

# LATINAS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY: PROGRESS AND PROMISE

*Raquel E. Aldana,\* Emile Loza de Siles,\*\* Solangel Maldonado,\*\*\*  
and Rachel F. Moran\*\*\*\**

## ABSTRACT:

*The 2022 Inaugural Graciela Olivárez Latinas in the Legal Academy (“GO LILA”) Workshop convened seventy-four outstanding and powerful Latina law professors and professional legal educators (collectively, “Latinas in the legal academy,” or “LILAs”) to document and celebrate our individual and collective journeys and to grow stronger together. In this essay, we, four of the Latina law professors who helped to co-found the GO LILA Workshop, share what we learned about and from each other. We invite other LILAs to join our community and share their stories and journeys. We hope that the data and lessons that we share can inspire other Latinas to join the legal academy. We encourage law schools to honor the transformation that our presence and contributions have brought to legal education and scholarship and to join us in considering how our path forward can be even more impactful and sustaining.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

I. INTRODUCTION .....	302	R
II. A DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW .....	306	R
III. LATINAS’ CONTRIBUTIONS IN SCHOLARSHIP AND TEACHING ..	307	R
A. <i>Latina Law Scholarship, Rich and Robust</i> .....	309	R
B. <i>LILAs’ Contributions to Teaching</i> .....	313	R
IV. CONTRIBUTIONS TO INSTITUTIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE .....	317	R
V. HONORS AND RECOGNITION .....	317	R
VI. LESSONS LEARNED AND LOOKING FORWARD .....	318	R

\* Martin Luther King Jr. Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law.

\*\* Assistant Professor of Law, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law.

\*\*\* Associate Dean for Faculty Research & Development and Eleanor Bontecou Professor of Law, Seton Hall University School of Law.

\*\*\*\* Distinguished and Chancellor’s Professor of Law, UC Irvine School of Law.

The more you move up, the more secure you become and the more you're able to practice your culture without having to apologize anymore, or without having to hide to use your culture.

Graciela Olivárez<sup>1</sup>

The Latina in me is an ember that blazes forever.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor<sup>2</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION

In 2015, as Visiting Scholar Dolores Atencio began work on her groundbreaking *Luminarias de La Ley* project,<sup>3</sup> she asked Professor Solangel Maldonado, “[H]ow many Latina law faculty there are in the US?”<sup>4</sup> Atencio had received a list of the 2014–2015 Latina/o Law Faculty that Professor Jennifer Chácon<sup>5</sup> had compiled and was surprised that it listed only 107 Latina faculty members, a tiny fraction of the more than 8,000 full-time faculty members in the United States.<sup>6</sup> After further research, Maldonado and Atencio confirmed that the number was slightly higher—there existed 127 tenured and tenure-track Latina law professors—but nevertheless, the 127 represented a miniscule 1.6% of the legal academy.<sup>7</sup> They, and many other Latinas, Latinos, and other allies have wondered why there were (and still are) so few Latinas in the legal academy. This lack of Latina law professors and other professional legal educators (collectively, “professors”) in the academy (collectively, “Latinas in the legal academy,” or “LILAs”) is

---

<sup>1</sup> Jan Cleer, *Western Women: Graciela Olivarez Spent Life Helping Less Fortunate*, ARIZ. DAILY STAR (May 7, 2020) (capitalization supplied), [https://tucson.com/news/local/western-women-graciela-olivarez-spent-life-helping-less-fortunate/article\\_6d4b7ec4-f782-584e-bea4-b4affef0f024.html](https://tucson.com/news/local/western-women-graciela-olivarez-spent-life-helping-less-fortunate/article_6d4b7ec4-f782-584e-bea4-b4affef0f024.html), archived at <https://perma.cc/V7MB-AZ3W>.

<sup>2</sup> Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Address to Hispanic Law Students at Hofstra University (1996), quoted in Joile Lee, *Sotomayor Said It: Notable Quotes from Supreme Court's 1st Latina Justice*, USA TODAY (Aug. 8, 2014), <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/08/08/sonia-sotomayor-supreme-court-five-years/13715203/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/J2SH-WCJW>.

<sup>3</sup> *Luminarias* (Luminaries) *Legal History Project*, DU PORTFOLIO (June 13, 2022), <https://portfolio.du.edu/Dolores.Atencio>, archived at <https://perma.cc/AK8X-ZZTS>. In furtherance of her *Luminarias* project, Dolores Atencio has been Visiting Scholar of the University of Denver's Latinx Center since 2015. See *Visiting Scholar Dolores S. Atencio, Esq.*, DU PORTFOLIO (June 13, 2022), <https://portfolio.du.edu/Dolores.Atencio/page/54483>, archived at <https://perma.cc/9H6R-VQ49>.

<sup>4</sup> E-mail from Dolores Atencio to Solangel Maldonado (June 22, 2015, 4:58 PM) (on file with authors). The two women had met through their work on the Hispanic National Bar Association's Latina Commission on which they both served at the time.

<sup>5</sup> Jennifer Chácon, the Bruce Tyson Mitchell Professor of Law at Stanford Law School, is the Chair of the Planning Committee for the forthcoming Second Annual Graciela Olivárez Latinas in the Legal Academy Workshop, which is slated as an in-person event for May 30–31, 2023 at Stanford Law School.

<sup>6</sup> See Jennifer Chácon, *Latina/o Law Faculty 2014–2015* (unpublished database) (on file with authors).

<sup>7</sup> See e-mail from Dolores Atencio to Solangel Maldonado (June 22, 2015, 5:31 PM) (on file with authors).

dispiriting. It is especially disappointing given that several decades have passed since the founding of Latina and Latino Critical Legal Theory, Inc. (“LatCrit”)<sup>8</sup> and its multidimensional school of critical legal theory, scholarship, and activism<sup>9</sup> and despite the numerous LatCrit and People of Color Legal Scholarship (“POC”)<sup>10</sup> conferences that have provided guidance and a supportive environment to many aspiring, junior, and experienced Latinx scholars. After all, Latina law professors have been publishing critical scholarship and teaching in all areas of law for decades.<sup>11</sup> Latinas also have been doing more than their proportionate share of service and other institutional work.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, law schools across the country have claimed to want to hire professors of diverse backgrounds, including Latinas.<sup>13</sup> So why are there so few Latinas in legal academia more than three decades after Professor and later UCLA Law Dean Rachel F. Moran so powerfully described the experience and implications of “being a society of one”?<sup>14</sup>

These questions were foremost on our minds in summer 2021 when, during an email exchange on the Latinx Law Professor listserv, we learned that only three law schools currently had a Latina dean.<sup>15</sup> Jenny Martinez, Dean of Stanford Law School, offered to host and provide administrative

---

<sup>8</sup> See *Latina and Latino Critical Legal Theory, Inc.*, LATCRIT, <https://latcrit.org/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/W7KJ-V3BA>.

<sup>9</sup> See Marc-Tizoc Gonzalez, Saru Matambanadzo & Sheila I. Vélez Martínez, *Latina and Latino Critical Legal Theory: LatCrit Theory, Praxis and Community*, 12 REVISTA DIREITO E PRÁXIS 1316, 1318–20 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1590/2179-8966/2021/59628>, archived at <https://perma.cc/QQ8B-LYB4>.

