



SPRING 2025 RECAP

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

In Spring 2025, the LALCC was fortunate to benefit from the leadership of Dr. Reinaldo Rojas, Associate Professor of Social Work, member of the Latino and Puerto Rican Studies minor committee, and LALCC Executive Board member since 2022. Born in Puerto Rico, Dr. Rojas is a scholar of urban and community studies whose research has examined Hartford's Frog Hollow neighborhood and the challenges Connecticut families faced after Hurricane Maria. Beyond his scholarship, Dr. Rojas brought deep knowledge of Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean history and culture, as well as a passion for music and community engagement, which shaped our spring programming. From literary lectures to discussions of reggaeton and artists like Bad Bunny, his commitment to interdisciplinary programming created opportunities for students and faculty to learn and connect. The LALCC sincerely thanks Dr. Rojas for his leadership this spring.

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



Elihu Burritt Library
4th Floor, Suite 408
Monday - Friday
9AM - 7PM
860.832.0056
LALCC@ccsu.edu



For more information,
visit our website at
ccsu.edu/lalcc



SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 26

PARANOIA AND CONSPIRACY IN CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE

PRESENTED BY DR. IGNACIO IRIARTE

Co-sponsored by Central's Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, the LALCC hosted its first event of the spring semester, *Paranoia and Conspiracy in Contemporary Latin American Literature*, on February 26. The event featured Dr. Ignacio Iriarte, professor of Latin American Literature at Argentina's National University of Mar del Plata, and was divided into two sessions. The first, a workshop titled *From Columbus's Diaries to Contemporary Literature*, took place with students in the classes of Dr. Eilyn Lombard-Cabrera, associate professor of Spanish. The second was a public lecture where Dr. Iriarte presented his research to the campus community. Students gathered at the LALCC for a casual conversation over food with Dr. Iriarte, where they had the opportunity to learn more about his academic journey and ongoing research projects. Dr. Iriarte holds a Ph.D. in Letras from the University of Buenos Aires and is also the editor of the literature website *Caja de Resonancia* (cajaderesonancia.com).



SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

MARCH 27

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA

PRESENTED BY DR. CASSIA ROTH



Co-sponsored by the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department, the LALCC hosted a powerful discussion on March 27 entitled *Reproductive Justice and Women's Rights in Contemporary Latin America* with Dr. Cassia Roth from the University of California, Riverside. Dr. Roth delivered two lectures exploring the history of women's rights in Brazil and the ongoing struggle for reproductive independence throughout Latin America, and met personally with CCSU students. Presentations were open to the public. Dr. Roth holds a doctorate in Latin American History with a concentration in Gender Studies from UCLA, as well as dual master's degrees in Public Health in Epidemiology from the University of Georgia and in Latin American History from UCLA. She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Society, Environment, and Health Equity at UC Riverside.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 10

***BEYOND SUGAR:
GENDER,
EMANCIPATION, AND
THE PUERTO RICAN
AFTERLIVES OF SLAVERY***



PRESENTED BY EMILIA CORDERO CRUZ

For its third event of the semester, the LALCC welcomed Rosa Emilia Cordero Cruz, a history PhD candidate at Rutgers University, for a talk titled *Beyond Sugar: Gender, Slavery, Emancipation, and the Puerto Rican Afterlives of Slavery and its Historical Narratives*. Her presentation examined the gendered and racial legacies of slavery in Puerto Rico, highlighting her current research on Black women, slavery, and emancipation in the island's Arecibo District during the 19th century. Cruz also discussed the erasure of Black history in Puerto Rico and the challenges she has faced in accessing primary sources. At Rutgers, she studies Latin American and Caribbean History as well as Women's and Gender History. Prior to her graduate studies, she earned a B.A. from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, where she was a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow and a member of the Honors Program. .

To watch the recorded event, scan the QR code to the right!



SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 16

PLACES WE CALL HOME: A READING & DISCUSSION OF LATINO/A/X POETRY

PRESENTED BY URAYOÁN NOEL

Over the past year, the LALCC has organized a series of events for the Latino Poetry Project, beginning with a kickoff celebration that featured an open house and a mariachi band performance, followed by a community reading with poet Deborah Paredez. Throughout the spring semester, the LALCC also hosted monthly poetry reading groups open to the public. To conclude the project, the LALCC welcomed author, poet, and professor, Dr. Urayoán Noel of New York University for a two-event finale. Dr. Noel, the author of ten books in English and Spanish, has had his work featured in *Latino Poetry: The Library of America Anthology*,



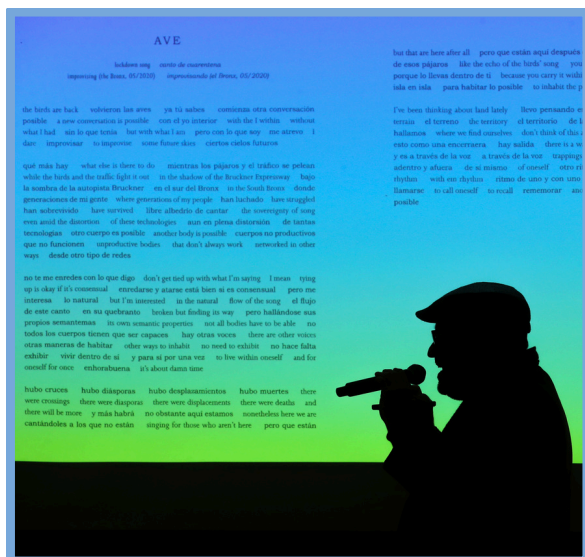
including the poem “No Long Ode/Oda Indebida” (p. 430). The first event took place on April 16 at the New Britain Library, where guests enjoyed Hispanic pastries and a performance by Orquesta la Yunqueña, a New England salsa band, before participating in an open discussion with Dr. Noel moderated by Dr. Natalie Catasús and Dr. Julien Strong of CCSU’s English Department.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 17

WRITING ACROSS LANGUAGE & CULTURE: A READING AND PROCESS TALK

PRESENTED BY URAYOÁN NOEL



Credits: Stan Godlewski

The second event with Dr. Noel, and the concluding event of the LALCC's Latino Poetry Project, *Writing Across Language & Culture: A Reading and Process Talk*, was held on April 17 from 11 AM to 12 PM in the Connecticut Room of CCSU's Memorial Hall. The program featured poetry readings by Dr. Noel followed by a discussion moderated by Assistant Professor Dr. Natalie Catasús. The LALCC extends its gratitude to the Library of America, CT Humanities, and the National Endowment for the Humanities for the funding and support that made these events possible.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

***Nostalgia &
Historical
Memory
in Bad Bunny:
From X100pre to
DTMF***

***Decolonial
Feminist
Responses to
Displacement in
Puerto
Rico***

***The Teaching of
History & the
Politics of
Forgetting
in
Puerto Rico***



*Scan to watch the
full presentation*

MAY 7-8

**PRESENTED BY DR. JORELL MELÉNDEZ BADILLO &
DR. AURORA SANTIAGO ORTIZ**

Dr. Jorell Meléndez Badillo, professor of Latin American History at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, spoke about his collaboration with Bad Bunny's team to write the historical descriptions for the visuals in Bad Bunny's new album, *Debí Tirar Más Fotos*. Dr. Aurora Santiago Ortiz, professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Chicana/Latina Studies at UW-Madison, joined the panel to analyze the album's themes. On Thursday, May 8th, in the Philbrick Room of the Student Center. Dr. Santiago Ortiz spoke on the intersections of gender, colonialism, and migration in P.R. Later that afternoon, Dr. Meléndez Badillo discussed the teaching of history and the politics of forgetting in P.R. and what led him to write his recent book, *Puerto Rico: A National History*.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

