

NUESTRO MUNDO

News for Notre Dame Latin Americanists

<http://kellogg.nd.edu/lasp>

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In Search of Common Ground:

Finding a balance between tradition and biomedicine

*Nathan Serazin, Biochemistry major
 grant recipient*

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Three hours west of Quito, Ecuador situated on one of the most breathtaking roads through the Andes Mountains is Pedro Vicente Maldonado. This Ecuadorian city in itself is not outwardly unusual. In fact, on the bus ride from Quito you will undoubtedly pass through numerous cities that on the surface appear identical to Pedro Vicente Maldonado. You will encounter the same run down storefronts, the same half-finished concrete houses, and the same farmers with weathered faces. However, just off of the main road through Pedro Vicente you will also find one of the most successful privately owned hospitals in all of Latin America. During the past two summers, I have called Pedro Vicente home, and it is this hospital that has provided me with an unparalleled perspective to learn about providing health care to rural populations in a developing country.



Serazin with a doctor at Pedro Vicente

The hospital in Pedro Vicente rivals many hospitals found in the United States. It is equipped to take care of most primary and secondary health care needs and is also able to offer affordable prices. Most importantly, though, the hospital is widely utilized. In contrast, although Ecuador's Ministry of Health has built comparable facilities, these hospitals do not come close to matching the patient load in Pedro Vicente. While experience has shown me that there are several reasons why patients prefer the hospital in Pedro Vicente, I learned during my first summer there that one underestimated reason for the hospital's success is that it takes measures to understand how its patients view medicine and treats them accordingly. With the support of a grant from the Kellogg and Kroc Institutes, my focus for this past summer turned towards this issue. More specifically, I returned to Pedro Vicente to study the efficacy of medicinal plants used by the citizens of Pedro Vicente to treat illnesses.

My research has given me a perspective of medicine that few people ever get to see. At the hospital, I spoke with patients and doctors about their opinions towards traditional medicine and learned about plants that they

Focus on Faculty

This fall Assistant Professor **Vania Smith-Oka** will begin her second year in the Anthropology Department at Notre Dame. Originally from Mexico City, Smith-Oka came to the US to begin her undergraduate career at Lawrence University, then moved to the University of Florida for her Master's and received her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Upon receiving news of her appointment to Notre Dame, Smith-Oka was quite excited, having "fallen in love" with the department and campus during her interview. Since her arrival, Smith-Oka has continued her research in Veracruz, Mexico, which builds upon one aspect of her Ph.D. dissertation work. Her current research focuses on the "interface between reproductive health and the globalized elements of the culture." In Veracruz, a multitude of changes are taking place in terms of healthcare and medicine. With the arrival of Western doctors in the region, more funding, better clinics, and a strong emphasis on individual health have also arrived. While the arrival of the doctor has provided the village with much needed supplies and services, it has also brought with it some unintended consequences. Mostly, as a result of miscommunication, women often feel that they have little voice or control over their reproductive rights, specifically regarding the use of contraceptives and the number of children they have. Smith-Oka says that the doctors care deeply about their patients, and are trying to address their health needs and trying to do what they can to help the women break free from the cycle of poverty that is so pervasive in the village. Despite the doctors' best intentions, however, a hierarchy between the Western doctors and indigenous women has formed, often times leaving the indigenous women feeling powerless.



Vania Smith-Oka

Upon completion of her research, Smith-Oka plans to use her findings to help the doctors and the women better understand each other's needs; she hopes to provide the doctors with her research and present the information to the women in a way that they can understand. She seeks not simply to study and understand the problem but also to provide a practical solution.

Through her research, Smith-Oka has ignited the interest of undergraduate students. This includes sophomore Stephanie Fairhurst who applied for and received an Experiencing Latin America Fellowship (ELA), which provided her with the resources to accompany Smith-Oka while she conducted her field research in Mexico. The ELA Fellowships are funded by the Kellogg Institute and give freshman and sophomore students the chance to apply for grants to conduct research or other projects in Latin America. Both Smith-Oka and Fairhurst had a very positive experience, and, when asked if she would like to have a student accompany her again in the future, Smith-Oka replied with an enthusiastic, "Oh, absolutely! I would love to bring more students to do fieldwork with me." While Smith-Oka has only been at Notre Dame for one year, her contributions both academically and to the students are already quite evident.

