CHARLES STANSIFER, 1930-2016

Community Mourns Professor Emeritus Charles Stansifer

Dr. Charles Stansifer, former Director of the Center from 1975-89 and KU professor emeritus of history, passed away on Feb. 4. A native Kansan from Garden City with a BA and MA from Wichita State and PhD from Tulane, Charley devoted his life to educating his home state and served on the KU faculty from 1963-2004. At Tulane he worked with fellow Kansan William Griffith, a giant in the study of Central American history. He helped recruit Griffith to KU, where Griffith directed the Center from 1970-75.

Charley became a renowned historian of Central America in his own right, particularly of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, and he authored, co-authored, and edited twelve books. He taught the first history course in the U.S. solely about the region and directed the Junior-Year program in Costa Rica from 1966-74. His lecture on the history of the banana, a Central American export rivaled only by coffee, was famous both for humor and historical detail, and he and his former students collected a veritable museum’s worth of banana-related memorabilia. In his research and educational travels, he collected many rare historical documents and books that are now housed in the KU Spencer Research Library. In fact, Charley had much to do with KU’s having one of the top three Central American library collections in the United States. His endowed Charles Stansifer Fund for Latin American Literature will keep KU’s Latin American and Caribbean collections strong well into the future. Having served on countless Masters theses and PhD dissertation committees, Charley also took the initiative in helping the libraries digitize the 138 KU theses and dissertations written about Central America, 51 of which are now available in KU ScholarWorks.

As if being a premier specialist in Central American
From the Acting Director’s Desk

“We still have a long way to go to adequately support undergraduate research, faculty travel, and events on and off campus, but we are heading in the right direction, buoyed by the dedication of friends, alumni, and memorials to Charles Stansifer.”

Brent Metz, Acting Director, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies

Winter Field School Provides Unique Learning Opportunities

Madison Outlaw
Senior, Spanish, Indigenous Studies in Latin America

A small group of KU students made the decision to spend half of their winter break in Guatemala and El Salvador participating in an Anthropology Field School led by Dr. Brent Metz. These students—which included a variety of majors including Spanish, journalism, anthropology, and Latin American & Caribbean Studies—participated in the evaluation of two ecotourism lodges, planning a cultural fair held in Jocotán, Guatemala for the Chi’orti’ Maya community, and a filmography project. Students also completed coursework which gave a brief overview of the histories of Guatemala and the Chi’orti’ Maya.

The evaluation of ecotourisms began with El Mango, a lodge located near Dulce Nombre de Maria in El Salvador. Students stayed for two nights in cabins and tents to evaluate the accommodations and attractions provided and offer suggestions to the leaders within the project so how they can improve the ecotourism to attract more international tourists. The attractions provided at El Mango included a variety of levels of hikes, a guerrilla museum, and a waterfall swimming hole. The sights and activities available were an incredible experience for all students involved. As student Haley Meals remarked, “it was great to learn such in-depth histories about both the people and the ecotologs that they established.”

The cultural fair was a great success, with many members of the community participating in the events of the day, which included a recipe collection, a performance of traditional dancing, a cultural fair, and a seed exchange. Of the day, which included a recipe collection, a performance of traditional dancing, a cultural fair, and a seed exchange.

Continued on page 4

US Ambassador to Paraguay Visits KU

Peter Haney
Assistant Director

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies was honored to join International Programs and others on campus in welcoming the U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay, Leslie Bassett, to campus on Thursday, March 10th.

Spring Break was almost upon us, but we welcomed the opportunity to host an incredible event. While the Center has many activities that you can attend, these were the most important events reported in the following articles, I call your attention to some newsworthy events that were reported in the following articles.

Ambassador Bassett is a relative newcomer, having arrived in Asunción to assume her duties in January of last year. Previously she served as the Deputy Chief of Mission for the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Korea. A career member of the State Department’s Senior Foreign Service, Ms. Bassett has also served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. embassies in Manila, Philippines; in Mexico City, Mexico; and in Gaborone, Botswana. Her career also includes service in Colombia, Israel, South Africa, El Salvador and Nicaragua. A distinguished graduate of the National War College, she holds a master’s degree from Johns Hopkins University.

Ms. Bassett visited the Center and discussed initiatives related to Paraguay with faculty and administrators. Her visit to KU was part of a tour of universities in Kansas. Our state has been matched with Paraguay for over almost fifty years through Partners of the Americas, and a number of Paraguayan students receive in-state tuition at KU universities every year. Recently, there have been increases in the Paraguayan enrollment at Kansas State and Pittsburg state and other schools. KU currently has a healthy group of 23. Ambassador Bassett’s enthusiasm for intellectual and cultural exchange between the U.S. and Paraguay was clear to all who met her, and with so much interest in Paraguay all over the state, we should expect great things in the next half-century of the partnership. Special thanks are due to Michelle Ward of International Programs for her fine work coordinating the Ambassador’s visit.

