



Eleventh Annual Conference
Latinos in the Heartland
At the Crossroads: ¿Incorporation or
Marginalization?
Columbia, Missouri
June 13-15, 2012

CONFERENCE PRESENTERS
(Short Bios – DRAFT)

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Authors are listed in alphabetical order.

Plenary Speakers

Steve Ball, *University of Missouri - Columbia*

Dr. Steve Ball is an Associate Professor of Exercise Physiology and State Fitness Specialist with the University of Missouri. He received his undergraduate and Master's degrees from MU, and his Ph.D. in Exercise and Wellness from Arizona State University in 2002. He is well known for developing physical activity programs for youth such as "Jump Into Action," which has reached over 45,000 Missouri youth. He also created the well-known "My Activity Pyramid for Kids," which has received national and international attention. In addition, he has developed his own video series called Fitness and Wellness for a Lifetime. He has been a frequent guest on TV and radio programs, including the nationally syndicated Radio Health Journal, and has been quoted in major outlets including the USA Today, Wall Street Journal, and U.S. News and World Report. He is the recipient of several prestigious awards including the Provost's Award for Creative Extension Programming by New Faculty (2007), The Donald W. Fancher Provost Award for Outstanding Achievement in Extension and Continuing Education (2010), and the William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence (2012).

Andrew Behnke, *North Carolina State University*

Dr. Andrew O. Behnke is an Associate Professor of Human Development and an Extension Specialist at North Carolina State University. He learned Spanish in Mexico 15 years ago and has served the Latino community since that time. Dr. Behnke, in partnership with Cintia Aguilar, developed the "Juntos" program to help Latino families come together to make higher education a reality. He conducts outreach efforts and applied research on academic achievement and parent involvement among Latino families. His life mission is to empower Latino youth to succeed and make a difference in the world.

Ruben Martinez, *Michigan State University*

Dr. Rubén O. Martinez is the Director of the Julián Samora Research Institute at Michigan State University. He is a nationally known scholar with expertise in the areas of higher education, race and ethnic relations, and diversity leadership. Among his areas of research focus are leadership and institutional change, education and ethnic minorities, youth development, and environmental justice. Dr. Martinez is the editor of the "Latinos in the United States" book series by Michigan State University Press. He has co-authored three books: Chicanos in Higher Education (1993), Diversity Leadership in Higher Education (2006), and a Brief History of Cristo Rey Church in Lansing, MI (2011). He has also edited a volume on Latinos in the Midwest (2011). He is currently working on a volume on Latino/a college presidents and another on the impact of Neoliberalism on Latinos.

Alejandro Morales, *University of Missouri - Columbia*

Dr. Alejandro Morales is an Assistant Professor of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri and is a Cambio Center Fellow. Dr. Morales conducts qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research in the areas of language brokering (i.e., children who translate and interpret) among Latino immigrant families, immigrant LGBT issues in mental health, and applied methodological issues in qualitative and mixed methods research with underserved communities. Dr. Morales received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He holds a B.A. in Psychology from California State University, Dominguez Hills. He was a Psychology Intern at UC-Davis Counseling and Psychological Services where he had the opportunity to provide counseling and psychotherapy to students of color, LGBT students, as well as first generation college students.

Bernardo Ramírez, *Hispanic Economic Development Corporation*

Bernardo Ramírez is the Executive Director of the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation, Kansas City. He has more than 20 years of experience working in economic development and advocating on behalf of Americans of Hispanic descent. Mr. Ramirez was previously the Deputy Vice President of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) headquartered in Washington, D.C. He has a background in board and nonprofit management in macro- vs. micro-management, operational programming and budget structures. He has conducted training sessions throughout the United States and in Quito, Ecuador. Mr. Ramirez serves on the local board of directors of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in KCMO, United Way of Greater Kansas City Local Operating Board, and the national board of the National Association of Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB) in San Antonio, Texas. Mr. Ramirez obtained an M.B.A. from Rockhurst College in Kansas City, MO.

Michele Waslin, *Immigration Policy Center*

Dr. Michele Waslin is Senior Policy Analyst at the Immigration Policy Center, a division of the American Immigration Council located in Washington, DC. IPC is dedicated to providing factual information about immigration and immigrants in the U.S. In her capacity, Dr. Waslin tracks and analyzes immigration policy and the immigration debate, writes fact sheets and reports on a multitude of immigration-related topics, coordinates the IPC research agenda and builds relationships with academics and other authors, provides technical assistance to organizations, conducts public education events, and maintains relationships with a wide array of national, state, and local advocacy organizations as well as federal agencies. Dr. Waslin has authored several publications on immigration policy and post-9/11 immigration issues, and appears regularly in English and Spanish-language media. Previously, she worked as Director of Immigration Policy Research at the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and Policy Coordinator at the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. She received her Ph.D. in 2002 in Government and International Studies from the University of Notre

Dame, and holds an M.A. in International Relations from the University of Chicago and a B.A. in Political Science from Creighton University.

