This year marks the 50th Year Anniversary of the Center of Latin American Studies with a wide array of events planned for November 18th-20th. The 50th Anniversary will bring together students, faculty, alumni and Latin American organizations on campus and culminate in a three day celebration of the history, legacy and future of Latin American Studies here at KU. The theme this year will appropriately be, "Latin American Studies in a Global Context: Past, Present, and Future."

As early as the 1940s, the University of Kansas has consistently been one of the pioneering institutions in Latin American Studies. Originally an offshoot of the Spanish & Portuguese Department, the Center of Latin American Studies officially began in 1961 with the appointment of John P. Augelli, Professor of Geography, as the first director of the Center. Since that time the Center has grown and expanded, continuing KU’s strong ties to the University of Costa Rica and building ties with Mexico, the Caribbean, and South American countries.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration will kick off on Friday, November 18th, 2011. Alumni and friends returning to campus are invited to visit a class or saludar an old professor. We will have a list of Latin Americanist classes for those interested. Friday afternoon the celebration will officially begin with the 20th Annual Waggoner Research Colloquium from 4-7pm. The celebration will continue on Saturday with all day activities in the Kansas Union, concluding with a private banquet Saturday evening.

We invite all our alumni and friends to attend the 50th Anniversary Celebration for the Center of Latin Americans Studies. Please RSVP to the Center at latamst@ku.edu/50th or (785)864-4213.
I come to the acting directorship of the Center of Latin American Studies from the KU English Department. I bring several years’ academic experience at Iowa State University; Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH; and the University of Kansas, as well as nearly 5 years’ administrative experience with USAID/Brazil. For over a decade, I have helped organize the Annual International Congresses of the Mediterranean Studies Association, which met in Brazil for the 500th anniversary of Cabral’s expedition. My research focuses on the cross-cultural interconnectedness of literature and culture. I am interested in the discourse of globalization, emerging networks, and evolving processes of cross-cultural and commercial exchange in the early modern period. The cross-cultural theme also appears in my essays in Luso-Brazilian studies and on the Portuguese colonial empire.

I was born in the highlands of Minas Gerais, and I was educated in Brazil and the US, including graduate coursework in Brazilian literature with the late Jon Vincent, the beloved professor of Brazilian Literature at KU. As a graduate student, I was a co-founder of the then Brazil-Portugal Club, now BRASA, whose central mission was to organize the annual Carnival and to bring together faculty and students interested in Luso-Brazilian Studies at KU.

Fifty years later, that vision continues to inform the Center’s mission to foster our students’ intellectual development and provide them with advanced language and area studies training, including study/research abroad, so that they can pursue successful, satisfying careers as teachers, scholars, and business and government professionals. From the director’s desk, I am awestruck and deeply inspired by the goodwill, kindness, and dedication in time, talent, and expertise of our faculty, staff, and students that go into planning, organizing, and implementing the Center’s programs and activities.

As many of you may already know, Professor Jill Kuhnheim of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese has been appointed Director of the LAS Center for a period of 3 ½ years, starting on January 1st, 2012. Jill, who has served as acting co-director of the Center, has published extensively in the areas of contemporary poetry, cultural studies, and gender studies in Spanish America. Melissa Birch has recently been appointed Associate Director, and we have a search under way for the full-time staff position of Assistant Director. We are all very excited about these appointments, and the vision, leadership, and experience that they represent.

The events for the 50th Anniversary Celebration, scheduled for November 18-19, 2011, will focus on the theme of “Latin American Studies in a Global Context: Past, Present, and Future.” Faculty, students, alumni and friends will reminisce, celebrate, and plan for the future. The events will start on late Friday afternoon with the Waggoner Research Colloquium, showcasing the research of KU faculty, and continue with a day-long conference on Saturday. The distinguished Costa Rican anthropologist, Dr. María Eugenia Bözzoli, will give the keynote lecture on “Latin America in a Globalized World.” On the occasion of the Center’s 50th Anniversary, we will also pay tribute to Professor Anita Herzfeld, who will be retiring at the end of the current academic year, after 50 years of dedicated service to the University of Kansas and Latin American Studies.

I take this opportunity to invite LAS alumni and friends to return to Lawrence for the festivities in November, and to provide us with the financial support we need, so that we may carry on our good work.

Cordially,

[Signature]
The Hall Center Latin American Seminar

activities on campus will be hosted in the Kansas Union lobby.

8:30am: Registration
(Coffee, tea, juice and breakfast pastries in the Kansas Union lobby)

9:00am: Welcoming Remarks
Marsha S. Haufler, Professor of Art History and Associate Dean for International Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Chair: Anita Herzfeld, Professor of Latin American Studies, and Undergraduate Director and Advisor, Center of Latin American Studies

Leticia Arroyo Abad, Assistant Professor of Economics, Middlebury College
“The Puzzle of Latin American Inequality: Trade, Institutions, & History”

Marshall Eakin, Professor of History, Vanderbilt University
“Brazilian Identity in the Twentieth Century”

Marc Becker, Professor of Latin American History, Truman State University
“Indians and Leftists in the Making of Latin American Social Movements”

11:00am-12:00pm: Career Choices in Latin American Studies
Chair: Peter Herlihy, Associate Prof. of Geography

Amanda Heter, Christian Foundation for Children and Aging, Kansas City

The 2011 Americanist Scholarship among KU Americanist faculty and graduate students is an example of the scholarship that is supported by the Center’s NRC Grant (2010-2014) strategy to promote Latin Americanist Scholarship among KU faculty and graduate students.

The 2011-2012 series is “Latin American Indigenous Identity in the Global Diaspora,” focuses on how indigenous peoples are reshaping their identities in a transnational world. Fall 2011’s distinguished presenters include:

José Drummond, Visiting Fellow, School of Global Environmental Sustainability, Colorado State University; Professor at Center for Sustainable Development, Universidade de Brasília

“Protected Areas Versus Areas Dedicated to Agriculture and Infrastructure in Brazil: Is There Room for Everybody?”
Fri., Sep. 23, 2011, 3:30pm - 5:00pm, Hall Center Seminar Rm.

Claire Wolniy, History

“The Race to Nicaragua: Anglo-Saxonism and Regeneration in William Walker’s Empire”
Fri., Oct. 7, 2011, 3:30pm - 5:00pm, Hall Center Seminar Rm.

Michelle Wibbelsman, Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, Austin

“Migration, Diaspora, and Cosmopolitanism: Otavalan Communities on the Move”
Fri., Oct. 21, 2011, 3:30pm - 5:00pm, Hall Center Seminar Rm.

