

Meet the 2022 Fund for Latino Scholarship Grant Recipients

INDIA SIMMONS | PROGRAM ASSOCIATE, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROGRAMS

The APSA Fund for Latino Scholarship's primary goal is to encourage and support the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Latina/o political scientists, especially students and tenure-track junior faculty. The secondary goal of the Fund is to support research on Latino politics in the United States. Grants for the 2022 cycle were awarded to those individuals whose purposes most clearly match the goals of the fund, and whose proposals most persuasively demonstrate capacity for successful completion. Applications for the Fund close annually each June. Learn more about the Fund for Latino Scholarship at <https://www.apsanet.org/fls>

ROBERT D. ALVAREZ

Robert D. Alvarez is a PhD student in the department of political science at the University of Houston. His research interests include political communication, public opinion, and political behavior, with a particular focus on the effects of mass media on political attitudes. While at the University of Houston, Robert has served as a teaching assistant for Latino Politics and Legislative Processes courses. He also serves as a research assistant working on Latino politics and legislative studies. Before beginning his doctoral studies, Robert worked as a journalist covering business and politics. His experience at the intersection of media and politics informs his research and motivates his continued efforts to better understand media's political function within society. With the support of the Fund for Latino Scholarship, Robert plans to attend the 2022 APSA Annual Meeting to present his co-authored research on the election of Latino Republicans to state legislatures and attend panels in his research areas.



Scholarship to support his qualitative data collection, including semi-structured interviews and archival research. Austin holds an MA from California State University, Fullerton and a BA from the University of California, Los Angeles.

ERIKA ARIAS

Erika Arias is a PhD student in the department of political science at Syracuse University. She holds a BA from the University of Washington in international studies and law, societies, and justice, and an MA in political science from Syracuse University. She currently holds the role of Teaching Mentor for incoming teaching assistants at Syracuse University, where she also serves as the president of the Political Science Graduate Student Association. Erika's research focuses on social movements, political behavior, public opinion, and state violence. Her dissertation examines the historical impact of state violence in Mexico on political emotions and behaviors across generations. The APSA Fund for Latino Scholarship will support Erika as she conducts fieldwork and survey interviews for her dissertation.



AUSTIN BARRAZA

Austin Barraza is a PhD candidate in political science at Northeastern University, where he studies higher education policy. Austin's dissertation examines the increasingly active role state legislatures play in setting community college policy. Using a mixed-methods design, his dissertation presents a quantitative analysis of community college related legislation across the 50 states between 1999-2019 and then subsequently dives into three states to document how community colleges have gained agenda status in state legislatures. Austin will use the grant from the Fund for Latino



ANTHONY BENCOMO

Anthony Bencomo is a PhD candidate in politics with a designated emphasis in Latin American and Latino studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is originally from Fresno, California. His research examines local politics, with a specific focus on police, street gangs, and the carceral state. His



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dissertation research focuses on community efforts to reform the police in a majority Latinx community. He is a former fellow of the APSA Diversity Fellowship Program and a current Chancellor's Diversity Incentive Program (CDIP) Fellow. The APSA Fund for Latino Scholarship will aid Anthony in gathering data during his fieldwork to complete his dissertation.

CAMILA PÁEZ BERNAL

Camila Páez Bernal is currently a Fulbright scholar and a PhD candidate at the School of Politics and Global Studies at Arizona State University. Her research interests are women's political participation and social mobilization. Currently, her research focuses on Colombia and Mexico.



SARA J. HERIDIA

Sara J. Heridia is a PhD student in political science at Emory University. Her research focuses on judicial politics, as well as immigration law and policy. Within these areas, she examines how the immigrant identities of judges in US immigration courts influence their decision-making behaviors. She focuses on how institutions structure the behaviors of these judges, and she blends qualitative techniques with quantitative approaches to rigorously assess her research questions. The Fund for Latino Scholarship will support Sara's ability to attend the 2022 APSA meeting and receive feedback on her work.



MICHELLE BUENO VASQUEZ

Michelle is a PhD candidate in political science and a master's candidate in statistics. Michelle's research explores the development of racial categories transnationally between the United States and Latin America. Her work deals specifically with the export of white supremacist and anti-Black standards through United States military occupations in the area and their influence on the political and social development in Latin American nations. She also explores the evolution of Census racial categories, particularly looking at Afro-Latino erasure in statistical methodology. In her dissertation,



she examines these themes through the case study of the Dominican Republic and its diaspora in the United States, providing insights into how Afro-Latinos make sense of their racial identity and Black consciousness in the here and now.

