



LA CASA CULTURAL
DE JULIA DE
BURGOS
YALE UNIVERSITY



2019- 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

STAFF

Eileen Galvez
Director

Carolina Dávila
Assistant Director

a year's overview

HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES



The 2019-2020 school year was one filled with many accomplishments, feats, and of course, challenges. This year we embarked on a year-long theme called "Decolonizing La Casa." Specifically, we set a focus on anti-Blackness, Native/Indigenous erasure, and Queer and Trans exclusion. As the world around continues to deal with both a health and racial pandemic, the importance of having such conversations became more evident and pertinent.

HIGHLIGHTS

We started the year with "La Bienvenida" - an orientation luncheon for first-year students and their Spanish-speaking loved ones. We kicked off Latinx Heritage Month (LHM) with our annual Latinx Retreat, which had record-breaking attendance (over 170 participants). LHM concluded with a closing keynote address by scholar Clelia O. Rodriguez and our first annual LatinXcellence Showcase. Despite the challenges of a virtual transition, we were able to continue community building efforts with students that will inform future practices.

Our staff members were recognized in the following ways:

Directora Galvez presented at a national conference, published a book chapter on Yale student activism in 2015, and has increased service to Yale through several trainings and presentations.

Assistant Director Dávila presented at a regional conference, a national convention, and was a panelist on a national webinar about anti-Blackness in the Latinx community.

CHALLENGES

Throughout the year, we found that our community was impacted by the changing political climate of the country as well as issue revealed by the health pandemic. Some of the challenges faced by our community are as follows:

AAU campus climate survey results and sexual culture on campus
 Natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes in Puerto Rico)
 Covid-19 pandemic
 - impact on vulnerable communities (e.g. Latinx families, front-line workers and service providers)
 - reliable access to technology
 - various time zones
 - ability to stay on campus, travel home, or seek alternate housing due to differing learning needs, living circumstances, and access to resources

While our students continue to be resilient, the mental health needs (including distrust) continues to be of concern. With ongoing political stressors, health concerns, and an incoming presidential election, we predict we will have similar challenges ahead.

a year's overview

STAFFING



DIRECTOR

Dean Galvez completed her fifth academic calendar in her role as director of La Casa Cultural. For the academic year, she set the following overarching goal:

Create a concerted effort to create opportunities to learn, reflect, and enact changes that counters anti-Blackness, Native/Indigenous erasure, and Queer and Trans exclusion. Through this initiative, La Casa brought in outside speakers with lived experience and content expertise. The theme set the learning objectives for staff training, and furthermore, student organizations and student staff utilized this theme for programming and partnerships.

Dean Galvez continues to use creativity and culturally-relevant scholarship to center the mission of La Casa Cultural. Through the combination of her doctoral courses, active engagement in the field, mentorship, and collaborative approach, within and outside of Yale, La Casa Cultural continues to expand representation of Latinidad at Yale. This also includes increased accessibility to our families and friends who are more comfortable with their first languages. As such, she created the all-Spanish orientation called "La Bienvenida: De Su Hogar al Nuestro," and ensured that in the midst of changes in the Spring due to Covid-19, that communications were also translated in Spanish and Portuguese.

Her service work outside of La Casa included:

- Member of the YCDO Communications Working Group
- Member of the Yale Intercultural Affairs Council
- Member of the YCDO University Wide Committee
- Member of the Dean of Student Affairs Search Committee
- Dean's On-Call Rotation
- Trumbull Fellow
- Coordinated virtual meetings for Central American scholars and student affairs practitioners around the world

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Carolina Dávila completed her third academic year as Assistant Director of La Casa Cultural. In her first year, she was tasked with maintaining and furthering efforts at La Casa that further solidified the foundation of the center (e.g. processes and procedures, staff organization, event evaluations and timelines, advising student organizations, etc.). Carolina continued getting immersed in the Yale culture and community and working with her counterparts in the three other cultural centers to develop intercultural efforts (e.g. all-staff trainings, event collaborations, etc.). Some of her La Casa highlights this year include collaborating with the Office of International Students & Scholars to include cultural centers in the Orientation of International Students, increasing Graduate Assistant supervision, welcoming two new student organization affiliates, and creating the "La Casa en mi casa" social media takeover series.

