

# La Alianza Newsletter 2015-2016

## A Year In Review:

Nadia Arid, La Alianza President

Dear Alumni,

This year was an exciting and eventful one for La Alianza at Harvard Law School, and we are thrilled to update you all on how the organization is doing. La Alianza has grown significantly in the past three years and is now one of the largest and most well-regarded affinity groups at HLS. As a result of our rising visibility on campus, we have recently been able to create programming that reaches a wider audience and brings Latino issues to the forefront of legal and academic discussions at our school.

This year we created new traditions and embraced old ones. We continued to hold the salsa nights, parties, and dinners that have, for a long time, been at the heart of the organization—this time linking up with local Latino law student associations and Latino groups at other Harvard schools as well as planning an off-campus fall retreat. In addition to social events, we set up a strong base of academic support, professional events, and community service opportunities for students. We hosted panels on clerkships and 1L exam tips, a speaker series on human rights issues in Latin America, and our first Spring Networking Night, giving students the opportunity to meet representatives from our sponsoring firms. We also hosted the Second Annual Alianza Gives Thanks event, which honors the custodial staff for the important role that they play in the HLS community.

One of our most exciting developments for this year was holding our inaugural Harvard Latino Law Conference, featuring keynote speakers and panelists such as Nina Perales, Margaret Montoya, Anthony Solana Jr., Hon. Fernando Olguin, and our very own faculty advisor, Professor Andrew Crespo. The conference was viewed as an overwhelming success, and we look forward to expanding its scope in the future.

As the Class of 2016 settles in as recent grads and begins to contemplate how we may be effective and supportive alumni, we are reminded of the significant impact that alumni have in Alianza's success. Under the guidance of **Carolyn Ruiz**, this year's Alumni Relations Chair, we created this newsletter to foster connections between alumni and current Alianza students. If you are interested in hearing more from the organization or becoming involved with the Alianza community, please let us know.



Nadia Arid '16, Carolyn Ruiz '16

Thank you for all that you do to support us, and we look forward to being connected in the greater HLS Latino student/alumni community.

*Raul Pérez was Co-Chair of La Alianza and Vice President of the student body during his time at Harvard Law School. Carolyn Ruiz '16, current Alumni Relations Chair, had the pleasure of speaking with Raul about his time with the organization.*

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: RAUL PÉREZ '94



### **What is your best memory about your experience with La Alianza?**

Raul reflected on the importance of the activism that he participated in through Alianza, but said, "By far, the lifelong friendships and relationships formed through La Alianza are what I hold dear to my heart, and at the end of the day, those memories are the ones that have stayed with me in the last 21 years."

### **What do you wish would have been different about La Alianza during your time at HLS?**

"La Alianza could have provided much better networking possibilities with the alumni at that time. In retrospect, I believe that was a huge missed opportunity. Two decades later when I realize the level of accomplishments of my classmates, I see the tremendous networking opportunities that could have benefited the students of La Alianza."

"We could have done a much better job of connecting members with job

opportunities, internships and even housing while in law school. Maybe we could have helped with academic mentoring. As Harvard students, we have this exterior we put on, we never discuss struggles, whether personal, financial, academic or otherwise. So I don't know if there were students [in La Alianza] with these type of struggles, but maybe we could have improved on that type of support. I believe it's in the DNA of Latino students to be tough, and everyone graduates, but there's a price we pay privately."

### **What advice do you have for current members of La Alianza?**

"Avoid the golden handcuffs. Explain to your parents that in the future you will be on the California State Supreme court or the head of a huge nonprofit, making a significant difference in the community. If being partner at a big law firm is your end goal, that's a wonderful thing too because we need more Alianza members to be in those partner

level positions at law firms, accumulating wealth or influence and sharing those blessings with others. But to the extent you feel you have a different calling, make the sacrifice, resist the temptation and I believe those dreams will come true."

