As election season comes to a close and we once again call Barack Obama our president, the influence of the Latino vote is irrefutable. When Dr. Matt Barreto came to speak at Tufts as the Frank Colcord Lecturer, he conveyed just that. In his lecture, “Why Latinos Will Decide the Election,” he explained why this year, more than in the past, the Latino vote would affect the way some states traditionally lean. As co-founder of the polling search firm Latino Decisions, Barreto and his colleagues conduct thousands of interviews nationwide to accurately map the Latino vote in each state.

Barreto began by considering two polarized misconceptions about Latino voters; the first being that all Latinos vote the same way and the second being that the Latino population is too segmented to draw any definitive conclusions. He claims both arguments are flawed generalizations that overlook many similarities as well as differences within the Latino population.

Dr. Barreto highlighted immigration as a unifying issue among Latino voters regardless of political affiliation. His research supported this, claiming that 75 percent of Latinos across the political

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Hello, my name is Matt Ramos and I am the new graduate intern at the Latino Center. I am pursuing a masters’ degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering here at Tufts and studied Geophysics as an undergrad at Bowdoin College. I am very excited to be working with the Latino Center and becoming a member of the Latino community at Tufts. During my time as the graduate intern, I have had the privilege of working with Rubén Salinas Stern and Emily Mears in planning the Latino Center Anniversary Celebration happening in the fall of 2013. This is one of the largest events I have been a part of planning and it has been a great experience to work with alumni and students in creating a fun but historic event for Latinos at Tufts.

I am half Puerto Rican and half Irish, but was raised by my mother who is 100% Irish. That being said, it has been difficult to fully understand my Latino heritage without being an active member of a Latino household or community. A few years ago I traveled to Puerto Rico for a few weeks to visit my grandparents and was able to gain a great appreciation for my Puerto Rican heritage. As we toured the small towns and villages in the center of the island, my grandparents introduced me to everyone they knew, literally stopping at every house to show me off to their friends. I was greeted in such a warm and welcoming manner, with hugs and kisses, as if I were family. This helped ease my mind a little because I went to the island equipped with only the Spanish I had learned in high school; which was completely useless! I didn’t understand a word that was being spoken, but everyone was very accommodating and attempted to do everything in their power to make me feel comfortable. For a while I felt as if I wasn’t Puerto Rican enough for people in high school, but my experience in Puerto Rico pushed me to reach out and really embrace my heritage, realizing that regardless of whether I was raised in a Latino household, spoke Spanish, or was close with my Puerto Rican relatives, I was still Latino. The people I met did not push me away because I wasn’t Puerto Rican enough for them, contrarily, I felt more welcome there than I have in my own community at times.

Fortunately, when I came to Tufts, I was once again welcomed with open arms (but no kisses) into the Latino community, and it has been one of the defining factors of my graduate experience. I initially applied to this position, hoping to make some money in order satisfy my oversized appetite, however, this has become much more than a job for me. The Latino community at Tufts is thriving, and it has been such a pleasure to be welcomed in and allowed to be myself, whether I speak Spanish, or am half Irish, no one cares. I am proud to be Latino and being the graduate intern at the Latino Center has allowed me to take an active approach, getting involved in the various groups and interacting with an awesome group of students. As the graduate intern, I want to reach out to every Latino at Tufts and let them know that they are welcome at the Latino Center and in the Latino community. The Latino Center is a great resource on campus and I am happy to have found it. Whether students come for group meetings, to do homework, or to watch tv, the Latino Center provides a unique venue on campus to get away from classrooms and sit back in a casual environment where everyone is welcome.

If you are interested in hearing more about the Latino Center’s 20th Anniversary Celebration please email tufts latinoalum@gmail.com

Spread the word and if you know of any Tufts Latino alum who are interested, have them email us as well. We hope to hear from you!
Latinos in the Election Cont’d

spectrum support the DREAM Act, which facilitates the path to citizenship for young undocumented immigrants. He attributes this accord to the connection many Latinos have to this issue claiming that 1 in 6 Latinos have a friend or relative who would benefit from such legislation.

