The Journey

from the Center for Diversity and Inclusion of the University of West Georgia

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Hispanic/Latino Culture at UWG

This edition of the Journey is devoted to Hispanic/Latino culture. The Hispanic/Latino culture embodies a vibrant, influential, and rich community. In this issue, you will find articles featuring Dr. Susana Velez-Castrillon, an assistant professor at the University of West Georgia, and Lily Winsaft, CEO of Aldebaran Associates. Also included will be an immigration update, interviews with Hispanic/Latino student organizations, and various "wolves" weighing in. The staff from the Center for Diversity and Inclusion is sure you will appreciate this edition. ¡Disfrutalo!

Dr. Susana Velez-Castrillon brings her business knowledge to the University of West Georgia

By Rafael Booker

How long have you been with this University? This is my second year at the University of West Georgia. I started here in fall 2011.

What are your most recent research interests? Can we expect any more publications in the near future? Right now I am interested in corporate reputation, and how firms develop reputations in the marketplace. Since completing my dissertation, I have been looking at what it takes to build a good corporate reputation. Corporate reputations have become more fragile because of online reviews, books, and magazines can quickly erode them. I do not know when I will get that published but hopefully it will be soon. I am also interested in the effects of diversity, particularly gender diversity in top management teams or at the board level. What initially interested you most in Business Management? What led you to continue your education in this area?

My undergraduate degree is in biology, which is a very different area. After I graduated from college, I had the opportunity to work at St. Louis University in a research lab. I was researching bio-chemistry and they were working with a bio-technology company and they were developing new drugs. [That experience got me interested in the business side of natural sciences such as the development of pharmaceuticals, the development of medical devices and agricultural technology products.] This was something that I had never thought about and led me to pursue my Ph. D. in Management. **You are an Assistant Professor of Business. Can you**

tell me what courses you teach?

I teach two classes right now. One is Strategic Management, which is what we call here the capstone class. The class is taken by students in their last semesters because it integrates what students learned in marketing, finance, economics, and accounting. It is the integration of everything and how those things combine and apply to develop a company's strategies. The other class that I am teaching is an elective called Social Corporate Responsibility. The class focuses on responsibilities that companies have beyond legal requirements. There are some laws that companies need to comply with such as minimum wage and minimum number of health and safety trainings. Beyond that, companies complete a lot of discretional programs for their employees, for the community, for charities. That is a part of the corporate responsibilities. The point of this elective is to show students all the problems that companies



Dr. Susana Velez-Castrillon, Assistant Professor, Richards College of Business

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face. Traditionally, we only think of the company's obligations to their shareholders or owners. Companies have obligations to the communities, employees, customers, competitors, and to their suppliers. This is what the Social Corporate Responsibility course is about, thinking about all the other stakeholders.

What more do you hope to accomplish here at the University of West Georgia?

I am the president of Phi Kappa Phi, which is a national honors society. I would like to get the chapter more involved in campus activities and become more recognized on campus. Another thing I want to accomplish is collaborating with other professors from different departments to promote the certificate and/or minor in Latin American Studies. There are some Latin American studies classes that exist. We are still working to see what will be the courses required for the certificate and/or the minor, and how the certificate will be awarded.

What has been your most rewarding experience as a professor here at the University of West Georgia? Attending graduation this year was amazing because I have never attended graduation as a professor. I have never had my students graduate. Because I teach the Strategic Management class, which is taken in the students last year, a lot of my students graduated. When Dr. Sethna started announcing students to stand up for different accomplishments, I was proud to see many of my students were First Generation College students, HOPE scholarship recipients, and Pell grant recipients. That was amazing; to see that I had made a difference in those individuals' lives.

Have there been any challenges that you had to overcome from being a student to becoming a professor? One thing that was difficult for me was the selfdiscipline required to finish my dissertation. When you are taking classes you have deadlines for everything, you have to present a paper, or take exams. You know when everything is due and you have to meet the deadline. However, when you are working on your dissertation your deadlines are more flexible. You do not have a set schedule for example, sitting in front of the computer from 6p.m. to 10p.m. for class. Managing the freedom of flexibility was very difficult for me.