Interview by Lindsey Hero, 2007 graduate

QUECHUA

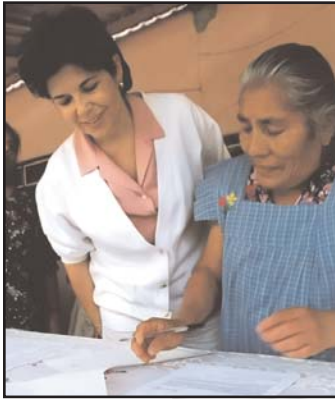


Did you know that Notre Dame offers the possibility of studying three languages of *Latin America*? Not only can you take Spanish and Portuguese from the Department of Romance Languages, but you can also take Quechua. Be one of an *elite group* of students in the country and take the opportunity to *learn a language* that will give you insight into the study of the Andes and the Inca. Beginner level classes are offered both fall and spring semesters by native speakers. Students who pursue the study of Quechua can also receive *fellowships* from the Kellogg Institute to study the language in Cuzco, Peru during the summer.

See <http://kellogg.nd.edu/students/lasp/fellowships/quechua.shtml> for details.

María Otero

2007 Notre Dame Prize Recipient to visit campus in November



María Otero, president and CEO of ACCION International, will be awarded the 2007 Notre Dame Prize for Distinguished Public Service in Latin America at a ceremony at the University of Notre Dame on Nov. 19, 2007.

Born and raised in Bolivia as one of nine children, Otero now resides in Washington, DC, with her husband and three children. Her father, Rene Otero Calderon attended law school at Notre Dame in the 1940's. After earning a BA from the University of Maryland and an MA from Johns Hopkins University's School for Advanced International Studies, she held a variety of positions with NGOs involved with development in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

"After working around the world, I decided I wanted to focus on helping women empower themselves through work so they can be leaders in their own lives," wrote Otero in a 2005 *Newsweek* profile. "I started looking for a group that did that and found ACCION International, which puts small amounts of capital in the hands of poor people with businesses. Most are women."

Otero began her ACCION career in Honduras in 1985 as a technical advisor to a local microfinance institution. By 1989, she was named director of ACCION's Washington, DC, office and then became executive vice president in 1992. In 2000, she was promoted to her current position of president and CEO.

In a 2005 *Newsweek* special report, "How Women Lead," Otero was named one of the 20 most influential women in the United States. In 2000, she was awarded *Hispanic* magazine's "Latina Excellence Award." *Hispanic Business* magazine, *Cookie* magazine, and the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders have also recognized Otero with awards for leadership.

ACCION is a private, nonprofit organization with the mission of giving people the financial tools they need—microenterprise loans, business training, and other financial services—to work their way out of poverty. As president and CEO, Otero directs the nonprofit's global operations. Stuart Mora, a Notre Dame junior, interned with ACCION in Paraguay this summer. (See related article, page 6.)

Supported by The Coca-Cola Foundation, the Notre Dame Prize for Distinguished Public Service in Latin America recognizes the efforts of visionary leaders, civic activists, intellectuals, and public servants to enhance the region's welfare.

To learn more about the Notre Dame Prize, see <http://kellogg.nd.edu/events/ndprize/index.shtml>.

Interim Director for Latin American Studies Program

Professor Jaime Ros has been appointed as interim director for the Latin American Studies Program for the 2007-08 academic year. We are all very grateful that he is willing to serve in this capacity and look forward to working with him on the program.

