

# LATINX PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL LATINX PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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## Dreaming Beyond Oppressive Systems

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT:

#### Welcome to another issue of the Latinx Psychology Today Bulletin

As we approach the last quarter of 2026, I am proud of our collective team and grateful to everyone who continues to advance the mission of the National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA). This issue offers an opportunity to recognize the dedication, leadership, and collective effort that continue to strengthen our organization.

I would first like to extend my sincere appreciation to our AMC Source Team, as well as to our Past President, Dr. Alfonso Mercado, and President-Elect, Dr. Lorraine Benuto, for their ongoing leadership and commitment to NLPA. I also want to recognize our Treasurer/Acting Secretary for Finance, Dr. Fiorella L. Carlos Chavez, and our Secretary, Dr. Kiara Manosalvas, for their tireless work in maintaining and strengthening our financial and administrative operations.

I am equally grateful to the members of our Leadership Council, whose expertise and service continue to move NLPA forward:

- Chief Diversity Officer: Dr. Bryan Rojas-Arauz
- Membership Committee Chair: Dr. Raquel Sosa
- Student Representatives: Anyoliny Sánchez, Jacqueline Sifuentes, and Dr. Sandra Gomez
- Early Career Professional Representative: Dr. Ivan Carbajal
- Student Mentoring & Networking Chair: Dr. Regina Jean-Van Hell
- Professional Development Coordinator & Continuing Education Chair: Dr. Nichmarie Soto-Bonilla



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  - Senior Advisor on Public Policy: Dr. Germán Cadenas
  - Journal Editor: Dr. Lisa Flores
  - Latinx Psychology Today Bulletin Editorial Team: Dr. Frances R. Morales and Dr. Charmaine Mora-Ozuna
  - Member-at-Large, AfroLatinx: Dr. Yoscaira Gomez
  - Member-at-Large, Undocumented Migrants: Dr. Maria Lauer
  - Member-at-Large, LGBTQ+: Dr. Roberto Abreu
  - Our Special Interest Group chairs

I especially want to recognize our outstanding conference co-chairs, Dr. Bryan Rojas-Arauz and Dr. Sandra Beltram-Grant, who are working tirelessly alongside our AMC Source Team, Rosie Rivera and Leslie Wysowski, to organize what promises to be an exceptional NLPA conference.

With nearly 300 abstracts submitted for poster and paper presentations, roundtables, and symposia, we are anticipating an exciting and well-attended gathering in Denver, Colorado on October 15–17, 2026. We are also honored to welcome an impressive group of local and national keynote speakers, including our very own dream team: Drs. Fred Millan, Ana Bridges, David Zelaya, and several student representatives. We are especially honored to have with us for the first time in NLPA history, Dolores Huerta.

With several months remaining in 2026, one thing is already clear: when we come together and dream together, we can accomplish great things for NLPA. From our monthly continuing education sessions and the strengthening of our financial operations to navigating uncertain times and creating spaces for belonging, thriving, and healing, we continue to draw upon our collective values, wisdom, strengths, and, of course, a little bit of sazón.

Now, imagine what we can accomplish when we come together in October.

Con eso, nos vemos en Denver.

En solidaridad,

Dr. Oswaldo Moreno  
2026 NLPA President

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## OUR MISSION

To create a supportive professional community that advances psychological education and training, science, practice, and organizational change to enhance the health, mental health, and well-being of Hispanic/Latinx populations.

## NLPA Leadership Council

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## Message from the Editor

Frances R. Morales, PhD

### Editorial

We, the NLPA editorial team, are excited to bring you the Fall/Winter 2026 issue of *Latinx Psychology Today* (LPT). We are proud to share this issue with the intention of uplifting and amplifying the voices of our comunidad during these challenging times.

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The *Latinx Psychology Today* (LPT) offers an exclusive inside look into the world of our querida NLPA organization and contributes to the growing and evolving ideas of Latinx Psychology. In addition to the events and accomplishments of NLPA and its members, each issue features content centered on a particular topic considered important to the membership. Thus, LPT aims to provide a space where students and professionals can contribute thought-provoking information that reflects the depth and diversity of our people and field, enhancing NLPA's mission.

This issue's theme "*Dreaming Beyond Oppressive Systems and the Current Sociopolitical Climate*" feels especially relevant right now. The last years have been marked by profound and intersecting challenges. For Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) psychologists working across academia, higher education, research, and clinical practice, the current sociopolitical climate can feel both deeply unsettling and painfully familiar. We are witnessing renewed attacks on racial justice, immigrant communities, bodily autonomy, educational access, and the legitimacy of scholarship centered on historically marginalized populations. These conditions do not exist only outside our institutions. They enter our classrooms, research labs, clinics, and professional organizations, shaping what we are permitted to study, whose knowledge is recognized, and how much of ourselves we must expend to remain present within systems that were not designed for our flourishing.

Yet oppression has never been our entire story. We also inherit expansive traditions of survival, resistance, and collective care. Our communities have long created ways of living beyond the boundaries imposed upon them. These practices, the stories shared across generations, ancestral teachings, spiritual traditions, communal rituals, native languages, creative expression, and everyday acts of care, have sustained our peoples through displacement, exclusion, and loss. These traditions remind us that resilience is not simply an individual capacity to endure adversity; it is relational, cultural, and intergenerational.

However, endurance alone is not liberation. Healing requires more than helping individuals adapt to oppressive environments. It calls upon us to question the structures producing distress, challenge the systems that normalize inequity, and imagine institutions organized around dignity, belonging, and collective well-being. Dreaming is essential to this work. Collective dreaming can be conceptualized as the disciplined practice of envisioning what oppressive systems have taught us to regard as impossible. It allows us to ask what higher education might become if cultural knowledge were treated as foundational rather than peripheral. What forms of psychology could emerge if liberation, rather than adjustment to injustice, became our guiding aim?

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We do not undertake this work alone. Community care reminds us that our well-being is interconnected and that liberation cannot be achieved through individual accomplishment alone. Mentorship, mutual aid, intergenerational dialogue, and solidarity across communities offer protection against the isolation often cultivated by academic and professional systems. They also create spaces in which we can grieve, restore ourselves, celebrate one another, and sustain the courage required to imagine otherwise.

The current issue is a collaborative effort of graduate students, early career, mid-career, and established members from NLPA aiming to highlight the essence of our members who speak about dreaming beyond oppressive systems, as a liberatory practice. I am beyond proud of the work, time, and effort the editorial team has dedicated to make this issue a reality. I want to thank all the NLPA community for taking the time to read our bulletin, and we hope you enjoy it as much as we hope you do.

As always, mil gracias to the contributors and editorial board for their dedication and hard work, as well as to leadership council, and all our vibrant membership community for supporting the relaunch of the LPT. Please visit all previous issues of LPT by going to: <https://www.nlpa.ws/latinx-psychology-today-bulletin>

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## Dreaming Beyond Oppressive Systems and the Current Sociopolitical Climate

Ashley Bautista, M.A.

