

Latin America Specialty Group  
Annual Business Meeting 7:30-8:30 PM  
Association of America Geographers  
Thursday, April 10, 2014  
Room 7, second floor Marriott Hotel

LASG Officers in Attendance:  
David S. Salisbury, Chair  
Betty Smith, Vice-Chair

Absent: Steven Rainey, Secretary-Treasurer in Brazil on Fulbright.

1. David Salisbury opened meeting: Approval of 2013 minutes (R. Kent moved, anonymous second)
2. Chair's Report (Salisbury)
  - NEW LASG website
    - New: <http://community.aag.org/lasg/home/>
    - This should be a sustainable site that will be able to be maintained.
  - LASG membership
    - Membership is at 420, doing quite well. We are still the largest regional group. Some are having difficulties maintaining or growing membership. We have a healthy membership although we are always looking for new members and students to join.
  - Update from AAG
    - 6100 participants (7400 last year)
    - 955 sponsored sessions
    - 22 groups listed highlighted sessions
    - LASG sponsored 18 paper sessions and 5 panels this year.
  - CLAG-LASG party at the Sail Pavilion at the Tampa Convention Center on Thursday 10 April 2014, 9:30-11:30 pm follows meeting... get a free drink ticket right here at business meeting.
2. Treasurer's Report (Salisbury for Rainey)
  - Disbursements and balance
    - Treasurer's report from last year was presented. Student checks have not been cut yet so \$4209.19 now.
  - Venezuela Breaking News Session
    - There was a late breaking session that we sponsored that brought activist student leaders from Venezuela. Activists were brought in by Skype for a late breaking panel that we sponsored. Should we pay for a rental car for the person that came from Venezuela who needed to rent a car to get to Tampa from Miami? The amount is \$217. Rob Kent asked if it was an academic activity. David said yes. Think it is a great way to support these students. It would be good in the future to have more lead time but not always possible. Graciela

Sandoval said it was a great idea and when you are protesting your own government there is no way to be able to have lead time. This would be innovative for AAG. These students were risking their lives.

- Steven Aitken motioned that LASG pay for the rental car.
- Laura Cano Amaya seconded the motion.
- Motion passed by consensus.

### 3. Report of Paper Award Committee

- Committee: David Cochran, Chair; Austin Avwundiogba; Elvin Delgado
- Austin Avwundiogba presented the student paper competition results
- MA/MS Awards: Dayna Cueva Alegria, Indiana University Bloomington
- PhD Awards: Adrienne Johnson, Clark University
- Single author vs. co-authored papers
  - Question came up: Should we allow co-authored papers student/faculty authored?
  - What about having two competitions? Significant concern on faculty involvement
    - 1) decreasing student initiative; 2) putting student solo authors at a disadvantage; 3) creating unhealthy competition between faculty members.
      - Or what about two or more students on the paper? Does this put student solo authors at a disadvantage
      - Another member felt it is important to encourage collaboration given multi-authored papers increasingly common. Yes, but degree of faculty influence difficult to gauge.
      - What about saying it must be the first author? Yes, but degree of faculty influence difficult to gauge.
      - What about having the award not be for writing the paper rather for presentation? This has been tried before, logistical nightmare due to size and space of conference. Rob Kent said we could have a presentation competition session all in one session. Chair suggested we continue the discussion electronically since it does not appear we will reach a consensus at this time.

### 4. Report of Field Study Awards Committee

- Committee: Margaret Wilder, Chair; Laura Schneider; Jorge Ruíz; Pete Richards; Johnny Finn;
- Johnny Finn presented the Research Field awards
- Submissions: 8 at MA level and 15 proposals at the PhD level.
- MA/MS Awards: Max Counter, University of Colorado at Boulder
- PhD Awards: Cadi Fung, Michigan State University

### 5. Elections

- Vice Chair
- Secretary Treasurer
- but Betty Smith declined to move from Vice Chair to Chair

- Nominees
  - Chair- Claudia Radel
    - Chair Motion Marcellus Caldas
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Maria Fadiman
    - unanimous consent in favor of chair Radel.
  - VC- Johnny Finn
    - Motion Christian Brannstrom
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Maria Fadiman
    - unanimous consent in favor of vice chair Finn.
  - Secretary Treasurer- Benjamin Tillman
    - Only nomination Dr. Rick Gioioso not present due to field trip. Nobody in room claimed to know Dr. Gioioso.
    - No motion to elect him.
    - Benjamin Tillman, Texas Christian University, nominated.
      - Gomez motioned to elect.
      - Brannstrom 2<sup>nd</sup>
      - unanimous consent in favor of secretary/treasurer Tillman.

## 6. Walk-ons

- Graciela Sandoval, Ph.D. student at Texas State recommended a flyer about LASG be put in the bag for the next AAG, must submit by October for the following spring meeting. Steven Aldrich motion. McWilliams 2<sup>nd</sup>. Graciela Sandoval to work on flyer draft. Revisit once draft completed.
- Laura Cano, Ph.D. student at Texas State suggested we have a student representative among the LASG elected leadership. Grad students are 40% of the membership. The rep would be a grad student. Johnny Finn would like to know what the grad student rep is to do? Laura Cano explained that the purpose is to bring the voice of the grad students to any decisions that are being made.
- Tony Bebbington thinks it is a good idea. Right now 40% of our membership does not have a voice in decision making. Rob Kent explains that grad students can and do participate in our business meeting. K. Johanneson said it is important to encourage students. Graciela Sandoval suggested perhaps have a community building representative instead of being an officer: that way students can have input. Joel Correa made a motion to create a non-officer position as a community builder. No second. Discussion: Claudia Radel said why not just do the student rep. Chair suggested we go to the by-laws and check. No resolution during meeting.

Meeting adjourned 8:15 pm. CLAG business meeting follows. New members interested in Latin America welcome!