Presenters

A

Saúl Abarca-Orozco, Iowa State University

Saúl Abarca Orozco entered the Sustainable Agriculture Ph.D. program at Iowa State University (ISU) in 2010. He has taught business students at the *Universidad Veracruzana* in Mexico about agribusiness and food security issues. His main interests are local food systems, organic agriculture, the farm-to-table concept, and the building of more sustainable food value chains. At ISU, he has been part of a research-extension team that works in Iowa communities with rapidly growing Hispanic populations. Abarca-Orozco plans to return to Mexico to share his knowledge of sustainable agriculture through teaching, become an organic farmer, and start his own restaurant in downtown Xalapa, in Veracruz State.

Kim Allen, North Carolina State University

Dr. Kim Allen is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University (NCSU). Dr. Allen has the great opportunity of teaching Family Life and Youth Development graduate students and supporting North Carolina Extension Agents by designing, implementing and evaluating programs that foster healthy children, families and communities. Dr. Allen's applied work at NCSU focuses on reaching vulnerable audiences in the areas of relationship education, youth development, adolescent health, and parenting.

Cintia Aguilar, North Carolina State University

Cintia Aguilar is the Latino Affairs Facilitator for Cooperative Extension and the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University (NCSU). She holds a Masters degree in Psychology from the University of Costa Rica. She has worked with families via NCSU for the last 11 years. As the Latino Affairs Facilitator, her primary responsibility is providing technical assistance to the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences staff in how to reach out to Latino audiences, develop programs for them, and develop partnership with community agencies. Her appointment also includes supporting the overall Extension system in North Carolina in the same capacity. She leads the NC Cooperative Extension Latino Advisory Council (CELAC) and the Extension District Latino Outreach Teams.

Jorge H. Atilas, Oklahoma State University

Dr. Jorge H. Atilas was appointed Associate Dean and Professor for Extension and

Engagement in the College of Human Sciences at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in 2010. Atilas has served as Associate Dean at the University of Georgia, where he also served as the Family and Consumer Sciences State Program Leader for Cooperative Extension and was a leader in Latino outreach for the University of Georgia, Athens Extension. He received his bachelor's degree in architecture from the Dominican Republic, his master's degree in urban and regional planning, and his Ph.D. in housing, from Virginia Tech. Dr. Atilas has worked in private and public sector managing housing finance and development projects in the United States and the Dominican Republic. His research and extension scholarship has focused on affordable housing, indoor air quality, energy conservation, home safety and water quality protection. He now leads our Family and Consumer Sciences extension programs to enhance OSU's capacity to address the most critical issues affecting Oklahomans.

B

Alexandra Bachran, Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake University
Alexandra Bachran has a background in development and non-profit fundraising with experience in direct giving, planned giving, and program development that has yielded over a million dollars to various health and human services agencies. She seeks to blend the areas of development and direct service in order to provide more streamlined and comprehensive client care. Alexandra Bachran is currently a senior at the Worden School of Social Service on the campus of Our Lady of the Lake University. She expects to graduate with a BSW in December 2012 and an MSW in December 2013. Her primary areas of interest include the impact of legislative policy on women's reproductive healthcare and in program evaluation of support services provided to women involved in domestic violence.

Debra Bolton, Kansas State University

Debra Bolton has been the extension specialist in Southwest Kansas for nearly seven years, working with Extension Agents from 26 counties in Family and Consumer Sciences. Previously, she worked as the director of a family resource/community learning center, a full-service school with early child, adult education, and alternative high school with medical facilities, along with other social services. Debra has worked in Head Start, and in another life, worked in public radio for 18 years. Debra received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English. Her doctorate is from Kansas State University in Human Ecology. Her research focuses on rural communities with high minority populations. Debra was appointed by two previous Kansas governors to serve as a commissioner of Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism. She currently serves on five other boards of directors as well. She is a workshop presenter for leadership programs, teaches grant writing and logic model building to area non-profit agencies. Her love for working with underserved populations includes teaching sex education to developmentally disabled adults.

Hector A. Bombiella Medina, Iowa State University

Hector A. Bombiella Medina has been a graduate student at Iowa State University (ISU) since 2008. He is working on his Ph.D. in Sustainable Agriculture and Sociology, and since 2011 he has been involved in different research and extension projects on Latino community in rural Iowa. Hector is a lawyer and completed a Master in Rights at the National University of Colombia. He practiced law for over 5 years advising social organizations, particularly victims of the internal conflict in Colombia. Later on, he wrote his master thesis in Political Science at ISU, about the growth and development of victims' social movements in Colombia and Latin America. Today, he is looking with land restitution and sustainable agriculture initiatives as alternative pathways to repair the victims. He is a social advocate and is always willing to participate in empowering processes that benefit underserved communities.

