

Live, Learn and Thrive.

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## News from the Dean for International & Border Programs

### UACH/NMSU Global Conversation: Creating Communities of Peace



On Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, in the *Facultad de Contaduría de la Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua*, approximately 300 participants, among them UACH students, faculty, and staff; representative of governmental and non-governmental organizations in Chihuahua; and citizens and residents from Chihuahua and nearby communities gathered for a day long “conversation” around the issue of creating peaceful communities and environments in the midst of external and ongoing violence. The day-long “global conversation” was sponsored by the *Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua*’s Office of International Studies and Outreach and New Mexico State’s Office of International and Border Programs. The overall purpose of the “conversation” was to provide hope and solidarity to a community devastated by violence and despair through a variety of individual, family, community, and internationally focused commitments and actions.

The day-long activity, entitled *Conversación Global: Desarrollo de Comunidades de Paz*, began with an overview of the day and introductions by the Director of UACH’s Office of International Studies and Outreach, Dr. Raul Favela. Dr. Favela then introduced and explained the significance of the official logo for the Global Conversation (seen in the photo accompanying this article): The shamrock, representing hope; the olive branch and dove, representing peace and justice; and the logos of both UACH and NMSU, representing the two sponsors. Dr. Favela pointed out that the “shamrock” was in honor of Dr. James Skelly, the “Conversation” key-note speaker, a life-long advocate for peace and justice worldwide, and the director of a peace and justice seminar held in Ballyvaughn, Ireland, this past June in which both Dr. Favela and I were participants.

Dr. Skelly’s talk to open the “Global Conversation” was followed by the other two presentations by speakers who likewise focused their remarks on a variety of peace-related themes including justice and injustice, human rights, global civil society, and religion and faith. The two additional plenary speakers were Dr. Leoncio Lara Saénz, who is currently *Defensor de los Derechos Universitarios de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* in Mexico City and Father Juan Pedro de Velasco Rivero, S.J., who is currently the Director of the *Complejo Asistencial Clínica Santa Teresita, A.C.*, in Creel Chihuahua.

Dr. James Skelly, the keynote speaker is currently the Resident Director of Brethren Colleges Abroad (BCA) in Derry, Northern Ireland and a professor in the University of Ulster's Magree College in Derry. Dr. Skelly has spent the last 30 years working to create educational programs that provide a foundation for a more peaceful and just world. As a young military officer in the U.S. Navy, Dr. Skelly's refusal to serve in Vietnam led to his lawsuit against the United States Government (*Skelly v Laird*), a case which subsequently helped to redefine the criteria for in-service conscientious objection. Dr. Skelly has published extensively in the areas of peace, justice, and global civil society. He has served as professor of sociology and director of peace studies and international programs at colleges, universities, and research-centers/think tanks throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Dr. Leonio Lara Saénz received his training in law at the Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua, graduating in 1965. In addition to his current position at UNAM, Dr. Lara Saénz has taught at numerous universities throughout Mexico, published widely in the area of human rights, and served as legal advisor to numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations throughout Mexico. A staunch, articulate, and courageous advocate of basic human rights, Dr. Lara Saénz has frequently been in conflict with the governmental and law enforcement organizations throughout Mexico.

Father Pedro Juan de Velasco Rivero, S.J., a Jesuit priest, received his doctorate in Theology and Religious Sciences from the Sorbonne in 1981. Since his ordination to the priesthood in 1974, *Padre Pedro*, as he is familiarly known, has discharged his priestly duties throughout the Sierra Tarahumara; has prepared future Jesuits as a professor of anthropology at the *Instituto Libre de Filosofía y Ciencias* in Mexico City and Guadalajara; served as the Director of *Centro Cultural Universitario de Hermosillo*; and as the Director of the Doctorate in Educational Sciences at the ITESO in Guadalajara.