Guatemalan youth perform at the Field School’s culture fair.
McAllister Contributes Collection

Charley Stansifer Remembered (cont.)

Charley Stansifer was one of the most important advisors I ever had in grad school. He turned me on to geography and was the chair of my thesis committee in Latin American Studies. I try, in every interaction I have with my own students, to emulate his care and concern, and to give the kind of constructive criticism that propelled me and many others forward. Thank you, Charley!

—Chris Brown, Associate Professor of Geography & Director of Environmental Studies, former student

Winter Field School (cont.)

The winner of the performance/storytelling competition and grand prize of 100 quesadillas was a poet from Coyoacán, Mexico, who shared several beautiful poems about Jocotán and its surrounding communities, even providing ideas for potential economic ventures. At a unique opportunity to try their hand in making a Colombia culture trunk thanks to the efforts of Diana Restrepo and the generous donations of the Colombian Cultural Association. The completed Colombia trunk has already traveled to events and is currently in a classroom in Overland Park.

Reflections on colleagues and students

I had the privilege of hearing Profesor Stansifer speak during a seminar on foreign policy for junior high students when I was a teenager; here in Lawrence, Kansas. Dr. Stansifer explained the background of 20th Century Latin American revolutions, saying names and mentioning events that the textbooks had not deemed worthy of note. I had just finished her research project on the history of soft drinks and had run across a journalistic story about a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Havana before the Revolution. During the question and answer session, I asked what had happened to it. Dr. Stansifer said he didn’t know about that specific plant but that most U.S. assets in Havana had been nationalized. He added that having visited Cuba, he could report that both of the soft drinks made by the Revolutionary state, “Cola” and “Orange,” were terrible. My friends ribbed me for days for asking about random minutiae, but the exchange showed me that Latin American Studies was a legitimate field of inquiry. Thanks to Dr. Stansifer for being a resource for the whole community.

—Schaffer Haney, Assistant Director, CLACS

Contribute to the Stansifer Fund

latamst.ku.edu/giving-program

Leave your memory of Charles Rumsey & Yost has a blog, where some of his former students have left comments and where anyone can continue posting indefinitely.

Information compiled from KU Communications, the Lawrence Journal World, and the Kansas-Paraguay Partners.
Faculty Updates

Saint Arias, Professor, Department of Spanish & Portuguese, Director, Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies

As resident fellow at the KU Center for the Humanities, on April 6th, Arias delivered her lecture “Reinventing Possessions from Saint Juan Bautista de Fuerro Rico: Writing a Critical History of Slavery and Colonialism (1764-1780).” At the Latin American Studies Association International Congress she presented the paper “Colonial Geo-graphing: Reassembling the Place of Space in Caribbean Studies.” In addition, Arias is forthcoming with the anthology “The New Spanish Prose Narrative” in the Cambridge History of Mexican Literature edited by Ignacio Sánchez Prado, Anna Nogar, and José Ramón Ruisánchez, and co-authored with Vanina M. Teggia (Con-cet-Argetina) the bibliographical essay “Bartolomé de las Casas: to appear in Oxford Bibliographies Online: Renaissance and Reformation.”

Chris Brown, Associate Professor, Geog-raphy, Director of Environmental Studies

Brown returns to campus this coming fall after his year-long sabbatical on a Fulbright Fellowship at the State University of Campania (UNICAMP) in Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil. He recently won of the 2016 George and Elea-ron Woodward International Educator Award here at KU. Chris and his co-authors at KU (Jude Kastens and Chris Bishop of the Kansas Biological Survey) and at Embrapa (Brazil’s equivalent of the USDA) completed a major project to map land use and land cover of the state of Mato Grosso, one of the world’s fastest growing breadbaskets, from 2001-2014. Other research in progress examines the social, political, and environmental dynamics of the expansion of sugar cane production in Brazil’s cerrado (savanna) with collaborators at UNICAMP and Kansas State University. Some recent publications include: “Land Occupations and Deterioration in the Brazilian Amazon.” Land Use Policy, Vol. 51 (2016), “Climate change as a cause of human mobility and conflict in the Amazon” in the journal Cosmos, and “Using an Analytic Hierachy Process Approach to Prioritize Public Policies Addressing Family Farming in Brazil.” Land Use Policy, Vol. 51 (2016) with Maria A. Petrini, Janedle Rocha, J. and Rafael Bispo.

