

# LATINX PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL LATINX PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume 10, Issue 2

Spring/Summer 2026

## Pausa y Poder: Prioritizing Wellness and Rest

### Editorial Board

#### Editor:

Dr. Frances R. Morales

#### Associate Editor:

Dr. Charmaine Mora-Ozuna

#### Assistant Editors:

Ashley Bautista

Cameron McCauley

Jordan Paris

Camila Tirado

### Contents

From our President

From the Editor

NLPA 2025 Summit Reflections

Joy and Rest as Collective  
Resistance

Student Leadership and Special  
Interest Groups Spotlights

Student Member Spotlights

Professional Member Spotlights

A Moment of Mind-Body  
Mindfulness

NLPA Statement on Immigration

NLPA Advocacy in Action

Let Rest be Revolutionary

### FROM THE PRESIDENT:

#### NLPA 2026 - Soñando en Comunidad: Lo Que Imaginamos y Construimos Juntos

As we began 2026 in NLPA's journey, we find ourselves at a meaningful crossroads. One that invites us to slow down, look inward, and ask with honesty and care: *Who are we [NLPA] now? What do we stand for? And where are we being called to go next?*



NLPA and the U.S. Latinx communities have weathered hard seasons together. Times that demanded rapid response, survival mode thinking, and immense emotional labor. Now, with a bit more space to breathe, we have the opportunity to be intentional, to dream, to re-imagine, and to re-align with our values, not just as professionals, but as a community.

This moment calls for more than planning events, conferences, or setting timelines. It asks us to re-engage with purpose, to reflect on the heart of our work and the soul of our organization. I envision beginning this season with a facilitated strategic visioning, one that holds space for deep dialogue, collective imagination, and cultural grounding.

This visioning is not about top-down decisions. It's about co-creating a direction that reflects the voices, needs, and dreams of our membership. To support this, we want to center a few core questions to guide our conversation:

● **What does NLPA stand for now?** How has our identity evolved, and what remains at the core?



- 
- **What big ideas and long-term goals are calling to us?** What vision do we have for the kind of impact we want to make in the world?
  - **What kind of professional *home* do we want to be?** Not just an association or a network but a space that nurtures belonging, growth, and community in this pivotal moment.
  - **What unmet needs exist in our communities and the field that require our leadership and advocacy?** Where is our presence most needed right now?
  - **And just as importantly, *how* do we want to operate?** Not as a traditional “white-collar” organization built on hierarchy and bureaucracy, but as a “brown-collar” collective grounded in *humildad, colaboracion, justicia, y cultura*.

This is more than operational strategy. It’s about cultural renewal. It’s about imagining what it means to be a professional organization that fully embodies Latinx values in 2026 and for years to come. The values that center collectivism, belonging, intersectionality, justice, reciprocity, and radical healing and care. It’s about building something that feels deeply familiar and radically transformative all at once.

This year, I invite us to dream expansively and act with clarity. To move from what has been done to vision, from surviving to building, from inherited models to liberatory healing and onward. This is our moment to be bold, grounded, and creative together. Let’s co-create a future for NLPA that is not only rooted in our past, but fully responsive to our present, and powerfully aligned with the future our community deserves.

*A soñar juntos,*

Dr. Oswaldo Moreno  
2026 NLPA President

Address correspondence to: Dr. Oswaldo Moreno, Virginia Commonwealth University  
Department of Psychology 806 W. Franklin St., Richmond, Virginia 23284.  
E-mail: [oamoreno@vcu.edu](mailto:oamoreno@vcu.edu)

## 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

**Dr. Oswaldo Moreno**  
President

**Dr. Lorraine Benuto**  
President-Elect

**Dr. Alfonso Mercado**  
Past-President

**Dr. Kiara Manosalvas**  
Secretary

**Dr. Fiorella L. Carlos Chavez**  
Treasurer and Acting Secretary  
of Finances

**Dr. Frances R. Morales**  
NLPA Bulletin Editor

**Dr. Charmaine Mora-Ozuma**  
NLPA Bulletin Associate Editor

**Dr. Ivan Carbajal**  
Early Career Professional  
Representative

**Anyoliny Sánchez**  
Student Representative

**Dr. Sandra Gomez**  
Past-Student Representative

**Jacqueline Sifuentes**  
Student Representative-Elect

**Dr. Bryan Rojas-Arauz**  
Chief Diversity Officer

**Dr. Amanda Venta**  
Psychological Science Issues  
Advocate

**Dr. Regina Jean-Van Hell**  
Student Mentoring Chair

**Dr. German Cadenas**  
Senior Advisor on Public Policy

**Dr. Taymy Caso**  
CoNREPA Representative



## Message from the Editor

Frances R. Morales, PhD

### Editorial

We, the NLPA editorial team, are excited to bring you the Spring/Summer 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.

---

We, the NLPA editorial team, are thrilled to release this second issue after the successful relaunch of the NLPA LPT with the intention of uplifting the voices of our comunidad during these challenging times. The Latinx Psychology Today (LPT) is NLPA's official bulletin. 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.

The closing months of the past year and the beginning of 2026 have unfolded amid profound challenges, as we attempt to remain grounded and steadfast in a reality shaped by persistent threats to our well-being, rights, and collective voice. 2026 has tested our endurance, stretched our resilience, and asked us to reckon more deeply with what truly sustains us. Against all, we continue to show up in comunidad, embodying remarkable strength as we juggle the demands of life and work while advancing Latinx psychology with intention and care.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) psychologists, particularly those of us working in academic and research settings, are often situated at the intersection of personal vulnerability and institutional responsibility. As psychologists, we bear witness to the psychological consequences of exclusionary policies, dehumanizing public discourse, and intergenerational trauma, while simultaneously navigating academic systems that demand sustained productivity often in the absence of adequate structural or institutional support. Against this backdrop, the current LPT issue centers on *Pausa y Poder: Prioritizing Wellness and Rest*, honoring rest as a liberatory practice that cultivates agency, resilience, and collective care.

