

2026 SHRI Fall Research Fiesta Speaker Bios

Community-Engaged Research Panel

Moderator

Tim B. Castillo is a Professor of Architecture and Director of the UNM Office of Community Engagement, where he led UNM's successful Carnegie Community Engagement reclassification and continues to develop university-wide initiatives integrating community engaged scholarship, teaching, creative activity, and service into the university's academic mission. He also serves as Director of Historic Preservation & Regionalism, a program centered at the intersection of academia, community engagement, and stewardship, with a commitment to preserving the unique cultural identity of the region. His teaching, research, and creative practice explore the intersections of culture, architecture, emerging digital technologies, and innovation, with particular attention to how design can contribute to community and regional development. He has developed interdisciplinary and community-based initiatives that bring together higher education institutions, community partners, and design professionals to explore the role of architecture and design in addressing contemporary social, cultural, and economic challenges.

Panelists

Dr. Divana Olivas is an Assistant Professor of Chicana/o Studies at the University of New Mexico. She is the co-creator of Jardín Ollin, an ecological education initiative centered on cultural memory and transformative knowledge. Dr. Olivas serves on the board of the New Mexico Environmental Law Center and is affiliated with UNM's Southwest Hispanic Research Institute. Her writing on food politics, environmental justice, and New Mexico history appears in *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, *Oxford University Press*, *Chamisa: A Journal of Literary, Performance, and Visual Arts of the Greater Southwest*, and in local publications like *Green Fire Times* and *Edible New Mexico*. She grew up in Valencia County and is a proud daughter of Mexican immigrant parents.

Isaac Suarez Flint is an undergraduate student majoring in American Studies with a minor in Community & Regional Planning. He is a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Research Fellow, ASSURE Fellow, and ambassador for the Undergraduate Research Arts & Design Network. His research constructs New Mexico's trans histories through critical and community-based archival work.

Dr. Gabriel López is a UNM Distinguished Professor who has devoted his career to fundamental and applied research with the goal to address problems in health and environmental disparities. He has developed innovative technologies like low-cost and rapid medical diagnostic devices and biosensors for detecting water contamination, particularly in underserved and Indigenous communities. As the founding director of the UNM's Center for Biomedical Engineering, he launched New Mexico's first biomedical engineering graduate program and developed a synthetic biology curriculum emphasizing accessibility and bioethics. López strives to apply engineering innovation to drive sustainability and egalitarianism, including through his recent receipt of an inaugural NSF Trailblazer Engineering Impact Award, through which his

group is developing new methods for utilization of waste forest biomass with an aim toward preventing wildfire and fostering watershed health.

Jose Arnaldo “Arnold” Lopez has spent more than 37 years serving Northern New Mexico through education, technology, and community leadership. A retired educator and network administrator, Arnold has always believed that his professional experience should be used to strengthen the communities he calls home. Today, he serves as Treasurer of the Las Trampas Land Grant, working to develop a community wood-processing facility that can support wildfire mitigation, forest health, local employment, and economic opportunities for land grant members and surrounding communities. He also serves as President of the Commission of the Acequias de Chamisal y Ojito, where he works to maintain and strengthen the traditional acequia system and secure resources for its continued operation. His community work brings together his background in education, technology, administration, and public service with a deep commitment to preserving the land-based traditions and institutions of Northern New Mexico. Throughout his career—as a teacher, college instructor, network administrator, and community leader—Arnold has focused on one principle: using his knowledge and experience to help build stronger, more self-sustaining communities.

Dr. Manuel Montoya

Manuel (MJR) Montoya, Ph.D. (he/him) is an Associate professor in UNM’s Department of Economics. His work focuses on global political economy and how we make the planet a meaningful part of our social and economic realities and has published work on issues ranging from international trade to creative economy. He is currently working on topics such as Rural Cosmopolitanism, Enchantment Economy, and works on ways to think about economic frameworks for survivors of geo-political crisis and climate disasters. He attended UNM where he became UNM’s first Latinx Rhodes Scholar. He then attended Oxford University where he received a master’s degree in philosophy, NYU where he studied politics and literature, and received his PhD from Emory University in International Relations and Comparative Literature as a CRS Fellow and George Woodruff Fellow. He has delivered over 150 lectures across the world and has advised world leaders on emerging markets and global conflict. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He recently received UNM’s Presidential Teaching Fellowship, UNM’s highest teaching honor. Dr. Montoya was born and raised in Mora, New Mexico.