Roberta Johnson, Spanish & Portuguese, UCLA

“Major Concepts in Spanish Feminist Theory”
Mon., Oct. 24, 2011, 3:30pm- 5:00pm, Hall Center Conference Hall.

Patricia Foxen, National Council of La Raza

“Providence Revisited: Transnational Maya in the Era of Mass Deportation”
Fri., Oct. 28, 2011, 3:30pm- 5:00pm, Hall Center Seminar Rm.

John Hoopes, Anthropology

“Shamans of the Apocalypse: Mesoamerican Identities and the Invention of Sacred Tradition”
Fri., Nov. 18, 2011, 3:30pm - 5:00pm, Hall Center Seminar Rm.

Meghan Webb, Anthropology

“How Have You Heard the One About...: Humor and Migration among the Kaqchikel and K’iche’ of Guatemala”
Thu., Dec. 8, 2011, 3:30pm- 5:00pm, Hall Center Seminar Rm.
Congratulations to our Spring 2011 LAS Master’s Student Graduates

Congratulations to Mara Aubel, for her graduation with a Master's in Latin American Studies. Aubel's thesis: "Affirmative Action and Afro-Brazilian Women in Bahia, Brazil," was successfully defended on April 19th, 2011. Her thesis advisor was Mehrangiz Najafizadeh, Associate Professor of Sociology.

End of the Year Fiesta Honors Students with Fellowships and Grants for Research in Latin American Studies

The Center honored 29 graduate students May 7th at the Graduate Recognition Ceremony and End of the Year Fiesta. The Fiesta was held in a local park and brought together LAS faculty, students, and friends to enjoy great food and the musical stylings of student bands.

The Center of Latin American Studies had a busy year for 2010-2011, with five separate fellowships, grants, and awards offered by the Center during the Spring semester. The ceremony recognized recipients of Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships, the Stransifer Fellowship, the Oppenheimer Grant, the Latin Americanist Graduate Research Competition, and the Latin American Field Research Awards.

Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships are prestigious awards from the U.S. Department of Education given to students pursuing coursework in a modern language. The KU Center of Latin American Studies administers FLAS awards for students of Portuguese, advanced Spanish, Quichua, Kaqchikel Maya, and Haitian Creole, with the additions of Moskitu, Nahuatl, and Poqomchi’ given to students this year. Contingent upon funding from the U.S. Department of Education, the fellowships cover tuition and fees for up to 12 credit hours in addition to a stipend of $15,000. For 2011-12, the Center awarded twelve Academic Year and eight Summer FLAS Fellowships for a total of twenty students funded!

The Robert Oppenheimer Memorial Scholarship was established for graduate students in History and Latin American Studies in memory of Dr. Robert Oppenheimer, former KU professor of Latin American history. The Center of Latin American Studies and the Department of History alternate years in which the award is made to a graduate student in the corresponding department.

The 2011 winners of the Oppenheimer Grant are Jacob Longaker, MA in Political Science for his project, "The Politics of Anti-discrimination Legislation in the Sao Paulo State Assembly," and Edma Delgado Solorzano, PhD in Spanish & Portuguese for her project, "Viva Cristo Rey y fuego!: Discourses of Violence and Religion in the Cristero Rebellion (1927-1929)."

The Stransifer Fellowship, given to graduate students in their pursuit of a thesis on Central America, was given to Jacob Rapp, PhD candidate in Spanish & Portuguese. For more information, see the Stransifer article on p. 7.

The forth annual Latin Americanist Graduate Research Competition was held on April 20th, 2011 in the Big 12 Room of the Kansas Union. Open to graduate students at both the Master’s and PhD levels, the competition featured 18 presentations on a wide variety of Latin American topics and a faculty keynote lecture by Assistant Professor in the Spanish & Portuguese Department, Verónica Garibotto.

A panel of judges, including Robert Nunley (Emeritus Professor of Geography), Michael Doudoroff (Emeritus Professor of Spanish & Portuguese) and Jana Krentz (Associate Librarian & Latin American Bibliographer) selected winning participants at both levels.

At the Master’s level, Geography student Andrew Norris’s presentation, "Land Tenure Transformation on the Periphery of San Luis Potosí, Mexico" was chosen as overall winner, followed by Sydney Silverstein’s (Anthropology), "Voting, Violence and Change: A Multi-sited Inquiry into Youth and Identity in Peru,"
Kevin Freudenburg's (Political Science), "Home Away From Home: Migrant Organizations and Transnational Politics Among Latin American Migrants in Spain" and Andrew Bailey's (Latin American Studies and Business), "Brazilian Coffee Cooperatives: Current Opportunities and Challenges."

At the PhD level, Ezekial Stear & David Lisenby both PhD candidates in Spanish & Portuguese came in first place for their presentations; Stear's "Nahua Histories of Migration in the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1619," and Lisenby's, "A Cecilia Valdés for the Twenty-First Century: Polemical Possession in Norge Espinosa's La virgencita de bronce."

The Latin American Field Research Grant, for graduate students who wish to do research in Latin America during summer, was awarded to five students for 2011. The grant, which was made possible with funds from The Center of Latin American Studies, was also supported with funds from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, CIBER, and the Department of Geography. It offers short-term field research grants on Latin American topics for periods ranging from four to twelve weeks.

Students receiving awards this semester are:

**Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship Winners:**
- **Academic Year Graduates**
  - Pablo Genaro Celis Castillo, PhD Spanish & Portuguese
  - Lindsay Dudley, MA LAS
  - Joshua Homan, PhD Sociocultural Anthropology
  - Katherine Moneymaker, MA Social Welfare
  - Diana Restrepo-Osorio, MA LAS
  - Erin Sheridan, MA LAS & MBA Business
  - Sydney Silverstein, MA Anthropology
  - Ezekiel Stear, PhD Spanish & Portuguese
  - Meghan Webb, PhD Anthropology

- **Summer Graduates**
  - Stacey Burton, MA Latin American Studies
  - James Herynk, PhD Medical Anthropology
  - Molly Martin, MA LAS & MBA Business
  - Taylor Tappan, MA Geography
  - Ezekiel Stear, PhD Spanish & Portuguese
  - Sydney Stone, MA Latin American Studies

- **Summer Undergraduates**
  - Kelsey Adkins, Spanish
  - Caroline Dickinson, Latin American Studies

- **Academic Year Undergraduates**
  - Mary Grace Felton, LAS & Linguistics
  - Jeff Miller, LAS, Anthropology, & Spanish

- **Oppenheimer Grant**
  - Edma Delgado Solórzano, PhD Spanish & Portuguese
  - Jacob Longaker, MA Political Science

