-Martinez  
Julia Gozdziwski  
Cuauhtemoc Guizar  
Cassie Guzman  
Maggie Hayes  
Alejandra Juarez  
Keeshawn Katers  
Allison Keeley  
Helena Lara  
Yireisy Mancera

Mari Morales Grande  
Alex Moreno  
Mindy Navarro  
Erin Oakley  
Alyssa Ortiz  
Rafael Pacheco Alcantara  
Gerardo Parra Noble  
Anna Pohlen  
Kaitlyn Romo  
Dani Rosen  
Gabriel Sanders  
Jessica Santos Valadez  
Luis Tecuanhuehue  
Rachel Temozihui Navarro  
Leslie Tlahuel  
Camila Trimberger-Ruiz  
Lily Tronco-Gutierrez  
Ashley Valle Argueta  
Erin Voss  
Cristal Zenon  
Joselyn Zuñiga Carapia







# CLASS OF 2024



# Student Spotlight: From High School to Now

**Tatianna Sanchez Mora (Class of 2026)**

My journey with Baird began 5 years ago during my sophomore year of high school. This past summer I had the privilege of returning as a Financial Analyst Intern, which marked a significant milestone in the early stages of my career. Being able to work and learn about various teams in the Finance Department, including FP&A, Baird Capital, and Reporting, gave me experience on a diverse range of projects and the opportunity to cultivate invaluable networking relationships. What truly sets Baird apart for me is its extraordinary culture of inclusivity and diversity. This environment not only ignited my drive to continuously strive for excellence, but it also made me feel like a vital part of the team, which is not common as an intern.

Beyond gaining priceless experience, I had the honor to give back in various capacities. I shared my experiences as a high school intern during a Baird meeting, I was invited to speak at my high school to inspire future talent, and had the privilege of attending the Thrive conference at Baird's Chicago office. Additionally, in collaboration with four fellow interns, we competed in the Light the Hoan Challenge. All which have contributed to a return offer and I eagerly look forward to continuing my journey with Baird!

# Senior Spotlight: The Importance of Extra-Curriculars

**Nallely Pineda-Ortiz (Class of 2024)**



Hello! I am a senior triple majoring in Political Science, Legal Studies, and Chicano Latino Studies, with a certificate in Criminal Justice. I am also a fellow PEOPLE scholar.

Throughout my time at UW-Madison, I have been involved in quite a few extra-curricular activities, such as interning at State Senator Kelda Roys' Office in the capitol. During my internship, I explored and did various things,



such as constituent work, which included answering the phone, writing emails, sending out letters, etc. I worked on the communication side and on the Senator's social media, creating Canva slides and various other graphics. I also got to work on introducing a new policy called The Building Families Act.

I have also been involved with Dreamers of UW-Madison as the Outreach Chair and Vice President and as a Social Justice Education Facilitation Intern for the Office of Inclusion Education. My time here at UW-Madison has had its challenges, to say the least. However, I am grateful for the community I have built through my majors and the various extracurriculars I have been involved with.

## Senior Spotlight: LSU Campus Leader

**Cuauhtemoc Guizar (Class of 2024)**



I am a recent graduate and a Mercile J. Lee Scholar from Milwaukee, double majoring in Community & Nonprofit Leadership and Political Science with certificates in Public Policy and Chican@ & Latin@ Studies.



As a first-generation and Latino student, I worked to promote student success and foster inclusive excellence while at UW-Madison. I served as the President of the Latine Student Union for the 2023-2024 academic year and previously held the positions of Outreach Chair and Outreach Co-Chair. As President, I managed seven student employees, served hundreds of students, advised campus administrators, secured over \$50,000 in grant funding, and engaged with the greater Madison community. My previous campus and



community involvements have included the Cabinet of Student Leaders, Associated Students of Madison, Multicultural Grant Council, Centro Hispano of Dane County, and more. I most recently was an Economic Policy Intern with Dane County and will be working for a management consulting firm in Chicago following graduation.

I am so appreciative and grateful for the support of the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program and its staff and faculty. I will miss the courses that allowed me to learn more about my community and the weekly luncheons.

## Senior Spotlight: The Benefits of Student Involvement

**Odilon Romeo Aranda III (Class of 2024)**



Because of a culmination of circumstances growing up, such as coming from a small town in Wisconsin, I was very unfamiliar with my roots and my Latinidad. Although, neither of these domains were one's that I was particularly connected to, where I would be proud and present throughout my Mexican heritage. However, this all changed when I took my first CHICLA class during the first semester of my freshman year.

