

● **Annual Report**  
**2020/2021**



**ONWARD**



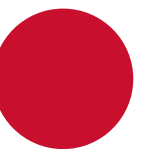


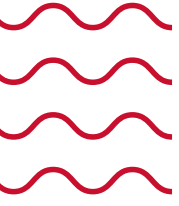
WELCOME

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me





# Our About CMAS



## Center for Mexican American Studies

The Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) at the University of Houston was established in 1972 as an interdisciplinary academic program encompassing the liberal arts, education and social sciences focusing on the Mexican American and broader Latino experience in the U.S.

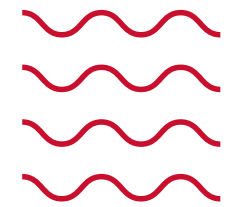


Located within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, CMAS has evolved into an academic unit with several major components: teaching, research and publications, recruitment and retention, leadership training, academic advising and community service.

# Mission



To advance knowledge, promote critical thinking and foster the value of service to the community. This involves designing a broad spectrum of public and scholarly programs.



# ● Message from the Director



The 2020-2021 academic outlined the “new normal” as the nation struggled to overcome the pandemic. As we embraced the challenges set forth by COVID-19, CMAS engaged the academic year with only two goals: to help our students achieve their dreams and to advance the Center’s research agenda.

This year, the University of Houston’s Undergraduate Committee approved CMAS’ Major in Mexican American and Latino/a Applied Studies. There is still a long way to go before we begin this major, but now the seed has been planted, and we remain optimistic about the innovative and interdisciplinary design of the curriculum. Our Minor in Mexican American Studies increased its enrollment by 24% compared to last year. We want to pay special tribute to Associate Director, Dr Cortina, for his stewardship of the major. The major is long past due, and we are grateful to him for his leadership.

Our forty Academic Achievers Program (AAP) students from more than ten different colleges finished the academic year with a strong 3.39 average GPA. Our external program grants that help to fund and grow the AAP increased by 75% thanks to the enthusiasm and commitment of my colleagues who run the program and write grants, and thanks to the community members who believe in and support CMAS’s mission. Special acknowledgement to our AAP Director, Fely Aguilar who has cared for and advised our students through this very challenging year.

We took the opportunities that, regrettably, the pandemic presented to us. As the Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR) headquarters, we concentrated our efforts to improve how researchers across the country interact, share ideas, and collaborate to advance the Latino research agenda.

Lastly, I want to thank my colleagues at CMAS for their commitment to our mission and for their hard work. They always put the well-being of our students before their own. It is this collective and selfless effort that makes CMAS remain true to its mission. I also want to thank all our supporters and alumni for their support and trust.

Sincerely,

Pamela Anne Quiroz  
 Director of the Center for Mexican American Studies &  
 CLASS Distinguished Professor of Sociology  
 Executive Director of the Inter University Program on Latino Research

## Our Team



● Associate Director  
 Dr. Jeronimo Cortina



● Business Administrator  
 Jessica Thiam



● Program Director, AAP  
 Fely Aguilar



● Financial Coordinator  
 Christine Cortez



● Program Coordinator, AAP  
 Eddie Muñoz



● UPLR Director, D.C.  
 Marisela Martinez, E.D.



● UPLR Director, Houston  
 Reyes Ramirez

# FOCUS

# Strategic



## 01

### Academics

Developing critical thinking through course planning and development and through mentoring the new generation of scholars.

## 02

### Research

Creating value added to the Latino community and decision makers through rigorous, relevant, and timely policy oriented research.

## 03

### Academic Achievers Program

Building a better tomorrow by creating opportunities through academics, community orientation, and responsibility.

## 04

### IUPLR

Leadership through innovation by transforming how scholars interact and bringing the digital world into Latino research.