Caroline Chaboo, Curator, Biodiversity Institute, and Assistant Professor, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Chaboo conducted field work in Peru, with co-PhDs Mary Ann Lake and Luke Jor-dan, Visual Arts. They are developing an interdisciplinary research on indig-eneous natural dyes with in-county collaborative laboratories. Dr. María de los Angeles La Toro-Cuadros, a professor of ethnobot-anatomy at the Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina, Lima and Nilda Callañaupa, a Quechua Master Weaver and Dyer. The group visited several Quechua communi-ties in the Sacred Valley and examined dyes made with insects, various plants, and lichens. They are preparing manu-scripts and external grants to continue this new course with a research and service learning component called Global Film Festivals to be offered Spring 2017. She will be on sabbatical leave Fall 2016.

Ruben Flores, Associate Professor of American Studies

Flores was the lead author of “Us-ing History to Analyze the ‘Learning by Observing and Pitching In’ Practices of Contemporary Mesoamerican Societ-ies,” published in December in the jour-nal Advances in Child Development and Behavior as part of a National Science Foundation-funded project designed by psychologist Barbara Rogoff at the Uni-versity of California, Santa Cruz, to un-derstand Mesoamerican learning prac-tices. The special issue was devoted to the study of the learning practices that Rogoff and others have coined “Learning by Observing and Pitching In,” or LOPI, which is especially common among in-di-viduals who grow up in extended families and families that have had contact with those communities.

Mugur V. Geana, Associate Professor of Journalism

Geana and his team of researchers from the University of Costa Rica recently completed the data anal-ysis on the impact of a communication campaign built on Community-Based Participatory Research addressing pre-vention of dengue fever in the province of Limón, Costa Rica. Some of the find-ings of this applied research will be pre-sented at the International Conference on Communication in Healthcare, Sep-tember 7-10, 2016, at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. Dr. Geana’s collaboration with Chile’s Catholic University (Schools of Mass Communication and School of Medi-cine) culminated in January with the presentation of the prototype of the on-line communication system (Bienesta-dio) designed to improve knowledge and awareness of Chilean seniors about health. The project was funded by FON-DEF (Fondo de Fomento al Desarrollo Ci-enctífico y Tecnológico). The collaboration received wide coverage in Chilean mass media. The team is currently working on preparing a grant proposal to advance the research and development of the web communication resource.

Laura Herlihy, Lecturer in Latin American & Caribbean Studies

Herlihy attended the 9th Assembly of Indigenous and Afro-Descendant people of the Nicaraguan Moskitia, from Feb. 26-28, 2016 in Bilwi, the capitol of the North Autonomous Region. This year’s assembly was important because the indigenous peoples of Moskitia are in crisis due to colonization of their land by armed settlers from the Pacific side of Nicaragua. While observing the assem-bly for her own research, Herlihy also teamed up with Dan and Jane Higgins, representa-tives of Bilwi’s sister city Burg-ington, Vermont. Dan Higgins is a pho-tographer and an Art History Emeritus professor at the University of Vermont and produced a film about the assembly with Herlihy serving as the interviewer and translator (Miskitu/Spanish/En-glish). The Bilwi-Burlington sister city was set up in the early 1980s by Burling-ton’s then mayor Bernie Sanders, when he visited Nicaragua during the Sandini-sta revolution. Herlihy is also attending the 2016 Permanent Forum on Indigeneous Issues at the United Nations, from May 8-14. She will serve as an academic observer and accompany the Miskitu leaders at the UN.

Joo-Ook Kim, Assistant Professor of American Studies; Christopher Ferrei-ra, Assistant Professor of American Studies; and Magali Rabasa, Assistant Profes-sor of Spanish and Portuguese

The three received a Commons Start-er Grant for Trans/transforming Activist

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ince her arrival on campus, Foun-dation Distinguished Professor of Sociology Cecilia Menjívar has been hard at work as co-director of KU’s new Center for Migration Research, together with Victor Agadjanian, also a Foundation Distinguished Professor of Sociology. This Spring, the Center organized a symposium on race and migration featuring such migration study luminaries as Rog-elio Saenz of UTSA and Nestor Rodri-guez of UT-Austin. Participants in the con-ference on the shift of em-placements in public discussions of migra-tion from overt racism to more veiled appeals to race after the Civil Rights Move-ments of the 1960s. Earlier in the semester, the Center also sponsored lectures by Pierrette Hon-dagneu-So- tello of the University of Southern Cali-fornia on migration in the U.S. context and Anne François of Eastern Uni-veristy (Pennsylvania) on the migration between Haiti and the Dominican Re-public. The Center is also supporting faculty research on migration through seed grants. Expect to see exciting re-sults from the projects supported by the seed grants.

