

noticias

INSTITUTE OF
LATIN
AMERICAN
STUDIES

COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY

FALL 2006
OCTOBER



This Aztec agricultural deity is among the features of an altar recently unearthed in Mexico City's central Zocalo Square. Archaeologists say the discovery of the altar and a nearby monolith could be the most significant Aztec find in recent years.

Photograph by Claudio Cruz/AP

COLUMBIA-NYU CONSORTIUM WINS DESIGNATION, FUNDS

Program aims to increase resources and visibility to Latin America in NYC

The Institute of Latin American Studies at Columbia University and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at New York University were advised during the summer that the U.S. Department of Education had awarded them the status of "National Resource Center" in Latin American studies.

The designation brings more than just a welcome source of funding. The NRC award signifies that Columbia stands among the most elite universities in the nation for the study of Latin America for the quality of its faculty and depth of course offerings.

The Consortium enjoys the support of over 100 internationally honored scholars,

has institutional support through faculty salaries and facilities of \$20 million, counts on a combined library of more than 600,000 volumes, and has access to unique audiences for over 150 events and programs.

Through the Consortium, Columbia and NYU aim to advance knowledge, shape policy options, and create and informed leadership and citizenry. NRC funding will be a stimulus to innovation, permitting us to combine scholarly distinction with a commitment to creative scholarship, teaching and outreach.

The Consortium also succeeded in obtaining a significant increase in federally funded FLAS (Foreign Language and Areas Studies) scholarships which will be of great benefit to CU graduate students doing research in Latin America. To this end, we want to make students aware of all Latin American

faculty and scholarly resources available to them at Columbia as well as fellowship opportunities including FLAS summer (3), academic year grants (4) and ILAS summer field research grants.

We at ILAS strive to the fullest extent to bring a stream of visitors to the University who continue to inform us of current events in Latin America. Our events will always be open forums in which students, faculty and the broader community can learn about and discuss the critical issues of Latin America. We urge you to take the fullest advantage of these opportunities for learning outside the classroom and join us at our lunchtime lecture series, panels and conferences

ILAS:
WHAT TO
EXPECT

06-07

The Institute is hard at work preparing an exciting new slate of programs that we hope will benefit the Columbia University community interested in Latin America. Our recent NRC designation will allow us to add new programs and services starting this semester. Complementing our academic brown bags and seminars are a slew of what we feel are worthy endeavors to help strengthen our mission such as a revamped website, a rebranding of the Institute (both to be unveiled soon), and the addition of this newsletter to our standard text-only e-mail distributions. We welcome any comments and hope you enjoy.

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Students share stories of summers in Latin America

Many first year SIPA students find that their first semester is about striking their own delicate balance between core requirement courses, attending amazing events both at SIPA and in Columbia, socializing, studying, surviving – and of course, looking ahead. In this case, and as we all know too well, it is never too early to keep your ear to the ground regarding internship opportunities. To this end, ILAS organized three different academic brown bags with students that worked or interned in Latin America during the summer to give first year students the opportunity to learn about this important aspect of their SIPA experience and gain tips about how to get an internship in Latin America.

On September 21st, Jaime Koppel gave the talk "Make a Difference while Studying" and shared how she runs a non-profit while studying at SIPA. (See student profile next page). Jaime's participation was followed by Liz Weiss and Kelly Desy, inaugural recipients of the brand new LASA Summer Travel Grant program. The Latin American Student Association provided travel funds for two SIPA students to complement their funding sources for summer internships. There were many qualified candidates for the grants and LASA hopes to continue the tradition in the future. Liz and Kelly spoke to students about their summer experiences in Mexico and Brazil, respectively. Liz interned with PRODESC (Proyecto Derechos Economicos, Sociales, y Culturales or Economic, Social, and Cultural

Rights Project), a small NGO located in Mexico City that does research and legal defense work, specifically labor and environmental rights. Liz conducted research on the rights abuses faced by the hundreds of thousands of Central American migrants who travel through Mexico via freight rails as they try to reach the United States.