After the keynote and two plenary talks, there was an opportunity for numerous questions from the "Conversation" participants. The penetrating and incisive quality of the questions themselves pointed to the extremely high level of interest and concern in the topics of the "Conversation," an



Global Conversation Conference Participants  
Left to right are speakers James Skelly and  
Father Pedro Juan de Velasco Rivero and  
Conference Facilitator Everett Egginton

interest that argued well for the next phase of the "Global Conversation," two full hours of round-table discussions among the 15 to 20 participants per table (20 tables) addressing three questions: 1. The participants' "vision" of an ideal community; 2. The participants' perception of the severity and nature of the violence in which they are living; and 3. From their perspective, how education, defined in its broadest sense (non-formal, family and community-based, formal), can bring themselves, their families, their communities, and ultimately the entire world closer to their "vision of an ideal community."

In trying to summarize in a single phrase or two the main message conveyed by each of the three principal speakers, I came up with the following:

Dr. James Skelly: Emphasized the need for one and all to develop the courage to act out of conviction in the face of injustice; non-action, he argued, is itself an insidious form of violence.

Dr. Leoncio Lara Saénz: All Mexicans need to understand that there exists an enormous gap between the laws of the land, which constitute the theoretical basis for a just society, and their implementation and enforcement, which have been and continue to be greatly flawed. Failure to enforce the laws of the land, especially those which guarantee free-

dom, equality, and protection of basic human rights, he argued, is a form of government-sanctioned violence. Education is the best tool we have to bring about greater justice and equality.

Pedro Juan de Velasco: Desperately poor and oppressed peoples worldwide, for example, the poverty-stricken and oppressed indigenous people native to the Sierra Tarahumara, have no alternative but to act outside of the law, for example, producing marijuana and other illicit drugs, in order for them and their families to survive. Acting outside of the law under these circumstances is no crime; however, perpetuating these kinds of injustices is criminal.

What next? The high level of interest shown by the participants in the “Global Conversation” in Chihuahua on October 16<sup>th</sup>, including specific requests to repeat the “Global Conversation” in other parts of the State, should not be ignored. Our Mexican friends and colleagues want this “conversation” to continue. Specific plans for following up on the “Conversation” will be decided in the very near future. We would like very much to involve interested faculty, students and staff from NMSU and members of the greater Las Cruces community. I will keep readers of International Briefs informed.

*Erin Egginton*

## 2009 International Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient



Mr. William Walter Wallace II, 2009 International Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient and Ida Baca, Associate Dean, Office of International and Border Programs

## International Education Week November 16-20

### Semana Tarahumara

The specific focus for the NMSU celebration of International Education Week this year will take place November 16-20 and focus on the Sierra Tarahumara region of Chihuahua. Over the last six years, numerous NMSU faculty, staff, and students working in the Sierra Tarahumara along with their colleagues and counterparts from a variety of schools, universities, research centers, and governmental and non-governmental organizations in Chihuahua, have come to better understand and appreciate the incredibly rich history and culture of the region along with the prevailing social issues and challenges to the region’s traditional way of life. These activities are being organized by the Office of International and Border Programs in close collaboration with the Mexican Consulate’s Office in El Paso, Texas and the Autonomous University of Chihuahua.

### Office of International & Border Programs Activities Planned For This Week

- Nov. 16 - 4:30 to 5:00 pm Diana Molina, Photojournalist presentation titled; “Raramuri Feet of the Sierra Madre” at the Nason House  
5:00-6:00 pm Opening of Photo Exhibition of the People of the Sierra Tarahumara by Photographer Arturo Rodriguez Torija at the Nason House (off of University Avenue across from the Kiunko’s. Reception to follow
- Nov. 18 - 3:00 to 4:30 pm Lecture Zacarias Marquez “Sierra Tarahumara in a Historical Context,” Faculty Senate, Garcia Annex (first floor); presented in Spanish only.  
5:00 pm Formal Opening of the Oscar and Omar Soto Art Exhibition in the Corbett Center Art Gallery. Reception to follow
- Nov. 19 -10:00 to 11:30 am Lecture by Romaine Wheeler on the “Sierra Tarahumara Way of Life,” PSL Auditorium.  
1:30-3:30 pm Sustainability Panel Discussion; Those presenting are: Neil Harvey, Martha Desmond, Martin Gomez and Steven Loring presenting and moderating the panel. PSL Auditorium; panel discussion will be presented in English only.