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As a clinical psychology graduate student nearing the end of my training, the LPT newsletter theme of *“Dreaming Beyond Oppressive Systems and the Current Sociopolitical Climate”* feels especially relevant right now. We are entering the field during a time when it can sometimes feel easier to focus on what we are fighting against than to imagine what we are working toward.

For many Latine psychologists and trainees, the current sociopolitical climate is difficult to separate from our work. Immigrant communities are experiencing increased fear, anti-immigrant rhetoric, and uncertainty about their safety and belonging. At the same time, researchers studying immigration, discrimination, health disparities, and other issues affecting minoritized communities are navigating funding cuts and uncertainty about whether these topics will continue to be supported. Many have also found themselves reconsidering the language they have historically used to describe their studies, removing or reframing terminology related to diversity, disparities, structural inequities, and other topics that have become increasingly scrutinized. In some cases, this has meant shifting how research questions or goals are framed in order to continue pursuing projects that remain deeply important to the communities they serve.

For trainees who entered this field hoping to contribute to this work, it can be difficult not to wonder what our place in it will look like, or what it means to build a career when the language, priorities, and questions our field is willing to support can change so quickly.

That is why the word “beyond” in this year’s theme stands out to me. It asks us to do more than respond to what is happening right now. It challenges us to imagine possibilities that are not limited by the systems we currently work within.

So much of our training teaches us how to navigate existing structures: how to provide care within complicated healthcare systems, how to conduct research within available funding priorities, how to publish within existing academic structures, and how to build careers within institutions that were established long before many of us had a seat at the table. Learning to navigate these systems is necessary. However, I also wonder what becomes possible when navigating them is no longer the end goal.

What research questions would we pursue if their value was determined by what our communities needed rather than what was most likely to be funded or published? What would mental health care look like if access were not determined by insurance, immigration

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status, geography, language, or the ability to navigate a complicated healthcare system? What would our careers look like if success were not defined primarily by productivity, publications, grants, or prestige? And what new roles might psychologists take on if we allowed ourselves to think beyond the traditional boundaries of our profession?

For trainees, these can be difficult questions to ask. We spend years learning the rules of our field and figuring out how to succeed within them. Sometimes, simply making it through graduate school, internship, or the next career milestone takes most of our energy. It can be hard to find the space to ask whether the systems we are learning to navigate are the same ones we want to inherit and reproduce.

Importantly, dreaming beyond oppressive systems does not require us to have all of the answers. It starts with giving ourselves permission to question what we have been taught and to imagine alternatives to the systems we have learned to navigate. Our communities have been doing this for generations. Latine communities have created joy, knowledge, connection, and ways

of caring for one another even when institutions have excluded them or failed to meet their needs. Our families and communities remind us that ways of knowing, healing, supporting one another, and defining success have always existed beyond the systems and institutions we currently work within.

Perhaps part of dreaming beyond is looking both forward and backward: imagining something new while remembering the wisdom and strengths that brought our communities here.

As I get closer to the end of graduate school, I find myself thinking less about how to find my place within psychology and more about what I hope psychology can become. The current sociopolitical climate gives us many reasons to feel uncertain about that future. Yet, it also makes imagining one feel even more necessary.

Maybe that is what dreaming beyond asks of us: to learn how to navigate the systems that exist without allowing them to determine the limits of what we believe is possible. To move from asking, "How do we make it within these systems?" to "What could we build beyond them?"



Please join us in congratulating the  
2026 NLPA Awardees

Distinguished Professional Career — **Dr. Cynthia De Las Fuentes**

Jeannette Castellanos Mentorship — **Dr. Martin LaRoche**

Alberto Figueroa-Garcia Leadership — **Dr. Pierluigi Mancini**

Distinguished Mid-Career — **Dr. Cristalis Capielo Rosario**

Distinguished ECPs — **Dr. Alejandro Vázquez & David Zelaya (Empate!)**

Star Vega Distinguished Service — **Dr. Edward Delgado-Romero**

Psychological Practice & Community Service — **Dr. Melvin Navarro**

Outstanding Dissertation — **Dr. Stephanie Reyes**

Cynthia De Las Fuentes Dissertation Grant — **Daniella Navarro Verdugo**

Stephen C. Rose Award — **Ramiro Angelino**

Student Service Award — **Lianelys Cabrera-Martinez**



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## SIGs, Student Organizations, & Community Organizations Spotlight

**Primary contact:**

Dr. Charmaine Mora-Ozuna

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Education is a transformative instrument that uplifts people by promoting critical thinking. My mom used to say, "Go to school because education is something nobody can take from you." But what happens when access to that human right is stripped away? Systems of oppression and white supremacy are well aware of the power that knowledge brings. This is exactly why they target the education of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color: from unequal school funding to anti-literacy laws and the banning of specific books. The Deep South is particularly familiar with structural and systemic oppression that has historically targeted Black bodies. The present-day continuation of this oppression can be seen in the Georgia Board of Regents' decision to ban undocumented students from Georgia's top five public universities, despite the fact that the employees themselves are not required to have backgrounds in education. Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina are the only three states with admissions bans of this kind.

To resist this educational segregation and oppression, Freedom University followed the legacy of Southern Freedom School traditions and established a modern-day freedom school.

It first opened its doors in Athens, Georgia, in October 2011, and continues to educate and empower undocumented students in pursuit of their human right to education. Freedom University has transitioned, adapted, and flourished. In 2013, Dr. Laura Emiko Soltis reestablished Freedom University in Atlanta, Georgia, and, using a human rights framework, leads the work through four interconnected pillars: tuition-free college preparation courses, educator trainings, policy change, and direct action. Together, these pillars work to resist systemic racism while creating pathways toward educational access and liberation.

In addition to providing tuition-free courses to undocumented students, Freedom University provides the books, supplies, legal aid, and mental health support students need to pursue higher education. And students have also made history through courageous acts of resistance. For instance, in 2016, Freedom University students and their allies organized acts of creative civil disobedience to challenge Georgia's segregationist admissions policy. These actions resulted in student arrests, but they also helped bring attention to the policy.

Later that year, following continued student and community organizing, the Board of Regents removed Georgia State University and Augusta University from the five-college ban.

I have been honored to teach the Mental Health course for two semesters. Although I am grateful to share space with the fierce leaders who staff this organization and students of Freedom University, I am also left with the uncomfortable reality that this organization exists because oppression continues to exist. I proudly share my fun fact with folks: "I was made in Mexico, born in Los Angeles, and raised in Atlanta." Though a basic statement, it is one that has deeply defined my life, especially my academic one. My mother crossed the border while pregnant with me, and that decision allowed me to apply to any university, access student loans, and complete the long training required to become a psychologist. I do not take that for granted. At the same time, I am appalled that others do not have the same opportunities to pursue an education simply because of where they were born.