<sup>10</sup> See Linda S. Greene, *From Sea to Shining Sea: The Midwestern Origins of the First National Meeting of the Regional People of Color Legal Scholarship Conferences*, 20 B.C. THIRD WORLD L.J. 29, 29 (2000); Neil G. Williams, *Two Men and Twenty Years of Meetings: Norman Amaker, Derrick Bell, and the Midwestern People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference from 1990-2010*, 42 LOY. U. CHI. L.J. i, iii (2011).

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Rachel F. Moran, *Commentary: The Implications of Being a Society of One*, 20 U.S.F. L. REV. 503, 509 (1986) [hereinafter Moran, *Commentary*]; Elizabeth M. Iglesias, *Structures of Subordination: Women of Color at the Intersection of Title VII and the NLRA. Not!*, 28 HARV. CR-CL L. REV. 395, 395 (1993); Berta Esperanza Hernández-Truyol, *Building Bridges—Latinas and Latinos at the Crossroads: Realities, Rhetoric and Replacement*, 25 COLUM. HUM. RTS. L. REV. 369, 369 (1994); Margaret E. Montoya, *Mascaras, Trenzas, Y Grenas: Un/masking the Self While Un/braiding Latina Stories and Legal Discourse*, 17 HARV. WOMEN’S L.J. 185, 185 (1994) (concurrently published in 15 CHICANO-LATINO L. REV. 1, 1 (1994)).

<sup>12</sup> See 2022 Inaugural Graciela Olivárez Latinas in the Legal Academy Workshop, Workshop Application Database (Apr. 25, 2022) (unpublished database) (on file with authors) [hereinafter GO LILA Database]; see *infra* text accompanying notes 102–05 (discussing Latinas’ service both in and outside their institutions).

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., Leslie G. Espinoza, *Masks and Other Disguises: Exposing Legal Academia*, 103 HARV. L. REV. 1878, 1882 (1990); PRESUMED INCOMPETENT: THE INTERSECTIONS OF RACE AND CLASS FOR WOMEN IN ACADEMIA (Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. González & Angela P. Harris eds., 2012); Carmen G. González & Angela P. Harris, *Presumed Incompetent: Continuing the Conversation (Part I)*, 29 BERKELEY J. GENDER L. & JUST. 183, 192 (2014).

<sup>14</sup> See Moran, *Commentary*, *supra* note 11, at 503.

<sup>15</sup> Posting of Michael A. Olivas to Latino Law Professors listserv [hereinafter Latinx Law Profs] (July 26, 2021, 6:59 PM) (on file with authors); Posting of Reynaldo Anaya Valencia to Latinx Law Profs (July 26, 2021, 9:51 PM) (on file with authors) (responding to Professor Olivas).

support for a workshop of Latina law professors “if a core group of volunteers wanted to form an organizing committee.”<sup>16</sup> Within a week of Dean Martinez’s offer, the four authors of this essay and several others, including Professor Reyes, who subsequently chaired the Planning Committee, came together to found what ultimately came to be named the 2022 Inaugural Graciela Olivárez Latinas in the Legal Academy Workshop, or GO LILA Workshop, for short.<sup>17</sup>

Some may have questioned whether a workshop focusing on Latinas in the legal academy was necessary, pointing to the LatCrit and People of Color (“POC”) conferences, as well as the Latina Law Scholars Virtual Workshop Series.<sup>18</sup> A workshop addressing the needs of Latinas in the legal academy, however, is indeed crucial to Latina law professors’ entrée into the profession and, once there, their professional growth and continued success. Latinas have played instrumental roles in founding LatCrit<sup>19</sup> and in planning and participating in the LatCrit<sup>20</sup> and POC conferences.<sup>21</sup> In addition, feed-

---

<sup>16</sup> Posting of Jenny Martinez to Latinx Law Profs (July 31, 2021, 6:29 PM) (on file with authors).

<sup>17</sup> Associate Deans Marty-Nelson and Rodriguez-Dod served as moderators for the Workshop. See *infra* text accompanying notes 48–49. In addition to the other Latinas mentioned at *supra* note 13, the Planning Committee for the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop included Professor Nadiyah Humber and Professor and former Dean María Pábon. See *Planning Committee, 2022 INAUGURAL GRACIELA OLIVÁREZ LATINAS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY (“GO LILA”) WORKSHOP*, <https://conferences.law.stanford.edu/go-lila-workshop/committee/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/T8P6-86LS>.

<sup>18</sup> Madeleine Plasencia, Elizabeth Iglesias, and César Cuahtémoc García Hernández created this community of Latina law scholars. See e-mail from Elizabeth M. Iglesias to Emile Loza de Siles, Madeleine Plasencia, Rachel F. Moran & Raquel Aldana (Mar. 3, 2023, 9:28 AM) (on file with authors). From those origins and ideas from Ediberto Roman, Alexander Boni-Saenz organized the community into the Latina Law Scholars Virtual Workshop Series, which first met in 2020 and continues on a bi-monthly basis. See e-mail from Alexander Boni-Saenz to Solangel Maldonado (Aug. 25, 2020, 5:43 PM) (on file with authors).

<sup>19</sup> See LatCrit, Articles of Incorporation, art. 7 (effective Mar. 15, 1999) (filed with Florida Secretary of State, Mar. 17, 1999) (on file with authors with thanks to Professor Marc-Tizoc Gonzalez) (identifying several Latinas as LatCrit’s co-founders, and highlighting Elizabeth Iglesias, Guadalupe Luna, and Laura Padilla as members of LatCrit’s initial board of directors).

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., Francisco Valdes, *Latina/o Ethnicities, Critical Race Theory, and Post-Identity Politics in Postmodern Legal Culture: From Practices to Possibilities*, 9 LA RAZA L. J. 1, 7 (1996) (foreword to Colloquium, Representing Latina/o Communities: Critical Race Theory and Practice); Francisco Valdes, *Foreword Poised at the Cusp: LatCrit Theory, Outsider Jurisprudence and Latina/o Self-Empowerment*, 2 HARV. LATINO L. REV. 1, 1, 2–3 (1997) (foreword to Symposium—LatCrit Theory: Naming and Launching a New Discourse of Critical Legal Scholarship, dubbing symposium “LatCrit I”); Elizabeth M. Iglesias, 28 U. MIAMI INTER-AM. L. REV. 177, 177–78 (1997) (foreword to Colloquium – International Law, Human Rights and LatCrit Theory); Francisco Valdes, *Under Construction: LatCrit Consciousness, Community, and Theory*, 85 CAL. L. REV. 1087, 1087 (1997) (concurrently published in 10 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 1 (1998)) (foreword to Joint Symposium – LatCrit Theory: Latinas/os and the Law); Shelley Cavalieri, Saru M. Matambanadzo & Lua Kamál Yuille, *Foreword: Mapping Critical Geographies in Virtual Space*, 99 DENVER L. REV. 653, 654–55 (2022) (discussing 2021 LatCrit Biennial Meeting proceedings).