Prof. Menjívar has not let the work of building a new migration studies program detra-ct from her own academic research. In a recent paper co-authored with Arizona State doc-toral student Dulce Medina, Menjívar studied the barriers that Mexicans face when they return to their home communities after living in the Uni-States. She found that immigrants and returns strategize how to obtain European file document funds and to utilize crowd-funding strategies. Menjívar’s research is especially common among in-di-viduals who grow up in extended families and families that have had contact with those communities.
Media in the Americas, brings together activist communities, artists and scholars from Mexico, Canada and across the United States to investigate how the arts, new media technologies and activist discourse and knowledge production intersect.

The events, which include performances, film and media exhibitions, roundtable events and a keynote lecture, will take place in fall 2016.

Breit Metz, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Acting Director


Betsaida Reyes, Librarian for Spain, Portugal and Latin America

Reyes is the owner of the article “Area Studies Librarianship: In Becoming a Star Subject Specialist: Practical Tips from the Field,” edited by Karen Sobel. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited. (Referenced, Invited) Libraries Unlimited is a leading publisher for library-related monographs. The book is aimed at those currently working on their library degree, and her chapter addresses areas studied librarianship. The chapter describes the unique qualifications and skills that will prepare future area studies librarians. The chapter also identifies key organizations for each particular region of interest.

Anton Rosenthal, Associate Professor of History


Robert Timp, Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Timp, his former student Andrea Romero, and their collaborators have had two papers recently appear on their research in Costa Rica. Their chapter on “The Caribbean Lowland Evergreen Moist and Wet Forests” was published in the book Costa Rican Ecosystems by the University of Chicago Press. The book and their chapter take a holistic, integrated approach with introductory, historical, and ecological information for a broad overview of the major ecosystems. Their chapter is a comprehensive account of the diversity, structure, function, uses, and conservation of Costa Rica’s Caribbean lowland landscape.

Their recent paper in the journal of Mammalogy assesses the abundance and diversity of mammals in primary and secondary forests, providing a rigorous survey technique and recommendations on how to sample wildlife in tropical forests. Their paper highlights the significant conservation value of secondary forests.

Luciano Tosta, Associate Professor of Spanish & Portuguese

In addition to receiving a promotion to Associate Professor, he won the 2016 Vice Chancellor for Research Book Publication Award for his book Confluence Narratives: Ethnicity, History, and Nation Making in the Americas, which is forthcoming with Bucknell University Press in July 2016. Informed by post-colonial theory, and ethnic and race studies, his book defines and analyzes a major literary genre that appears across the Americas in the middle of the twentieth century. With Eduardo P. Coutinho, Tosta also edited a collection of essays titled Latin America in Focus: Brazil. The book takes an all-encompassing look at Brazil and is suited for undergraduates, high school students, and readers outside of a classroom. Its chapters explore such topics as religion, social classes, ethnicity, gender and family, marriage and sexuality, and education, culture, and the arts.

Lecturer Laura Herlihy leading a LASA human rights delegation from Burlington, Vermont filming testimonials from the Miskitu of Nicaragua. Burlington is sister City of Puerto Cabezas, started when Bernie Sanders was mayor of Burlington and visited Nicaragua in the early 1980s.

Peter Haney
Assistant Director

Spring is in the air, the itch mites are waking up to bite, and once again CLACS is getting ready to say “goodbye” to some of our amazing majors and minors. Majors Madion Fox and Bryan Neely are both ready to finish their BA degrees, as are minors Madison Outlaw and Carmen Bosneag. Janelle was our front-desk assistant at CLACS for several semesters and we’ll miss her cheerful smile and careful proofreading eye. Madison is well-known on campus for her leadership with the Jayhawk Health Initiative. She will take this experience to nursing school in the Fall. Carmen, who moved to Laura Herlihy’s summer program like a fish to water, is majoring in City working as an HR Manager for the public relations firm Branson Cole. What is it about PR and Latin American & Caribbean Studies these days?

Our current students are keeping us on our toes. Major Alex Stuart and minor James Tandy will both travel to Latin America soon with help from the Anita Herzfeld Scholarship offered by our Center. You’ve met Alex if you’ve been to Mesa Brasil or any other BRAH events recently. He’ll be in Florianópolis during the Fall semester. James, who got his feet wet in Central America this past winter with Acting Director Breit Metz’s program, will return to Guatemala. Carmen, who was already in his summer Mayan language program. Here at home, major Elena Anderson-Smith and non-major Britney recently won first place in the Sigma Xi Undergraduate Research Competition for a paper about alcoholism on Nicaragua’s Atlantic Coast. CLACS’s Laura Herlihy and David Jarmolowicz (Applied Behavioral Science) supervised her research.

