Experience guides new SPP track head

BY WANDA LAUKKANEN | In the state of Oregon, where the Hispanic population surged 63 percent from 2000 to 2010, Pacific University is pursuing education for professional students with an understanding of Hispanic culture.

One of those target growth areas is the Latino/bilingual track within the School of Professional Psychology, with its new director, Ruth Zuniga.

Born in rural Costa Rica, Zuniga’s background mirrors the journey taken by many other Latino immigrants to the United States.

She was the youngest of four children. Her two older sisters began working after sixth grade, she said, because the family needed the money the girls could earn.

“My brother, because he was a man and due to cultural values, was allowed to attend high school, but the women in the family could not,” she said.

“Education is free, but when someone is attending school, it means they’re not working, they’re not bringing money to the family, and it means you have to pay for all the other things. You need uniforms, books, food, and everything else.”

But Zuniga loved school and did well in her studies, and she was determined to follow in her brother’s footsteps. She battled the cultural stereotypes and, with her sisters’ support, attended high school, despite her mother’s desire to keep her home and her father’s prolonged absence.

It wasn’t easy. Classes were from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Zuniga rode a bus 1 ½ hours each way. One of her sisters died of leukemia while she was in school, leaving two small children — one 5 months and the other 1 ½ years old. At night and on weekend, Zuniga was in charge of taking care of the children. But she kept studying.

See ZUNIGA, page 4
November Birthdays

AURAE BEIDLER, MHA, provided analysis in “Identifying Your Risk with New Audit Programs” in a recent edition of the e-newsletter HealthData Management.


PAT CAROLINE, Optometry, was a keynote speaker at the Contact Lens Specialist Symposium held in London in September.

AMY COPLEN, Dental Health, has been selected to present a poster, Comparison of Communication Styles Amongst an Interprofessional Student Cohort, at the American Dental Education’s 2014 Annual Session & Exhibition in March in San Antonio.

DAVID CORDES, Chemistry, displayed his art, Reflections on Organic Chemistry at Mt. Hood Community College in October. The display featured 13 portraits of signature personalities involved in the development of organic chemistry as a science in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Major themes and ideas explored in an introductory organic chemistry class also were part of the exhibit’s reflections.

JACK DRISCOLL, MFA, read an excerpt from his newest book, How Like an Angel: A Novel, and also engaged students in a creative writing class at Union University, Jackson, Tenn., in October.

ISAAC GILMAN, Library, has published a new book, Library Scholarly Communication Programs: Legal and Ethical Considerations.

ERIN JOBST, Physical Therapy, presented a one-day continuing education course, Pharmacological Considerations for Geriatric Patients/ Clients, by PT On Call for physical and occupational therapists and speech language pathologists in Spokane, Wash., in November.

KEVIN JOHNSON, Chemistry, has been awarded an American Chemical Society Petroleum Research Fund grant of $65,000 to cover support for his research project, Between Oil and Water: Surfactant Modified Hydrophobic Interfaces. The grant will support six undergraduate researchers over...
the course of four summers and also fund the acquisition of a new 12-core computer workstation for student use on the project.

RAMMY (RAY) HAIJA, Sociology, published an article, “The Real Syriana: Interlocking Directorates Shaping a Defense-Petroleum-Policy Complex” in Modern Social Science Journal. He also will join The Abraham Fund’s International Board of Directors for a term beginning Jan. 1. The fund’s goal is committed to “building a shared future for Israel’s Jewish and Arab citizens.”

PAM KAWASAKI, Dental Health, has been selected to serve a two-year term as the dental hygiene educator member of the Dental Hygiene Process of Care committee of the Western Regional Examining Board.


DAWN SALGADO, Psychology, has been awarded one of only two Mamie Phipps Clark Research Grant Awards of $1,000 for a 2013-2014 research project, Making College Campuses into Diverse Learning Communities: Associations between Diversity Programming, Student Involvement, and Campus Climate. The grant was submitted with psychology undergraduate student Samantha Cruz ’13 and is for Psi Chi students and faculty conducting research focused on racial/ethnic minorities. The grant is named for Mamie Phipps Clark, the first African American woman who received a doctorate in psychology in 1943 from Columbia University.

