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Welcome to Rosa Garza Mourino, Associate Faculty and Internship Coordinator!

By Amanda Garces, UCE Student

Antioch University Los Angeles' B.A. program and the Urban Community and Environment concentration proudly welcome Rosa Garza Mourino as the newest member of our faculty. After many years as a beloved adjunct instructor at Antioch, Rosa's primary role in her new position will be to cultivate internships and community-based learning opportunities for our undergraduate students.

Rosa first became acquainted with Antioch in the late 1990s, when she was invited to be a guest speaker. Rosa never imagined that teaching would be an appealing field since her interests were primarily focused on qualitative research on immigrant identities, in-depth understanding of Los Angeles' urban cultures, and volunteering at the Los Angeles Public Library. However, Rosa was drawn to Antioch because she became fascinated with the way students bring their life experiences into the educational module.

Rosa's research in Mexico focused on urban entrepreneurial cultures, but not how we traditionally think about them. According to Rosa, "I am talking about a lady that at night takes out her charcoal and her grill outside her house and she provides snacks for dinner." Rosa was intrigued by how these micro-scale efforts were succeeding against all



Rosa Garza Mourino, the newest member of the B.A. faculty

which commits Antioch to performing an emissions inventory and, within two years, setting a target date and interim milestones for becoming carbon neutral.

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Urban Sustainability & Social Justice Summit: A Highlight of Inauguration Week Activities

On October 4, AULA hosted the "Urban Sustainability and Social Justice Summit: An Invited Community Dialogue," as part of the week-long series of events related to the inauguration of Neal King, Antioch LA's fifth president. Summit organizer Donald Strauss introduced President King by noting his demonstrated commitment to ensuring that Antioch LA "walks its talk" as an institution that views environmental sustainability and social justice as inextricably linked. President King recently signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment,

which commits Antioch to performing an emissions inventory and, within two years, setting a target date and interim milestones for becoming carbon neutral.

Strauss then introduced keynote speaker D.J. Waldie, author of *Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir* and *Where We Are Now: Notes From Los Angeles*. Waldie challenged those in attendance to begin the conversation by examining and reinventing the ways in which we tell the story of Los Angeles. He noted, "Here in

(Cont'd on p. 4)

UCE Students Win Big in Scholarship Competition

The Urban Community and Environment concentration is thrilled to announce that three UCE students have been awarded scholarships for the fall 2007 quarter. Each student has been recognized for his or her academic excellence and community activism.

Tyler Daly has been awarded the Fletcher Jones B.A. Opportunity Grant, which recognizes high academic ability as well as demonstrated commitments to community service for non-traditional students. Tyler has been a critical advocate for youth in a variety of settings, and has recently been appointed Lead Organizer for the Community Clinics Campaign (C3), a Los Angeles-based organization working for improved transgender health care. At Antioch, he has declared a double concentration in Urban Community & Environment and Creative Writing. His long range goal is to develop arts programs for queer and transgender youth because he believes that the creative process is essential to the empowerment of marginalized communities.

Amanda Garces is the recipient of the inaugural AULA President's Scholarship, which is funded by the Antioch University Los Angeles Board of Visitors. The President's Scholarship commends students who have demonstrated their commitment to Antioch's core values of self-directed learning, community activism, and social justice. Amanda has extensive experience as an accomplished organizer on behalf of immigrant rights and worker rights in both New

Jersey and Los Angeles, including recent work for the Institute of Popular Education of Southern California and the Garment Workers Center. At Antioch, Amanda has taken the lead organizing campus events to help Antioch better achieve its mission, including an "Immigrant Rights Teach-In" in April 2007 and a fair trade coffee campaign, which launched in September.

Beatrice Lee has won the AULA Alumni Association Scholarship, which is awarded to students who contribute in exceptional ways to campus and community. Beatrice came to Antioch after a distinguished career in public service in Los Angeles. She has worked for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), where she coordinated a public safety campaign intended to teach K-12 students how to use light rail and also developed an extremely successful vocational training program for high school students interested in architecture and engineering. In her current position at Community Build, one of AULA's Community Partners, Beatrice is further working to address educational inequities and college preparation by coordinating a tutoring program for high-school youth from South Los Angeles.