# Academics



## + 24% Growth

Minor in Mexican-American Studies  
Increases Number of Students

## Major in Mexican-American & Latino/a Applied Studies

Undergraduate Committee Approves  
the Major and Moves to Next Steps



# Visiting

# Scholar & Graduate Fellows

## 2021-2022 CMAS GRADUATE FELLOWS



Valentina Jager  
Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Carlos Guajardo  
M.A. SOCIOLOGY

Luisa Perez  
M.A. ART HISTORY

Mariana Vazquez  
Ph.D. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY



## Cecilia Balli, Ph.D

CMAS Visiting Scholar

Cecilia Balli is a magazine writer, cultural anthropologist, and a research and communications consultant. Balli received her B.A. from Stanford University and her Ph.D. from Rice University. For 23 years, she has conducted research and written about the U.S.-Mexico border and Latino issues.

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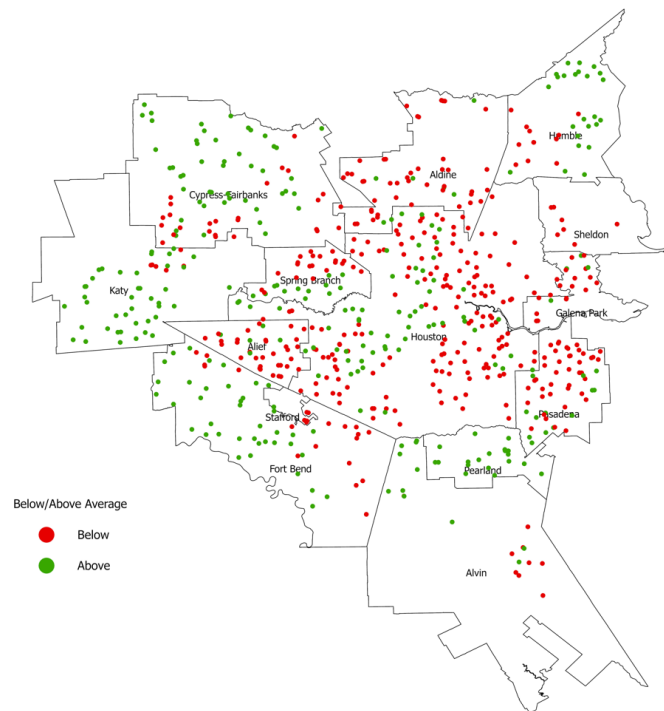
# Growing Research

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON  
CENTER for MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