Latinas who contributed works to LatCrit conferences include Elvia Arriola, Leslie G. Espinoza, Berta Esperanza Hernández-Truyol, Elizabeth M. Iglesias, Margaret E. Montoya, Rachel F. Moran, Laura M. Padilla, Ileana Porras, Deborah Ramirez, Daria Roithmayr, Celina

back received through the Latina Law Scholars Virtual Workshops is significant and beneficial. None of these convenings, however, deals exclusively with “supporting and mentoring Latinas in and aspiring to enter, succeed, and lead in the legal academy,” which is the cornerstone of the GO LILA Workshop’s mission.<sup>22</sup>

For years, we have yearned for a community where we could share the challenges that Latinas face, not only as women academics, or members of the Latinx community, or faculty of color (although we are all of that), but as Latina law professors. LILAs needed a space where we could provide guidance and mentorship to junior Latina colleagues, strategize to increase our representation in the academy, and encourage and support those *hermanas* (sisters) interested in pursuing leadership positions.<sup>23</sup> Latinas also needed a space where we could share and celebrate our successes and learn how to carve out time to take care of ourselves physically and emotionally, given our multifaceted identities and responsibilities as Latina scholars, teachers, institutional and community leaders, mothers, daughters, and sisters. We applauded the successes of our African-American sisters, some both Black and Latina, who have participated in the Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Workshop, created sixteen years ago to provide “a support system for Black women law professors” and which has helped grow the number of Black women law school deans.<sup>24</sup> We also celebrated the convening in 2021 of the Inaugural Workshop for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Women in the Legal Academy.<sup>25</sup> We envisioned creating a similar support system for Latina law professors.

Creating a community requires that we get to know the people who will join that community. To that end, Part II of this essay provides a brief overview of who we are, where we come from, and what we teach and write. Part III highlights the teaching and scholarship aspects of the Workshop. The Workshop created a safe space to discuss the challenges we face as Latinas

---

Romany, and Enid Trucios-Haynes. See *LatCrit Symposia*, LATCRIT, <https://latcrit.org/publications/latcrit-symposia/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/JV3Q-44TW>.

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g., Solangel Maldonado, *Cultivating Community Through the Third National People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference: A Chair’s Retrospective*, 55 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 732, 732 (2020) (documenting Solangel Maldonado as National Chair of the Third National People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference in 2010).

<sup>22</sup> *Mission Statement, 2022 INAUGURAL GRACIELA OLIVÁREZ LATINAS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY (“GO LILA”) WORKSHOP*, <https://conferences.law.stanford.edu/go-lila-workshop/mission-statement/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/VPZ4-NWBB> [hereinafter *Mission Statement*] (adopted by Planning Comm. Jan. 17, 2022).

<sup>23</sup> “Go, you’ve got a lot to contribute. And so you don’t fall in the water, we’ll lay the plank down for you.” Graciela Olivárez (undated) (recounting encouragement she received), quoted in Jennifer Mason McAward, *Lay Down A Plank: The Path to Law School Diversity*, 96 NOTRE DAME L. REV. REFLECTION 222, 226 (2021) (citation omitted).

<sup>24</sup> Rebecca Beyer, *A Support System For Black Women Law Professors*, THE RECORD (July 27, 2022), <https://www.bu.edu/law/record/articles/2022/a-support-system-for-black-women-law-professors/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/MC64-5N62>.

<sup>25</sup> See INAUGURAL WORKSHOP FOR ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) WOMEN IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY, <https://pennstatelaw.psu.edu/events/asian-american-women-workshop>, archived at <https://perma.cc/RYS7-HUMN> (virtual event hosted by Penn State Law, University Park, Penn).

in the classroom and provided strategies to address these challenges. In addition, the GO LILA Workshop provided opportunities for all participants to share their scholarship, regardless of its stage of development. Part IV describes this session and the lessons we learned. The GO LILA participants are an accomplished group, and Part V describes the roles these participants have undertaken in the legal academy and the recognition they have attained. Part VI concludes by highlighting what we learned from our work as members of the Planning Committee and from the participants so that we as a community may continue and accelerate our progress as we build upon the promise of this Inaugural GO LILA Workshop.

## II. A DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

At the Workshop, we welcomed seventy-four registrants.<sup>26</sup> They were a diverse group on several dimensions. Slightly more than half of the participants identified as having Mexican ancestry; almost 40% reported Cuban, Dominican, or Puerto Rican ancestry, and 20% said that they were of Central or South American ancestry.<sup>27</sup> The percentages add up to slightly more than 100% because some participants had at least dual ancestries.<sup>28</sup> The participants also brought a range of experiences in the legal academy. Slightly more than half had taught law for fifteen years or more and had attained the rank of full professor.<sup>29</sup> Nearly all the participants were on the tenure track or had security of employment.<sup>30</sup> Those who joined the Workshop clearly

---

<sup>26</sup> See GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12. The processes adopted for the inaugural GO LILA Workshop were that individuals completed an “application” form to provide demographic and other information (“Questionnaire”) by which to inform the GO LILA planning effort. All who responded to the Questionnaire were subsequently registered for participation in the virtual sessions and break-outs carried out using Zoom, a video conferencing application. To our knowledge, all registrants participated in all of sessions and break-outs held during the two-day Workshop, with one or two periodic exceptions. Therefore, “applicant” and “registrant” are synonymous under the Workshop’s processes. For consistency and to reflect our gathering in community, this Article uses the word “participant.” Note that all questions identified by number and referenced in this article were set forth in the Questionnaire and responses to those questions are recorded in the GO LILA Database.

<sup>27</sup> GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 6 analysis. Question 6 asked, “What is your Hispanic/Latinx ancestry? Choose all that apply.” *Id.* at Questionnaire. The Latina community is greatly diverse. See Graciela Olivárez, *quoted in Hispanics Push for Bigger Role in Washington*, 84 U.S. NEWS & WORLD REP’T 58, 58–59 (May 22, 1978).

We Hispanics have the same plea: recognition of our members but, at the same time, recognition of our uniqueness[.] . . . We may all speak Spanish, but that’s about where it stops in terms of being alike. The culture, the food, the music, the habits and customs vary from Mexican to Puerto Rican to Cuban to South American.

*Id.*

<sup>28</sup> See GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 6 analysis.

<sup>29</sup> *Id.* at Question 7 analysis. Question 7 asked, “How many years have you been teaching in a law school?” *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.* at Question 8 analysis. Question 8 asked, “What is your faculty rank?” *Id.* at Questionnaire.

demonstrated their staying power in the world of professional legal education.

The significance of the participants' presence in the academy is brought home by the fact that so many were "firsts" at their respective institutions. Nearly half were the first Latina or Latino person to be hired at their law schools, but they generally were not the last.<sup>31</sup> Today, just about a quarter remain the only tenured or tenure-track Latinx faculty member at their institutions.<sup>32</sup> In short, the group that gathered for the GO LILA Workshop embodied a living history of the progress and advances that Latinas have made in the legal academy.

### III. LATINAS' CONTRIBUTIONS IN SCHOLARSHIP AND TEACHING

LILAs cover a wide range of legal and legal education topics within their scholarship, teaching, and practice.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, each of the seventy-four participants at the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop concentrated her work on an average of five topics out of a total of 372 topics reported.<sup>34</sup> Further, their work is richly diverse with seventy-one unique topics within that reported total.<sup>35</sup> Chart 1 shows a small sampling of that diversity, identifying topics covered by ten or more LILAs.