- **Stansifer Fellowship**
  - Jacob Rapp, PhD Spanish & Portuguese

**Graduate Research Competition Winners**
- **MA Level**
  - 1st - Andrew Norris, MA Geography
  - 2nd - Sydney Silverstein, MA Anthropology
  - 3rd - Kevin Freudenburg, MA Political Science
  - 4th - Andrew Bailey, MBA School of Business & MA Latin American Studies

- **Ph.D. Level**
  - Co-1st - Ezekiel Stear, Spanish & Portuguese
  - Co-1st - David Lisenby, Spanish & Portuguese

**Graduate Field Research Grant**
- Hispano Duron, PhD Film Media Studies – Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama
- Jessica Raab, MA Anthropology - Mexico
- Stephanie Stillo, PhD History - Spain
- Irene Olives, PhD History - Spain
- Meghan Farley Webb, PhD Anthropology - Guatemala

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One of the bands playing at the Fiesta (left). Jorge Soberon, Professor of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology; Jorge Soberon, MA LAS, and Clarice Amorim, MA Anthropology (center). Brent Metz, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Hispano Duron, PhD Candidate in Film Media Studies (right).

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The Stansifer Fellowship, endowed by Dr. Charles Stansifer, Professor Emeritus of History and former Director of the Center of Latin American Studies stands with the 2011 recipient of the Stansifer Fellowship, Jacob Rapp. Rapp, a PhD candidate in Spanish & Portuguese, will use the funds for the study of literary culture, specifically the modernista writers of the Porfirato, the 35-year period at the end of the 19th century in Mexico.

The Stansifer Fellowship, endowed by Dr. Charles Stansifer, awards around $4,000 each year to a graduate student working on a thesis or dissertation on a Central American topic. The applicants can be seeking degrees in any area of study and are selected by an interdisciplinary faculty committee.
Faculty Highlight:

Dr. Robert C. Schwallar, Assistant Professor of History

Dr. Robert Schwallar is welcomed this Fall as the newest addition to the Latin Americanist faculty here at the University of Kansas. Schwallar, with a strong background in the history of Latin America (Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean), African Diaspora, and indigenous ethno-history of Mesoamerica is a strong addition to the over 160 interdisciplin ary core faculty members of our growing Latin Americanist community here on campus.

Schwallar’s research focuses on the development of race in Latin America. His current book project, ‘Géneros de Gente: Defining Difference in Early New Spain, explores the intellectual and social development of racial labels in early colonial Mexico. This research traces how late medieval Iberian notions of difference were transported across the Atlantic where they evolved into new socio-racial categories. Terms such as español, indio, mestizo, mulato, negro came to define and circumscribe individuals by mapping stereotypes onto phenotypical and somatic difference. In order to better understand the relevance of these categories, this study analyzes the social and cultural history of early mestizos and mulatos.

His ongoing research builds upon this project and focuses on the interaction between Africans and Native Americans in the early Atlantic World. In particular, his research has shown that in early colonial Mexico, Africans and indigenous people frequently formed families and communities. These positive interactions benefitted both groups and undermined the Spanish attempt to rigidly separate subaltern subjects. Some of this research has appeared as,” “Mulata, Hija de Negro y India: Afro-Indigenous Mulatos in Early Colonial Mexico,” Journal of Social History, vol. 44, no. 3, Spring 2011. This project will expand our understanding of early African-indigenous interaction by comparing these relationships across the Caribbean Basin.

Faculty Updates

Melissa H. Birch, Associate Director of the Center of Latin American Studies, Associate Professor of Business will be serving as Director of Graduate Studies in LAS for academic year 2011-12. Birch also serves as the faculty advisor for the Paraguay Kansas Student Organization and KU AIESEC, a student-run international internship organization.

Marta Caminero-Santangelo, Professor and Chair of the Department of English, recently wrapped up her second year as Chair of the English Department. Her article, “Narrating the Non-Nation: Literary Journalism and ‘Illega l’ Border Crossings,” will appear in the coming year in Arizona Quarterly. The article is part of her larger book manuscript, “Documenting the Undocumented: Narrative, Nation, and Social Justice in the Gatekeeper Era,” which examines U.S. Latino/a writing and narrative of the last two decades represents and responds to the issue of undocumented immigration, in what is essentially a hostile political and cultural climate and an era of escalating enforcement. In addition, Marta has two essays forthcoming in anthologies (issued by Routledge and Oxford) on the New Sanctuary Movement in the United States.

Ben Chappell, Assistant Professor of American Studies — His book Lowrider Space will be published by University of Texas Press in the spring of 2012. This summer, he was awarded a Big 12 Fellowship to travel to the University of Texas at Austin. Chappell spent one week in Austin and will spend at least one more there in the spring, conducting field work and archival research on his new project “Mexican American Fastpitch,” on the significance of community-based recreational softball for post-immigrant communities from Kansas City to San Antonio, roughly since the 1940s. He will present this research at the American Studies Association in Baltimore (October) and the American Anthropological Association in Montreal (November).

Ruben Flores, Assistant Professor of American Studies — Received a faculty travel award from the Center for Latin American Studies in Spring 2011 to conduct research in Mexico this past summer. He spent August 2011 in the Archivo General de la Nación, finishing the last of his archival work for his book manuscript. He sends this picture from Mexico City, where he and Spanish graduate student Jacob Rapp caught up over a Monterrey-style dinner in Mexico City. Flores also received a writing and travel grant in February funded by the National Science Foundation for part of a collaborative project that is exploring indigenous psychology in central Mexico and California.

Laura Herlihy, Lecturer of Latin American Studies — Directed the KU Latin American Studies Study Abroad Program in Nicaragua, which included three levels of a LCTL (Less Commonly Taught Language), the indigenous Miskitu language. Along with Dr. Herlihy, a native Miskitu-speaking teacher taught the Miskitu language courses and students also completed individual research projects. The program was approved and co-funded by the KU Linguistics department and by the US Department of Education, for Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) funding. Three of the eleven students had FLAS awards. The University of New Mexico Press will publish Herlihy’s book, The Mermaid and the Lobster Diver, in spring 2012. Herlihy also published an article, “Rising Up! Indigenous and Afro-Descendant Women’s Political Leadership in the RAAN.” Baracco, L. (Ed) (2011) National Integration and Contested Autonomy: The Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (New York, Algora Publishing). Herlihy was awarded the Latin American Studies Faculty 2011 Summer Travel Grant and remained in Nicaragua to complete fieldwork on indigenous women and gender violence in Nicaragua after the Study Abroad.