What is your proudest professional accomplishment? My proudest accomplishment was getting this job. I began searching the job market in 2010. At that point, I had not finished my dissertation, which made me a weaker candidate than others who were done. Even though I had not finished my dissertation, I was able to get a tenure track job here at the University.

How does President Obama's latest immigration policy affect undocumented people in the U.S. and Georgia?

By Dr. J. Sal Peralta, Assistant Professor of Political Science

On June 15, 2012, President Obama announced from the Rose Garden at the White House a new immigration policy temporarily halting deportation procedures against certain qualified undocumented immigrants. On that same day, Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, issued a memorandum directing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to "exercise prosecutorial discretion with respect to individuals who came to the U.S. as children." This announcement set off a heated debate between supporters and opponents of the policy, and highlighted the political implications of this presidential directive in the middle of the presidential campaign.

On August 15, 2012, the DHS began accepting applications for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals from undocumented immigrants who meet certain guidelines: applicants must have come to the U.S. before age 16, must have lived continuously in the U.S. for the past five years, and among others must pass a criminal background check demonstrating a clean record – no felonies and misdemeanors.

According to Jeffrey Passel and Mark Hugo Lopez at the Pew Hispanic Center, up to 1.7 million undocumented individuals may benefit from this policy. Not surprisingly then, on the first day DHS began accepting applications, from New York City to Chicago to Los Angeles to Miami, thousands of undocumented youth lined up to apply for deferred action. By August 10, 2012, the U.S. Center for Immigration Services reported statistics showing that 179,794 applications had been received, and 4,591 applications had been completed, which means that 4,591 applicants had been granted a deferral from deportation.

At the same time that the policy was welcomed among undocumented youth, many were still skeptical and concerned about the implications of this policy on their lives. Two major concerns among applicants were clear. First, since this is a presidential directive, if President Obama is defeated in November, the policy may be rescinded and they would be left worse off than they were before – undocumented and already in deportation proceedings. Second, even if the policy continues, it is only temporary and it does not offer a path toward citizenship. Unlike the Dream Act, which failed to pass both Houses of Congress, this directive does not provide a path to citizenship, only temporary relief against deportation and a two-year work permit. Here in Georgia, this policy could lead to an increase in the number of undocumented applicants to USG institutions, particularly Latino applicants. In October of 2010, a USG report found 501 undocumented immigrants attended USG institutions (out of 310,000). It is unclear at this point, how many more applicants have applied and been accepted to USG institutions since President Obama announced his policy in June, and whether the policy will have a significant long-term impact on Latino recruitment, retention, and progression toward graduation. It is clear, however, that at least for the moment young undocumented immigrants may be able to pursue a college education.

UWG's New Latin fraternity Lambda Theta Phi brings cultural awareness to campus



By Stacie Taniguchi

As the newest members of the Greek community, Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Incorporated has made major strides in bringing attention to Latin heritage at the University of West Georgia. As Colony Founders of the first Latin fraternity on campus, Eric Alvarez, Takeo Garcia, and Brian Nunez are bringing awareness to Latin culture to a school and community with a growing Latino population while providing an alternative option for men looking to go Greek. *The Journey* had the privilege of talking with these gentlemen.

What are all of your class levels and where are you originally from?

Eric Alvarez: I am a Senior, Marketing major from, Dallas, Texas.

Brian Nunez: I am a Junior and I'm studying Political Science, and I am from the Dominican Republic.

Takeo Garcia: I am a Sophomore, and my major is Criminology from New York.

Why it is important to have a Latin based fraternity? At UWG?

BN: I believe it is important because it gives Latinos, or other people, the opportunity to contribute to the Latino community. With fraternities I feel there's that brotherhood aspect. And at UWG a lot of people have come up to us saying that they like how we're different than the NPHC or the pre-dominantly black fraternities and differFrom left to right: Eric Alvarez, Takeo Garcia, and Brian Nunez

ent than the predominantly white, and that offers people a third choice they can make.

EA: It brings a lot of awareness to cultures around West Georgia. It brings awareness to not only West Georgia, but also the Carrollton community.

TG: The school is currently growing so it's good for us to bring something different in this case diversity with a Latin based fraternity.

What makes you proudest being a member of Lambda Theta Phi?

