

**H A C U**

H I S P A N I C  
A S S O C I A T I O N  
O F C O L L E G E S &  
U N I V E R S I T I E S

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# Spring 2009 Intern Newsletter

March 2009

## Director's Note

The month of March is gone and your internships are drawing to a close. As we get ready to bid you good bye, we are working extremely hard in preparation for the summer session. Some of you will be returning; others will pursue different paths. Whatever it is you decide to do afterwards, please become ambassadors of our mission: like Manuel Garcia, who has committed to organize an informational event about HNIP once he gets back to school.

In this issue, we highlight the interesting work that Lisette Arredondo is doing at the CDC on HIV/AIDS, a pandemic that is affecting someone in the U.S. every nine and a half minutes. At the Census Bureau, Brendan Kaye is mapping cities throughout the U.S. and Nina Martinez shares with us a very personal story.

We also highlight HNIP alumna Jaqui Sosa, who after her experience at the NSF as a HACU intern, felt empowered to pursue her PhD.

The energy, enthusiasm and hope of spring permeate everything. Enjoy your last weeks and make the most out of your time in the nation's capital or your field assignment.

Maria Elena Vivas-House

## Every 9 1/2 Minutes

By Lisette Arredondo  
California State University, Monterey Bay

DHHS—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Spring 2009 Intern



*Lisette making her mark at CDC*

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, I participated as an actress in a public service announcement called "9 1/2 Minutes" for a campaign that is

focused on providing Latinos with information on the prevention of HIV.

This was a unique experience since it was my first time in front of the camera. According to my supervisor, I am the first HACU intern to participate in such an activity.

Also, I participated in the AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) web-seminar. The seminar focused on *Latino Youth Prevention HIV Infection*. I increased my knowledge about how Latinos are at risk of obtaining the disease and the risk factors.

Overall, the staff at the Capacity Building Branch (CBB) continues to provide me with an enormous amount of support. For instance, my supervisor keeps me updated on opportunities she finds and that she believes will be of interest to me.

This has allowed me to realize how many doors of opportunities exist and can open for me because I am working with a federal agency. There is someone in CBB that is reviewing my resume and will be providing me with feedback on how to improve it to make it more suitable for a federal government job.

**Check out Lisette, and Maria Alvarez, her supervisor, on camera in the PSA at <http://www.cdc.gov/CDCTV/Informatel/index.html>**

## Getting on the Map at the Bureau of Census

By Brendan Kaye  
University of Central Florida

Department of Commerce—Bureau of the Census  
Spring 2009 Intern

I am still working in the newly acclimated ArcGIS software program, and I have finished the map on the Miami-Dade, Broward, and West Palm Beach County metro area. That was a very good feeling of success and completion, however was very short lived as I continued right on to the map for Washington D.C.!

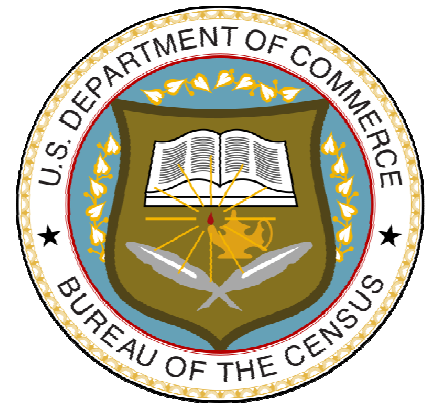
Another interesting development was the American Housing Survey Conference that we held here at the Census Bureau Headquarters in Suitland, MD.

The conference consisted of all of the Census Bureau's field offices including Atlanta, Boston, New York, Detroit, Chicago, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Seattle, Denver, Dallas, Charlotte, and Philadelphia. The main topics were field representative training, budget issues, and the timeliness of the survey.

The most intriguing part of the conference to me was the presentation of PANDA, which is the Performance and Data Analysis Tool, that helps regional offices and headquarters keep track of the data flow from the field representatives.

The main focus is on recurring outliers in the data that would signal a problem. The problems arise from either false information given from the respondent or, more often than not, from the field representative providing false or skipped answers. Seeing this aspect of our survey gave me a fresh, unique perspective of what we do here at my branch.

My latest goals at work have been to attempt to dissect the minds of all of the established and experienced employees that work in my branch to better grasp the



longitudinal aspect of our survey as well as how things have changed at the Census Bureau in the last 30 years.

Sometimes I have trouble with all the information being poured in from all corners at all times – but more information is always better than a lack of it.

## Building Lifelong Friendships

DHHS—National Institutes of Health  
Spring 2009 Intern

By Manuel Garcia  
University of Puerto Rico—Cayey



Manuel Garcia, taking the White House by storm.

I cannot believe that time is passing so fast. We have only one month to continue enjoying this unbelievable experience.

My experience of working with the National Insti-

tutes of Health (NIH) has been very productive and I am taking advantage of every opportunity.

As part of my professional development I had the opportunity of attending many conferences that have completely surpassed my expectations. Also I have met new people with whom I have enjoyed many fun experiences that I will never forget.

D.C. is a place where you can admire cultures from all over the world by walking downtown, visiting museums, trying different cuisines or just riding the metro.

As for my experience with other HACU interns I can only say that a lot of them have

become my family. As a result of these friendships I know that I will be able to visit every state in the U.S. I am sure saying goodbye will not be easy. At least we still have a little more time to continue enjoying!