---

<sup>31</sup> *Id.* at Question 32 analysis. Question 32 asked, "Were you the first tenured or tenure track Hispanic/Latinx (of any gender) law professor in any law school in which you have worked?" *Id.* at Questionnaire.

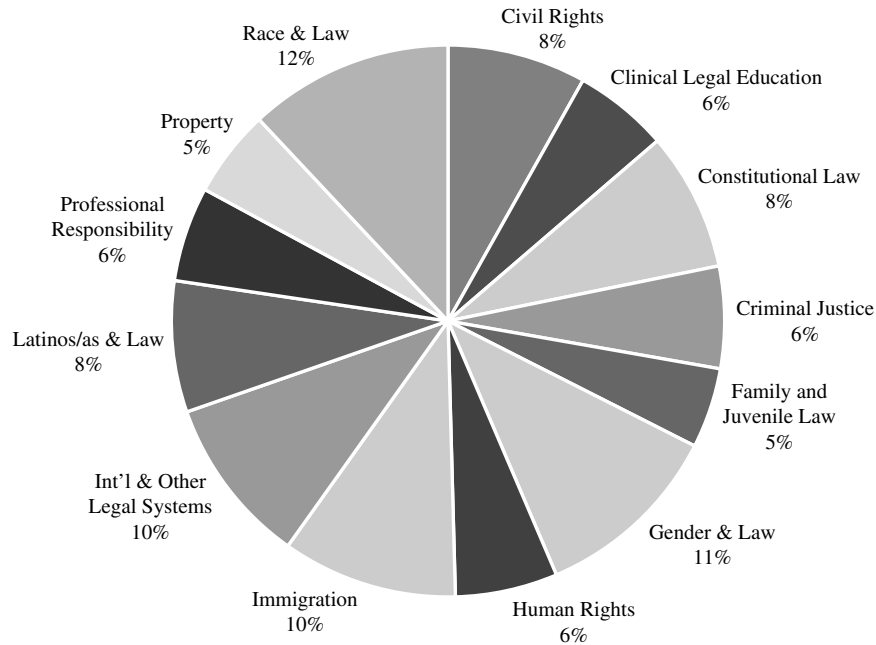
<sup>32</sup> *Id.* at Question 33 analysis. Question 33 asked, "Are you currently the only tenured or tenure track Hispanic/Latinx (of any gender) law professor in the law school where you work?" *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>33</sup> *Id.* at Question 9 analysis. Question 9 asked, "What are your areas of research, teaching, or practice?" *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at Question 9 analysis.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.* (documenting more than sixty-five areas of law).

CHART 1. TOPICS COVERED BY AT LEAST TEN INAUGURAL GO LILA PARTICIPANTS



Latina law professors engage in scholarship, teaching, and practice in almost every sphere of public or private law with a focus on global, domestic, and local domains.<sup>36</sup> LILAs emphasize civil rights, immigration, human rights, international law, and family and juvenile law in their contributions.<sup>37</sup> GO LILA participants also reported work in ten distinct areas focused on race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, disability, or the experiences of other marginalized groups.<sup>38</sup> Notably, about one-third, i.e., twenty-five, of all GO LILA participants reported work on critical race theory or race and the law.<sup>39</sup> Almost one quarter, i.e., eighteen participants, focused on Latinos in the law and on gender and the law.<sup>40</sup>

Latinas should not be pigeonholed or be considered unidimensional as to their areas of intellectual focus and fervor, however. LILAs also work in a host of other areas of substantive law, including, for example: art and cultural heritage law; business and human rights; education law; energy law; food and drug law; intellectual property law; rurality and law; and separation

---

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*  
<sup>37</sup> *Id.*  
<sup>38</sup> *Id.*  
<sup>39</sup> *Id.*  
<sup>40</sup> *Id.*



of church and state.<sup>41</sup> They also cover areas such as corporations, securities, intellectual property, and tax, as well as courses in sports and entertainment and courses involving technology, law, and social justice.<sup>42</sup>

A. *Latina Law Scholarship, Rich and Robust*

The mission for the GO LILA Workshop is to facilitate Latinas' greater entry into, success in, and ascension within the legal academy.<sup>43</sup> This mission reaches all areas of professional, personal, and community development and well-being.<sup>44</sup> Robust and impactful scholarship is foundational to the GO LILA mission and to Latina legal educators' advancement. Latinas' scholarship is contributing richly diverse legal knowledge and expanding the reach of that knowledge within the academy and beyond to legal communities and the public. The Workshop provided LILAs with a special platform and convened a uniquely attuned, expert, and supportive community within which to engage in intellectually rich and critically constructive discourse about scholarship.

*Works in Progress and in Incubation.* Two sets of break-out sessions were dedicated to participants' presentation of and vital conversations about their scholarship: a works in progress ("WIPs") session, and an incubator session for collaboratively brainstorming about participants' projects then in early stages of development. Almost 50% of participants came forward to express their interest in presenting WIPs (twenty-one participants, or 28%) and their projects under incubation (fourteen participants, or 19%).<sup>45</sup> Ultimately, fourteen and nine Latinas presented WIPs and incubator projects, respectively, under the session leadership of Professors Nadiyah Humber, Solangel Maldonado, and María Pabón.<sup>46</sup> WIP commentators came forward in equal number to provide meaningful critiques to their *hermanas*.<sup>47</sup> Space prevents a complete listing of the abundance of presented topics, but they are visually summarized in Word Cloud 1. Justice is clearly at the center of these LILAs' emerging scholarly works.

---

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> See *Mission Statement*, *supra* note 22.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 12 analysis, Question 13 analysis. Question 12 asked, "Are you interested in presenting a WIP?" *Id.* at Question 12. Question 13 asked, "Are you interested in presenting an incubator?" *Id.* at Question 13. Another 8% (6) aimed to do both: present a work in progress ("WIP"), and engage the group to discuss an incubator topic. *Id.* at Question 12 analysis, Question 13 analysis. In furtherance of the GO LILA Workshop's mission, all those expressing interest were invited to present their WIPs and incubator projects at the Workshop. See *Mission Statement*, *supra* note 22.

<sup>46</sup> See *Works in Progress (WIPs) and Incubators Break Out Sessions*, 2022 INAUGURAL GRACIELA OLIVÁREZ LATINAS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY ("GO LILA") WORKSHOP, <https://conferences.law.stanford.edu/go-lila-workshop/sessions/works-in-progress-wip-incubators-break-out-sessions/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/Z68J-T6EP>. Last-minute scheduling conflicts prevented a few LILAs from participating for the entire two-day event.