For BIPOC psychologists, rest is not an indulgence; it is a radical and necessary act of resistance. Pausa and rest should be understood as intentional choices that sustain our capacity to remain engaged, grounded, and in community amid a politically charged landscape shaped by anti-immigration rhetoric, racialized fearmongering, and the erosion of collective care. Within such conditions, expectations of constant productivity, emotional availability, and limitless resilience imposed on BIPOC psychologists constitute a form of harm. Choosing rest is to reject that demand, affirming our humanity and protecting our capacity to endure and continue leading.

---

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. 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 the need to slow down and pause, to care for ourselves and our comunidad, as a liberatory practice. The issue also includes reflections on last fall's NLPA Summit – Psychology at the Border Resilience, Mental Health, and the Immigrant Journey.

We hope this issue of *Latinx Psychology Today* encourages ongoing connection, mutual care, and intentional pause, particularly at a moment when People of Color, immigrants, women, queer communities, and other historically marginalized groups are increasingly vilified, criminalized, and dehumanized within the national discourse. While grassroots organizing, activism, and collective solidarity remain vital to our survival and liberation, so too does rest. 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>

Address correspondence to: Dr. Frances R. Morales, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley,  
Department of Psychological Science – 1201 W. University Drive, Edinburg, TX 78539.  
E-mail: [frances.morales01@utrgv.edu](mailto:frances.morales01@utrgv.edu)

## Summit Reflections: Community, Research, and Impact

The 2025 NLPA Summit, centered on psychology at the border, brought together scholars, clinicians, trainees, and community members in a dynamic and deeply meaningful gathering centered on connection, cultural pride, and collective purpose. Across sessions, attendees described the Summit as invigorating, empowering, and *cálida*, highlighting its role in fostering both professional growth and emotional renewal during a challenging sociopolitical moment.



The following reflections, shared with the Latinx Psychology Today Bulletin Editorial Board, capture the emotional impact, professional inspiration, and sense of community that participants experienced throughout the Summit. Across sessions, participants pointed to specific moments that were significant and illustrative of the Summit's broader themes.

One session that resonated strongly was the *Invisible Borders: Navigating Bicultural Burnout as Latinx Professionals from Immigrant Families*. Samantha Cruz, a community member living along the Texas border, shared that the session moved her deeply by highlighting ongoing injustices while reinforcing the importance of unity within the Latino community. She described the experience as informative, cultural, and supportive.

Several attendees noted how the Summit's theme aligned closely with their professional work. Andy Torres, a doctoral student from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), identified sessions on immigration evaluations, the APA immigration task force, and the bienvenida at the Hidalgo Pump House as especially memorable. They described feeling compelled, nostalgic, hopeful, and inspired, emphasizing how the Summit strengthened their commitment to supporting Hispanic clients, students, and supervisees.



Participants also described experiencing a wide range of emotions. Dr. Milton Fuentes, professor at Montclair State University, noted that being in community with colleagues was deeply invigorating, particularly as conversations moved beyond dominant immigration rhetoric toward narratives rooted in critical consciousness. He emphasized the importance of resisting and persisting while remaining grounded and regulated.

The keynote presentation by Sister Norma generated particularly strong reactions among attendees. Dr. Diana Formoso, professor at Nova Southeastern University, described being deeply moved by Sister Norma's accounts of migrants' journeys and the ways the McAllen community mobilized to provide essential support and restore dignity. She also noted the powerful symbolism of the keynote taking place at the historic Hidalgo Pumphouse Museum, followed by a youth mariachi performance, which created a memorable experience.



For some attendees, the summit provided a renewed sense of hope and purpose. Dr. Kim Nguyen-Finn, assistant professor at UTRGV shared that she had been feeling overwhelmed and disheartened by current policies and dehumanizing narratives surrounding migration. However, she described the summit as offering exactly the sense of empowerment and clarity she needed.

Overall, reflections from attendees consistently emphasized themes of community, resilience, and inspiration. The LPT Bulletin Editorial Board would like to give special appreciation to Dr. Alfonso Mercado for his leadership and to UTRGV for hosting the event. Their efforts made possible a gathering that fostered dialogue, facilitated the sharing of impactful research, strengthened professional networks, and reinforced NLPA members' commitment to advocacy, culturally responsive practice, and advancing the well-being of the communities they serve. We look forward to seeing everyone at next year's NLPA Conference, *Soñar en comunidad: Lo que imaginamos y construimos juntos*, in Denver, Colorado, October 15-17, 2026.

### In Their Own Words

"The conference helped me breathe again. I was reminded that our field has the ability to help our community through our knowledge of context, prevention, and social justice. I felt called to think beyond the therapy room and toward collective healing, advocacy, and solidarity. Even when the world feels like it's burning, we still have a role. It helped me focus my energy on advocacy and how small actions can build into bigger movements within our own communities." - Monica Sanchez, Doctoral Candidate at the University of Georgia

"Being at the border was an emotional experience. However, what I took away from the summit was the strength, resilience and beauty of our community, and in particular, I was so struck energy of the UTRGV undergraduate volunteers." - Dr. Edward Delgado-Romero, NLPA co-founder and Associate Dean for Faculty and Staff Services in the College of Education at the University of Georgia.