In alumni news, lots of good reports are coming in. Patricia Solis (’15) is now in Latin American & Caribbean Studies and Public Policy in December and has started working as a legal advocate with the Mattie Rhodes Center in Kansas City. She also works part-time at the Rose Brooks Center, a domestic violence shelter, along with Kate Sopcich (’15), who divides her time between Brooks and the Mex-.ican Consulate. Joey Hentzler (’15) continues in our MA program, teaching a full class of LAA 100 students and getting ready to go to Bolivia with a Tinker award to do his own research. From Illinois, we hear that Cassie Osei is rocking the History Ph.D. program. She was scheduled to return to KU to present at the Mid American Indian Studies conference but had to cancel because of illness. Gus Bova (’15) and Rachel Cross (’15) are both finishing up Americorps years, Gus in Austin and Rachel right here in Lawrence. Gus is looking into ways to start a journalism career, while Rachel is investigating options in government service. Rachel has worked closely with me this Spring, helping to coordinate service assignments for my LAA 300 class. Students in that class are volunteering in various capacities with Cen-tro Hispano. Gena Pollack (’14) is studying law at the University of Tulsa and worked with Tulsa Educare. As for Grant Berning (’14), he’s pursuing a Ph.D. in archaeology right here at KU and recently visited Mexico with Tinker support from the Center. Zach O’Bea (’13) remains at Cerner in Kansas City and reports that he is about to tie the knot with a special someone he met through his travels in Brazil. Bret Lathrop (’13) is still working for General Mills, now in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. And for his part, Jeff Miller (’13) is getting back to nature as part of a new intentional community near the southeast Kansas town of Independence. It’s always a privilege to work with such wonderful students, and we love to hear what our alumni are up to. Keep the news coming!
A few weeks after defending my thesis, I moved to California to assume the role of Program Associate in the Andes-Amazon Initiative (AAI) at the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation in Palo Alto. The Intel founder and his wife established the foundation in 2001 to create positive, meaningful, and lasting change for future generations. My role consists of project management, as well as providing programmatic and administrative support to a $30 million annual grant portfolio that finances environmental conservation projects across the Amazon Basin. Since AAI was launched in 2004, it has contributed to more than 30% of the conservation of the Amazon Basin. Our portfolio currently consists of over 60 projects in five countries (Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia), giving me ample opportunities to practice my language skills, including KU FLAS funded Portuguese, as I work very closely with our grantees and partners on developing their proposals and make site visits to monitor the progress of project objectives. My responsibilities also include engaging with key decision makers, thought leaders, and practitioners in the region to conduct gatherings that facilitate the exchange of ideas, establish basin-wide conservation work plans, and develop conservation monitoring tools and strategies that can influence development and policy-making in the Amazon Basin.

While at KU, my M.A. thesis focused on sustainably-grown food as a mechanism for environmental and social justice for an MST (Movimientos dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, or Landless Workers’ Movement) community in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil. It was KU CLACS support, through the Tinker and Oppenheimer research grants, that took me to Brazil and enabled me to gain some expertise in a region that is extremely relevant to my current work. While at KU, I also got the opportunity to participate in CLACS outreach activities, which enabled me to exercise my passion for education and expanding experiential opportunities for K-12 educators and students. Co-founding LAGO (Latin American Graduate Organization) further enriched my studies, as it provided a platform to continue exploring issues in Latin America through an interdisciplinary lens. These and other volunteer experiences cemented my commitment to work on environmental conservation and social justice issues in the region.

Today, I continue to develop my research interests beyond my current professional role. I am currently working on a chapter for a book project that will be published later this year on food justice in the U.S. and global context, and have started my own blog called Tacualli, in which I will continue to explore the intersections of food production, food cultures, social justice, and conservation in Latin America (http://www.tacualli.wordpress.com). This spring I will be presenting at a conference on agricultural systems and environmental conservation in Mato Grosso on a panel that will give me the opportunity to sit side-by-side with the community that I worked with during my thesis research, and in the fall, I will return to Costa Rica where I have been invited to be a visiting scholar at EARTH University. At EARTH, I will present on my research and get a chance to interact with students and professors in their community-based projects. In my free time, I volunteer at an educational farm in the Bay Area.

LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN STUDIES Alumni Lacey Koester (’07) is using the language skills and knowledge she gained through her undergraduate studies to help Latin American immigrants in the Kansas City area roll with life’s punches and recover from trauma. Currently an MSW, Koester is completing her year-long clinical-level foundation at KU School of Social Welfare with The Family Conservancy in Kansas City, Kansas. There, Koester provides therapeutic counseling to members of the Spanish-speaking community in Wyandotte and Johnson counties through the “Dame La Mano” (“Give me your Hand”) Program. The program helps children, families, couples, and individuals manage stress, overcome trauma, reduce family violence, and beat depression and anxiety. Many of Koester’s clients are victims of crime who accessed services for free through the Crime Act Victim Assistance Grant (VOCA) provided by the state of Kansas. Many were unaccompanied minors from Central America.

During her practicum, Koester helps the kids adjust to a new culture while dealing with the trauma that precipitated their move to the United States. She uses a strengths-based and resilience-focused framework, as well as solution-focused therapy to promote hope and honor her clients’ the unique cultural background. She also works with the parents, relatives, and caregivers of the children to provide an environment supportive of their unique mental health needs. In addition to direct therapeutic services, Koester helps the unaccompanied minors with applications for asylum as they navigate removal proceedings. She regularly confers with lawyers and provides letters of support on behalf of her clients regarding their adverse childhood experiences and recommendations for remaining with their caregivers in the United States.

Time and time again, clients have professed their gratitude to the Family Conservancy for the services provided through the Dame La Mano Program. Without insurance, most had been unable to afford the mental and behavioral health services they so desperately needed to navigate and maintain their daily lives. After therapy, many reported improvements in their educational, social, and familial relationships once they learn to manage the symptoms related to their previous traumatic experiences. For Koester, who earned a BA in History, Latin American & Caribbean Studies, and Spanish from the University in 2007 and received a FLAS Fellowship from CLACS to study Portuguese in Salvador, Brazil in 2014, the work was hard but rewarding. “When my clients describe what happened to them in Central America, I recognize the names of the places they talk about and the situations they describe,” said Koester. “I know what questions to ask, and Latin American & Caribbean Studies helped get me there.” As she wraps up the clinical practicum, Lacey has begun working for the Kansas City school district as a Refugee and Immigrant Social Worker. There she continues to serve students from Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, and many other countries.
Outreach Notes

KU to Host Fall Cortés Exhibit

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies is partnering with the Spencer/KU Libraries to host *In the Shadow of Cortés: From Veracruz to Mexico City* this Fall. The traveling art exhibit will be on display at the Kenneth Spencer Library Gallery from September 1st through December 10th. The exhibit is the fruit of a project by two Indiana University professors: Kathleen Myers, a professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese History and the author of recent work on Mexican History, and Robert Hoyt, a professor of History and the author of several books on the Spanish Conquest. The exhibit features a series of objects and documents that tell the story of the conquest of the Aztec Empire and its aftermath.

Faculty Research Clusters to Return

Faculty are invited to submit themes for interdisciplinary research clusters. CLACS is currently seeking external support for one or two clusters with a modest grant that may host a speaker or program. These events would add to the already established Colonialism seminar through the Hall Center and the Migration group through the Center for Migration Studies.

Paraguayan Student Assoc.

Under the leadership of President Ale Carrizosa, VP Facundo Bittar, Social/PR Chair Ximena Scavone, Treasurer Pablo Chen, Volunteer Chair Gabriela Valdivinos, and Cultural Chair Sergio Gils, the Paraguayan Student Association had a busy and productive spring. The highlight was its March meeting with the US ambassador to Paraguay, Leslie Ann Bassett. In her preparations for the visit, Ambassador Bessett made meeting Paraguayan students a priority, and PSA rose to the occasion. The group also participated in the World Expo in the Kansas Union. At the Paraguayan table, they had the opportunity to share their culture with the other international students by displaying items from the CLACS Southern Cone Trunk, including pictures, food, clothing, handwritten books, and books that describe the native aspects of Paraguay. The association also host- ed a group of high school students from Encarnación, Paraguay who were in Law rence to study abroad. The group also got the week off to a funky start. A samba workshop led by BRASA vice-president and CLACS major Alex Stuart got the week off to a funky start. It was followed on Tuesday with a film screening of The Second Mother. This event brought students from a variety of disciplines together with CLACS Profes sor and BRASA advisor Luciano Tosta to have a serious discussion about domestic labor in Brazil. On Wednesday, the discussion was held about the political and economic situation in Brazil and what the country’s outlook is for the future. Many thanks to CLACS faculty Melissa Birch, Antonio Simões, Chris Anderson, CLACS MA Alum Mara Aube, and friend of the center Jacob Longaker from Political Science for participating on the panel.

