Rosario Caminero Latino Studies Award Achieves Endowment

Established following the death of Dr. Rosario Caminero, founder of the Latina/o Studies minor and faculty member in the Department of Foreign Languages, the scholarship named in her honor has achieved its endowment level of $25,000. This scholarship will be awarded competitively to a student enrolled in the Latina/o Studies minor who has a minimum grade point average of 2.5 and have completed at least 15 credits at Millersville University. Students who meet the criteria will be sent an essay prompt by the Director of Latina/o Studies. After reviewing the essays, a panel of faculty and staff will select one or more winners. The winners will be announced at the Honors and Awards Convocation every spring.

Donations to the scholarship fund are still being accepted. To contribute to the fund, please visit www.millersville.edu/give. If you would prefer to mail in a check, please make it payable to Millersville University, write “Caminero Scholarship” on the memo line and mail to: Development Office, Millersville University, PO Box 1002, Millersville, PA 17551. For more information about the scholarship, contact Dr. Kimberly Mahaffy, Director of the Latina/o Studies minor, kmahaffy@millersville.edu.

Dr. Caminero

Dr. Caminero was born in Cuba. She passed away in 2006 after a courageous battle with cancer. Dr. Caminero taught Spanish linguistics and cultures for 15 years at Millersville, directed the Spanish Graduate Program, and developed the Latino Studies Minor. She was very active in her field, publishing papers, presenting at conferences, and consulting to various institutions.

More importantly, she was a dedicated and beloved teacher.
Andrea C. Gaitan

Why did you decide to minor in Latina/o Studies?
I chose to minor in Latino Studies for various reasons. One reason is that in all my years in public school I never received a Latino studies course. My schools only repetitively taught us African American history, World history, and American history. I remember asking my teachers, “What was happening in South America or other Latino countries while slavery was existing in America?” My teachers never really answered me because maybe they didn’t know. Personally, I am minoring in Latino studies because I love my culture and everything that has to do with Latinos in general. I never want to completely assimilate into the United States and forget about my roots nor not be able to pass down my culture to my future children. Keeping my culture alive is a priority to me. Academically, I am minoring in Latino Studies because I want to work with the Latino population as a Social Worker. Transitioning Latino immigrants and refugees into the United States, fulfilling their basic and emotional needs, and being an advocate for the rights and privileges that they deserve as human beings is a position that I want to take as a Hispanic Social worker in the United States.

What did you learn about your own culture that you didn’t know before?
I learned that Colombia had the largest numbers of refugees leaving their country because of political and unsafe reasons. I learned that in Ecuador, there is a great need for doctors to travel up the Andes Mountains in higher regions where people populate because medical attention isn’t present up the mountains. Many inhabitants cannot travel downward to cities and towns for help because their physically unable to which brings need for doctors to come to them.

This newsletter entry will be read by people outside the University, too. What would you like them to know about the Latina/o Studies minor?
I would like Millersville students to know that taking a course that teaches about other cultures besides the U.S.A will broaden our mind in learning about how other people outside of the United States live. Courses of other cultures make us learn that there is more to life than what we are accustomed to in our lives right now and may influence us to even get out of our comfort zone to experience other cultures, foods, ways of having fun, and even to travel to other countries.

What is your major? Social Work

What are your careers or graduate school plans?
I plan to do my Senior Field Placement in South Africa as a way of immersing myself in a culture I have never experienced with people that need the help that I want to give.

Luis Vazquez

Why did you decide to minor in Latina/o Studies?
I wanted to learn more about the Latina/o community and to broaden my horizon on the Latina/o population as a whole. My ultimate goal was to apply this knowledge to my future profession and understand this population.

What have been your favorite courses in the minor? Why?
I have to say that I have liked all my classes that pertain to the minor given they all give me a perspective regarding the Latina/o culture and of others.

What did you learn about your own culture that you didn’t know before?
I have learned much about my own culture that I didn’t know beforehand. I am of Puerto Rican heritage and I have learned more of the history of my ethnicity.

This newsletter entry will be read by people outside the University, too. What would you like them to know about the Latina/o Studies minor?
The Latina/o Studies minor gives great insight and perspectives of a growing population and others that represent the “minority” in this country. The information taught within the curriculum is beneficial knowledge in this growing diverse world we live in.

What is your major?
Psychology

What are your careers or graduate school plans?
I plan to attend Graduate School and further my education.
Yanitza Francisco

Why did you decide to minor in Latina/o Studies?
During my freshman year in college I enrolled in the Latina/o Studies course and absolutely fell in love with the subject matter. I found curiosity in the history of Latinos and wanted to further explore into my own culture.

What have been your favorite courses in the minor? Why?
My favorite course in the minor was African American and Latino Educational Experiences. This course joined my two passions, education and the African American and Latino culture. I enjoyed being able to think critically and develop my own thoughts and theory’s about the educational pipeline.

What did you learn about your own culture that you didn’t know before?
By being a Latina/o studies minor I have been able to discover that no one factor defines a “culture”. As individuals we all have different backgrounds and upbringings which tailor each of us to have an our own individual culture.

This newsletter entry will be read by people outside the University, too. What would you like them to know about the Latina/o Studies minor?
The Latina/o studies minor is an amazing experience. The world is composed of more than just black and white and with this minor I have been able to see beyond the news headlines and articles. You will never begin to understand people like myself, until you educate yourselves with proper sources as to why we are who we are. There is nothing to lose when it comes to education, so I encourage everyone to take a chance and look into Latina/o studies.

What is your major?
I am an International Studies candidate.

What are your career or graduate school plans?
I plan to graduate in May 2014 and immediately go into graduate school. I will pursue a career in Higher Education Administration.

Christopher Zych

Why did you decide to minor in Latina/o Studies?
I decided to minor in Latino Studies because I thought it would be an interesting field to learn about and it would compliment my Spanish Education major.

What have been your favorite courses in the minor? Why?
LATS 201 was my favorite course because it was a great insight into the issues that Latinos face here in the U.S. as well as back home. Dr. Mahaffy made this class both interesting and enjoyable, and after taking LATS 201, I decided to minor in Latino Studies.

What did you learn about your own culture that you didn’t know before?
I’ve learned a lot about the various struggles that Latinos face with issues such as immigration, living conditions, education and employment.

What is your major? Spanish Education

What are your career or graduate school plans?
After college, I hope to find a job as a Spanish teacher in either middle school or high school. I would also like to get my ESL certification so I can work with students who are just learning English. Eventually, I would like to go back to school and get my masters degree in Spanish.
Millersville University's Latino Community Mural Project explores the stories of the Latino community in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The project was led by artist-in-residence Michelle Angela Ortiz in partnership with students enrolled in Dr. Christine Filippone's Contemporary Art course and students in Dr. Kimberly Mahaffy's African American and Latino educational experiences course.

As part of the community arts process, Ortiz led the Millersville University students in the documentation of community stories through audio and video interviews. From civic leaders to abuelitas, the students interviewed community members who shared their stories as Latinos living in Lancaster. One mural is installed at Millersville University and the other at Clipper Magazine Stadium, North Prince and West Clay Streets, Lancaster City.

For more information on the Mural go to: http://millersville.edu/~latinomural/