A Latina’s Journey to Her Ph.D.

Dr. Rebecca Martínez, an Assistant Professor in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Missouri, earned her Ph.D. from the University of California, Irvine.

Dr. Martínez visited the Introduction to Latina/o Studies class to describe her path to a doctoral degree. Her inspiring message reminded students that social support from family and academic mentors is crucial. She also encouraged the students to study abroad and apply for a Fulbright scholarship.

Afterwards, Dr. Martínez continued to engage a small group over lunch. The Latina/o Studies Program was delighted to provide this networking opportunity for our students.

Dr. Martínez has conducted ethnographic research in Southern California on health beliefs among Mexican and Salvadoran immigrant women, Chicanas, and physicians. She was also a U.S. Fulbright Scholar in Venezuela where she conducted her dissertation field research on the social construction of medical knowledge related to cervical cancer and patient/doctor interactions in the treatment process for this disease.

The Gender & Sexuality Institute sponsored Dr. Martínez’s public lecture, “Women out of Control: Class, Race, Gender & Sexuality in Narratives of Cervical Cancer Risk.”

Rosario Caminero Latino Studies Scholarship Recipient

Ricardo Brens Matos, a native of the Dominican Republic, recently became the first student to receive the Rosario Caminero Latino Studies Endowed Scholarship. A Spanish Education major with a minor in Latina/o Studies, Ricardo is President of the Society on Latino Affairs and a team member of SHARP - Students Helping Admissions Recruiting Program. He was voted “Mr. Millersville 2013” after a very competitive process. Ricardo works part-time as an office assistant in the Sociology/Anthropology Department.
The Latino Student Leadership Institute held its first retreat during the weekend of September 27th at the Gretna Glen Camp and Retreat Center. The purpose of the institute was to provide social support to new Latina/o students and introduce them to leadership opportunities.

Nineteen first year and transfer students, seven peer leaders, two graduate students, and the Director of Latina/o Studies engaged in community building and academic strategizing sessions. The students represented a variety of majors, countries of origin, and Spanish fluency.

On Saturday, seven alumni as well as five faculty and staff members joined the students to discuss their college experiences. To facilitate small group discussions and networking opportunities, students were divided by major. A session on effective cover letter and resume writing was also presented by a representative from the Experiential Learning and Career Management Office.

Other activities included basketball games, the video “Precious Knowledge,” impromptu dance lessons and inspirational talks from peer leaders.

The highlight was a bonfire, where slips of paper with negative stereotypes were incinerated, and positive attributes were affirmed. The finale was roasting marshmallows to make s'mores, a new experience for quite a few students!

**Thank You to the LSLI Sponsors**

We could not have offered the Latino Student Leadership Institute without financial support from:

- The Society on Latino Affairs
- Student Lodging, Inc.
- The President’s Commission on Cultural Diversity and Inclusion
- The Center for Student Involvement and Leadership
- Experiential Learning and Career Management Office
- Friends of Joe Pitts Committee
- Mr. Antonio Hernandez, Jr. ’96
- Mrs. Linda Hernandez ’96
- Mr. David Hernandez ’71
- Mrs. Donna Hernandez
- Dr. Joseph Perez, ’86
- Mrs. Tina Velez ’99
- Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Lituma
- Mr. Joshua Grill ’04
- Mrs. Jessica Grill ’03
- Mrs. Veronica Mahaffy
- Dr. Kimberly A. Mahaffy

**Walmart Foundation and Facility #2334 - Lincoln Highway East in Lancaster, has donated funds for the 2014 Latino Student Leadership Institute!**

**Thank You Walmart!**
PROFILE: Yolanda Castillo Larson

Yolanda graduated from Millersville University in 2013 with dual majors in psychology and sociology as well as a minor in Latina/o Studies. She is currently a graduate student at MU in the clinical psychology program.

Yolanda’s creation of the Latino Student Leadership Institute was her way to give back to the Latina/o community. She wanted to develop a supportive network for incoming and current Latina/o students who often feel isolated on a predominantly white campus. Her experience as a Pastor Associate for Youth with the Diocese of Harrisburg provided the insight for programming decisions and guided the peer leader selection process for the Institute.

Yolanda and her husband have four (4) children who have graduated from college and obtained employment in aerospace engineering, the arts, and teaching.

After graduation, Yolanda plans to apply her clinical training in service to others.

PROFILE: Carol Reina

Carol graduated from Millersville University in 2013 with a degree in psychology and a minor in Latina/o Studies. She is currently a graduate student at MU in the school psychology program.

Having extensive experience assisting with retreats, Carol served as the co-facilitator of the Latino Student Leadership Institute. Her sense of humor and positive attitude made early morning activities more enjoyable for the participants.

Carol’s emigration from Colombia to Lancaster is reflected in the digital mural, “We Belong/Nos Pertenecemos” which was installed in the Student Memorial Center atrium during 2011.

She hopes to work with children and youth after completing her graduate degree.
Huipil Collection Donated to Latina/o Studies

On September 20th, Reverend James Richards ’71 and his wife Jacqueline Richards ’68 of Del Haven, New Jersey were on campus to join the monthly luncheon, “Almuerzo con Amigos” sponsored by the Latina/o Studies Program. The Richards lived in Guatemala for a number of years while working for a church. While there, they collected numerous hand crafts made by various indigenous groups of Guatemala.

Reverend Richards and his wife chose to donate their huipils, weavings, and masks from their personal collection to the Latina/o Studies Program.

Dr. Mahaffy, Director of the Latina/o Studies Program, was pleased to receive these beautiful donations to the Program for current and future projects.

The Latina/o Studies seniors are being taught to weave their own graduation stoles by Susan Weaver, (yes, that is her last name) a Millersville University alumnus.

According to Dr. Mahaffy, the huipils are outstanding examples of hand woven textiles. In the near future, Dr. Mahaffy and Ms. Weaver hope to teach a course on the relation between indigenous weaving and social movements.