



VULNERABILITY  
ISSUES IN DRUG ABUSE

# VULNERABILITY TO DRUG ABUSE AMONG HISPANICS: BRIDGING SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

2014 VIDA Conference  
May 29-30, 2014 - El Paso, Texas

## Presenter Biographies



## Diana S. Natalicio, Ph.D.

President, The University of Texas at El Paso



Diana Natalicio was named president of The University of Texas at El Paso in 1988. During her long and distinguished career with the University, she has served as vice president for academic affairs, dean of liberal arts, and chair of the modern languages department. During her tenure as president, UTEP's enrollment has grown from 14,971 to more than 23,000 students, its annual budget has increased from \$65 million to more than \$400 million, research expenditures have grown from \$6 million to more than \$84 million per year, and doctoral programs from one to 20 during this same period.

Dr. Natalicio chairs the board of the American Council on Education and serves on the board of trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation. Previously, she served as member and vice chair of the National Science Board, on the boards of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, Trinity Industries, the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, the U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science, the Sandia Corporation and Internet2.

Dr. Natalicio was awarded the 2013 TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence and was recognized in 2011 by the President of Mexico with the *Orden Mexicana del Aguila Azteca*, the highest honor bestowed on foreign nationals. She is the recipient of the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education, was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame and was honored with the Distinguished Alumnus Award at The University of Texas at Austin. She is the recipient of honorary doctoral degrees from Georgetown University, Smith College and the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon. A graduate of St. Louis University, Dr. Natalicio earned a master's degree in Portuguese and a doctorate in linguistics from The University of Texas at Austin.



## **Junius Gonzales, M.D, MBA**

Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, UTEP  
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Junius Gonzales, prior to joining the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs in February 2011, was the founding Dean of the College of Behavioral & Community Sciences (BCS) and Executive Director of the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI) at the University of South Florida. He brings over nineteen years of expertise in the strategy, execution and program/policy development of academic and

research endeavors, collaboration with universities and other entities, and a leadership record of transformation in scientific portfolio management and higher education fulfilled by prioritizing cross-sectoral partnerships.



## **Roberto Osegueda, Ph.D.**

Vice President for Research, UTEP  
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Roberto Osegueda has served as the Vice President for Research since September 2005, with the primary responsibility of overseeing all research and sponsored project activities at the University. Dr. Osegueda has been a champion in making strides in building human and research capacity and creating an environment of growth for research. Today, UTEP is well on its way to becoming a national research university with nearly \$60 million in research expenditures. Dr. Osegueda has also been a contributor to UTEP's success,

creating an enhanced supportive climate for research, creative, and scholarly activities in all of the University's colleges. He received his higher education at Texas A&M University, graduating with the degrees of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering in 1981, Master of Science in Civil Engineering in 1983 and the Ph.D. degree in 1987. He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Texas.

## Principal Investigators

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### Edward Castañeda, Ph.D.

Principal Investigator, VIDA Project  
Co-Director, Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center  
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Eddie Castañeda earned his B.S. and M.A. from the University of Texas at El Paso, and his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1987. He became an Assistant and then Associate Professor of Psychology at Arizona State University. He returned to El Paso to assume the position Full Professor of Psychology at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Dr. Castañeda's research interests relate to the neural mechanisms that influence the plasticity of the brain: its ability to change function to consolidate learning, to respond to neurodegenerative disease, and to become an addicted brain during drug abuse. His scientific contributions have documented such changes in a motor system of the brain, the basal ganglia, as well as in a reinforcement/reward pathway, the mesolimbic pathway, that releases dopamine to mediate these behaviors



### Elias Provencio-Vasquez, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, FAANP

Principal Investigator  
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Elias Provencio-Vasquez is the principal investigator of the Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center (HHDC) and Dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Texas El Paso. Dr. Provencio-Vasquez is known nationally and internationally for his work with “at risk women” and their families. Dr. Provencio-Vasquez is a pioneer in creating innovative nursing approaches (home intervention) for mothers with substance use disorders and their children. He has published and presented nationally and internationally. He was the principal investigator of Packaging Project SEPA: A Proven HIV Behavioral Intervention for Use with Latinas at Highest Risk of Acquiring HIV (CDC) and Project VIDA (Miami): Violence, Intimate Relationships, and Drugs among Latinos (NIH). Dr. Provencio-Vasquez is currently the principal investigator for Project VIDA II (El Paso): Violence, Intimate Relationships, and Drugs among Latinas/os (NIH).