Land Grants Project Panel

Professor Marc-Tizoc González teaches at the University of New Mexico School of Law (UNM Law), which faculty he joined in 2019 after teaching at St. Thomas University School of Law (2011-19, obtaining tenure in 2017), and as a lecturer for the San Francisco State University Department of Raza (now Latina/o) Studies (2008) and University of California Berkeley Department of Ethnic Studies (2007-11).

At UNM Law, he regularly teaches Property; Ethics; Social Change Advocacy; and Latinas, Latinos, and the Law; has also taught Food Justice, Law, and Policy; Intellectual Property; and

Wills and Trust; and contributed to the team-taught spring 2023 two-weekend course, Lands Grants (Mercedes) and Acequias.

Professor González is a coauthor of Richard Delgado et al., *Latinos and the Law: Cases and Materials* (West Academic 2d ed. 2021) and has written several book chapters, numerous law review articles and essays, and various other writings, including amicus curiae (friend of the court) briefs for federal and state appellate courts, most recently for the New Mexico public accommodation case, *Johnson v. Board of Education for Albuquerque Public Schools*.

Much of Professor González's scholarship critiques and theorizes how constitutional jurisprudence, civil rights statutes, and property law affect people who are hungry, impoverished, racialized, or otherwise socially marginalized. He also writes "critical ethnic legal histories," featuring people with racialized ethnic identities who attempted to use the law to advance social movements for justice. His current research relates late twentieth century antiracist movements in the United States with contemporary antifascism efforts during the Trumpista period, and he is drafting a book-length manuscript, "Learning Property Law in New Mexico," which he hopes to co-author with other UNM professors.

Professor González is a longtime director and officer of Latina and Latino Critical Legal Theory, Inc. (LatCrit), a member of the board of the Critical (Legal) Collective, and chair emeritus of the Association of American Law Schools Sections on Critical Theories, Civil Rights, Minority Groups, and Poverty Law. Email him at mtgonzalez@unm.edu.

Candido Arturo Archuleta, Jr. is the Director of the New Mexico Land Grant Council and the Land Grant-Merced Institute at the University of New Mexico. He also serves as the Chair of the Community Governance Attorney Commission. His service to land grant-merced communities began in 2003 and he has over 20 years of experience working on land grant related issues, including policy development and advocacy at the state and federal levels, community development, governance capacity building and legal assistance. He is a licensed attorney in the State of New Mexico, and his education includes a Juris Doctor from the UNM School of Law, a Master's in Community and Regional Planning from the UNM School of Architecture and Planning and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Spanish from Eastern New Mexico University. He is a native New Mexican born and raised in Albuquerque with roots in the land grant communities of Tierra Amarilla and Manzano.

Professor Manuel García y Griego is the founding faculty member of the UNM Land Grant Studies Program, established with a grant from the legislature supported by land grant community in 2008. He also served as director of the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute from 2006 to 2012 and held a joint appointment in CCS until 2022. He has been associate professor of history at UNM since 2006 and teaches courses on New Mexico history and Chicana and Chicano history. He presented a research paper at our SHRI research seminar last spring on the *United States v. Sandoval* 1897 case. Earlier this year he published a book chapter, in Spanish, on population and land use in New Mexico from 1790 to 1940.

María E. Montoya is a Professor of History at New York University and the former Dean of Arts and Sciences at NYU Shanghai. She earned her BA, MA and PhD degrees at Yale University. She is the former President of the Western History Association, a

Fellow to the American Antiquarian Society, and on the Board of Editors for the Journal of American History.

Her research explores how workers and families in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have used natural resources to earn a living and make their homes in particular places in the American West. She is the author of numerous articles on the History of the American West, Environmental, Labor and Latine history, including her most recent piece in the Western Historical Quarterly, "Viewing the American West as A Chicana in China." She is also the author of the book, *Translating Property: The Maxwell Land Grant and the Conflict over Land in the American West, 1840-1900*. She is the lead author on the U.S. History textbook, *Global Americans: A Social and Global History of the United States*.