Nov. 20 - 9:00 to 11:00 am Creating Sustainable Economic Development in the Sierra Tarahumara Region of Mexico; Those presenting are: Greg Bloom, Eduardo Emilio Touche Hernandez and Luis Humberto Ochoa Sanchez; moderated by Everett Egginton. Faculty Senate, Garcia Annex (first floor); presented in Spanish only.

7:30 pm Concert by Romayne Wheeler renowned Mexican Pianist; Atkinson Music Recital Hall.

### **International Student Services Office Fall International Festival Events**

International Film Festival (all films to be shown in Corbett Center Auditorium, 7:00pm) is tentatively planned to include the following films:

- Nov. 2- Shaolin Soccer (Chinese film)
- Nov. 9 Monsoon Wedding (Indian film)
- Nov. 16 Close to Eden (Russian film)

International Country/Cultural Displays: Also on Monday, November 16, students from NMSU's international student population will present country/cultural displays to the university and Las Cruces community. This will take place in the lower level of Corbett Center, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.



Two students from India demonstrate the art of henna skin painting at the 2008 International Festival

### **News from the Center for Latin American and Border Studies**

Wednesday, November 4, 1:00-3:00 pm: Presentation on politics in Ciudad Juarez, entitled: "El desgobierno de la ciudad y la política del abandono" by Professor Luis Alfonso Herrera (Autonomous University of Ciudad Juarez). Professor Herrera will also present his new book "La Sociedad del Abandono" (copies will be available for purchase and signing). He will be accompanied by two colleagues from universities in Ciudad Juarez. This event will take place at the Nason House (1200 University Ave, directly across from Kinko's). Presentation in Spanish with English translation provided. Contact: Lydia Herrera, 646-6814.

Friday, November 6, 1:00-3:00 pm: Presentation by Dr. Juan Aguillo, Dean of Political and Social Sciences, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina, on "Political and Social Justice Issues in Argentina." This event will take place at the Nason House (1200 University Ave, directly across from Kinko's). Presentation will be in English. Contact: Lydia Herrera, 646-6814.

Thursday, November 12, 6:00-8:00 pm: Presentations by recipients of the 2009 Nason Student Scholarships for Research in Latin America. Three students will present results from research carried out during summer 2009: Camilo Roldan on the Nadaista poets of Colombia, Judy Forney on mining and sustainability in Peru, and Maria Schrock on land reform policy in Peru.

**EDITORIAL NOTE:**

THIS NEWSLETTER IS RELEASED THE BEGINNING OF EACH MONTH. THE CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF NEWS ITEMS IS THE 25TH OF EACH MONTH. PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS WHICH ARE PLANNED AND/OR ARE SCHEDULED FOR SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE. THIS NEWSLETTER IS INTENDED TO SHARE INFORMATION AND TO INFORM OTHERS ON CAMPUS OF UPCOMING AND PENDING ACTIVITIES, TRAVEL, VISITORS ON CAMPUS, ETC. FOR THIS REASON, ITEMS WHICH ARE SUBMITTED FOR ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE WILL ONLY BE UTILIZED IF THEY HAVE SOME RELEVANCE TO FUTURE ACTIVITIES. PLEASE MAKE SUBMISSIONS TO CIP-ADM@NMSU.EDU. IF YOU WISH TO REVIEW OLD ISSUES OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS ISSUES FOR THE LAST 12 MONTHS CAN BE FOUND ON THIS SITE.

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