Her service work outside of La Casa included:

- On-Call Responder
- Davenport Fellow
- Member of the YCDO Ad-Hoc Committee on Social Life & Community Values
- Member of the YCDO Undergraduate Organizations Committee
- Member of the Assistant Director Search Committee for the Afro-American Cultural Center
- NASPA Region 1 Ubuntu Institute's Womxn of Color Coordinator and co-presenter of "A Conversation on Gender Solidarity"
- ACPA Latinx Network Social Chair
- ACPA National Convention co-presenter of "Super Womxnhood: Debunking notions of perfection for womxn of color"
- NASPA and ACPA Latinx groups' webinar panelist on "Anti-Blackness in the Latinx/a/o Community"

a year's overview

STAFFING



GRADUATE ASSISTANTS (GA)

For this year, we hired two GAs at La Casa: Hector Peralta, a third year PhD student in American Studies, and Brea Harris, a second year student from the Yale School of Nursing. With an increased focus on leading and advising the Latinx Graduate Network, this group was able to provide visibility of La Casa to graduate students, accessibility, and funding for events.

Throughout the year, La Casa was able to program 9 events for graduate and professional students, including an academic lecture with Dr. Jason Ruiz followed by a reception. GAs also hosted two of our monthly-development staff meetings and sat in on biweekly Leadership Team meetings with our Head PL and Head SC.

STUDENT COORDINATORS (SC)

The SC staff was composed of 12 undergraduate students in the fall semester and 11 undergraduate students in the spring semester. We were able to consolidate the Co-Head SC position into one Head SC role thanks to streamlined tasks across the entire La Casa staff. We successfully transitioned a new Head SC each semester, both solidifying the foundation of this new position at La Casa.

PEER LIAISONS (PL)

The PL staff was composed of 13 undergraduates serving first-year students from the 14 residential colleges.

last year's

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Before the pandemic-induced virtual transition, La Casa continued to see growth of engagement in both student attendance and student leadership. The tables below summarize our number of events and attendees for the year, including virtual opportunities of spring 2020.

ALL EVENTS	Administrator Initiatives	Graduate & Professional Students	Peer Liaisons	Student Coordinators	Affiliate Student Organizations (15)	Total per month
August	2	0	3	0	0	5
September	7	3	1	6	13	30
October	4	2	4	6	14	30
November	4	1	2	7	19	33
December	0	1	0	3	11	15
January	2	1	2	1	2	8
February	0	1	2	10	12	25
March	2	0	0	1	3	6
April	8	0	0	3	2	13
May	2	0	0	0	1	3
Total per role	31	9	14	37	77	168

ATTENDEES	All-Staff	Affiliate Student Organizations (15)	Total per semester
Fall 2019	2436	2076	4512
Spring 2020	791	696	1487
Total per role	3227	2772	5999

Fall 2019

The table below compares the number of events and attendance of Fall 2018 and Fall 2019, highlighting our growing community efforts and engagement. Even while having one less active student organization, there was a -17.35% increase in number of events hosted and a -21.72% increase in the number of attendees.

Fall 2018	Events	Attendees
All-Staff (Admin, GAs, PLs, SCs)	54	2,127
All Student Organizations (14)	44	1,580
Totals	98	3,707
Fall 2019	Events	Attendees
All-Staff (Admin, GAs, PLs, SCs)	56	2,436
All Student Organizations (13)	59	2,076
Totals	115	4,512

21.72%
increase

Spring 2020

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT



Naturally, the spring semester numbers were impacted by the pandemic as we all transitioned to virtual engagement and faced various factors that limited event-hosting capacities and student engagement abilities, such as reliable access to internet and varying remote location conditions.

However, thanks to the creativity and collaboration of all La Casa constituents, we were able to provide community engagement opportunities through virtual platforms. The map above highlights some of the locations of our various staff, student organization leaders, alumni, and presenters while continuing La Casa's community building efforts. We recognize La Casa is much more than a building. La Casa is a living, breathing, ever-changing community that transcends our center and campus; it moves with each of us across the country and continents.

The table below reflects numbers for both spring 2019 and 2020. For spring 2020, the number of attendees does not include all virtual participants (e.g. social media story followers, social media live session participants, La Casa video viewers, etc.)