BN: I've actually tried to be Greek before and it didn't fit well with me. But the brotherhood aspect within Lambda Theta Phi fit for me. Also just the work that we put in, to bring the fraternity to UWG.

TG: Specifically what makes me the proudest is the brotherhood aspect; I feel that it's so strong with our fraternity.

EA: What I love is how even when we go meet brothers we've never met before-- from Georgia (University of Georgia), Georgia State, Kennesaw—it's kind of like a friend you see once a year but yet you're best friends when you see them. The fact that we can be a part of something new at UWG is also a big deal and I think it brings a lot of awareness, and people notice and they tell us.

Can men who are not Latino join Lambda Theta Phi?

BN: One thing that we say in the informationals is that we celebrate *your* own culture. We are Latin based but we do celebrate everybody's culture. For example, we have Vietnamese brothers, Chinese brothers, Black brothers, even some European brothers. Close to West Georgia, UGA has two black brothers and three Asian brothers. So you can just see the diversity there. TG: And just to top it off, we're Latin by tradition but not by definition.

EA: At UGA we have an Asian brother and even though a lot of our events are Latin based they did a Vietnamese night and it's just one brother but they did an event for him and that's culture. We're open to anyone and we're willing to celebrate everyone's culture.

What makes your organization unique?

TG: Really, just the diversity and like I said before the brotherhood...we hold the brotherhood that were always there for each other and that's really like the main things that make us unique.

BN: The main thing that makes us unique is the fact that we salute, we do not step or stroll. We do respect other fraternities that do, but when we were founded back in 1975 our founders wanted to create something different and they came up with the art of saluting. This can best be described as poetry in motion. The motion and the intensity that we put in is definitely something unique to us that we hold very dear.

EA: We are the first Latino fraternity and the largest Latino fraternity in the country. And the saluting, we are the only fraternity that does it in the nation.

How does it feel to be founders at UWG?

BN: I love it. We worked at it for a year before we were official. So many people come up to us and are like wow how does it feel? You get that wow—you can't really describe it. And you get that respect when other fraternities and sororities come up to you and say it's so great that we've brought this here.

EA: I'm definitely proud to be a part of something that's bigger than just me. At the same time, you're bringing a national organization onto a campus and this national organization has never been here. That in itself makes me very proud. And of course making it through the process. When you look back, no one can take it away from you, and I'll always have that memory.

TG: what makes me real proud is the fact that we're the ones who set the foundation for anyone who's coming to join our fraternity. Whenever we do come back to visit brothers will be basing their principles off of the founders, so we are the ones who set the foundation for our fraternity.

What are your hopes for the future as a chapter at UWG?

BN: Thrive in numbers but also just spread awareness of the Latino community in Carroll County because there are a lot of students but sometimes diversity is not seen. EA: I hope to have an impact. Not only at West Georgia and in Carrollton but also not be the stereotype of a fraternity. Not use it as a fun thing but have an actual impact.

TG: We are trying to make an impact on the community, by having events like community service.

BN: The brotherhood aspect is one part of it because we are a social fraternity but we also care about our community and making an impact.

Do you/did you have any specific events or celebrations acknowledging Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month?

BN: We celebrated Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month by hosting an Immigration Panel with professors and other experts, and had Luso Hispanic Day which was a day full of different activities and events to bring awareness to Hispanic culture.

What do you think of the diversity at UWG in terms of students, faculty, and staff?

TG: Slowly but surely diversity is growing at West Georgia and we are the ones who have started something new and that will attract more people and diversity to our university.

BN: With the faculty and staff there is room to grow, but I see it growing and I see them taking it a new direction. We are truly becoming a destination university.

EA: I definitely think it's growing. And it could grow more and it should grow more. And I think with time it will. In terms of students, faculty, and staff, we are doing a good job. It's a work in progress. As the university increases in size so will the university's diversity.

Do you feel that there is a solid understanding and appreciation of diversity at UWG?

BN: I think there is. They're trying definitely with offices like the Center for Diversity and Inclusion. They've been here for a while and now they have united with the MAP program (Multicultural Achievement Program). They are kind of honing in into being more diverse. For example they have a display case celebrating Hispanic Heritage month and they celebrate Native American, Asian American, and Black History Months with the different programs they do and there is this understanding and appreciation for diversity.

