

ABRIENDO BRECHA: OPENING A PATH

ILASSA'S 26TH ANNUAL STUDENT
CONFERENCE ON LATIN AMERICA

SCHOLARS
POLICYMAKERS
BUSINESSES
LEADERS
COMING
TOGETHER
THROUGH
CON
FER
ENCES

ACCOUNTABILITY AND
THE RULE OF LAW IN MEXICO
ON THE THRESHOLD OF
THE 2006 ELECTIONS

POLITICAL PARTIES AND
VOTERS IN MEXICO'S
2006 ELECTIONS

SECOND CONFERENCE ON INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES OF LATIN AMERICA

WITH THE JULY 2006 UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL election in Mexico, the LLILAS Mexican Center held two conferences to analyze what was termed Mexico's first "normal" democratic election, although anticipated to be highly contested. The first conference, held September 8–9, 2005, on Accountability and the Rule of Law in Mexico on the Threshold of the 2006 Elections, examined the stability and capacity of the Mexican institutional system to guarantee a democratic and effective electoral process. The conference was cosponsored with FLACSO–Mexico, as well as the University of Texas Law School and the LBJ School of Public Affairs.

On February 3, 2006, the Mexican Center held its second conference, Political Parties and Voters in Mexico's 2006 Elections, to examine the three leading presidential candidates from the PAN, PRD, and PRI and the substance of

about indigenous languages, is the first of its kind in the United States. On October 27–29, 2005, CILLA held its Second Conference on Indigenous Languages of Latin America with participants coming from Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Venezuela, and the United States. Keynote speakers included: Judith Aissen, University of California, Santa Cruz; Jon Landaburu, CNRS, CELIA; Sergio Meira, Universiteit Leiden; and Valentín Peralta, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. The three days of panel discussions deepened the discourse and furthered scholarship on both the linguistic and social aspects of a spectrum of indigenous languages from the region.

CILLA is also building online resources with the CILLA Papers on Latin American Indigenous Languages, an electronic publi-

American studies student conference in the United States.

The third annual Abriendo Brecha/Opening a Path conference on activist scholarship was held at UT on February 16–18, 2006. An ambitious and innovative mix of paper presentations, performances, and workshops, the conference addressed current and long-term trends in research and creative intellectual work aligned with communities, organizations, and movements working for social justice. The goal was to provide participants with a bridge between their scholarly pursuits and their political convictions.

More than 35 sessions, workshops, and performances over the three-day period addressed such varied issues as diasporic identity, the politics of crisis response, and generating activism through education. A workshop facilitated in part by Karen Engle

LLILAS HAS BEEN THE PROUD HOST TO 16 CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS THROUGHOUT THE 2005–2006 ACADEMIC YEAR. THESE GATHERINGS LARGE AND SMALL BRING TOGETHER SCHOLARS, BUSINESS LEADERS, AND POLICYMAKERS FROM ACROSS THE AMERICAS. HERE ARE SUMMARIES OF JUST A FEW OF THE MANY EXCELLENT CONFERENCES SPONSORED BY LLILAS IN THE PAST YEAR.

their campaigns. Issues were looked at from two perspectives. A "view from below" based on the finding of a new panel survey designed to tap voters' opinions and preferences was given by scholars. This was complemented by a "view from above" by party representatives, the International Affairs Coordinators of the PRI (Samuel Aguilar), PRD (Saul Escobar), and PAN (Senadora Cecilia Romero), who discussed platforms and strategies. The election did prove itself to be the closest yet and to test fully the Mexican electoral institutions to handle the crisis in determining the validity of the next president of Mexico.

The Center for Indigenous Languages of Latin America (CILLA), established at LLILAS in 2001 to contribute to knowledge on these languages, to promote their maintenance, and to coordinate teaching programs in and

cation series featuring papers by UT faculty and students and invited scholars. Papers can be accessed at: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/llilas/cilla/>.

Also of special note was the 26th Annual Student Conference on Latin America of ILASSA (Institute of Latin American Studies Student Association), held February 9–11, 2006. Wholly organized by students, this yearly event provides them an opportunity to exchange ideas with their peers from around the world and to present their research in an academic setting. The students house visitors in their own residences and finance the conference with sales of the ever-popular ILASSA T-shirts as well as donations from local businesses and other fundraising events. With close to 100 presenters from all over the globe, it is the oldest and largest Latin

of the UT Law School's Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice focused on the Living Newspaper Project, an innovative program to reinvigorate civic education in Austin area high schools through dramatization of current human rights issues.

Among the organizers were UT professors Richard Flores, Charles Hale, Shannon Speed, and John McKiernan-Gonzalez, with support from the College of Liberal Arts, LLILAS, the Center for Mexican American Studies, the Center for African and African American Studies, the Center for Women's and Gender Studies, and Performance as Public Practice. Plans for Abriendo Brecha IV in 2007 are currently under discussion.

See a list of upcoming LLILAS conferences online at <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/insts/llilas/conferences>. 🌟