To dream beyond oppressive systems and the current sociopolitical climate is to imagine a world where Freedom University does not need to exist... because everyone can apply to and attend higher education. I reimagine a world where the students I have had the privilege of sharing space with can pursue their dreams without fear, uncertainty, or worry. And yet, even within these uncomfortable realities, these students do it. They apply. They learn. They persevere. They continue to dream.

There is something profoundly beautiful about Freedom University because it is not simply creating access to education. It is creating spaces where students can imagine themselves beyond the limitations imposed on them. It is cultivating knowledge, leadership, resistance, community, and hope. These students carry the dreams of their parents and ancestors, but they are also dreaming beyond what was once thought possible.

Freedom University reminds us that education is not simply about obtaining a degree; it is about having the freedom to imagine, pursue, and build a life beyond the systems that seek to limit us. Until that freedom is truly accessible to all, Freedom University continues to do what freedom schools have always done: teach, organize, resist, and create possibilities for a more just future. To learn more about Freedom University or support their mission, please visit [Freedom University's website](#).



## NLPA Student Member Spotlight

### Mateo Vallejo

Master's Student in Social Work  
The University of Texas at Austin

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I began my Master of Science in Social Work at the University of Texas at Austin last August 2025 expecting to develop clinical skills, conduct research, and improve mental health outcomes for Latino communities. My education took an unexpected turn with the first question I dared to ask: *What is social work?*

My name is Mateo Vallejo, a graduate student from Weslaco, Texas, a predominantly Mexican American community within the Rio Grande Valley. Though it pained me to leave, the Rio Grande Valley continues to shape who I am. My parents, grandparents, and community taught me that success is measured by what we leave behind for others. Their sacrifices continue to shape the scholar I hope to become.

Early in my first semester of my MSSW program, I became the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) Representative for UT's School of Social Work. Wanting students to have a stronger voice in a period of anti-DEI legislation in Texas, I published an op-ed in the university student paper, *The Daily Texan*, arguing for the Assembly to be more active in its representation of graduate students. In the following weeks, I authored two resolutions opposing the

laws that eliminated diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and weakened faculty governance. I believed graduate students deserved a voice in conversations about changes that would directly affect their education, research, and communities.

In a rare decision, both resolutions were blocked by the University before I was able to present them to the Assembly, a decision that raised broader questions about student speech and shared governance on campus.

Suddenly, instead of learning about advocacy in my first semester, advocacy became my education. The months that followed brought national media attention from Inside Higher Education, the Foundation of Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), along with others. FIRE and the ACLU-Texas sent and published a joint letter to the University president expressing concern about my free speech being infringed upon. Through many requests for comment, a few legal meetings, and public attacks on social media, I was still a first-year graduate student trying to understand the values I was studying in class.

I was reminded constantly that the University and my School of Social Work were not behind

me. I questioned whether practicing the values I was learning had somehow become controversial. The isolation was difficult, and I worried about the consequences of speaking out.

The university later announced plans to consolidate departments including Mexican American and Latina/o Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, and African and African Diaspora Studies, threatening academic homes that affirmed students' histories, identities, and scholarship.

It was during that fight that I finally answered what social work is. Social work is not only about helping patients and clients survive in a world that continues to oppress them, but to also change the world we lead them back into and create community along the way.

Pushback was widespread as departments came together to advocate for one another. On the day it was announced, I authored a resolution condemning UT's move and calling for its reversal, which was later passed unanimously in the GSA. I also published an op-ed in the Austin American-Statesman outlining how UT's decisions have been harming students of color. In my final move of the year, I wanted to show other social work students how they can advocate as well. When UT pulled its funding for the NASW-Texas Social Work Advocacy Day, after over a decade of partnership, I organized funding for 37 students to attend and learn without the cost barrier.

Alongside advocacy, I found hope in research and community engagement. I

co-authored a manuscript examining factors associated with alcohol use among U.S.-born adolescents living in Mexico, presented research on recovery housing sustainability in Texas, and am currently working on a project supporting Latinx families caring for a loved one living with serious mental illness. I was also honored to receive the NASW-Texas Andrew Marks Student Advocacy Award and NASW-Texas Capital Area Branch Student of the Year Award.

Outside of academics and advocacy, I love to reconnect with my community in Austin and Weslaco. I love playing tennis and cricket with friends, exploring cafes and restaurants in Austin, and going back home to Weslaco to recharge with family and friends.

The theme Dreaming Beyond Oppressive Systems and the Current Sociopolitical Climate reaffirms my belief that hope is found in the act of creating change. Hope begins the moment we dare to improve systems that others believe cannot change. Even when we fail, those efforts inspire others to dream alongside us.

To my fellow NLPA students: please do not silence your voice, for it is powerful when rooted in community. We may have inherited broken systems and oppressive structures, but we have also inherited the strengths of those before us. We have inherited resilience, compassion, and a continued responsibility to leave the systems around us better than we found them.

To dream beyond oppressive systems is to dream beyond.



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## NLPA Student Member Spotlight

### Vianey Canseco Heredia

3rd year PsyD Student in Clinical Psychology  
Loma Linda University

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I immigrated from Mexico in 2006 and have called San Bernardino, California, home since I was five years old. Growing up in this community shaped who I am and inspired my commitment to giving back to the people and communities that helped raise me. Today, I am a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient and a third-year Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) student in Clinical Psychology at Loma Linda University, specializing in children and adolescent populations.

My clinical work primarily focuses on adolescents experiencing trauma-related concerns and internalizing disorders. I currently provide individual therapy and facilitate therapy groups for at-risk youth at a School-Based Health Center in San Bernardino. I am also being trained to conduct bilingual school psychological assessments, serving predominantly Hispanic and Latine students and families. Working alongside young people during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives has reinforced the importance of culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and evidence-based practices.

Beyond my clinical training, I have worked and volunteered throughout San Bernardino in research, healthcare, and K-

12 educational settings. These experiences have strengthened my commitment to serving historically underserved communities through integrated, holistic care. As a Hispanic, Spanish-speaking individual raised in San Bernardino, I have witnessed how systemic barriers, cultural values, and community strengths intersect to shape mental health and access to care. These lived experiences continue to influence both my clinical practice and my advocacy.

My doctoral project reflects these passions. I am examining adolescents' self-reported emotional and behavioral experiences while receiving behavioral health services within an integrated School-Based Health Center in San Bernardino. Through both research and clinical practice, I hope to deepen my understanding of how culture, communities, and larger social systems contribute to health disparities among Hispanic and Latine youth. Ultimately, I aspire to use this knowledge to improve access to equitable, culturally responsive mental health care.