These students have truly realized the goals, values, and vision of an Antioch education taken to its height. From your faculty, staff, and student colleagues, please accept our most sincere and proud CONGRATULATIONS!



Bottom Row: Monica Salazar, Farah Eshetu, Khana Lacewell; Middle: Jackie Legg, Tyler Daly, Connie DePaepe Layton, Amanda Garces; Back: Morgan Strauss, Donald Strauss, Michael Cassadine, Laura Barraclough

Photos from the UCE Pizza Party & Student Mixer, October 4, 2007

Below: Student and artist Marta Ramirez Oropeza unveils the forthcoming Antioch mural, a collaborative project involving numerous AULA students and faculty.



UCE and SAJE Co-Sponsor Economic Justice Institute

What are the best ways to attract high quality jobs, socially and environmentally conscious companies, and sound investment to Los Angeles? How can we protect the rights of working people, tenants, children, the elderly, and other populations from urban redevelopment and displacement? Students will explore the answers to these questions and more in the three-part Economic Justice Institute, co-sponsored by the Urban Community and Environment concentration and Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), the concentration's newest community partner.

SAJE is an economic justice, community development, and popular education center that has been building economic power for working class people in Los Angeles since 1996. Some of SAJE's many accomplishments include creating the nation's first welfare-to-work bank account. More recently, as a member of the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice, SAJE negotiated the nation's most comprehensive Community Benefits Agreement with the developers of the Staples Center. SAJE is a founding organization of the National Right to the City Alliance, which is framing the fight against gentrification in terms of our rights to the city. UCE students will have the unique opportunity to learn from and work with this most important organization throughout the upcoming academic year.

The Economic Justice Institute will launch with a one-day, one-credit workshop in Fall 2007 entitled "The Contested Space of Downtown L.A.," led by Albert Lowe, Action Researcher for SAJE. The workshop will feature a bus tour of some of the neighborhoods impacted by downtown redevelopment, condo construction, and

gentrification; guest speakers from LA Community Action Network and Esperanza Community Housing Corporation; and lunch at el Mercado la Paloma, Esperanza's economic development arm that acts as an incubator for small businesses and houses non-profit organization offices.

During the winter 2008 quarter, Professor Laura Barraclough will offer the second stage of the Institute with her 10-week, 3 unit class, "Los Angeles: Problems, Politics, and Policy," which is a core course in the UCE concentration. Students will examine the key players and institutions in local politics with a focus on the region's changing economy, demography, political structure, and environmental constraints. They will apply this conceptual framework to understand specific problems and policy issues including working poverty and living wage campaigns; affordable housing, rent control, and tenants rights; crime, gangs, and police brutality; mass transit and transit racism; and environmental justice, green space, and recreation.

Students will then apply their knowledge in these areas to practical, hands-on research in the third part of the Institute, an Action Research Seminar in the spring 2008 quarter. Students will work with SAJE's action research team, helping to develop a community economic development campaign in the Figueroa Corridor. This is an ideal opportunity for students to connect theory with practice and to gain research skills that are highly in demand.



UCE Faculty Participate in Just Spaces Exhibit

The work of UCE Core Faculty Laura Barraclough is prominently featured in Just Spaces, an exhibit now on display at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) through November 18.

Just Spaces co-organizers Nicholas Brown and Ava Bromberg explain that the exhibit "reflect[s] the renewed recognition that space matters to cutting edge activist practices and to artists and scholars whose work pursues similar goals of social justice ... Understanding that space—like justice—is never simply handed out or given ... means that

justice—if it is to be concretely achieved, experienced, and reproduced—must be engaged on spatial as well as social terms." In addition to multimedia projects from around the globe, the exhibit includes public symposia, a library and infoshop, and a mobile planning lab and community design shed.

Featured in the exhibit is A People's Guide to Los Angeles, a poster and alternative tour guide that highlights sites of racial and class struggle in Los Angeles, of which Barraclough is co-

author with Laura Pulido and Sharon Sekhon. Barraclough also participated in a symposium on the theme of "Environmental Justice and Public Health" on October 28th.