Peter Herlihy, Associate Professor of Geography, worked with colleagues Jerry Dobson (KU Geography), Dan Wildcat (Haskell), and John Hoopes (KU Anthropology) to develop the 2011 World Human Geography Conference: Communities and Ethics, a conference held at Haskell Indian Nations University on Sept. 15-17, 2011. Herlihy also helped organize KU’s participation in a “Space Symposium” held at the University of Costa Rica, March 21-23, 2011 and he presented research entitled “Tilting Horizontal Spaces of Indigenous Communities in the Rainforests of Central America and Mexico” at the conference on March 22, 2011. Herlihy did research in Honduras and Nicaragua during June-July 2011 while his family lived in Puerto Cabezas (Bilwi), Nicaragua.

Marike Janzen, Lecturer of Humanities & Western Civilization and coordinator of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program - In October, 2010, Janzen presented a paper at the German Studies Association conference titled “The Anna Seghers Preis: From Internationalist Literature to the Literature of Human Rights.” The Anna Seghers Prize was founded in East Germany by the East German writer Anna Seghers who was exiled in Mexico during World War II and maintained lifelong relationships with Latin American writers. The prize supports Latin American and German-speaking authors at the beginning of their careers, and has been in existence since 1987. Her paper focused on the way that the Anna Seghers prize articulates a global literary sphere premised on a leftist tradition of international solidarity; this is distinct from the way that contemporary German prizes for non-German literature invoke an individualist, human rights discourse.


Jill S. Kuhnheim, Dept. of Spanish and Portuguese, was Acting Co-Chair of Latin American Studies in the Spring and will return as Director in January of 2012. In the meantime, she has a Hall Center for the Humanities Fellowship to complete her book manuscript on “Poetry and Performance in Latin America.” She is the Editor for Rio de la Plata Poetry for the Handbook of Latin American Studies: Humanities and her brief essay on recent poetry of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and various annotations appeared this year in Volume 66. She has entries on Argentine and Chilean Poetry forthcoming in the Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics and an article she co-authored with Jacon Rapp, “Una puesta en voz neobarroca: Diadema de Marosa di Giorgio,” is forthcoming in the Revista de crítica literaria latinoamericana.

Brent Metz, Associate Professor of Anthropology - With the financial support of KU CIBER, the Center of Latin American Studies, and the Dept. of Anthropology, Brent Metz (Anthropology) and graduate assistant Meghan Webb led a group of 14 undergraduate and graduate students to Copán Ruinas, Honduras, for a 2-week, 1-credit field school in January, 2011. The students divided themselves into two teams, one composed largely of engineering students and the other mostly of anthropologists and business students. The former group identified rural water sources in Ch’ortí’ communities with fecal bacteria contamination and conducted a survey of health needs, and the latter group developed a website for the main Ch’ortí’ Maya organization and conducted a marketing analysis for their hotel and crafts. While the trip was challenging on several levels, it was considered a success for all involved, including the Ch’ortí’s, that Metz plans to make this a regular course offering for winter breaks.

Martha Rabban, Lecturer of Humanities & Western Civilization - Rabban’s most current publication, “The Development and Antidevelopment Debate: Critical Reflections on the Philosophical Foundations,” was published in April 2011. In July Rabban travelled to the city of Aracaju in Brazil where she taught a three days seminar on Education for Peace and Nonviolence to public school teachers and administrators. The event had the support of the education department of the state of Sergipe and 80 educators participated and concluded the three day program.

Paul Sneed, Assistant Professor of Brazilian Literary and Cultural Studies. Over the summer, Dr. Sneed completed an article about community learning and performance in the favela of Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In the fall, he is on a research intensive leave and plans to continue working on his manuscript on the same topic. He used his nonprofit educational center in Rocinha, the Two Brothers Foundation, to collaborate with international street photographers Gary Mark Smith, Sarah Stern, and Carlos Perez Beltrán to support a collaborative photographic workshop/project called Projeto Rocinha Real in May and June. Some of the images and film sequences coming from this are to be incorporated in his new short documentary film to serve as a companion to the book manuscript, which is currently in post-production with the help of student editors. He has received an invitation to show his film at the Afro-Romance Institute of the University of Missouri in the spring. With Aaron Lorentz (Duke University), he has co-organized a panel for LASA 2012 called Favela and Film.

Geraldo U. de Sousa, Professor of English and Acting Director of the LAS Center, had a very productive year. He published a book, titled At Home in Shakespeare’s Tragedies, had two essays accepted for publication, and gave papers at academic conferences in Seattle; Salamanca, Spain; and Corfu, Greece. Like his earlier book, At Home is deeply grounded in his Brazilian roots, education, and living experience in Brazil. He is currently working on a paper on Brazilian travel literature. In early summer, he visited Greece and Albania. The directorship of the LAS Center has kept him very busy; yet he manages to find time to serve on the University and Faculty Senates; direct several PhD dissertations and MA theses; serve as teaching mentor for graduate students and new faculty; and teach a course on early modern English literature, “Home and Away: Roots and Routes,” for the English Department, and a graduate directed study course for the Department of Spanish and Portuguese on Brazilian Literature and Travel. At the end of the year, he hopes to travel to Brazil for a very large biannual reunion of his mother’s family.

Paulette Spencer, Director, Bioengineering Research Center and Ackers Distinguished Professor, Mechanical Engineering - A visiting professor, Dr. Sergio Goncalves (Professor, Universidade Estadual Paulista Julio de Mesquita Filho, São Jose dos Campos, São Paulo, Brazil) will be working with Dr. Paulette Spencer and her research team in the fall semester, 2011. Dr. Goncalves will be conducting investigations related to the design and development of new biomaterials for application in the oral and craniofacial system.

Emily Tummons, Lecturer in Latin American Studies - Won a summer Faculty Travel Award, and gave a talk at the Guatemala Scholars Network conference in Antigua Guatemala in July. She also took four KU students to Guatemala to participate in a Kaqchikel language field school she directs each summer.
Faculty Updates Continued

Vicky Unruh, Professor of Spanish & Portuguese - Spent the 2010-2011 academic year as the AMUW Women’s Chair for Humanistic Studies at Marquette University, Milwaukee, where she taught classes on Latin America and did research for her book in progress on Post-Soviet Cuban cultural life. Her talks related to this project include “‘Compañero, la vocación se respeta’: Improvisations of a Workaday Crisis” for the October 2010 LASA in Toronto; “Walking the Talk: Tertulias and Cultural Activism in Latin America,” a plenary lecture for “Think-Gove-Act: The Salon and Its Histories” at the Brown Symposium, Southwestern University, February 2011; and, for the Distinguished Eleanor H. Boheim Lecture at Marquette, “Impromptu Lessons: The Teacher in Cuba’s Cultural Imaginary,” April 2011. In May she spent a week in Havana with the Director of KU International Programs, Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco, exploring possible future activities in Cuba for KU students and faculty.

