



VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

# Center for Latin American Studies

Spring 2009

## CLAS Awarded Tinker Grant to Fund Summer Research

**CLAS** has been awarded a prestigious institutional grant from the Tinker Foundation. With matching funds from the College of Arts and Science, the Tinker Field Research Grants will be used to support pre-dissertation graduate student research over the summer. We are guaranteed funding for 2009 and can apply for renewed funding in each of the next two years. This funding is designated to support field research and travel expenses for graduate students working in Latin America and Iberia, with preference given to doctoral students in the early stages of their research; we will fund exploratory and pre-dissertation research as well as language study. Graduate students from all Vanderbilt

schools are encouraged to apply, and CLAS expects to announce ten award recipients in mid-March.

The CLAS Tinker Field Research Grant replaces and expands our previous CLAS/CFA Summer Research Award program, and comes at a time when funding opportunities for graduate students are shrinking. We are pleased to be able to provide more support for graduate students in this crucial stage of their careers.

Dr. Edward Larocque Tinker created the foundation in 1959. His lifelong interest in the Iberian tradition in the Old and New Worlds has directed the foundation's overall focus on Latin America, Spain and Portugal.

## UNDP, IDB Meetings Held at Vanderbilt

**V**anderbilt was the site of important planning meetings for both the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Development Program in January 2009.

Researchers at Vanderbilt and across the Americas came together in Nashville on January 16 to study the effects of a major economic downswing on democracy. At this LAPOP workshop, called "Economic Shocks, Social Welfare and Democratic Sustainability in the Americas" and sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Mitchell Seligson discussed from a historical perspective how economic crises have affected democracy. Abby Córdova presented data gathered by LAPOP on the relationship between the economic conditions and

democracy. Other Vanderbilt presenters included Jonathan Hiskey, Cindy Kam, Elizabeth Zechmeister and Miriam Shakow.

Twenty-three Latin American economists affiliated with the

United Nations Development Program met on Vanderbilt's campus January 23-24 to discuss the measurement of economic inequality and its impact on development. Professor of Economics James Foster, who has done extensive research in this area, joined the visiting economists for the two-day conference, entitled "Measurement of Human Development and Inequality." CLAS was pleased to host the meeting. These measures will be used in conceptualizing future Human Development Reports in the region.



*CLAS hosted the UNDP January 23-24 for "Measurement of Human Development and Inequality."*



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#### **CLAS**

**230 Buttrick Hall**  
**VU Station B 351806**  
**2301 Vanderbilt Place**  
**Nashville, TN 37235-1806**  
**tel: 615-322-2527**  
**fax: 615-322-2305**  
**<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/clas>**

**Director:** Edward F. Fischer  
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**Program Manager:** Norma Antillón  
**Outreach Coordinator:** Sarah Birdwell  
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## Director's Corner

**W**e are living in a very different world than the one we inhabited six months ago. The financial crisis has shaken the core of the economy and altered our funding in the academy. Falling oil prices have undermined Chavez's ability to promote his Bolivarian project at home and abroad. Soybean producers in Argentina and Brazil are likewise suffering from the commodity price decline. And northern Mexico is in danger of becoming a failed state.

At the same time, this is a moment of great potential. Latin American political and economic relations are undergoing a fundamental reconfiguration. In this context, it is crucial that foreign policy under the Obama administration realizes that the future of the United States is intimately linked to the future of Latin America. I was heartened to hear that the Obama administration has asked for LAPOP to develop a democracy index for use in policy planning. We need to support this effort and think of other ways that we can make our knowledge applicable in this time of opportunity of administration openness to the social sciences.

This recalls our charter as a National Resource Center—to serve as a resource on Latin America in service of the public good. We will be applying for the next round of Title VI National Resource Center funding in November 2009. And I ask each of you to think of ways that we might fulfill our mission more effectively and to share those ideas with us over the coming months as we plot our funding priorities for the next five years.

—Ted Fischer

## Did you know...

- ♦ the U.S. imports more oil from Latin America than from the Middle East?
- ♦ the U.S. has more direct foreign investment in Latin America than in Europe?
- ♦ persons of Latin American descent are the largest minority in the United States?

## Did you know...

how easy it is to earn a **Minor** in  
**Latin American Studies?**

**In fact you may already qualify.**

Visit [www.vanderbilt.edu/clas](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/clas) for more information.