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*Raul Pérez is a partner and a civil litigation attorney in the Los Angeles office of Capstone Law. Among many other honors, he has previously been appointed as a Commissioner for the Los Angeles Fire and Police Pension Board, and to the Board of Commissioners for Los Angeles World Airports (LAX). He has served as the President of the Latino Lawyers Association and been on the board of numerous organizations that help the Latino community. He is currently on the Board of Advisors to the Banc of California, Board of Advisors to the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Board of Directors for Beverly Hills Little League, and Board of Directors of the Good Sheppard School.*

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## Alumni, get Involved with La Alianza!

Current students want to meet you! Please reach out and let La Alianza know where you are located, what kind of law practice you have, and any ideas you have for engagement between alumni and current students. We are currently rebuilding our database of past alumni, so if you have any

ties to groups of past La Alianza members, please contact

**[alianza@mail.law.harvard.edu](mailto:alianza@mail.law.harvard.edu)**

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

How has planning La Alianza's inaugural law conference contributed to your law school experience?

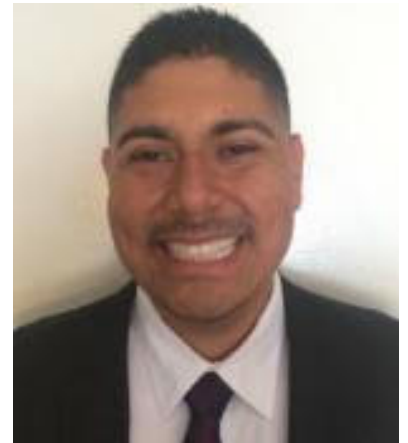


"I was very happy to be a part of such an important moment for La Alianza and for Harvard. I really enjoyed being able to design this conference from scratch along with other very creative community members. We had a chance to invite our heroes, and it made me proud to see so many Latino faces on the Harvard Law School campus."



ALEXANDRA SANTA ANA '16

"Planning the conference provided an ideal opportunity to meet with faculty, alumni, and learn about the dynamics of the law school community, all of which would not have been available to me had I not volunteered. ...It also felt great to help establish an event that gave our organization a louder voice and a great deal of credibility moving forward."



DAVID AZCARRAGA '18

## Alianza Gives Thanks



The custodial staff at HLS works incredibly hard to keep the school running smoothly. As members of La Alianza, we have always appreciated them and wanted to express our gratitude. In November of 2014, we held the first Alianza Gives Thanks event, a party for the custodial staff which included Latin music, catered lunch, and individual thank you cards for each staff member. The event helped to spark genuine friendships and feelings of warmth and support between staff and students. This year, over 100 students showed up to celebrate the staff and let them know how grateful we are to have them as part of our HLS family. Gracias!



## 2015–2016 Outgoing Executive Board

### **President**

Nadia Arid

### **Vice President of Communications**

Nicolas Hidalgo

### **Vice President of Finance**

Olivia Bensinger

### **Academic & Professional Development Chairs**

Stephanie Jimenez &

Rodrigo Seira Silva Herz

### **Community Service Chairs**

Alicia Corona & Maria Lacayo

### **Social Chairs**

Silvia Ruiz Mancera & Victor Salcedo

### **Political Action Chair**

Jessica Carballo

### **Conference Chair**

Alexandra Santa Ana

### **Alumni Relations Chair**

Carolyn Ruiz

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## 2016–2017 Incoming Executive Board

### **Co-Presidents**

Stephanie Jimenez & Silvia Ruiz Mancera

### **Vice President of Finances**

David Azcarraga

### **Vice President of Communications**

Alexander Andresian

### **Academic & Professional Committee Chairs**

Hector Grajeda & Victor Salcedo

### **Community Outreach Chairs**

Maria Lacayo & Olivia Bensinger

### **Social Committee Chairs**

Alec Puig & Alicia Corona

### **Conference Committee Chairs**

Edith Sanguenza & Marco Castanos

### **Student Recruitment Chairs**

Andrew Santana & Tabitha Cohen

If you would like more information about being a sponsor of La Alianza for the 2016–2017 academic year, please contact David Azcarraga at [dazcarraga@jd18.law.harvard.edu](mailto:dazcarraga@jd18.law.harvard.edu)