Brazilian Student Assoc.

For two years, people have been wondering “what happened to Carnaval?” “Why doesn’t BRASA bring it back?” Well, this Spring they did, and it was spectacular. More than 500 people descended on Abe and Jake’s Landing in downtown Lawrence on February 20th to see the band Chicago Samba. Hips were moving throughout the night, while DJ 151 kept the crowd pumped during intermissions. CLACS’s very own star and BRASA president Owen MacDonald MCed the evening, finding out just how tough it is to go on stage and organize dance-offs. All told, Carnaval was the party of the year in Lawrence with rave reviews from students, professors, and folks from as far away as Brazil. BRASA was glad to see so many faces there, and looks forward to making next year’s celebration even bigger!

Student Organizations Update

Paraguayan Student Assoc.

The Latin American Graduate Organization organized an Earth Day Celebration on April 20th with Musician Amaud Espinoza and dancer Karen Lisondra. This event easily matched last year’s success, drawing a crowd of around 120 attendees from KU and the broader community of Lawrence. The event included presentations exploring the rich history of Latin American culture, followed by a traditional indigenous regalia. South America wearing traditional indigenous regalia. Drums were played by Amado Espinoza, a talented musician who has taught himself to play up to 40 instruments from around the world, and can play up to 50 instruments at the same time. His wife Karen Lisondra is an actress, theater director, educator, and yogini who performed a variety of dances from South America wearing traditional indigenous regalia. Drummer Gustavo Restrepo joined Espinoza.

LAGO celebrated the noted Colombian author and Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez with a gala event on March 10th at the Kansas Union Ballroom. The group organized a potpourri of presentations exploring the author’s contribution to the genre of magical realism and the many ways that his cultural traditions permeate his work.

Next semester LAGO hopes to continue its involvement in the community of Lawrence to celebrate the Hispanic Heritage Month and continue the posadas or novenas Colombiana in December. If the fall, the torch will pass to a new group of officers. Nadia Ruiz will take over as President, with Laura Jiménez as Vice President, Melanie Piedra Barrera as Treasurer, and Will Penn as Secretary.

Faculty are invited to submit themes for interdisci- plinary research clusters. CLACS is currently seeking external support for one or two clusters with a modest grant that may host a speaker or program. These events would add to the already established Colonialism seminar through the Hall Center and the Migration group through the Center for Migration Studies.

Clusters should connect to themes of broad scholarly interest at KU and strategic areas that could eventually lead to outside funding. The proposal should be submitted by at least 2 faculty members from different disciplines. Through this effort, the Center seeks to continue an important initiative it began with Title VI NRC support in 2010.
Tinker Field Research Grants Provide Students with Funding for Research in Latin America

In 2013, CLACS was awarded a prestigious grant from the Tinker Foundation to fund graduate student field research in Latin America. The grant, together with matching funds, provides $30,000 per year through 2016 for students to conduct short-term research on a non-dissertation topic in Latin America that is new to them. Each year, students benefit from access to invaluable data and research experience they would have otherwise been unable to attain.

Grant Berning, Anthropology, traveled to Villahermosa, Tabasco, Mexico to conduct preliminary research into the number of archeological sites and museums associated with the Olmec Civilization. He spent time in Villahermosa collecting resources and publications at libraries and research institutions. Among his accomplishments on this trip were visits to the site of La Venta to become familiar with its ceramic artifacts building. He plans to build an Olmec ceramic sequence with the Olmec ceramic collection housed in the Archaeological Research Center at the University of Kansas.

He was able to locate and photograph the place where former KU archaeologist Robert Squier excavated the ceramics. He visited the Sitio de La Venta (INAH), Parque Museo La Venta, Museo Regional de Antropología Carlos Pellicer Cámara, the Comalcalco Archaeological site museum, the Biblioteca José Marta Pino Suárez, and the research library at the Museo Regional de Antropología Carlos Pellicer Cámara.

Alba Constanza Torrado, Spanish & Portuguese, explored Cuba’s Gallego Associations. She visited three important libraries and found valuable periodical publications written by Galician intellectuals. She decided to focus her research on a newspaper called La tierra gallega. It depicted a transatlantic vision on the problems of the turn of the century, offering Galician modernity to Cuba for the next century. She also visited the Sociedad de Beneficencia de Natales de Galicia, a Galician association located in the Gran Teatro La Habana, which unites various Gallego associations on the island. The most important material that she collected there was the original manuscript of the Galician national anthem, by Eduardo Pondal, “Queixutes dos Pinos”.