JEFF SEWARD, Politics and Government, recently completed a documentary, The Grasshopper Women. The film follows four Peruvian women who are computer professionals working in a male-dominated profession and society.

CHRISTINE SNEED, MFA, received the 21st Century Award for her first novel, Little Known Facts, at the Carl Sandberg Literary Awards dinner in Chicago in October. The awards are sponsored by the Chicago Library Foundation and Chicago Public Library.

BLAKE TIMM, Athletics, set a personal best in running the Portland Marathon in October. He placed 395th out of 6,844 finishers.


SHARE YOUR NEWS | Is there a staff or faculty member you would like to see profiled? Do you have a presentation, publication or other professional achievement to share? Send your ideas to news@pacificu.edu

---

January Birthdays

1 Nora Schreck
2 Michelle Lawrence
2 Katherine Elder
2 Linda Fields
2 Shereen Khoja
3 Ashly Tilden-Browning
4 Shawn Davis
4 Lisa Carstens
4 Jonathan Brown
4 Irina Gelman
4 Teresa Roberts
4 Megan Hockert
5 Jeremy Hilliard
5 Susan Luther
5 Sarah Sharp
6 Jerry Rice
6 Ni’cole Sims
6 Judy Ortiz
6 Melissa Barnard
6 Maggie Olivos
7 Mariana Valenzuela
7 Jeannine Chan
7 Martha Duran
7 De Gonzalez
7 Bob DeGroat
8 Matthew Zrebski
8 Greg Bradley
8 John Harrelson
9 Sean Roush
10 Scott Klemens
10 Patty Larkins
10 Maria Echeverria
10 Sybil Hedrick Fisher
10 Katharine Loey
10 Philip Davis
10 Mark Pedemonte
11 Linda McIntosh
11 Elizabeth Rapkoch
11 Martin Wright
12 Rich Van Buskirk
12 Ryan Bulson
12 Beth Kinoshita
14 Patsy Charlesworth
14 Lars Campbell
14 Dana Libonati
15 Heide Island
16 Will Perkins
16 Matthew Lautenbach
16 Konstantin Kvach
17 Linna So
17 Lorne Yudcovitch
17 Jennifer Antick
17 Chris Brems
17 Erik Borg
17 Bernie Phillips
17 Paula Wilkes
17 Michele Quint
18 Laura Edwards-Leeper
19 Natalya Seibel
19 Chrisann Deuwaarder
19 Len Hua
19 Denise Goodwin
19 Bethany Moyses
19 Caitlin McDonnell
19 Mary Jo Saavedra
20 Lucina Mejia
20 Gaona
21 Tiffany Fieken
21 Karen Lawson
21 Pam Widmer
22 Zach Gantenbein
22 Stephen Zahm
23 Lily Tsang
23 Matt Wade
23 Severin Walsh
23 Alfonso Lopez-Vasquez
24 Allie Losli
24 Deepa Rao
24 Sandy Evans
24 Renee Beard
25 Claire Delamarter
25 Marsha Cullop
26 Janet Coleman
26 Jan Sheredy
27 Angela Surratt
28 Minda Potter
28 Cynthia Rapp
28 Nicole Shappart
28 Lisa Christiansen
28 Lori Gobel
28 David Cordes
28 Barb Sample
29 Jan Stricklin
29 Anne Huffington-Carroll
29 Vincent Roux
30 Michael Boardman
30 Shahana Koslofsky
31 Launa Kind
31 Michael Burch-Pessers
31 Aaron Svarthumle
31 Monica Rudick
“We have to focus on serving and working with the Latino community, in all the different environments, contexts and areas — from the immigrant worker who may have no papers to Latino leaders, Latino advocates and Latino professionals. ... I want us to bring the service to the people ...”

— Ruth Zuniga, director
SPP Latino/bilingual track

Zuniga: Early struggles lead to focus on helping others

Continued from Page 1

“I loved being in school,” she said. “I became involved in every single thing I could: oratorios, student government, math competitions.”