Virginia Braxs, Washington University in Saint Louis

Virginia Braxs, a native of Argentina, has been a Senior Spanish Lecturer at the Romance Languages & Literatures at Washington University in St. Louis (WU) since 1996. She is in charge of the WU Department of Romance Languages & Literatures' Outreach Programs as its Hispanic Community and Student Groups Liaison. Braxs is the founder and faculty mentor of the *Latino Youth Tutoring/Mentoring Programs*, after school programs working with first generation, Latino students K-12. Since 1998, Braxs has been working as the Vice President of the *Hispanic Arts Council of St. Louis* www.hispanicartscouncilstl.webs.com, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promote the excellence of the Hispanic culture through art and education. Since 1996 to 2003 she was the hostess of 'Hispanic Culture/Cultura Hispana' and 'Hispanic Calendar,' two bilingual radio programs at KDHX FM88.1 St. Louis Community Radio. She is also an active board member of the *St. Louis Regional Arts Commission*, *The Hispanic Educational, Cultural & Scholarship Fund* and *Arts & Faith St. Louis*, as well as co-founder and board emeritus of *Upstream Theater*, a professional theater company staging international works. Throughout the years Braxs has received many distinctions and awards, among them: the 2012 Washington University 'Annika Rodriguez Award' for exceptional dedication/service to the Latino Community, the 2008 'Gerry and Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award' at Washington University in St. Louis and the 2006 'Esperanza (Hope) Award' giving by the Hispanic Leaders Group of Greater St. Louis for her committed leadership in the St. Louis Latino community.

Connie M. Brooks, University of Missouri

Dr. Connie M. Brooks is a licensed psychologist and Assistant Clinical Professor at the University of Missouri Assessment & Consultation Clinic. She specializes in psychological evaluation, clinical supervision, and working with underserved populations, particularly those who are vulnerable and face barriers to services. She currently provides clinical supervision to 14 students and oversees the provision of more than 200 evaluations each year.

Cornelia Butler Flora, Iowa State University

Dr. Cornelia Butler Flora is the Charles F. Curtiss Distinguished Professor of Sociology

and Agriculture and Life Sciences at Iowa State University (ISU). She served for 15 years as Director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. Previously she was holder of the Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems at the University of Minnesota, head of the Sociology Department at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, a University Distinguished Professor at Kansas State University, and a program officer for the Ford Foundation. She has taught at universities in Peru, Argentina, Uruguay and Spain. She is a former president of the Rural Sociological Society, the Community Development Society, and the Society for Agriculture, Food and Human Values. Dr. Flora is a fellow of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. She is author and editor of a number of recent books, including *Interactions Between Agroecosystems* and *Sustainable Agriculture in Temperate Zones*. Her newest book is *Rural Communities: Legacy and Change*, 4th edition. Her current research includes immigrant community inclusion. Her degrees are from the University of California at Berkeley and Cornell University. She was president of the Boards of Directors of the Henry A. Wallace Institute of Alternative Agriculture and the Northwest Area Foundation.

D

Alexandra Davis, *University of Missouri*

Alexandra received a BA in Psychology from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2010. She is currently working toward a Ph.D. in Human Environmental Sciences.

April Dirks-Bihun, *Mount Mercy University*

Dr. April Dirks-Bihun joined Mount Mercy University in 2008, where she is an Assistant Professor of Social Work. She holds a Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Iowa. She has extensive clinical experience in the mental health field as a private practitioner and is a Licensed Independent Social Worker. As a therapist, she specialized in narrative therapy, crisis intervention, depression, child abuse, and other emotional issues. She also served as a school social worker and bilingual family therapist working with at-risk youth, immigrant families, and family trauma. Special topics of interest in teaching and research are child welfare, cultural competency, suicide, at-risk youth, Latino families, trauma, and human sexuality. Her research has been on strain theory and suicidal ideation among maltreated adolescents as well as child welfare and immigration among Latino families.

Lisa M. Dorner, *University of Missouri - St. Louis*

Dr. Lisa M. Dorner is an Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She received her Ph.D. in Human Development and Social Policy from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Dr. Dorner's main research interests include immigrant childhoods, the politics of bilingual education, and the implementation of educational policies. Dr. Dorner believes it is important to work closely with community organizations in her scholarship and teaching. As such, she has created "LACES" (www.lacesproject.org), a collection of primary sources for our community to inquire

about the *Languages, Arts, Cultures, and Ethnicities* that tie St. Louis together. Dr. Dorner teaches courses in child and adolescent development, immigrant families, and qualitative research methods, and she has published her work in such journals as *Educational Policy, Journal of Education Change, Journal of Adolescent Research, and American Educational Research Journal*.