Barreto stressed the importance of eligible voters making their way to the polls. By increasing Latino voter turnout, the outcome of not only the presidential race but also the Senate and gubernatorial elections are directly influenced. His research finds that candidate Romney’s chances of winning decrease significantly with a larger Latino turnout. Barreto illustrated this with his interactive map that allowed the user to manipulate the percentage of voter turnout for individual states to see potential election results.

Barreto closed his lecture by turning the discussion to the voice of Latino voters. He reports that the majority of Latinos proclaim that their motivation for voting is not to support an individual candidate, rather to ensure that their voice be heard, that the voice of the Latino community in America be heard.

- Alexander Ocampo, 2014

New Faces on Tufts Campus Cont’d

assisted Barack Obama’s campaign. He also became a member of ALAS (Association of Latin American Students) and even joined an intramural Basketball team deciding it was important for him to try out new things. Now reflecting on his first semester experience as it comes to a close, Gilbert deems his first few months on campus a success and hopes that any incoming freshmen know that “Although it will be different, it will be easy to settle in and feel at home so long as you give yourself time to adapt and don’t expect things to just happen for you.”

While not as tall as Gilbert, what Daniel lacks in stature he radiates in personality as a proactive member of the Latino community. Having moved to the United States from Colombia within the past couple of years, he is no stranger to change and was comfortable with the independence of being in college having had to be self-sufficient while living with his godmother in Bogota. Coming in he thought his biggest challenges were going to be dealing with the lack of diversity at Tufts (compared to Teaneck, where he currently lives with his family) and the rigorous course load that Tufts is notorious for. Daniel described BLAST, a program that helps incoming first generation freshmen acclimate to the Tufts environment, as being “monumental to my experience here at Tufts. It told me about things I would’ve never thought about such as seeking help when I needed it and it exposed me to a support system here at Tufts.” Aside from his guidance from BLAST he has also found support through the Latino and Africana centers as well as through the Latino Peer leader program. In fact, his involvement in the Latino Center pushed Daniel to run for Freshmen Representative for ALAS where he is now a member of the executive board. Looking back on his first couple of months in college, Daniel is proud of his accomplishments. “My advice to incoming freshmen would be to seek help when you need it. It is okay to admit when you need help. Experiment and be accepting of other people’s ideas, because Tufts is full of interesting people. But most importantly be ready to have the time of your life!”

The Latino Center proudly welcomes Gilbert and Daniel to the community and wishes the class of 2016 the best of luck throughout their college experience!

- Ariel Ortiz, 2013
This summer I had the opportunity to study and live in Havana, Cuba for 6 weeks. I went with a group of students from Tufts and Norfolk State and like most Americans, had limited and dated information about Cuban society, history, and culture. Our limited time on the island was spent travelling, reading, writing, engaging, and learning. The core of our program was educational- I took classes on history, race, racism, diaspora, and culture in Cuba at Casa de Las Americas, one of the most influential cultural institutions in Latin America. At Casa we had the privilege of learning from prolific Cuban scholars, artists, and activists including Tomas Fernandez Robaina and Esteban Morales. We were also taught by Professors Claudia Kaiser Lenoir and Geoffroy de Laforcade who worked endlessly to stimulate our personal, academic, and literal explorations of Cuba. It was during our classes that we were pushed, by ourselves, our professors, and our environment, to think about the Cuban system and U.S.-Cuba relations with critical analysis. While I tried to navigate the economic, historical, and political webs that inextricably link the U.S. to Cuba, I was struck by just how little I knew about the stronghold that my country has had on Cuba over the past decade. My ignorance of Cuba revealed my ignorance of the history of my own country. In learning about Cuba I was not forced, but invited to learn and take responsibility as an American for much of the poverty and marginalization that Cuba and its people experience on a domestic and international level. In addition, we each took up an independent research project which allowed for further investigation into topics not directly covered in our classes. I was inspired by the projects that my peers worked on- papers on Cuban hip hop, the hair industry and standards of beauty, marginalization of and racism against Afro-Cubans, Cuban agriculture, and Cuba’s new wave of private enterprise and self-employment, to name a few. My independent research was done on Popular Education Methodology and Popular Educators in Havana. I was lucky to find a wealth of information and passion at the Casa Comunitaria Paolo Freire in La Lisa, a marginalized neighbourhood at the edge of the Havana city limits. It was at the Casa Comunitaria where I learned from community activists and true revolutionaries the reality of their Cuba. My time with the activists of the Casa Comunitaria gave me great insight into the on the ground work that is being done right now to strengthen communities and institutions on the island. The projects at the Casa Comunitaria are designed to address specific neighborhood concerns- from workshops on Afro-Cuban culture, history, and political activism and the intersection of race and gender in the lived experiences of Afro-Cuban women, to local ecological clean-up projects and the creation of community gardens. I could go on and on about the art, music, food, history, struggle, resistance, pain, and hope that I was consumed by as my time came to a close in Havana. I made lifelong friends and family in Cuba and I have discovered the subject of my senior thesis- the role of women in El Partido Independiente de Color and the struggle for Afro-Cuban equality. I am planning an independent research trip back to Havana for next summer and I am currently working on a year-long Directed Independent Study in preparation. I urge the administration, student body, and faculty at Tufts to continue to advocate for a continued relationship with Cuba and any and all programs such as this that challenge us to not only recognize, but take responsibility for our privileges as Americans and the true costs of those privileges.

