



# AXOLOTL

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NEWSLETTER

CENTER FOR MEXICAN  
AMERICAN STUDIES  
AT UT - ARLINGTON  
SPRING 22 | VOL. VII, NO. 1

# Bienvenida



As always, it's a pleasure to introduce our new issue of *Axolotl*. The Spring semester allowed faculty and students to return to campus and go back to regular academic life. Coming back to campus has allowed our students, staff, and faculty an opportunity to demonstrate their resilience in the face of ongoing challenges to balance college with work and family responsibilities in this still uncertain time due to the pandemic. As the semester comes to an end, it is time to celebrate the accomplishments of our students, staff, and faculty. We hope you enjoy the latest issue of the CMAS newsletter!

Christian Zlolniski | *CMAS Director*

# Editor's Note



Welcome to the Spring 2022 issue of *Axolotl: The Newsletter for the Center for Mexican American Studies*. This semester has been a time of reconnecting with friends and colleagues and connecting to new people who enrich our lives. This issue is all about the people who make CMAS and UTA great, the students, faculty, and staff who mean so much to us and to each other. The issue highlights familiar associates, such as, Dr. Micki Washburn, and new colleagues, like Dr. Elsa Camargo. We are excited to introduce Leyla Bunster's role as a new subject librarian for Mexican American studies, and celebrate our recent graduates, scholarship winners and this issue's student artists, Jesse Webb, who will be graduating this spring. Spring 2022 will mark our first in-person graduation for CMAS in two years and it will have a new format. We hope you will join us, and we look forward to featuring that event in the fall 2022 issue along with many others.

Erin Murrah-Mandril | *Axolotl* Newsletter Editor

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## Leyla Bunster

The Center for Mexican American Studies is delighted to announce the appointment of Leyla Bunster as Multidisciplinary Librarian for Mexican American Studies. Ms. Bunster is working with CMAS to identify resources that enhance our student's and faculty's research and teaching in Mexican American and Latino Studies. She also conducts library resource workshops for MALS classes, and can hold one-on-one consultations for MALS minors. Ms. Bunster is a UTA Alumna (BA History '17, MA History/Archival Administration '20), and is working toward a Master of Library and Information Science at the University of North Texas. ¡Bienvenida a la familia de CMAS!



## New Hispanic-Serving Leadership Preparation Graduate Certificate

In Fall 2022, the College of Education will launch their Hispanic Serving Leadership Preparation Graduate Certificate. The certificate program was developed by Drs. María Yareli Delgado and Elsa Camargo. The HSI Certificate provides a path for PreK-20 educational leaders, as well as community

college and other college and university professionals who want to specialize in learning to serve Latinx populations and discover what it means to lead a Hispanic Serving Institution. The certificate consists of four graduate-level courses.

## TACHE Conference

In February 2022, CMAS was a sponsor at the TACHE Conference in Fort Worth, TX.

The conference theme was "Seguimos Floreciendo: Cultivating Resilient & Responsible Leadership through Latinx Awareness, Action, & Advocacy." The event was an excellent opportunity to connect and promote CMAS. We are looking forward to the next conference to support Latinos' education and advocacy while expanding our Center's outreach.



Dra. Maria Yareli Delgado promoting the Hispanic-Serving Leadership Preparation Graduate Certificate



Monica Aurora López promoting CMAS

# STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

## AMAS



We are the Association of Mexican American Students (AMAS) at the University of Texas at Arlington! Our purpose is to preserve and advance the Mexican American heritage and create a support network for Mexican American students at the university. AMAS strives to educate people about Mexico's history and culture to any and everyone interested to learn. Everyone is welcome to join; membership is open to ALL University of Texas at Arlington students and faculty

We have worked on promoting events that would provide students with the opportunities to learn and appreciate our culture by creating a support network for our members. As a result, we have hosted general meetings focused on the promotion/education of our culture and attended art exhibits (Octavio Medellín

at the Dallas Museum of Art and Afro-Mexican experience at the African American Museum) where we received private tours. Our general meetings are every other Friday from 12:00pm-1:00pm at the Center for Mexican American Studies in room 125.



We have attended sports events such as a Mavericks game and have been invited to attend a Dallas Stars game and FC Dallas game. Next semester, we plan to invite José Ángel Gutiérrez as a guest lecturer. He is the founder of CMAS (Center for Mexican American Studies) at UTA, famed former professor at the school, and the founder of La Raza Unida Party, which won elections in Texas in the 1970's during the Chicano movement.

# STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

## AMAS

We have worked hand in hand with the Center for Mexican American Studies by volunteering and facilitating the Distinguished Cheech Marin Speaker event on Chicano art. Next semester, we plan to focus on volunteering and fundraising events

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, AMAS was inactive on campus for almost two years. However, a group of select students gathered to re-establish AMAS on the UTA campus and gained campus wide recognition as of November 2021. The Spring 2022 semester is our first semester back on campus and hosting events. We hope to host more events and increase our membership during the Fall 2022 semester to promote the importance of our culture and creating a community at the university campus.



## Officers

- América Reséndiz, **President**
- Rodrigo Lizaola, **Vice President**
- Yehimy Paola Marín Rodríguez, **Secretary**

# PERFILES

# PERFILES

## Dr. Elsa Camargo Assistant Professor & Program Co-Coordinator



Elsa Camargo, Ph.D. is an assistant professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and program co-coordinator for the Hispanic Serving Graduate Leadership Preparation Graduate Certificate at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Prior to arriving to UTA, she was an assistant professor of Higher Education at the University of Arkansas where she also served as Junior Research Fellow at the Office for Diversity and Inclusion. Dr. Camargo's research examines various points of the student-to-tenured faculty pipeline and the challenges that minoritized populations face in this trajectory. In her examination of these issues, she employs lenses that are critical of the systemic structures in higher education that make it difficult for institutions to become socially just and equitable. Her research has been published in academic journals and magazines such

as the *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *Innovative Higher Education*, *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *Journal of Education and Training Studies* and *Gender Transformation in the Academy*, *Liberal Education Magazine*, and the *Magazine of the Society of Women*. In 2019, Dr. Camargo was named a "Top 100 under 50 Emerging Leader" by DiversityMBA Magazine. She holds degrees from Virginia Tech (Ph.D. in Higher Education) and the University of Illinois at Chicago (B.A. in English and Spanish and M.A in Hispanic Studies).

## Dr. Micki Washburn Assistant Professor



Dr. Micki Washburn is an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work. Her research focuses on developing culturally grounded mental health and substance misuse interventions to address health disparities experienced by those in historically underserved communities, focusing on Latinx women, LGBTQ+ youth, and families with child welfare involvement. She currently serves as the PI of a NIDA funded study to develop a virtual reality-based intervention decrease substance use and substance relapse. She also recently participated in the NIH Innovation Corps (I-Corps) program which focuses on training researchers to commercialize their biomedical technologies to get them to communities in need more quickly and efficiently. Much of Dr. Washburn's recent work has focused

on health literacy regarding mental health and substance misuse in Latino communities which has resulted in a series of articles comparing how Latinos in the southern United States and in Mexico conceptualize mental health symptoms and explores their preferences for formal and informal approaches to treatment. For over 15 years, Dr. Washburn has worked with people experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance abuse concerns. Her extensive clinical experience brings real world knowledge to the classroom to further develop the knowledge base and skills of the next generation of social work professionals.

## 2021 Gamio Scholarship Recipients

**Emmanuel Mariscal** is completing his BS in Biology as a pre-med student and is earning a minor in Mexican American Studies. He is a first gen student who plans to use his future medical degree to benefit the Latino community. Indeed, he is already doing so by volunteering at Mission Arlington, Medical Center Arlington, and, one of his favorites, Dental Health Arlington, which provides low and no-cost procedures for low-income families in the area.

**Jhoselyn Torres** is earning her BA in History and plans to teach after she graduates. She is also a first gen student and the oldest of four siblings for whom she is pioneering the way in higher education. Ms. Torres spends much of her time volunteering for several organizations including local schools and her church where she teaches an ESL and citizenship class.

## Spring 2022 MAS Minor Graduates

- Eduardo Bruno Meza, Spanish
- Leslie Flores, Exercise Science
- Isabella Morales, Spanish
- Emmanuel Mariscal, Biology
- Erika López, Spanish

**Congratulations to our  
2022 Graduates!**

## State Representative Terry Meza



Rep. Terry Meza grew up in Irving, Texas, in the heart of District 105, which she has represented since 2019. She is a proud graduate of Irving High School. Meza commuted from Irving for all her higher education pursuits to attend UT Arlington, The University of Dallas, and Texas Wesleyan University School of Law. She is currently running for reelection.

<https://terrymeza.com/>

**Axolotl:** What caused you to want to run for political office, and how did you build the support in the community to be a successful candidate?

**State Representative Terry Meza:** My motivation in running for political office was seeing the poor representation that we had from our incumbent state rep. Even though Irving has a sizeable Muslim community, he supported an anti-Muslim bill. Lest you think that doesn't concern our community because we're not Muslims, he returned the next session to support SB4, the Show Me Your Papers bill. With a 40% Hispanic district, why would he do that? He believed that we didn't vote. Offering a candidate who would make a difference together with an issue the voters cared about

was a winning combination. Visibility in the community and at their door resulted in success.