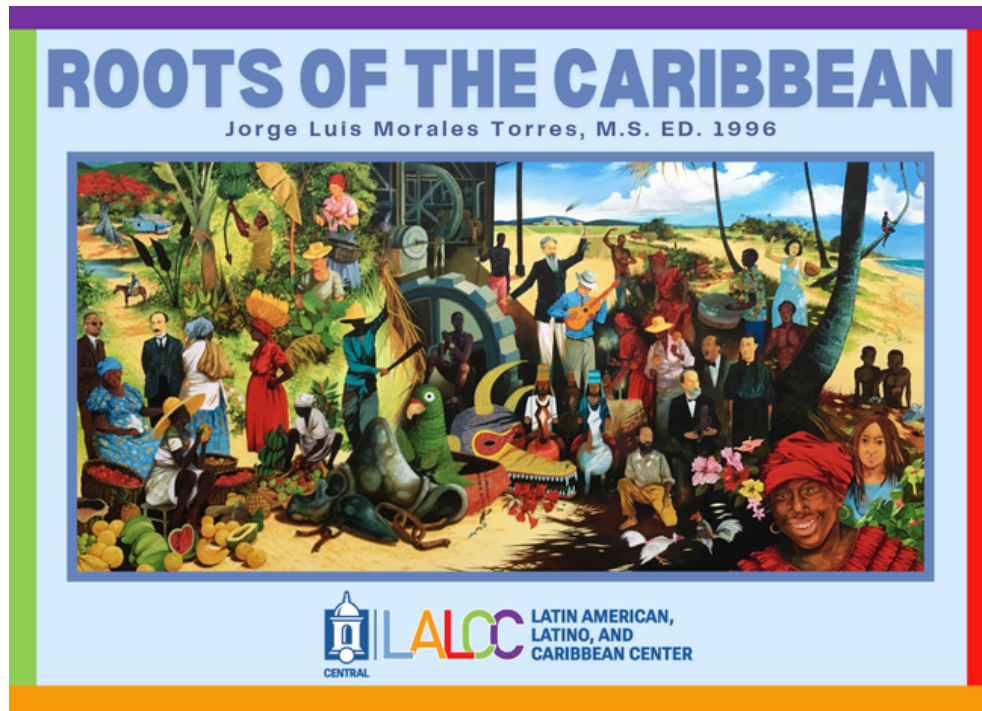
Special Visit by One of Our Donors: Dr. Gilbert Joseph!



Dr. Gilbert Joseph, Farnam Professor Emeritus of History at Yale University, visited the LALCC on Tuesday, June 24, 2025. A leading scholar of modern Latin America, Dr. Joseph recently retired and generously donated a portion of his personal book collection on Latin American history and culture to the center, helping to expand our growing library. His work has long focused on Mexico and Central America, revolutionary and social movements, and U.S.–Latin American relations during and after the Cold War. During his visit, he was introduced to the student interns, toured the center, and learned more about our collections, programs, and mission. He was joined by Dr. Mary Ann Mahony, Professor of Latin American History at Central Connecticut State University and Director of the LALCC. Dr. Mahony and Dr. Joseph share a long-standing professional relationship dating back to her graduate studies at Yale, making his visit to the center a meaningful reunion.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

Next-Gen Mural Project: *Roots of the Caribbean*



Grab your booklet!

Thanks to Central's Next Generation of Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and Community Engagement Program, student interns at the LALCC, and CCSU faculty have created printed informational booklets about the *Roots of the Caribbean* mural. Pick up your copy at the Student Center's information desk or at the LALCC!

Coming this winter: The digital version of the *Roots of the Caribbean mural* will be launching soon! This interactive website will feature contextual research by LALCC student interns, along with supplemental educational resources for teachers and learners. Whether you're in the classroom or on the go, the site will offer an accessible and engaging way to explore the mural and its rich cultural history.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

— Other Events & Milestones! —

Our Spring 2025 Graduates!



As the Spring 2025 semester came to a close, we bid farewell to our two graduating student assistants, Leilani Rivera, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, and Scarlin De Jesus with a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology.

Both have been vital members of the LALCC team, and their hard work and dedication will be deeply missed. We wish them success in their future endeavors!

LALCC Library Update

We are happy to celebrate another huge milestone with our library collection having reached over *4,000 volumes!* We are grateful for the generosity of our donors. To view a virtual catalog of our collections, scan the QR code below!



Thank You to Our Donors!

