



ASBURY LATINO CENTER

NEWSLETTER 2020

WELCOME

¡SALUDOS, FAMILIA!

We are so excited to bring you the first edition of the Asbury Latino Center (ALC) Newsletter! In the following pages you will find some updates on our work and some achievements from the academic year 2019-2020; and some inspiring stories from some of our students and much more! This newsletter is simply an attempt to further connect us to our network and the broader Asbury Seminary community, and for our network and the community to stay abreast of our work and progress.

As most of you know, “Asbury Seminary is committed to historic Christian faith in the Wesleyan tradition in a way which is globally engaged, spiritually formative, and missionally alert.”

The ALC exists as a bilingual expression of these community values for the church at large. We can only accomplish this mission because of Asbury’s staff and faculty, the seminary administration and trustees, and of course, all of our wonderful students.

We recognize that this year has been nothing short of challenges, but it also has been one of God’s given

opportunities. Many of you have faced the Coronavirus head-on, while others have been impacted in other ways. Some have found a certain grace from the Lord in these turbulent times and have started school and are new students at Asbury this Fall. Some started new ministries, others renewing their current ministry or place of service; and yet others are trying to find what the Holy Spirit is saying to them this season. Know that we continue to pray for you wherever you find yourself at this moment in life.

In these times of change and uncertainty, we find hope in the words of the Apostle Paul: “... *being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus*” Phil. 1:6 NIV

Dr. Peter Rios,
Executive Director,
Asbury Latino Center

Asbury Latino Center Vision Statement

The vision of the Asbury Latino Center is to serve as the bridge between the Latino/a community and Asbury Theological Seminary’s theological tradition, ethos, mission, and educational resources. To this end, we seek to create and sustain a set of educational program offerings (both credit and non-credit) that are contextualized, accessible and affordable, and culturally responsive to the ministry needs of the Latino/a church in the USA and the world.



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ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019-2020

Bilingual Master's (MAM)

The Apostle Paul said that he became whatever was needed in order to make an impact and be effective with others (1 Cor. 9:22). Asbury's new bilingual Master of Arts in Ministry will help you further develop into who God has created you to be so that you can serve many! In a constantly changing and complex world, the Apostle's way of living challenges us to access all the available tools to prepare ourselves as contextual leaders for the Kingdom of God.

This fall we have expanded our academic program offering a bilingual Master of Arts in Ministry. This Master's gives the opportunity for pastors and leaders to increase and expand their ministerial capacities to serve and reach many more in a Latino community that speaks two languages.

The new bilingual Master of Arts in Ministry from Asbury Seminary Ministry is a timely tool for today's Latino/a leaders.

For more information press following link: [MAM](#)

MOU with Discípulo 21

After two years of collaboration, conversations and negotiations, the Asbury Latino Center and Discípulo 21 signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a partnership that provides accredited theological education for members of Discípulo 21.

Discípulo 21 is a church-planting network of Latino/a congregations and leaders in the United States and Latin America. Their focus is to nurture missionally-minded congregations that will equip and deploy leaders (both lay and ordained) that would plant churches in their communities and beyond.

Discípulo 21 operates under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Iosmar Álvarez, who is the District Superintendent of the Lexington District, Kentucky Conference of the United Methodist Church, and a Doctor of Ministry graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary.

New Publication

In March 2019, The Excellence in Preaching Initiative, a Project of the Asbury Latino Center published a book on basic skills for preaching.

The book, titled *Predicando con Impacto: Preparación y Presentación de Mensajes Bíblicos*, was the result of a collaboration of five Latino/a Homiletics and Biblical scholars with the purpose of developing a resource for preachers (both novice and advanced practitioners) on various skills used in the preparation and delivery of sermons.

The book is written in Spanish and published by First Fruits, the academic - open access publisher of Asbury Theological Seminary. The book was edited by Danny Román-Gloró Director of Strategic Initiatives of the Asbury Latino Center, who also contributed one of the chapters in the book.

Thanks to the generosity of Lilly Endowment the book is accessible at no cost as an e-book or printed in PDF format by the reader, through the following link: [Predicando con Impacto: Preparación y Presentación de Mensajes Bíblicos](#)



ACHIEVEMENTS

Latino Ministry Formation Program Re-Certified

The Latino Ministry Formation Program (LMFP) was re-certified as an access to Seminary program by the Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH)

AETH and the Association for Theological Education (ATS) entered into an agreement in which AETH can certify programs that function as equivalent to a bachelor's degree for purposes of admission into Seminary. This is the 5th year of this certification.

For more information press the following link: [LMFP](#)



Registrations Abound for LMFP

Despite the social and economic crisis due to the pandemic, the Latino Ministry Formation Program (LMFP) managed to enroll a high number of students for the Fall 2020 term. We give glory to God, for the annual growth of the Program and for the opportunity to bless our Latino/a brothers and sisters academically. LMFP is an integral part of the Seminary's strategy to provide contextual theological education in languages other than English.