When some of her family doubted if she should continue, her teachers would travel to her hometown to stress to her mother the importance of Zuniga’s education.

After high school, she found work helping to manage a hotel, and there met some Americans who worked at a power plant construction site near her hometown. She became a “cultural broker” for them, helping them to understand and negotiate possible cultural conflicts.

She also started studying psychology nights and weekends, earning a bachelor’s degree from the Universidad Latina de Costa Rica in 2003.

At work, meanwhile, she met her future husband, Andy Soria. Also originally from Costa Rica, Soria had earned both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in the United States and was working at the power plant as an environmental engineer. They married and moved to the University of Idaho at Moscow.

There, Zuniga struggled with the cultural shock of being a new immigrant in the United States.

“I felt lonely, sad, far away from home, different, but wanting to make the most out of the situation,” she said.

To learn English, she would throw a blanket over the TV and listen only to the words. She also persuaded a professor to let her sit in the classroom, though she didn’t speak English well enough to register for classes, and she bartered with a woman to help her prepare to pass the TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language) test, making her a Costa Rican lunch once a week in exchange.

Finally, Zuniga learned enough English to pass the TOEFL and got a position as a graduate residence assistant in the Residence Life Department at the university.

“I had never been in a dorm in my life,” she said. But, she told the housing directors, she had hotel management experience in Costa Rica: “You have rooms. I have been a hotel manager dealing with rooms. You have beds. I know about beds. I’m a hard worker.”

She earned a master’s degree in counseling and human service from the University of Idaho in 2006, then she and her husband moved to Alaska, where she earned a doctorate in clinical-community psychology with a rural and indigenous emphasis.

She was surprised by how many Latinos she found living in Alaska and how much need there was for Spanish-speaking providers.

“I was the only Spanish-speaking therapist in the state,” she said. “I saw the need not only for serving Latinos but for training students and people to treat Latinos in a culturally appropriate way.”

That, she said, is just what she can do at Pacific. The Latino/bilingual track in Pacific’s School of Professional Psychology focuses on doctoral students interested in learning, serving and delivering mental health services to the Latino community in Oregon and beyond.

“We have to focus on serving and working with the Latino community, in all the different environments, contexts and areas — from the immigrant worker who may have no papers to Latino leaders, Latino advocates and Latino professionals,” she said.

“... I want us to bring the service to the people, to seek opportunities beyond the therapy room. With the new trends in the population and healthcare, we need to work in more integrated and more interdisciplinary fields.

“I want to develop more relationships with other disciplines, and I want us to develop closer relationships with the Latino community.

“I want the track to be more about community relationships ... about empowering the community.”
39% of Pacific faculty and staff gave to Pacific so far in the 2013 fiscal year, as of Nov. 20. Your gift supports the university and our students. Consider a gift or a payroll deduction today.
pacificu.edu/giving

HOLIDAY EVENTS SCHEDULED
Pacific University’s annual holiday party for faculty and staff takes place Thursday, Dec. 12, at the University Center on the Forest Grove Campus, beginning at 5 p.m. Employees will receive an invitation at the end of November to RSVP to the event.

Most university employees will have seven days off work for celebrating the holidays, beginning Tuesday, Dec. 24 through Wednesday, Jan. 1. The regular work schedule begins again on Thursday, Jan. 2. Some offices and departments will require minimal coverage during the December break. Individual office procedures will be available in the December Holiday Planning Guide, to be issued by Human Resources.

JOIN JANUARY STAFF MEETINGS
Pacific University’s Staff Senate will meet Wednesday, Jan. 15 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Hillsboro Campus in Creighton Hall, Room 502. The group provides a forum for exchange of information between members of the staff, administration, faculty and students at the university.

An all-staff meeting, hosted by the Staff Senate, will take place on Wednesday, Jan. 22 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in the Forest Grove Campus University Center with video stream to the Hillsboro Campus, Creighton Hall, Room 518. Suggestions for agenda items may be sent to staffsenate@pacificu.edu.