## VIDA Faculty



### João Ferreira-Pinto, Ph.D.

Deputy Director, Vulnerability Issues in Drug Abuse (VIDA) Project  
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João Batista Ferreira–Pinto, Ph.D. is the Deputy Director for the VIDA Project. He has an appointment at UTEP’s College of Health Sciences as an Associate Research Professor and Director for Research, and also as Director for the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation (CIHRE). Previous to his current appointment, Dr. Ferreira-Pinto was an Assistant Professor of Behavioral Sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, School of Public Health Program in El Paso.

Dr. Ferreira-Pinto's research interests center on HIV/AIDS/STD and drug abuse prevention and treatment, community and organizational development, and qualitative evaluation methodologies. Most of his work is based on fostering collaboration between academics and community based organizations (CBOs) to improve community-based participatory research (CBPR). Paulo Freire’s and other critical thinkers’ methodologies and pedagogies have influenced his research and teaching approaches.



### Jon Amastae, Ph.D.

Professor, Language and Linguistics, UTEP  
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Jon Amastae is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Texas at El Paso. He has received grants from the National Endowment from the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, the University of Texas Telecampus, the National Institutes of Health, and the Center for Border Health Research.

Dr. Amastae investigates linguistic variation and change, the relationship between language and demography, and the connections between linguistic analysis and other disciplines. Research in these areas requires the intertwining of linguistic theory, a variety of investigative methods, and knowledge of the practices and preoccupations of other disciplines. Current research projects involve the possibility of psycho-social prediction through linguistic cues, evaluation of the impact of recent health care legislation in Texas, and a survey of bilingualism in culturally distinct areas of the Americas.



## Luis Carcoba, M.D., Ph.D.

Professor, Psychology, UTEP  
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Luis Carcoba graduated from the University of San Luis Potosi, Mexico with a M.D. degree in 1984. After years of clinical work with substance abuse users in Ciudad Juarez Mexico, interest in the effects of stress on relapse among heroin users, and the neurobiological mechanisms mediating pain in opiate users, he earned a Ph.D. degree in Pathobiology at the University of Texas at El Paso in 2005. Afterwards, he completed a postdoctoral training position with emphasis in Behavioral Neurosciences at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX. Currently, he collaborates with Dr. Laura O'Dell in her *Neural Basis of Addiction* Laboratory on the neurochemical mechanisms mediating sex differences to nicotine. He expects to extend this line of study, using his previous clinical experience, to understand sex differences among opiate users. Dr. Carcoba is a member of the National Hispanic Science Network, and the Society for Neuroscience, and when he is not glued to a computer screen, he enjoys spending time with his family.



## Larry Cohn, Ph.D.

Professor, Psychology, UTEP  
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Larry Cohn earned a Ph.D. in Psychology at Washington University in St. Louis and he completed postdoctoral training in Health Psychology at the University of California, San Francisco. He is currently Professor of Psychology and Associate Dean for Research in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas at El Paso. He conducts both applied and laboratory based research, investigating a range of factors that influence risk perception, risk communication, risk taking behavior, and injury control. His lab is currently investigating the relative importance that young adults attach to *anecdotal information* and *expert information* when evaluating the danger of several health related behaviors, including the use of novel recreational drugs. His lab is also investigating how young adults perceive the risks of driving a motor vehicle after consuming small amounts of both marijuana and alcohol.



## **Kristin Gosselink, Ph.D.**

Associate Dean, College of Science, UTEP  
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Kristin Gosselink received her B.A. in Biology, from Luther College and her M.S. and Ph.D. in Physiological Science at UCLA in Los Angeles. She joined the UTEP faculty in 2005, after four years as a postdoctoral fellow at the Salk Institute. Now an Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Associate Dean in the College of Science, and Campus Director of the A-PRIME TIME accelerated pre-medical program, Dr. Gosselink balances her neuroscience research with her love of teaching and training future generations of scientists, teachers, and healthcare professionals.

Dr. Gosselink's research program in neuroendocrine physiology and the control of responses to acute and chronic stress has broad applications to health and disease, and is particularly relevant to the border region where mental health and co-morbid conditions are critical concerns. This work investigates the links between stress and multiple health conditions.