JESSICA COBIAN

Jessica Cobian is a PhD student and Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellow in the political science department at UCLA. She is currently studying the effects of anti-immigrant rhetoric on the Latino vote. Jessica's research interests are centered on Latino political behavior, voter turnout, group threat and xenophobia. Prior to attending UCLA, Jessica worked on campaign management and policy analysis on immigration, democracy and technology at the progressive think tank, Center for American Progress in Washington DC. She has previously worked as an immigration campaign manager for Sojourners, a lead organizer for ACCE and a community organizer for Faith in Action in California. She has published at JAMA Network Open, written for Sojourners and the Center for American Progress and has opinion editorials in the Voice of San Diego, Univision, La Prensa and Colorlines. Jessica holds an MPP from American University and a BA in political science from UC Riverside.



AIME HOGUE ROVELO

Aime Hogue Rovelo is a political science PhD student at the University of Missouri focusing on comparative and American politics. Her research interests lie at the intersection of minority representation, elections, and policy. Her work on electoral politics has also led her to examine related issues such as refugee immigration, human rights violations in Latin America, and the Latin American political economy. The Fund for Latino Scholarship will support Aime's data collection on the election of minority candidates in jurisdictions with cumulative voting rules and other electoral systems.



ANA LUISA OAXACA CARRASCO

Ana Luisa Oaxaca Carrasco is a PhD candidate in political science at the University of California—Los Angeles. Her research creates synergy between literatures on representation, immigration politics, and race and ethnicity. She undertakes this synthesis to study how political institutions shape the

political representation of immigrant constituencies at the local level. In her dissertation, she develops a new theory of local elite behavior given the presence of nationalization. The project builds a comprehensive understanding of the strategic decision-making process undertaken by municipal officials constrained by federal, state, and municipal governments when confronted with the representation of non-voting populations. The Fund for Latino Scholarship will fund the completion of her fieldwork collecting, organizing, and analyzing over 60 interviews with mayors and city council members across the United States.



DAVID HERRERA

David Herrera is a PhD Candidate in political science at Brown University. His research interests include racial and ethnic politics, urban politics, community organizing, and environmental politics and policy. David's dissertation explores how the community organizing practices of local environmental justice organizations in Oakland and San Diego shape the policy agenda of local government on air pollution issues. His dissertation research has been supported by the Robert & Patricia Switzer Foundation, the Institute at Brown for Environment and Society, the Taubman Center for American Politics and Policy, Brown University's Political Science Department, and the APSA Fund for Latino Scholarship. The Fund for Latino Scholarship will support David's data collection including in-depth interviews, participant observations, and archival research.



YANIRA RIVAS PINEDA

Yanira is a doctoral candidate at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she is currently finishing her dissertation titled "Crime-Ridden and Heavily Policed: Political Involvement in two Los Angeles Public Housing Facilities." Her research explores political participation in under-resourced, crime-ridden, and over-policed Latino communities.



What does political participation look like in these communities? How do these communities mobilize, and what mobilizes them? How does contact with crime and the criminal justice system shape political participation? Yanira employs a mixed-method research approach using quantitative and qualitative tools for data collection and analysis to explore these questions. Yanira is the recipient of numerous research awards, including the UCSB Chicano Studies Institute Research Grant, UCSB Humanities and Social Sciences Research Grant, UCSB Department of Political Science Graduate Research and Training Grant, and the APSA Fund for Latino Scholarship Grant. She has been a Graduate Division Dissertation Fellow, Graduate Opportunity Fellow, SAGE Fellow, and a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Fellow. She intends to use the 2022 Latino Scholarship Grant to attend the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting in Montreal, Canada. Yanira's areas of specialization are Latino politics, race and ethnic politics, American politics, criminal justice, comparative politics, and Central American politics (in the United States and comparatively).

ÁNGEL TORRES

Ángel is a master's student in international relations at the University of Chicago. His research examines the presence and diversification of criminal activities and illicit markets with emphasis on the provision of services by organized criminal groups in Mexico. With the support of the Fund for Latino Scholarship, Ángel attended the 2022 APSA Annual Meeting to present his research and attend panels in his research fields.



CESAR VARGAS NUNEZ

Cesar Vargas Nunez is a PhD candidate in the department of political science at Stanford University. His research sits at the intersection of political science, public health, and sociology. In his dissertation, he focuses on understanding the political determinants of immigrants' access to healthcare, the conditions under which citizens are willing to extend access to government healthcare programs, and the strategies that undocumented immigrants use to navigate healthcare exclusion. He obtained his BA in political science from Pitzer College and received a Fulbright Research grant in 2014-2015 to investigate healthcare inequities in Spain. Cesar will be a Ford Dissertation Fellow in the 2022-2023 academic year. The Latino Fund will enable him to attend the 2022 APSA conference. ■