For a web version of the People's Guide to L.A., check out www.pgta.org. For more information about the Just Spaces exhibit, visit www.justspaces.org. LACE is located at 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles. Open Wed-Sun 12-6 p.m. and Fridays 12-9 p.m. Admission is free.

“Summit,” cont’d from p. 1



“The moral purpose of a great city is to shelter a maximal diversity of public settings in which citizens might acquire the ability to sympathize with the conditions of others and act on those conditions by communal and political means.”

— DJ Waldie

Los Angeles—and in Southern California and, more broadly, the West—the need to sustain an ‘ecology of stories’ may be first among the challenges you face as activists, scholars, organizers, and citizens.” His simultaneously lyrical and rigorous address illuminated the fact that Los Angeles has a deep and rich patchwork of stories that emerge from the most diverse urban population in the world—a patchwork that seldom (if ever) resembles the array of edenic to apocalyptic images that occupy so much of the popular narrative memory of the region. Waldie reminded those in attendance that cities do not merely convey services, but rather, have a moral purpose. In his words, “The moral purpose of a great city is to shelter a maximal diversity of public settings in which citizens might acquire the ability to sympathize with the conditions of others and act on those conditions by communal and political means” - certainly an objective the Urban Community & Environment concentration embraces.

Waldie was joined by a panel of sustainability activists including Dwain Wilson of The Wildwoods Foundation, Joe Linton of Livable Places, Siel of greenlagirl.com and latimes.com/emeraldcity, and Jenny Price of Urban Rangers. Each of the panelists discussed their activities in education, housing, and public access; and their unique perspectives on the broad array of urban sustainability issues. The panelists then entertained a lively round of questions from the audience of participants.

The formal program was followed by focused table discussions about the possible contributions Antioch University could make in the area of urban sustainability. Some of the ideas generated by these group discussions included encouraging carpooling (via neighbor match-up programs to parking privileges to shuttle services), to working with the Culver City Bus to run later buses for students with classes that end at 10 pm, to providing good bike maps. Others shared helpful tips from their own green living experiences, including in-home composting projects and ideas for how to build a cargo bicycle. Several current students and alumni suggested that Antioch develop a Masters Degree in Urban Sustainability to extend the undergraduate Urban Community & Environment concentration.

Fair-trade, shade-grown coffee was served in mugs (not paper cups), and the delicious lunch featured all organic ingredients. The event was featured in Siel’s “Emerald City” blog for the Los Angeles Times; see <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/emeraldcity/2007/10/dj-waldie-and-g.html> for her rendition of the event.

The summit was meant to jumpstart a conversation about Antioch’s role as a sustainable business and in cultivating widespread commitment to urban sustainability among our students, faculty, staff, and beyond. Watch future issues of Pulse of the City for updates on how we’re achieving those goals.



DJ Waldie with Jenny Price.

Garza Mourino, cont'd from p. 1

odds and wanted to investigate how they emerge and thrive. She led the think-tank section of an organization similar to the Chamber of Commerce for thirteen years. Her research findings helped members mentor each other and develop communication tools to influence economic policies not friendly to their form of business.

Rosa soon noticed that many of these entrepreneurs were immigrants lacking opportunities in rural areas. "The dislocation of people coming from the country to the city and finding themselves homeless or unemployed or in unacceptable circumstances that ultimately trigger creative ways to fight back." She also noticed how some were skipping Mexico City and coming straight to Los Angeles, and she explains, "I wanted to come along with them and see what they were doing once here, how would they translate themselves in a foreign setting." This is how Rosa became an immigrant herself: pursuing her research goals, getting to know Los Angeles thoroughly, and somehow finding herself in this place she now calls home.

Rosa has a deep respect for the Los Angeles Public Library where she is a volunteer docent. Her experience there has been humbling and inspiring because shortly after her arrival to the United States, with limited English speaking skills, she became a volunteer docent. Even though she read and

understood English at graduate level, she remembers that "one fine day 30 tourists from Nebraska came for a tour that I was supposed to deliver and it was until that very moment that I was unsure whether I could verbally articulate all the tour content – I could not; so it was a very challenging discovery for me...for someone who supposes to be very aware of communication principles, and to not have considered the fact that back then my brain could not

"I wanted to come along with them and see what they were doing once here, how would they translate themselves in a foreign setting."

automatically connect to my tongue." She attributes to the Public Library the opportunity to test and develop her English speaking skills. She continues to give tours in both English and Spanish.