Her new book, *A Workplace of Their Own: Roche, Rockefeller, and Labor's Battle over Industrial Democracy* (Oxford University Press, 2026) focuses on John D. Rockefeller and Josephine Roche, and their roles in defining the spheres of work and home life during the early twentieth century.

She is also working on two other projects: *Propriety and Progressivism: Protestant Missionaries and the Remaking of the American Southwest* looks at how the arrival and sustained presence of the Protestant church reshaped Hispanos' attitudes towards education, morality, and capitalism in the early twentieth century. *Arrested River: Culture, Memory, and Politics Along the Rio Grande* is a broad look at the uses and misuses of the Rio Grande from the headwaters in Colorado to the International border that divides Mexico and Texas.

Lunch

Faculty Research Award Recipient

Dr. Nancy López is professor of sociology (PhD Sociology, Graduate School & University Center, The City University of New York (CUNY); BA Regional Studies in Latin America, Columbia College, Columbia University) at the University of New Mexico. Dr. López is co-founder and past director of the Institute for the Study of "Race" and Social Justice (2009-2024), an unfunded labor of love brought to fruition through the efforts of a community of interdisciplinary scholars. Her scholarship, teaching and service are guided by the insights of intersectionality--the importance of examining the simultaneity of race, gender, class, ethnicity and other systems of inequalities across a variety of social outcomes, including education, health, employment, housing, for developing contextualized solutions that advance social justice. Dr. López is author of *Hopeful Girls, Troubled Boys: Race & Gender Disparity in Urban Education* (2003) over 1,000 citations; co-editor of, *Creating Alternative Discourses in the Education of Latinas & Latinos* (2003), *Mapping "Race": Critical Approaches to Health Disparities Research* (2013); and, *QuantCrit: An Antiracist Approach to Education Equity* (2023). Dr. López is PI NSF HIS Hub, "Intersectionality as Inquiry and Praxis: Race-Gender-Class-Ethnicity for Student Success in STEM," a community of practice consisting of UNM, NMSU, CNM and CUNY-City College, Lehman College and Hostos Community College (hsistemintersectionality.com). Dr. López's other current research projects include: the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for a

study on “Employing and Intersectionality Framework in Revising Office of Management and Budget Standards for Collecting Administrative Race and Ethnicity Data” for illuminating the difference between race (visual social status/street race) and ethnicity (cultural heritage) for interrogating inequalities. She is also co-PI for research funded by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on “Climate for Latino Students: Employing Intersectionality for Understanding Latino Student Success in Higher Education;” the Hewlett Foundation and the WT Grant Foundation for a mixed-methods research project on the impact of high school ethnic studies classes for reducing intersectional inequalities; and the Spencer Foundation for a planning grant to conduct a study on "Envisioning the Transformation of Measures and Analysis of Structural and Systemic Racism." Dr. López is Black Latina, New York City-born daughter of Dominican immigrants with a second-grade education rich in cultural wealth. Spanish is her first language. She was raised in public housing and graduated from a large de facto segregated public vocational high school in New York. Dr. López is the first woman of color tenured in Sociology and the first woman of the African Diaspora tenured in the College of Arts and Sciences (2008) and promoted to full professor (2018) at UNM. She has served on over 100 PhD/MA Committees and has led curricular innovations including the first transcribed race and social justice undergrad and graduate certificate open to community. She is affiliated and regularly crosslists courses with Africana Studies; Chicana & Chicano Studies; Native American Studies; Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies and is Research Faculty at the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute. She has held secondary appointments at The College of Education & Human Sciences and College of Population Health.

More Info:

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<https://sociology.unm.edu/people/faculty%20profile/Nancy%20Lopez.html>
<https://race.unm.edu/>
<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=3bQ4rzQAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

Graduate Research Flash Talks

Bilge Aydın is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at the University of New Mexico. She is originally from Turkey. She holds a BA in English Literature and an MA in American Literature, and her MA thesis focused on the works of Rudolfo Anaya. Inspired by Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima*, she pursued doctoral studies in New Mexico. Her research draws on postcolonial studies, Latin American subaltern studies, and New Mexican cultural and literary studies. Her dissertation draws on archival materials to trace the representation of Muslim identities and heritage, as well as the historical Muslim presence in New Mexico, and their role in shaping the region's racial formation.