## Joy and Rest as Collective Resistance: *Un Baile Inolvidable* this March 2026

Dr. Charmaine Mora-Ozuna

---

As we write this piece on joy and rest, we honor our siblings who have been displaced, kidnapped, and murdered. We recognize the lives of those whose families have been torn apart. We write acknowledging that we are mourning, *y a la misma vez*, we are resisting. Grief and resistance coexist in our bodies. They sit side by side en nuestras salas, in our therapy rooms, and in our classrooms.

On February 8th, 2026, for about fifteen minutes, the world paused. For fifteen minutes, anxiety, tiredness, sadness, frustration, and anger were not at the forefront of our experience, joy was. Bad Bunny's Super Bowl halftime show became, for many Latines, a collective exhale. For a brief period, we were able to be human and just exist. Speaking on behalf of many in our communities, the performance refueled us, *y nos dio un poquito de esperanza*.

Joy as resistance is not new, it has existed as part of la lucha. Our ancestors, those across Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, have used joy and cultural expression as a way to survive. Liberation psychology (Martín-Baró, 1994) calls us to attend to the historical conditions shaping psychological distress while also amplifying collective strengths.

When guilt tries to take over for engaging in joyful moments through challenging times, remember that it is not an individual selfish treat. Joy is a communal practice that disrupts dehumanization and challenges narratives that erase our creativity, brilliance, and pleasure.

Today, we highlight and honor la música, el baile, el arte, y la creatividad as embodied forms of resistance. Connected to African roots, from Plena in Puerto Rico, to Cumbia in Colombia, to Mariachi in Mexico, to other music across the Latine diaspora, these cultural practices carry memories and hope. They hold stories that have survived migration, borders, and generations. *En cada canción y en cada baile*, there is history and there is possibility. This is exactly what Bad Bunny did for us during this Super Bowl halftime show. He told stories, called in oppressive events, welcomed authenticity, and celebrated our right to exist, just as we are.

Dr. Lorgia García Peña (2022), Latinx Studies scholar and author, reminds us that although we may not all live in our home countries, our cultural production is a site of resistance within the diaspora. We carry our culture, regardless of where we live. In her work on Black Latinidad, she emphasizes the importance of preserving our histories and cultural knowledge.

---

Dr. Hector Adames, Dr. Nayeli Chávez-Dueñas, and their colleagues (2019) highlight through the HEART framework the importance of connecting clients (individuals, families, and communities) to cultural traditions during their healing journeys. Similarly, we must also engage in spaces where we can sing loudly, dance freely, and remember that in choosing joy and cultural connection, we are practicing resistance.

Joy is familiar to our comunidad, but rest can feel foreign. No sé ustedes, but I observe my mother, a Mexican woman, grow anxious when she slows down. Latinas, like other historically and presently oppressed communities, are hustlers. We make a way out of nothing. We have been conditioned to equate worth with productivity. What I have witnessed in my family, and in the therapy room, is that staying still is hard, especially for older generations whose survival depended on constant movement.

Tricia Hersey (2022), founder of The Nap Ministry, discusses four tenants, starting with, “rest is a form of resistance because it disrupts and pushes back against capitalism and white supremacy” (p. 13). As a second tenant, she reminds us that our bodies are a site of liberation.

Yet, many of our parents', *abuelas'*, *abuelos'*, and ancestors' bodies have been sites of extraction through field work, domestic work, the service industry, and other employment where they are often overworked and underpaid. Many have been socialized to believe that rest is selfish or lazy. This makes it vital for us to help our families and communities re-write this narrative and learn how to engage in rest.

As psychologists, educators, healers and students committed to our comunidad, we are called to confront injustice. Y *también*, we are called to sustain life. **Liberation is not only the dismantling of oppressive systems, it is the cultivation of conditions where our people can breathe, create, and feel joy unapologetically.**

We hope this piece reminds you to rest and to do the things that you love. Not that you need permission, but in case you feel like you do, *aquí está*. **May this serve as an invitation to nap, dance, sing, laugh, pray, garden, paint, or simply exist in a sanctuary space, whatever sanctuary means to you.** In your body. In your home. In community.

Con cariño,  
Dr. Charmaine Mora-Ozuna





## NLPA Student Leadership and Special Interest Groups Spotlight

### Bilingual Issues in Latinx Mental Health SIG

Primary contact: Dr. Elisa DeVargas (she/her)

Co-Chairs of the Bilingual Issues in Latinx Mental Health SIG:

Brie Kohrt, David Martinez, Yessenia Mejia, Mercedes Palacios, Bryan Rojas-Arauz, Hannah Meisels, Gabriela Peralta Reyes, Alejandra Buitrago

#### Overview of the Special Interest Group (SIG):

The Bilingual Issues in Latinx Mental Health SIG aims to offer a space for psychologists and mental health professionals who are interested in training, research, and clinical practice with Latinx, Spanish speaking and bilingual communities.

#### How has your SIG practiced wellness to continue intentionally showing up within your respective professional roles?

The Bilingual SIG has been very active this year with its every-six-weeks Spanish consultation groups. Here, clinicians come together to consult, share resources, and even practice their clinical Spanish skills. This year, as ICE raids and discrimination put extra pressure on immigrant communities, these gatherings became more than meetings—they turned into much-needed support circles for clinicians on the front lines. These groups have been a helpful tool to boost wellness and combat the isolation bilingual psychologists often feel. During these group *pláticas*, clinicians find collective care rooted in shared culture, language, and professional experience. It's a space where stories are exchanged, frustrations are voiced, and everyone gets to be held,

so they can return to their clients grounded, supported, and ready to keep showing up. We also provide a break-out room specifically for students and non-licensed professionals! Plus, these groups are free, even to people who are not members of NLPA!

