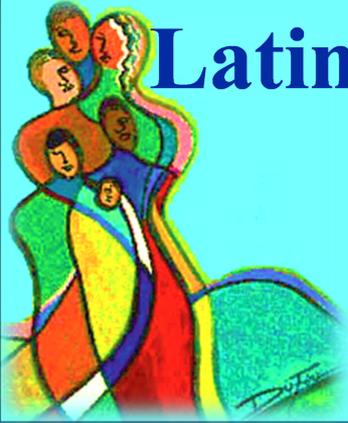


Latin American & Latino/a Studies presents the

12th Annual

Latina/o Communities Conference



Building Bridges / Construyendo Puentes

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

*First Virtual
Latina/o
Communities
Conference!*

DATE:
WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 30
2020

TIME:
8:30 AM
TO
4:15 PM

All events will be held on Zoom
Classes welcome! Free and Open to the Public

<http://www.wcupa.edu/latinoconference>

Contact: LATCOMSCONF@wcupa.edu

12th Annual Latina/o Communities Conference

“Building Bridges / Construyendo Puentes”



This interdisciplinary conference provides a creative space to enhance the understanding of Latina/o issues, contributions and cultures.

This annual conference informs the university and broader community about a wide range of issues concerning Latinos in Pennsylvania and beyond, and represents twelve years of working to build and strengthen ties between West Chester University and the Latino community, as embodied in our theme “Building Bridges/Construyendo Puentes.”



2020 Conference Organizers

Latino Communities Conference Co-coordinators

Emily Aguiló-Perez (English)
Miguel Ceballos (Sociology)
Raúl Olmo Fregoso Bailón (Educational Foundations and Policy)
Daniela Johannes (Languages and Cultures)

Latino Communities Conference Organizing Committee

León Arredondo (Anthropology)
Pablo Arriaza (Social Work)
Michele Belliveau (Social Work)
Marcos Campillo-Fenoll (Languages and Cultures)
Tony Delgado (Assistant Vice President for Identity, Health, & Wellness)
Hiram Martinez (Office for Social Equity)
Chris Przemieniecki (Criminal Justice)
Linda Stevenson (Political Science)
Maria Urrutia (Dance)
Claire Verden (Special Education)
Latino-American Student Organization (LASO)

Acknowledgments

The following organizations and offices contributed to the success of this conference:

- ❖ WCU President’s Office
- ❖ WCU Latin American and Latino/a Studies
- ❖ Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- ❖ Ethnic Studies Institute

www.wcupa.edu/LatinoConference

latcomsconf@wcupa.edu

SCHEDULE

Click on Zoom icon next to session
All events Zoom passcodes: **LCC**

8:30 WELCOMING REMARKS

Chris Fiorentino. *WCUPA President.*
Nelly Jimenez. *Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs,*
on behalf of Governor Tom Wolf
Dianne Herrin. *West Chester Borough Mayor.*
Tracey Robinson. *WCU Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer.*



9:00-9:50

PANEL 1

SERVICES THAT MAKE A BIG IMPACT FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITIES

ALMA VIDAL, CECILIA ARCE, KIRBY L. WYCOFF, CHESTER COUNTY MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CONSORTIUM

LA COMUNIDAD HISPANA ESCALERA PROGRAM

NORMA DIEGO-FLORES, LCH HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PANEL 2

DIALOGIC EDUCATION FOR LOVE AND TRANSFORMATION

OBED ARANGO, MARÍA GUADALUPE CASTILLO, HORACIO DE LA LUZ, MARÍA DE LOURDES FLORES, HOLLY LINK, DIANA LUGO, LAURA SÁNCHEZ, CENTRO DE CULTURA, ARTE, TRABAJO Y EDUCACIÓN (CCATE)

CURATING EDUCATIONAL SPACES WITH AUTOHISTORIA-TEORÍA AND CONOCIMIENTO: A DECOLONIAL FEMINIST TEACHER INQUIRY

LESLIE C. SOTOMAYOR, EDINBORO UNIVERSITY



10:00-10:50 GUEST SPEAKER

CULT OF GLORY: THE BOLD AND BRUTAL HISTORY OF THE TEXAS RANGERS

DOUG SWANSON
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH



11:00-11:50

PANEL 3

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE LATINX COMMUNITY

HEATHER EDELBLUTE, WCU HEALTH, ALMA VIDAL, CHESTER COUNTY MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CONSORTIUM, GEORGE ESCOBAR, CASA