Although my journey in psychology has been deeply rewarding, pursuing this path as a DACA recipient has come with significant challenges. California has provided opportunities and protections that have allowed me to pursue higher education, but living without permanent legal status has meant navigating graduate

school with ongoing uncertainty. I have experienced repeated rejection from funding opportunities and professional opportunities, not because of my qualifications or dedication, but because of my immigration status. Those experiences have reinforced the structural barriers that many Dreamers continue to encounter despite years of academic and professional achievement.

Today, many Dreamers face an increasingly uncertain future. Across the country, immigrants continue to encounter detention, family separation, and the constant fear of losing the homes, schools, careers, and communities they have contributed to. Sharing my story is one way I hope to raise awareness of the challenges facing Dreamers and immigrant communities while highlighting the resilience that so many demonstrate every day.

Living each day with the uncertainty that everything I have worked for could be taken away has reaffirmed my purpose to

become a licensed bilingual clinical psychologist. Whether through clinical work, research, or advocacy, I hope to continue serving vulnerable populations while learning from the resilience and wisdom of the communities that have shaped me.

Outside of psychology, I find joy in spending time with my family. We love watching movies, cooking together, and playing board games. I also enjoy reading, weightlifting, trail running, and building LEGO sets. These moments remind me that resilience is built not only by overcoming hardship but also by creating spaces for connection, laughter, and rest.

As I continue my journey, I hope to contribute to a future where every child, adolescent, and family has access to compassionate, culturally responsive mental health care, regardless of their background or immigration status. My experiences have taught me that our stories have the power to build understanding, strengthen communities, and inspire meaningful change.



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## NLPA Professional Member Spotlight

**Nancy Rodriguez, PhD**

(ella, she, her)

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During my entire career, I've asked myself a question I didn't choose, *"How do you thrive when the systems in place were not designed with you in mind?"*

I'm a DACAmented psychologist who grew up most of her life in deep East Oakland- and that alone should tell you a lot about the terrain I've had to navigate. Even though DACA now provides me with limited protections, I am still only able to plan my life two years at a time, with the constant threat of having those protections taken away at any moment.

Every step of my career has been shaped by this reality, while being excluded from opportunities, even if unintentionally. Currently, there is plenty of talk about supporting undocumented and migrant communities, yet they rarely address actionable efforts to foster equitable resources, whether professional or personal. In particular, we are not shown how to navigate being there for your community in a professional sense, though you are in the same circumstance.

I built my practice, Healing Corazones, as a sanctuary that holds this reality- not only for myself, but for other professionals seeking spaces where they too can be fully held and seen.

Traditional mental health in this country was built as a way to keep people of the global majority, especially those of African descent, oppressed and pathologized— where normal responses to white supremacy and colonialism were treated as clinical illness rather than as what they are: reasonable reactions to unreasonable conditions. My personal reality, and that of the communities I serve, pushed me to reimagine what healing could look like, not as an abstract concept, but as something that honors the humanity of people who were made to believe their pain was a disorder. And this is why "dreaming beyond oppressive systems" isn't an abstract theme for me- It's the actual architecture of my work.

I didn't want to build a practice that asked for clients to continue to contort themselves to fit somebody else's mold, learning skills just to survive oppressive spaces. Given this, I have put more intentionality into building a platform. Every instagram post, intake form written in both languages, support group, and workshop made to remember and honor our ancestral roots and rebuild the sense of belonging that gets stripped away. It's a rejection of the idea that clinical legitimacy requires clinical jargon, that

that professionalism requires cultural neutrality, that access should be the exception rather than the starting point. It was built on the belief that therapy is one healing space, but not the only one. The belief that community care is, at its core, just as transformative.

My recently launched project that embodies "*dreaming beyond*" is *Raíces, Corazón y Alas*, a peer support and professional development group. The name is the whole philosophy: *Raíces* (roots), *Corazón* (heart), *Alas* (wings). It consists of eight sessions that actually move participants from grounding in where they come from, to processing what they carry in the present, to imagining what they're capable of becoming.

What makes this different from traditional therapy isn't just the bilingual delivery. It's the model itself. Individual therapy, as good as it is, can still be an isolating structure — one person, one room, one paid hour, healing in private. *Raíces, Corazón y Alas* insists that healing can also happen collectively, in community, among

women who see themselves in each other. This was created to mirror how healing has actually happened in our families and communities for generations, long before it had a clinical name.

And then there's the project dear to my heart: the UndocuTherapist Healing Circles, a space for undocumented therapists regardless of where they are in their career, to come together for support and peer mentorship. Through combining the expertise of these therapists, they form a lasting kinship with their clients.

That's ultimately what dreaming beyond an oppressive system looks like for me. It doesn't always look like a protest. It is a form of resistance deeply felt, deeply embodied. Sometimes it looks like building an eight-session curriculum and witnessing a room full of undocumented and first-gen Latinas hold each other the way a single therapist alone cannot.

*Con cariño,*

Dra. Nancy



# Fotos y Pláticas: Utilizing Mujerista-Led Photovoice to Capture the Immigration Experiences of Mujeres from the Northern Triangle of Central America

Dr. Ana Carina Ordaz

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As the daughter of Mexican immigrants, my connection to this research was deeply personal. I grew up in a mixed-status household; I was four when my mother, Angélica María, was detained and deported, and we later reunited in Georgia. *Ella me enseñó el significado de luchar, resistir y existir en espacios que no fueron creados para nosotros*, and dreaming beyond oppressive systems remained an act of resistance throughout this work. My connection to the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) came through a family member's Honduran experiences. I entered as an outsider to the NTCA community, bringing a lifetime of proximity to immigrant resilience and *lucha*. That commitment to honoring *mujeres'* stories of generational knowledge and strength, carried me through the doctoral process itself. My research team, Alondra, Jocelyn, and Monica, bilingual and Latine-identified with Mexican and Nicaraguan roots, deepened this project's cultural insight.

## Moving Towards Visibility

Women and girls in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras face extreme gender-based violence, worsened by corruption, weak institutions, and impunity, with marginalized, Indigenous, and Afro-descendant women facing greater barriers to protection (Council on Foreign Relations, 2023; Huq, 2023; WOLA, 2022).

Though women make up over half the region's population and serve as primary breadwinners in most single-headed households, they are often forced to flee their homes or countries to escape violence. The Atlantic Council (2021) adds that El Salvador saw a femicide, on average, roughly every twenty-four hours in 2018, though femicides are inconsistently classified across countries (Bozmoski, 2021). Domestic violence, sexual assault, and rape remain widespread and underreported, with most cases never investigated. Women comprise under 20% of police forces, the entry point for reporting abuse, yet hold many justice sector roles, including a majority of judges and public defenders in Honduras (WOLA, 2022).