#### How does your group's work embody Pausa y Poder?

The Bilingual SIG's Spanish consultation groups—paired with our quarterly charlas—serve as an antidote to burnout, giving bilingual clinicians and scholars a community that truly gets their unique challenges. By pooling resources, wisdom, and lived experience, we lighten the load of endless translating and exhausting internet hunts for client tools. Instead, we learn, grow, and thrive together.

#### What is one message your SIG leaves our NLPA *familia* with?

"El Pueblo Unido Jamás Será Vencido"  
- Quilapayún

**Overview of the Special Interest Group (SIG):**

The Immigrant Collaborative SIG aims to identify, support, promote, and advocate for culturally responsive and contextually relevant strategies to help immigrants, their families, and their providers. The Immigrant Collaborative seeks to address issues impacting all immigrants, regardless of their documentation status. This special interest group is dedicated to utilizing best practices in research, training, evaluations, and service to enhance the mental health and well-being of immigrant communities, while also emphasizing their valuable contributions to society. Moreover, the Immigrant Collaborative is committed to social justice and fostering strong relationships through effective multi-disciplinary collaboration and communication among researchers, practitioners, community organizations and institutions that serve immigrant communities and through advocating for immigrant rights and protections. The purpose of this special interest group aligns with the overall mission of NLPA to provide equitable, inclusive treatment for the Latinx/e population.

**How has your SIG practiced wellness to continue intentionally showing up within your respective professional roles?**

To offer holistic support, the Immigrant Collaborative SIG developed four sub-teams to lead specific immigration-related goals: 1. Clinical Forensic Team; 2. Clinical Team; 3. Research Team; and 4. Resources Team. The Clinical Forensic Team plans to begin offering a consultation group for members. The Resources team continues to gather resources about training sites. The Clinical Team is working on developing a series of wellness groups. The Research Team had 14 collaborations at the 2025 NLPA Summit. These included roundtables, symposiums, workshops and posters.

Some highlights: The Forensic sub-team, led by Dr. Cassandra Bailey, offered an all-day pre-conference workshop, which was very well attended and well-received. Two additional CEU workshops were offered. Dr. Diana Formoso led a team on how we can support migrant youth and families in a shifting immigration landscape. Dr. Susana A. López and Dr. Bryan Rojas-Araúz's workshop focused on cultural

wealth and how immigrant communities actively resist and survive attacks on their humanity. We also hosted a roundtable presentation to share information about how to get involved in the Immigrant SIG. Lastly, we hosted a very successful Social Hour during the Border Summit which fostered connection between NLPA members.

### **How does your group's work embody Pausa y Poder?**

By advocating for best practices in research, training, evaluation, and service delivery, the Immigrant Collaborative promotes models of care that move beyond crisis response and toward sustainable well-being. This aligns with Pausa y Poder's emphasis on rest as we continue to do difficult clinical, educational, and research work in our communities. Our SIG knows that immigrants (clients, professionals, and communities) often experience chronic stress, vicarious trauma, and burnout due to the vast systemic inequities. Our SIG's commitment to supporting providers alongside immigrant communities stems from collective care practices to protect our collective mental and emotional health.

### **Share something that reflects the spirit of your group:**

As a SIG, we try to maintain constant communication and interaction with our members. We value new members and we acknowledge them at our meetings. We start the meeting with brief introductions to highlight our collective interpersonal

power. The check-in functions as an opportunity to connect and give space to anything that the group might be interested in discussing. Given the harm targeted against immigrants, a quote that centers our work is: "They tried to bury us. They did not know we were seeds" ("*Quisieron enterrarnos, pero no sabían que éramos semillas*"). This serves as a reminder that we are beautiful and resilient as a community.

### **What is one message your SIG leaves our NLPA familia with?**

We hope everyone feels empowered to prioritize their wellness as a vital part of their identities and their psychological work. Pausa y Poder means intentionally pausing to reconnect with our purpose, culture, and community. We invite our members to join us in action and rest and care for themselves. Finding compassion for the self and resisting the demand to constantly produce. We invite leaders to model wellness, honor lived experience, and build collaborative spaces rooted in care and love.



---

## NLPA Student Member Spotlight

Isabel Almanza (she/her/ella)

1<sup>st</sup> year Master's Student | M.S. Psychological Science |  
Texas Women's University

---

### Tell us about yourself and how your work connects to wellness, rest, and/or liberatory or community-centered healing.

I am a graduate student at Texas Woman's University in the Psychological Science program, where my focus is on ethnic minority mental health and the psychological impact of discrimination on marginalized communities. My advocacy work is grounded in social justice values and informed by my community engagement, including volunteer roles with organizations serving Hispanic families, youth programs, and mental health advocacy initiatives. My work is deeply connected to community-centered healing, particularly within Latino communities who often face cultural and structural barriers to care. I approach research and clinical practice with a commitment to cultural humility, collective resilience, and the belief that healing is strengthened through community support. By prioritizing culturally grounded interventions and community engagement, I aim to promote accessible, affirming spaces where individuals can experience safety, connection, and empowerment.

### What motivates your commitment to healing work?

My commitment to healing work is deeply rooted in my identity as a Mexican descendant and by the values instilled in me by my family. Community involvement, caretaking, and resilience were actively demonstrated by my parents. We rarely engaged in mental health discussion, but it was deeply felt. I learned early on how stress and silence can affect not only an individual but entire families and communities that surround them. As I moved into advocacy spaces, I saw those same struggles reflected in the clients and communities I served. I remember moments where I witnessed many people push through exhaustion and stress because they believed it was a burden to rest. This strengthened my determination to advocate for culturally grounded care. I have learned through moments of overwhelming emotions and self-reflection that rest is not luxury indulgent but a form of agency and power. Rest to me is a reclaiming of power and necessary for a foundational start to healing, personally and collectively.