2018 - 441 Credit Hours

2019 - 624 Credit Hours

2020 - 651 Credit Hours

LMFP Student Achieves Her First Publication

This past Summer, an LMFP student published an article in an online academic journal. LMFP Professor Jonathan Sanchez wrote about this accomplishment: "Ana Múnera did an excellent final work for the philosophy of religion class, which was submitted to a digital publication a few months ago. Her article, "*Más allá de la celebración*", was selected to be published in the theology and philosophy section of caminandoenjusticia.com, a digital platform that focused on contemporary ethical dilemmas and brings theological/ethical answers to them. This is a great step for the quality of graduates that are being developed by the program.

You can see the article here: <https://caminandoenjusticia.com/mas-alla-de-la-celebracion/>

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Brenda A. Velázquez-Morales

My journey at Asbury Theological Seminary has been powerful and transformative both spiritually and emotionally. I thank God for allowing me to study in this very special place where my knowledge has expanded, and my conscience has been challenged to change old mores and the ways of thinking rooted in them

The challenge in diving deep into the word of God, professors full of knowledge, love and the Holy Spirit, has been an enriching experience for my life, my ministry, and those around me. I am deeply grateful for all these experiences, and the provision that God has made in my life through the men and women who provide financial resources to be able to fulfill the call that my Savior made to this Servant. In Christ, thank you!!!!



Luz Ortíz

Recipient of the “Dulos Award 2020”

I started my journey as a student in the summer of 1997. Since I walked through the Asbury doors, I could feel that it was the place that God had chosen for me to achieve my educational and spiritual goals.

One of the most beautiful experiences was receiving the “Dulos Award” which is given to a person who reflects the character of Christ through their faith, life, humility and holistic service. This award represents what it is like to be transformed through study and answered prayer. Today my educational and spiritual goals come together to be the hands and feet of Christ, for the glory and honor of God.

Thank you to the Asbury’s Latino Ministry Formation Program, its administration and teaching staff for so much love, a love that transforms everything.

“When you seek to learn about God through study, you can have faith that God himself will teach you and transform you in his image”



Emanuel Gómez

In my experience as a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, the focus of the professors is on helping the student to acquire the appropriate knowledge and the students receive the most up-to-date material. The teachers help the student to be effective in their calling and what God has deposited in our lives. So far, I can see that they have helped me expand my knowledge of writing and how to read God's word. To be more analytical and to update certain forms of study. I definitely like the professional demeanor of the teachers and how they work to ensure that the student develops and receives the correct training.

During the hybrid classes there was a good interaction between students and the teacher, which was a blessing for all. At the same time, I am glad that the focus in all of these classes is Christ-centered and that they encourage us to bear witness, to apply what we learn to our lives, so that the love of Christ can be reflected through our lives. Blessings to all!



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Ana María Múnera

Recipient of the Academic Excellence Award 2020

The best thing about my experience at ATS was that even in the midst of the academic rigor, God always let me feel His presence, ministered to my life and spoke to my heart. Today, the joy of a goal achieved is mixed with the sadness of reaching the end of a path of great blessing. I Thank God for His infallible presence and for all His light, to my professors and classmates for all that I have experienced and learned, for teaching me to see in each face the precious image of the Lord!



Daisy Montenegro

My story in Asbury Theological Seminary began in the Spring of 2019. Although some people told me that I needed a bachelor's degree to attend Seminary, the Holy Spirit prompted me to search for a Seminary. Through a google search I found Asbury Theological Seminary. After the search, I reached out to admissions and shortly after I was admitted following their review of my transcripts. The admissions and the financial aid offices, academic advisors, and library personnel were exceedingly helpful.



The classes that I have taken up to now have helped me grow intellectually, theologically, but mostly spiritually. My professors have enticed me to search within me for the great leader that God has called me to be. They have been supportive through times of personal sickness. They also were there to pray for me and my family and to give their support by showing their godly love in times of bereavement due to COVID-19.

I am very excited and thankful for being a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, and I am working very hard to maintain an outstanding GPA.

Pastor Jesús Manuel Torres

Sports lovers know and frequently talk about the importance of the role of a coach, leader or trainer of a team or athlete. We know that the success in the performance of that individual or organization will be directly linked and will depend largely on the tools that the coach has. The same is true in our ministry and life calling.

*Of course, we know that the Bible educates us and establishes that it is God himself who constituted some **“apostles; to others, prophets; to others, evangelists; to others, pastors and teachers,”** (Ephesians 4:11) But there is no doubt that the formation and effectiveness of our ministry is polished and improved when we are exposed to tools that change and improve us. That is my experience with Asbury Theological Seminary.*

Its spiritual environment, its commitment to providing excellence to each person and student who enters its doors, and the professional experience of each teacher, impacts you from day one. Asbury has shown to be, not only a ministerial training center but also an individual one. What do I mean? That when my life changes, my ministry changes, that is why the growth promoted by the education offered in this institution has been transformative in our cities and worldwide.



RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Danny Román-Gloró, was selected as Florida-Dunnam Campus 2020 Staff of the Year. Danny is the Director for Strategic Initiatives for the Asbury Latino Center. In that role, Danny oversees the *Latino Ministry Formation Program*, the *Excellence in Preaching Initiative*, and the *Thriving-in-Ministry Initiative*.

Every year Asbury Seminary honors an individual from each campus, who in the opinion of staff, faculty, and administration of the seminary exemplifies the values and ethos of the Seminary, and whose work on behalf of the seminary is exemplary. Danny was honored in a small ceremony attended by other staff members, faculty, and administrators.

Danny joined the Asbury Staff in 2015 as Director of the Excellence in Preaching Initiative. Since 2013, he has served as an Adjunct Professor of Preaching at Asbury Theological Seminary - Florida Dunnam Campus. He has a PhD in Communication from Regent University and a DMin in Preaching from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He is an Ordained Elder in the Southeast Region Conference of the Free Methodist Church and has served as pastor in both Spanish and English-speaking congregations in Miami, Boston, and Chicago.



Graduates 2019 - 2020

Asbury Latino Center congratulates the 2019-2020 LMFP Graduates:



- Eddy Cardenas
- Ana Múnera
- Luz Ortíz
- Abner Rodríguez
- Abnier Rodríguez
- Joshua Santiago

Beloved students, you have been obedient to the Lord's call, you started the race and you are doing very well. We invite you to continue your academic theological preparation to the next level. Cheer up! God is with you on this adventure.

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you: I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”
Isaiah 41:10*

Hispanic Heritage



Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration

In October 2019, the Asbury Latino Center celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with various events. During the month, ALC, in partnership with the Justo and Catherine González, Resource Center, recognized the contribution of Latino/a individuals and leaders to the Seminary and the Latino Church throughout the world. Events included chapel services, the Latino/a Theological Heritage Celebration Dinner, where Dr. Justo González made an excellent presentation, and a service renewing its partnership with the Asociación para La Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH), in which Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Fraizer delivered a powerful sermon.



Meet the Asbury Latino Center Team



Ms. Marla Ortiz, M.A.
Coordinator,
Asbury Latino Center



Ms. Mónica Rivera,
B.A.
Administrative
Assistant



Rev. Dr. Danny Román-
Gloró, Ph.D.
Director of Strategic
Initiatives



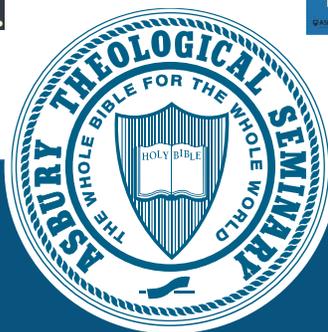
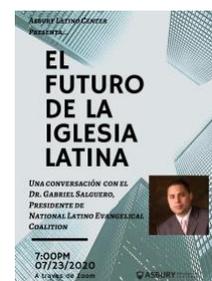
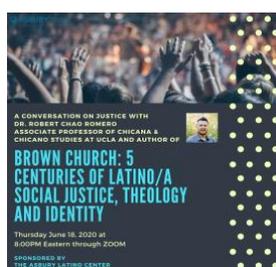
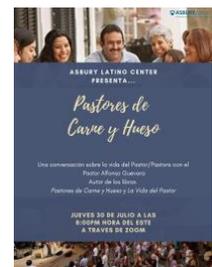
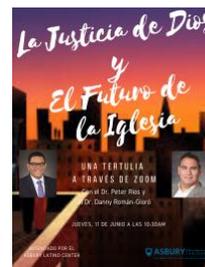
Dr. Peter Rios, D.S.L.
Executive Director

ASBURY LATINO CENTER WEBINAR SERIES

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Asbury Latino Center created a series of Webinars. These webinars featured staff from the Asbury Latino Center, members of the Asbury Seminary Faculty, and prominent Latino/a leaders from across the USA.

Some of the topics featured in these webinars included: Prophetic Leadership in the time of COVID, Pastoral Care in the time of COVID; a Bible Study on the Book of Lamentations; God's Justice; The Future of the Latina/o Church; The Life of the Pastor; and "Brown Church: Five Centuries of Latina/o Social Justice, Theology, and Identity." You can access our webinars online through our page facebook.com/asburylatinocenter

Given the response and popularity of these Webinars, the ALC plans to continue to offer a monthly webinar with topics such as The Church's Response to Domestic Violence; Human Traffic and the Church; and a Bible Study of Habakkuk; among others.



ASBURY LATINO CENTER MEMBERS
 Mónica Rivera - ALC Administrative Assistant
 Marla Ortíz - ALC Coordinator
 Dr. Danny Román-Gloró - ALC Director of Strategic Initiatives
 Dr. Peter Ríos - ALC Executive Director
 Dr. Steve Gober - AVP of the FL Dunnam Campus

ALC IS JUST AN EMAIL AWAY!
[ASBURY.TO/LATINO](https://asbury.to/latino)

Feel free to send your comments and suggestions to
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