<sup>47</sup> See *id.*

## WORD CLOUD 1: TOPICS, WORKS IN PROGRESS AND INCUBATOR SESSIONS



*Showcasing our Scholarship.* Beyond these WIP and incubator sessions focused on participants' scholarly projects, the Workshop offered a separate break-out session that focused on scholarship itself and strategies by which to amplify its reach and impact, including within public spheres. This special scholarship break-out was one of three during the 'Having an Impact, Creating a Legacy' session organized by Professors Rachel F. Moran, Nadiyah Humber, and Emile Loza de Siles and held on June 25, 2022.<sup>48</sup>

Professor Loza de Siles led the 'Showcasing Our Scholarship' break-out session, which was moderated by Associate Deans Elena Marty-Nelson and Eloisa C. Rodriguez-Dod.<sup>49</sup> The scholarship break-out featured three nationally-recognized Latina scholars: Professors Laura E. Gómez, Jasmine E. Harris, and Tanya Katerí Hernández.<sup>50</sup> The collective works of these scholars have achieved significant impact through a range of modalities, including published works, such as books, law review articles, and opinion editorials; notable social media presences; and media appearances and other public

<sup>48</sup> See *Having an Impact, Creating a Legacy Break Out Sessions*, 2022 INAUGURAL GRACIELA OLIVÁREZ LATINAS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY ("GO LILA") WORKSHOP, <https://conferences.law.stanford.edu/go-lila-workshop/sessions/having-an-impact-creating-a-legacy-break-out-sessions/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/DT76-LGCT> [hereinafter *Having an Impact*]. Workshop participants were assigned approximately equally, after taking into account their rank-ordered preferences, across the three break-out sessions. The 'Showcasing our Scholarship' break-out had 24 participants. See Final Registration List — Showcasing our Scholarship Breakout (June 21, 2022) (on file with authors).

<sup>49</sup> See *Having an Impact*, *supra* note 48.

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*

contributions.<sup>51</sup> The moderators styled the event as a “fireside chat,” posing questions that encouraged these panelists to share the ways in which they have so successfully elevated the visibility and impact of their work, along with strategies for productivity and tips on social media engagement.<sup>52</sup>

*Amplification Strategies for and Challenges Faced in Latina Law Scholarship.* The GO LILA Questionnaire (“Questionnaire”) asked how participants have most effectively increased the visibility and impact of their scholarship.<sup>53</sup> One question elicited responses about successful scholarship strategies while a companion question<sup>54</sup> opened a dialogue, perhaps even a lament, about LILAs’ unmet needs as to their scholarship and the challenges they face in pursuing their scholarship agendas.<sup>55</sup>

About one-third of all participants shared that they currently do not have a strategy by which to raise the visibility and increase the impact of their scholarship, although they voiced their needs for and desires to develop and execute such strategies.<sup>56</sup> Fourteen percent of participants said that they needed specific information about techniques to build their scholarly reputation and to maximize the effectiveness of these techniques.<sup>57</sup> Notably, a significant portion of *all* GO LILA participants, irrespective of their years of service in the academy, expressed their need for support to enable such an intentional and strategic focus on their scholarship.<sup>58</sup>

As to effective scholarship amplification strategies, there are some notable, and logical distinctions within the group, based on their years of service in the legal academy. For example, a number of the newest LILAs reiterated that “entry-level friendly” platforms are key to nurturing their scholarship and to helping them find their footing for and confidence in de-

---

<sup>51</sup> See *Jasmine E. Harris*, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA CAREY LAW SCHOOL, <https://www.law.upenn.edu/faculty/jashar>, archived at <https://perma.cc/ZJT3-GCYA>; *Tanya K. Hernández*, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, [https://www.fordham.edu/info/23144/tanya\\_hernandez](https://www.fordham.edu/info/23144/tanya_hernandez), archived at <https://perma.cc/K9EW-J3DD>; *Laura E. Gómez*, UCLA SCHOOL OF LAW, <https://law.ucla.edu/faculty/faculty-profiles/laura-e-gomez>, archived at <https://perma.cc/BJG4-4XGD>.

<sup>52</sup> See *Having an Impact, Creating a Legacy — Session Information* (Mar. 14, 2022) (on file with authors). The moderators’ questions were informed by and tailored to address participants’ scholarship responses in the Questionnaire.

<sup>53</sup> See GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Questionnaire. Faculty members may ascribe different priorities to scholarly productivity and visibility, as compared to teaching and service responsibilities, depending upon where in their professional trajectories they are. Therefore, although space here does not permit a thorough exposition, it would be insightful in future works to examine the participants’ responses along those trajectories mapped to their years of service in the legal academy. See *id.* Question 7 invited participants to select one of the following spans: 1–5 years; 5–10 years; 10–15 years; 15–20 years; and 20+ years. See *id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>54</sup> See *id.*

<sup>55</sup> *Id.* at Question 20 analysis, Question 21 analysis. Question 21 asked, “What has been the most challenging barrier to bringing your scholarship forward for impact and visibility, and what is your advice for addressing similar barriers?” *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>56</sup> *Id.* at Question 7 analysis, Question 20 analysis. For the spans of service years, the percentages range from 16% (20+ years) to 33% (5–10 years). The overall average for all spans, combined, is 26%, and for all spans, combined, except the 20+ years span is 29%. *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *Id.* at Question 21 analysis.

<sup>58</sup> *Id.* at Question 20 analysis, Question 21 analysis.

veloping their scholarly voices.<sup>59</sup> Affinity group workshops, such as the GO LILA Workshop, provided some of these scholarship-fostering platforms.<sup>60</sup> For others, presenting before American Bar Association groups and other practicing attorneys were where they found less “intimidating” and less “dismissive” opportunities to begin their scholarly journeys.<sup>61</sup>

Trust, then, seems a critical foundation for engaging with the work of these junior scholars, but many do not feel that legal academic audiences offer a safe space to present their work.<sup>62</sup> This need for trust and safe spaces for scholarly critique and conversation is not limited to junior Latina law professors, however. As LILAs reach five to ten years of service, the trepidation felt during the initial years in the academy abates.<sup>63</sup> Introversion, however, and a perhaps culturally heightened discomfort with the self-promotion of their scholarship remain a challenge, even into Latinas’ twentieth-plus years of service.<sup>64</sup>

As Latinas have advanced in their legal academic careers, they have grown the power of their scholarship in two ways. First, following the path of heroes,<sup>65</sup> they connected with admired senior scholars and other champions and built up those supportive relationships over time. The force-multiplier importance of these champions to LILAs has continued on through their years of service.

Second, LILAs operationalize effective strategies to increase the visibility and impact of their scholarship through “scholar-extenders.”<sup>66</sup> Scholar-extenders are people and platforms that propagate the work and amplify the reach of scholars out beyond the academy. For example, one participant at the five-to-ten-year service mark shared that she produced scholarship-infused policy documents that were then used and publicized by community groups.<sup>67</sup> In this way, the groups functioned in the role of

---

<sup>59</sup> *Id.* at Question 20 analysis. Another winning strategy reported by new LILAs was their engagement with scholars and researchers outside the legal academy in their creation of interdisciplinary scholarship. They note the distinguishing power of this kind of scholarship. It also may be that working with scholars and other professionals in non-law fields enables Latina scholars to gain the trust factor that is so essential to advancing scholarship, but that, unfortunately, may be missing within the legal academy.

<sup>60</sup> *Id.*

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*

<sup>62</sup> This raises serious concerns because the fear and reality of facing not scholarly critique, but intentional humiliation and peer rejection, particularly as motivated by sexism, racism, and other prejudices, impose strictures upon the creativity and intellectual risk-taking that are so essential to the scholarly innovation of all early scholars, including junior LILAs.

<sup>63</sup> *Id.* at Question 20 analysis, Question 21 analysis.

<sup>64</sup> *Id.*

<sup>65</sup> See Emile Loza, *The Odyssey: One Woman Attorney’s Journey in Entrepreneurship*, 51 *ADVOCATE* 25, 25 (2008).