**Axolotl:** You served as an educator at every level from elementary school to college and you currently sit on the Public Education Committee. What are the most important educational issues facing the Latino community today?

**RTM:** The most pressing issues facing the Latino community today in public education are the loss of learning from the pandemic combined with the shortage of bilingual education teachers.



**Axolotl:** How would you counsel students, Latinos and Latinas, who are interested in going into politics, what would be the one piece of advice you would give them about how to take the first step to get involved?

**RTM:** My advice on the first step to get involved is to find a candidate and/or issue you believe in and devote your time to that.

# STUDENT ARTIST

## Jesse Webb

Hello! My name is Jesse Antonio Webb. I am a senior at UTA working towards a degree in Psychology. My artistic inspirations come from all over the place but the featured art pieces shown are influenced by urban art, landscapes, and video game series graphics. I really enjoyed watching Bob Ross as a kid, so I consider him to be a big influence as well.



Redacted  
Digital



Wonderful Winter  
Digital

# STUDENT ARTIST

## Artist Statement

The Amber Autumn art piece is part of a theme I created with pieces representing different seasons when I was experimenting with spray paint feature of a program called Procreate. The bubbly appearance of the trees showcase my fascination with minimalist art at the time. The right most tree is both a framing object, a boundary break for the center circle, and a counterbalance for the figure on the right. The hair adds movement and guides the eye deeper into the images landscape. All in all, Amber Autumn is one of my favorite pieces in the series.



Amber Autumn  
Digital

# RECONOCIMIENTOS

## Dr. Elsa Camargo



Elsa Camargo delivered the accepted paper “A Nuevo South Collective for Love and Healing: Examining Multiethnic Intersectionality in Research” at the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education Annual Conference in Henderson, Nevada on March 11, 2022. She also co-published the articles “Siendo Latinx en el Nuevo South: Defining Identity, Social Justice and Equity” in *Innovative Higher Education* and “Plantando Raíces en el Sur: First-Generation Mexican-Origin College Students’ Transformational Impetus in New Destination States” in the *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*. These articles seek to document the educational experiences of Latina/o/x college students in Arkansas and North Carolina.

## Dr. Sonia Kania



Sonia Kania published two co-authored articles and a book chapter with her collaborator, Patricia Giménez-Eguíbar. The authors examine the lexis of the Relación de la jornada de Cíbola, the only extant eyewitness account of the Coronado expedition of 1540-1542. The topics include the use of indigenous loanwords, Americanisms, and lexical resources in the depiction of the Other. The studies appeared in the last quarter of 2021, in the peer-reviewed Spanish journals *Revista de Filología Española* and *Al-Qánṭara*, as well as the peer-reviewed volume *Estudios sobre la historia léxica del español de América* (Universidad de Jaén, Servicio de Publicaciones).

# RECONOCIMIENTOS

## Dr. Xavier Medina Vidal



Dr. Xavier Medina Vidal served as an external consultant to the City of Fort Worth’s Redistricting Task Force. In this role he shared his expertise on Hispanic opportunity districts and Latino political behavior and provided the task force with recommendations on the adoption of redistricting map proposals. Dr. Medina Vidal also had the research article “Imaginando la (re)patriación voluntaria a las tierras ancestrales de los latinos en Estados Unidos” accepted for publication by the journal *Norteamérica: Revista Académica del CISAN-UNAM*. The article, co-authored with José Tránsito Ayala (University of Arkansas), examines the attitudes held toward return migration and permanent relocation held by Latin American migrants and US-born Latinos.

## Dr. Erin Murrah-Mandril



Dr. Erin Murrah-Mandril was invited to participate in the Newberry Library Borderlands and Latino/a Studies Seminar on Friday November 5th, 2021. She presented her book chapter “But My True Position is at the Entrance: Parteras as Transnational Agents.” The Newberry seminar provides a forum for works-in-progress that explore topics in Latino/a and borderlands studies.



UPCOMING ISSUE


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## Fall 2022

Coming in the Fall of 2022, the Axolotl issue will feature The Center for Mexican American Studies' Distinguished Speaker event that took place in April. Stay tuned to read all about it.

THE CENTER FOR MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDIES  
The University of Texas at Arlington

**CMAS DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER**



**Richard "Cheech" Marin**  
Actor and Chicano Art Collector

**Chicano Art: Perspectives  
of an Art Advocate**

Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 6:30 PM

Rosebud Theatre at the UC  
Limited seating

**A+ AH** Co-Sponsored with the Department  
of Art and Art History and  
Visiting Artist Chair

For more information  
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Graphic Designer: Pamela Juarez  
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