Despite this, the specific gendered experiences of *mujeres* from the NTCA remain disproportionately underrepresented within the immigration and psychology literature, often conflated with the experiences of Mexican immigrants or folded into broader pan-ethnic Latine categories. According to the Migration Policy Institute (2025), Central American immigration to the U.S. has grown substantially, with the Central American-born population reaching just over 4.3 million as of 2023. Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans together account for the majority of this population and have driven most of its growth since 1980.

Hondurans saw the fastest recent growth, followed by Guatemalans. Salvadorans remain the largest origin group overall, though with a more modest growth rate over the same period (Dasema & Batalova, 2025).

NTCA immigrants' traumatic exposures span the pre-immigration, in-transit, and post-immigration phases (Kaltman et al., 2011; Perreira & Ornelas, 2013), and many settled in the "New Latino South," including Georgia, drawn by employment opportunities (Kochhar et al., 2005), only to encounter underprepared infrastructure and hostile anti-immigrant legislation (Delgado-Romero et al., 2007). Within this landscape, *mujeres inmigrantes* carry a distinct and often under-examined burden. They navigate not only the shared traumas of displacement and resettlement, but also the gendered violence, caregiving responsibilities, and survival labor that fall disproportionately on women throughout every phase of immigration.

To understand these realities fully, this study centers women specifically, not as a subset of the immigrant experience, but as holders of knowledge about how oppression is lived, resisted, and transformed at the intersection of gender, race, class, and immigration status.

To be part of this study, participants, referred to as community researchers (co-researchers), had to meet four criteria:

1. identify as Salvadoran, Guatemalan, or Honduran;
2. identify as woman/*mujer* (inclusive of cis and trans women);
3. be at least 18 years old; and

4. have immigrated to Georgia from one of those three countries and lived in Georgia for at least one month before the study began, including women who lived in other U.S. states before settling in Georgia.

### **Pensadoras and Knowledge Holders**

This study is grounded in *Mujerista* Psychology, also known as Latina Womanism (Bryant-Davis & Comas-Díaz, 2016), a liberation psychology framework designed to center women's voices, knowledge, and survival strategies through the creation of liberatory, inclusive, and safe spaces, where storytelling can take eclectic and embodied forms such as *testimonios*, *autohistoria*, photovoice, and activism (Bryant-Davis & Comas-Díaz, 2016). Consistent with this framework, Photovoice, a participatory action research strategy, gave co-researchers the tools to lead *su proyecto*, embodying their roles as *pensadoras* and knowledge holders of their communities and life experiences, positioned as co-researchers and image-makers rather than simply subjects being studied. Photovoice's three goals of documenting their community's strengths and concerns, sparking critical dialogue, and reaching policymakers, were furthered by using photos to elicit responses, which allowed *mujeres* to enter the *pláticas* at their own pace, diminishing the power dynamic present in a one-on-one interview.

Using *Mujerista*-led Photovoice (Mejia et al., 2013), the researcher explored the lived experiences of co-researchers across their pre-migration (*esperanza y superación*),

In-transit (*resistencia y perseverancia*), and post-migration (*fortalezas y áreas de crecimiento*) journeys to Georgia; what roles they came to take on in their communities as a result; and where they found their strength. *Testimonios* were gathered through three photovoice sessions using the VENCER process, an adaptation of Freire's SHOWED method (Baquero et al., 2014; Wang & Burris, 1997), which guided co-researchers from what they saw in a photo, to what it meant in their lives, why it existed, and what could be done about it. Together, these choices allowed for a deeper understanding of the interlocking systems of oppression that shape the multiple identities of *mujeres inmigrantes* (gender, race, sexual orientation, class, country of origin, documentation status), and, more importantly, allowed those women to define and mobilize around those realities themselves.

Prior to the first photovoice session, each co-researcher was mailed a Polaroid camera and journal to be used throughout the photovoice assignments, followed by a 2-hour group orientation and training with the co-researchers via Zoom. The researcher and a compañera introduced themselves, then revisited confidentiality, especially in a group setting, asking "*Que cosas les gustaria tener en este espacio para que cada una se sienta mas segura?*" to establish group agreements. The researcher introduced the photovoice process, answered questions, and reviewed ethical concerns that may arise, especially when deciding what images to capture in their communities. Co-researchers also participated in a mock

photovoice assignment practicing how to upload photos via Qualtrics. Finally, the group determined their first photovoice assignment together, developing a list of themes related to their pre-immigration experiences as *mujeres* from the NTCA, and were instructed to take 5-8 photos to discuss two weeks later.

### **La Unión Hace la Fuerza: Themes of Survival and Strength**

Using Reflective Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022), researchers identified six major themes, several with subthemes, centering the *testimonios* of six Salvadoran and Guatemalan co-researchers. Some themes were interwoven throughout their entire immigration journey while other themes were specific to the pre-immigration, in-transit, and post-immigration phases. Two overarching themes emerged that were present across all phases of the co-researchers journeys. The first was *Fe en Dios: Donde Hay Esperanza Hay Vida* (Faith in God: Where There is Hope There is Life), in which psychospirituality served as a consistent source of strength, coping, and protection, woven into every phase of the journey. The second was *Discriminación y Racismo* (Discrimination and Racism), encompassing experiences of discrimination that spanned detention centers, interactions with ICE, and daily life in Georgia specifically.

Within the pre-immigration phase, the theme of *Pre-migración: Partir Para Sobrevivir* (Leaving to Survive) captured the varied, often life-or-death factors driving immigration.

A subtheme within this, *Para Ayudar a la Familia: Mejores Oportunidades* (To Help the Family: Better Opportunities), reflected the *mujeres'* experiences of immigrating specifically to provide financial support and better opportunities for their families.

During the in-transit phase, the theme of *Injusticias y Adversidades Durante el Cruze: Hemos Sobrevivido y Resistido* (Injustices and Adversities During the Crossing: We Have Survived and Resisted) captured the dangers and injustices the *mujeres* endured while crossing. Within this theme, *Cruzamos Con Gente Peligrosa: Para Ellos Somos Mercancía* (We Cross Paths With Dangerous People: For Them We Are Merchandise) described the dehumanizing treatment *mujeres* experienced at the hands of *coyotes* and *mafias*, while *Protección y Compañerismo Durante el Cruze* (Protection and Companionship During the Crossing) reflected the support and solidarity *mujeres* found in each other, and occasionally from others in power, along the way. A third subtheme, *Me Dijeron Vas Para Un Lugar Mejor: Liberación Ficticia* (They Told Me You're Going To A Better Place: Fictional Liberation), captured the humiliation and continued confinement experienced inside detention centers.