Joselin Castillo is a fifth-year doctoral student in the department of American Studies at the University of New Mexico (UNM). She earned her BA in Anthropology where she became a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow at California State University, Los Angeles. Upon earning her MA in Latin American Studies at UNM, she became a recipient of the Crossing Latinidades Mellon Predoctoral Research Fellowship during her doctoral program. Drawing from her personal upbringing, her research explores the cultural productions of the Central American diaspora in the twenty-first century. As the daughter of a Guatemalan immigrant and single mother, her dissertation re-examines narratives and stereotypes of womanhood experienced by

Central American migrant women, and explores the women's praxis through their political activism, art, mothering practices at face of anti-immigrant sentiment and policy.

Esther Hewitt is a second-year master's student in Latin American Studies who believes the best research happens *with* communities, not *about* them. As a Participatory Action Researcher, she most recently tackled food system interventions in Albuquerque's District 6, piloting Albuquerque's first Food Policy Council in close collaboration with community partners. She focuses on a three-step engagement model that weaves together historical and cultural context, just implementation design, conflict resolution, and sustainable futures. She strongly advocates for solutions that come from within the community affected by policy and decision changes. She also serves as board chair of Reintegra, an anti-human trafficking organization.

Dominique Rodríguez is an Assistant Professor of Spanish at the University of New Mexico, Valencia campus and is a doctoral candidate in the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at the University of New Mexico. A generational Nuevomexicana, her research interests in Chicana and Chicano Studies include Chicana Feminism, Spirituality, Gender, Sexuality, Chicana Folklore, and New Mexican history and identity. Her dissertation project examines how Chicana spiritual healers in the U.S. Southwest exercise personal power in their practices of Curanderismo and/or Brujería. She is particularly interested in how spiritual healing practices serve as a point of resistance to systems of oppression.

Arts & Activism Panel

Eric J. García uses history and a graphic style to create political art that confronts our understanding of the present. Using printmaking, political cartoons and murals, he aims to educate and challenge. He received his BFA with a minor in Chicano studies from the University of New Mexico, and earned his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Garcia is a teaching artist, a member of the Veteran Art Movement, and one of the newest members of the [Justseeds Print Cooperative](#). Garcia has exhibited nationally and can be found in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Library of Congress.

Augustine Romero is an artist, museum curator, and arts professional whose work spans graphic design, sculpture, and community-based exhibitions. Born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado, Mr Romero earned a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design (1985) from Colorado State University–Pueblo (formerly the University of Southern Colorado). Following his graduation, Mr. Romero gained hands-on experience across a range of artistic disciplines, from graphic design to working as a foundry assistant at Renaissance Bronze in Pueblo, where he contributed to both private and public art projects. In 1997 earned a Master of Sculpture from New York University. He went on to teach Product Design at Parsons School of Design in New York from 1997 to 2001. A parallel trajectory within my practice examines the politics of land, sky, and territoriality in the U.S.–Mexico border region. These works engage themes of surveillance, border infrastructure, and ecological disruption, including the reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolf and the presence of scavenger species such as vultures observed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through this lens, the landscape is understood not as passive backdrop but as a contested and surveilled space, shaped by overlapping systems of control, migration, and environmental change.