<sup>66</sup> Professor Loza de Siles coins this “scholar-extender” term here, building upon her healthcare administration experience in which physician extenders, *e.g.*, nurse practitioners, physicians’ assistants, fulfill roles earlier and exclusively reserved for physicians. Analogizing briefly, healthcare payment systems and other efficiency drivers placed ever-greater pressure upon physicians’ time and, thus, physician extenders play increasingly more prominent roles in healthcare services delivery.

<sup>67</sup> See GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 20 analysis.

scholar-extender. For others, users on social media platforms performed in this role. One LILA, for example, reported that her use of Twitter helped her scholarship take flight when her then-institution's relatively low status otherwise might have relegated it to obscurity.<sup>68</sup>

The insufficiency of time, including limitations due to conflicting priorities and inadequate institutional support, was among the greatest challenges to Latina law scholarship productivity and success, as reported by about one-third, 31%, of participants.<sup>69</sup> Concerningly, another 28% identified biases as the most significant barriers.<sup>70</sup> In addition to racism, ethnicism, and sexism biases, these GO LILA participants reported biases against their scholarship that they attributed to their institutions' reputational standing and their own credentials.<sup>71</sup> Most troubling of all, more than 20% of participants reported that intellectual biases devalued and worked to undermine their scholarly achievements.<sup>72</sup> Based upon these participants' comments, at least half of these reported intellectual biases appear to be pretextual, serving as proxies for racist, ethnicist, and sexist prejudice held against the small minority of law professors who are Latina.<sup>73</sup> Some participants attributed these intellectual biases to others' lack of awareness about Latinx cultures.<sup>74</sup>

### B. LILAs' Contributions to Teaching

An important project in legal education is measuring faculty contributions to teaching. In general, U.S. law schools rely on student teaching evaluations as the sole metric for teaching excellence, despite numerous studies revealing their shortcomings<sup>75</sup> and bias.<sup>76</sup> By contrast, the GO LILA Workshop documented the teaching contributions of its participants more broadly through a series of questions that revealed participants' substantial contribu-

---

<sup>68</sup> *Id.* at Question 20 analysis, Question 21 analysis.

<sup>69</sup> *Id.* at Question 21 analysis.

<sup>70</sup> *Id.*

<sup>71</sup> *Id.* at Question 20 analysis, Question 21 analysis.

<sup>72</sup> *Id.*

<sup>73</sup> *Id.*

<sup>74</sup> *Id.*

<sup>75</sup> See DENNIS E. CLAYSON, A COMPREHENSIVE CRITIQUE OF STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, AND IMPARTIALITY (2021); Rebecca J. Kreitzer & Jennie Sweet-Cushman, *Evaluating Student Evaluations of Teaching: a Review of Measurement and Equity Bias in SETs and Recommendations for Ethical Reform*, 20 J. ACAD. ETHICS 73, 73 (2022) See also Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, *Validity and Equity Problems in Law School Teaching Evaluations*, YOUTUBE (Jan. 23, 2022), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAoeE5D2UiU>, archived at <https://perma.cc/2ZT8-B44Q>.

<sup>76</sup> See, e.g., Sophie Adams, Sheree Bekker, Yanan Fan, Tess Gordon, Laura J. Shepherd, Eve Slavich & David Waters, *Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching: 'Punish[ing] Those Who Fail To Do Their Gender Right'*, 83 HIGHER ED. 787, 787 (2022); Silvia R. Lazos, *Are Student Teaching Evaluations Holding Back Women and Minorities? The Perils of "Doing" Gender and Race in the Classroom*, 164, in PRESUMED INCOMPETENT, *supra* note 13; see also Meera E. Deo, UNEQUAL PROFESSION: RACE AND GENDER IN LEGAL ACADEMIA (2019); Meera E. Deo, *A Better Tenure Battle: Fighting Bias in Teaching Evaluations*, 31 COLUM. J. GENDER & L. 7, 7 (2015).

tions to law teaching, collectively and individually, at U.S. law schools. For example, LILAs teach every course in the core curriculum with constitutional law, criminal justice, property, and professional responsibility being among the most common.<sup>77</sup> Latinas in the legal academy also contribute significantly to students' development of critical legal skills. Thirteen GO LILA participants, for example, reported teaching clinical legal education courses, but only one reported teaching legal writing.<sup>78</sup> Their responses to the Questionnaire, however, also confirm the challenges that LILAs face in being recognized for these contributions and affirm the need to reconsider how we measure teaching impact and effectiveness in legal education and beyond.

When asked to describe their best teaching innovation or idea, the participants offered answers that were wide-ranging and compelling.<sup>79</sup> Several LILAs have created teaching materials, including new casebooks that introduce ideas or experiences that are often ignored in U.S. legal education, such as comparative perspectives from the Global South or history or the still-current impacts and practices of colonialism.<sup>80</sup> Relatedly, many engage with difficult topics, such as deep and hard reflections on race or gender, demonstrating their commitment to brave and intentional teaching. Many LILAs invest creative energy to teach skills and values that promote social justice, such as intercultural legal sensibility and bilingualism, often through innovative experiential methods. Indeed, several have started clinics or study abroad programs that seek to foster students' greater understanding of the communities, locally or globally, they may represent.<sup>81</sup>

Many LILAs have brought their personal selves into the classroom, intentionally seeking to connect with students of color and others who feel alienated by law or legal education. GO LILA participants reported on teaching methodologies that are personal and relational or that seek to deconstruct hierarchies, for example, the Paulo Freire circle teaching method, or methodologies that are trauma-informed.<sup>82</sup> Participants also revealed a commitment to student engagement, a variety of teaching methodologies responding to learning differences, and a willingness to do time-intensive assessments to promote learning.<sup>83</sup> Several also described a sensi-

---

<sup>77</sup> GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 9 analysis (highlighting the breadth of courses taught by LILAs). Question 9 asked "What are your areas of research, teaching, or practice?" *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>78</sup> *See id.* at Question 9 analysis.

<sup>79</sup> Indeed, these ideas were so inspiring that we curated them and created a handout for GO LILA participants to help spark new ideas or simply to validate their contributions in the academy. Question 18 asked, "What has been your best teaching idea or innovation thus far?" *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>80</sup> *Id.* at Question 18 analysis.

<sup>81</sup> Latina faculty are often drawn to global engagement, particularly with the Global South and in ways that contest dominant narratives and that call for humility or equitable engagement. *See, e.g.,* Constance de la Vega, *The Special Measures Mandate of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination: Lessons from the United States and South Africa*, 16 ILSA J. INT'L & COMP. L. 627, 627 (2010).

<sup>82</sup> GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 18 analysis.