Continued from page 1 Serazin

believed to have medicinal properties. I was also welcomed into the homes of traditional healers in Pedro Vicente to learn how they treated different illnesses and about the plants that they utilized to do so. However, what has been most interesting from my research has not been the plants themselves. Instead, the most valuable part of my research has been seeing these two perspectives side by side. It has been seeing how regulars at the hospital could still have a strong preference for tradition and how traditionalists are willing to forgo their beliefs for a more effective treatment that has led me to conclude that the two are not so different that a common ground cannot be found. Unfortunately, what both lack is a basic understanding of the other that is often responsible for conflict between the two. It is my hope that upcoming publications from my research will allow me to share my experience to give doctors a better understanding of the populations that they serve by showing them that traditional methods for treating disease can often prove to be effective.

Latin American

CULTURAL EVENTS

- September 6 **Art Beat**
Downtown South Bend
4:00-8:30pm, For more information, see
<http://www.artbeatsouthbend.org>.
- September 6 **Romantico** (2006)
Immigration: A Notre Dame Perspective
at 7:00pm and 10:00pm, Browning Cinema, DPAC
- September 6 **Dying to Live** (2006)
Dan Groody will be present for discussion
Immigration: A Notre Dame Perspective
at 7:00pm and 10:00pm, Browning Cinema, DPAC
- September 7 **La Alianza Fiesta Del Sol** Free food and live music
Fieldhouse Mall (Rain Location: Stepan Center)
- October 10 **"From the Other Side"**
Kellogg Institute International Labor Film Series
7:00pm Hesburgh Center Auditorium
- October 11-24 **Images of Immigrant Communities**, A Photographic Exhibition on Migration. Featured Artist,
Students from the Notre Dame Community. Galería América, McKenna Hall.
Open Monday-Friday (9:00am–5:00pm)
- October 25-
January 10 **Día de los Muertos: Images from a Mexican Tradition**
Gallery Exhibition at the Galería América, McKenna Hall
Open Monday-Friday (9:00am–5:00pm)
- October 30 **Day of the Dead Celebration Workshop**
Chavez Family Weavers
5:30-8:00pm, Institute for Latino Studies Annex
- Chloe's Cabaret: Poetry, Music, Conversation and Coffee**
Gabriel Gomez and Valerie Martinez, Featured Poets
7:00–9:00pm, Regis Philbin Studio Theatre, DPAC
- November 1 **Day of the Dead Celebration**
Ramiro Rodriguez, Featured Artist
7:00pm, Snite Museum of Art
- December 12 **Virgen de Guadalupe Mass**
Basilica of the Sacred Heart

Migration Documented Film Series

7:00–9:00pm

DeBartolo Classroom Building

September 5

"La Fuerza"

September 12

"Letters from the Other Side"

September 26

"Life and Debt"

October 3

"Snakeheads"

October 17

"The Sixth Section"

For more information contact Carmen Macharaschwili cmachara@nd.edu
or see <http://www.nd.edu/~latino>.

Latin American

ACADEMIC EVENTS

- September 4 **Maria Herminia Tavares de Almeida and Leandro Piquet Carneiro**
Universidade de São Paulo
Shaping the Local Political Arena in Federalist Brazil
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 12:30pm
- September 11 **Manuel Alcántara**, Universidad de Salamanca and Kellogg Institute Visiting Fellow
The Quality of Political Leaders in Latin America
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 12:30pm
- October 16 **Aníbal Pérez-Liñán**, University of Pittsburgh and Kellogg Institute Visiting Fellow
Scott Mainwaring, Dept. of Political Science and Kellogg Institute Director on leave
Regime Trajectories in Contemporary Latin America
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 4:15pm
- October 30 **Gabriel Negretto**, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica (CIDE) and Kellogg Institute Visiting Fellow
The Logic of Constitutional Survival: Evidence from Latin America
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 12:30pm
- November 1 **Ignacio Walker**, Corporación de Estudios para América Latina (CIEPLAN)
Democracy and Populism (Old and New) in Latin America
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 12:30pm
- November 6 **Gillian Sorenson**, Senior Advisor, United Nations Foundation
Hesburgh Center Auditorium, 6:00pm
- November 13 **Rev. Robert Pelton, CSC**, Dept. of Theology and Kellogg Institute Faculty Fellow
Medellin and Puebla: Dead or Alive in the 21st Century Catholic Church?
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 12:30pm
- November 15 **Cecilia Vaisman**, Hewlett Visiting Fellow, Freelance Writer
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 4:15pm
- November 27 **Larry Diamond**, Stanford University
The Globalization of Democracy
C-103 Hesburgh Center, 12:30pm