Ray Hernández-Durán, originally from San Antonio, Texas, is Professor of Art History and Associate Chair of the Department of Art at UNM, and Regents Professor in the College of Fine Arts. His primary area of specialization is Spanish colonial and nineteenth-century Mexican art with secondary specializations in Chicano/Latinx art, Arts of Africa and the African Diaspora, and Museum Studies. His research has explored art and politics in eighteenth-century New Spain, nineteenth-century Mexican museology and historiography, and Chicano art in New Mexico. Ray gained museum experience as a student, intern, and fellow at the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Chicago, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Art Institute of Chicago, and he has curated exhibitions at the UNM Art Museum and the National Hispanic Cultural Center. Awards he has received include two Fulbright Hays Fellowships, a MacArthur Fellowship, a Mellon Foundation grant, an Andy Warhol Foundation grant, and a NEH grant, among others. New research projects focus on the significance of landscape in Chicano art, representations of race in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Mexican art, and the diffusion of the Churrigueresco style throughout the Spanish empire during the eighteenth century. He is currently co-editing three volumes: *The Routledge Companion to Latinx Art*; *“The Foundation of Our Genius”: Racial Epistemologies and Global Iberian Visual and Material Cultures*; and *“X Marks the Spot”: Testimonios from Gen X Latinxs in Higher Education*. In 2007, Ray founded the graduate research journal, *Hemisphere: Visual Cultures of the Americas*, for which he serves as faculty advisor and is currently on its 18th issue, and in 2020, he co-founded the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute’s community-facing periodical, *Chamisa: A Journal of Literary, Performance, and Visual Arts of the Greater Southwest*, the fifth volume of which is in production.

Jadira Gurulé is the Head Curator and Manager for the Art Museum and Visual Arts Program at the National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico and she has been with the NHCC since 2016. Gurulé finished her BA in Art History at the University of New Mexico (UNM) in 2010 and received her MA in American Studies from UNM in 2015. Her curatorial work engages themes of identity, social justice, and the role of museums in building community and shaping national discourse.

Among the exhibitions Gurulé has curated are *Because It’s Time: Unraveling Race and Place in NM* (2018), *Qué Chola* (2019), and *Mira, Mira On the Wall: Reflecting on 20 Years of NHCC Exhibitions* (2021). The exhibition, *Fronteras del Futuro: Art in New Mexico and Beyond* (2022) examined the way BIPOC artists imagine the future through the intersections of art, technology, and speculative fiction. She co-curated the exhibition *Into the Hourglass: Paño Arte from the Rudy Padilla Collection* (2023) which explored artworks by incarcerated artists working with Chicano visual iconography, their contributions to American art, and their impact on how we understand the role of incarceration in the United States today. A recent collaboration with the Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium produced the current exhibition, *Nuclear Past, Present, and Future: Art in Action* which utilizes art to examine the impact of nuclear testing and industry in New Mexico and beyond.

Gurulé's curatorial work has been reviewed in publications such as *Hyperallergic*, *Associated Press*, *Remezcla*, *The Magazine*, *Trend Magazine*, and the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. Gurulé participated in Creative West's (formerly WESTAF) Emerging Leaders of Color 2013 cohort and the NALAC Leadership Institute's 2017 cohort. In 2022, she travelled to Spain as part of the United States – Spain Council Young Leaders Program. Gurulé's article, "Unraveling Latinx Racial Politics: Museums, Intersectionality, and Art in Conversation," is included in the Spring 2020 Issue of *Chiricú Journal: Latina/o Literatures, Arts and Cultures*. Her blog post, "The Earnest Work of Dreaming: Chicanafuturism in Visual Art" was featured on the Center for the Future of Museums Blog through the American Alliance of Museums in June 2023.

Isabella Romero is an interdisciplinary Chicana artist whose roots stretch between Albuquerque and Chimayó, New Mexico. She studies psychology and art, with plans to become a Licensed Professional Counselor. Her future practice will explore the intersection of alcohol and addiction treatment, traditional medicine, and art as modes of healing.

Her art practice emerges from the complexities of living as a land-based person in a "post-colonial apocalypse," where Spanish, American, and nuclear colonization have left her homelands fragmented, radiated, and carrying what she describes as a "soul sickness." Through a multitude of mediums, ritual, and collaboration, Romero explores the romance of the feminine, the spirit of matriarchy, and the necessity of returning to primordial medicine while reconnecting to the cycles of nature. Her practice serves as both a homage to rematriation and an honoring of what her ancestors left her.

Romero primarily creates sculptural works, pottery, animated films, and paintings in oil and acrylic. She works with wood, clay, adobe, charcoal, beads, and plants, often combining and layering mediums through collage and assemblage.