A Word from the Director

A very busy academic year 2011-2012 has come to a close, and I wish to provide a few highlights of the year. LASP Associate Professor Francisco E. González was selected by students to receive the 2012 Max M. Fisher Excellence in Teaching award at this year’s graduation. He will be the first faculty member to have twice received this recognition. Also at graduation, LASP Program Coordinator Jennifer Zurek celebrated the completion of her graduate studies at SAIS. In March, I accompanied a delegation of 12 students on our first-ever Brazil study trip; in November 2011, LASP Adjunct Professor Mila Freire escorted 12 DC LASPies and one visiting student on our 6th consecutive LASP study trip to China. LASP Associate Director Guadalupe Paz successfully completed her SAIS Ph.D. studies in American Foreign Policy—with distinction. Finally, through the generous donation of Robert Hildreth, ’75, Anne McKenzie was honored with the establishment of summer internship awards in her name. I acknowledge and sincerely appreciate our engaged alumni network, from hosting alumni receptions to mentoring LASPies to donating generously to the program, as well as our foundation and corporate sponsors. As we welcome new SAIS Dean Vali Nasr, I hope the year ahead will bring more opportunities to strengthen our vibrant LASP community.

With best wishes,

Randa Roett

1. Faculty and Staff Updates

Dr. Roett poses with a gift from LASP students: a “tobakhead” doll in his likeness.

Dr. Roett, 2012.

In May 2012, Guadalupe Paz completed her SAIS Ph.D. studies in American Foreign Policy.

LASP celebrated the release of Dr. González’s new book at a panel event in April.

Anne McKenzie was honored with summer internship awards in her name.

Dr. González accepts the Excellence in Teaching Award at Commencement.

2. Samuel Z. Stone Seminar Series

The Samuel Z. Stone Seminars, on average ten per semester, remain an integral part of the program. The lectures are given by prominent practitioners or policy experts on varied topics of interest. Highlights of the 2011-2012 speaker series include:

- Dr. Clifford Young, Managing Director, IPSOS Public Affairs, “Political Trends in Latin America for 2011-2012”
- Mr. Paulo Nogueira Batista, Executive Director for Brazil, International Monetary Fund, “BRICS & the International Economic Order”
- Mr. Benjamin Sessions (SAIS alumnus), Managing Director, Global Environment Fund, “Challenges and Trends in Infrastructure Investing in Emerging Markets”
- Mr. Geoff Dyer (SAIS alumnus), Correspondent, Financial Times, “Prospects for Sino-Latin American Relations in 2012”
- The Diane Rehm Show, July 2012
- CNN en Español, July 2012

3. This Year’s LASPies

With a combined 68 students in the DC and Bologna campuses, LASP maintained its status as one of the largest regional programs at SAIS. The diverse LASP student body represented ten countries, including Austria, Canada, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, England, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. In addition to participating in academic events, LASPies were active participants in SAIS community service, cultural, and language activities. At the 2012 commencement ceremony, LASP-Wharton student Tara Nicholson received the Christian A. Herter Award for the highest GPA. Also among this year’s graduates were two LASP Ph.D. students — Emily Breyer and Lauren Silva McIntyre — and MA student/LASP Program Coordinator Jennifer Zurek. Although she will be greatly missed in the LASP office, we are proud to see Jennifer Zurek move on to an exciting position at OPIC and we welcome her to our growing LASP alumni network.
4. Summer Internships & Research Fellowships in Latin America

Now a capstone of the Latin American Studies Program, internships provide professional work experience that give LASP students an advantage in an increasingly competitive job market. With generous alumni, corporate and foundation support, during the summer of 2012, 19 students (18 interns and one research fellow) were placed in six countries in the region—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Mexico. Newly-confirmed opportunities include Bosques Amazónicos in Lima; Control Risks in São Paulo; Itaú Asset Management in Santiago, Rio Negócios in Rio de Janeiro; and Zurich in Mexico City, among others.

We extend a special thank you to Robert Hildreth (’75), the Zemurray Foundation, ExxonMobil, D. Scott Palmer, Olivier and Jennifer Lemaigre (’91 & ’83 respectively), Robert (’57) and Leslie Botjer (’68), the Crandall Family Endowed Internship Fund, David Kyle (’79), Sophia Lynn (’91) and David Frederick, who stand out among the many, through their generous support, to make these experiences possible.

5. International Study Trips: Brazil and China

Brazil—March 2012
Professor Roett led twelve LASP students on a one-week study trip to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil. Sponsored by the Zemurray Foundation, the trip allowed students to gain exposure to the “new” Brazil, now the world’s sixth largest economy, from varied perspectives. The agenda focused on the dynamics behind Brazil’s impressive recent economic/financial development and its prospects for an increasing leadership role, both regionally in South America and on the global stage in the context of the BRICS. In addition to meeting with high-level representatives from the private, public, academic, and diplomatic communities, the delegation had the opportunity to exchange views with SAIS alumni in both destination cities. Meeting highlights included presentations by the President and CEO of Vale, BNDES management, and senior editors of the influential daily newspaper O Estado de São Paulo.

China—November 2011
Led by LASP Adjunct Professor Mila Freire and also sponsored by the Zemurray Foundation, the sixth consecutive LASP China study trip took eleven SAIS Latin American Studies students and one Hopkins-Nanjing student to Beijing and Shanghai for a series of meetings with academic, public and private sector representatives, diplomats, and journalists. Among the highlights were a luncheon at the Mexican Embassy with the Mexican, Costa Rican, and Argentine ambassadors; a visit to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs where they met with the Director General for Latin America; a lunch seminar with students and faculty at the Peking University School of International Studies; a visit to the Chinese steelmaker Baosteel and to the Brazilian iron-ore exporter Vale; and a meeting with correspondents from the Wall Street Journal, The Economist, the New York Times, Dow Jones Newswires, and the Chinese media company Danwei.

6. Alumni Networking

Since summer 2011, alumni gatherings have been organized in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, as well as in Washington, DC. The network remains a valuable resource for recruiting purposes and social networking both in and outside of the United States. LASP alumni continue to be crucial partners in the success of the popular LASP Summer Internship Program, often serving as internship sponsors and mentors, and frequently providing in-country advice to current students.