

A few stories of your colleagues, past and present

ALVSCE_Bulletin <alvsce_bulletin-bounces@list.cals.arizona.edu>

on behalf of

Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension Weekly Bulletin

<alvsce_bulletin@list.cals.arizona.edu>

Fri 10/8/2021 11:18 AM

To: alvsce_bulletin@list.cals.arizona.edu <alvsce_bulletin@list.cals.arizona.edu>

📎 1 attachments (490 bytes)

ATT00001.txt;

Dear Colleagues,

September 15-October 15 marks Hispanic Heritage Month. I hope you will join me in taking some time to reflect on the varied and vital contributions that Hispanic and Latina/o/x Americans have made to our legacy. I don't have the space here to comprehensively describe every one of our faculty and staff of Hispanic and Latina/o/x heritage and so I hope you will forgive me and let me share with you a few stories of your colleagues, past and present. If you have a story you'd like to share, please tweet me [@UAAgLifeVetExt](https://twitter.com/UAAgLifeVetExt) or email me at vpalvsce@email.arizona.edu so I can retweet and share them out on [Compass](#).

During the late 1960s, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension hired its first two "paraprofessionals" using federal grant funding. **Mercedes Rendon** and **Victoria Sainz** of Nogales worked with a home economics agent based in Santa Cruz County to deliver programs in nutrition education, foods, and clothing. This forerunner to the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), established in 1969, aimed to impact the lives of underserved families and older adults--and to do so more effectively by employing members of these same communities. Rendon and Sainz worked in tandem with volunteers and personnel from such agencies as the Community Action Program and the Migrant Opportunity Program.

A two-time UA alumnus, **Ismael "Miley" Gonzalez, Ph.D.** was hired in 1973 by our then-Department of Agricultural Education as an in-service teacher educator for the New Teacher Program. In-service educators traveled to high schools across the state, training and doing clinical observations of first-year vocational agriculture teachers. In 1976, he began teaching on campus and later pursued his Ph.D. at Penn State. Over the course of his career, Dr. Gonzalez held posts at three additional land-grant universities. From 1997 to 2001, he served in the Clinton Administration as the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and later as the New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture. He was vice provost and dean of international programs at Montana State University when he died late last year.

Laura López-Hoffman, Ph.D. needs little introduction to many of you. Laura joined the University of Arizona in 2007 as a postdoc and associate research scientist. Today, she is a professor in our School of Natural Resources and the Environment and centers her research in interdisciplinary science to inform environmental policy. Laura and SNRE Assistant Professor Aaron Lien, Ph.D., along with SNRE colleagues Jonathan Derbridge, Ph.D. and José Soto, Ph.D., recently received a \$1.5 million NSF DISES (Dynamics of Integrated Socio-Environmental Systems) grant, "Governance Across Space: Discovering Principles of Equity and Sustainability to Conserve Migratory Species within Telecoupled Social Environmental Systems." <https://telecoupledgovernance.org/> DISES is the NSF's flagship program for interdisciplinary

research about the environmental and human impacts of global change. Over the past seven years, UA has led the nation in DISES awards, and our SNRE faculty are a very big part of that success.

On a personal note, Laura was the first person I met on my first official visit to UA in May 2011. She was then and remains today an exceptional ambassador for our values.

I hope you feel as proud as I do to call these individuals your colleagues. They are just a few of the many Hispanic and Latina/o/x Americans whose contributions helped to build--and continue to shape--our College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Arizona Cooperative Extension.

Best regards,
Shane

Shane C. Burgess

Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Life & Veterinary Sciences, and
Cooperative Extension
Charles-Sander Dean of the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Forbes Building, Room 306 | 1140 E. South Campus Drive
P.O. Box 210036 | Tucson, AZ 85721-0036
Office: 520-621-7621
sburgess@cals.arizona.edu
alvsce.arizona.edu
cals.arizona.edu
[twitter](#)

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.