Spring 2019	Events	Attendees
All-Staff (Admin, GAs, PLs, SCs)	46	1,551
All Student Organizations (14)	52	2,126
Totals	98	3,677
Spring 2020	Events	Attendees
All-Staff (Admin, GAs, PLs, SCs)	35	791
All Student Organizations (15)	20	696
Totals	55	1,487

18
active virtual
events
plus several passive
online campaigns

Between March and May, La Casa staff and student organizations hosted 18 active virtual events and several passive online campaigns, including:

- weekly "Cena a las seis" presentations, promoted as "Zoom a las seis"
- weekly social media #TuesdayTakeover series called "La Casa en mi casa" featuring students, administrators, and alumni
- alumni cooking demos and a DJ "Pachanga" virtual dance party coordinated by alum, Marco Davis
- three student panels during "30 Bulldog Days of April" for admitted Latinx and Latin American students
- "The Undocumented Americans" book discussion with De Colores
- summer academic and career plans advising session with Sube
- senior celebrations, including a "Senior Spotlight" series on social media, "La Casa Senior Awards" video recognition, and a class memories video

VIRTUAL VIERNES A LAS SEIS
COOKING WITH:

Cupcake Tesoro



Leticia Martinez, YC '94, owner of Cupcake Tesoro, will welcome us to her kitchen! Live from San Antonio, TX, Leticia will walk us through how to make a piñata cupcake.

Join us live on Friday, April 10th at 6pm EST on Cupcake Tesoro's Facebook Live!

Senior Spotlight

GIOVY
WEBB

Pauli Murray College

Ethics, Politics & Economics
and Geology & Geophysics
Energy Studies

FAVORITE MEMORY AT YALE

"I loved getting my Yale Latina shirt freshman year and wearing it around campus constantly. Every time I went home my family wanted to take a picture with me in that shirt; they were and still are so proud!"




zoom
a las seis
VIRTUAL COMMUNITY SPACE



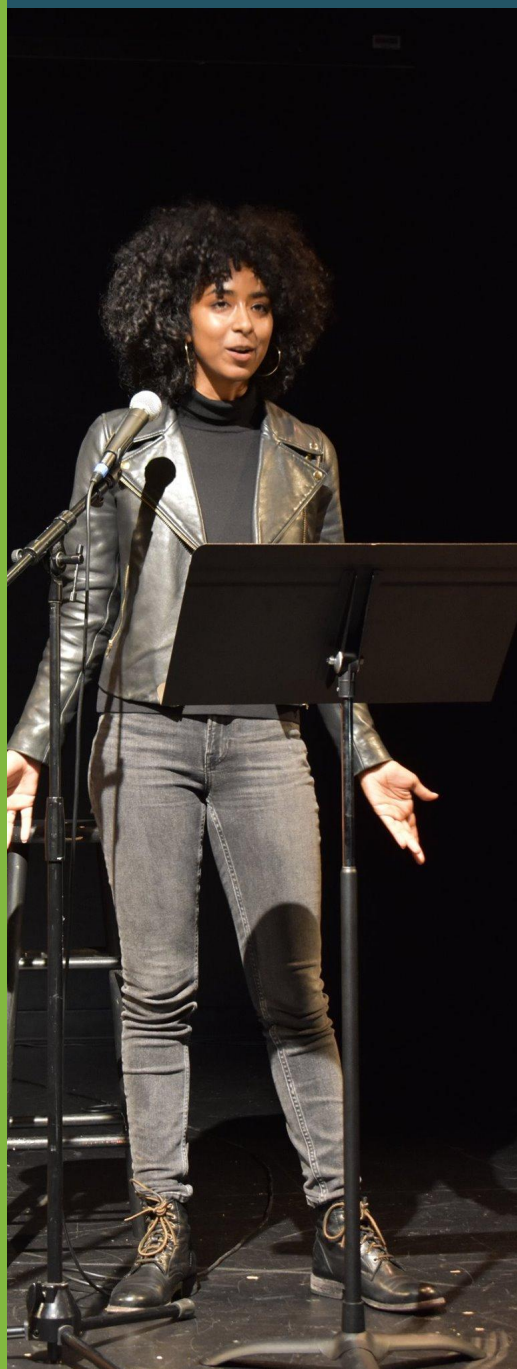
ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

La Casa had an increase in alumni engagement opportunities and exchanges this year, from campus-wide events and center visitors to guest speakers and virtual presenters.