PANEL 4

LORETTA PERNA: AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR SUPPORTING LATINX STUDENTS IN KENNETT SQUARE, PENNSYLVANIA

GUADALUPE ORTIZ CORTEZ, SONIA CASTANO-GARCÍA, ESTEFANI SÁNCHEZ FONSECA, MARLEN CORDOVA AND ANGEL CHIMAL RODRÍGUEZ, FACILITATORS: POWER START TEAM, EMILY ELMORE AND RAÚL OLMO FREGOSO BAILÓN, WCU EDUCATION



12:00-12:50 LUNCH BREAK

LATINO PROFESSIONALS LUNCHEON GROUP OF CHESTER COUNTY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS
MUSIC BY MEZZO-SOPRANO PAULA RIVERA-DANTAGNAN



1:00-1:50

GUEST SPEAKERS

**THE MISSING AND DISAPPEARED IMMIGRANTS
AT THE US-MEXICO BORDER**

GIA DEL PINO AND LOURDES GONZÁLEZ
COLIBRÍ CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



2:00-2:50

GUEST SPEAKERS

CIRCLES AND GEMS

XELENA GONZÁLEZ AND ADRIANA M. GARCÍA,
CHILDREN'S BOOKS AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR



3:00-3:50

PANEL 5

THE IMPACT OF THE LATINO VOTE

NELLY JIMENEZ, GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMISSION OF LATINO AFFAIRS
EMILIO A. BUITRAGO, GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMISSION OF LATINO AFFAIRS
CHRISTOPHER JARAMILLO, NORRISTOWN NAACP
ANGELIQUE HINTON, NORRISTOWN NAACP



PANEL 6

***SCHOLAR-ACTIVIST IDENTITY: WHEN SCHOLARSHIP MEETS
ACTION***

STEPHEN SANTA-RAMIREZ, UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO
DAWN DEMPS, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

***WHEN THE STARS ALIGN FOR LUNA: A LATINX THEATRICAL
EXPERIENCE***

ADRIANA DOMINGUEZ, UT EL PASO

***THE TRANSNATIONAL GEOGRAPHIES OF IMMIGRANT GIRLS AS
CAREGIVERS***

MELISA ARGANARAZ GOMEZ, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND



4:00-4:15

CLOSING REMARKS



POST-CONFERENCE EVENT

A VIRTUAL TOUR OF DUTCHIRICAN:
A LATINX HISTORY OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA EXHIBITION

LINK WILL BE POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE FOR
THE MONTH OF OCTOBER



12th ANNUAL LATINA/O COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE
“BUILDING BRIDGES / CONSTRUYENDO PUENTES”
Wednesday, September 30, 2020 - 8:30am-4:15pm



TITLES, ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Cult of Glory: The Bold and Brutal History of The Texas Rangers
Doug J. Swanson. University of Pittsburgh

The Texas Rangers are one of the most famous--and most celebrated--law enforcement agencies in the world. But their history also includes numerous incidents of racial oppression and murder, much of it directed toward Latinos. Along the Texas-Mexico border, the Rangers were in the early 20th Century as feared as the KKK was in America's Deep South

Doug J. Swanson is a veteran investigative reporter. He has been a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, and was a John S. Knight Fellow in Journalism at Stanford University. *Cult of Glory: The Bold and Brutal History of the Texas Rangers* is his seventh book. He teaches writing at the University of Pittsburgh.

The Missing and Disappeared Immigrants at the US-Mexico Border
Gia Del Pino & Lourdes González. Colibrí Center for Human Rights

Gia Del Pino, program and data associate of Colibrí Center for Human Rights and Lourdes González, coordinator of the virtual border project, present on the status of missing and disappeared immigrants at the US-Mexico border, and the Colibrí Center’s work in solidarity with the families of these immigrants to find truth and justice through forensic science, investigation, community organizing, bearing witness to this unjust loss of life, and raising awareness of the consequences of border militarization.

Gia Del Pino (MFA in Art and Technology) is the program and data associate director at Colibrí Center for Human Rights. The work of the Colibrí Center builds on a legacy of humanitarian work in southern Arizona to address the needs of families of the missing and unidentified individuals through forensic investigation and community involvement. Gia del Pino has a trajectory of work on immigrants’ rights and justice, including being the co-founder and lead organizer of a grassroots immigrant-led organization called Madres Sin Fronteras in Gainesville, FL.

