Jose approaches life with an inquisitiveness and eagerness which is quickly evident to anyone who has a chat with him. A mechanical engineer and self-avowed metal head who at the beginning of the year turned heads when he let others know he did not own a cell phone, Jose Lopez hails from Pasadena, California. While in high school there, Jose was part of “Puente,” a University of California program designed to help disadvantaged students get to college by way of alternate classes including college prep. That, along with his participation in the BEST program, prepared Jose for a successful first semester at Tufts. He describes his state of mind as he came in, as at ease. He thought to himself, “I already know how this works.”

While Jose has atypical interests, he has found ways to nurture them at Tufts. He has gone off-campus to continue his passion for Judo, finding a gym in Somerville. Further, while he doesn’t see metal as one of the musical genres substantially represented among Jumbos’ eclectic taste, he has found a small group of fellow metal fanatics to start a band with. He actually describes his most memorable moment so far at Tufts as “going crazy listening in Granoff” to metal with these friends, making evident his ability to make a home for himself at Tufts even if his interests may be considered on the margins of campus life.

Our very own Noe Montez, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Drama and Dance, directed the play Welcome to Arroyo’s, the first Latino play to be performed at Tufts. It opened earlier this semester during the month of October. The play focuses on issues of gentrification, identity, authenticity, and the cultures that define a person. It is a coming of age hip-hop story that, “celebrates the good in life, cuts it up, mixes it together, and spins it back as something fresh.” In putting together the play, professor Montez talked about the great support he received from the Latino community at Tufts. One of his goals was to increase awareness of the Latino presence in theater and this play showed that there is a hunger to learn and recognize the multiple diverse bodies that make up contemporary American theater.

As the first Latino play at Tufts, Welcome to Arroyo’s definitely made a splash. With at least a 75% full house at every show, the play attracted people who had never been to a play at Tufts. Professor Montez mentions a conversation with the house manager where he noted that there were many students across the university from all grade levels that had never attended a show at Tufts before and were attending Welcome to Arroyo’s. The biggest challenge that Montez had envisioned was resolved from the outset. His main concern was finding the right students for the cast. “The biggest question that you always ask with a show that requires the cast to be people of color is if you’re going to find the bodies to fill the cast, especially at places like Tufts where the drama departments is nearly 95% white. Once I saw those folks come into the room and read together I
Maria Hiraldo is a staff clinician at Tufts University. Born in Argentina and raised in Miami, Florida since the age of five, Maria has traveled a long way to her position with the university.

Maria began her journey at Tufts University through her post-doctorate fellowship. After obtaining her counseling license, she came back to the hill and has been here for approximately two years. When asked why she likes working at the university, she expresses an interest in college counseling. She believes these are formative years for students and really enjoys the community aspect of working on a college campus.

At Tufts University, Maria is a staff clinician. Through this role she counsels individual students and couples. Maria also consults with students and other university staff about students of concern. She is the liaison for the Latino Center where she hosts workshops and attends events throughout the year. Every year she hosts suicide prevention training with the Latino Peer Leaders. The counseling center also offers training for other groups of students, ears for peers, and professors.

Maria believes that the most crucial issue for mental health at Tufts University is how tough it is for many students to find a balance between the rigorous schoolwork, jobs, social life, and self-care. She says, “The balance between all of these is crucial for a stable and successful college experience” even though it may be different from what a student is used to.

When asked what she thought was the crucial issue for Latino students accessing Mental Health Services, Maria expressed concern over the stigma around mental health, which is part of the culture and the way people in the United States view getting help. She also says, “many Latino students might feel more comfortable talking to someone who shares their same race or ethnic background”. Even though, she stresses, “the counseling center makes a huge effort to train culturally competent clinicians”. Maria understands that people may have assumptions about what it would be like but she underlined that, “even though a counselor isn’t your same background...or hasn’t had your same experiences, there is at least a basic understanding of what the issues are”.

Over 20% of students go to the counseling center for services during their time here at Tufts. One of the center’s goals is to increase outreach and make itself more accessible to all students. The easiest way to set up an appointment is to call the counseling center at 617-627-3360. Students can look on the website at staff bios to get familiarized with the faces of the counselors and who they will be meeting with. If there is a mental health emergency, students can call TUPD at 617-627-3030 and have the on-call counselor paged.

