

# NEWSLETTER



**LATIN AMERICAN,  
LATINO, AND  
CARIBBEAN CENTER**

ISSUE NO. 3

## FALL 2025 RECAP



**Elihu Burritt Library 4th Floor, Suite 408  
Monday - Thursday 9AM - 7PM and Friday  
9AM-4PM**

**For more information,  
visit our website at  
[ccsu.edu/lalcc](https://ccsu.edu/lalcc)**



**860.832.0056 - [LALCC@ccsu.edu](mailto:LALCC@ccsu.edu)**

# DIRECTOR'S LETTER

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Welcome to the Spring 2026 newsletter of the LALCC. Much has happened since our last update and since the end of the fall 2025 semester. We begin with good news before turning to more concerning developments.



Our highly successful Applied Student Internship program supported 18 student interns and 3 volunteers. Interns keep the Center open more than 40 hours per week, help organize monthly programs, and apply skills from their majors to tasks such as design, budgeting, library management, and preparing this newsletter. Most maintain GPAs above 3.0, with several on the Dean's List. Their work makes the Center's accomplishments possible, and we thank them for their dedication and academic success.

The Center also had a strong fall semester of programming. We received a CT Humanities grant to host a conference on Understanding Latino Identity through Art, bringing distinguished guests to campus, including Dr. Gilberto Cárdenas, Mrs. Dolores Garcia, Dr. Mercedes Trelles, and Dr. Anthony De Jesus. We are grateful to CT Humanities and our guests for their support. As part of this visit, Dr. Cárdenas and Mrs. Garcia donated 17 pieces of art by prominent Latino artists following their positive evaluation of our programs. These pieces will be displayed at the Center and added to the University's art inventory.

As the spring semester begins, global and domestic events have reshaped our plans. The U.S. invasion of Venezuela has renewed concerns about U.S. intervention in Latin America, prompting the Center to invite Dr. Alejandro Velasco (NYU) to campus in April to discuss recent Venezuelan history.

Domestically, increased immigration enforcement and continued uncertainty about the fate of DACA (Delayed Action for Childhood Arrivals) have raised urgent questions for the American public and campus community. The Center will host at least one scholar this semester to help contextualize these issues. We look forward to an engaging and informative semester.

All the best,  
Mary Ann Mahony, Ph.D.  
Director and Professor of History



## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY & EXHIBIT

The Friends of the Library Ceremony, hosted by the Elihu Burritt Friends of the Library Committee, honored library donors, including contributors to the LALCC collection. These generous donors added more than 3,000 volumes of Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean scholarship to the library's collection. Dr. Gilbert M. Joseph, Dr. Stuart Schwartz, and Dr. Maria Jordán Arroyo accepted the Activist Award on behalf of the eight contributing scholars.

The ceremony also marked the opening of a limited-time exhibit featuring recent donations to the LALCC collections. Curated by LALCC Director Dr. Mary Ann Mahony and student intern Ednitza Algarin-Garcia, in collaboration with the Special Collections and Rare Books Department, the exhibit was on display throughout Hispanic Heritage Month, from September 15 through October 15, 2025.



Photos by Stan Godlweski

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# SPANISH IN THE US: HISTORY, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND SOCIOPOLITICAL TENSIONS



The Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, in collaboration with the LALCC and the History Department hosted a virtual presentation by Dr. Jennifer Leeman, Professor of Spanish Linguistics at George Mason University, on September 15. Dr. Leeman examined the sociopolitical and demographic landscape of the Spanish language in the United States.

Her presentation drew on her interdisciplinary research, with particular attention to multilingualism, Spanish in the U.S., and the teaching of Spanish as a heritage language. Dr. Leeman's work integrates the theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches of critical applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, while also engaging the fields of education, Latinx studies, language policy, and linguistic anthropology.



# 30TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE

On Tuesday, September 30, the LALCC marked its 30th anniversary during its annual Open House, celebrating three decades as an academic and cultural resource at Central Connecticut State University.

The event featured a buffet, a lively performance by Orquesta La Yunqueña, and an interactive salsa dance workshop led by Xiomara Colón, creating an energetic and welcoming atmosphere.