Rosa brings an incredible wealth of knowledge and experience in communication and cultural studies, and most of her classes at Antioch are centered on these fields as applied to L.A.'s distinct urban cultures. As an adjunct faculty, her popular courses have included

"Cinematic Los Angeles," "Exploring Modernism and Postmodernism," "Urban Ethnography," and "Identity, Community, and Social Change." She has also offered one-day workshops such as "The Cultural Shades of Downtown Los Angeles." Currently, in addition to her position at Antioch, she is working with Tree People to organize greening campaigns in the Long Beach, Harbor City, and South Bay areas.

We are very excited about Rosa's promotion to Associate Faculty as well as her new role as Internship coordinator. She brings vast and diverse experiences and, most importantly, an immeasurable energy that will connect students' experiences to the realities of Los Angeles. The model for internships she will use integrates experiential learning, high academic standards, and meaningful community work with some of the most progressive organizations in Los Angeles.

Be sure to check out future issues of Pulse of the City for updates on Rosa's work and developments within our newly reinvigorated internship program.

At right: Rosa Garza Mourino (center) with fellow B.A. faculty Laura Barraclough (left) and Program Chair Kirsten Grimstad (right) at the UCE Student Mixer in October.



Do you want your organization, event, or campaign to be highlighted in a future Pulse of the City newsletter? Have an idea for an innovative new course or student learning opportunity? Need a smart and motivated student intern to work and learn at your organization? Call Laura Barraclough, UCE Coordinator and Core Faculty, or Rosa Garza Mourino, Associate Faculty and Internship Coordinator, at (310) 578-1080. We look forward to hearing from you!

Fiddling While Rome Burns, Part 2: Fiddling in the Mountains, A Beginning

Donald Strauss, MFA, is Core Faculty in the B.A. program and works closely with students in both the Urban Community & Environment and Creative Writing concentrations. Earlier this year, he was selected and trained to be one of Al Gore's "foot soldiers," and now makes presentations on climate change throughout Southern California. An acclaimed writer and activist, Donald will teach an Urban Nature Writing class at Antioch in winter 2008. Below is an excerpted sample of his work-in-progress, which he presented at Antioch's "Meeting of the Minds" on October 18th and plans to revise for publication.

Journal entry: Tomorrow, Sunday September 24, 2006, I'm going on a walk. On the surface, there is nothing particularly stunning about taking an eleven-mile walk in the Santa Monica Mountains. At dawn I'll drag my mostly-indoor aching lank a few miles up the road and begin a trek, a pilgrimage, an unsentimental journey in six parts along the 71 miles of The Backbone Trail which runs the western two thirds of the transverse coastal range. I have this feeling that this walk is going to be like one of those parties I dread going to and then I end up meeting a new lifelong friend and kindred spirit.

...

On the eve of this first walk, these reflections have brought to light a delicious paradox. I, a largely indoor man, have such a deep sense of connection to an ambiguously wild, half-way untouched and un-built upon place that runs smack through the middle of one of the most unequivocally touched and built-upon urban ecosystems anywhere on the planet. Because of these complexities and the impossibilities of these relationships of the built and the un-built with its adjacent array of subtly beautiful biomes, I cannot get these mountains out of my mind. No matter what I do to get the hell out of Dodge—something I periodically tell myself I must do—it's these mountains and their neighboring ranges, and the ways in which water has moved down their slopes through canyons and washes, down into a huge basin and its underlying aquifer, into a trickster river that would vanish and appear several times along its course, then finally out onto a coastal plain that I swear strains to reveal itself from under the square miles and cubic yards of concrete and asphalt that holds it hostage. It is the potential of eruption and emergence, or at least the imagination of it, that binds me hard to this complex and compelling place. This perhaps is why I subscribe so easily when the environmental historian, Jenny Price, chides and challenges with her claim that this is the most important place in the world for a naturalist or a nature writer to be. Now, I thought, I would take up her challenge. If we are going to fiddle while Rome burns, might as well fiddle in downtown Rome where the fire is hottest.