At first, I didn't expect much from it, as the entirety of my previous education consisted of western science, civilization, and everything beyond this. Learning about BIPOC or Latin figures was unknown to me, where the focus for everything academic was based on ingrained, hegemonic white standards. But this singular CHICLA class changed everything that I knew. From my culture to my academics, to the way that I sought out community and allyship, I was in the midst of change.

After this experience, where I shared the space with fellow hermanes, Latines, and amiges alike, I began wanting more - more knowledge, more connections, and above all, more community. This soon led me to seek out villages that were outside the classroom, and that was when I fell in love with Mecha de UW-Madison and the Mecha House. Mecha de UW-Madison was where I truly felt comfortable in my skin, where I felt empowered, seen, and could finally hear people say mi nombre con carino and amor, Odilon. The Mecha House also served as a “home away from home,” showcasing the beauty of community empowerment and solidarity. My first steps into the Mecha House were and will always be a sacred moment for me. I saw many dichos written on the walls for the first time. These dichos were from many previous members of Mecha, including: In Lak’ech, the expression of “hold all abusers accountable,” and a call to fight for liberation of all chained peoples. However, we had eventually lost this sanctuary due to the University’s lack of humility and humanity and we had to now think of other ways to feel a sense of belonging at a PWI. But like our ancestors and all of those who came before us, we persevered, we survived, and we built something beautiful out of what we lost. We found ourselves building a community in the small room that now acts as our “Mecha House” in the Red Gym, illuminating our resilience in every terrain, environment, and institution. Mecha continues as a space for organizing, resistance, and solidarity. I thank Mecha for the journey it provided me, and the experiences it granted me, as without it, I would still have a lot of self-discovery ahead of me.

Now, as I reflect on my journey at UW-Madison, I can begin to grieve, yet cherish how far I have come. Although I can grieve the moments that I had lost, I can now cherish the family I made during my time, and cherish how that one CHICLA class had sparked such a deep love for my people and heritage. That same CHICLA class pushed me to join a community of people and pursue a bachelor’s degree in the field. Although my departure from Mecha wasn’t one that I dreamed of, Mecha played a crucial role in how I see myself and the beauty of



Latinidad. In Mecha and the CHICLA program, I was able to gain a sense of pride in who I am and the ancestors whose shoulders I stand on. These two driving forces in my life have always pushed me to do more for myself and mi gente, sparking my compassion and understanding of our struggles, values, and ability to thrive no matter what. Now, in my final stretches of my college career, I can embrace the wake of my true self, where I will love and acknowledge my ancestors, my community, and more importantly, mi alma.

## Senior Spotlight: Research & Graduate School

**Isabel Hernandez-White (Class of 2024)**

This May, I graduated with degrees in Psychology and Chican@ & Latin@ Studies, and for the past year I have been working with Dr. Alyssa Ramírez-Stege through the Esperanza: Nuestra Cultura de Salud Graduate Bilingual Psychological Services Certificate. In partnership with Despertar del Camino Sagrado, the Esperanza Program hosts Santuario HEART which includes monthly meetings that seeks to bring together Latine and Latine-serving mental health supports at multiple intersections (e.g., community-based, school, health care) across Wisconsin and beyond who work with Latinx communities to promote healing from ethnic-racial trauma. Throughout the year I have conducted a community-based program evaluation of the Santuario HEART to understand how it supports Latine social service providers in their flourishing and healing from ethnic-racial discrimination about burnout. This summer I will continue the research process in preparation for the future research conference.

After taking Nidia Bañuelos' class, Latines in US Higher Education, I feel confident to continue my journey in higher education. In the Fall, I will be attending UW-Milwaukee to obtain my Licensed Clinical Social Work degree with a Trauma Informed Specialization. The Chican@ and Latin@



Studies major helped me wake up and choose social work, a lifelong calling. The gratitude I feel towards the professors and classmates I've met along the way is immense.

As I move to Milwaukee, I am honored to continue working with clients in the social work service settings. I am blessed with the wisdom and knowledge of the abueles. With these gifts, I am excited to continue the legacy of Latinas getting masters degrees while pushing that statistic into the double digits.