ND - University of Guadalajara USAID Program - Student Presentations

Recently returned Notre Dame students as well as their Mexican counterparts will present their projects from their summer 2007 experiences at the University of Guadalajara. Meet the faculty and students involved and learn more about the program. Students will present on Thursday, September 18, from 3:30–5:30pm in C-103 of the Hesburgh Center for International Studies. A reception will follow.

For more information about Kellogg Institute events, see
<http://kellogg.nd.edu/event.shtml>.

LASP Reception

The annual LASP Reception will be held Wednesday, November 7 at 6:00pm in the Hesburgh Center for International Studies. Students and faculty who are interested in Latin America should attend. The reception will include information about travel and research opportunities as well as class information for the spring semester. Food will be provided.

Required attendance for LASP Minors

Stuart Mora, a senior history major, has spent this summer working as an intern for Acción International in rural Paraguay, funded by the Kellogg Institute's Summer Internship Program. Stuart spent summer 2005 interning with the Foundation for Sustainable Development in Peru and spring semester of 2006 traveling and interviewing people throughout Mexico. This summer he worked in the Villa Ygatimi, a small rural village where more people speak Guarani than Spanish. His project involved coordinating microcredit arrangements for small farmers in the region. Below are some of his reflections from his summer experience.

Life in Villa is improving. I definitely had a tougher time adjusting than I had anticipated. It was my first experience with culture shock. No, there really wasn't anything that I hadn't seen before. It just took me a while to realize that the people were less friendly because most of them speak only limited Spanish.

I am doing my best to learn Guarani and a few other interns will be around off and on this summer to keep me company. My work is definitely interesting. I have six committees, and four of them have received loans from my organization to raise animals—pigs, cows, and chickens. This new production leaves them less reliant on their crops which always run the risk of low prices and drought. Language is the biggest challenge in these committees, but I've always found a translator when necessary. Otherwise, enough people speak and understand Spanish that if I speak slowly and clearly, we communicate just fine.

Two committees are trying to prepare themselves for a loan. The other four are looking for markets where they can sell their livestock on a monthly basis. I would like to see the first two committees be well-trained technically and able to qualify for loans and the other four have solid three-year business plans and a definite locale to sell their product. I thought organizing would be a larger part of this, but community is a concept that these people live much better than we do in the US.

Transportation is a riot. Another intern sold me his "moto," a 150cc dirt bike, which is how everyone gets around unless they can't afford one, which leaves them on foot, hitchhiking, or driving an ox-cart (which I am determined to learn how to do). I've never driven a stick-shift, so learning to ride the dirt bike has been an adventure, although I drive pretty slowly in comparison with the locals.

I was invited to attend a meeting in Asunción yesterday in order to iron out some details about the program in which I am involved. A representative from the Inter-American Development Bank, which funds the project, came to give us a pep-talk and ended up talking all morning in a wild Argentinian accent. He went on and on about how microfinancing allows people with skills and wealth to help those without skills and wealth. (That's a bit of a caricature but it's the general idea.) He seemed to think that it was the only way. [My view is a bit different.] Microfinancing is a great idea. It works. It enables small businesses to grow and, in turn,



Mora in Peru

improves the lives of the owners of these businesses and their families. The idea, with some adaptation, can be effective with small agricultural producers as well. However, a necessity for any individual, organization, or idea, is to know one's own limits. There are still large numbers of hard-working people (I still contend that they're the majority anywhere in the world.) who labor five or six days a week and still can't provide adequately for their families, especially when it comes to education. At some point, if we really desire any form of equality in this world, we're going to have to trade a bit of personal luxury for some higher ideals. That does not mean subsidies or more government programs. I just mean rewarding people for the work that they do...and possibly admitting that a college degree and a few personal connections doesn't necessarily mean that your forty hours per week should be worth ten times more than another person's forty hours per week.