EA: It's definitely growing and I think they're getting a better understanding as time goes on. It's a learning process.

Latino Cultural Society celebrates vibrant Latino culture on campus

By Michael Ucci

Founded in 2006, the Latino Cultural Society, better known around campus as LCS, is dedicated to celebrating our campuses vibrant Latino culture. Through a variety of programs such as dancing lessons, Hispanic Heritage Month events, participating in International Education week, and many others, LCS aims to share the Latino culture with the University of West Georgia and Carrollton communities. Open to all students, regardless of cultural self-identification, the organization is also deeply committed to community service and finds it imperative to give back to their community.

Nadia Sims, sophomore, is the current treasurer of LCS says that she joined as a freshman to experience a culture other than her own. She wanted to remain part of the group, and even successfully attained an active leadership role, because "everyone is so welcoming and I look forward to our weekly meetings." Many students remarked that they enjoy being a part of LCS not only because of the culture but also because they are making new friends and getting involved in real issues that impact the campus. "I feel that I get to, in a way, make a difference on our campus by helping to educate our community not only about the Latino culture, but also about real-world issues", remarked Mercedes Miller, sophomore and current president. Freshman and Goizueta Scholar Carina Arellano-Garcia sees a very bright future for the organization, "I believe LCS will continue to leave a mark of diversity at the University of West Georgia."

The Latino Cultural Society meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in 210 UCC. For more information, visit <u>http://www.westga.edu/</u> <u>diversity/index_20311.php</u> or contact Mercedes Miller, President, mmille17@my.westga.edu

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Businesswoman Lily Winsaft shares her experiences with UWG

By Stacie Taniguchi and Michael Ucci



Lily Winsaft (pictured in a blue dress), poses with students and staff at the Center for Diversity and Inclusion's Hispanic Heritage Month Program.

Why is it important to celebrate National Hispanic/ Latino Heritage Month?

I think it's important to celebrate our heritage whether you're Hispanic, or you're Polish, or you're Italian, or German. Heritage is really important because it's the stuff that we're made of. It's what makes us who we are today, it's the richness of our personalities, behind our drive and to how we work with and relate to our families, our communities, our schools, our society, our culture. It gives us a background; it's kind of like the meat of who we are. So I think it's important to celebrate it.

What do you think are the biggest issues for the Hispanic and/or Latino communities in the United States?

Immigration, definitely. It's such a huge problem. And I think our government—as much as they're trying to solve the problem, I think they're looking at it from different angles. I think we're looking more to what's wrong with immigration instead of looking at it as a problem that we as a society have. We, the United States of America, are known as the Melting Pot of America, so don't tell me it's wrong to let people immigrate to the United States because that's crazy. But we have a problem because people are coming here illegally. So what we need to do is solve that issue and there are all kinds of other societal problems that arise from that. You know, children that are growing up in our school system that are graduating and they aren't United States citizens because they were born here but they don't have legal documentation. That's a problem! So I think that's the biggest problem that's facing the Latino community, and from there

arise other problems like the college and high school dropout rates within the Hispanic community being so very high. So I think education is a big concern. But if we can stop the immigration issue and look at it as a problem that we as a society, as a community, as a group have to solve, I think from there we can solve all the other problems.

How do you feel about The Dream Act, do you view it as a viable solution or as a temporary Band-Aid to cover the bullet hole.

It's more of a temporary stop the bleeding kind of solution. I think that what we really need to do is look at the problem from all angles. We can't just absolve everyone and give everyone the right to become legal overnight, which is to be on one extreme. But I think we need to generate some rules and parameters under which individuals that have been illegal in the United States can become legal. And at the same time, cause them to also in some way pay for their illegal action because there is an illegal action happening here. But you don't make people pay for a crime by taking their children away for example. That's not humanitarian. So I think we need to be more humanitarian about it but we still need to recognize that there's a crime being committed here. We need to be more humanitarian across the whole punitive system. I think it is more of a temporary Band Aid, but it's better than nothing.