## Senior Spotlight: Study Abroad in Cuba

**Danitza Rodriguez Jimenez (Class of 2024)**



In June, I had the opportunity to study abroad through UW-Madison's art department. Professor Faisal Abdu'Allah led our short program, and we explored Havana, Cuba through Afro-Cuban art. Our group was relatively small, comprised of only 12 people including our professor. We met with various Cuban people such as scholars, artists of all backgrounds, and adolescents. The first week, we focused on visiting Havana's cultural, historical, and art sites. The second week, we were in the studio; artists at the Taller Experimental de Gráfica de la Habana helped us here. To ensure we all truly experienced as much as we could in these two weeks, Professor Faisal emphasized reliance on our five senses when exploring Cuba. With this, we were required to document our days in an art journal.

As a major in International Studies, I thought it crucial that I study abroad at some point in my college career. Other than going to Mexico to visit family, I had never been outside of the country. Since I am considering careers within the international sector, such as diplomacy or non-governmental organization (NGO) work, gaining experience traveling abroad and connecting with different groups of people is essential. Being comfortable in navigating new places and adapting to other cultural settings were skills I got the chance to develop while in Cuba. The “UW Exploring Cuba Through Art” class also fit perfectly with my other major, Chican@ and Latin@ Studies, and my certificate, Art History. My region of focus is Latin America, however, there were few Latine/Latin American art history courses at UW. In Cuba we visited places such as el Museo de Bellas Artes, Fábrica de Arte Cubano, and la Casa de África for more institutional information about Cuban art, including contemporary and cultural. We also learned about art directly from artists and scholars, such as filmmaker Gloria Rolando and singer/poet/hip hop artist Magia López Cabrera. The opportunity to travel to Cuba and learn about their culture and history through Afro-Cuban art was an amazing experience that allowed me to focus on the areas I have studied. Lastly, I would like to thank Chican@ and Latin@ Studies and the Somos Scholarship for funding that allowed me to participate in this experience. Since graduating from UW-Madison, I am now working as a Cultural Orientation Specialist at the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) Multicultural Community Center in Wausau. In this role, I am working with refugees in the areas of capacity-building and public health, and assisting with the resettlement process. I am also enjoying work with middle-school children as the Youth Development Professional for the Boys & Girls Club.



## ☀️ Alumni News 🚀

Congratulations to **Nancy Saiz** and **Dr. Dominic J. Ledesma**, two CLS alums who were recently featured on a list of Wisconsin's 36 Most Influential Latino Leaders for 2024!



## 2024-2025 Speaker Series on Latinx Art & Protest



On Thursday, September 26th, Tatiana Reinoza and Lalo Alcaraz kicked off the first event in a series of lectures this year on Latinx Art and Protest. Throughout the panel Reinoza and Alcaraz tackled the topic of the representation, or lack thereof, of Chicanx and Latinx communities in the visual arts and entertainment industry. Following an introduction by Armando Ibarra, Reinoza opened up the discussion by sharing her research on how printmaking has been reclaimed by Latinx artists for their own discourses and needs. She shared images



of this work featured in her new book, *Reclaiming the Americas*, which examines the spread of printmaking as a medium for Latinx artists. Reinoza currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Notre Dame, and her research focuses on contemporary Latinx art. Alcaraz, a renowned editorial cartoonist as well as television and film consultant, shared how he has used his chosen medium to comment on topical political issues. Alcaraz featured several cartoons that he has created in recent years to comment on COVID-19 and vaccine misinformation in the Latinx community. He also discussed his work as a cultural consultant in Hollywood, most notably on the film *Coco* and the series *The Casagrandes*. After hearing from Reinoza and Alcaraz, audience members enjoyed a lively Q & A session with the speakers. If you missed this exciting first event in the series, worry not! Keep an eye out for emails about future events in the series, which spans the 2024-2025 academic year. This series is supported by the Anonymous Fund, the Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies Program, Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies, the School for Workers, and the Departments of Art History, English, Gender & Women's Studies, Geography, Sociology, and Spanish & Portuguese.

## **CLS Remembers Administrator Sylvia Garcia**



Over the summer, the Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the community around it mourned the passing of Sylvia Garcia, who worked as the Program's Administrator from 2008 to 2016. Born in 1952, Sylvia grew up in Waukesha, Wisconsin. She moved to Madison in 1970 to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Here, she became involved with La Raza Unida Student organization (now Mecha), first as a member and then as president. Along with other

students in the group, she picketed the Letters and Science Dean's office demanding the creation of a Chicano Studies Department. In December of 1975, she received a degree in Agricultural Economics. Although she graduated before the University's first Chicano Studies classes were offered, she took pride in knowing that her activism as a student had helped make them possible. Sylvia