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## Faculty Profile: Elizabeth Zechmeister

Elizabeth Zechmeister is Assistant Professor of Political Science and serves as Assistant Director of the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). Zechmeister is working to introduce experimental studies within LAPOP's surveys. One current project focuses on better understanding individuals' responses to crime victimization questions. The results are providing interesting insight into the conditions under which individuals may or may not report having been the victim of a crime.



(crime). Some of the pilot research for these projects is being conducted on the Vanderbilt campus in the new political science research lab, of which Zechmeister is co-director for 2008-09. The lab provides a way for political scientists to test theories related to public opinion and political behavior.

Zechmeister earned a B.A. from Loyola University Chicago, minoring in Latin American Politics, and a M.A. in Latin American Politics from the University of

Chicago in 1996. She received a Ph.D. at Duke University, where she began to focus specifically on understanding political behavior in Latin America. Zechmeister's dissertation examined factors that influence the decisions made by voters in Latin America, with a particular focus on Mexico. She came to Vanderbilt from the University of California-Davis.

Zechmeister and her collaborator Jennifer Merolla (Claremont Graduate University) have a manuscript in press at the University of Chicago called *Democracy at Risk? How Terrorist Threats Affect the Public*. The work evaluates the ways in which individuals react to terrorist threat compared to better times, using survey and experimental data from both the U.S. and Mexico. Zechmeister has begun to pursue several extensions to this research project, one of which involves a more detailed look at the individual-level consequences of two crisis types: economic and public security

## Helfer Publishes Research on Andean Tribunal of Justice

The Andean Tribunal of Justice is the world's third most active international court (after the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice). It has proven to be an especially effective international dispute settlement venue, and yet it has received little scholarly attention to date. Larry Helfer, Professor of Law and Director of the International Legal Studies Program at Vanderbilt Law School, and his coauthors are rectifying this with three recent papers published as part of their long-term empirical study of the Andean Tribunal of Justice.

In "Islands of Effective International Adjudication: Constructing an Intellectual Property Rule of Law in the Andean Community" (forthcoming in the *American Journal of International Law* and available now at [www.ssrn.com](http://www.ssrn.com)), Helfer and his colleagues note that the Andean Community, a forty-year-old regional integration pact of developing Andean nations in South America, has widely been viewed as a failure. Yet, they show how the Andean Community has in fact achieved remarkable success within one part of its legal system, the Andean Tribunal of Justice. The tribunal has issued over 1,400 rulings to date, 90% of them concern intellectual property. The tribunal has helped to establish intellectual property as a "rule of law island" in the Andean Community where national judges, administrative officials and private parties actively participate in regional litigation and conform their behavior to Andean intellectual property rules. This tribunal has been an exception to its surrounding Andean legal context, which remains under-enforced and often circumvented by domestic actors.

## In Brief

**Omar Ali** (African American and Diaspora Studies) was quoted in *El Espectador*, Colombia's second largest newspaper, on October 14, 2008 on the difficulties faced by third party candidates in the United States electoral system, which he attributes to electoral laws established at the level of state legislatures.

**Carol Sullivan** thanks CLAS for the Visiting Scholar position she held at Vanderbilt for a year, saying that having library access helped tremendously in her preparation of an outline and sample chapter of a book, which she will shortly submit to Duke University Press.

## Recent Faculty Publications

**Elizabeth Zechmeister** (Political Science) – *Democracy at Risk? How Terrorist Threats Affect the Public* (2009). University of Chicago Press. Coauthored with Jennifer L. Merolla, Claremont Graduate University.

**Carlos Jáuregui** (Spanish & Portuguese) – *The Conquest on Trial: Carvajal's Complaint of the Indians in the Court of Death* (2008). Penn State Press.

**Edward Wright-Rios** (History) – *Revolutions in Mexican Catholicism: Vision, Shrine and Society in Oaxaca, 1887-1934* (2009). Duke University Press.

**John Wayne Janusek** (Anthropology) – *Ancient Tiwanaku: Case Studies in Early Societies* (2008). Cambridge University Press.

**Susan Berk-Seligson** (Spanish & Portuguese) – *Coerced Confessions: The Discourse of Bilingual Police Interrogations* (2009). Mouton de Gruyter.

Two other papers are forthcoming: one, tentatively titled "Constructing Judicial Supranationalism in the Andes," will appear in the *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics*; the other, on judicial lawmaking and activism, is currently in draft form.