Jessica Vasquez, Assistant Professor of Sociology - This past year, Jessica Vasquez’s first book, Mexican Americans Across Generations: Immigrant Families, Racial Realities, was published by New York University Press. In addition, her co-authored article on “racial authenticity,” published in Ethnic and Racial Studies, won the “Best Article Award” from the Latino/a Sociology Section of the ASA last summer. She taught undergraduate courses in methods, race/ethnicity, and Latino/as in the US and a graduate course in race and migration. Next academic year she will be on a residential fellowship at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York City to begin writing her second book on Latino/a family formation (racial/ethnic intermarriage and coethnic endogamy), racial/ethnic identity, gender, and ethnic culture in Kansas and California.

Ketty Wong-Cruz, Assistant Professor of Music, taught a seminar in ethnomusicology within the Master’s of Music program at the Facultad de Artes de la Universidad de Cuenca, Ecuador, from July 31 to August 8, 2011. This is the third time she and her colleague from the KU School of Music, Prof. Paul Laird, have been invited to teach in Ecuador. Prof. Wong was also invited to present a conference at the Universidad Espíritu Santo, Guayaquil, on the research findings of her book “La música nacional: Identidad, mestizaje y migración en el Ecuador,” which won the Casa delas Américas Musicology Award in 2010 and will be released in the spring of 2012.

Welcome to our incoming Latin American Studies Master’s Students for Fall 2011!

Diana Restrepo-Osorio
Lisa Scrivener (joint MBA)
Scott Simpson (joint MBA)
Fall 2011 Paraguay Workshop and Spring 2010 Cinco de Mayo Success

As part of a growing effort to connect with local teachers, the Center of Latin American Studies Outreach office has focused on organizing teacher workshops for K-12 educators. April 30th, during the Spring semester, the Outreach team organized a teachers workshop on Cinco de Mayo. Over twenty people attended the Cinco de Mayo Workshop, which featured a lecture by PhD candidate Jake Rapp of Spanish & Portuguese on the history and importance of Cinco de Mayo. Outreach also unveiled newly-developed Center resources for teachers, and shared a Cinco de Mayo lesson plan.

Also, in April, in collaboration with the other NRC’s on campus, the KU CIBER and KU’s Center for Economic Education, the Center offered a day-long workshop for middle school and social studies teachers on the importance of export markets to the Kansas economy. KU Business professor Melissa Birch led the seminar with Dr. Barbara Phipps, Associate Professor of Education. The workshop provided information on Kansas exports to each of the regions that are a focus of study at KU and emphasized the importance of foreign language learning to the Kansas economy.

Another major success was the joint area studies teachers workshop on Migration and the Arts. The Migration and the Arts workshop drew teachers all the way from Oklahoma. Professor Ketty Wong spoke on behalf of Latin American Studies with a lecture on Marimba music and how it migrated to the Americas.

LAS Outreach will host two workshops for the upcoming academic year. The Fall workshop will be held on October 15th, 2011 and will focus on Paraguay, providing teachers with a foundational knowledge of Paraguay through featured guest speakers.

Classroom materials and digital tools used to bring Paraguay into the classroom will be provided as well as a presentation about teacher travel opportunities in Paraguay.

The Spring Semester workshop will focus on the African Diaspora in Latin America and will be held on February 11th, 2012.

Another event to mark on the calendar for Spring is the upcoming joint area studies workshop on UNESCO World Heritage sites in Latin America. Outreach will be involving faculty, student groups, and community organizations to provide quality workshops for teachers.

Although it is a busy semester for Outreach, please do not hesitate to contact us at our KU address:
lasoutreach@ku.edu

We look forward to meeting new teachers and involving a variety of groups to promote learning about Latin America.

Graduate Snapshot:
Jake Longaker, MA Political Science
This summer I conducted five weeks of field research in São Paulo, Brazil with the help of the Oppenheimer Grant, for completion of my M.A. thesis in Political Science. My project explores the belief systems and policy frames underlying LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) activist networks in relation to a state level non-discrimination policy. I also intend to analyze the role of issue attention in agenda setting and public policy.

Overall, I recorded fourteen semi-structured interviews with a digital audio recording device. Respondents represent a broad cross-section of the policy subsystem, including academics, bureaucrats, activists, lawyers and politicians. Moreover, the interview sample includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, travesti and heterosexual identities.

I was fortunate to be in the country for LGBT pride month and witness a high level of activity by LGBT groups in São Paulo. Interviews were supplemented by a number of informal and group respondent sessions, such as seminars, conferences, public debates and NGO meetings. At all times, ethnographic field notes were recorded to inform my research beyond my prepared interview questions.

Funding from the Oppenheimer Scholarship also enabled me to complete two short trips to the interior of São Paulo, allowing for the inclusion of local-level NGOs in my research. Additionally, I received certification for a three-weekend course on Direito e Diversidade Sexual, sponsored by the Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil (OAB). Most importantly, I developed a rich network of contacts for future research on LGBT politics in Brazil.

K-12 teachers at a presentation for the Cinco de Mayo Workshop put on by LAS Outreach on April 30th, 2011.

Jacob Rapp, PhD Candidate in Spanish & Portuguese talks with K-12 teachers after his Cinco de Mayo presentation at the April Workshop.
Merienda Brown-Bag Lectures

The Center’s Merienda lectures, held most Thursdays during the fall and spring semesters, provide an opportunity for invited students, faculty, community members and visiting scholars to share their experiences and research in Latin America. The speakers represent a wide range of disciplines and backgrounds. Presentations typically last 40-45 minutes and allow for audience questions at the end. A simple lunch of rice and beans is served. Meriendas take place in Bailey Hall, Room 318 from 12:00-1:00pm.