E

Westy A. Egmont, Boston College

Dr. Westy A. Egmont heads the Immigrant Integration Lab of the Graduate School of Social Work at Boston College. His teaching includes courses on integration, comparative social policy and immigrant and refugee policy issues. A native of New York, Egmont has been the Dean of Students at Rift Valley Academy in Kenya, served various church organizations including being the chair of the Association of Regional Religious Broadcasters during his 11 seasons producing and hosting a weekly TV show on current issues. A social activist, Dr. Egmont incorporated Covenant Housing, developed the Greater Boston Food Bank, and served for a decade as the Executive Director of the International Institute of Boston, the largest immigrant service agency in New England. Dr. Egmont is a co-chair of the Massachusetts Governor's Advisory Council on Immigrants and Refugees and served as a past co-chair at the National Immigrant Integration Conference.

Maithe Enriquez, University of Missouri

Dr. Maithe Enriquez is an Associate Professor of Nursing at the University Of Missouri Sinclair School Of Nursing. She also has a clinical appointment in the Department of Infectious Diseases at Truman Medical Center in Kansas City, Missouri where she leads the bilingual/bicultural HIV care team. Dr. Enriquez has focused her research and clinical career on enhancing health outcomes for vulnerable individuals who are living with HIV and that experience difficulty adhering to their medications. Her publications include articles on topics focused on HIV treatment adherence, immigrant health care and interventions using a community-based participatory action approach. She has recently published her 1st book, entitled "What Nurses Know...HIV/ AIDS".

F

Jan L. Flora, Iowa State University

Jan L. Flora is an Iowa State University (ISU) Professor of Sociology, Extension Community Sociologist, and on the faculty of the Graduate Program in Sustainable Agriculture and the inter-institutional distance Masters in Community Development. His extension work centers on involving immigrants, refugees, and their youth in Iowa's rural and urban communities, with a particular focus on their inclusion in community food systems and on strengthening entrepreneurship among Latino business owners. His research analyzes the relationship of community capitals to economic, community, and sustainable development. He consults with the World Bank on Advocacy Coalitions as a tool for rural and urban communities in Latin America to

more readily adapt to climate change. He is a grassroots participant in A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy (AMOS), an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation. He is fluent in Spanish. His Portuguese is a bit rusty. His English improves daily. He grew up on a farm in western Kansas.

Lisa Y. Flores, *University of Missouri - Columbia*

Lisa Y. Flores is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational, School & Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri. She has expertise in the career development of women and Latino/as and Latino immigrant issues and has published and presented extensively in these areas. She received the early career professional award from APA's Society of Counseling Psychology in 2008 and the National Latino/a Psychological Association in 2008. She is currently Editor of the Journal of Career Development and former Associate Editor of the Journal of Counseling Psychology, and has served on the Editorial Boards of the Journal of Vocational Behavior, The Counseling Psychologist, Journal of Counseling Psychology, and Career Development Quarterly. She is a new mother to a daughter, Victoria. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with the family, reading, watching documentaries, and the outdoors.

Alice Floros, *University of Missouri - St. Louis*

Alice Floros is a pre-service Secondary Education History teacher studying at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She is excited to share her research with others and learn more about deepening multicultural education in the Midwest.

G

Candance Gabel, *University of Missouri*

Candance Gabel is the Assistant Program Director of Human Environmental Sciences at the University of Missouri. She is also the state coordinator of the Family Nutrition Education Programs.

Eleazar U. González, *Cambio Center, University of Missouri - Columbia*

Eleazar U. González is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri. His research interests are primarily in Economic Sociology, including social entrepreneurship, collective action, community development, and health literacy amongst Latino communities. González also worked as a Research Assistant with the MU Cambio Center project "The Impact of Networks and the Context of Reception on Asset Accumulation Strategies of Latino Newcomers in New Settlement Communities of the Midwest," and has wide experience working as facilitator and data collector on research with Latino immigrants.

Alejandra Gudiño, *University of Missouri - Columbia*

Alejandra Gudiño is an Anthropologist and Social Archaeologist housed at the College of Human Environmental Sciences, Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology. She has been involved in integrating Latino newcomers to Missouri over the past

twelve years and has extensive research and service experience working with social network and demographic changes. An important aspect of her work is to “conceptualize diversity” and she develops and implements programs that reach a wide spectrum of audiences. Alejandra has a special interest in the reconfiguration of cultural and social meaning as a result of mobility and migration process, with an emphasis on how food choices equal identity. She is also a Difficult Dialogue Fellow and Research Fellow at the Cambio Center, University of Missouri; and is the Co-Chair of the workgroups “Strengthening Families and Family Involvement in Education Workgroup” for the NCERA: Latinos and Immigrants in Midwestern Communities, Inter-State University Network.