- Our "Oral History Series" allows alumni to host a presentation and conversation at the center over dinner with our students to discuss the Latinidad at Yale throughout the years. This year, we had Juan Carlos Salinas 'DRA '03 (fall 2019) and Jorge Torres YC '97 (spring 2020).
- Several alumni visiting campus asked to visit the center and connect with current students
 - William Genova YC '15 hosted a "Life After Yale" dinner conversation at the center and several one-on-one meetings with students
 - Anna Chavez YC '90, member of the University Council, met with a group of students at La Casa to tour the center and learn about the current student experience
- Every other year, we host a Latinx Student & Alumni Breakfast Mixer for the Harvard-Yale Football Game. We had over 100 attendees stop by La Casa to reconnect with each other, meet new students, take pictures, enjoy food, tour the center, and purchase apparel.
- Justice Sonia Sotomayor returned to campus for her class reunion . Thanks to the generosity of Heather Gerken, Dean of the Yale Law School, & Linda Lorimer, Co-Chair of the 50WomenAtYale150 celebration, La Casa was able to invite 100 students and staff to Justice Sotomayor's talk.
- As Spring 2020 transitioned us to virtual platforms, so did our alumni experiences:
 - Leticia Martinez YC '94, owner of Cupcake Tesoro, hosted a "Virtual Viernes" Facebook Live session for our constituents to learn how to make piñata cupcakes.
 - Woesha Hampson-Medina YC '18 hosted one of our "La Casa en mi casa" Tuesday Takeovers and hosted a live cooking demo to make tamales.
 - Marco Davis YC '92 and several other alumni hosted a "Yale Pachanga-Zoom Edition" DJ session during commencement weekend and welcomed the Class of 2020 graduates.



LATINX HERITAGE MONTH



Latinx Heritage Month is a celebration of the various Latinx and Latin-American communities found at Yale from September 15th through October 15th. Immediately following the start of the academic school year, LHM provided faculty, staff, students, and community members with the opportunity to hear from national figures and to provide space and resources for student groups. This year our Latinx Heritage Month Kickoff was our annual Latinx Retreat, with a record-breaking attendance of over 170 participants. Clelia O. Rodriguez provided our closing keynote address, which led into our first annual "LatinXcellence Showcase." The showcase featured visual art submissions, performances, speeches, and more - all done by our Latinx undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

In collaboration with our resident student groups, La Casa Cultural put on 27 programs that served the community with educational, empowering, and community building opportunities.

Our events were co-sponsored with the Yale Communication and Consent Educators, the Office of International Students & Scholars, Joseph A. Slifka Center/Yale Hillel, St. Thomas More Catholic Chapel & Center, Morse College, Pierson College, Yale College Undergraduate Admissions, Yale Graduate Housing, Graduate & Professional Student Senate, Yale Well, Yale Divinity School, Yale School of Arts & Sciences, Yale School of Architecture, Yale School of Drama, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, Yale School of Public Health, the Office for LGBTQ+ Resources, the Afro-American Cultural Center, the Asian American Cultural Center, and the Native American Cultural Center.



DECOLONIZING LA CASA

Both La Casa staff and student organizations organized a variety of events that centered our year-long theme. Some of our guest presenters included:

- La Loba Loca - workshop on "*Abuelita & Ancestral Knowledge*" and herbal remedies during the annual Latinx Retreat
- Clelia O. Rodriguez - Latinx Heritage Month closing keynote address, co-sponsored by Pierson College and Morse College
- Kay P. Martinez - presentation on "*Negra Necia: Anti-Blackness and Gender Policing in AfroLatinidad*"
- Alan Pelaez Lopez - talk and poetry reading for our "Julia De Burgos' Birthday: Poetry Showcase"
- Floridalma Boj Lopez - presentation on "*Settler Colonial (Un)belonging: Border Violence, Legality, and Maya Migrants*"
- Paola Velez - lunch discussion and cooking demo for the "*Chewing the Fat: Cooking Across the Black Diaspora*" series, in collaboration with the Yale Sustainable Food Program and the Afro-American Cultural Center

For several of our "Decolonizing" efforts, staff and student organizations were able to co-host events with campus partners and involve New Haven community members, including some virtual engagement opportunities.