Lourdes González is the Communications and Social Media intern at Colibrí Center for Human Rights. The work of the Colibrí Center builds on a legacy of humanitarian work in southern Arizona to address the needs of families of the missing and unidentified individuals through forensic investigation and community involvement. Lourdes Gonzalez currently pursues her degree in Latin American Studies at The University of Arizona.



Circles and Gems

Xelena González, author & **Adriana M. García**, illustrator

Latina writer Xelena González (*Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation*) and illustrator Adriana M. García discuss their experiences in the creation and publication of children’s books. Their works include the award-winning picture book *All Around Us* (2018) and the upcoming picture book *Where Wonder Grows*.

Xelena González is a storyteller, screenwriter, poet, and author of *All Around Us*, winner of multiple accolades, including the Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children’s Book Award, an American Indian Youth Literature Honor Award, and an International Latino Book Award. Her storytelling skills were honed as a children’s librarian in San Antonio and in Guangzhou, China. As a visiting author, she has introduced her method of “tai chi storytelling” to more than 60 schools and libraries around the globe. In October of 2020, Cinco Puntos Press will release *Where Wonder Grows*, her much-anticipated sophomore collaboration with muralist Adriana García.

Adriana M Garcia is a home-grown San Antonio visual artist, muralist, and illustrator. Her debut picture book *All Around Us* was awarded the prestigious 2018 Pura Belpré Honor. Her second book, *Where Wonder Grows* (written by Xelena Gonzalez, Cinco Puntos Press) is set to come out in October 2020. Garcia is most proud of the mural "Changing the World" installed at Northwest Vista College and completed in the Fall of 2019. The mural project "De Todos Caminos Somos Todos Uno," completed for the San Antonio River Authority, was recognized in the Americans for the Arts 2019 Year in Review. She is a big fan of portraits and loves depicting strong women as a way to honor those who have come before and those who continue to lead by example.

LUNCH BREAK MUSIC PERFORMER

Paula Rivera-Dantagnan is a mezzo soprano professional lyric singer. She has performed in Chile, Argentina and the U.S., and she is currently a core member of Opera Philadelphia’s chorus. She has performed locally at the Concert Opera Philadelphia, Delaware Valley Opera, The Philadelphia Singers, the Symphonic Choir and Children’s Opera Box. Paula is also an active voice teacher. As a voice faculty member in the Music Department at Saint Vincent College in Pittsburgh, PA, she directed numerous Opera Scene programs and a fully staged production of Dido and Aeneas. She is the vocal coach for the Pennsylvania Girlchoir and Keystone Boychoir and has worked as the vocal instructor for Middle and Upper School at Friends Central School and as General Music teacher and choir director of Greener Street Friends School and Plymouth Meeting Friends School. She has a passion for education and in 2010 founded Children’s Opera Box, an educational opera company that brings opera to young audiences in the Greater Philadelphia area.



PANELISTS

PANEL 1

Services that make a Big Impact for Low Income Families in our Communities

Alma Vital, Cecilia Arce, Kirby L. Wycoff. Chester County Maternal and Child Health Consortium

Too many economically disadvantaged women and their children, especially Latino and Black/African American women, have difficulty accessing the health care they need to have healthy babies and raise healthy children because of poverty, low levels of education, and language and cultural barriers. Research shows these families face increased chances of experiencing difficulties in accessing healthcare; mothers have a higher prevalence of both preterm and/or low birth weight babies (LBW) and are more likely to have health problems with negative effects on the child, mother, and the community in the short and long-term. For 29 years, MCHC has risen as a leading voice for underserved women and their children and has expanded its services to meet their emerging needs. Our mission is to empower families to build a healthier and brighter future for their children by overcoming the social and environmental barriers that lead to poor health conditions in our communities.

Cecilia Arce, BA, Med Cecilia brings over 20 years of education, management, and professional development experience to her role at MCHC. She first began as Healthy Start Program Manager, overseeing staff and home-visiting services. As a former director of a local community center, she worked on curriculum development and data management, managed grants, staff, and internal operations. She has also worked for a consulting firm as a Program Specialist to implement the Head Start Program and oversee grant implementations. Now, Cecilia is back in the non-profit world as MCHC's Director of Programs and Family Center Director. She has a Bachelor of Arts and Mathematics from Albertus Magnus College, a Master's in Education, International Teaching, from Framingham University, holds a Medical Interpreter Certificate, from bridging the Gap Delaware program, an Ascending Leadership Certificate and Executive Leadership Program Certificate from Bryn Mawr College.