The LALCC extends its sincere thanks to all who attended, as well as to Orquesta La Yunqueña and Xiomara Colón for helping make the evening memorable. For 30 years, the LALCC has supported students, faculty, staff, and local communities through programming and resources in Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Studies, while also providing student interns with hands-on training and professional development. The LALCC remains committed to keeping its doors open to all and invites the community to continue engaging with its academic-cultural programs.



# PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE



On September 21, the LALCC, in collaboration with Central's Center for Community Engagement and Social Research (CCESR) and the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management, proudly marched in Hartford's annual Puerto Rican Day Parade. The LALCC invited all Central students, faculty, staff, alumni, as well as friends and family to join in celebrating Puerto Rican culture, history, and community.

Puerto Ricans represent the largest Latino community in Connecticut and at Central, making this event an especially meaningful opportunity to celebrate heritage, visibility, and unity. Participation in the parade reflects the LALCC's ongoing commitment to community engagement, academic-cultural programming, and strengthening connections between Central and the greater Hartford community.





# FROM COLONIAL PADRES DE FAMILIA TO MODERN CHILD MOTHERS



The LALCC hosted a lecture on Tuesday, October 14, titled “From Colonial Padres de Familia to Modern Child Mothers: Methods and the Archive in Latin America,” featuring Dr. Bianca Premo, Professor of Latin American History at Florida International University.

A leading scholar of the history of the colonial Andes and of Peru, Dr. Premo examined questions of family, ethics, and representation through the history of early puberty and child pregnancy in twentieth- and twenty-first-century Peru. Her talk addressed, in part, the well-known 1939 case of Lina Marcela Medina de Jurado, the youngest confirmed mother in recorded history.

The event offered the CCSU community a valuable opportunity to engage with one of the foremost historians of Latin America.

# FLAVORS & SOUNDS OF BRASIL



To celebrate Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month, the LALCC partnered with SALD and the Center for Global Engagement to host “Flavors and Sounds of Brazil,” an event highlighting the culture of Latin America’s largest nation. Held on October 14 in the Student Center’s Alumni Hall, the celebration featured music, dance, food, and study abroad information booths. The event opened with a capoeira performance and workshop by Benção Capoeira of West Hartford, showcasing the Afro-Brazilian art form that blends martial arts, dance, acrobatics, and music. This was followed by a samba dance workshop led by Thelma Ladeira of Arts for Learning Connecticut. Music was provided by WFCS radio, and attendees received ticket vouchers for Brazilian food trucks located outside the Student Center.

Free and open to the campus community, the celebration coincided with the Study Abroad Fair, where students could meet faculty and learn about study abroad programs offered during the academic year. As Latin America’s largest country by land and population, Brazil plays a prominent role in the world. Connecticut is home to a growing Brazilian population, reflected in the increasing number of Brazilian students at Central and rising interest in Brazilian culture and history.



# LATINA IDENTITY ART EXHIBIT



The LALCC hosted the 2025 Latina Identity & Empowerment Student Art Exhibit, featuring over 20 works created by students in Dr. Heather Rodriguez's SOC/LTN 250 course. This biannual course explores Latina identity and empowerment, and the student art projects addressed topics such as media representation, immigration, sexuality, family, culture and the arts, music, identity construction, education, body image, work, and globalization. The projects highlighted the diverse experiences and factors that shape Latina identity and empowerment.

The LALCC thanks Dr. Heather Rodriguez and the SOC/LTN 250 students for sharing their powerful and inspiring work. The exhibit offered the campus community a glimpse of the many remarkable pieces created throughout the semester.

# DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

The LALCC hosted its annual Día de los Muertos celebration, inviting students, faculty, and staff to come together in remembrance and community. A student-created ofrenda was on display from October 27 through November 3, with community members contributing photos and personal items honoring loved ones who have passed.

The celebration included a Día de los Muertos reception on October 28 from 2–4 p.m., planned by student intern Mario Moreno and LALCC Graduate Assistant Jeferson Garcia. The reception featured an educational presentation on Día de los Muertos traditions, followed by music, hot chocolate, pan de muerto, and conchas in a warm and celebratory setting.





