



Center for Mexican
American and Latino/a Studies
College of Liberal Arts
and Social Sciences



ANNUAL REPORT

FALL 2024-SPRING 2025

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HISTORY & MISSION

02



History

The **Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS)** at the University of Houston was established in 1972 as an interdisciplinary academic program encompassing the liberal arts, education and social sciences focusing on the Mexican American and broader Latino/a experience in the U.S.

Due to rapid growth of Latino/a representation at the university, in 2022, the center was renamed the **Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies (CMALS)** to reflect this shift in demographics.

Mission

To advance knowledge, promote critical thinking and foster the value of service to the community. This involves designing a broad spectrum of public and scholarly programs.

WELCOME MESSAGE

03



Dr. Pamela Anne Quiroz

Director

At a time when dramatic changes have generated uncertainty for our country, our university, and our communities, CMALS has continued its work to support the achievement of our students, expand our Latino cARTographies project, and serve our community. Indeed, 2025 was marked by significant growth of the Center with the addition of new staff members that included Professor Dr. Karla Lira-Moore, CMALS full-time instructor, and Dr. Alex LaRotta. We also saw growth in our Academic Achievers' Program as we expanded to serve even more students than past years. Dr. Diana Pino continued to guide our Lydia Mendoza graduate student program and Latino cARTographies

interactive and public archive added two new satellite sites to its existing five sites; Catapult Gallery and Houston's Children's Museum.

Our students traveled to Oaxaca, Mexico in our study abroad program and engaged in summer internships throughout the city. They also engaged in service to the Houston community, including supporting local artist Loriana Espinel's exhibit of the Anaconda at the Children's Museum. And they excelled at everything they did, with 81% making the Dean's list.

CMALS has expanded its outreach to the Houston community in recruiting and educating undergraduates and graduate students through instruction and research. And we exhibited Latino cARTographies at a number of venues and nationally in Spain.

At this time of great uncertainty, one thing will remain constant – CMALS will continue its recruitment, education, research and service to the community. We will also continue our outreach with only one thing in mind—**success!**

Dr. Pamela Anne Quiroz

Director

CMALS TEAM

04



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Program Coordinator II

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TEACHING STAFF

05



Dr. Karla A. Lira-Moore
Professor of History

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Dr. Diana Pino
Professor of Practice
Director of the Lydia Mendoza Fellowship

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Dr. Alex LaRotta
Professor of History

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Dr. Andre Rodriguez
Lecturer

✉ arodriguez15@uh.edu

CMALS GRADUATE FELLOWS

06



David Guevara

Master's Sociology

Currently a Latino graduate student in Sociology, David's research interests involve investigating social phenomena within Latino populations in the United States that are creating related social stratification and its solutions.



Pablo Lopez Duque

PH.D.

QUANTUM PHYSICS

Pablo is a Ph.D. student whose research work is in the context of conformal systems, quantum field theory, quantum information, and quantum computing. He has been working on a quantum computing education project sponsored by the CMALS Graduate Fellowship.



Aracely Lara

History, PH.D.

Aracely is an artist and a doctoral student in History. Her research delves into the Latine concept of *susto*, a profound fright that dislodges the soul, reframing it within the context of gentrification. She has a profound passion for researching spirituality, activism, and community histories.

Through research on murals and public art, she demonstrates the interconnections between spirituality, activism, and the documentation of community histories.

CMALS VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Visiting Scholar Program aims to support research on Mexican American and Latino/a studies regardless of the disciplinary focus. Visiting Scholars join the Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies as post doctoral fellows and actively participate in the Center's research activities and seminars. The Visiting Scholar Program provides time, space, and mentoring for the fellows to work on their projects as well as advancing the Center's research agenda.