Alma Vidal joined MCHC in July 2015 as a Family Health Advocate for the Healthy Start Program and was promoted to Manager of the Healthy Start and Family Benefits Programs in July 2019. As a Manager, she is responsible for overseeing both programs and provides support for staff members to ensure our mission and goals are achieved and that families are being well served. Alma brings expertise in early childhood education and holds a Medical Interpretation Certificate from Bridging the Gap, a Credential for Strengths-Based Family Worker from Temple University, and participated in the Phoenixville Community Health Foundation's Executive Leadership Institute. Alma has a passion for helping others, her dream being that all children and families have access to health care and food stability regardless of their social or immigration status.

Kirby L. Wycoff, Psy.D., Ed.M., MPH., NCSP is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist who serves as an Associate Professor and Co-Director of the School Psychology Program at Eastern University. She is a leader in the mental health field and her work focuses on trauma, adversity, and policy within a public health framework. She is co-chair of the National Association of School Psychology's Trauma and Child Maltreatment Interest Group and she serves as the Co-chair of the Policy Committee for the Association of School Psychologists of Pennsylvania. She is currently an Emerging Leader Fellow at the Pennsylvania Psychological Association. In 2019, Dr. Wycoff completed her internship at Maternal and Child Health Consortium and worked on a project to address health disparities and equal access to health care.



PANEL 1

La Comunidad Hispana Escalera Program

Norma Diego-Flores. LCH Health and Community Services

In this presentation, Norma Diego-Flores, LCH’s Education Coordinator, will share information regarding the *Escalera* Program, a program for high school juniors and seniors who may be unfamiliar with opportunities available to students following secondary school graduation to prepare them for life after high school. LCH implemented the program, which includes class sessions, college visits, and case management, in the 2019-2020 school year.

Norma Diego-Flores has been working at LCH for seven years. In her time at LCH Health and Community Services, she has overseen several programs including healthy eating classes, women’s health outreach, community wellness activities, and the English as a Second Language Program. Currently, she is in charge of LCH’s Education Programming, which includes adult GED classes in Spanish, a Citizenship Program which has a 100% citizenship pass rate, and has led the inaugural program year of *Escalera*.

PANEL 2

Dialogic Education for Love and Transformation

Obed Arango, María Guadalupe Castillo, Horacio De La Luz, María de Lourdes Flores, Holly Link, Diana Lugo, Laura Sánchez. Centro de Cultura, Arte, Trabajo y Educación (CCATE)

This research on the topic of education for immigrant students was motivated by concerns of CCATE’s Community-based Participatory Research Circle (CBPRC), researchers who are primarily members of the Latinx immigrant community and parents of children attending Montgomery County public schools. Researchers conducted a case study on one CCATE family to gain a more holistic understanding of immigrant children’s strengths and challenges for successful learning in contrast to the limited view schools provide through report cards and parent-teacher conferences that focus primarily on reading and math test scores and allow little meaningful dialogue with families about their children’s growth and development. The most striking finding of this research is prolonged childhood trauma detrimental to school success due to violent treatment of immigrant families of mixed-documentation status by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and schools’ refusal to fully acknowledge or address such trauma.

CCATE CBPRC Members

Obed Arango is a Mexican immigrant living in the US since 2000. He is from Mexico City and is the father of two Mexican daughters who he teaches to never forget their language and their cultural roots. With his daughters, he learned to resist the anti-immigrant environment and together they explored the principles of humanists Paulo Freire and Martin Luther King, Jr. Following this path and with the spirit of other members of the immigrant community, he founded CCATE as a center for social transformation. He serves as CCATE’s Director, and he is also an Instructor at the University of Pennsylvania. For Obed, “CCATE is a space for us to dream and exist, and to see our faces, skin color(s) and ways of speaking as integral to our identities y dignity.”