Kelly interned with the World Resources Institute's branch New Ventures in Sao Paulo, Brazil. New Ventures supports sustainable enterprises by accelerating the transfer of capital to outstanding companies that incorporate social and environmental benefits.

Lastly, we organized a four-student internship panel, entitled "There and Back Again," with even more student internship experiences to cover the breadth of opportunities available to students in various fields and different countries.

Joshua Berger, an IMC concentrator, who interned at Folha de São Paulo, the largest newspaper in Brazil. He worked in several different sections of the paper and wrote articles about the World Cup, arms trafficking and a phenomenon called "erotic bingo."

Sara Rioff, an EPDer focusing on microfinance and microenterprise development, spent the summer in El Salvador with a grassroots development NGO called Alfalit de El Salvador. She participated in all of Alfalit's 4 main program areas: adult literacy, health, microfinance, and the environment.

Steve Pérez interned at the Colombian Ministry of Justice and the Interior in Bogota and worked their reincorporation into civil life program.

Aimee Sostowski, another EPDer, divided her time between an internship with the Falconbridge Foundation in the Dominican Republic and conducting a feasibility study with Oxfam America for a microfinance program in El Salvador. Aimee shared with us that it is possible to do two internships in one summer!

Janina Franco, a dual degree student with SIPA and Urban Planning (GSAPP), did research on the implications of a housing project in the slums of Chile. Janina was the recipient of an ILAS research and travel grant this year.

ILAS is putting together an internship database with summaries, contacts and all pertinent information so that students interested in doing quality work in Latin America may find a valuable tool at their disposal. Our hope is that this database, which will include an online search component, may provide students with a one-stop reference guide that will complement their outside search as well as the invaluable help they may receive at the Office of Career Services (OCS).

Regional Roundup:

A slightly irreverent look at what's making headlines in LatAm...

1. Mexico has a new president...

Ending weeks of political turmoil marked by civil disobedience across the streets of Mexico City by leftist sympathizers of Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador, the nation's highest electoral court declared his rival, conservative Felipe Calderón, President-elect. He will be sworn in on 1 Dec., succeeding term-limited Vicente Fox.

2. ...make that two presidents...

Declaring that the election was stolen from him, AMLO called a National Democratic Convention on Mexico's Independence Day, which declared him the "legitimate president" and allowed for the establishment of a shadow government. He takes office 20 Nov.

3. Brazil braces for a second round...

Hurt by last-minute allegations of corruption in his own campaign, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva failed to outright win re-election. Lula must now face former Sao Paulo Governor Geraldo Alckmin on 29 October; both men are actively courting voters who threw their support to the Democratic Movement Party, which won the most seats in Congress and is considered the "prized bride" in the elections.

4. It still smells of something...

In a well-received speech at the UN General Assembly, President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela did to Noam Chomsky what's usually Oprah's domain and skyrocketed his "Hegemony or Survival" to the top of Amazon's lists. Oh, and he criticized the Bush administration. Again. And then again at a rally in Harlem, where he also proposed expanding his heating fuel program to low-income American households. Boston ponders removing the famed CITGO sign.

5. More Presidential Election Watch...

Rafael Correa leads in Ecuador (15 Oct), Daniel Ortega inches ahead in Nicaragua (5 Nov), Chavez phones it in (3 Dec). What pendulum?

¿Sabias que?

ILAS, the Center for Brazil Studies, and the Latin American Student Association jointly proudly sponsor Spanish and Portuguese Speaking Clubs.

The Clubs meet EVERY FRIDAY from 9:30am -10:45am
Room 801 IAB - SPANISH
Room 802 IAB - PORTUGUESE

Come practice in a friendly and informal environment with native speakers as well as students of various proficiency levels in a completely comfortable atmosphere. All levels are welcome! Breakfast treats will be served.

For more information, please contact:
Debbie ([dcb2123](#)) - PORTUGUESE
Janina ([jaf2334](#)) - SPANISH

POWER PLAYER: Senator Cristina Kirchner, right, speaks at a recent ILAS event.



TAN LEJOS DE DIOS: Students and outside guests gather to hear a spirited talk on the Mexican presidential elections.