In the post-immigration phase, the theme of *Post-Inmigración: La Lucha es Permitida* (Post-Immigration: The Fight is Allowed) reflected the continued striving, or *superación*, *mujeres* engaged in after arrival. This theme encompassed three subthemes: *No nos Tenemos que Quedar Estancados* (We Don't Have to Stay Stuck),

which addressed the daily realities of living without documentation in Georgia, including barriers like driver's licenses; *Proceso de Adaptación Cultural: No Estoy Aya, Estoy Aca* (Cultural Adaptation: I'm Not There, I'm Here), which reflected *mujeres'* efforts to retain cultural values and traditions while adjusting to a new country; and *Estilo de Crianza y Educación para los Niños* (Parenting Style and Education for Children), which captured concerns about raising children and connecting them to their cultural roots.

The final major theme reflected the collective education, advocacy, celebration, and representation the co-researchers were already engaged in, alongside some of the challenges they identified within their own community. *Mujeristas: La Unión Comunitaria Hace la Fuerza* (Mujeristas: Community Union Makes Strength) captured the co-researchers' own commitment to giving back and empowering one another. This theme included three subthemes: *Problemas de Liderazgo en la Comunidad* (Leadership Issues in the Community), which addressed gaps and shortcomings identified in existing community leadership; *Necesidades en Nuestra Comunidad* (Needs in Our Community), which reflected needs the co-researchers identified along with concrete steps they suggested to address them; and *El Amor Propio* (Self-Love), which underscored the necessity of caring for oneself as a foundation before being able to care for others.

Across these themes, a clear pattern unfolded: the same sources of strength

preventing *mujeres* from fully integrating due to strict anti-immigrant policies. Understanding *mujeres*' experiences through a family systems lens is also imperative, as co-researchers illuminated the importance of family and children, navigating transnational mothering (Silva et al., 2022; Miranda et al., 2005) and differing parenting practices (Fuentes et al., 2022). A transnational family systems approach that acknowledges mixed-status families helps us understand how *mujeres* from the NTCA make sense of their new identities, contend with parenting in a new context, and retain cultural values amidst pressures to acculturate. Integrating such models, rooted in *Mujerista* psychology (Bryant-Davis & Comas-Díaz, 2016), allows us to honor these complex experiences at the intersection of documentation status and historical legacies of resistance and oppression (Latina Feminist Group, 2001).

At the policy level, co-researchers plan to present findings directly to identified stakeholders to advocate for structural change, reflecting the *mujerista* commitment to collective liberation. Co-researchers are already engaged in giving back, through food banks, informal mentorship, and skills-sharing, embodying the *mujerista* spirit of collective, rather than individual, liberation. The researcher will host a community forum where co-researchers present to stakeholders they have identified, with families present "para que vean nuestro trabajo," following the co-researchers' lead in presenting their photovoice project in a way that feels safe individually and as a collective.

This study makes room for testimonio, photovoice, and *plática* as rigorous, healing-centered methodologies. It challenges the erasure and conflation of *mujeres* from the NTCA with broader pan-ethnic Latine categories within Latine psychology research. It also builds toward a Counseling Psychology, as named through APA Division 17's own values, one that considers context, systems, and intersecting identities; centers marginalized voices; addresses systemic oppression; and upholds diversity, social justice, and participatory action research (DeBlaere et al., 2019).

*Nuestra comunidad* carries deep capability and knowledge. Co-researchers set their own agreements, learned new technology, ran their own small businesses, and directed a research project, all while carrying some of the heaviest stories a person can carry. They were never participants being studied; they are *pensadoras*, knowledge holders, guiding su *proyecto* from the very first session. For many, this was the first time they had a space to share their *testimonio* in full, and they wanted it shared. That matters deeply in a state like Georgia, where the current political climate makes it that much harder for immigrant communities to be seen, let alone heard. Upon completion of this study co-researchers shared the following words of wisdom with potential community members and providers that would be reading their *testimonios* in mind: "*Para todo hay una recompensa, debemos de luchar siempre y todo se puede,*" "*Todo lo que nos proponemos lo podemos lograr,*"

"Cada mujer es brillante y tiene su propia luz," y "Todos pasamos por momentos difíciles pero poniendo nuestros esfuerzo, con ayuda profesional podemos salir adelante." The researcher hopes that this study models what empoderamiento can look like when mujeres are trusted to lead their own liberation.

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# In Memory, Love, and Community

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**Frederick Marius Jacobsen IV, MD** passed away while snorkeling in Curacao on Christmas Day 2025. He was 70 years old -an epic traveler who loved the sun and sea in winter.

Dr Jacobsen practiced Psychiatry in Foggy Bottom, DC, across the street from George Washington University Medical School where he was a Clinical Professor. He specialized in neuropsychopharmacology, sleep medicine, and cross-cultural mental health, authoring or co-authoring numerous publications, most focusing on mood disorders and seasonal affective disorders (SAD). Among them is a sweet paper- Ethnocultural Allodynia -co-authorized with his wife Lillian as first author. It addresses cultural, especially racial, trauma as it emerges and can be understood in both the psychotherapy and medication management of psychiatric conditions.



Dr. Jacobsen was a founding and professional advisor to the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of the National Capital Area for 37 years. His lectures were wonderful reviews of the latest research enjoyed by medical professionals and lay people alike. The last lecture in 2023 was on "Post Covid Ups and Downs" and can be seen on YouTube.

Fred was born in Iowa-an only child who spent a high school year abroad living with a large Brazilian family as an American Field Service exchange student. He came to speak fluent Portuguese, decent Spanish and a bit of French. A graduate of Cornell University and the University of Illinois Medical School, he completed his psychiatry residency at Yale University School of Medicine. Dr. Jacobsen moved to Washington to join the Clinical Psychobiology Branch of the NIMH as a researcher. He subsequently entered private practice where he was thought of as a devoted and gifted physician to the many patients he treated through the years.

He was a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. He also received the Exemplary Psychiatrist Award from the National Alliance of the Mentally Ill and a Clinical Faculty Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Residency Training Program of the George Washington University Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

Dr. Jacobsen was a lover of art and a gifted photographer. The accompanying photo is a self-portrait, taken in some museum, somewhere, maybe in France. He is survived by his wife, the psychologist Dr. Lillian Comas-Diaz.

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# In Memory, Love, and Community

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On April 2nd, **Dr. Cynthia Medina** passed away in Oakland, CA after a brief illness. Born on April 2, 1984, in Huanusco Zac., Mexico, Cynthia embodied a life dedicated to education, professional excellence, and compassionate service to others. Cynthia earned her Masters and her PhD from the University of Oregon, a significant milestone and one of her greatest accomplishments. Her academic journey and passion for the field culminated in her impactful career at Berkeley University, where she served as a psychologist for several years.

Cynthia was a staff psychologist at the University of California Berkeley Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS). The late Dr. Joseph White, one of the greatest mentors in the history of our field, saw Cynthia's promise and potential when she was an undergraduate student and encouraged her to pursue graduate studies. She always lived up to that promise. As a young woman, she was not only clear in

her educational and career goals, she was grounded in her identity, her cultural and familial values, and her energy for adventure. Cynthia exuded positivity, joy, and playfulness so admirably.