Dr. Javier Franco

Visiting Scholar

Javier Franco is an interdisciplinary scholar whose research focuses on the various forms of violence that contribute to the development of dissident subjectivities and collectives in Mexico and the US Southwest. He earned his PhD in Spanish, specializing in contemporary Latinx/Latin American literature and culture, and a graduate certificate in Gender Studies from the University of Houston. His dissertation, *Fuera máscaras: Drag queens, nationalist machismo, and trauma in LGBTQ+ cultural productions of Greater México, 1980-2024*, centers on drag queen



representation in contemporary Mexican and Chicano cultural productions. His research focuses on the emotional precarities that are pertinent to drag queens as they perturb binaries of both gender identity and sexual orientation within patriarchal structures of society. Therefore, one of the main research questions addresses collective trauma resulting from violence rooted in masculinist nationalism.

Dr. Franco is currently investigating the history of *lucha libre*, or Mexican wrestling, along the US/Mexico border while examining the role of *exóticos*, the wrestlers defined by camp, like *Cassandra*, to understand the implications of this sport and Chicano border identities. His research interests, which include gender & sexuality studies, trauma & memory studies, and performance studies have received additional support from the Mellon Foundation, Point Foundation, and Cullen Foundation.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

08



Research

Latino cARTographies is a visual digital archive and public knowledge tool that merges art with technology to create the country's first portable, bilingual and interactive map of Houston's Latino art.

Academics


Through relevant courses, a Major & Minor, fellowships and other academic opportunities, CMALS has promoted critical thinking and fostered the value of service to the community since 1972.

Student Success

The Academic Achiever's Program (AAP) has provided invaluable support to students since 1994. Its mission is to recruit and graduate underrepresented students

Community Engagement

The goal for CMALS through its strategy is to forge academics that excel as exceptional representatives for the Latino/a community.



**“TO MAKE A
GREAT DREAM
COME TRUE, THE
FIRST
REQUIREMENT IS
A GREAT
CAPACITY TO
DREAM; THE
SECOND IS
PERSISTENCE”**

-CESAR CHAVEZ

Latino cARTographies

10

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



Latino cARTographies merges visual and performing art with technology to create the country's first portable, bilingual, and interactive digital board that maps Houston's Latino art, landmarks, and culture. With just a touch of the finger the visitor can access more than 350 of Houston's Latino artists, explore 7 Latino neighborhoods and 81 landmarks. You can access these through video, images, text, avatars, and much more!

Latino cARTographies was funded by the **University of Houston**.

**NEW
FEATURES
COMING
SOON!**



Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art

Interaction by location



BUSH IAH AIRPORT
TERMINAL D15

1, 328, 453



HOUSTON HERITAGE
HISTORY MUSEUM

103, 877



ART MUSEUM TX

114, 804



HOBBY AIRPORT

608, 401



CONSULADO GENERAL
DE MÉXICO EN HOUSTON

1, 186, 166



NEW SATELLITE LOCATION!

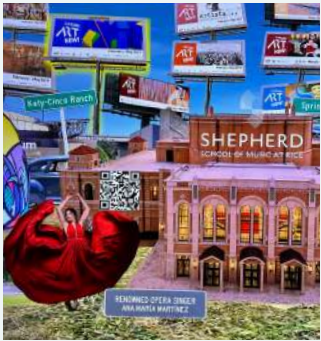
CATAPULT GALLERY

106,974



Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



BRINGING TOGETHER COMMUNITIES



Latino CARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



LATINO CATALYST

How a Small Ethnic Studies Center Helped Transform Latino Art in Houston

Over the past few weeks, the University of Houston Center for Mexican American and Latino Studies (CMALS) has organized a series of public programs and events, including a panel discussion on the development of digital cartographies of Latino art in Houston. The panel, moderated by CMALS director, Dr. Patricia Zavala, featured speakers from the University of Houston, the University of Texas at Houston, and the University of California, Los Angeles. The panelists discussed the role of CMALS in the development of digital cartographies of Latino art in Houston, the importance of digital cartographies in the study of Latino art, and the challenges of creating digital cartographies of Latino art. The panelists also discussed the role of CMALS in the development of digital cartographies of Latino art in Houston, the importance of digital cartographies in the study of Latino art, and the challenges of creating digital cartographies of Latino art.