Kathleen Dougherty
Elizabeth Hansen, Ph.D.
María Jordán Arroyo, Ph.D.
Gilbert Joseph, Ph. D.
Margaret Keck, Ph.D.
Patricia Pessar, Ph.D.
Stuart Schwartz, Ph.D.
Katherine Sugg, Ph.D.
Eliza Willis, Ph.D.



 | **LALOC**
Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Center
Central Connecticut State University

CCSU APPLIED LEARNING INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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APPLIED LEARNING INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Each semester, about 15 Applied Learning Interns (formerly Student Assistants) form the core of the LALCC staff. Based in the Resource Room on the fourth floor of the Elihu Burritt Library, interns welcome visitors, manage daily tasks, and develop skills in communication, teamwork, and professionalism. They also contribute knowledge from their majors to support the Center's mission.

Seven students made the Spring 2025 Dean's List, and another four had GPAs between 3.0 and 3.49. Overall, the average GPA of students in the program was 3.34.

The following students interned with the LALCC in the 24-25 academic year:

- **Sarha Antonio**, Political Science
- **Ednitza Algarin-Garcia**, History
- **Eary Banushi**, Journalism
- **Kody Barcelos**, History
- **Lasania Campbell**, Pre-Nursing
- **Miguel Davila**, Music Technology (Honors)
- **Scarlin De Jesus**, Criminology
- **Agatha Dias Pinheiro**, Pre-Nursing
- **Lindsay Figueroa**, Criminology
- **Jeferson Garcia**, History, MA
- **Jhan Gomez**, Computer Science (Honors)
- **Nicholas Hernandez**, Psychology
- **Natalia Karas**, History
- **Lavinnia Nazareth**, Journalism
- **Jacob Salas**, Electrical Engineering
- **Chrismary Santana-Feliz**, Computer Science
- **Angel Santana-Perez**, Psychology
- **Leilani Rivera**, Communications
- **Joseph Torres Rodriguez**, Biochemistry
- **Kevin Vasquez-Arevelo**, Accounting
- **Michelle Vega Chinaea**, Graphic Design

Intern Testimonials

“Mentoring Mondays were really helpful for me. Now I know where to go on campus when I need help.”

– Miguel Davila, student intern since Fall 2024

“Helping to catalog the book donations has helped me discover that I want to be a librarian.”

– Ednitza Algarin-Garcia, student intern since Spring 2023

“Working at the LALCC has helped me feel more comfortable talking to people and building relationships.”

– Jhan Gomez, student intern since Fall 2023

“I’ve learned so much about Central’s resources that I can now share them with friends on campus.”

– Lindsay Figueroa, student intern since Fall 2024

“I’ve always enjoyed learning about new cultures, and the LALCC helped me to do that.”

– Eary Banushi, student intern since Summer 2024

FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

MONDAY, SEPT. 15 (4:30 PM)

SPANISH IN THE U.S.: HISTORY, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND SOCIOPOLITICAL TENSIONS

PRESENTED BY DR. JENNIFER LEEMAN



*Link to
presentation*

As part of Hispanic Heritage Month, the LALCC will co-sponsor a virtual presentation by Dr. Jennifer Leeman, Professor of Hispanic Linguistics at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, titled "*Spanish in the U.S.: History, Demographics, and Sociopolitical Tensions.*" The talk will trace the historical and demographic development of Spanish in the United States, beginning with an overview of the Spanish language in North America and moving to current data on Spanish-speaking populations. Dr. Leeman will examine how language ideologies shape public attitudes toward Spanish and its speakers, addressing issues of race, citizenship, and national origin, as well as patterns of language maintenance and shift associated with sustained contact with English. She will also highlight the sociopolitical tensions surrounding Spanish in the U.S., offering insights into both the challenges and opportunities faced by Spanish-speaking communities. Dr. Leeman's research focuses on the sociopolitics of language, multilingualism, and heritage language education. She has published widely on topics such as the racialization of Spanish, language ideologies, and ethnoracial and linguistic classification. She is also the coauthor, with Janet Fuller, of *Speaking Spanish in the United States: The Sociopolitics of Language* (Multilingual Matters, 2021).



FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 (3-6 PM)

LALCC 30th Anniversary Open House

ELIHU BURRITT LIBRARY, 4TH FLOOR



Come join us on Tuesday, September 30, for our annual open house celebration commemorating the LALCC's 30th anniversary!

The open house will take place from 3-6 PM on the 4th floor of Elihu Burritt Library and will feature a buffet and a special performance by Orquesta la Yunqueña, one of Connecticut's premier salsa bands.
All are welcome!

FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, OCT. 7 (4:30 PM)

FROM COLONIAL PADRES DE FAMILIA TO MODERN CHILD MOTHERS: METHODS AND THE ARCHIVE IN LATIN AMERICA

PRESENTED BY DR. BIANCA PREMO

As part of our fall programming, the LALCC will host Dr. Bianca Premo, Professor of History at Florida International University and a leading scholar of the colonial Andes and Lima, Peru. Dr. Premo will present a talk titled *From Colonial Padres de Familia to Modern Child Mothers: Methods and the Archive in Latin America* on Tuesday, October 7, at 4:30 p.m. Her presentation will feature new research from her forthcoming book, *The Smallest Subject*, which explores questions of family, ethics, and representation through the history of early puberty and child pregnancy in twentieth and twenty-first-century Peru, focusing in part on the well-known 1939 case of Lina Marcela Medina de Jurado, the youngest confirmed mother in history. Dr. Premo is the author of two award-winning books and numerous scholarly articles that have advanced the study of law, childhood, and Spanish colonialism in the Americas. Her recent research extends into the history of medicine, journalism, and visual culture, paying particular attention to the ethics of representing girlhood and child pregnancy in historical writing. This special event will offer the CCSU community a rare opportunity to engage directly with one of the foremost historians of Latin America.



FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14 (12 PM)

FLAVORS & SOUNDS OF BRASIL!



The LALCC, in collaboration with Student Activities and Leadership Development, the Mosaic Center, and the Central Study Abroad Office, invites you to celebrate Hispanic & Latino Heritage Month with *Flavors and Sounds of Brasil* in collaboration with the Study Abroad Fair on Tuesday, October 14th at 12 PM in the Student Center Circle.

This exciting event will showcase the vibrant culture of Brazil with a live Capoeira workshop and performance by Benção Capoeira (Capoeira Connecticut) led by Mestre Joel Melendez, followed by a Brazilian dance workshop with instructor Thelma Ladeira, along with samba and pagode music brought to you by CCSU's WFCS Radio. Attendees can also enjoy authentic Brazilian cuisine from local food trucks.

Free and open to the entire Central community, this event promises an afternoon of music, dance, food, and celebration. Students will also learn more about study abroad opportunities. Be sure to follow our social media for the latest updates! In case of rain or inclement weather, the event will take place in the Student Center's Alumni Hall.

FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

Mentoring Mondays At 3PM

09/22 - with Kelly Perrotti, Associate Director, Student Financial Literacy

09/29 - with P.J. Rossitto, Director, Career Center

10/13 - with Dr. Zongxiang Mei, International Education Coordinator

10/27 - with Dr. Kimberly Kostelis, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

Talking Tuesdays At 3PM

10/7 (12:15pm) - Dr. Bianca Premo, Professor of Latin American History, Florida International University

10/21 - Dr. Ricardo Friaiz, Assistant Professor of Latin American Philosophy, Department of Philosophy

November - TBA

Wisdom Wednesdays At 3PM

09/24 - Dr. Luz Amaya, Associate Professor, Department of Engineering

10/1 - Isabele De Souza, Undergraduate Student in Management Information Systems

10/15 - Dr. Reinaldo Rojas, Associate Professor, Department of Social Work



LATIN AMERICAN,
LATINO, AND
CARIBBEAN CENTER

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

We hope to see you this fall!
In the meantime, stay tuned with
our events on Instagram,
YouTube, and our website at
www.ccsu.edu/lalcc.

YOUTUBE

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Caribbean Center at CCSU

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THIS NEWSLETTER WAS CREATED BY LALCC
STUDENT INTERNS:
EARY BANUSHI, MIGUEL DAVILA, & JHAN GOMEZ