

Hispanic Alumni Newsletter

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Our Mission

Part of MSUB's Strategic Plan is to attract and retain students from underrepresented communities. The Hispanic Outreach Committee (HOC) was created as a response to this initiative with the goal of providing educational opportunities to Latinx students and making MSUB a campus that reflects our culture and gives voice to Latinx concerns. The focus is on Latinx outreach within MSUB to organize our students to better support their academic goals and listen to their concerns. We are also working to create a Latinx-friendly campus through events that reflect and celebrate our rich culture. Just as important is the input and participation of the broader Billings community; our hope is to create greater civic engagement to foster change and give more opportunities to our Latinx students. This first issue of the *Hispanic Alumni Newsletter* is an extension of this commitment toward inclusivity.

Ana K Diaz, Ph.D
Hispanic Outreach Coordinator

Inside the Classroom with Rachael De La Cruz

Latin American Women Crafting Change



Between August 19 and October 1, The Northcutt Steele Gallery at MSUB hosted the Latin American Women Crafting Change exhibition, which displayed vibrant and detailed "cuadros" (embroidered and appliqued fabric picture stories) meticulously crafted by women living in Pamplona Alta, a shantytown on the outskirts of Lima, Peru. The works were commissioned by Dr. Rebecca Berru-Davis, who has conducted fieldwork in Pamplona Alta since 2006. Dr. Berru Davis and the artists collaboratively curated this dynamic exhibition of "cuadros" that represent the histories, activism, religious practices, ambitions, and daily life of the artists and their community.

On September 24th, students in Dr. Rachael De La Cruz's modern Latin American history course toured the exhibit. Using WhatsApp, the students met the artists, who were simultaneously working on new "cuadros" from their homes in Pamplona Alta. Spanish-speaking students and professors translated the questions and answers in a unique cross-cultural exchange.



Student Denise Morales-Boyd, reflected that "the "cuadros" are a method to fight the external powers, because the women promote their stories in an attainable way for foreigners and countrymen alike. Despite the hardships they faced, there's an abundance of happiness displayed. As a celebration of life, these women include images with authentic representations of their Indigenous, colonial Spanish, and modern influences to display the Peru that they know."

Rachael De La Cruz, Ph.D

MSUB's First Latinx Scholarship

Learn How to Donate

A central goal of MSUB's Hispanic Outreach Committee (HOC) has been to establish a scholarship directly aimed at helping Latinx students, many of whom are at a distinct disadvantage relative to other students because they often lack the financial resources to complete their higher education. Happily, the Billings League of Women Voters (LWVB) has developed a \$1,000 scholarship for a Latinx student for each of the next three years at MSUB. This scholarship is the result of LWVB's working relationship with the Latinx community in Billings, and thanks to their work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The LWVB of Billings is asking our members and allies for help in funding this scholarship. Your gift will help with our commitment toward equity in education. Please invest in our work and in Billings' future with a gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, or more today to give Latinx students the opportunity to have what others often take for granted. With our nonpartisan commitment, grassroots power, and attention to inequities in our community, we are making a difference in the Billings community, and beyond. For a tax deductible donation, write a check to League of Women Voters Education Fund with Latinx Scholarship in the memo line. Send to: Jacqie Gee, Treasurer, LWVB; P.O. Box 21631; Billings MT 59104. If you wish to donate through a charitable donor advised fund or other funds, contact Jacqie Gee at [gjacie@gmail.com](mailto:gjacqie@gmail.com) or 406-371-3143.

Events

To learn more on how to vote, please [visit](#) the League of Women Voter's Montana 2020 General Election Information [VOTE 2020](#)

Night on the Van

In partnership with the Salvation Army, MSUB Night on the Van is a food insecurity initiative aimed at delivering hot meals to those in need within the Billings community. Each meal provides much-needed sustenance to those who cannot reach a food distribution center, ensuring that the most vulnerable members of society do not go hungry. Sign up for future events at:

www.msubillings.edu/community

Hispanic Outreach Committee

Get to Know Our Members



Dr. Ana K Diaz is an Associate Professor of philosophy at Montana State University Billings. Her research interests are in philosophy of mind, feminism, and critical race theory. She is a public member and president of the Montana Board of Medical Examiners and is the Lead for Native American, Veteran and Hispanic Outreach at MSUB. She is also a member and coordinator of MSUB's Hispanic Outreach Committee that has been working on several initiatives to highlight the presence of the Hispanic community in Billings and MSUB. Dr. Diaz was recently named the NCAA's designee on diversity and inclusion for MSUB. For three years, she was a member of the American Philosophical Association's Committee on Hispanics, which is charged with assessing, reporting and identifying discriminatory practices of Latinx philosophers. She was born in Lima, Peru and moved to the states at the age of six. She is married and has two young daughters, ages 10 and 4.

Linda Garcia is the Access Services Librarian at the MSUB Library. She has a BFA (Studio Arts) with an emphasis in Graphic Design and a minor in Landscape Architecture from the University of Idaho - Moscow. She has a Master's in Library & Information Science from the University of Washington - Seattle. She has worked in public and private academic libraries in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana in the last 14 years. Linda is a member of the Hispanic Outreach Committee, a member of the Resource-Sharing & Fulfilment Steering Committee for the Montana Academic Libraries consortium (TRAILS), and is the Liaison Librarian for MSUB's departments of Art, Environmental Studies, History, Math, Music, Political Science, and Social Studies. Linda is proud to be a first-generation graduate, Mexican-American, and the daughter of Mexican immigrants!



Born in La Paz, Bolivia, Maggie (Carrasco) Arbuckle attended a German school there before going to boarding schools in the US and Canada. She met her husband Lee at the Peace Corps/Bolivia office then moved to the family ranch in Montana. Maggie completed her B.S. in Business Administration at Northeastern University, Boston and worked for the Agency of International Development (USAID) in Honduras. Back in Montana, Lee & Maggie developed a business manufacturing a native grass seed harvester. Now retired, Maggie is involved with the family ranch, League of Women Voters, Hispanic Outreach Community and AAUW.

Lisbeth Madriz, a student at Montana State University Billings, has completed an Associates Degree in General Science with the goal of becoming a Physician Assistant. Ms. Madriz is slated to complete a bachelor's degree in Spanish with a minor in Business Administration in the summer of 2021. Presently, she is the president of the Spanish Club, the student member of Hispanic Outreach Committee, International Studies, Student Activities Board member, and works at Trio Student Support Services and Alumni Association. Ms. Madriz is a wife and mother of five children; she volunteers as a tutor as part of the Spanish Club and hosts cultural events and workshop to help students obtain scholarships.





Dr. Rachael De La Cruz is a new faculty member in the department of history. Her research and teaching interests include histories of modern Latin America, migration, and gender. As a Filipina American and the newest addition to the Hispanic Outreach Committee, Rachael is committed to collaborating with other faculty, staff, and students to foster an educational environment that allows Latinx and other marginalized communities to thrive at MSUB.

Shelly Ovalle has been working with MSUB for 10 years as an Administrative Assistance II for the Art and Math Department. She was born in Billings MT and was raised in Chihuahua, Mexico. Shelly graduated as a Bilingual Accountant and Certified in Basic English Instructor. She worked as an English teacher in Delicia Chihuahua for 6 years and came back to Montana in 1992 and has been a resident of Billings ever since. Shelly is a single mother of 3 children all of whom graduated from Senior High. She resides in the Southside community and her goal is to share her love for MSUB and help students from Riverside and Senior High be excited to continue their education with MSUB.