## **Oralia Loza, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, Public Health Sciences, UTEP  
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Oralia Loza obtained her doctoral degree from U.C. San Diego and San Diego State University in Public Health (Epidemiology). Her research interests are focused on understanding and documenting substance abuse and risk behaviors for HIV, Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among high-risk populations on the U.S.-Mexico border region, including transgender women, injection drug users, and migrants to then develop or adapt appropriate prevention strategies and interventions. In March 2013, she launched a pilot study under the Vulnerability Issues in Drug Abuse (VIDA) Project (NIH R24) on "Social and Contextual Vulnerability on the U.S.-Mexico Border". This research is conducted in collaboration with community partners, Programa Compañeros and Alliance of Border Collaboratives.



## Manuel Miranda-Arango, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Biological Sciences, UTEP  
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Manuel Miranda is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences. Dr. Miranda's Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience laboratory investigates the changes on the dopamine and glycine transporters that may contribute to Parkinson's disease and schizophrenia, respectively. In addition, a more thorough understanding of transporter activity and the resulting effects on the duration of synaptic signalling may provide new information about the mechanisms of drug addiction and withdrawal. Dopaminergic and Glycinergic signalling in the brain are heavily involved in mental health disorders that are prevalent in the U.S./Mexico border region, including substance abuse and addiction.



## Laura O'Dell, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Psychology, UTEP  
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Laura O'Dell's research program examines the neural basis of drug addiction. Her research interests lie in the application of scientific principles to the study of how the brain controls behavior. Over the past 20 years, she has dedicated herself to learning research skills to apply in her research program investigating the neural basis of drug addiction. More specifically, her laboratory focuses on the neural mechanisms that mediate the reinforcing and toxic effects of abused substances, such as nicotine, alcohol, and cocaine. Her recent interests are in studying how various clinical populations are differentially vulnerable to tobacco use, with an emphasis on age and sex differences as well as persons with metabolic disorders, such as diabetes. Her desire to serve minority students is reflected in her work at UTEP, where she is dedicated to serving Hispanic students and developing a research program that is based on strong student participation.



## Rebeca Ramos, MA, MS, MPH

Consultant, VIDA Project  
Executive Director, Alliance of Border Collaboratives  
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Rebeca Ramos became involved in community efforts early in her career. In the 1980's she was the Director and Principal Investigator, for the Paso Del Norte Area Health Education Training Center (AHEC). Between 1990 and 2009 she was the Technical Director of the U.S. Mexico Border Health Association (USMBHA). Since 2006 she has been an adjunct professor with the UT Houston Health Science Center. Currently she is the Executive Director for the Alliance of Border Collaboratives (ABC).

With funds from the United States Department of State in collaboration with the National Commission Against Addictions (CONADIC), Ms. Ramos has developed and expanded a network of community coalitions in Mexico (Red de Coaliciones Comunitarias "la Red") comprised of 21 CBO coalitions located in ten Mexican cities with the aim of reducing substance abuse. *La Red* connects multiple sectors including parents, teachers, youth, schools, media, law enforcement, faith community, health providers, social services agencies, and federal, state and local government agencies.



## John Wiebe, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Psychology, UTEP  
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John Wiebe, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist and member of the health psychology faculty at UTEP. He studies adaptation to the stress associated with severe chronic illness, focusing primarily on depression and adherence to medication regimens. In his work to address health disparities on the U.S.-Mexico border, he has developed expertise in cross-language and cross-cultural measurement. In his current research, Dr. Wiebe is exploring the use of substances as a coping strategy by those who live with the stress of HIV/AIDS. He has worked extensively

with the patients and staff of Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe, a federally-qualified health clinic that provides HIV care to residents of El Paso and surrounding communities.

## HHDRRC Faculty

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### Sara Grineski, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Sociology and Environment Core Director  
Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center, UTEP  
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Sara Grineski is an Associate Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Environment Core of the Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center at UTEP. She graduated with her PhD from Arizona State University as a NSF IGERT in Urban Ecology Fellow in 2006. She studies environmental justice and health

disparities with a focus on air pollution and children's asthma.

She prioritizes the inclusion of students in research by co-authoring peer-reviewed publications with them and by supporting them as research assistants. She has (co)authored 50 publications in outlets including *Environmental Research; Population and Environment; Health and Place; Social Forces; Environment and Planning A; and Local Environment*.