LATINO CARTOGRAPHIES



A VISUAL DIGITAL ARCHIVE AND PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE TOOL



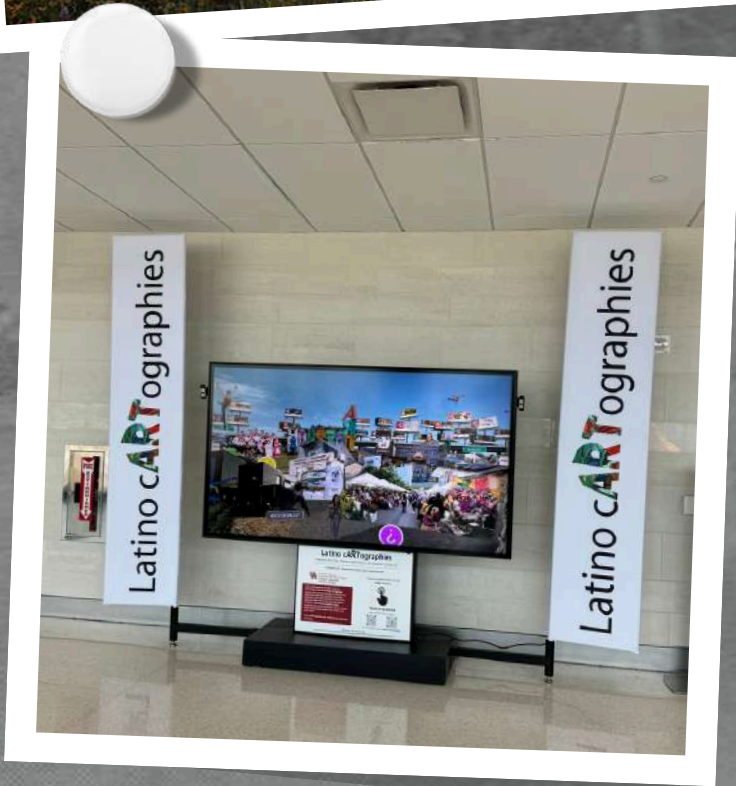
RESEARCH

Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



3 Year Renewal for IAH & Hobby Airport!



Skytrax named Houston Airports World's Best Airport Art Program in 2023, 2024, and 2025!

RESEARCH

WINNER

Digital Communication Art Direction

Latino cARTographies

Artist: **Miguel Avila**

Creative Director: **Justin Patera**

Production: **Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies at the University of Houston**

We're proud to share that Latino cARTographies has been named a 2025 Winner in Art Direction at the Collision Awards under the Digital Communication Craft category!

Selected from over a thousand submissions across 25 countries, this project with art by Latino cARTographies featured artist, Miguel Ávila, and directed by Justin Patera, beautifully visualizes Latino/a experiences through compelling digital storytelling and stunning visual design. It's an honor to see this powerful work recognized on an international stage. Explore the award-winning piece at collisionawards.com

SILVER
WINNER
2025

Collision
Awards



Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art

IN THE COMMUNITY



Latino cARTographies Exhibitions		
	Location	Dates
2025	International Conference in Spain	September 15-September 17, 2025
	Children's Museum Houston- Loriana Espinel's El Guío/Anaconda exhibit	September 8- September 28, 2025
	Holocaust Museum	September 6, 2025
	Heidi Vaughn	May 7, 2025
2024	Holocaust Museum	September 13 – December 13, 2024
	7th Latino Health Summit Conference	March 21st & March 22nd 2024
	Cleveland ISD	January 29 – February 29, 2024
	Ion Houston	October 11 – November 16, 2023
2023	The Heritage Society	September 11 – September 25, 2023
	8th Annual Statewide Summit	June 24, 2023
	Public Interest Communications Event	June 13, 2023
	Houston Scottish Rite Immersive	April 1, April 2, April 8, & April 9, 2023
2022	Debbie Harwell's Class	March 6, 2023
	Alley Theater	November 30, 2022 – January 11, 2023
	The Heritage Society	October 29, 2022
	Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board	October 26, 2022
	Houston Scottish Rite – Unveiling	September 29, 2022
	Slalom	September 15, 2022
	Art in the Heart Grand Opening	May 28, 2022