Rodolfo Gutierrez, *Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER)*

Rodolfo Gutierrez came to Minnesota in 1998 pursuing a PhD in History at the University of Minnesota. Before that, he studied for a Master Degree in Demography at El Colegio de Mexico, and worked for the National Council of Population in Mexico, from where he moved to Baja California, to work at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, engaging in different research and evaluation projects related to immigration and human rights, working with bi-national agencies from Mexico and the United States. With eight years of experience upon his arrival to Minnesota, Rodolfo has focused his interest in the Latino community issues, including teaching at the University of Minnesota. Since 2007, he joined HACER, working on many research projects on diverse topics associated with the same community, including education, health care, immigration and demographics. Rodolfo is fluent in Spanish and English, and has conducted research and evaluation projects involving the use of both languages. Currently, Rodolfo is participating as a lead researcher in the Latinos in Minnesota project using 2010 Census data, and he also participates in the English Language Learning research project, to determine needs and solutions in improving school achievement among Latino students in Minneapolis.

H

Himar Hernández, *Iowa State University Extension*

Originally from The Canary Islands, Spain, Himar Hernández came to the United States as an exchange student at the age of 15. He holds a B.A. in Public Administration/Political Science from Buena Vista University. Mr. Hernández was the Director for the New Iowan Center in South East Iowa before joining Iowa State University Extension as an Economic and Community Development Program Specialist. He covers the state of Iowa, providing leadership development training for new immigrants and diversity trainings to communities. Himar has worked for the last six years with Latino business owners in Iowa assisting them in becoming successful. Himar is also involved with Main Street at the local, state and national level. He is co-author of “Cultural Impediments to Trust Development: A Network Analysis of a Hispanic Business Network.” presented at the Midwest Sociological Society Meetings in

Chicago, IL and his interview on Latino impact in small rural communities appeared in Good Morning America. He is also the Chair for Iowa State University Extension Diversity Committee.

Pilar Horner, Michigan State University

Dr. Pilar Horner holds a joint appointment with the School of Social Work and Julian Samora Research Institute. Her areas of specialization include neighborhoods effects, substance use and misuse, history of social welfare policy, and organizations. She received her PhD from the University of Michigan Joint Social Work and Sociology program.

J

Stephen C. Jeanetta, Cambio Center, University of Missouri

Stephen Jeanetta joined the the University of Missouri (MU) Community Development Program faculty as State Extension Specialist for Community Development Process in December 1998, where he serves as coordinator for the Community Development Academy and provides leadership to programs in Organizational Development and Nonprofit Management, Community and Economic Planning and Building Inclusive Communities. Jeanetta has a Ph.D. in Adult Education from the University of Missouri in St. Louis and an M.A. in Community and Regional Planning, and a B.S. in International Affairs from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Steve has conducted community development programs in the Amazon region of Brazil, Guyana, Canada, and Germany. Jeanetta is a member of the Executive Committee of the Cambio Center at MU and he serves as the executive director of the Missouri/Para Chapter of the Partners of the Americas. He is interested in programs that build the capacity of communities and community organizations so they can better understand and address the issues presented by recent population changes.

Reyna Jurkowski, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon

Reyna Jurkowski was born in Mexicali, Mexico. She has a B.S. in Mexican Literature & Social Studies from the School of Philosophy and Sciences at Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon in Monterrey, Mexico. She is a professional with experience in Education, Human Resources and Social Assistance Programs in school and business. She specializes in Mexican Literature; Spanish language and Literary Theories. The Social Studies background provides her the knowledge to develop editorial work, teaching skills, human resources, coaching and training. She has been working in the Education field as a Spanish, English and Appreciation of the Arts teacher; Literature academic assessments and tutoring for elementary, junior high and high school students. She is experienced in the Human Resources Management field, and her skills include maximizing the manpower performance, creating the profile of the employees in order to measure the workforce standards of efficiency, technical skills and knowledge, promoting the continue education of the manpower depending of the necessities of the

employer and the employee, as well as offering seminars, courses, coaching and training.

K

Marlen Kanagui-Muñoz, *University of Missouri*

Marlen Kanagui-Muñoz is a 5th year advanced doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Missouri. Marlen's research focuses primarily with underrepresented communities, particularly the Latina/o community, and their well-being with regard to mental and physical health and education. Currently, Marlen is a graduate therapist at the True North Shelter and a graduate clinician at the MU Assessment and Consultation Clinic. Outside of the university, Marlen is involved in multiple services in the community serving Latina/os.

Kathleen D. Kelsey, *Oklahoma State University*

Kathleen D. Kelsey is Professor of Evaluation in the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership at Oklahoma State University. Her research interests include evaluation of educational programs, specifically in the agricultural context. She is also the distance learning coordinator for the department and manages the online Master of Agriculture and Master of Science programs. She has won 22 awards for excellence in teaching, research, and service. She has co-authored over 200 publications regarding evaluation methodology.