DIVERSITY AND SCHOOL BOARDS:  
AN ANALYSIS OF RACE, ETHNICITY, AND  
GEOGRAPHY IN GREATER HOUSTON

CMAS | REPORT V 2.3

April | 2021



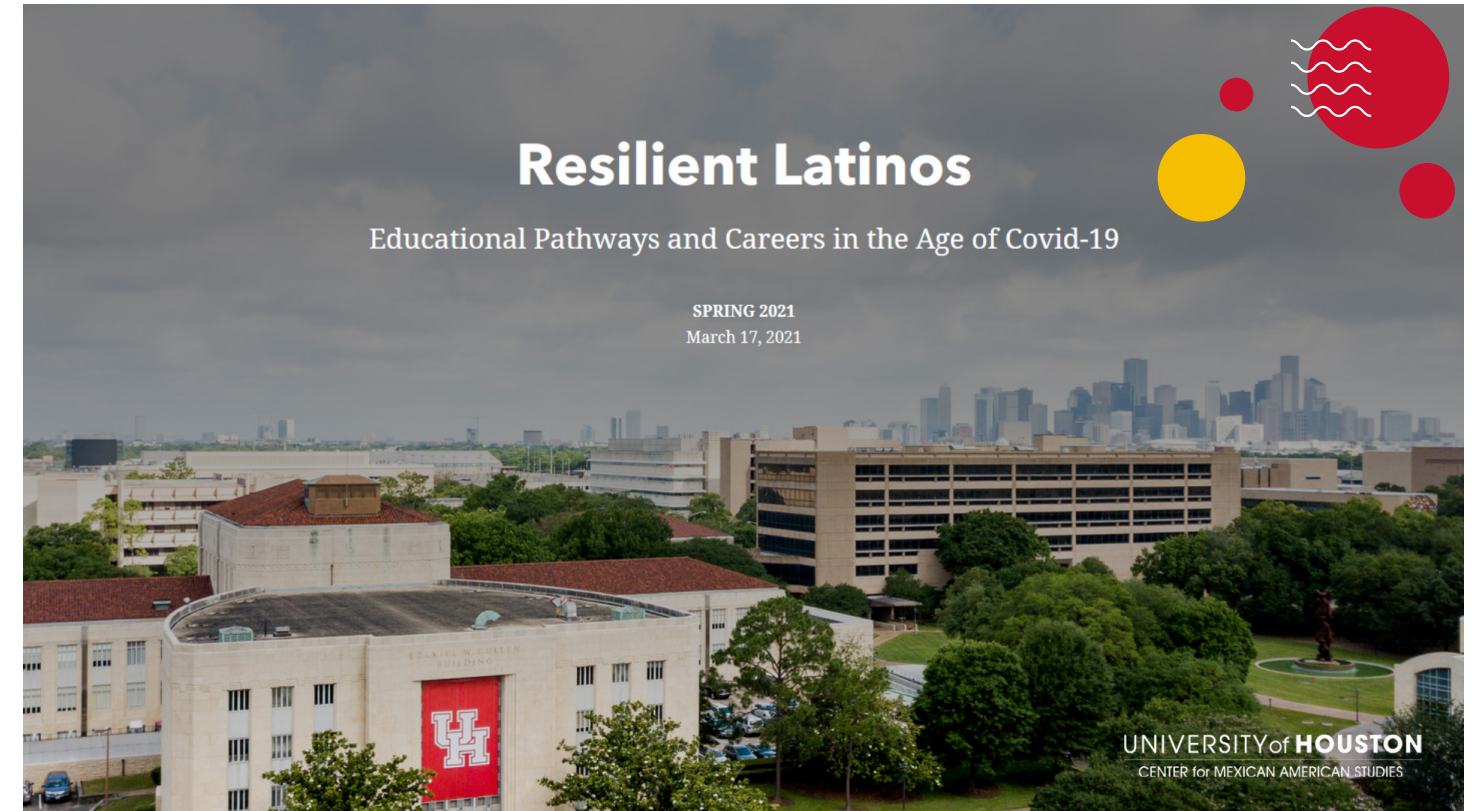
## How Diversity in school boards is related to student performance on standardized testing?

Using academic performance data from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA), we analyze fourteen independent school districts to measure whether descriptive representation – how well school board members represent the district racially, culturally, or ethnically – impacted student academic achievement (Reardon et al. 2019). We find that Greater Houston-area school boards are not only substantially non-Hispanic white, but districts with diverse racial and ethnic minorities tend to underperform in terms of academic achievement indicators, a severe problem for a region rich in culture and diversity. The daunting fact that representation seems to be a strong indicator of student success for non-Hispanic white school boards but a weak indicator for diverse boards raises severe concerns for Houston and the surrounding school districts.

## Resilient Latinos

Educational Pathways and Careers in the Age of Covid-19

SPRING 2021  
March 17, 2021



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CENTER for MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDIES



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UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON  
CENTER for MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

RESILIENT LATINOS:  
EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS AND CAREERS  
IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

CMAS | REPORT V 2.4

June | 2021

# Academic Achievers

The Academic Achievers Program (AAP) sponsored by the Center for Mexican American Studies, Office of the President, and Office of the Provost began in the fall of 1994. It is designed to retain students through graduation. Since its inception, a total of **311 students** have graduated from the program. Services offered by the program include:

**At a Glance**

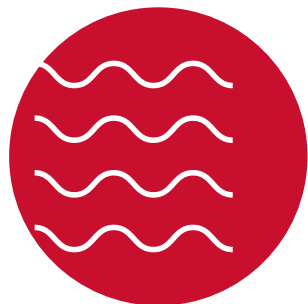
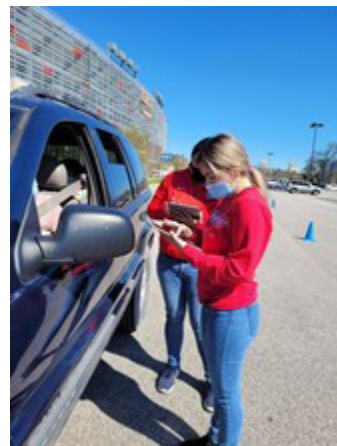
- \$3,000 Annual Scholarship
- Mandatory Individual Academic Tutoring
- Time Management Skills Sessions
- Skills Workshops and Leadership Training
- Career and Internship Opportunities
- Priority Registration