Latino **CART**ographies

OUTREACH

FALL 2024

INSTAGRAM AVERAGE INTERACTIONS
AUGUST 2024-DECEMBER 2024

38
LIKES

2
COMMENTS

7
SHARES

765
VIEWS

598
FOLLOWERS

SPRING 2025

INSTAGRAM AVERAGE INTERACTIONS
JANUARY 2025-JULY 2025

30
LIKES

3
COMMENTS

6
SHARES

739
VIEWS

@LATINOCART_UHCMALS

Across all social media channels.



ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS PROGRAM



The Academic Achievers Program (AAP) is sponsored by the Center for Mexican American Studies and the Office of the President. It was established in the fall of 1994 and is designed to retain and propel more students to graduation. The mission of the AAP at the University of Houston is to recruit underrepresented students.

AT A GLANCE

- \$5,000 Annual Scholarship
- Mandatory Individual Academic Tutoring
- Time Management Skills Sessions
- Skills Workshops & Leadership Training
- Career and Internship Opportunities
- Priority Registration

65
STUDENTS

2024-2025 IMPACT

3.2
GPA

10
GRADS

100%
GRADUATION
RATE

81%
DEANS
LIST

Academic Achievers - University of Houston



The Academic Achievers Program (AAP) has provided practical and invaluable support to students since 1994. Nationally recognized as a program of academic excellence by the White House and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, our efforts have always focused on one unshakable mission: to help students achieve their higher-education goals.

Academic Achievers - Austin High School



NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AS A PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE BY:



CLASS OF 2024



MAYRA J. GARCIA

Major: Strategic & Corporate Communications
Minor: Mexican American Studies



YANET GUERRA

Major: Computer Information Systems
Minor: Spanish



JOSE M. MEDINA

Major: Supply Chain Management



DIANA BALDERAS

Major: Finance
Minor: Supply Chain Management



YOALI PEREZNERGÓN

Major: Supply Chain Management

STUDENTS

CLASS OF 2025



NATASHA MENDOZA

Major: Biology



JOSHUA BLANCO

Major: Psychology and Studio Art



RACHELL MARQUEZ

Major: Political Science
Minor: Business Administration Management



SERGIO GOMEZ

Major: Construction Management



BROCK FOSNIGH

Major: Finance

STUDENTS

Important Dates

Sept 6, 2024	Monthly Meeting with Study Abroad
Sept 14, 2024	Fiestas Patrias Parade
Oct. 4, 2024	Monthly Meeting with the Carrizales
October 15, 2024	AAP 30th Anniversary Proclamation
November 1, 2024	Monthly Meeting with Christina Morales
November 7, 2024	AAP and Challenger first gen mixer Party on the patio
November 7, 2024	Mayde creek hs campus tour
Nov 21, 2024	Monthly Meeting with UH Law
Feb 7, 2025	First Gen Passport Party
March 3, 2025	community service at the tejano center
March 21, 2025	AAP meeting with the Consulate of Spain
March 22, 2025	Riata family meet and greet
April 3, 2025	Leadership at the Capitol to Austin, TX
April 6, 2025	Monthly meeting with Law Center
April 11, 2025	Chase Bank site visit
August 8, 2025	AAP Alumni Mixer