Ann Marie Kuchinski, *University of Missouri - Columbia*

Ann Marie Kuchinski received her Master's degree in Anthropology from Georgia State University in 1997. Since then she has worked in a variety of teaching and research positions as well as for the State of Georgia and University of Missouri Extension. Currently she is working on a research project out of the School of Social Work, examining the savings strategies of foster youth involved in Opportunity Passport (an initiative of the Casey Foundation). She is also a PhD candidate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

L

Deirdre Lanesskog, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Deirdre Lanesskog is a third year doctoral student in Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research focuses on the response of human services institutions to new immigrant populations in non-traditional immigrant destinations. She is specifically interested in the strategies agencies and workers use to serve their immigrant clients in communities with limited numbers of bilingual and bicultural workers.

M

Sarah May, *Cambio Center, University of Missouri*

Sarah May is a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology and a Cambio Center student fellow at the University of Missouri. Sarah graduated from the University of Georgia with a BS in Psychology and BA in Spanish. She is interested broadly in cross-cultural research with Latino/a immigrants to better understand the mental health outcomes of immigration to the U.S. from Central America/Mexico and their implications for community integration and public policy. She continues to work closely with advisor Dr. Lisa Flores and the Cambio Center to investigate these topics.

Eve McGee, University of Missouri – Kansas City

Eve McGee, MSW, is a Research Associate at the UMKC School of Nursing where she oversees a retention program for students underrepresented in healthcare professions, in an effort to ensure that every student is equipped with the necessary academic and non-academic resources to complete the Nursing education program. McGee brings her own personal experience living in public housing and receiving government benefits to her work with low-income and underserved individuals. As Director of Social Services for reStart Inc., one of the largest homeless shelters in the area, McGee was responsible for daily operations of the shelter and identifying community resources for clients. McGee has coordinated community-based projects including education, support and mentoring for at-risk individuals and groups, such as the homeless, women living with HIV/AIDS and families living in poverty. She currently serves on the REACH Healthcare Foundation Board of Directors and is the Vice President of the Missouri-Kansas National Association of Black Social Workers. McGee has lectured on effective support for ethnically diverse students and how to increase cultural competency in the nursing education program.

Eva A. Millona, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition

Eva A. Millona is Executive Director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA), the state's largest organization representing the foreign born. She assumed the position in 2008 after nearly a decade at MIRA, and she is now one of New England's most highly quoted immigration experts. In her native country of Albania, Millona practiced civil and criminal law, serving as a judge in Tirana's District Court from 1989 through 1992. She is also the co-chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Refugees and Immigrants, serves on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and is co-chair of the National Partnership for New Americans, comprising 12 immigrant rights state coalitions. Working with the Partnership, she hosted and co-chaired the nation's largest immigrant integration conference in 2010. A graduate of Clark University and of Tirana University School of Law in Albania, Millona is the recipient of over a dozen major awards.

Sonia G. Morales Osegueda, Washington State University Extension

Sonia G. Morales O. joined Washington State University Extension in 1999 as a Faculty in King County. Currently she is a Diversity Specialist / Agriculture / Youth Development 4-H Faculty. Sonia's responsibilities include diversity, overseeing the

development of Extension 4-H youth development programs in non-traditional populations. Sonia provides leadership in 4-H Youth Development; promote higher education; developing curricula focused on skills and volunteer development, and cultural competency; provides trainings in the areas of youth agriculture, cultural competency, volunteerism, and skills development. She has served as chair of the Ad Hoc Diversity Committee for MANRRS National Society; as a Latino Outreach Task Force WSU Extension Team; Peer Review Panel for several research, teaching, and extension Grant Programs at NIFA-USDA Washington, DC.; and board member of several educational organizations. Dr. Morales has published articles, in Crop Breeding, Agronomy, Agricultural Extension, Education, volunteerism, and Cultural Diversity. She also has been invited to present more than one hundred professional paper at local, national and international conferences. Sonia is WSU Coalition Team member for serving non- U.S. citizens' students who qualify for admissions to higher education as allowed by WA House Bill HB-1079.

O

Caroline Oliveira, Iowa State University

Caroline Oliveira is a first year Master's student in Sociology and Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. She is currently a research assistant in the Department of Sociology working on projects that integrate Latino communities in the food system, and is co-president of the Sustainable Agriculture Student Association. She moved to Iowa from Florida, where she earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Florida in Agricultural Operations Management, with a minor in Environmental Studies and a certificate in Latin American Studies. She is interested in bioethics, biodiversity conservation and strategies for diversified farming systems.