# LATINO IDENTITY & SELF-EXPRESSION THROUGH ART

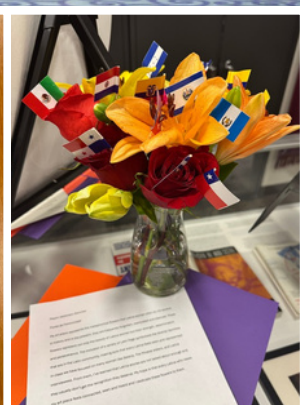
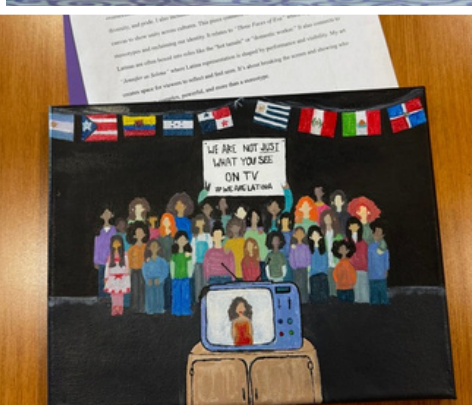
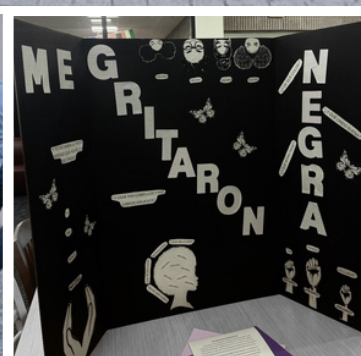
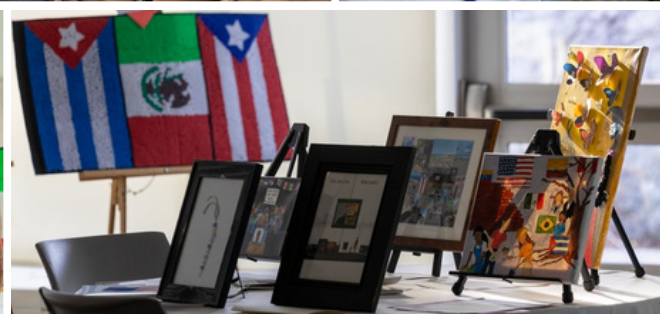


On December 5, the LALCC hosted the *Latino Identity and Self-Expression Through Art* Symposium to close out the fall semester and the 2025 year. The event was funded by Connecticut Humanities through its America 250 CT program, with additional support from the Welte Society.

The program opened with a panel of CCSU undergraduate students, highlighting student perspectives, followed by presentations from Dr. Mercedes Trelles-Hernández of the University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras and Dr. Anthony De Jesus of the University of Saint Joseph. Featured speakers also included keynote Dr. Gilberto Cárdenas Emeritus Professor of the University of Notre Dame and internationally recognized collector and curator of Latino art.

The symposium brought together scholars, artists, curators, students, and community members to explore Latino art, diasporic culture, and issues of social visibility.







## NEW DONATIONS

The LALCC extends its sincere gratitude to Dr. Gilberto Cárdenas and Mrs. Dolores Garcia for their generous donation of more than 17 artworks, including several artist-signed screen prints and posters. The Cárdenas–Garcia donation of Latino art significantly enhances the LALCC’s growing collection, expanding it beyond literary scholarship to include visual art.



Gilberto Cárdenas and Dolores Garcia

The donation also supports hands-on learning opportunities for student interns, including the study of art terminology, best practices for the care and storage of these valuable and unique works and learning about prominent art collectors and Latino artists. This development is made possible through collaboration with and mentorship by Dr. Cárdenas and Mrs. Garcia, the owners of the largest private collection of Latino art in the world and members of the Board of the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin.

Several pieces from the LALCC collection will be framed and displayed on the walls of the Center in the near future. The donated works include art by Latino artists whose pieces are featured in major institutions such as the Smithsonian Museum of American Art and the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin. Artists represented in the donation include Sandra Fernández, Malaquias Montoya, Pepe Aguilar, and others. We invite everyone to visit and experience this growing collection.



Sandra Fernández, *Paz y Amor en esta Tierra*.



Malaquias Montoya, *Years*, 1994.



Pepe Coronado, *Bailando Con el Sol*, 1996.