[I've tried] to become better acquainted with my clients. We've worked, attended church services, and shared meals together. Mostly we sit on porches chatting and drinking *tereré*, which is just water and tea leaves in a weird-shaped cup with a metal straw. It's quite a tradition that really has to be lived. It has the casual, almost lazy, feeling of drinking lemonade under a shade tree on a hot day with the added community feeling of sharing a glass and passing it around a circle. My Guarani has improved to where I can say a few things, but understanding what is spoken continues to escape me.



"Teaching children of all ages at the school in the mountain village of Guarjila, El Salvador, truly opened my eyes to both the immense need in the community and to the vibrant and resilient spirit of youth in the region."



"In the past two weeks, we have been to five communities giving charlas (lectures) about basic hygiene such as brushing one's teeth, washing one's hands, eating the right foods, etc., and day by day I have been learning a lot about rural impoverished health care."

Melissa Maxwell - Internship recipient
Anthropology major

STUDENTS EXPLORING LATIN AMERICA

With its mission to deepen the knowledge and experiences of undergraduate students beyond the classroom, the Kellogg Institute sent a record number of students to Latin America this year. Thirty-one undergraduates were funded to travel to the region through internships, research grants and fellowships. The projects the students participated in varied widely. Students interned with the Foreign Commercial Services in Argentina and Chile, studied women's health issues in Mexico and Peru, and even created a music program for children in a small town outside of Lima. Nathan Serazin (See related article, page 1) was one of three students who received a research grant to Ecuador and Peru. Twenty-three students interned in the region while four freshmen and sophomores took advantage of the funding set aside exclusively for them through the Experiencing Latin America fellowships. Those students explored initial projects that will help form their academic interests now that they have returned to campus.

Our award recipients were inspired to go to Latin America because of their classroom experiences and, in particular, their professors. The enthusiasm and support of Notre Dame's faculty drive student research and interest in the region. With faculty influence, the Kellogg Institute hopes to continue to support a growing student interest in these programs as well as the Latin American Studies Program.

"The Human resource department has weekly meetings with all the interns. At the end you obtain a diploma from the OAS if you attend at least 80% of meetings. Last Friday we had a meeting with the Secretary General Jos Miguel Insulza."



Maria Camila Bernal - Internship recipient
Political Science & Economics major

Animal market: "Indigenous people are a very important part of Ecuadorian national identity, although politically and socially, they often form part of the underclass. However, in some towns in the Ecuadorian Andes, indigenous groups have adapted successfully to the cash economy through participation in tourism as well as extensive trade networks for their artisanal goods from Colombia to Chile."



Michael McKenna - Grant recipient
Anthropology major

"This is actually my last day at the firm, as I have finished everything they have asked of me, and my flight leaves on Saturday morning. As for my work, it went extremely well. Last week I turned in a 12-page report of all my observations, suggestions, and proposed counterargument to the three lawyers that I have been working with."

William Lyman - Internship recipient
Political Science major



"I participated in Cusco's Corpus Cristi festival shortly after arriving. It was an amazing display of the formidability of ancient traditions and ideals that live on in Cusco's culture today. It was my first major realization of those influences and set a tone for the remainder of the research."

Kathryn Bouskill - Grant recipient
Anthropology major



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT *Opportunities*



Summer Internship Program Deadline - November 5, 2007

See <http://kellogg.nd.edu/students/internship/index.shtml>.

Kellogg/Kroc Undergraduate Research Grants Deadline - March 10, 2008

See <http://kellogg.nd.edu/students/grants/index.shtml>.



Information Meetings

To learn more about Kellogg's various awards and grants, please attend the information meetings listed below. Previous recipients will talk about their summer experiences and offer advice about how to apply and where to travel.

**Kellogg Undergraduate Internships, Grants, and Fellowships
October 1, 6:30pm**

C-103 Hesburgh Center for International Studies

**Kellogg/Kroc Undergraduate Research Grants
November 12, 6:30pm**

C-103 Hesburgh Center for International Studies