Cristina Ortiz, University of Iowa

Cristina Ortiz is a PhD student (ABD) in Anthropology at the University of Iowa. She has been living and doing research in a rural Iowa meatpacking community since the summer of 2009. As part of her community involvement, she has worked with a community college as an instructor for adult English classes and bilingual (Spanish and English) GED classes. The unexpected arrival of nearly 500 Chin Burmese refugees to the rural community of about 2000 people over the last two years has presented an interesting development for her dissertation, which deals with the way rural community belonging is constructed through mechanisms of visibility and invisibility.

P

Claudia M. Prado-Meza, Iowa State University

Claudia M. Prado-Meza has her first degree in Economics from the University of Colima, Mexico. She obtained her Masters, and is now pursuing her Ph.D in Sustainable Agriculture, with a Social Justice certificate, at Iowa State University (ISU). Her research is on changes in community food systems in two transnational communities: Marshalltown, Iowa and Villachuato, Michoacán, Mexico. Family members move between these two communities, as do food ways. Claudia's other

scholarly interests include social justice advocacy and sustainable development. She was the President of ISU's Latino Heritage Month committee, coordinator of the Latino Seminar Series, and Vice-President of the campus-based *Latinoamericanos*.

Q

Danielle Quintero, *University of Missouri*

Danielle Quintero is currently a first year graduate student at the University of Missouri, pursuing a Masters of Education in Counseling Psychology. Danielle works under the supervision of Dr. Bryana H. French in the Educational, School and Counseling Psychology Department. She graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara with majors in Psychology and Sociology, with a minor in Education and Applied Psychology. Her current research interests include sexual violence prevention and intervention methods, coping strategies within minority populations, and empowerment and social justice.

R

Meredith Rataj, *Catholic Charities Community Services Southside Center*

Meredith L. Rataj is a licensed marital and family therapist from St. Louis, Missouri. She obtained her B.A. in Spanish from Truman State University and her M.S. of Marital and Family Therapy from Fuller School of Psychology in Pasadena, CA. After living abroad in both Spain and Argentina, Meredith worked as a case worker and therapist for Chestnut Health Systems, Pasadena Mental Health Services, and the Division of Family Services.

She currently serves as the interim director and as a bilingual therapist at Catholic Charities Community Services Southside Center, a social service agency dedicated to providing culturally competent services to the immigrant and refugee populations of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. In Meredith's six years at Southside, she has chaired and cultivated the mental health department as it has sought to meet the mental health needs of Latinos in the St. Louis area; conducted trauma-informed individual, couple, and family therapy; and facilitated a psycho-social educational group for Spanish-speaking women called Amigas Latinas.

Maria Rebecchi, *The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis*

Maria Rebecchi joined The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis as Program Director in 2010. Her prior work experience includes Associate Director of Financial Aid at Bastyr University, as well as WorkSource Affiliate Coordinator and Employment Case Manager at the YWCA in Downtown Seattle. Maria received her Master's degree in Human Services with a specialization in Mediation & Conflict Resolution in 2001, a bachelor's degree in Sociology with an emphasis in Diversity from the University of California - Irvine, and a certification in print journalism from the University of California - Los Angeles. Her volunteer experiences range from supporting Latino community health initiatives in Washington, to intensive work with Latino immigrant and refugee families at the Political Asylum Project of Austin, to volunteer tax

preparation for low income individuals to helping families navigate the college and financial aid application processes. Diversity, equity, and educational opportunity have been consistent themes in much of her work.

Nancy Rios, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Kansas City, Missouri

Nancy Rios works for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in the Kansas City Regional Office. She began her career in 1999 in the Division of Survey, Certification & Enforcement. Her career at CMS also includes a two year assignment in the Division of Medicaid & Children's Health and five years of experience in the Division of Medicare Health Plans Operations. Nancy is currently the Lead for the Regional External Affairs Team responsible for the implementation of national CMS campaigns and initiatives at the regional level. She is also the Native American Contact for the region. In this capacity, she coordinates and provides technical assistance, policy guidance, and training to Indian Health, Tribal, Urban Indian Programs, and State Medicaid Agencies.

Yolanda Rodríguez-Escobar, Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake University

Dr. Yolanda Rodríguez-Escobar's social work practice includes work in Child Welfare, Foster Care, Crisis Counseling, and over 23 years of expertise in direct practice in the field of HIV/AIDS. She began her work as a front-line social worker serving Pediatric HIV/AIDS patients and their families in the early days of the epidemic. In 1994, she founded *Mujeres Unidas Contra el SIDA*, a non-profit, women-centered, grass-roots organization for Latinas and their families infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS. She served as Founder/Executive Director for 15 years for *Mujeres* while advocating for the needs of Latinas living with HIV/AIDS in a bilingual/bicultural setting while completing her doctoral studies at the University of Texas, at Austin in Social Work. The title of her dissertation is "Coping Strategies among Mexican American Women Living with HIV". Other research interests include Culture Diversity, Health Disparities Affecting People of Color, Immigration, and Community Organizing. Dr. Rodríguez-Escobar joined the faculty at Our Lady of the Lake University's Worden School of Social Service in August, 2009 where she has been teaching primarily in the area of social work practice and policy to undergraduate and graduate social work students.