**“As for my experience with other HACU Interns, a lot of them have become my family”**

As part of my commitment and dedication to HACU, I am planning to organize an event at my university about HACU and the benefits that this internship offers. That way, I will be able to share my story and let students know about the program.

You don't have to be a psychologist to figure out why the U.S. is constantly evolving. For the past 12 weeks I have been part of the workforce that is full of energy and ready to keep moving forward. I cannot wait to share this experience with as many people as possible.

## Walk for Hope

By Nina Martinez  
Emory University

DHHS—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Spring 2009 Intern

I received a phone call on February 13<sup>th</sup> that one of my closest friends was hospitalized at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) in Newark. Shelton Jackson, age 31, went into the hospital with end-stage AIDS.

I personally got to know Shelton through a young person's speaker's bureau called Hope's Voice, then based in New York City. In 2006, Shelton and I went on the "Road to Hope" Tour - an educational college tour that went to 22 colleges/universities across the United States, covering 3,000 miles over 5 weeks to do HIV peer education programs

I rushed to my friend's side on February 15, 2009. I am fortunate to work in a field where my supervisors can understand that people still die from this disease, and persons who have it deserve all the love like anyone else in the world.

Certainly his physical appearance had changed from last I saw him. In the two weeks following, I heard that his cancer had spread to his lungs and stomach. The last



*Nina Martinez and Shelton Jackson*

words I spoke to him were "I'll be in touch," the day before he died on March 2, 2009. Like always he responded, "I love you, darling."

While I am new to CDC, I thank my supervisors for their patience and understanding during my two trips to Newark in those three weeks. I discovered how small the field of people who work in HIV/AIDS when someone at the cemetery asked me if I knew Maria Alvarez (my supervisor).

The last six weeks or so I have been writing a report on the interaction between incarceration, Hispanics/Latinos, and HIV. It was certainly a challenge. Not too much research is out there on persons in corrections in general, and adding the Hispanic/Latino lens made the task that much harder.

My work has paid off in part since next week I am taking part in a consultation called *Corrections and Public Health Consultation: Expanding the Reach of Prevention*. There will be 80+ participants discussing HIV prevention among those in prisons, jails, and detention centers.

***Nina Martinez will be walking the New York AIDS Walk to remember Shelton.***  
***[http://aidswalknewyork2009.kintera.org/walk\\_nina\\_walk](http://aidswalknewyork2009.kintera.org/walk_nina_walk)***

**Upcoming Events**

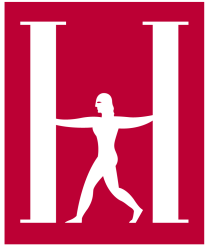
**HACU Ambassadors: Spread the Word**

**04/23/09**

**Spring Intern Farewell**

**04/29/09**





**HACU**  
ALUMNI  
HISPANIC  
ASSOCIATION  
OF COLLEGES &  
UNIVERSITIES

## Alumna Seeks PhD after HNIP Experience

By Jaqui Sosa

There is no doubt in my mind that if you let the right people influence you, you will surpass your own expectations. Thanking key people at HACU and NSF for the well rounded opportunity to reach my short-term goals would not be fair without mentioning other important people I met in the past at Arizona Western College (AWC) and at American University (AU.) While looking to do something different while studying at AWC, my counselor Ms. Angelica Diaz de Leon advised me to apply to the HACU internship program. Initially, I hesitated to apply, and I thought "Who would select an inexperienced girl from the small town of Yuma, AZ?" However, my former boss Mr. James Self constantly insisted I should apply for the internship. I finally applied in November of 2004 and in January of 2005 I flew to Washington DC to start an internship at USDA.

While interning at USDA my supervisors advised me to apply to AU, so I could finish my BS. I applied to AU in February and in August of 2006 I came back to DC to start my first semester at AU. While studying at AU, I met Dr. Richard Linowes whom I still consider my mentor for all the support he gave me when I was his student. Great things have happened since 2006. Being one of the 2008 NSF scholars has been a truly well-rounded experience. In fact, before my tenure at NSF I considered starting a Masters Degree. Now, I feel confident I will complete a Masters degree and empowered to continue my studies to the PhD level. I am truly grateful for being selected as an NSF scholar and to have the opportunity to improve my technical skills and envision a more ambitious future. After all, *time is precious!*



## HACU Alumni, Volunteer in DC !

Hands on DC's main event is a one-day work-a-thon held every spring. During the work-a-thon, more than 2,000 volunteers spend the day at one of about 30 to 40 DC public schools.

Their work typically involves projects such as painting, cleaning, or landscaping. Other projects require greater skills and resources, such as repairing bathrooms, laying carpet, building tree boxes or wiring classrooms for Internet access.

Creating a better environment for learning is just one of the ways volunteers help local students. They also raise money to fund college scholarships administered by local tutoring and mentoring organizations, and they learn about the condition of and the people involved in the schools. That knowledge helps build support for public education.



Date: Saturday, April 25, 2009

Time: 8:45am - 3:00pm

Location: C.W. Harris, located at 301 53rd St SE, Washington, D.C.

[www.hnip.net/alumni](http://www.hnip.net/alumni)

For more info or to register to volunteer please contact us at [alumni@hacu.net](mailto:alumni@hacu.net)