COMMUNITY
SERVICE



GUEST SPEAKERS



STUDENTS



MONTHLY MEETINGS

23



STUDENT ENRICHMENT



STUDENTS



MENTORSHIP & LEADERSHIP



CIVIC & CULTURAL AWARENESS



AAP SUMMER INTERNSHIPS



EDUARDO RUBIO

ERIC'S RESTAURANT:
HILTON COLLEGE OF GLOBAL
HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP



MIGUEL BLANCO

SULZER TURBO SERVICES



AIDEN MANRIQUE

STELLAR BANK:
ACCOUNTING OPERATIONS



ARELY MARTINEZ

UHLC PRE-LAW PIPELINE
PROGRAMS



ASHLEY QUINTERO

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

STUDY ABROAD

SUMMER IN OAXACA

26

As part of MAS Course 3340 - Mexican American Urban Communities, students embark on first hand experience at home and abroad through this CMALS faculty-led program.

An interdisciplinary approach to the origin and development of Mexican American neighborhoods in urban regions from the 20th century to the present. The course focuses on demographic and structural organization and its influence in the quality of life in various settings.



MAJOR & MINOR IN MEXICAN AMERICAN & LATINO STUDIES

Major in Mexican American Studies

Inter and multidisciplinary academic area of study that builds upon the experiences of people of Mexican and Latino descent. The BA seeks to prepare culturally competent and knowledgeable students to become leaders in the business, political, academic and cultural communities for the 21st century by exposing them to a wide curriculum and diverse academic experiences including conferences, symposiums, internships, cultural and artistic programming.

Minor in Mexican American Studies

The Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies offers a minor in Mexican American Studies. The material covered in the minor conveys the broad and rich experiences of people of Mexican descent in the United States. A minor in Mexican American Studies augments a student's major area of study and prepares him/her to better understand the history, culture, social relations, folklore, literature, politics, and numerous contributions this group has made to society in the United States.

CURRENT MAS COURSES

- **MAS 2340** Intro. to Mexican American Studies
- **MAS 3340** Mexican American Urban Communities
- **MAS 3341** Mexican American Experience through Film
- **MAS 3343** Latino Psychology
- **MAS 3345** Latino Leadership, Activism & Organizing
- **MAS 3395** Selected Topics: Intro. to Latino Studies

CAREERS FOR MAS DEGREES

- Immigration, Human Rights and Civil Rights Law
- Non-profit Leadership/Management
- Community outreach, services and organizing
- Government
- Business and corporate sectors in areas with target demographics
- Education and health in areas with target demographics
- Art, graphic design and IT sectors seeking to employ graduates whose creativity is informed by cross-cultural and transnational skills.



CROSSING LATINIDADES

PRE-DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP

The goal of Crossing Latinidades' Summer Institute is to equip participants who are already thinking of dissertation ideas with increased competence to enable intellectual innovation and expanded views of the field of Latino Humanities Studies before advancing to candidacy. Emphasis is placed on exploring and reimagining a comparative framework for Latino Studies that moves beyond the single-nationality paradigm.

Crossing Latinidades is funded by the Mellon Foundation.



JULIANA JAVIERRE

2024-2025
CROSSING LATINIDADES FELLOW



ANDREA CUEVAS

2024-2025
CROSSING LATINIDADES FELLOW



LEA COLCHADO-JOQUIN

2024-2025
CROSSING LATINIDADES FELLOW

LYDIA MENDOZA FELLOWSHIP

SPONSORED BY  CFEI

In early 2024, CMALS received confirmation that CFE International had committed to providing a sizable scholarship to advance the education of Latino students at the University of Houston. The grant, named in honor of historic Texan, Lydia Mendoza, would fully fund the graduate studies of 31 students. The search for the best of our academic community began in the spring of 2024 and the 31 recipients were announced in the summer.

About Lydia Mendoza

Lydia Mendoza (1916–2007) was a pioneering American singer and guitarist, widely regarded as the "First Lady of Tejano Music." Born in Houston, Texas, she began performing at a young age, gaining recognition in the 1930s for her distinctive voice and instrumental skills. Mendoza was known for her heartfelt renditions of traditional Mexican and Texan music, and her contributions helped shape the development of Tejano and Conjunto music. Mendoza was inducted into the Tejano Music Hall of Fame and received many accolades for her influence on Latin music in the United States.