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María Guadalupe Castillo is an immigrant from Palmarito Tochapán in the state of Puebla, Mexico. She arrived in this country 14 years ago. She has worked in office cleaning since coming to the US. She has two sons who are her reason to continue learning more every day. CCATE has given her the opportunity to be able to share her opinion or suggest different propositions. She loves to help with what she can. Her life changed when she first arrived at CCATE because she had such a need to spend time with others who spoke her language. She believes that CCATE is a truly transformative place for people, and that spending time there as a teacher, you leave your heart in everything you do there.

Horacio De La Luz Lopez is a Mexican from a town called San Bartolo in the state of Puebla. He has lived in the US for 20 years. He has three children and works in construction. He is a CCATE member and leader, and believes that in the CCATE community, everyone learns something new every day.

María de Lourdes Lopez Flores is a Mexican woman from the state of Guerrero. She has been in the US for 18 years. She is a woman who loves her family. Her family is built on a base of love and respect. They are also her motor for fighting in this world. She works at home and with her children. She loves helping but, above all, she learns from others. As a member of CCATE she can say that to give and to receive is what motivates her to get ahead in life. She has goals and many resolutions thanks to her artistic companions.

Holly Link grew up mostly in Miami, FL. She identifies as a white cisgender woman with Anglo-European roots. She teaches at Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania in the School for Social Policy and Practice. She has been connected with Norristown since 2008 as a doctoral student at Penn in Educational Linguistics. She directs educational programs and research at CCATE. As a non-Latina leader, she works to acknowledge with the CCATE community how her privilege is implicated in social hierarchies and power relationships, and more broadly in the structures she works to change. Her dream and commitment is to co-research with the CCATE community. For Holly, CCATE is her second home and her primary place of learning.

Diana Lugo Martínez is proudly Mexican, from Cadereyta, Querétaro, and an undocumented immigrant woman who has lived in the US since 2002. Over the years, she and her partner have raised a beautiful family who are her motor for life, inspiration and strength. In the last years, her partner and children have accompanied her in what she considers is her mission, which is TO BE and to serve in CCATE. CCATE is a space that liberates, transforms, humanizes and dignifies. She firmly believes that with love, support, education and hard work, the community can work and grow together every day. At CCATE there are several mottos that have emerged from inside of our community, and she wishes to share two of them. The first is “a talent not shared is a talent wasted.” This shows how with humility and critical thinking, one can break with narratives that dehumanize the immigrant community.

Laura Sanchez is a Mexican immigrant from Acapulco, Guerrero, México. She arrived in the USA 19 years ago. She has worked in restaurants, cleaned offices, and is currently a nanny for a family with three children. She is also the mother of two children, José Luis (who is 21 years-old and works in the restaurant industry) and Alondra (who is 16 years-old). “I love them and we are CCATE,” she says. “CCATE is an incredibly marvelous place. It’s a place where we come together to learn and collaborate with a lot of love, with extremely intelligent and talented people. Moreover, CCATE is where we discover our artistic talents and where we discover our love of reading and to continue learning.”



PANEL 2

Curating Educational Spaces with Autohistoria-Teoría and Conocimiento: A Decolonial Feminist Teacher Inquiry Leslie Sotomayor, Edinboro University

My research presentation, Decolonial Feminist Teacher Inquiry, documents and analyzes my experiences teaching the undergraduate course *Latina Feminisms, Latinas in the US: Gender, Culture and Society*. In this study, I interpret seven recursive stages of Gloria Anzaldúa’s *conocimiento* theory as transformative acts to guide my research design and teaching methodology. I apply Anzaldúa’s theories of *autohistoria-teoría* and *conocimiento* to curate educational spaces that decolonize White hegemonic academic canons and empower underrepresented learners who may experience a deep sense of not belonging in academia. I situate myself in the study as curator, and my practice of curator, as an agent of self-knowledge production and theorizing to create self-empowering learning environments. Important to this research is teaching and learning from a feminist *testimonio* writing practice of theorizing experiences (i.e., *autohistoria-teoría*).

Leslie C. Sotomayor is an artist, curator, and dual PhD professor in Art Education and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She has curated numerous art exhibitions, including *Borrando fronteras/Erasing borders* a Cuban and Cuban-American Collaborative Art Exhibition at Penn State and *Hilos Rojos*, a solo art traveling art exhibition in Havana, Cuba. Sotomayor has numerous publications about her research work in Cuba, feminist curatorial projects and curriculum approaches, and visual arts practice. Her twenty plus years of teaching experience expand to many areas including: public education focus groups, higher education teaching, homeschool community and the U.S. Department of Education Upward Bound Program. Her research work began in 2011 in Havana and Santiago de Cuba, Cuba exploring Arab migration, fine arts, art history, and Women’s Studies interwoven into Cuban society and culture.