40  
Students



**Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Award**  
Honoring AAP Student – Yonatan Mascorro

**Houston Food Bank**  
UH Food Distribution



**Morales Foundation**  
24th Annual Back to School Giveaway

GPA  
3.39

\$70,000 in Grants  
75% Growth



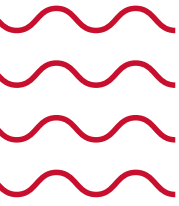
**Alumni Mixer**  
Revelry on Richmond

**LWI Annual Luncheon**



# SUCCESS



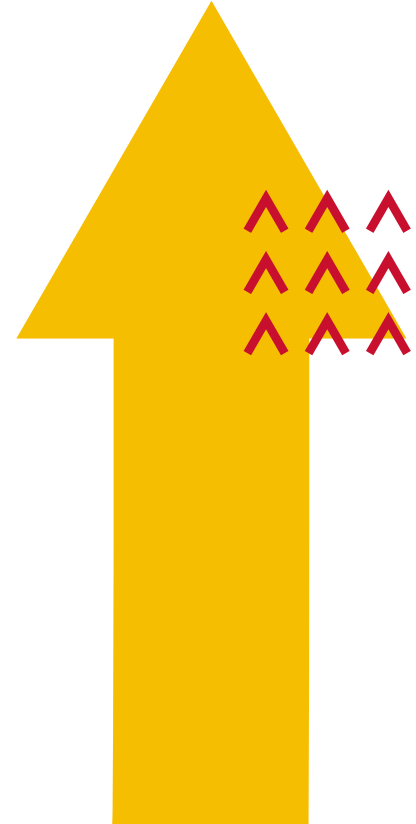


# IUPLR

INTER-UNIVERSITY PROGRAM  
for LATINO RESEARCH

Founded in 1983, the Inter-University Program for Latino Research became a national consortium of university-based centers dedicated to the advancement of the Latino intellectual presence in the United States. For more than 35 years, IUPLR has promoted core research on issues of importance to Latino communities and the broader US society. The consortium has become a respected national catalyst and facilitator of in-depth policy-relevant research and works to expand the pool of Latino scholars and leaders.

Headquarters at the University of Houston Center for Mexican American Studies.



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ADVANCING SCHOLARSHIP

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# NEW

## IUPLR's Projects

## Digital Research Projects & Experts Database

**IUPLR EXPERTS**

**Vincent D. Carales, PhD**  
Recently did a project exploring the impact of Hurricane Harvey on community college students and how they overcome this tragedy. The goal of my research is to...

**Reverberations of Racial Violence**  
November 15, 2021 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**DRIMIX AFTERNOON TERTULIA: SAN JUAN QUEER**  
November 15, 2021 @ 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

**TRACTION: ART TALK WITH CASSIUS AND RAFA ESPARZA**  
November 15, 2021 @ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

**DIGITAL RESEARCH PROJECTS**

- Chicago Latino Archive
- Houston Latino Visual Art Registry
- IUPLR Video Library
- LANI Chicago Virtual Gallery
- Latino Art Midwest
- Latino CARTographies

**IUPLR**  
INTER-UNIVERSITY PROGRAM  
for LATINO RESEARCH

**MELLON FELLOWS PROGRAM**

*Congratulations!*  
*2021-2022 Fellows*

Amy Martinez, Latin American & Latina/o Studies Dep. JJay CUNY  
Ricardo Gabriel, Centro for Puerto Rican Studies, CUNY  
Vicente Carrillo, Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA  
Mauricio Patrón Rivera, Center for Mexican American Studies, UH  
Elizabeth Obregón, Latin American & Latino Studies Program, UIC  
Nathan Rossi, Center for Mexican American Studies, UT

# MELLON FELLOWS PROGRAM

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**

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CENTER for MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDIES



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