**Share something you are currently working on or deeply excited about. How does *Pausa y Poder* impact this work?**

I am currently deeply engaged in community work with youth, which I find both inspiring and energizing. I work with young people in foster care, resident youth facilities, and local outreach programs through mentorship, advocacy, and youth-focused initiatives. My goal is to help them navigate complex social, emotional, and systemic challenges while providing guidance, resources, and encouragement to foster growth, resilience, and self-confidence. In this work, I am continually reminded of the importance of listening, presence, and cultural humility, as each youth brings unique experiences and strengths. *Pausa y Poder* resonates with me because it emphasizes that even in the midst of service and advocacy, taking intentional moments to rest, reflect, and recharge is essential. By honoring rest as a form of power, I am able to sustain the energy, focus, and care required to make a meaningful impact for the youth and communities I serve.

**Share a glimpse of who you are beyond your work, such as a hobby, a cultural tradition that helps you recharge, a sustaining quote or affirmation, or what brings you joy and grounding.**

Beyond my academics and advocacy, I find grounding in creativity, social engagement, and cultural practices. I love reading, hiking, going to the gym, and coloring to help me rest and reconnect with myself. I also enjoy cooking and baking for my family and friends, to show my appreciation for them. I treasure large family gatherings where we share meals,

laughter, and stories. These moments remind me of the importance of connection. My mom often sends motivational quotes, which provide gentle reminders to keep moving forward. Being outside, spending quality time with family, and engaging in creative or active pursuits help me recharge, stay centered, and cultivate joy in everyday life.

**What hopes do you have for our field and for the well-being of those who care for others? What does *Pausa y Poder* mean to you as a student member of NLPA?**

I hope that the future of mental health care emphasizes compassionate, equitable support for both clients and the clinicians who serve them. Everyone deserves moments of rest to stay present, recharge, and maintain the energy needed to continue their work. As a student member of NLPA, *Pausa y Poder* represents taking intentional pauses to center oneself, calm the mind, and then move forward with renewed purpose in learning and contributing to the field of psychology. To emerging clinicians, I encourage embracing rest as an act of resilience, it is not a pause from impact, but a powerful step toward sustaining it.



## NLPA Student Member Spotlight

**Maria Paula Moreno Parada (she/her/ella)**

3rd year Doctoral Student | Clinical Psychology PhD |  
University of Arkansas

### **Tell us about yourself and how your work connects to wellness, rest, and/or liberatory or community-centered healing.**

My family is from Colombia. I grew up in South Florida, and because of its proximity to Miami, I was surrounded by diverse cultures, including Latine culture. I attended Duke University for undergrad, where I interacted with scholars from across the world, which helped me consider different perspectives. I then moved to Connecticut, where I worked as a research assistant for a few years. Here, I deepened my value of finding community wherever I am. At present, I live in Arkansas to complete graduate school and I am focusing my work on how Latines navigate seeking care for children. As far as my clinical interests, I would like to serve Spanish-speaking families and provide neurodiversity-affirming care, which are two rich and nuanced communities I would be honored to connect with to engage in healing together.

### **What motivates your commitment to healing work?**

My amazing mentor, Dr. Ana Bridges, reminded me that although many Latines

may self-sacrifice or overwork in order to serve their community, it is important to rest to best serve the community. If we overextend ourselves and don't take time to rest and take care of ourselves, we may accomplish goals in the short-term, but this is not a sustainable approach. There are so few clinicians in general, much less Spanish-speaking ones, so we need to commit to renewal and recharge to ensure that we can serve our communities for as long as possible and in the most present and engaged way. Healing takes time, and I find it important to remember that we are not just healers, we are also healed through engagement with the community.

### **Share something you are currently working on or deeply excited about. How does *Pausa y Poder* impact this work?**

I am participating in a community advisory board for researchers seeking to understand how to best serve Latine families of autistic individuals. I am participating as a student, but there are also clinicians and parents of autistic people in the group. Understanding the perspective of these parents is invaluable, and I hope that my perspective can also be useful to others in the group so that we can engage in community care and

communal learning. Our sessions are often held in Spanish, and we frequently check in with each other to ask about our rest and care practices, so I find this is a wonderful time to recharge by connecting with the community and strengthen my Spanish so that I can feel more comfortable working with Spanish-speaking families in the future.

**Share a glimpse of who you are beyond your work, such as a hobby, a cultural tradition that helps you recharge, a sustaining quote or affirmation, or what brings you joy and grounding.**

A quote that motivates me in my work is, "*Juntos venceremos.*" It reminds me of the importance of a robust support system and connections to community. I know that I can only achieve what I can because of my ancestors and those who helped pave the path before me. Part of what brings me joy is listening to music in Spanish. Many Latine rhythms, like salsa and merengue, make me want to dance and sing. I feel so grounded and aware of the present in these moments, and it helps me feel proud of my culture.

**What hopes do you have for our field and for the well-being of those who care for others? What does *Pausa y Poder* mean to you as a student member of NLPA?**

I hope that the field will not rely on a myopic view of what healing looks like. Communities are sources of power and information, and to truly do transformative work, you have to understand that you can not do it by yourself. Rather than that being an intimidating idea, that can serve

as a source of inspiration. Look around you, people are doing amazing work, and you can heal and be healed by engaging with it. Resting is nothing to be ashamed of, rather it strengthens you and can help sustain your work for longer.



## NLPA Professional Member Spotlight

Jacqueline Fuentes, M.Ed., MsW, PhD

(ella, she, her)

President, Division 35, Section 3,  
Society of Latinx Womxn in Psychology  
American Psychological Association

### Tell us about yourself and how your work connects to wellness, rest, and/or liberatory or community-centered healing.