### Trip With Shalom Foundation to Guatemala

**T**he CLAS/Children's Hospital/Shalom Foundation medical project proceeds apace in Guatemala. In September, we sent our fourth surgery mission trip to Guatemala City. The 18-member team consisted of doctors, surgeons, nurses and staff



members from Vanderbilt Children's Hospital and Shalom Foundation staff. The team performed a number of pediatric surgeries, focusing particularly on cleft lip and palate surgeries, removal of masses, birth defect or scar reduction, and other ENT procedures. The trip

also gave team members a chance to check on the toddler Joseline Elizabeth Vásquez Santay, whom VCH and Shalom brought to Nashville in 2008 to perform surgery to remove a neck tumor the size of her head, which hindered her ability to eat, breathe and move her neck normally. After three months of extensive procedures, Joseline and her family returned to Guatemala City, where she is doing very well.

In late 2008, Vanderbilt signed an agreement with the Shalom Foundation to establish a permanent home in Guatemala City for the medical missions program. The 12,000-square-foot facility will include 3 operating rooms, 17 recovery beds, and 5 pre-operative beds.

Over Spring Break, a team of Biomedical Engineering students led by Prof. Cynthia Paschal will be working on equipment used by the Vanderbilt/Shalom project.

### Guayasamín Exhibit Receives Awards

**I**n October 2008 Joseph Mella, Ted Fischer and Carlos Jáuregui were awarded the Outstanding Exhibition and Catalogue of Contemporary Materials by the Southeastern College Art Conference (SESAC) for organizing the exhibit *Of Rage and Redemption: The Art of Oswaldo Guayasamín* and producing its companion catalogue. The award recognizes exemplary work in the visual arts in higher education.

CLAS and the Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery were also honored in an event held in celebration of the 90th birthday of renowned, late Ecuadorian artist Oswaldo Guayasamín in Quito, Ecuador. Curator Joseph Mella was given an original lithograph by the artist in recognition of Vanderbilt's contributions to the legacy of Guayasamín that culminated in the national traveling exhibition.

### CLAS National Advisory Board Meeting

**C**LAS will host a meeting of its National Advisory Board members March 12-13. Board members include Franklin Knight (Johns Hopkins University), Nora England (University of Texas), Tom Reese (Tulane University), and Tom Trebat (Columbia University). Events will include a roundtable discussion on "The Future of Latin American Studies" on March 13.

### Guatemala Scholars' Network Conference

**C**LAS held the first conference of the Guatemala Scholars' Network (GSN) October 11-12 at Vanderbilt. The meeting was attended by nearly 50 faculty members,



graduate students, and professionals who conduct research in Guatemala. In addition to discussing their research in Guatemala, conference participants explored the future direction of the organization, and drew up a work plan to present at the GSN meeting at the AAA conference in November 2008 and the LASA meeting in 2009.

### Brazil Financial Expert Visits Alma Mater

**S**andy Severino visited Vanderbilt in November to discuss issues facing Latin America during the current global recession. Severino, a graduate of Vanderbilt in 1983, is now the Managing Director of Latin American Credit Markets for Citi. He currently works with emerging markets in Brazil. His presentations included a small lunch question and answer session and several lectures to senior undergraduates and graduate economics students.



## LAPOP News

**LAPOP data used by Obama transition team** – The Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean with USAID submitted a briefer for the Obama transition filled with data compiled by the LAPOP AmericasBarometer project. Additional data was requested on LAPOP's work on populism receptivity. The request and inclusion of this data is a significant endorsement of LAPOP's groundbreaking research.

**Inter-American Development Bank grant** – The IDB has granted LAPOP \$150,000 to plan for their 2010 surveys with a focus on the economic crisis. The Brazilian Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CHPq) has also granted \$52,000 to their partner at the Universidade de Brasília for the 2010 surveys.

**LAPOP has received significant global media coverage** of late in news publications citing data gathered in the Americas Barometer survey. El País (Uruguay) ran several features following LAPOP presentations



given in Montevideo in September 2008, and stories have also appeared in online news sources in Spain and the United States.

**Book Award** – The website Foreign Policy edición española included LAPOP's edited volume, *Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the AmericasBarometer*, in its list of the top 25 books of 2008. (<http://www.fp-es.org/los-25-libros-de-fp-2008>).

## Manuel Zapata Olivella Library Collection

The library recently acquired a collection of personal papers of Manuel Zapata Olivella, noted Afro-Colombian novelist and anthropologist, known as “the dean of Black Hispanic writers.” The collection consists of manuscripts, personal correspondence, videos, journals, and photographs, as well as an extensive number of transcriptions and recordings of interviews with Afro-Colombian slave descendents.