## MM, TT, WW EVENTS

### Mentoring Mondays At 3PM

**2/02-** with Jessica Ofray, LPC  
Interim Associate Director,  
Counseling and Student  
Development

**2/09-** with Dr. George Claffey  
Chief Information Officer

**2/23-** with Scott Kazar  
Director of Campus  
Recreation

**3/02-** with Diana Velasco  
Assistant Director, CCESR

**3/23-** with Patrick Tucker  
University Registrar &  
Director of Academic Affairs  
Operations

### Talking Tuesdays At 2PM

**(Thurs) 2/05, 12-1PM -**  
Enrique Lebron,  
Retrospective Films and  
Jon Cruz, J27 Studios

**02/24-** Dr. Daisy Torres  
Hill, Assistant Dean,  
School of Education,  
CCSU

**03/4-** Dr. Tina Loarte-  
Rodriguez, Executive  
Director, Connecticut  
Center for Nursing  
Workforce

**(Thurs) 4/9, 1-2PM-**  
Anthony Moreno, CCSU  
'23 Alum and Peace  
Studies MA Student,  
University of San Diego

### Wisdom Wednesdays At 3PM

**3/25, 4-5PM -** "Latino/Hispanic  
Cultural Competency Training  
in Developmental Disabilities  
for Native Spanish Speakers"  
Dr. Silvia Corbera Lopez,  
Associate Professor  
Psychological Sciences, CCSU

**4/08-** "In the Borderlands of  
Coalition"  
Bradey Kelsey, Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Anthropolgy,  
UConn

**4/15-** "Earth and Water  
Tremors in the Territorial  
Reconfigurations of two  
Contemporary Puerto Rican  
Poets"  
Dr. Eilyn Lombard-Cabrera,  
Assistant Professor, Spanish,  
CCSU

## CONVERSATION HOURS

### Hora en Español:

Thurs. Feb 12<sup>th</sup>  
Mon. March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Thurs. April 9<sup>th</sup>  
Mon. May 4<sup>th</sup>

### Hora em Português:

Thurs. Feb 19<sup>th</sup>  
Wed. March 11<sup>nd</sup>  
Thurs. April 16<sup>th</sup>  
Wed. May 6<sup>th</sup>

**Time: 3-4PM**

Join us once a month for separate Spanish and Portuguese  
conversation hours! All levels are welcome.

Open to everyone!



## LALCC RESEARCH ROOM

The LALCC research room is available for Central students, faculty, and staff Mon-Thurs 9 AM-7 PM and Friday 9 AM-4 PM.

There are three desks, one with a PC and another with a iMac, includes free black and white printing.

How to Reserve:

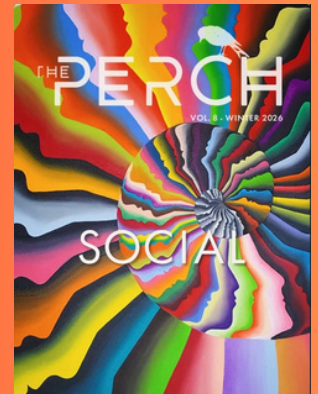
- Call the office at 860-832-0056
- Or stop by the LALCC in person

Reservations are for up to 2 hours. Extensions may be granted upon request, based on availability.

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## “Finding Home in a London Tattoo Studio”

LALCC student intern and Central senior Michelle Vega, a double major in Graphic Design and Spanish, recently had her essay “Finding Home in a London Studio” published in Volume 8 of *The Perch*, a creative arts literary journal focused on mental health and published by the Yale School of Medicine. Vega’s essay explores how art, identity, and belonging can be found in unexpected spaces. The essay appears on page 62 of the journal. We are extremely proud of Michelle and her classmates in Professor Jeanne Criscola’s Spring 2025 Study Abroad to London, UK for this outstanding accomplishment.





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*Thank you for reading this  
issue of the newsletter!*

We hope to see you this spring!  
In the meantime, stay tuned for  
information about our events on  
Instagram, Facebook, and our  
website at  
[www.ccsu.edu/lalcc](http://www.ccsu.edu/lalcc).

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THIS NEWSLETTER WAS CREATED BY  
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**EARY BANUSHI, MIGUEL DAVILA, & JHAN GOMEZ**