Argentina, Mexico head list of Fall ILAS 2006 Events

Senator Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, First Lady of Argentina, kicked off the slate of Fall 2006 events in grand style on September 18th by outlining the history of Argentine politics and economy for two groups of students, special guests and members from the Argentine Consulate. The First Lady spoke to students in Professors Pinto and Murillo's classes. Ever eloquent and polished, Lady Kirchner spoke favorably about the current administration and Argentina's progression toward a stable economy. Kirchner's events in New York, including her talk at Columbia, were covered widely in the Argentine press.

Senator Kirchner's speech was followed later in the month by an evening seminar on the aftermath of the Mexican presidential elections. Moderated by Pablo Picatto, Professor of History and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of History, the event brought together a panel of distinguished academics, including:

- *John Coatsworth*, Professor of History and at Harvard University, who spoke on the historical economic lessons to be drawn with the aftermath of the elections.
- *John Tutino*, professor and historian of Mexico at Georgetown University, who delivered a punchy historical perspective.
- *Claudio Lomnitz*, recent addition to Columbia, who focused on the historical and cultural sociology of the politics behind the elections, drawing on myth and fictions in the collective Mexican psyche.

For all the histrionic novelty of the elections, all panelists agreed that the roots of the outcome were to be found in the country's past. The prospects for progress, they concurred, were bleak, given turmoil within Mexico – a questionable victory – and beyond its borders – such as a potential economic down-

turn that could handicap the new administration and lead to six years of troubles.

Get to Know Your New Faculty: LISA SCHINELLER

As the Director of Sovereign Ratings for Latin America at Standard & Poors, Lisa Schineller brings a wealth of current information and analysis to her students in "Problems of Economic Growth in Latin America" at SIPA, which she co-teaches with ILAS director Tom Trebat. Professor Schineller is responsible for sovereign analysis in the Latin American Group and is the primary analyst responsible for Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Panama and Uruguay. Before joining S & P's in 1999, Professor Schineller worked in the International Finance Division at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors in Washington D.C. and previously as an economist for Exxon Company International. Professor Schineller has a Ph.D. in economics from Yale University and a B.A. in economics and Spanish from Wellesley College. Given her busy schedule working and teaching, we asked her a few questions to get to know her a little better.

1. As the director of Sovereign Ratings at S&P's, what is your favorite aspect of your job?

Meeting interesting people in the countries where I have traveled and getting their perspective on politics and the economy. I have had the luxury of meeting incredibly intelligent ministers and leaders of well known companies, even a president. But meetings or discussions with "regular people" often provide important much needed insight, such as with a local indigenous leader or taxi driver.

2. What do you feel is the most challenging problem Latin American countries face?

Establishing a firm foundation for growth that delivers across the income distribution and in doing so establishes faith in government; the latter lacking in the region as a whole is essential to create widespread participation in the economy and culture of paying taxes so that in turn the government has sufficient resources to improve the quality and coverage of education.

3. As a Brazil expert, what is your opinion on the outcome of the presidential elections and potential impacts on the economy?

Hopefully the fact there is a second round election means that both President Lula and candidate Alckmin will focus more on the many economic challenges facing Brazil during the intra-election period. Continuing to reduce Brazil's fiscal weaknesses is crucial in my opinion to pave the way for stronger growth prospects. Key advisors to both candidates recognize this. Both candidates would likely put some fiscal measures on the table, but their politically sensitive nature and make-up of Congress will also likely limit profound progress.

4. How has your experience teaching at SIPA been so far?

Just great. Love the discussions with students who are clearly interested and motivated.

5. If we ended up having a Subway Series, would you be cheering for the Yankees or the Mets?

As a diehard Yankee fan, I would have cheered for the Yankees. But following their complete debacle over the weekend, now it's the Mets. Both because I am a diehard New Yorker, and as a said Yankee fan, Willie Randolph happens to be one of my favorite players and is a phenomenal coach. Go Mets!

events

Please note that these events may change; we will do our best to provide timely updates if necessary. For more information, please check the Columbia University Events page or sign up to receive our newsletter and weekly "ILAS Events" e-mail.