As a child, I didn't typically bring rocks home from the mountains, just so much dirt it would make the bath-water brown. This time I thought I would take something. I intended to take new way of knowing from this walk. I intended to know and understand some things about mountains in as many different ways as I could. I would take those various knowings and understandings to others in the hopes that they might consider what it means to be a mountain range in a city.

...

By 7am of what was to become a very hot day, I began the gradual ascent of a trail I had hiked dozens of times since childhood. In truth, it is more fire road than trail. On a weekend hike, I might encounter 50-100 people on the road to Inspiration Point and The Backbone Trail. I'm not entirely sure how to talk about this place without slipping from one cliché to the next. Examples: This is California—Los Angeles, California; the current governor of California, his family, and their nine or so Hummers live in their own private canyon at the eastern border of this State Park; on any given day, there is an inordinate amount of spandex and other stretchy fabric on this trail; celebrity sightings are more frequent than unusual bird sightings; celebrity personal trainers chase wealthy clients, some of whom are from the aforementioned population of celebrities, up and down the trail in pursuit of the "perfect body;" it is not unusual to hear people on cell phones usually equipped with Bluetooth devices, often giving the impression that they are talking to themselves; 99% of the people on the trail are Caucasian; the velocity of most walkers on the trail would seem to render the "nature" experience problematic, as can the presence and velocity of trail bikes. In the alternative, it could be said that this is the nature experience on this trail.

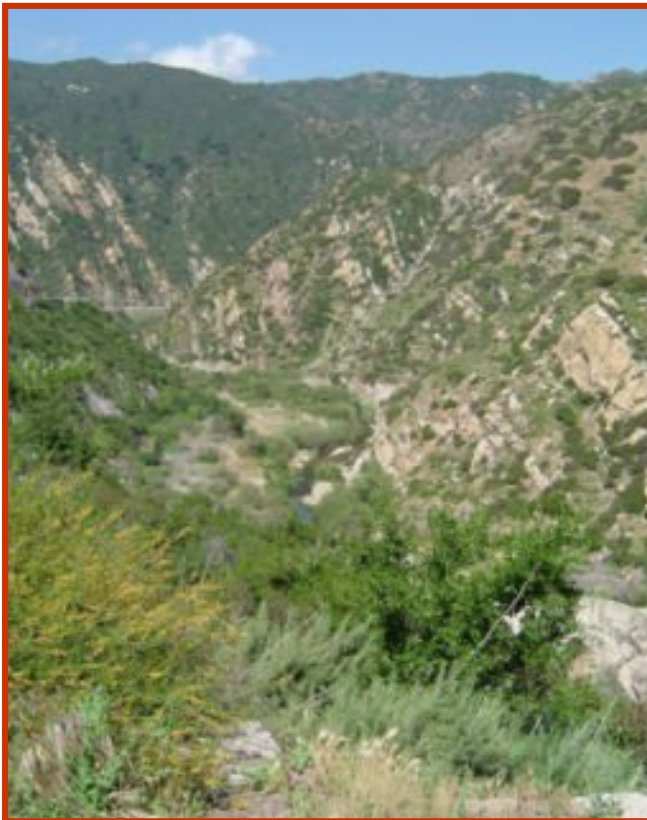
On this particular morning, the hike does not start with the usual cast of characters. There is no one on the trail up to Inspiration Point, one person on the trail up to the main east-west artery of The Backbone. I experience a moment of wonder when I encounter a column of cool air falling down through a tunnel of small trees in a section of plant community known as elfin forest. I am momentarily stunned and at once relieved by the absence of people on a trail that sits almost square in the middle of a region populated by well over 10,000,000 people. And then, over the next nine miles, I will step, jump, or scramble to avoid no fewer than 50 trail bikers

...