We would like to thank all the presenters for Fall 2011 and the presenters who gave Meriendas for Spring 2011 listed below. The topics presented ranged from Central American Film to Politics, Infrastructure and Education in Brazil, and brought attendance levels to an all-time high. The Fall 2011 schedule will be just as exciting. Please visit our website the Merienda website under the News & Events section for more information and event photos. Thank you:

**Fall 2011 Schedule:**
- Sept 8: Anita Herzfeld
- Sept 15: Linda Lee
- Sept 22: Francisco Robles
- Sept 29: Cristian Dimitriu
- Oct 6: Tiffany Creegan Miller
- Oct 13: MOAS Merienda
- Oct. 20: Ketty Wong
- Oct 27: Patricia Foxen
- Nov 3: Edma Delgado
- Nov 10: Brent Metz
- Nov 17: Laura Herlihy
- Dec 1: Andrew Hilburn

**Spring 2011 Schedule:**
- January 27: Kiran Jayaram
- February 3: Erin Sheridan
- February 12: Hispano Duron
- February 17: Mara Aubel
- February 24: Emily Tummons
- March 10: Pedro Dos Santos
- March 31: Emilia Barosa
- April 7: Clarice Amorim
- April 14: Veronica Garibotto
- April 21: Javier Valerio
- April 28: Silvia Gonzalez

LAS Documentary Film Festival for Fall 2011

Every semester, the Center of Latin American Studies holds a film festival to showcase different aspects of Latin American culture and history. In the Fall semester, documentaries are shown, and in the Spring, feature films are presented. For Fall 2011 the Center has chosen four intriguing and award winning documentary films:

**Tuesday, October 18th:** Paraguayan War: 74 minutes, 2009. Also known as the War of the Triple Alliance, The Paraguayan War was the crucible in which the modern nations of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay were formed. Though the largest war in South American history, it has been neglected by scholars. Spanish with optional English subtitles.

**Thursday, October 20th:** Los Que Se Quedan (Those Who Remain): 96 minutes, 2009. Winner of the 2009 Los Angeles Film Festivals Best Documentary Award, is an intimate and discomfiting depiction of the impact of migration on families and villages left behind by loved ones who have traveled North for work. The documentary shows an emotional encounter with different families from several regions of Mexico who have stayed behind while their family members search for better opportunities. Spanish with English subtitles.

**Monday, October 24th:** Crude: 105 minutes, 2010. Crude, the Real Price of Oil is the epic story of one of the largest and most controversial legal cases on the planet. It is an inside look at the infamous $27 billion “Amazon Chernobyl” case. This real-life high stakes legal drama is set against a backdrop of the environmental movement, global politics, celebrity activism, human rights advocacy, the media, multinational corporate powers, and rapidly disappearing indigenous cultures.

**Wednesday, October 26th:** A Convenient Truth: Urban Solutions from Curitiba, Brazil: 52 minutes, 2007. An informative, inspirational documentary aimed at sharing ideas to provoke environment-friendly and cost-effective changes in cities worldwide. The documentary focuses on innovations in transportation, recycling, social benefits, and the processes that transformed Curitiba into one of the most livable cities in the world. The documentary includes exclusive interviews from world renowned Curitiba’s mayors Jaime Lerner and Cassio Tanigushi, as well as other brilliant minds who helped make Curitiba a world class model. English and Portuguese.

Each film showing features a keynote speaker who gives background surrounding important themes in the films.

The film festival is free and open to the public. This Fall, films will be shown in Stauffer-Flint 100 at 7pm. Please make sure to check the Film Festival Website for more information!
Student Updates

Clarice Amorim, MA, Anthropology - In the summer of 2009, Amorim conducted field work in Suchitepequez, Guatemala, with the support of a Tinker grant and a Carroll Clark Award. She has presented preliminary results of her research at the Society for Applied Anthropology meetings, held a Merienda for Latin American Studies, and competed in the KU Latin American Graduate Research Competition. She also taught Portuguese at an Educational Opportunity Programs summer camp during this past summer.

Andrew Bailey, MA, Latin American Studies & MBA - Traveled to China with the School of Business to attend lectures at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing and visit various Chinese businesses. Bailey also traveled for 5 weeks in Venezuela and Colombia and met with the MOAS delegation of Universidad Central de Venezuela and led one of their weekly prep sessions for the 2012 MOAS. Bailey will finish his MA Thesis this fall and is taking the Foreign Service Exam for the State Department in early October.

Stacey Burton, MA, Latin American Studies - Recipient of a FLAS summer award to study Miskito, Burton also completed her MA thesis research while working with a local non-profit in Bilwi-Porto Cabezas, Nicaragua. She interviewed women who suffered from various forms of violence, as well as community members.

Rebecca Crosthwait, PhD, Cultural Anthropology - June - Oct. 2011 Crosthwait interned at the Mexico City office of the International Organization for Migration. She worked with governmental and academic counterparts to produce project proposals to pursue research and intervention work related to human mobility as impacted by climate processes and events.

Edma Delgado Solórzano, PhD, Spanish, received the Robert Oppenheimer Research Grant to conduct research on the Cristero Rebellion, a religious uprising in central Mexico during the late 1920’s. Her project was titled “Viva Cristo Rey y fuego!: Discourses of Violence and Religion in the Cristero Rebellion (1927-1929).” During her six week trip, she traveled to the Jalisco Highlands, Guadalajara, and Mexico City. She was able to examine propaganda, testimonials, and other visual artifacts that reveal how the armed conflict was justified, incited, or sanctioned by the Catholic clergy and among Cristeros themselves.

Meghan Farley Webb, PhD, Cultural Anthropology - Received a Field Research Grant to investigate the immigration practices of Kaqchikel and K’iche’ Maya. During her two months in Guatemala she interviewed potential immigrants, immigrants, and the families of immigrants in five different communities. She will continue her research this year with additional interviews in both Guatemala and the United States.

James Herynk, PhD, Medical Anthropology – Received a FLAS for Poqomchi’ this summer in Guatemala. Herynk also passed his comprehensive oral exams and is now ABD. He’ll return to Guatemala in the fall to finish his dissertation and publication research.

Jacob Longaker, MA, Political Science – Recipient of the 2011 Oppenheimer Grant, Longaker conducted five weeks of field research in São Paulo, Brazil to explore the belief systems and policy frames underlying LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) activist networks in relation to a state level non-discrimination policy. He intends to analyze the role of issue attention in agenda setting and public policy.

Molly Martin, MA, LAS & MBA – Recipient of a FLAS summer award to study Portuguese, Martin spent 6 weeks at the Fast Forward Language Institute in Maceió, Brazil - the capital of the state of Alagoas (in the northeast of Brazil) where she participated in intensive Portuguese language study at the advanced level. Martin also lived and worked in Washington, D.C. as an intern for Senator Jerry Moran.

Irene Olivares, PhD, History - Received a Latin American Graduate Research Grant to Madrid, Spain, for the summer of 2011. She worked in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, where she examined documents relating to popular perceptions of Spanish imperialism during the seventeenth century, giving particular attention to Spaniards’ views of Latin American territories.

Jake Rapp, Ph.D, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, performed archival research at the Hemeroteca Nacional (National Periodical Archive) in Mexico City in August. With the support of the Sfanser Fellowship, he examined newspapers, literary reviews and other materials published during the late-nineteenth century in the preparation of his dissertation proposal on modernism and modernization in Mexico at the last turn of the century.