*Saludos colegas!* I come to you to share *palabras* on how I am centering wellness and *alegría* during these times, inviting you to take what you need to support you in your *current luchas*.

I am Dra. Jacqueline Fuentes, bilingual-bicultural, first-generation Xicana Counseling Psychologist and am happy to celebrate the completion of my student training and now stepping into the identity of an early-career professional. I completed my internship at Kaiser Permanente Northern California Mental Health Training Program and my postdoctoral training at USC/Children's Hospital of Los Angeles within the Project HEAL Trauma track, specializing in child trauma psychology. Trained in prevention, family-centered, systemic, and evidence-based trauma treatment, I am dedicated to providing research and clinical practice focused on interrupting structural violence and its effects on children's and families' mental health and well-being. I am also a fierce proponent of language justice, advocating for enhanced training for bilingual mental health professionals.

This past year, I honored my homecoming after my doctoral journey took me to many places: Oregon, the Bay (Northern CA), and Georgia. It has also encompassed a post-doctoral training year filled with uncertainties, ongoing collective trauma, and grief. Specifically, the LA Fires, ICE raids, and the closure of a medical clinic dedicated towards providing gender affirming care impacted my training, my peers, as well as the children and families we served. Moreover, the pressures to study and pass the EPPP were strong.

I tried to follow the usual path after fellowship, like getting licensed and finding a job, but it was hard with so much structural violence happening. I often asked myself, "How could we be expected to act as if nothing is happening?" To push back against this, I spoke openly about my pain with supervisors, training directors, and peers, reminding them that my identity cannot separate my personal and professional life. *Desahogándome*, sharing my righteous rage, and, of course, individual therapy helped me get through the year, along with leaning on liberatory teachings of *colegas* within NLPA.

**What helped you understand rest as a source of power and agency in healing**

## work?

I claimed my *pausa* after fellowship training and have engaged in various spaces that have provided me with *poder y alegría*. My current energies have revolved around studying for the EPPP and restoring my mindbodyspirit. Mi amiga, Dra. Marjory Vazquez modeled it as necessary to honor the twists and turns of our journeys as first-generation students, recognizing that reaching this stage is a testament to our efforts that began in high school. My doctoral academic sisters further supported me.

And so, my restoration and joy have included enjoying my family through *presencia y convivio*, including enjoying a *cafecito* and *pan dulce* with my mom and *tía* and just slowing down before immersing myself in what is next.

## Share something you are currently working on or deeply excited about. How does *Pausa y Poder* impact this work?

My restoration has also included taking the leadership baton to lead APA Division 35, Section 3, with the intention to expand spaces for us. With the support of the fierce muxeres on my leadership team, we are collectively stepping into our *poder* and *medicina*, shaping programming. Feeling the limited space to process the gravity of ongoing ICE Raids, I reached out to my mentor, Dra. Adriana Medrano, and invited her to lead a community circle. As a true mentor, she accepted the offer and encouraged me to be her co-presenter supporting me to lean into my medicine. Together, we planned and held, “*Grounding in Ancestral Medicina y Comunidad to Forge Forward: A Community Healing Circle*” last November. Healers across the nation

gathered en comunidad to unburden our pain, reclaim lived and ancestral knowledge, and fill our cups with the *alegría*, the kind that emerges when we let the tears roll and are comforted by *comunidad* that reminds us of our *poder*. I have derived the same *alegría* in participating in the Coyolxauhqui Full Moon Circles held by *Mujeres de Maiz*, allowing me to (re)connect and (re)member Indigenous cosmologies and ancestry.

## Share a personal and affirming way you have practiced *Pausa y Poder*.

Most recently, I had the privilege of returning back to Morelos, Mexico, with my family. Together, we made tamales, participated in posadas, visited sacred sites including Teotihuacán and La Basílica de Guadalupe, and went to a spring water balneario. Upon returning, I am filled with the vastness of my bicultural identity, which includes layered histories of my ethnic background, ancestral memory, my relationship with land, and the enduring campesino wisdom that I descend from and that continues to shape me.

## What hopes do you hold for our field and the well-being of those who care for others, especially our *NLPA Familia*?

As we hold space and cultivate radical hope, I invite you to reflect: When was your last *pausa* that nourished your mind, body, and spirit? What are your sources of *alegría*, and what new ones might you cultivate?

Thank you all for *acompañar* my *testimonio*. May we continue drawing on our embodied knowledge and cultural strengths to create brighter possibilities ahead.



## NLPA Professional Member Spotlight

Veronica Torrico, PsyD

(ella, she, her)

### Tell us about yourself and how your work connects to wellness, rest, and/or liberatory or community-centered healing.

I earned my PsyD in Clinical Psychology in 2020 from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in eating disorders at Cohen's Children's Medical Center, where I developed a strong focus on eating disorders in communities of color and the need for culturally responsive care. Since 2021, I have worked as a HealthySteps Specialist at NYC Health +Hospitals/Elmhurst, serving immigrant and historically underserved communities. In this role, I support caregivers in fostering healthy attachment, self-regulation, and family resilience, while collaborating with pediatric providers on care coordination, counseling, and culturally responsive education around child development and the intersection of mental health and immigration.

My work is deeply connected to *Pausa y Poder* and is grounded in education, advocacy, and community support amid a challenging sociopolitical climate. Writing, psychoeducation, conversations with families, and public presentations are central to my work and represent its most healing aspects.

As a Bolivian native with a background in research, I am deeply committed to advancing health equity. Prior to my doctorate, I worked as a Project Manager at NYU on a bilingual narrative project highlighting the lived experiences of stroke survivors, which I presented at the American Public Health Association Conference Film Festival in 2013.