<sup>83</sup> *Id.*

bility to student experiences, such as a commitment to creating open access course materials to reduce (somewhat) the cost of legal education.<sup>84</sup> Finally, Latina faculty engaged with students substantially beyond the classroom, sometimes by opening their own homes or spending time mentoring or networking with students.<sup>85</sup> In the survey, when we asked how many LILAs were either serving or had served as the faculty advisor to Latinx student organizations, nearly three-quarters, or fifty-five LILAs, said, “Yes.”<sup>86</sup>

For many of the GO LILA participants, their teaching contributions and talents have been recognized in various ways. A total of thirty-three, or 45%, reported receiving either multiple teaching awards or at least one teaching award.<sup>87</sup> There is diversity in the type of award, ranging from national or university level awards that recognize teaching innovations, to peer recognition, and to faculty of the year awards based on student selection. However, few Latina law professors have received student selection awards. Only eight, about 10%, have received such recognition, although among them, one has received student selection awards eighteen times while another one has received them eight times.<sup>88</sup>

Unfortunately, the data also revealed the challenges that many Latina law faculty face at U.S. law schools in being recognized and valued for their enormous teaching contributions. When asked to identify their greatest teaching challenge, thirty-two respondents, or 43%, focused on racist or biased student reactions to their teaching.<sup>89</sup> Several reported that these bad or mixed evaluations or input imposed a heavy emotional toll on them and also negatively impacted their academic advancement.<sup>90</sup> Sadly, several also described experiencing microaggressions or even open hostility and pushback in the classroom due to their intersectional identities as women of color; resistance to learning critical perspectives or receiving input; or even students questioning their competency. Others highlighted feelings of imposter syndrome as teachers, which resulted from a lack of institutional diversity, including in the classroom, and a culture that devalues their distinct contributions.<sup>91</sup>

Beyond U.S. law school culture, some Latina faculty also noted the enormous burdens imposed on them working in states with policies that have a chilling effect on what they teach in the classroom.<sup>92</sup> Several also highlighted that administrative and family burdens, particularly during the pan-

---

<sup>84</sup> *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> *Id.*

<sup>86</sup> *See id.* at Question 30 analysis. Question 30 asked, “Have you served as faculty advisor of the Hispanic/Latinx student organization in your law school?” *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>87</sup> *Id.* at Question 25 analysis. Question 25 asked, “Have you received a teaching award from any law school where you have taught or from any other institution during your career as law faculty? If so, what was the award, who gave it to you, and when did you receive it?” *Id.* at Questionnaire.

<sup>88</sup> *Id.* at Question 25 analysis.

<sup>89</sup> *Id.* at Question 19 analysis.

<sup>90</sup> *Id.*

<sup>91</sup> *Id.*

<sup>92</sup> *Id.*

demic, made it difficult to balance all of the teaching demands from the institution and students.<sup>93</sup> A few noted the challenges of teaching and assessing complex topics or skills to a range of students or introducing critical perspectives, especially in large required classes.<sup>94</sup> Clinical faculty or those who teach experiential courses discussed the enormous challenges of establishing ambitious clinics or programs with few resources and sometimes little institutional support.<sup>95</sup>

We also asked GO LILA participants to share how they have worked to overcome their teaching challenges. The nature of their few responses (about ten) reveal the need for institutional rather than individual fixes to what are structural barriers to the measurement and achievement of teaching success.<sup>96</sup> Most of the responses focused on what could best be characterized as self-care, whether by creating or finding supportive spaces outside of their institutions or spending more time in activities that promote their physical or mental well-being.<sup>97</sup> Others have tried to adjust their teaching, often in detrimental ways, in response to concerns over student pushback by introducing less critical perspectives or dedicating only a few classes to those perspectives, providing fewer and more generous assessments, or attempting to communicate directly with students about biases.<sup>98</sup>

In a session titled ‘Teaching Strategies to Survive and Thrive: Subverting Presumptions of Incompetence in the Classroom,’ Professors Maldonado and Aldana discussed some ideas to help LILAs change their institutions’ evaluation of teaching, gain perspective and confidence in the classroom, and further their own growth as teachers.<sup>99</sup> Specifically, we advised LILAs to educate their respective deans and fellow faculty members about the research documenting bias in student evaluations and to take steps to address this bias by, for example, supplementing student evaluations with peer evaluations and with their own mid-semester evaluations to preempt and address student concerns during the semester.<sup>100</sup> We also suggested that LILAs use anonymous polls to engage students and allow them to hear their peers’ different perspectives, without attributing them to the LILA faculty. In the interest of emotional well-being, we recommended that LILAs share their teaching evaluations with a trusted colleague who could read them objectively and offer constructive feedback, without the distorted focus on the negative comments we often bring when reading our own evaluations. We

---

<sup>93</sup> *Id.*

<sup>94</sup> *Id.*

<sup>95</sup> *Id.*

<sup>96</sup> *Id.*

<sup>97</sup> *Id.*

<sup>98</sup> *Id.*

<sup>99</sup> See Solangel Maldonado & Raquel Aldana, Teaching Strategies to Survive (June 25, 2022) (on file with authors) [hereinafter Maldonado & Aldana, Teaching].

<sup>100</sup> See *id.* We also shared the results of similar efforts from the University of California Davis Academic Senate. See *Report of the Special Committee of the Special Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching (June 7, 2019)*, [https://academicsenate.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk3876/files/inline-files/final\\_scet\\_report\\_6.2019.pdf](https://academicsenate.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk3876/files/inline-files/final_scet_report_6.2019.pdf), archived at <https://perma.cc/8QDK-E8KZ>.



Spring 2023

Progress and Promise

317

encouraged LILAs to foster their own development by participating in teaching workshops and collaborating with colleagues and former students and teaching assistants to explore strategies to effectively teach critical perspectives. Finally, we reminded LILAs to embrace their principled pedagogical choices, seek opportunities to become innovative teachers, and contribute to scholarship on teaching that would help them and others grow.<sup>101</sup>

#### IV. CONTRIBUTIONS TO INSTITUTIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The seventy-four Latinas who gathered for the GO LILA Workshop have been movers and shakers in the legal academy. They have been called upon to serve their institutions in leadership roles, and they have time and again assumed major responsibilities that advance legal education and the legal profession. Remarkably, nearly 40% of the participants were then serving or had served as deans or associate deans at their law schools.<sup>102</sup> Almost half had chaired law school committees, and nearly 10% were directors or associate directors of centers and institutes.<sup>103</sup> The participants' contributions reached well beyond their law schools. Nearly 30% had taken on leadership roles in other organizations, serving as national chairs, presidents, founders, chief executive officers, and senior advisers.<sup>104</sup> Since the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop, at least two Latina law professors have been called, like Professor Graciela Olivárez, to national service by the President of the United States.<sup>105</sup> In these and many other ways, participants at the GO LILA Workshop amplified their impact, demonstrating how their talent and vision contribute to making a significant difference in law and other fields of service and endeavor.

#### V. HONORS AND RECOGNITION

Given the many accomplishments of the impressive Latinas who attended the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop, it should come as no surprise that they are earning a range of honors and recognition. Nonetheless, it is extremely gratifying to see how their contributions to legal education and the legal profession are being acknowledged. One mark of distinction is admis-

---

<sup>101</sup> See Maldonado & Aldana, Teaching, *supra* note 99.

<sup>102</sup> Rachel F. Moran, LILA History and Identities (June 24, 2022) (on file with authors) [hereinafter Moran, LILA History]. At the time of the inaugural GO LILA Workshop, there were only four Latinas serving law deans in the country, including Puerto Rico. See Laura M. Padilla, *The Black-White Paradigm's Continuing Erasure of Latinas: See Women Law Deans of Color*, 99 DENV. L. REV. 683, 684, 718 (2022).

<sup>103</sup> GO LILA Database, *supra* note 12, at Question 10 analysis.