Lisa Rausch, PhD, Geography – Rausch is living in Mato Grosso, Brazil on a Fulbright Student Grant doing field work for her dissertation and recently co-authored a paper with Chris Brown and some other colleagues, coming out this year in Land Use Policy. Brannstrom, Christian, Lisa Rausch, J. Christopher Brown, Renata Marson Teixeira de Andrade, and Andrew Miccolis. “Compliance and Market Exclusion in Brazilian Agriculture: Analysis and Implications for “Soft” Governance.” Land Use Policy. In Press. 2011

Erin Sheridan, MA, Latin American Studies & MBA – Sheridan received an Academic Year FLAS award for Portuguese, was elected Vice President of BRASA (Brazilian Student Organization) for the 2011-12 school year, and served as the LAS Executive Committee Grad Student Representative for 2010-11. Sheridan worked as an intern for Capistrano Global Advisory Services, specializing in Brazil, during Spring 2011 and for Farmland and Smithfield Foods International, Export Coordination for Summer 2011.

Ezekiel Ster, PhD, Spanish & Portuguese - Recipient of a FLAS summer award to study Nahua English course for this language at Vanderbilt University this summer. He is also the recipient of a year-long FLAS award to study Portuguese at KU. In his last year of PhD coursework, he plans to present his comprehensive exams in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese in August of 2012. This dissertation will focus on a re-evaluation of the Spiritual Conquest of Mexico, based on perspectives represented in Indigenous documents.

Sydney Stone, MA, Latin American Studies - Recipient of a FLAS summer award to study Portuguese, spent six weeks in Salvador, Brazil during an intensive language immersion program through UCLA. Stone also conducted research on the Brazilian real estate market in preparation for the World Cup and Olympic Games that will take place in Brazil in 2014 and 2016.
Memories are made of this...

By Anita Herzfeld

Undergraduate Director and Advisor

As everything in life, many events have unexpected consequences. So it was that in 1962—just a year after I had arrived from Argentina on a Fulbright grant to study at KU—I read in the Daily Kansan that a visitor from my native country, Dr. San Martin, the then Chancellor of the University of Mar del Plata, was visiting KU. The article mentioned that he was a patient at the university hospital (then located where the School of Social Welfare is nowadays). At that time, I was still struggling with the not-so-easy task to adapt to U.S. life, thus I felt very sorry for a fellow citizen who was sick in a foreign country, and decided to visit him in the hospital. Once we went through the normal exchange of who-was-who, he told me he was attending, with many other Latin American colleagues, a Seminar on Higher Education in the Americas conducted by the then Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dr. George R. Waggner. He found the seminar very interesting, he said, because all participants shared similar concerns on higher education and they had never had the opportunity of exchanging ideas amongst themselves before. He also indicated that while the morning seminars were exhilarating, the afternoons and evenings were long and tedious, since they could not speak English, and without transportation, withstanding temperatures below zero (to which they were not accustomed), they were confined to their hotel rooms.

I thought for a minute about what I could do to help them and I came up with a suggestion—I could teach his group English ad honorem in the afternoons, since that was what I had done in Buenos Aires to pay my way through College. He seemed quite enthusiastic about the idea and suggested that I visit the Dean of the College and propose this plan to him. I was young then, and much more adventurous than I am today, thus I asked for an appointment to see the “all powerful” Dean. Only after I convinced his secretary that I had no academic complaint to file with the Dean, did she let me in to see him, as a great privilege—students did not often go to speak to the Dean. That is how I met Dean Waggner. He was a tall man, of marked features, but of pleasant demeanor, with a certain softness of expression, but at the same time leaving no doubt about who the authority was in that office. I told him about my interest in helping out to fight the Seminar participants’ ennui by teaching them English. He agreed with a smile, and from that moment on until his untimely death, he changed my life as he became my mentor, my friend, and the best adviser ever throughout my entire academic career.

I am retelling you this story, because although other University officials may have sanctioned the creation of the various Centers at KU, there was no one who had more vision in terms of international relations at the helm of the College than George Waggner. Although he was a Shakespeare specialist, he had a special love for and interest in Latin America. So much so, that he took Spanish classes and lat-
er travelled extensively throughout the Americas. His academic background, acquired at Indiana University, was undoubtedly the source for his interest in establishing the various Centers at KU, and among them that of Latin American Studies in 1961. Although there had been students who graduated with such a degree prior to that date, as Prof. Agnes Brady—the chair of the Department of Spanish and my first real boss at KU—had established a Latin American Area program, it was officially founded that year and was first directed by Prof. John Augelli, an amiable and brilliant Harvard geographer. I was privileged to see it grow later, under the tutelage of an accomplished historian, Professor William (“Bill”) Griff, and then, exponentially, under the able direction of another historian, Professor Charles (“Charley”) Stansifer, recently retired. Although I was acquainted with both previous directors, it was really when Charley took over—and his office was across from mine, as I was the Director of the then called Foreign Study Office, at Strong Hall—that we collaborated on a number of programs together, such as the establishment of a Study Abroad program in Paraguay, exchanges with several Central American Universities and the acquisition of Golfito (the United Fruit Company headquarters) for the university. Those were the beginning of the Golden Years for the Center, with Charley’s creation of TUCLAS (a three Kansas universities’ agreement of cooperation in Latin American Affairs). Prof. Jon Vincent, an inimitable, entertaining and beloved professor of Portuguese, was the next director, to be followed eventually by another well known and highly respected historian, Prof. Elizabeth (“Betsy”) Kuznesof. After my own stint working at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., I returned to join the Center of Latin American Studies and eventually became Director and Advisor of Undergraduate Students, during Betsy’s very successful term in office. Thanks to her indefatigable enthusiasm for things Latin American as well as her extraordinary vision and writing skills, the Center was recognized as a National Resource Center, and with that recognition came the awards of hefty grants which allowed the expansion of the curriculum and the addition of faculty. Those were, probably, the best years of my own academic life at KU. I saw the Center grow from three majors to some thirty students whom I advised academically, to my great joy. And we started providing our own classes (in addition to those offered by departments throughout the entire university), making it uniquely different from all the other Centers at KU. This brings us to the present, in which after a transitional period, the Center is well established and serves as the hub of a myriad of intellectual activities related to Latin America. I will leave at the end of this academic year with the great satisfaction of having witnessed and partaken in the makings of an extremely successful story. I have worked alongside people whom I highly respected and cared for deeply, from whom I constantly learned great lessons of wisdom and who made me feel as though I was contributing to a great social cause. May the Center continue to flourish in the years to come and may many more students profit from its offerings to make them aware of the richness and complexity of our Latin American life.
In addition to teacher workshops, Outreach has also developed a number of resources that teachers and the public can use to help teach and learn about Latin America. One of our major accomplishments in the summer of 2011 is our traveling cultural trunks. Outreach currently has ten cultural trunks that contain a unique collection of artifacts, books, maps, music, and videos about different countries or regions of Latin America. One trunk is even dedicated specifically to the Day of the Dead celebrated in Mexico.