PANEL 3

The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Latinx Community Heather Edelblute, WCU Health. Alma Vidal, MCHC. George Escobar, CASA.

This panel discussion will examine the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Latinx communities in the US. The impact of COVID-19 will first be examined through a population health perspective with an integration of the social determinants of health to aid in understanding why Latinx communities are disproportionately affected by the virus. The socioeconomic impact of the epidemic in terms of housing, jobs, and community well-being in the mid-Atlantic region will also be examined. Finally, the impact of COVID-19 on families in Chester County will be explored.

Heather Edelblute is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health at West Chester University with a combined background in public health and sociology. Her research is at the intersection of migration and health with a focus on how transnational social networks impact mental health and maternal and child health for immigrants in the US and family members in migratory sending communities in Mexico. She is currently conducting research on the role of adaptation and racialization processes on the health of African immigrants in the Philadelphia area. Her work has been published in *International Migration*, *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, *Journal of Mental Health*, and *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*. Prior to coming to West Chester University, Heather worked at the University of Texas at San Antonio and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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George Escobar is the Chief of Programs and Services at CASA, the Mid Atlantic Region’s largest immigrant serving and advocacy organization with over 100,000 members in 3 states. George oversees CASA’s service programming which includes legal assistance, naturalization support, workforce development, employment, adult education, case management, financial and health education initiatives. Programs within George’s portfolio are charged with providing services that address disparities and create pathways to success for members while introducing them to CASA’s power building and leadership development initiatives. George has over 15 years of experience working for both the public and non-profit sectors designing and leading a variety of programs targeting the Latino and immigrant community. George grew up in Los Angeles where his family moved from Mexico and was first introduced to community development work while serving in the Peace Corps in Tanzania, East Africa.

Alma Vidal joined MCHC in July 2015 as a Family Health Advocate for the Healthy Start Program and was promoted to Manager of the Healthy Start and Family Benefits Programs in July 2019. As a Manager, she is responsible for overseeing both programs and provides support for staff members to ensure our mission and goals are achieved and that families are being well served. Alma brings expertise in early childhood education and holds a Medical Interpretation Certificate from Bridging the Gap, a Credential for Strengths-Based Family Worker from Temple University and participated in the Phoenixville Community Health Foundation’s Executive Leadership Institute. Alma has a passion for helping others, her dream being that all children and families have access to health care and food stability regardless of their social or immigration status.

PANEL 4

Loretta Perna: an Outstanding Educator Supporting Latinx Students in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania
Guadalupe Ortiz Cortez, Sonia Castano-Garcia, Estefani Sanchez Fonseca, Marlen Cordova-Pedroza and Angel Chimal Rodriguez. Facilitators: Power Start Team. **Emily Elmore & Raúl Olmo Fregoso Bailón**, WCU Education.

This presentation is about Loretta’s amazing work as a mentor for many Latinx students in Kennett High School. Her work has changed the lives of numerous students throughout the years, including our own, and it should be recognized. She is not only a mentor that helps students achieve and strive for their academic goals, but she is also a friend where students can find emotional support. Intertwined within each of our stories, are the tremendous impacts that mentors like Loretta Perna and academic support programs have had on our lives, so that you can you begin to understand the power of passion and dedication within our education system.

Guadalupe Ortiz Cortez: Bachelor’s degree in Regional Planning from the Cook Honors College at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a Master’s in Urban and Environmental Planning at Arizona State University. Currently, city planner for a city in Arizona. Former student from Kennett High School.

Sonia Castano-Garcia: Graduated from Robert Morris University, Moon Township, PA in May 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, with a concentration in Accounting and a minor in Legal Studies. Current position is Senior Auditor within the Internal Audit department of Saint-Gobain Corporation, a French manufacturing company headquartered in Malvern, PA. Prior to that, spent 3 years in external audit with Big4 accounting firm, Deloitte & Touché in Philadelphia.

Estefani Sanchez Fonseca: Rising sophomore at Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Angel Chimal Rodriguez: Graduated from Immaculata University with a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and a dual minor in Psychology and Sociology. Current position is Correctional Officer at Chester County Prison.