Events:

www.columbia.edu/events

Newsletter:

ek2159@columbia.edu

Subject "Mailing List"

october

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"Police and Military Violence Against Women in Mexico's Volatile Political Climate"
802 IAB
12:00 - 1:30 PM
Speakers: Andrea Montpellier
Mirian Ruiz Mendoza

18

"The Economy of Puerto Rico: Restoring Growth"
1501 IAB
4:00 - 6:00 PM
Speakers: Mike Soto
Barry Bosworth, Gary Burtless
Francisco Rivera-Batiz

19

"Voice and Light: Political Competition and Partisanship in the Reform of Public Utilities in Argentina"
802 IAB
4:00 - 6:00 PM
Speaker: Victoria Murillo

23

"Kallari: We Bring the Rainforest to You"
802 IAB
1:00 - 2:30 PM
Speaker: Judy Logback

november

17

"LATIN AMERICA AT THE CROSSROADS" Conference, sponsored by the Latin American Student Association (LASA) and co-sponsored by ILAS. A full-day's worth of panels ranging from politics to economy, security to culture, LASA presents a slate of distinguished academics and regional movers and shakers, who will discuss their opinions where Latin America is headed. *The event is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Jorge Manzano (jrm2132).*

Student Spotlight: JAIME KOPPEL

Jaime is a second year MPA student at SIPA with a concentration in Economic and Political Development. Prior to beginning her studies at SIPA, Jaime worked for the New York City Administration for Children's Services. During her time with Children's Services she worked in the Commissioner's Office as Director of Development and subsequently as Chief of Staff to the Executive Deputy Commissioner of Child Welfare Programs. As Chief of Staff, she was responsible for helping to develop a new senior staff administrative structure for the "Child Welfare Programs" area of the agency (which oversees 4,000 of the agency's 6,500 staff).

Prior to working for Children's Services, Jaime lived in Honduras for two years. During this time, she worked with local Hondurans to begin developing a model for inexpensive bilingual education in Central America. As a result of her experience, Jaime realized a non-profit organization was needed to sustain a collaborative relationship with Honduran educational partners while also recruiting and supporting the cultural immersion experience of North American/European volunteer teachers - thus BECA was born.

Through BECA's partnership with the Asociacion de Padres Proeducación (a newly

formed Honduran nonprofit), over 180 children in Pre-K to 9th grade are currently being educated at San Jeronimo Bilingual School in Cofradia, Honduras by a team of 10 BECA volunteers and 5 Hondurans. Jaime spent the summer in Honduras evaluating BECA's progress and speaking with government officials and community members in other towns throughout Honduras in order to prepare for BECA's expansion beyond Cofradia.

1. What do you think is the role of education in the development of nations?

In my mind, quality education, along with clean drinking water and health care access, is clearly the foundation upon which nations' successful development can and will be built. Think about how much money we invest in a SIPA education. Either all SIPA students are exceedingly foolish or there is something to this whole "education is valuable" concept!

2. How is it balancing school and life and BECA and everything else?

I would say it challenges me every day! My days begin at the coffee pot and end about 19 hours later when I set the timer for the next morning's brew. I am very lucky to have an incredibly supportive husband who is not only 100% supportive, but is also my sounding board for absolutely everything.

3. Where do you see BECA in the next five years?

In five years I envision numerous BECA school sites throughout peri-urban areas of Honduras (and eventually throughout the Central American region), and a network of BECA volunteers throughout the USA engaged in meaningful work with Latino communities.

4. What *one* thing would you tell SIPA students that want to create an enterprise in Latin America (or elsewhere)?

Take advantage of the breadth of courses available to you at SIPA! For those interested in development work, think about the impact your withdrawal would have on a community well before you even entertain the thought of providing a service. If you're not in a position to fulfill the commitment you want to make and if you're not willing to work within a local system, don't even get started!

5. Since the Red Sox didn't make it to the Playoffs... Yankees or Mets?

I can't believe you even mentioned "the team from Boston." Appalling! Viva los Yankees!