The collection will be an exceptional resource for students and scholars in Latin American and Afro-Hispanic studies. Special thanks are due to Prof. William Luis and Pablo Gómez for their help in making the acquisition of this exciting new collection possible.



VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

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Has the honor of announcing the

## *Certificate in Latin American Studies*

The Center for Latin American Studies offers graduate students from different departments and schools the opportunity to complete a Certificate in Latin American Studies. The Certificate allows students to document their regional specialization by earning the Certificate, which is awarded in conjunction with their M.A. or Ph.D. The Certificate also encourages graduate students to study outside of their disciplinary specialization.

The LAS Certificate program requires 15 hours of formal course work in Latin American Studies. Course work must be spread over at least two disciplines, no more than 9 hours coming from any one discipline. The Certificate also requires demonstrated conversational or reading proficiency in Spanish, Portuguese, or an indigenous Latin American language.

For more information, visit [www.vanderbilt.edu/clas](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/clas) or contact CLAS @ [clas@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:clas@vanderbilt.edu).

Susan Berk-Seligson, Associate Director CLAS

Norma Antillón, Program Manager CLAS



### Graduating M.A. Students

Six students will graduate with a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies in Spring 2009:

**Juri Bottura** plans to pursue a doctorate in Political Science.

**Lakisha Grant** plans to pursue a doctorate in Political Science.

**Andrew Larason** plans to complete a collection of short films on Latin American folklore and mythology. He is considering attending film school and/or art school in Mexico or Argentina.

**Matthew Layton** plans to pursue a doctorate in Political Science.

**Laura Morgan** plans to pursue a doctorate in Spanish & Portuguese, focusing on modern Latin American Literature and women writers.

**Chaz Yingling** plans to pursue a doctorate in History.



*Graduating M.A. students (from left to right) Chaz Yingling, Lakisha Grant, Matthey Layton, and Juri Bottura.*

### Student News

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Over the past year M.A. student **Andrew Larason** has drawn inspiration from his research and travels in the K'iche' speaking highlands of Guatemala to translate his experiences into various film projects. He is currently working on two film projects about the K'iche', one of which will be screened at World on Wednesdays on February 18. While Guatemalan folklore and spirituality have been his main focus, he has also explored facets of the Latin American community in Nashville, such as the creation of the city's first all Spanish-speaking Catholic church. This latter project, entitled *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, was created in collaboration with CLAS graduate Mark Kendall and has been submitted to numerous national and international festivals.

M.A. student **Katie Chalk** (LAS) will intern with Nashville Mayor Karl Dean's Office of Economic and Community Development in Spring 2009. Kathleen's work will focus on community

development, working especially with the Latino population, and fostering small minority-owned business growth.

**Dr. Jesús Escamilla Roa** has received a prestigious CONACYT fellowship to take a postdoctoral appointment in the Department of Physics & Astronomy. Escamilla Roa will continue his research in theoretical physics and the phenomenology of neutrino oscillations.

M.A. student **Leslie McClure** (LAS) will release an album entitled "Back Home to You" in Spring 2009. All proceeds from sales of the CD, which contains an eclectic mix of songs in Spanish, Portuguese and English, will benefit Conexión Américas and the Martha O'Bryan Center.

### Alumni News

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**Greg Johnson** (M.A. 1991) is currently employed with Science Application International Cooperation in Mt. Pleasant, SC. Previously Greg held positions in Louisiana State University's Antiterrorism Assistance Program and various other projects, including a stint in Burundi teaching peacekeeping tasks to Burundian troops under a U.S. State Department-sponsored program.

**David LaFevor**, a doctoral student in the Department of History, was awarded a Fulbright-García Robles grant to research his dissertation project, "Navigating the Concepts of Modernity, Race,

and National Identity through Sports and Business in Mexico, Cuba, and the United States, 1910-1930." David is in Mexico City until June 2009 to conduct this research, where he is affiliated with the Center of Investigation on Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Britta Watters** (M.A. 2001) is currently working at Neely's Bend Elementary School in Nashville, teaching English Language Development Reading. Britta was previously employed with the Vanderbilt International Office. She and her husband Ajay are expecting a baby in May.