These trunks can be used as learning tools, displays during international fairs, and various cultural events. Each trunk is even dedicated specifically to the Day of the Dead celebrated in Mexico. The Argentinian Cultural Trunk collection of artifacts, books, maps, music, and videos about different countries or regions of Latin America. One trunk is even dedicated specifically to the Day of the Dead celebrated in Mexico.

These trunks can be used as learning tools, displays during international fairs, and various cultural events. Even more exciting is that for the first time these trunks can be viewed online on our website in a digital interactive format. Thanks to our wonderful Tech Staff, Harley Ewing and Calvin McConnell, the interactive trunks are now available on the LAS website. By clicking on the trunk of their choice, viewers can then click on individual trunk items for a more detailed description and close-up image. To view the cultural trunks please visit the Cultural Trunks Webpage under the Outreach section.

Outreach has also developed a digital newsletter called, El LASO (Latin American Studies Outreach). This newsletter is a digital resource for Latin American affairs—featuring timely field reports, lesson plans, articles, and interviews. El LASO is published at the beginning of each semester and is sent out via email to our subscriber list, as well as posted on our Outreach webpage.

To check out all of our resources please visit www.latamst.ku.edu/outreach!
I spent six weeks in the beautiful country of Nicaragua on a KU LAS Study Abroad program directed by Dr. Laura Herlihy. At the beginning of the six-week journey, eleven KU students stepped out of the Managua airport, overwhelmed with the heat. Personally, I was like “what did I get myself into!” We hopped on a bus with no air conditioning and made our way to the colonial city of Granada. Here, we were introduced to our amazing host families and I lived with a woman named Judith, who had two sons, a daughter, and a mother living with her in this tiny home. Living with a host family made me appreciate the things I have at home, but it also made me realize that people without many material possessions can have much to offer. During our week in Granada, we took an excursion to the Laguna de Apoyo, a crater lake between two volcanoes, and we were the only ones there! It was paradise sitting on rafts and listening to the rainforest surrounding us. Even though we all got sun burnt, that may have been the best two hours of my life. We also toured the Isletas in Lake Managua, the historic cities of Granada and Leon, a coffee plantation in the mountains, out-door markets in Masaya, and climbed volcano Mommbacho.

After our week of craziness on the Pacific coast, we hopped on a twelve-person prop plane and flew over Nicaragua to Corn Island, a tropical island in the Caribbean. We were greeted by white beaches, clear water with coral reefs, and palm trees with hammocks—it was an incredible four days of relaxation, minus the chiggers. We also ate traditional island food called Ron Don, a soup of local seafood (fish, lobster, crab, and shrimp), coconut cream, and starchy that “runs down” your arm when you eat it. Local restaurateur Roxanne Dixon cooked the dish especially for us and we were treated like honored guests.

We then switched gears again and traveled to Puerto Cabezas, an indigenous city of 50,000 where we lived for four weeks in Casa Museo Bed and Breakfast. We had to adjust to electrical power outages, cold bathing water, and being starved at when we went out in public. Puerto Cabezas (called Bilwi in the Miskitu language), is situated on a bluff overlooking the Caribbean Sea and is home to a unique mix of indigenous and ethnic groups, including Miskitu, Mayangna-Sumu, Garifuna (Black Caribs), English-speaking Creoles, and Spanish-speaking mestizos. Here, we studied Miskitu language and young Mormon missionary guys attended our classes. They wanted to teach the Bible in the native language were each called Elder ‘so and so’ (depending on their last name). Their presence upped the level of learning in the language class, as the “Elders” enthusiastically acting out different conversations in Miskitu. We also participated in a culture class and were required to complete independent research projects and write twenty-page papers. Each of us had a different topic, such as Miskitu children’s songs, the lobster-diving economy, and inter-ethnic relations. While there was not always a lot to do in Puerto Cabezas, it forced us to get out and meet the people. We found ways to have a great time and we all benefited greatly from excursions to the university, the markets, the discos and Karaoke bars, seafood restaurants, and especially the dock to watch lobster divers begin their journeys to sea. We really got to know the culture and even took dance classes, learning a step or two.

By the end of our stay in Puerto Cabezas, we had adjusted to the heat and were ten shades darker and ten pounds lighter, were beginning to speak an indigenous language, and we had made great friends with the locals and with each other. It was definitely worth some of the hardships we endured. I have a lot more information about my time in Nicaragua on my blog if you want to know more: http://blog.travelpod.com/members/samspurlock

The blog also has links that can connect you to Miskitu music as well as Miskitu language.

Miskitu uplika nani lilia sna mai kakaira takala. Pain sma! I’m happy to meet you Miskitu people—you’re beautiful!

Rachel Bohn, BA in LAS, Spanish & French, at the Undergraduate Awards & Recognition Ceremony for Latin American Studies
Why give to the Center of Latin American Studies?

By giving to LAS, you contribute to Latin American academic activities, community outreach, special guests and cultural events and student research like that described in the preceding pages of our newsletter.

The Center of Latin American Studies

- Supports the development of new courses about Latin America, faculty and student research travel for study of Latin American languages and research topics.
- Disseminates knowledge of Latin America through academic conferences, seminars, weekly brownbag Merienda lectures, cultural performances, museum exhibits and cultural celebrations.
- Organizes teacher workshops to help Kansas educators incorporate Latin American languages and cultures into their classroom curriculum.
- Visiting scholars, lectures series and field trips

Donations to the Center of Latin American Studies may be used for:

- Undergraduate or graduate study abroad scholarships
- Research or conference travel for students or faculty
- Public programs such as conferences, lectures, exhibits and performances
- The Latin Americanist Newsletter

You may give online by visiting the “Giving” page on The Latin American Studies website (http://latamst.ku.edu/about/giving/index.shtml). Online giving is secure, speedy and simple. Click the area you would like to support and you will be redirected to the website of KU Endowment, the non-profit fundraising organization that supports KU.

Latin American Studies Contingency Fund: Donations help fund undergraduate or graduate study abroad scholarships, research or conference travel for students and faculty, public programs such as conferences, lectures, exhibits and performances, and the Kansas Latin Americanist newsletter.

Stansifer Fund: Initially endowed by Professor Emeritus Charles Stansifer, this fund awards support to graduate students planning to complete a doctorate in the study of Middle America (defined as Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean). Fellowships are granted on a competitive basis.

If you wish to send a donation by mail, please contact us at:

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