My time in Cuba and the work that I produced would not have been possible without the generous support and guidance of Ruben Salinas Stern and the Tufts University Latino Center. As a Tufts student, ALAS member, and Latina, I am so grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow in Latin America which your help afforded me. I am confident that the Latino community at Tufts will continue to be able to connect with ourselves and our roots through international study. I would also like to show my gratitude to Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir, Geoffroy de Laforcade, the Tufts University American Studies Program, The Shapiro Award, The Institute for Global Leadership, the Tufts University Undergraduate Research Fund, Norfolk State University, La Casa de Las Americas, and the leaders of La Casa Comunitaria Paulo Freire for all of their help and support.

Zoe Muñoz , 2014
Important Dates & Deadlines

Apply to Live in La Casa:
La Casa Latina (Latino Culture House) provides a support system to the Latino community at Tufts. It welcomes students who are interested in Latino culture and Latino Issues. Residents sponsor activities and events to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of Latino Culture in conjunction with the Latino center.

Applications will be available on January 30, 2013

Apply to be a Latino Peer Leader:
The Latino Peer Leader Program was established to support first year students. Latino Peer Leaders organize fun and helpful activities and programs designed to help first year Latino Students make their transition to college life a success.

Applications will be available on: February 1, 2013

Save the Date!

Latino Culture Show
The Association of Latin American Students (ALAS) is proud to present its annual Latino Culture Show. The extravaganza will feature dancers, singers, live music, and good food. Sign up and get involved—you don’t have to be on stage to contribute!

The show will take place on Saturday March 9, 2013

Latino Freshmen

Males: 32
Females: 45

Latinos in Freshmen Class

- Central American: 35%
- South American: 29%
- Dominican: 10%
- Mexican: 9%
- Puerto Rican Mainland: 6%
- Puerto Rican (Island): 4%
- Hispanic: 7%
Events
Fall 2012
Events
Fall 2012
Did You Know…?

1. For the first time in American history, the Latino electorate has a legitimate claim of being nationally decisive!
2. Latino vote was a record breaking 75% for President Obama this election cycle, surpassing the 72% vote attained by Bill Clinton in his 1996 reelection.
3. This led to a net margin gain for President Obama of +5.4%, and a +2.3% bump in the national popular vote.
4. If Latinos had split their vote in this election with Romney capturing at least 35%, President Obama would have lost the national popular vote.
5. Romney’s policy stance on immigration led nearly 60% of Latino voters to feel less enthusiastic about him, while President Obama benefited from a 58% increase in enthusiasm for his deferred action policy.
6. President Obama became the first Democratic presidential candidate to receive the majority of the Cuban American vote, which has historically leaned towards the Republican Party. (Al Jazeera)

FALL 2012

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Are you interested in submitting articles, poetry, or photography for Noticias?
If so, contact: The Latino Center at ext. 7-3363 or email latinocenter@tufts.edu