Josh Homan, Anthropology, investigated the connections between indigenous Quechua speaking people living in the Upper Amazon region of San Martín, Peru and other indigenous people living in lowland Amazonia within the region of Loreto, and how these linkages have been maintained through trade, shamanism, and indigenous movements. He conducted archival research on communities around that area. He traveled to the small community of Sina, San Martín, and conducted interviews with government officials and indigenous authorities about the history of ampi production in the community. His research provided ample data on indigenous trade relations, identity, and shamanism, from both indigenous and mestizo perspectives. This research expanded the ethnohistory of the western Peruvian Amazon, which has an archeological research project in comparison to other regions of the Amazon such as in southern Colombia, Ecuador, and southwestern Brazil.

Josephine Kapicika, MA Latin American & Caribbean Studies, studied the cultural impacts that perceptions of climate change have on the indigenous Muskitu people in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAN) of Nicaragua. She conducted structured interviews with people of the coastal community of Haulover. This research reported that the shrimp that should annually enter the lagoon have not been seen in three years, that marine life overall had decreased, and that manatees that once inhabited the lagoon have disappeared entirely.

Doriane Andrade Meyer, MA Architecture, researched the influence of Islamic architecture in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. The research uncovered important Islamic influences, including murals in some windows, verandahs that encircle farmhouses, and the interior design of some colonial residences. She photographed hundreds of fortresses, churches, convents, buildings, and historical residences exhibiting Islamic architectural styles. She also interviewed some important scholars and researchers and found important bibliographic and journalistic sources in the Instituto de Patrimonio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (National Institute for Historic and Artistic Heritage), the city’s main public library, the Fundação Cultural Palmares of Brazil’s Ministry of Culture, the city’s Central Public Archive, and the São Bento Monastery.

Pamela Rodríguez-Montero, Theater, travelled to Guatemala City, Antigua and Raímab. Her research allowed her to explore the design elements of the contemporary Mayan culture and its richness in terms of visual language and theatrical design. She was able to explore the costume design and visual elements associated with the traditional dance drama Rahinal Achi. The research allowed her to gauge possibilities and costs for costume design. In Rahinal, she learned that the drama-dance is performed in honor of the San Pablo, the patron saint of the community but Catholicism is always mixed with Maya elements, including the dance styles and constant beating of the drum.

Gina Sandi-Díaz, Theater, visited Diríamba, Nicaragua to study the performances of El Güegüense, a colonial theatre-dance drama performed since the 17th century. She witnessed the ritual performances of El Tope of the Santos, El Güegüense, El Toro Huaco, El Viejo y la Vieja and La Giganta festivities in Diríamba and neighboring Dolores. She also conducted open interviews of audience members, mask makers, and artisans about the festivity and visited historical sites and cultural centers to learn the historical context of Granada, the province in which Diríamba lies. Her conversations with artisans, mask makers and audience members suggested that El Güegüense is indeed a symbol of national identity, and yet the current government has divested from the traditional dances and forced participants to abandon the processions and their complexity.

Taylor Tappan, MA Geography, held a participatory research mapping workshop in Grano de Oro, Costa Rica and gained insight into traditional Cabécar land tenure and subsistence practices. Twenty Cabécar leaders representing villages from all sectors of the Alto Chirripo Reserve traveled to Grano de Oro to receive training in basic geographic methodologies, including community sketch mapping, application of a land use survey, and the use of a hand-held GPS unit. These local investigators returned to their communities after the workshop to organize assemblies in which land use surveys were completed and sketch maps were drawn to reflect the cognitive spatial knowledge of members of the given community. This experience was essential for becoming familiar with the geographic and Cabécar community leaders, and to establish ties with geography students and professors at the National Autonomous University and the University of Costa Rica who have experience working in the region.

Carmen Torre Pérez, Spanish & Portuguese, traveled to Cuba to discover the extent to which Cuba’s alternative music scene differed from those in Havana and North America. At first she expected to visit Havana, Santa Clara and Sancti Spíritus, but then she added Guantánamo and Trinidad to garner a fuller perspective of Cuba’s scene. Her journey began at Havana. Through a snowball approach, she was able to meet many people who referred her to many more. She was able to meet all of her contacts, exchanged music with them and even visited some music venues and a self-made recording studio. She interviewed five bands and spoke with many underground critics, publishers, and consumers. She also found a strong tendency towards being apolitical, as opposed to being critical of communism or capitalism.
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The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies strives to provide a diverse range of opportunities and programs for its students, the University and the greater community, but it cannot sustain these activities on state funding alone. Through donations, students are able to travel to Latin America to complete pioneering research on interdisciplinary subjects, as well as experience Latin American culture. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

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