S

Jennifer Stacy, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Jennifer Stacy is currently a doctoral student at The University of Nebraska - Lincoln in the field of education. She received her undergraduate degree from Bowling Green State University in Early Childhood Education and Spanish. While working as a teacher in Monterrey, Mexico, Jennifer studied a Masters in Education at La Universidad de Monterrey. She completed her thesis about the perspectives of Anglo factory workers in Dalton, Georgia, concerning the demographic changes that the city has experienced since the 1990s, specifically to better understand the environment that the working class

Latino population faces on a daily basis. At UNL, Jennifer plans to combine her experience in international teaching and Latin America and pursue studies in the field of Comparative Education. She is most interested in studying how international experiences impact teachers, their professional identity and their practice.

Mercedes Stephenson, Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri

Mercedes Stephenson is presently teaching language, culture and education classes at Webster University and St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley in St. Louis, Missouri. Her research interests include immigrant groups in the United States, Chicano Literature, Latino and Chicano Studies, English language learners, language acquisition and methodology in the teaching of foreign languages. She has taught for 25 years at Hazelwood Central High School; 13 of those years she served as Chairperson of the Communication Skills Department and four as Foreign Language Coordinator for the Hazelwood School District. Mercedes, who is a native of Argentina, has a Ph.D. in Spanish Language and Literature from Saint Louis University, an M.A. in Latin American Studies from the University of Southern California and a BA in Sociology from the Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She has presented in many local and national foreign language conferences. Her professional affiliations include Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, Foreign Language Association of Missouri, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Foreign Language Teachers Association and The Hispanic Leaders Group of Greater St. Louis.

Megan Strawsine Carney, University of Missouri

Megan Strawsine Carney is a doctoral intern at the University of Missouri Assessment & Consultation Clinic. She will be graduating with her Ph.D. in School Psychology in August 2010 from the University of Missouri. Megan is interested in the provision of culturally and linguistically competent mental health services to diverse and underrepresented clients, particularly within the Latina/o community. She currently conducts mental health evaluations, provides individual and family therapy in English and Spanish, and offers consultation services. Megan also has experience co-leading Spanish language parenting groups and conducting psychological evaluations in Spanish. Her past research has focused on teachers' beliefs in their ability to teach English language learners, as well as school climate.

Cara Streit, University of Missouri - Columbia

Cara Streit received a BA in Psychology from Western Washington University in 2011. She is currently working toward a MA in Early Childhood Development at the University of Missouri.

T

Diego Thompson, Iowa State University

Diego Thompson is a Ph.D. student of Sociology and Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University (ISU). He came to ISU from Uruguay in 2008 as an international graduate student. His master thesis in Sociology and Sustainable Agriculture (2010) examined the community capitals that immigrant gardeners and beginning vegetable farmers in two rural Iowa towns were able to mobilize. As a graduate student and research assistant, he has worked in several research and development projects on immigrants' integration in rural communities, local food systems, social justice, and sustainable agriculture. His Ph.D. research focuses on Uruguayan rural communities' resilience to natural and anthropogenic changes. He collaborates with researchers in Uruguay on several projects about farmers' perception and adaptation to climate change, fisher communities, and sustainable rural development.

V

Corinne Valdivia, *University of Missouri - Columbia*

Corinne Valdivia is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics in the Division of Applied Social Sciences at the University of Missouri (MU). Her research focuses on understanding how livelihood strategies develop in the context of change and strengths that lead to wellbeing. The research takes place in the United States, the Andes of Peru and Bolivia, Mexico, and East Africa. She is Faculty Fellow of the Cambio Center at MU, where she collaborates with colleagues from the University of Missouri on research about Latinos and integration. She recently completed a 4-year research project about Latino newcomers in rural communities of the Midwest funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). She also led an interdisciplinary program in the Andes, called Adapting to Change in Vulnerable Ecosystems, to develop adaptive capacities to climate change funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID). She directs the Interdisciplinary International Development Minor at the Graduate School. She received in 2008 the MU International Scholar Award for outstanding international engagement. In her spare time, she enjoys exercising, dancing, and more recently walking across northern Spain. In her travels, she loves learning from others and sharing experiences.

Isabel Velázquez, *University of Nebraska - Lincoln*

Dr. Isabel Velázquez is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. She received her doctorate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her area of research includes sociolinguistic variation, Hispanic linguistics, bilingualism and language acquisition, heritage speaker pedagogy, language contact on the U.S./Mexico border, and the role of language in identity formations of U.S. Latina/os. Her current research focuses on linguistic maintenance and loss among Latino families in the Midwest.