(Jaime Koppel headlined our Sept. 21st brown bag, "Making a Difference While Studying: Social Entrepreneurship in Latin America.)

New ILAS-Related Faculty & Staff at Columbia

Maria Teresa Conde
Professor, Spanish/Portuguese

Maria Uriarte
Professor, EEB

Jessica Gillota
ILAS Program Assistant

Claudio Lomnitz
Professor, Anthropology

Caterina Pizzigoni
Asst. Professor, History

Jorge Manzano
ILAS Program Assistant

John Coatsworth
Professor, History

Gabriel Weintraub
Asst. Professor, Business

Guillermo Gallego
Asst. Professor, Engineering

Nicolas Stier
Asst. Professor, Business

Abigail Ahn: Newest Addition to ILAS Family

Message from the Executive Director

Thomas J. Trebat



On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Institute of Latin American Studies at Columbia, we are pleased to welcome

back so many of our returning students, and to extend the most cordial bienvenida to all faculty and students who are new this year to our community at Columbia.

Latin America occupies a very special place at Columbia University. A stream of professors and graduate students whose scholarly work is virtually synonymous with the development of Latin American studies in the United States have created a special tradition here, a Columbia way of looking at Latin America. I would describe this particular Columbia approach as one of dedication to bringing scholarly insight to bear upon the most pressing economic, political, social, and environmental issues in Latin America.

Perhaps this is an offshoot of the location of our school in New York City which is such a business and diplomatic crossroads for Latin America, and certainly it is influenced by the long tradition of excellence in social sciences and history here at Columbia. Whatever the source of this tradition, we at ILAS rededicate ourselves to its furtherance in 2006-07.

ILAS is proud to introduce our Fall 2006 Tinker professor, Dr. Jorge Leon-Trujillo. Prof. Leon earned his Doctorate in Sociology from the University of Montreal and is visiting the Institute of Latin American Studies at SIPA from FLACSO (Latin American Faculty for Social Sciences) in Quito, Ecuador. His teaching, research interests and consulting work

revolve around socio-economic identification of communities, relationships between communities and organizations, processes of social change and social conflict, development issues, leadership responsibilities, social history, social conflict and relationships between ethnic movements and political participation.

He will be teaching two classes this semester: Ethnic Movement & Political Participation which will analyze the relationships between ethnic movements and political participation, empirically focused on the Andean cases in comparative perspective, and Political Parties & Social Change in Latin America which analyzes the relationship between political parties and processes of social change. We hope you enjoy his classes!

Many issues about Latin America remain to be thrashed out and understood. Three issues seem particularly important to me as we examine the Latin American landscape in 2006-07. These three issues – the sustainability of the economic recovery, political and social stability, and U.S.-Latin American relations – will be among those transcendental themes that occupy all of us at ILAS in the year ahead. You will see these sorts of themes in the lineup of courses, conferences, speakers, and roundtable discussions we are sponsoring on Latin America and which are listed in the course catalogues.

In looking forward to the 2006-07 academic year, we want to emphasize how much we hope to make ILAS the critical campus hub for Latin America at SIPA and at the University more broadly. As Associate Director of the Institute in 2006-07, I want to emphasize an open door policy to assist with questions you may have regarding course content and registration, about regional versus functional specializations, about career prospects and internships in Latin America – in short, about

any of the issues that touch upon your interest in Latin America. We want to do everything in our power to facilitate your learning about this critical region of the world during your time at Columbia University.

About the Institute

The Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS) is the center for Latin America policy development and research at Columbia University. The Institute is housed in the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), which provides our students and faculty with access to the resources of one of the major policy institutions in the world.

For more than 40 years, ILAS has supported scholarship and professional achievement in the field of Latin American Studies. It was founded in 1962 in response to the government's need for knowledge of what was then a relatively understudied region. In recent years, ILAS has become known within the Columbia University community as the best resource for both contextually-grounded information and institutional contacts in Latin America.

DIRECTOR: Albert Fishlow
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ADMINISTRATOR: Eliza Kwon-Ahn

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