Marlen Cordova-Pedroza: Rising senior at Kennett High School

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Emily Elmore currently works as WCU's Director of Diversity Recruitment in Education. She is a proud, two-time graduate of WCU, with a B.S. Ed in Secondary English Education, and an M.A. in English. Emily taught for several years in The School District of Philadelphia, and is passionate about providing quality public education for all students.

Raúl Olmo Fregoso Bailón is an assistant professor at the Department of Educational Foundations and Policy Studies at WCU. Dr. Fregoso grew up and completed all his studies in Latin America. He received his Ph.D. from The University of Texas at Austin and is the author of *¿Qué tan Diferente es México de la Venezuela de Chávez?* (University of Guadalajara Press). He is currently a member of the International Advisory Committee of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education.

PANEL 5

The Impact of the Latino Vote

Nelly Jimenez and Emilio A. Buitrago, Governor's Advisory Commission of Latino Affairs

Angelique Hinton and Christopher Jaramillo, Norristown NAACP

Our participation in government, census, and voting process will impact our influence in the future. Latinos are expected for the first time to be the nation's largest racial or ethnicity minority in a U.S. presidential election. The Latino vote will be influential in who wins the next presidential election. Efforts to increase participation in voting registration and turnout to the polls will be key for this election. Join our conversation about the Latino impact and grassroots efforts to registering and voting this election.

Nelly Jimenez is the Executive Director and CEO of ACLAMO in Montgomery County. ACLAMO provides educational programs, social services and access to health and wellness programs to Latinos and other community members to empower them to fully achieve their life potential. Nelly is also an appointed member of the Pennsylvania Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs, co-chair of the Montgomery County PA Counts Census Committee 2020, and a co-organizer of the Latino Professional Luncheon Scholarship Program for Chester County. Nelly has received numerous awards including the 2013 Power Women Award by Main Line Today Magazine, the recognition as the 2015 Most Influential Latina of the Delaware Valley and the 2018 Superhero Award by United Way of Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey. Nelly holds a degree in law and a specialization in business law from Santa Maria University, Venezuela.

Emilio A. Buitrago is a decisive, action-oriented and results focused Engineer and PMP® certified Project Manager with over 20 years of experience in the Telecommunications, Project Management and Renewable Energy fields. Highly-experienced in providing insightful technical support as a strategic business partner with senior management and customers. Goal-oriented contributor with finely tuned planning skills contributing to overall company growth. He is a dynamic leader with uncompromising integrity and exemplary work ethics.

Angelique Hinton is currently the 1st Vice President of the Norristown NAACP and has been a resident of the Norristown area for over 35 years and has a passion for empowering her community. Mrs. Hinton spent 20 years of her career working in Client Service for Vanguard, the Financial Investment Company based in Malvern, before following her passion and becoming an organizer both in her community and politically. Angie is very dedicated to supporting young people in her community, she is a board member of Expressive Path who provides access to music and art to at risk students in Norristown. She works with Philly Youth Vote and Vote That Jawn, which are non-partisan organizations dedicated to register eligible students in PhilaSD.



Christopher Jaramillo is the Chair of Membership for Norristown NAACP. His passion for the education and empowerment of individuals paired with his love for uplifting the diverse community in which he currently lives in led him to seek out the organization for righteous causes. Mr. Jaramillo graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in May of 2020 with a Master of Science in Education. He works closely with the Norristown Area School District’s Administration through their Diversity Committee initiative, and also serves on the board of West Chester University’s Alumni Association, where he strives to make positive, impactful changes for students of color who attend both institutions.

PANEL 6

Scholar-Activist Identity: When Scholarship Meets Action

Stephen Santa-Ramirez, University of Buffalo & **Dawn Demps**, Arizona State University

It can be challenging for many students and educators to reconcile their scholar-activist identities. Too often in the academy, People of Color are challenged with having to decide between either solely being the scholar or activist, but not both. Negotiating between school/work and political engagement can feel tricky at times, but it is possible to successfully do both, and both are necessary as we collectively work towards a just society. In this workshop, the presenters will share various ways they’ve been able to embrace their scholar-activist identities while being students, faculty, and community organizers, in addition to sharing different ways to partake in activism efforts depending on individuals’ comfort levels. At the end of the session, attendees will have an opportunity for self-reflection and develop an individual scholar-activist and advocacy plan.