### What motivates your work? What helped you understand rest as a source of power and agency in healing work?

What motivates my work most is my community—*mi gente*. Every day, I have the privilege of working with families from diverse backgrounds, learning from their lived experiences, honoring their customs, and respecting their cultures. Sharing knowledge while witnessing their stories is both humbling and profoundly meaningful. The trust placed in me to hold people's deepest fears and experiences of injustice is a responsibility I carry with care. I strive to offer emotional resonance, validation, and advocacy, standing firmly alongside my community.

I remain deeply rooted in my cultural identity and committed to challenging oppressive systems, while continually learning about my own history and diaspora through personal reflection,

research, and heritage exploration. My clinical practice is grounded in work around memory, trauma, and intergenerational storytelling. As a helper, managing stress and prioritizing self-care are essential to preventing burnout and sustaining this work. Balance looks different for everyone, but for me, activism and advocacy are what give me *Pausa y Poder*. My writing, psychoeducation, conversations with parents, and public presentations are the most healing and empowering aspects of my work—and they remind me every day that even small actions can spark change, inspire hope, and fuel motivation.

**Share something you are currently working on or deeply excited about. How does *Pausa y Poder* impact this work?**

I am deeply passionate about advocacy and education for immigrant communities—groups that have long faced attacks, terror, racism, and systemic injustice. Many individuals lack safe spaces to express their fears, and many parents struggle with how to talk to their children about the current sociopolitical climate. To address this, I have developed a project focused on helping families open conversations with children about immigration and deportation. While the emotional climate in these communities can feel heavy, my goal is to bring light—guiding families, providing practical tools for communicating with children, and reminding parents that they are doing their best. So far, I have presented this project at various consulates, including the Mexican and Ecuadorian consulates, as well as at other organizations. I look forward to reaching many more families in the future.

**Share a personal and affirming way you have practiced *Pausa y Poder*.**

I once endured a deeply painful experience while advocating for my community. In that moment, it became clear that many people do not fully understand the systemic barriers immigrant families face. My community was misunderstood, dismissed, and met with a profound lack of empathy. The pain, anger, and frustration I experienced could have led to a sense of defeat. Instead, I grounded myself in my culture, my community—*mi gente*—my core beliefs, and my connection to *Pachamama*. My Bolivian native music, my dances, and Andean folklore became essential tools for processing my anger, sadness, grief, and resilience. The sounds of the *charango*, *quena*, and *bombo* were profoundly healing. Their stories—carried through Aymara and Quechua songs and lyrics—gave voice to the lived realities of struggle, discrimination, and oppression endured by Indigenous communities. Through this music and dances, I felt my soul strengthen, my identity reclaimed, and my connection to my roots and *aguayo* restored. I emerged empowered in my voice and purpose. *Jallalla!* What once felt like injustice transformed into motivation, collective strength, and an unwavering commitment to advocacy.

**What hopes do you hold for our field and the well-being of those who care for others, especially our *NLPA Familia*?**

The vision I hold for the field of psychology is one rooted in love, human connection, and genuine empathy for our communities. The current sociopolitical climate, marked by polarization, constant

exposure to distressing news, and social division, has intensified compassion fatigue and emotional exhaustion. There have been moments when I have felt personally overwhelmed while simultaneously holding space for patients and families enduring the same emotional strain. Bearing witness to these experiences can lead to vicarious political trauma and, at times, feelings of imposter syndrome. Beyond practicing self-care, I draw strength from remaining deeply connected to my cultural identity, dedicating myself to challenging oppressive systems, and continually exploring my history and diaspora through reflection, research, and heritage. Furthermore, spaces like NLPA have been a profound source of support—being in community, participating in consultation groups, and attending the yearly conference have all provided meaningful moments of *Pausa y Poder* for me.



---

## A Moment of Mind-Body Mindfulness: Grounding in Gratitude

Andy Torres

5th year Doctoral Student | Clinical Psychology PhD |  
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

---

Yoga and mindfulness originate from spiritual practices associated with Buddhism dating back to around 500 B.C.E. One of the most enchanting aspects of mindfulness is the ability to practice it anywhere and at any time. Mindfulness is not bound to licensures, monthly membership fees, or exotic locations.

Mindfulness can be practiced on top of your yoga mat beneath the blue-black starry skies; at the shoreline while waiting for the first rays of the sun to warm your face as the symphony of ocean waves carries away your worries; beneath a tree in your backyard on a Sunday morning, sipping the rich, sweet, and bold flavors of a hot coffee latte; or taking deep breaths in your bed while listening to gentle rain tapping on your window as it leads you into a calm, deep, and peaceful sleep.

Mindfulness allows us to be present in this point of space and time, grounded in both mind and body. The second beauty of mindfulness is its ability to help us appreciate our mere existence without judgment. In doing so, it allows us to practice gratitude for our experiences. This is an invitation to you, the NLPA *familia*, to join the mindfulness challenge and practice mindfulness for just one minute. Your body, mind, and health may thank you for it.

And speaking of “thanks,” gratitude is embedded in the spiritual and philosophical roots of mindfulness. Within mindfulness, gratitude can be practiced by non-judgmentally appreciating the present moment, including both its joys and its hardships, its pleasant and unpleasant moments. This perspective allows for growth and helps us find life’s gifts even in the midst of chaos.

As a psychologist-in-training, a bilingual, mixed-race, first-generation-everything individual, I am grateful for the opportunity to provide psychological health services. I thank life, my loved ones, and my friends for filling my life with wonderful memories and countless moments of joy and peace. I thank the challenges of life, for they have taught me how to swim against the current. I thank my mentors for guiding me through moments of uncertainty, especially Dr. Alfonso Mercado, who has guided my academic journey since 2016.