Throughout her time at UO and after, she maintained that vigor, both in her professional endeavors and in her life outside of work. For example, very soon after entering the University of Oregon Counseling Psychology program, Cynthia co-founded a campus-wide organization that was dedicated to "building a supportive space and community for graduate students, providing networking, mentorship, education, and professional development opportunities" and "striving to better serve the underrepresented graduate students and allies at the University of Oregon."

Cynthia worked at UO campus Center on Diversity and Community, and she provided clinical and multicultural outreach services at our university counseling center. She helped facilitate an afterschool intervention program for newcomer Latinx immigrant high school students, and conducted research to understand barriers and assets contributing to Latinx student persistence. She had a deep capacity to be with clients in the dark places of their lives and help them to see their potential and their strength. It was a joy and blessing to be Cynthia's advisor (Ellen Hawley McWhirter, Ph.D).

Cynthia completed her predoctoral internship and then a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California Berkeley's CAPS. After two years at San Jose State University, she returned to CAPS in 2016 as a staff psychologist. During her time at CAPS, Cynthia Medina was active in virtually every aspect of the service. She provided individual, couples, and group therapy and was deeply engaged in outreach programming, particularly in supporting students from marginalized and underserved communities. Cynthia felt blessed to serve the clients to whom she was so deeply committed.

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# In Memory, Love, and Community

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Perhaps one of the greatest gifts Cynthia left with CAPS is the legacy of the many interns and fellows she mentored. Her investment in their growth continues to ripple, as many of those she supervised and supported are now themselves providing supervision and mentorship to the next generation of psychologists and clinical social workers.

Cynthia also played a pivotal role in developing CAPS' first modified Intensive Outpatient Program, creating opportunities for colleagues to better serve some of our most acute and at-risk students. Her clinical creativity, compassion, and commitment to students helped expand what CAPS could offer at a time when those services were needed most.

Cynthia was a light at CAPS. She brought warmth, generosity, wisdom, and an unwavering belief in the potential of both students and colleagues. Her legacy lives on in the people she mentored, the services she helped create, and the countless students she cared for and colleagues who were fortunate enough to work alongside her.

Cynthia was far more than the sum of the impressive degrees she earned, articles she wrote, presentations she delivered, hours she worked, and her many other accomplishments. She was a daughter, a sister, a partner, and a friend. She was loved for her compassion, humor, and ability to bring light and joy into any event or moment. She was profoundly humble, playful, and loyal. She modeled a love for life. This extended to her dedicated work as a psychologist with Latine community, BIPOC college students, and overall mental health care. Her time on Earth, though briefer than what feels fair, was impactful. She emanated a sense of gratitude and courage that graced even the final minutes of her life, encircled by loving family and friends.

Ellen Hawley McWhirter, Ph.D  
Professor, Counseling Psychology, University of Oregon

Claytie Davis III, Ph.D., ABPP  
APPIC Membership Services Coordinator

Marina Valdez, PhD  
Licensed Psychologist, Portland, OR



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# In Memory, Love, and Community

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**Dr. Claudette Luz Santiváñez Antuña**, 80, was an extraordinary, devoted, and loving mother to four children and grandmother to ten grandchildren. She was born in Lima, Peru and had three siblings, Patricia, Deborah, and David. She loved her family dearly and was a vibrant, witty, and positive person, who worked hard and never complained.

She always put her family first and dedicated her life to providing for them. She was extremely passionate about her work. A bilingual and bicultural clinician fluent in both Spanish and English, Dr. Santiváñez Antuña built a distinguished career spanning social work, crisis intervention, healthcare administration, disaster mental health, immigration advocacy, and forensic evaluation. For decades, she was an advocate for vulnerable populations, providing psychological and forensic evaluations for detained and un-detained individuals seeking legal relief.

Dr. Antuña's professional journey began in 1972 at the Stanford University Medical Center, providing direct care to pediatric populations and Spanish-speaking adult oncology patients. She then relocated to Florida, serving as a clinical social worker in various hospitals in Miami and then as the Director of Social Work Services at Miami Children's Hospital from 1973 to 1986. There, she established the hospital's first dedicated social work department, expanding it into a robust clinical division. During her tenure, she secured a prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation intergenerational grant, managed a federal grant as the Psychosocial Faculty Coordinator to train pediatric residents, and launched a pioneering bilingual neonatal parent support network. Her innovative fee-for-service model at Miami Children's drew national attention, prompting hospitals like Palms West Hospital in Florida and Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters in Virginia to hire her to develop their own clinical departments. She also testified before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in 1985 regarding the medical treatment of handicapped newborns.

Her trauma expertise extended to state labor forces; from 1997 to 2008, she served as the Clinical Director of the Peer Trauma Support Program for the Washington State Department of Transportation. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, her disaster leadership called her to the front lines. She was among the first mental health professionals to deploy, providing vital trauma counseling to police officers and firefighters operating in the aftermath at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and FBI sites.

Driven to deepen her clinical and forensic impact, Dr. Antuña returned to graduate school, earning a Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in Clinical Psychology from Argosy University Seattle in 2012. Her doctoral dissertation focused heavily on systemic trauma, titled "A Profile of Domestic Violence: The Responding of Spanish-Speaking Female Survivors Seeking Lawful Immigrant Status in the United States Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) on the Personality Assessment Inventory."

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# In Memory, Love, and Community

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She went on to earn a Certificate in Global Mental Health from the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma, participated in the APA's Minority Fellowship Program Summer Institute, and published the article "Why cultural competence is not a myth-working with immigrants: Remember do no harm."

Her forensic mental health advocacy within the immigration courts was a central pillar of her legacy. The Immigration Courts in District IX formally recognized Dr. Antuña as an expert in mental health issues affecting individuals seeking legal relief. Over her career, she provided the USCIS Immigration Court with more than 3,500 written reports and gave oral testimony in approximately one-third of those cases, completing roughly 70% of this intense work completely pro bono.

Recognized as an expert on the effects of trauma and torture by the Department of Homeland Security, she regularly conducted neuro-cognitive testing for individuals seeking naturalization disability waivers. In 2012, she expanded her systemic footprint by becoming the Director of Professional Services for the Northwest Detention Center Roundtable Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest (AID-NW).

Her multi-system forensic expertise extended into the local courts. She consulted for the Tacoma Veterans Center starting in 2000, worked as an Affiliate Sex Offender Treatment Provider, and evaluated complex custody cases for the Washington Office of Public Defense, officially joining their expert list for parenting evaluations in 2024. From 2022 onward, she bridged local and international borders by providing virtual clinical supervision to students volunteering with the Refugee Health Alliance Mental Health program on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Dr. Antuña held influential national leadership positions within major psychological associations. She served as the Professional Development Coordinator and Continuing Education Chair for the National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA), and as the Immigration Task Force Chair for APA Division 52 (International Psychology). Additionally, she acted as the liaison between Divisions 52 and 56 (Trauma Psychology) on the Refugee and Asylum Network and served as the APA Diversity Delegate for the State of Washington.