What sparked your interest in going into the business area and starting your own successful company? I'd like to say I had a plan, but I didn't. The thing that I knew was that for who I am and where I wanted to go, where I was wasn't working. So I made a risky move to leave where I was without having a plan. I don't recommend that for everyone. You have to have some really thick skin to do what I did. I left a six and a half figure income with five weeks' vacation and benefits galore and as a single mom with two teenagers in high school that was a very risky move. I had a career established and a future. So what prompted me to leave where I was, was that it wasn't working for me and the main thing that wasn't working for me is that I saw that some of the aspects of the business model of the company where I was didn't align with me from an integrity stand point. There were issues there for me that worked against my grain; they worked against my core values as a human being and what I'm committed to. And so I decided that if I really wanted to live my core values and live what and who I am about, I just might have to go and do my own thing. Because I would rather go out and be risky and start my own thing where I get to say how things run rather than adapt into a model that is not in alignment with me. Not that my model is perfect but at least it's mine. At least I get to live my core values every day.

Have you come across adversity in the workplace because of your Hispanic or Latino identity?

I have not. The reason I have not is that I have never thought of myself in those terms. I have never thought of myself in terms of what do I need to do to cover up this thing. I just always consider myself like everybody else. So much so that there was a point where I actually realized that I had been a closet Latina. I didn't know that I was in the closet when I was in the closet but I realized that I was in the closet when I stepped out of the closet. Because then, when it became kind of popular to be Latino, all of a sudden I wanted to say "Hey! Here I am! Don't forget about me! I'm Latina!" That's when I realized I was actually in the closet. I really think that when we talk about leveraging what makes you different, it is more about how to consider yourself equal to everyone else. It's about who you are and if you believe others are going to work against you or not accept you or be prejudice against you, it's like if you believe that will happen then guess what? It probably will.

As a woman have you come across adversity in the workplace?

Same response. Although I'm sure that at some point in both categories I have been discriminated against I've just been blind to it. I haven't noticed it. Although I'm sure it has been there at some level. As a woman I can tell you that to me, being a woman has actually helped me in many ways. There's aspects of how women run a business and how women lead in an organization that are very beneficial to the group because we have a nurturing aspect to us. So we tend to be more compassionate and caring leaders. So we have at times more success leading organizations or leading projects because of that feminine aspect.

UWG Wolves weigh in

By Tonya Chin



Altavia Lowe, Freshman, Early Childhood Education

Are you satisfied with campus life at the moment? What aspects of campus do you enjoy? What are some changes that you would like to see?

Yes, I like it because it is homey. I grew up in a suburban area so it's very familiar to me. I enjoy the events that are held on campus and the different student organizations. What I would like to see change is for the food service stations to stay open a little later so that I am not forced to starve after 7 o'clock (she joked).

How has UWG made your college experience a unique one? The people that I have met. The campus is so diverse that you never know who you are going to meet. I don't feel subjected to one group of people and I don't have to be selective in my group because there are so many different people to talk to and to meet from all different aspects of life. It's not like when you were in high school and only hung out with a certain group of people.

How important is diversity to you? Are you happy with the level of diversity on campus, why or why not?

I am happy with the level of diversity here. It is important because you want to be able to communicate and interact with other cultures and ethnicities. America is a diverse country, it is not just one face so you have to know how to interact with different people in order to sustain in society and be understanding of someone else of a different background. Therefore, it is good to have a college campus that represents the face of America in some way.

What about the Hispanic heritage community? Do you see a wide variety and representation of Latinos on campus? I can't say that I see a lot of Hispanics or people of Latino culture specifically, but I do see a lot of different people that I am able to communicate with of different heritages. I think that it is very important to be bilingual in certain Spanish communi-

UWG Wolves weigh in cont.

Joshua Allensworth, Senior, Business Management

Are you satisfied with campus life at the moment? What aspects of campus do you enjoy? What are some changes that you would like to see? Yes I am satisfied with campus life. I enjoy the recreational activities that are held here and I think that the new additions that are being made will be great for future students. Something that I would like to see change is the diversity here.

How has UWG made your college experience a unique one? It was made unique through the interactions I have had with different people and being introduced to different cultures and backgrounds. It opens up your eyes to so much and allows you to see life a little differently.