**Things to look out for next semester:**

Relationships group - work on building stronger, healthier relationships

Mindfulness and Meditation - focuses on stress reduction

Returning from medical leave group

Coping with loss - for students who have experienced a loss of a friend or family member
New faces on campus continued

Jessica Posada doesn’t immediately strike you with the same charisma Jose does, but those lucky enough to get to know her see that she more than makes up for it in charm. Coming in to Tufts, she says she had, “normal college fears, but was excited to meet new people different from those I went to high school with.” While she has been happy with her first semester at Tufts, she notes that Tufts has been somewhat different than she expected. For instance, it is not as diverse as she had hoped, especially coming from Norwalk, Connecticut, a small town she feels is special for featuring people from all around the world.

As far as extra-curricular activities, Jessica has transferred her passion for social causes to Tufts, and has become active in ALAS, CORES, Mujeres, and Brazil Club, where she is a member of the executive board. She feels these clubs are how she fills the missing diversity from her home neighborhood. She is excited to go back to Norwalk over break, saying, “I miss my parents sometimes, but I’m pretty sure they miss me more.”

The Latino Center is proud to welcome Jose, Jessica and the rest of the Class of 2017 on their Tufts journeys!
United for Immigrant Justice

The student group, United for Immigrant Justice (UIJ), is a new organization on campus recently recognized by the Tufts Community Senate. UIJ is a group that stands for the belief that no human being is illegal and aims to address inequities and obstacles faced by undocumented immigrants. The goal is to create a sustainable grassroots movement led by both undocumented and allies. Elizabeth Palma, A’16, is the founder and current President of UIJ at Tufts. She talks about the motivation behind the establishment of this new organization on the Tufts campus. After attending the Student for Immigrant Movement (SIM) camp last spring, Palma and a group of students were more than determined to bring awareness of the issues undocumented immigrants have to confront to the Tufts community. For Palma, this issue is one that hits home. Being raised in a predominately Latino community in Southern California, she saw the pain families went through due to deportations.

In the future, Palma hopes to organize events through UIJ that will continue to raise awareness in the Tufts community, and hopefully, recruit individuals for the Immigrant Movement. UIJ is currently working on a mural with the theme, “Migration is Beautiful”, where they will use the symbolism of a Monarch butterfly to represent the need of continuous migration of individuals. In the future, she hopes to co-sponsor events with different departments on the Tufts community and bring speakers that can address the issues of immigration first-hand. She hopes that UIJ will also help address the problems undocumented immigrants face with higher education and the inability of higher education institutions to provide access to these high-achieving undocumented students.

Important Dates & Deadlines

Apply to Live in La Casa:
La Casa Latina provides a support system to the Latino community at Tufts. It welcomes students who are interested in Latino culture and 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
January 24, 2014

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, 2014
**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 8, 2014**

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**Latino Freshmen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latinos in Class of 2017</th>
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<td><strong>Male:</strong> 37</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Female:</strong> 27</td>
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**Percentage of Undergraduates who are Latino**

Year

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Soerny Cruz ’16 & Sylvia Montijo ’16
Latino Peer Leaders
Welcome Back BBQ—Yum!

Playing Volleyball at the BBQ
Kayaking during the retreat
Hello from the Sargent Center!

Facing a brave new frontier
Hang in there—Tufts is great!

Have A Great Semester!
From All Of Us at The Latino Center!
Events & Pictures

Fall 2013

Our Photo Gallery Exhibit

Rubén Salinas Stern speaking at the 20th Gala Celebration

Leiny García ’14 & Yareliz Diaz ’15

President Anthony P. Monaco

Kelvin Perez ’12, Luriel Ocampo ’14, & Yorman Garcia ’12

Smiling faces at the 20th

Genesis García ’15 in Welcome to Arroyo’s

Friends at the Gala

Welcome to Arroyo’s Rehearsal
Did You Know…?

- 76% of Latinos in cities attend public schools where low income students are more than half of all students
- 30 Million Americans are enrolled in higher education
- 2.3 Million of those in community college are Latinos
- Less than 1/2 of Latinos enrolled in community college will finish in 6 years
- According to recent data from the U.S. Department of Education, between 2009 and 2011 the number of Latino undergraduates grew 22%
- 65,000 undocumented youth graduate from high school every year
- Tufts has a student organization that focuses on immigration issues, United for Immigrant Justice (UIJ)
- “Mujeres” has been recognized by the TCU Senate

FALL 2013

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Yareliz Diaz ‘15

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