A week or two prior to my first hike, a friend sent me an email in which he informed me of the fact that Al Gore—who had recently been featured in the documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth*, a phenomenon that has developed a narrative unto itself—had started The Climate Project, a nonprofit organization, for the purpose of disseminating information about global environmental change. When asked on a morning talk show what he was going to do to keep the climate change message alive after the buzz from the film died down, Gore extemporized—much to the shock of his staff who would have to fulfill on any wild promises made by their boss—that he was going to train 1,000 citizens to give the lecture and “slideshow” presentation that constitutes the core material in the film. My friend’s email included a link to The Climate Project website page inviting people to submit an application to become one of the aforementioned citizens.

This aforementioned email arrived at around 8:00pm. By 8:05pm, I had dismissed the proposed undertaking and invitation as something I was not just too busy to participate in but even to apply for. By 8:10pm, I had reread the email several times. By 1:30am the following morning, having spent the last several hours writing a detailed account of who I was, as if that were something I could actually account for in any authentic way, where I was situated in the universe of environmental activism, and why I would be an ideal candidate for the training, I clicked the send button.

...



I could write an entire piece about my three days in Nashville, but not here and not anytime soon. The following, though, seems important to relate. Day three of the training was spent mostly with the “faculty” who worked with us on various aspects of our presentation skills. At the end of a long day, Mr. Gore gave some closing remarks. As it happened, I was sitting five feet from him as he gave those remarks. I don’t remember a great deal of detail, because he spoke for quite a long time. But I do remember being deeply moved. He is, contrary to all of the right-wing propaganda, swallowed whole by way too many people including those who call themselves liberals (though “media tools” would be more fitting), a deeply engaging speaker. Funny, self-effacing, and appropriately sober when he needs to be, the Biosphere could hardly hope for a better spokesperson than Al Gore. I do have one very vivid fragment of recollection remaining from his remarks—sights and sounds burned forever into memory that return often, sometimes several times daily. He was at the end of his by-now-well-known story about losing the grasp of his six-year-old son’s hand at a busy intersection and the ensuing nightmare of a nearly fatal accident that threw the entire Gore family into a state of turmoil over the six months that would follow. His voice broke slightly as he spoke of replaying the scene in his head daily and his perpetual wish that he could have held tight to his son’s small hand. He paused for several beats. Now he was standing directly in front of me, and I could see that his eyes were red and full of tears. He had warned us the day before about breaking down in front of an audience. We would lose them, he said. But in that moment, I am quite certain he had the unwavering attention of two hundred people plus his staff. He looked for a moment straight into my eyes, and as he looked back up at the room he said, very softly, “We are losing this planet, but this time I am not going to let go until I have done everything I can...” The room melted and spun, and the rest of what I heard sounded like parts of The Beatles’ “Revolution Number Nine.” I remember wandering over to have my picture taken with Mr. Gore and the other members of the western states contingent. I remember sitting on the airport bus and realizing that in my haze I had walked away without my autographed copy of the book version of *An Inconvenient Truth*, and my trusty stainless-steel coffee mug that had traveled tens of thousands of miles with me in service of the planet. I remember thinking, “What the fuck do we do now?”

The following day, I showed up in my Urban Ecology class and gave my first presentation of Gore’s slideshow. I had no idea what else to do.

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Urban Community & Environment (UCE) concentration

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Concentration in Urban Community and Environment:
Developing a New Way to Understand the Urban
Dynamic

Urban Community and Environment (UCE) Students in the Urban Community and Environment concentration, the equivalent of a major within the B.A. degree completion program, study the urban setting from an interdisciplinary perspective that emphasizes the dynamic interplay between the arts, histories, systems, environment, and peoples of the city. The unique dynamics of Los Angeles become our lens to understand and analyze a broad range of urban communities, past and present, from a global perspective. Through engagement with community organizations working in urban arts, services, and economic and environmental justice, students develop theoretical and practical tools for creating a more equitable and livable region.



Check out our winter courses!

The winter quarter begins Monday, January 7 and continues through Saturday, March 22. Applications are still being accepted.

Ten-week, three-unit courses:

Environmental Chemistry and Human Health
Los Angeles: Problems, Politics, and Policy
Media Literacy
Social Change in an Era of Globalization
Urban Economics
Urban Nature Writing

One-day, one-unit workshops:

Los Angeles Architectures
Urban Wilderness Conservation