How important is diversity to you? Are you happy with the level of diversity on campus, why or why not? Diversity is very important because you get to understand and communicate with different backgrounds. It allows people to be different but accepted on the basis of those very differences. I don't think that the level of diversity here is very high; I would like to see a more diverse population here.

What about the Hispanic heritage community? Do you see a wide variety and representation of Latinos on campus? No, I feel like I really only see a select few. I can't say that I have seen them widely represented on campus either.

Sarah Dunn, Junior, Early Childhood Education

Are you satisfied with campus life at the moment? What aspects of campus do you enjoy? What are some changes that you would like to see? Yes I am satisfied. I enjoy meeting new people and the different organizations.

How has UWG made your college experience a unique one? I have really enjoyed meeting the people that I have at West Georgia and being involved with several different organizations on campus.

How important is diversity to you? Are you happy with the level of diversity on campus, why or why not? Diversity is very important to me! Coming from a very diverse hometown, I was actually disappointed in the level of diversity at West Georgia. I expected college to be very diverse but I don't see that at West Georgia. What about the Hispanic heritage community? Do you see a wide variety and representation of Latinos on campus? No, I do not see a very large diversity or variety of Hispanics on campus.

Spenser Norman, Graduate Student, College Student Affairs

Are you satisfied with campus life at the moment? What aspects of campus do you enjoy? What are some changes that you would like to see? Being a graduate student I have a different experience to campus life than undergraduates. I have a job within the University and get to see the campus climate in a different light. I do believe that this campus is trying to grow and expand to target students and their needs. I would like to see a community area for students; I find that students need a location besides the residence halls to call their own. Also would like to see more faculty/staff to student interaction.

How has UWG made your college experience a unique one? UWG has made my college experience unique because this University is growing. It is always a great experience to see growth and change on a campus. UWG has also helped me learn about why things are in place at the university. The university has a lot of history to it and it is always a great experience to learn about the history of the campus.

How important is diversity to you? Are you happy with the level of diversity on campus, why or why not? Diversity is very important to me because that is how I grow as an individual and others can grow as well. UWG has a lot of diversity on campus. I do find that this university might get caught up in the racial barriers of diversity. Race for a lot of people can be the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about diversity and still is a very important component to focus on at times. I would like to see diversity programs that might focus on spirituality, human rights, and global issues and cultural differences. What about the Hispanic heritage community? Do you see a wide variety and representation of Latinos on campus? I see the Latino community growing on this campus. I am aware the fraternity Lambda Theta Phi is a newly established Latin Fraternity on this campus. I would like to learn more about their culture and to see more students who identify as Hispanic or Latino attend this university.

Interested in volunteering with the Center for Diversity and Inclusion?

Call 678.839.5400

Center for Diversity and Inclusion Upcoming Events

January 17

7:00pm at the Campus Center Ballroom 4th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Program Angela Y. Robinson Theme: It's Time To Come Together

January 29 7:00pm Location Ingram Library **Controversies of Culture Series** Dr. Joshua Moon Johnson Understanding and Respecting LGBTQ Identities

January 31 7:00pm, Campus Center Ballroom 108.2 Black Jew Dialogues

February 13 11:30-1:00pm at the Z6 Hubbard Dining Hall **Multicultural Conversations Series Panel**

February 19 7:00pm Location TBD **Controversies of Culture Series**

February 26 Black History Program Living Legacy Series Mr. James Pack-Montford Point Marines

March 13 11:30-1:00 at the Z6 Hubbard Dining Hall **Multicultural Conversations Series**

March 14 Noon—5:00pm at the Campus Center Ballroom **4th Annual Multicultural Festival** Theme: Beyond Differences

March 26 at the Campus Center Ballroom 29th Annual MAP Awards Speaker: Mr. Ray Moore

March 28 7:00pm at the Campus Center Ballroom 108.2 **Women's History Month Celebration** April 2-27 Older American's Month Sock Drive

April 5 Multicultural Book Discussion

April 8 7:00pm Location Campus Center Ballroom **Dr. Earl Suttle—AAMI Program**

April 9 Asian Pacific Heritage Program Ingram Library

April 23

World Book Night