<sup>104</sup> *Id.*

<sup>105</sup> See Emile Loza de Siles, *State of the Section Report, Section on Minority Groups, Ass'n of Am. Law Schools 2022*, 12 (Jan. 5, 2023) (Professor Catherine J.K. Sandoval confirmed by U.S. Senate as U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (Dec. 13, 2022)) (Professor Sara C. Bronin confirmed by U.S. Senate as Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Dec. 22, 2022)).

sion to learned societies. The American Law Institute (“ALI”) describes itself as “the leading independent organization in the United States producing scholarly work to clarify, modernize, and otherwise improve the law.”<sup>106</sup> The ALI was founded in 1923 and collaborates with “eminent lawyers, judges, and academics, to give back to a profession to which they are deeply dedicated, and to contribute to the public good.”<sup>107</sup> Nearly 25% of the participants at the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop have become members of this august institution.<sup>108</sup>

The American Bar Foundation (“ABF”) is “the world’s leading research institute for the empirical and interdisciplinary study of law.”<sup>109</sup> It has been in existence for approximately seven decades, and it “seeks to advance the understanding and improvement of law through research projects of unmatched scale and quality on the most pressing issues facing the legal system in the United States and the world.”<sup>110</sup> The ABF Fellows represent “a global honorary society of attorneys, judges, law faculty, and legal scholars whose public and private careers have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the highest principles of the legal profession and to the welfare of their communities.”<sup>111</sup> Only 1% of all lawyers licensed to practice in a jurisdiction can be admitted to membership.<sup>112</sup> The participants at the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop well outstrip this 1% figure: about one in five is a Fellow.<sup>113</sup> Nor does the recognition end at admission to elite learned societies. In addition to the teaching awards already discussed, about 33% have been recognized for their service,<sup>114</sup> and about 40% have received research grants or awards.<sup>115</sup> All of this confirms that the GO LILA participants have made tremendous contributions through their research, teaching, and service, and they are gaining well-deserved honors and awards as a result.

## VI. LESSONS LEARNED AND LOOKING FORWARD

1972 marked our beginning as a community of Latina full-time legal educators in the United States, including Puerto Rico. At the outset, there was only one of us: Professor Graciela Olivárez, who served on the Univer-

---

<sup>106</sup> *About ALI*, AM. LAW INST., <https://www.ali.org/about-ali/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/7HHL-MYE4>.

<sup>107</sup> *Id.*

<sup>108</sup> Moran, LILA History, *supra* note 102.

<sup>109</sup> *About*, AM. BAR FOUND., <https://www.americanbarfoundation.org/about/index.html>, archived at <https://perma.cc/VP7B-LRAJ>.

<sup>110</sup> *Id.*

<sup>111</sup> *The Fellows of the American Bar Foundation*, AM. BAR FOUND., <https://www.americanbarfoundation.org/fellows/index.html>, archived at <https://perma.cc/VP7B-LRAJ>.

<sup>112</sup> *Id.*

<sup>113</sup> Moran, LILA History, *supra* note 102.

<sup>114</sup> *Id.*

<sup>115</sup> *Id.*

sity of New Mexico School of Law faculty from 1972 through 1975.<sup>116</sup> In the early 1980s, there were only two Latinas<sup>117</sup> among the country's twenty-two Latinx law professors.<sup>118</sup> Some forty years later, the Inaugural GO LILA Workshop organizers identified 190 LILAs, as of April 2022.<sup>119</sup>

The insights, lessons, and community that we gained through the Workshop provide a strong foundation for carrying out our continued mission through the next GO LILA Workshop. One important lesson that we all knew, but was reaffirmed in the Workshop is how much we rely on *hermandad* (sisterhood) to sustain us and to remind us of our individual and collective power. During the Workshop, we cried and we laughed together. We felt seen and elevated, and not alone. We also affirmed that we matter and matter greatly and that we make an enormous difference. It was so gratifying to learn about the accomplishments of LILAs in the Workshop and remember those who have left us. We ensured that our celebration of each other's accomplishments, however, did not sweep under the rug the personal struggles and the institutional challenges we all have experienced. We also reminded each other that, individually and collectively, we are more than adequate to address the struggles and challenges, and we affirmed our unity, uniqueness, and worth in our callings and profession.

Planning is now underway for the Second Annual GO LILA Workshop, again hosted by Stanford Law School and planned as an in-person event on May 30–31, 2023. Further efforts are underway to identify all Latinas in the legal academy, including those who are fellows and visiting professors. That outreach should enhance the pipeline of Latinas seeking full-time permanent

---

<sup>116</sup> See Hearing Before the Committee on Human Resources, United States Senate, Ninety-fifth Congress, First Session, on Graciela (Grace) Olivarez, of New Mexico, to be Director of the Community Services Administration, April 22, 1977. In 1975, Professor Olivarez returned to government service, including in President Jimmy Carter's administration. See NOTABLE HISPANIC AMERICAN WOMEN 301 (Diane Telgen & Jim Kamp eds., 1993); <https://archive.org/details/notablehispanica00telg>, archived at <https://perma.cc/MQ95-3CB5>.

<sup>117</sup> E-mail from Rachel F. Moran to Emile Loza de Siles (Jan. 15, 2023).

<sup>118</sup> Michael A. Olivas, *The Education of Latino Lawyers: An Essay on Crop Cultivation*, 14 CHICANO-LATINO L. REV. 117, 128 (1994).

<sup>119</sup> See Emile Loza de Siles, Latinas in the U.S. Legal Academy, Including Puerto Rico (Apr. 4, 2022) (unpublished database) (on file with authors) [hereinafter Loza de Siles, Database]. To summarize its provenance, Professor Loza de Siles created this roster of known LILAs with information from the membership roster of the Association of American Law Schools' Section on Minority Groups per permissions from Latina members to Professor Loza de Siles, then the Section chair; Latinx Law Professor listserv roster shared by Professor Pedro Malavet; a Latino/a law professors list compiled by Professor Jennifer Chácon in 2014 and maintained by Associate Dean Mariela Olivarez on the basis of those professors' periodic self-reporting; an inquiry into fellowship and visitor programs as facilitated by Professor Laura Padilla and Dean Leticia Diaz; and further research by Professor Loza de Siles with input from other GO LILA organizers and others.

employment in the legal academy.<sup>120</sup> The community now stands at 256 LILAs.<sup>121</sup>

The progress that Latinas in the legal academy have made since Professor Olivárez first took to the lectern in 1972 is demonstrable and a source of pride at the pioneering fortitude, intense dedication, and intellectual power and creativity of our community. We hope to give stronger and more collective voice to increasingly claim our rightful places in the legal academy and beyond. With the growth and impact of Latinas in the legal academy and counting, our progress and promise are clear.

---

<sup>120</sup> See also María Mercedes Pabón, *Presumed Incompetent II: Race, Class, Power, and Resistance of Women in Academia* by Yolanda Flores Niemann, Gabriella Gutierrez y Muhs and Carmen G. Gonzalez, *Utah State University Press* (2020), 37 *BERKELEY J. GENDER L. & JUST.* 267, 276 (2022) (stating inaugural GO LILA Workshop's role in growing pipeline opportunities for Latinas interested in serving in academic leadership positions).

<sup>121</sup> See Loza de Siles, Database, *supra* note 119.