DECOLONIZING	All-Staff	Affiliate Student Organizations (15)	Total per semester
Fall 2019	7	10	17
Spring 2020	7	5	12
Total per role	14	15	29



STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

By the end of Spring 2020, La Casa had 15 active resident student organizations. The organizations reported hosting 2,772 attendees at a total of 77 events, including collaborations for Latinx Heritage Month, community partnerships, and virtual engagement opportunities. Additionally, each organization sent a representative to La Casa's three open houses and the Latinx Retreat.

Assistant Director Carolina Dávila hosted five (5) La Casa leader meetings for trainings, updates, collaborations, and leadership development. This year, La Casa's Student Organization Consultant (SOC) was Luis Leon Medina, who provided increased advising to organizations by attending and participating in monthly La Casa leader meetings, including Yale College updates, seeking feedback, and leading training sessions on funding requests and responsible event hosting.

At the start of each semester, Assistant Director Carolina Dávila met with the leadership of each organization to discuss their vision, goals, and budget for the semester ahead. Certain organizations met with Assistant Director Carolina Dávila on a more frequent basis, based on their specific group's needs. This year, these included Brazil Club, Despierta Boricua, Dominican Student Association, Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc., Latina Women at Yale, MEChA, Sabrosura, and Sube.



SENIOR EVENTS

A volunteer senior events committee has been in place for three years to allow seniors to design and lead programs for their own class. For the class of 2020, the following seniors were a part of this committee: Jose Lopez, Nathan Nuñez, Yesenia Chavez, Juan Otoy Vanini, Emily Almendarez, and Beatriz Rios. With the support of La Casa staff, some accomplishments for the committee include: hosting a class brunch in the fall semester, creating a "Senior Spotlight" social media series, recognizing La Casa Senior Award recipients, and publishing a class video featuring music from La Orquesta Tertulia.

Although we were not able to host our annual Senior Community Dinner or La Casa Graduation Celebration, we are looking forward to rescheduling these efforts for when the university welcomes back the class of 2020. In the meantime, please check out this year's award winners: tinyurl.com/LaCasaAwards

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Most of La Casa's experiential learning and development opportunities take place in the spring semester. Unfortunately, the pandemic had a severe impact on our planned efforts, including our Alternative Spring Break and attendance to the annual Latinx Ivy League Conference.

Alternative Spring Break: in collaboration with the Joseph A. Slifka Center/Yale Hillel, St. Thomas More Catholic Chapel & Center, we coordinated to take 11 students to El Paso, TX for a "Border Awareness Experience" to be hosted by our local partner, the Annunciation House. Although travel was not possible, we were able to host seven (7) pre-trip preparation sessions with assigned materials and guest speakers. These included the book "The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border" by Francisco Cantú, and talks with Kica Matos (Director of the Vera Center on Immigration and Justice), Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS), the Yale Law School Worker & Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic (WIRAC), and Catherine Panterbrick (Morse Head of College and past "Border Awareness Experience" participant).

Latinx Ivy League Conference (LILC) was to take place at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. The LILC was postponed until further notice.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

For over thirty years, La Casa has served as a home for English as a Second Language courses facilitated by and for New Haven community members. Every Monday and Wednesday, from 7-9pm, nearly the entirety of La Casa is shared with students to provide this service at no cost to participants, coordinated by the Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven.

This year, we saw an increase of local community member participation in events at La Casa. Some examples include:

- panelists in the "Latinx Artivism" event co-hosted by MEChA and De Colores
- poetry readers during our "Julia de Burgos Birthday Poetry Showcase"
- attendees at the "Alien-ated Mexicans: Unveiling Silenced Asian Mexican Discourses" presentation by Dr. Ignacio Lopez-Calvo
- participants at the virtual "The Undocumented Americans" book discussion with author Karla Cornejo Villavicencio, hosted by De Colores

2020-2021

LOOKING FORWARD

For the 2020-2021 school year, we have a set of challenges ahead, many which are unknown to us. However, we do know that the efforts around anti-Blackness and anti-racist education are ones that require continuous commitment. For this reason, the theme for the upcoming school year will be "Unpacking Latinidad: Race, Colorism, and Radical Solidarity." Through this theme, we will:

- Invite major speakers who will be Afro-Latinx and Black Latinx that have direct expertise and experience in Afro-Latinidad
- Develop our own workshops on addressing anti-Blackness in Latinidad for small groups
- Partner with our student organizations, student staff, and general community members to support interrogations of anti-Blackness, colorism and racism.

We look forward to another successful year that utilizes the strengths and leadership of our students.