Dr. Stephen Santa-Ramirez (he, him, his) is a proud West Chester University (WCU) alum (’09) and is currently an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at the University at Buffalo (NY). Stephen’s personal and professional experiences in higher education/student affairs and identity as a scholar-activist have played formative roles in the development of his research agenda, which centers the lives and knowledge of historically marginalized and economically neglected students. By employing critical and asset-based frameworks, his scholarship investigates campus racial climate, first-generation students’ sense of belonging, and the various ways race, ethnicity, and im/migration inform Latinx college students’ educational experiences. Stephen holds a Ph.D. in Educational Policy and Evaluation and a Graduate Certificate in Socioeconomic Justice from Arizona State University. In recent years, Stephen received the Legacy of Leadership honor from WCU, was selected as a Fellow for the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE) and New York University’s Faculty First-Look.

Dawn Demps is a Flint, MI native that has been involved with community advocacy and organizing since 12 years old. She utilizes her own lived experiences to connect with students and parents to promote tools for self-advocacy, structural reforms and strives to champion the concerns of these populations. Dawn holds an MA in Social Justice Studies and is currently a PhD candidate at Arizona State University in Education Policy and Evaluation. She has published articles examining the possibilities of youth inspired school leadership as exhibited through youth voice and participatory action research, unpacking the difficulties and potential of Black and Brown collaborative educational leadership and how art can be used to expose the experiences of Black youth whom have experienced school exclusion. She is currently conducting a critical ethnographic oral history study of a grassroots community advocacy group comprised of Black natural and othermothers whom are galvanizing to challenge and dismantle the educational policies and practices that exclude Black children from educational spaces. Dawn has been awarded the 2020/21 American Association of University Women Dissertation Fellowship and Arizona State University Dissertation Completion Fellowship and is the proud mother of three children: Journi, Jayanti and Zora- ages 17, 15 and 7 respectively.



PANEL 6

When the Stars Align for Luna: A Latinx Theatrical Experience

Adriana Dominguez, UT El Paso

Occasionally the stars align and the magic that is the world of theatre just works. The presentation details the process of utilizing the rasquache aesthetic in the production of Luna by Ramón Esquivel at an El Paso, Texas high school. Luna is a piece full of *corazón* about young Soledad, a daughter of migrant farmworkers, and her struggle to make friends as she is constantly forced to move so that her parents can follow the work. The four-month artistic journey with these young people continually reframed the theatre educator process. It solidified that the rasquache aesthetic is an effective process to promote process over product and bring in a sense of empowerment for young people. This unique process also reinforced the conviction that those that have the opportunity must use their position in educational theatre to promote work that connects with the community and validates the experiences and stories that are vital to a home community.

Adriana Dominguez is an Assistant Professor and serves as the Director of BA/BFA Theatre Programs at the Department of Theatre & Dance at UTEP. She received her BA in Theatre Arts with a Minor in Secondary Education from the University of Texas at El Paso, her MA in Performing Arts Administration from New York University, and her PhD in Curriculum & Instruction from New Mexico State University. Adriana has participated in theatre as an actress, director, producer, designer, and teacher at the elementary school, middle school, high school and college levels. She is the co-founder of both the Chicana/Latinx Theatre Series and the Children’s Traveling Troupe which serve to promote artistic connections with the community at no cost. Recent/upcoming projects include: Real Women Have Curves (Director), Luna (Director), A Christmas Carol, en la Frontera (co-adapter), and Into the Beautiful North NEA Big Read Grant (Principal Investigator). She lives in El Paso, TX; a beautiful border community that knows no borders.

PANEL 6

The Transnational Geographies of Immigrant Girls as Caregivers

Melisa Argañaraz Gomez, University of Maryland

This paper examines the experiences of racialized immigrant Latina girls using the framework of transnational feminist geographies. The study draws from a virtual participatory action study and interviews in Baltimore, Maryland to examine the role that immigrant girls caregiving practices play in transnational families. Scholars depict children as either left behind in the global south or as privileged beneficiaries of caregiving in the global north. These perspectives fail to recognize children as social actors and the main roles that children take on transnational relationships among family and across borders. This paper argues that major attention should be given to intersectional contexts of young girls.

Melisa Argañaraz Gomez is a PhD candidate in the department of Geography and Environmental Systems at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Her dissertation explores the experiences of immigrant Latinx and youth diaspora in the migration-development context in the global north.