# CLAS Spring/Summer 2009

# Events

- **January 29** – Tango Fire (co-sponsored with Great Performances)
- **February 6** – Wines of Argentina wine tasting, co-sponsored by Midtown Wine & Spirits
- **February 19** – Lecture by Alejandro Portes
- **February 26** – Outreach Teacher Workshop “Black History of the Americas”
- **March 2-6** – Biomedical Engineering trip to Guatemala
- **March 12-13** – CLAS National Advisory Board meeting
- **March 13** – Roundtable: The Future of Latin American Studies
- **March 26** – Outreach Teacher Workshop “Guatemala: Indigenous Latin America Today”
- **April 2** – Outreach Teacher Workshop “Carmen Miranda and Chiquita Banana: Economic and Cultural Commerce with Latin America”
- **June 11-14** – LASA Meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- **June 1-8** – Outreach International Summer Institute “Puerto Rico, el pasado y el presente”
- **June 15-19** – Outreach Summer Institute “Archaeoastronomy” (co-sponsored by Dyer Observatory)



*Tango Fire (above); Wines of Argentina wine tasting (right)*



## Fall 2008 Events of Note

**Alma Guillermoprieto**—Renowned Latin American journalist Alma Guillermoprieto visited Vanderbilt in September, participating in a workshop with area middle and high school teachers and giving a public lecture entitled “How to Be Mexican.”

**Día de los Muertos Celebration at Cheekwood Museum of Art** – CLAS again participated in this annual event. With the help of Elena Segovia and her colleague Iván Vásquez, Andrew Larason (M.A. student in LAS) directed a short informative film on the Day of the Dead, which was shown at the celebration and viewed by the record number of 3,500 people who attended.

## Outreach News

**Puerto Rico, el pasado y el presente** – Elena Olazagasti-Segovia will lead the 2009 International Summer Professional Development Institute for K-12 teachers. Elena will accompany a group of teachers to Puerto Rico for one week and aid them in gaining a better understanding of Puerto Rico’s rich and complex history, examining its sociocultural ties with Spain and Latin America and its political and economic relationship with the United States. Through the institute, the teachers will develop curriculum materials and incorporate their experiences into their teaching.

**Archaeoastronomy** – In June CLAS will collaborate with the Dyer Observatory on a professional development institute for K-12 teachers on archaeoastronomy. Participants will learn about Mayan and Incan archaeoastronomy, with particular focus on the groups’ mathematical and calendrical systems, archaeology, religious beliefs and social practices. Renowned archaeoastronomer Anthony Aveni will interact with teachers and give an evening public lecture at Dyer. Workshop attendees will also visit the state-of-the-art planetarium at Nashville’s Adventure Science Center and tour the Dyer Observatory, where they’ll participate in a sundial activity and discuss the equation of time-astronomical principles.



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# *Report on the* CLAS Foreign Area Officer Program

**V**anderbilt University's Latin American Studies program has helped train over twenty Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) since 1987. FAOs are a trained cadre of foreign area and political science experts who are ambassadors and diplomats of the armed services overseas. FAOs receive years of extensive training in foreign languages, culture, diplomacy, strategic intelligence, and international relations. They fill a wide range of posts both at home and abroad including serving as military attaches at foreign embassies, providing analysis on geopolitics out of the Pentagon, or working as country experts to the major military commands. FAO graduates from our M.A. program have filled posts throughout the hemisphere, utilizing their expertise in inter-American affairs.

**Scott Roberts** (M.A. 2005) recently returned from Iraq and is happy to be with his family after a long, hard tour. He will spend six months in Washington, D.C. before reporting for attaché duty in Uruguay.

**John Suggs** graduated in December 2008 and is currently in Argentina executing his In Country Training (ICT).

**John Trylch** will receive his M.A. in May 2009. Before studying at Vanderbilt, John was assigned to the U.S. Cavalry and served in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany and Iraq. While at Vanderbilt, John focused on Political Science and History. He will move with



*From left to right: John Trylch, John Suggs, James Winland*

his wife and daughter to Guatemala, where he will serve as Chief of Operations in the U.S. Military Group in Guatemala.

**James Winland** graduated in December 2008. Jim majored in Political Science and History and minored in Spanish & Portuguese. Previously he studied French at West Point, served as a tank platoon leader in Germany, commanded a tank company in South Korea, and traveled throughout Asia. He is currently completing his FAO training in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



**The Center for Latin American Studies**  
VU Station B #351806  
2301 Vanderbilt Place  
Nashville, TN 37235-1806