Scholarship Selection Committee

Pamela Anne Quiroz, Ph.D.

Director, CMALS

Marisela Martinez, Ed.D.

Associate Director, CMALS

Zelma Oyarvide-Tuthill, Ph.D.

Professor, Sociology

Deborah Harwell, Ph.D.

Professor, History

Samuel Brower, Ed.D.

Professor, Education

Gustavo Villalpando, JD

Community Partner



LYDIA MENDOZA FELLOWSHIP

FUNDED 2023-2025

RECIPIENTS

Valeria Gonzalez
Ph.D., History

Miranda Ruizinsky
Ph.D., History

Gustavo Valdivia
Ph.D, Physics

Pablo Lopez- Duque
Ph.D., Quantum Physics

Lorissa Saiz
Ph.D., Cell &
Molecular Biology

Jesus A. Rodriguez T.
Master's, Computer &
Systems Engineering

Reynaurora Resendez
Master's, Curriculum
& Instruction

Natividad Mosqueda
Master's, Curriculum
& Instruction

Meghann Adkins
Master's, Education

David Ramirez
Master's, Public Admin.

Itzia Medrano
Master's Sociology

Edward Muñoz III
Master's Sociology

Carolina Aguado
Master's, Anthropology

Noah Wood
Master's, Anthropology

José Gutierrez
J.D., Law

Alyssa Peralez
Master's, Communication
Sciences & Disorders

Sandra Hernandez
Master's, Communication
Sciences & Disorders

Maritza Yanez
Master's, Communication
Sciences & Disorders

Vicente Mandujano
Ph.D., Political Science

Susana Lewandowski
Graduate Certificate,
Arts & Health

Christina Segura
Ph.D., Psychology

Taylor Longoria
Ph.D., History

Aracely Lara
Ph.D., History

Katherine Avila
Ph.D, Psychology

Kathia Marquez
Master's, Social Work

Daniel Riojas
Master's, Social Work

Erika Avila
Master's, Social Work

Kimberly Cervantes
Master's, Poetry

Lea Colchado-Joaquin
Ph.D., Rhetoric &
Composition

Adrian Pachuca
Master's, Poetry

Theresa Escobedo
Master's, Inter-
disciplinary Practices
& Emerging Forms

CMALS

BY THE NUMBERS

MEXICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO/A STUDIES MAJOR/MINOR

STUDENTS DECLARED FALL 2024



STUDENTS DECLARED SPRING 2025



STUDENTS DECLARED SUMMER 2025



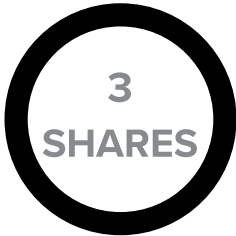
CMALS SERVICES

- MALS Major and Minor Advising
- Mentorship, scholarships and learning abroad opportunities
- Academic Achievers Program
- Latino cARTographies Arts Interactive
- Graduate Fellowship Opportunities
- Curated Mexican American and Latino/a Resources

CMALS OUTREACH

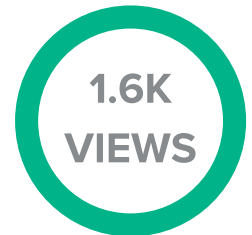
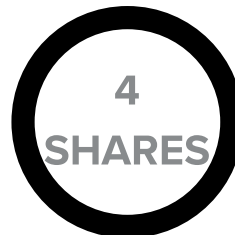
FALL 2024

INSTAGRAM AVERAGE INTERACTIONS
AUGUST 2024-DECEMBER 2024



SPRING 2025

INSTAGRAM AVERAGE INTERACTIONS
JANUARY 2025-JULY 2025



@UHCMALS

Across all social media channels.





Center for Mexican
American and Latino/a Studies

College of Liberal Arts
and Social Sciences

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