always had a passion for equality and social justice for Chicanx and Latinx peoples, as well as other underserved, disadvantaged populations. Her life's work reflected this passion. After a long and successful career both on campus and with such employers as the City of Madison and Alliant Energy, Sylvia joined the staff of the CLS Program in 2008. As Administrator, she managed with skill and grace the day-to-day operations of the program she had pushed to establish so many years before. She also mentored many students and will be especially remembered for her leadership with the conference known as "La Mujer Latina." In addition to her paid work, Sylvia volunteered with numerous community groups including the Wisconsin Women of Color Network. Following a bout with cancer from 1990 to 1992, she founded the Madison Latino Health Council, together with Romelia Schleuter and Mercedes Medina. She also served on the board of directors for the American Cancer Society's Midwest Region. At her memorial service, one speaker noted that Sylvia was an "anti-institutional institutionalist." In other words, she spent her formative years in social movements that challenged existing institutions and then sought to continue the struggles of her youth by working for concrete, incremental changes within new institutions created to address the injustices that motivated those struggles. Always a powerhouse for the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program, she is greatly missed by her former colleagues here and by the alumni whose lives she touched. A full obituary for Sylvia Garcia can be found on the website of Madison's Cress Funeral Service. The Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program is grateful to Sylvia's family for designating our Development Fund as a recipient of donations in her memory. We also thank the donors who honored her with contributions.

## **GOODBYE FROM DIRECTOR DR. RUBÉN MEDINA**

On Saturday May 11, the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies program held its annual graduation celebration, recognizing 45 students who completed the Certificate and 17 students who completed the Major. Prof. Nidia Banuelos, a new affiliate faculty member, gave a stirring address about the success of Latine students in higher education, to a group of students and their families and relatives that filled Ingraham Hall's auditorium classroom.



It was a very special occasion since we had the first generation of college students earning the BS/BA in CLS. It was also special for me since I was completing three years as Director of CLS. It has been an honor to serve as the Director and to support the tremendous growth in the program since the last time I was a Director in 2000-2003. Today we have more budgeted faculty, more affiliates, more courses, more committees, more programming and, above all, more student enrollment each semester in our courses and degree programs. I believe CLS as an academic unit is in a good place at this moment, and with a bright and promising future.

These past three years, we had several accomplishments. Without doubt, creating and implementing the new CLS Major is one of them. But we also increased substantially the number of faculty affiliates, developed courses in various areas to sustain the Major, and we recruited Assistant Professor Aurora Santiago, along with her husband, Jorell Meléndez-Badillo, who is an affiliate in History. The Program structure was strengthened by the creation of new committees, and we explored the nomination of faculty and staff for awards, with considerable success. Faculty were extremely active introducing new initiatives (for example, the New Speaker Series), and applying successfully for grants to major projects, such as the Wisconsin Latinx Oral History Collective's work, headed by Assistant Professors Almita Miranda and Marla Ramírez, along with Emerita Andrea Tess Arenas.

We continue to work toward department status, a goal that makes particular sense now that CLS is preparing to move in fall 2026 to the new Levy Hall, which will house all the ethnic studies units from the campus, as well as the departments of History and Gender and Women's Studies. We hope to recruit even more new faculty to the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program. I am pleased to welcome Professor Theresa Delgadillo to the Directorship of the program. She brings such a remarkable expertise and vision to CLS. As I leave the directorship, I look forward to working with and supporting her in achieving all these goals.



# CHICAN@ AND LATIN@ STUDIES PROGRAM MISSION

The Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program offers a systematic and interdisciplinary analysis of Mexican- and Latin American-origin people, cultures, and collectivities within the United States. The interdisciplinary Program is designed to provide students with a broad knowledge base and the intellectual tools to understand the unity and diversity of U.S. Latin@ populations. The primary objective of the Program is to train students in the study of Chican@s and Latin@s, as well as to introduce them to the central questions, topics, and applications that have emerged in this field.

## CHICAN@ AND LATIN@ STUDIES UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

The CLS Program is open to undergraduate students of all majors and schools. Students are able to take courses on topics ranging from Latina Feminism to Political Economy of Race in the United States. The CLS Program is meant to exemplify the Wisconsin Idea, academic excellence, civic engagement, and diversity.



**Chican@ and  
Latin@ Studies Program**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

### Director

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Lisbeth Cruz-Molina  
Ximena Sanchez  
Jennifer Reynaga

**DECLARE HERE:**



**SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF CLS**

The Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Development Fund supports programs for students, faculty and the campus community.

The Jesus Salas Scholarship Fund provides scholarships for CLS students who are active in the Community.

The Andrea-Teresa Arenas Somos Fund provides awards for student and faculty professional development.

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