Dr. Antuña is survived by her four children and their spouses, and their children, daughter Elena and husband Steve Nelson their two sons Christopher and Thomas, daughter Laura and husband James Capestany their four children Lucas, Alexis, June and Olivia, and son Eduardo and wife Kori and their two sons Manuel and Jace and daughter Rebecca and her husband Graeme and their two children, Jackson and Isabella. She was preceded in death by her husband Eduardo Antuña, 60 years old.



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# Cartografías de lo Intangible

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Cartografías de lo Intangible is a collaborative work by Jessica and Julián that explores the emotional landscapes that accompany migration, memory, love, and personal transformation. Through the intersection of visual art and poetic reflection, the piece traces the invisible threads that connect identity, belonging, and cultural memory across time and place. Inspired by their experiences as Colombian immigrants, artists, and scholars, the work reflects on resilience, community, and the ongoing process of imagining futures beyond limitation. It is an invitation to honor what cannot always be seen but continues to shape who we are and who we become.

**Jessica Suárez** is a Colombian ceramic artist and creative entrepreneur whose work explores memory, landscape, materiality, and the relationship between nature and human experience. Drawing inspiration from the ecosystems and cultural histories of Colombia, she creates sculptural and functional ceramic pieces that blend traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design. Her work reflects an ongoing interest in belonging, transformation, and the stories embedded in place and material.

**Julián D. Moreno-Villamizar** is a Colombian researcher and doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at Boston University. His research focuses on increasing access to evidencebased mental health care for trauma-exposed and historically underserved communities through implementation science, transdiagnostic interventions, and culturally responsive care. Alongside his academic work, he uses writing and creative expression to reflect on migration, identity, resilience, and the human experience.

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# Cartografías de lo Intangible

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*Cartografías de lo Intangible* is a series of ceramic pieces that explores the invisible landscapes we inhabit: memories, emotions, migrations, relationships, and experiences that shape our identities without occupying physical space. Inspired by the experience of living between cultures and territories, the series reflects on what remains with us even as places change.

Through the dialogue between different clay bodies, contrasting textures, and gold details, the pieces function as imagined maps of human experience. Their surfaces become territories where memories, journeys, and connections intertwine, challenging the boundaries between the internal and the external, the individual and the collective.

Each work constitutes a personal cartography, an attempt to give form to what often remains unseen. Like maps, these pieces do not represent territory literally; instead, they suggest pathways, encounters, and traces that invite viewers to navigate their own inner landscapes.



## SELVA

*Selva* emerges from the observation of the living systems that connect the natural world: underground roots, river channels, mycelial networks, and organic structures that sustain life beyond what is visible. Inspired by the relationship between the Amazon rainforest and the Andean páramos, territories connected by the so-called “flying rivers,” atmospheric currents of moisture that travel across the sky and link distant ecosystems, the piece transforms these dynamics into an imagined geography where golden lines traverse the surface as pathways, tributaries, and routes that diverge only to meet again.



The contrast between the two clay bodies creates a shifting landscape that evokes aerial views of forests, mountains, and terrains shaped by time. Across this surface, gold acts as a luminous trace, revealing invisible flows: movements of water, memory, and transformation that traverse both the land and human

experience. The golden lines suggest hidden connections between places, stories, and moments in time, reminding us that much of what sustains life exists beyond our immediate perception.

Rather than representing a physical jungle, the work proposes a metaphor for the inner ecosystems we inhabit. Like a living network in constant transformation, *Selva* explores the ways our histories, affections, and memories remain intertwined, even when their connections are not immediately visible. The piece invites contemplation of what sustains life from a distance and in silence: the invisible currents that bind territory, memory, and identity.

**Wheel-thrown ceramic, mixed of black clay and porcelain, cone 6, and gold luster details. Unique piece.**

## MESTIZA

*Mestiza* explores identity as a space of encounter, tension, transformation, and continuity. Inspired by the cultural diversity that defines Colombia, the work acknowledges that our history has been shaped by the ongoing dialogue between Indigenous, African, European, and many other communities that have contributed to who we are today. Rather than understanding identity as something fixed or uniform, the piece conceives it as a living process of exchange, adaptation, and collective creation.

Two clay bodies intertwine to form a continuous chain that encircles the vessel, evoking bonds that connect different histories, cultures, and experiences without erasing their distinctions. Each link retains traces of its origin, yet gains new strength through its connection to the others. The chain becomes a metaphor for the relationships that tie us to our roots, our territories, and the people who form part of our story. No link exists in isolation; its resilience depends precisely on the diversity of elements that compose it. The vessel thus becomes a container for shared memories and intersecting trajectories.

The work celebrates being mestiza not only as a cultural inheritance, but as a way of inhabiting the world. Migration, encounter, belonging, and transformation are ongoing processes that continue to shape us both individually and collectively. In this sense, *Mestiza* proposes understanding diversity not as a difference to be resolved, but as a source of strength, creativity, and resilience. Like the links that surround the vessel, our identities are built through connections that transform us without erasing the traces of where we come from, reminding us that mixture does not imply loss, but rather the constant possibility of evolution.

**Wheel-thrown ceramic with hand-built chain, black clay and porcelain, cone 6 and gold luster details. Unique piece.**



# LATINX PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL LATINX PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume 11, Issue 1

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## Call for Submissions

Dear NLPA members,

We are happy to announce that submission guidelines for the Spring/Summer 2027 issue of the NLPA bulletin, **Latinx Psychology Today**, will be shared next month.

The NLPA bulletin aims to highlight and celebrate NLPA members' academic, professional, and community contributions that reflect the organization's mission and the theme of each issue across different sections including:

- Student Leadership and Special Interest Groups, Community Organization Spotlight
- Student Member Spotlight
- Professional Member Spotlight
- Science Spotlight

The different sections are designed to uplift diverse voices, journeys, and efforts both within and beyond traditional academic settings, showcasing inspiring members engaged in impactful work—from students and career professionals to those involved in grassroots, community-based participatory research, or applied practice.

We invite submissions that share recent or noteworthy research, publications, projects, and community initiatives relevant to our mission and readership, with the goal of sparking interest, fostering connection, and promoting visibility of the work being carried out by our members. **Stay tuned for full details in our upcoming call for submissions!**

We are excited and look forward to including your piece in the next NLPA bulletin issue. Please email your questions or concerns to [nlpanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:nlpanewsletter@gmail.com)

P.S. You can visit all previous LPT issues at <https://www.nlpa.ws/latinx-psychology-today-bulletin>

Sincerely,

The NLPA Editorial Board