At last, I encourage you, the reader of this post, to practice mindfulness in the present moment and cultivate gratitude in your own life. I share this message as one of hope, gratitude, and resistance to my fellow NLPA *comunidad*, students of psychology, psychologists and mental health providers, and to all who strive to understand and improve the human experience.  
**To quote Bob Marley: Light up the darkness.**



# NLPA Statement on Immigration

## Released in February 2026

Dear NLPA Community,

We reach out to you to stand in solidarity with so many who have been impacted by the policy landscape and by immigration enforcement. We know that the past year has been arduous for Latinxs, immigrants, and other minoritized communities. The impacts of violent and inhumane immigration enforcement are large in scope, affecting individuals and families across immigration statuses, targeting communities and neighborhoods all over the country, and particularly in Minnesota, Illinois, Oregon, Washington DC, and California among many others. **As a community of psychologists and scholars, we stand against violence, and decry those who commit it, including violent ICE agents of Latinx descent.**

Active community organizing and national advocacy give us hope. The ongoing sharing of stories, videos, and other accounts of escalating violence are bringing to light the realities that our country is enduring. Recent polls show that public opinion is shifting, with most of the American people seeing that Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) has gone too far. We agree.

**Kindling this collective hope, we share with you the following tools for action:**

- 1. National Advocacy:** In January, amid the growing violence by ICE and federal agents in Minnesota, NLPA joined major national advocacy organizations and signed onto a letter calling on Congressional leaders to investigate federal immigration enforcement actions. The letter was led by the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC), Common Cause, and League of Women Voters.
- 2. Contact Your Elected Officials:** We encourage individuals to contact their elected officials to express how immigration enforcement is impacting their local communities. The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) has an action hub with several options. Additionally, individuals may directly contact the offices of their Senators and their member of the House of Representatives.
- 3. Strategies to Support Impacted People:** NLPA joined the President's Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration to compile evidence-informed strategies and develop a public resource: Supporting Mental Health Amid Uncertain Immigration Status: A Higher Education Guide. We offered practical strategies for individuals who are directly impacted, their supporters, those providing mental health services, and higher education leaders. A webinar is also available and was co-sponsored by NLPA and other immigrant rights' organizations and advocates.
- 4. Psychological Science:** For those engaging with immigration topics in psychological practice, teaching, training, research, and advocacy, we highly recommend the report of the APA Task Force on Immigration and Health. Many NLPA members and leaders contributed to this report, which is grounded in science and offers a robust section on advocacy and policy recommendations.

NLPA continues to stand with our members and in solidarity with individuals and communities who are impacted in multifaceted ways. We will continue advocating for immigrant rights, and for the health of Latinx people and all communities.



# NLPA Advocacy in Action

## Resources and Advocacy

(Visit the links below for more information)

- [Lulac, joined by leading legacy civil rights organizations, calls for congressional investigation into recent federal immigration enforcement actions](#)
- [Higher Ed Immigration Portal, Supporting Mental Health Amid Uncertain Immigration Status: A Higher Education Guide](#)
- [Higher Ed Immigration Portal, Mental Health and Immigration Uncertainty Webinar](#)
- [Psychologists for Justice in Palestine, A Petition Asking APA to Protect Freedom of Speech and Justice for All Related to Current Listening Sessions](#)
- [NLPA Advocacy in Action homepage](#)

## Allied Organizations

- [Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration](#)
- [National Hispanic Leadership Agenda](#)

# Let Rest Be Revolutionary

BY ELENA VALE

She laid down.  
And the world  
called it laziness.  
But her body  
called it return.  
Her bones whispered,  
We were not made  
to always move.  
They've told us  
movement is value.  
That to be still  
is to be wasteful.  
That sleep is selfish  
unless it's earned.  
We have inherited  
a rhythm of urgency,  
a culture of grind  
wrapped in feminist hashtags.  
But if the system only loves you  
when you're producing,  
it doesn't love you—  
it loves your output.  
So she stopped.  
She said:  
"I am not a machine."  
She said:  
"My body deserves softness  
that doesn't need a reason."  
She said:  
"No."  
And the world didn't applaud.  
But her nervous system did.  
This is the feminism  
they forget to print on T-shirts:  
The nap instead of the meeting  
The silence after saying "no"  
The boundary drawn in permanent marker  
The bath taken without guilt  
The phone left unanswered  
Not because we don't care—  
but because we finally do.  
About ourselves.



"Self-care". Illustration by Paru Ramesh

Rest is not retreat.  
It's resistance.  
It's trusting  
that the revolution doesn't crumble  
if you take a day off.  
It's remembering  
that burnout helps no one.  
That your softness  
is not optional—  
it's strategy.  
The nap  
is an act of war  
in a world  
that wants women tired, compliant,  
too busy to revolt.  
Rest  
is a spell  
that unravels capitalism  
from the inside out.  
You don't have to:  
Earn stillness  
Justify sleep  
Apologize for turning off  
Prove your worth through pain  
You can simply say:  
I am tired. I deserve care. I will pause  
And that.

is enough.  
Feminism is fierce.  
But it is also  
a deep exhale.  
It is the lie-down.  
The disengagement.  
The refusal to rush.  
The healing that happens  
when no one is looking.  
It is the bare face.  
The unmade bed.  
The unposted moment  
that belongs only to you.  
So rest, sister.  
Not as indulgence.  
Not as rebellion.  
Not as branding.  
But as birthright.  
You do not need  
to be exhausted  
to be powerful.  
You are not a movement  
only when you march.  
You are one  
even when you're curled up  
in quiet.

# LATINX PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL LATINX PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume 11, Issue 1

Spring 2026

## Call for Submissions

Dear NLPA members,

We are happy to announce that submission guidelines for the Fall/Winter 2026 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 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