### Sharon Thompson Davis, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences and Community  
Engagement and Dissemination Core Director  
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Dr. Sharon Thompson Davis is an Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences at The University of Texas at El Paso and the Community Outreach and Dissemination Core Director of Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center. She received her Ph.D. in Health Education from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM in 1999. She has extensive Hispanic health disparity community outreach and research experience. She has published in multiple scholarly manuscripts in the area of teaching and student learning as

well as student community outreach and service learning and completed a Faculty Research Fellowship at the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research in Underserved Populations in the School of Nursing at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Davis is also a Master Certified Health Education Specialist. Her research interest include: U.S.-Mexico border health issues; health education/promotion in underserved communities.

## Presenters

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### **Paul Amrhein, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Psychology, Montclair State University  
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Paul Amrhein has attracted national and international attention for his research on motivational interviewing and the study of commitment language. His research has important implications for understanding and predicting changes in drug use. He is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Medical Psychology at Columbia University in New York and he holds a tenured faculty position in the Department of Psychology at Montclair State University in New

Jersey. Dr. Amrhein has also served on the faculty of the University of New Mexico, where he worked closely with Dr. William R., Miller on studies of motivational interviewing.



### **Albert Avila, Ph.D.**

Acting Director, Office of Diversity and Health Disparities, NIDA,  
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Albert Avila became the Acting Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Office of Diversity and Health Disparities (ODHD) in June 2013. As Acting Director, Dr. Avila oversees the health disparities and outreach efforts for the ODHD and provides guidance to the NIDA Director on matters pertaining to diversity and health disparities research as they relate to substance abuse.

His primary mission for the ODHD is to increase the number of independent underrepresented scientists conducting drug abuse research and receiving grant funding, as well as to enhance the research addressing minority/health disparity populations.



## **Julie Barroso, Ph.D.**

Professor and Associate Dean for Doctoral Programs,  
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Julie Barroso is a Professor and Associate Dean for the Doctoral Programs at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies. She has served the HIV community personally and professionally for more than 20 years, and has conducted HIV-related fatigue studies as well as a study using a stigma reduction intervention for HIV-infected women in the Deep South. She also worked with Dr. Margarete Sandelowski to develop the techniques for qualitative metasynthesis. She is a member of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, and is a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing. She is the first nurse to serve on the Board of Trustees of the International Association of Providers in AIDS Care.



## **Ernesto Castañeda, Ph.D.**

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Ernesto Castañeda is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Texas at El Paso. He got a B.A. from the University of California Berkeley. He holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Sociology from Columbia University in the City of New York. His research appears in *International Migration*; *Social Movement Studies*, *The Latin Americanist*, *the Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, and a number of edited volumes.

Ernesto Castañeda has conducted surveys and ethnographic fieldwork in places of migrant origin and destination including the United States, France, Spain, Switzerland, Mexico, Algeria, and Morocco. His work compares different avenues for immigrant political voice and integration. His current projects look into the U.S./Mexico border; as well as health disparities amongst different Hispanic groups in El Paso: public housing, mental health, addiction, and health disparities along the US-Mexico border.



## Alice Cepeda, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Social Work, University of Southern California  
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Alice Cepeda is currently Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California. She received her doctoral degree in Sociology from the City University of New York, Graduate Center. Her research examines the complex of social determinants including familial, neighborhood and socio-ecological factors that influence the development of drug abuse health disparities across generations of Mexican-origin populations. Dr. Cepeda's research has also highlighted the unique gendered experiences encountered by females within this cultural context. Her most recent research projects, as Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator, respectively on two National Institute on Drug Abuse funded studies focus on 1) examining the long term health consequences of adolescent gang membership and 2) the emergence and diffusion of crack use in Mexico City.



## Scott Comar, MA

Graduate Assistant, UTEP  
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Scott Comar was born in New York State and grew up in Hartford, Connecticut. After over a decade of a seemingly endless sojourn, Scott moved to Juarez, Mexico, where he lived from 1998 to 2007. During this time, Scott experienced the transition from active addiction to a life in recovery. After graduating from the University of Texas at El Paso with his BA in 2008, Scott entered graduate school at UTEP and obtained his MA in U.S.-Mexico Border History. In 2011, the University of Texas Press published his auto-ethnography, *Border Junkies*, which described his lived experience while in Juarez, and his journey into recovery from active addiction. Subsequently, Scott has attained candidacy status in the UTEP history department's Borderlands program, where he has worked as assistant instructor and class lecturer from 2010 to the present.



## Joseph De Santis, Ph.D., ARNP, ACRN

Associate Professor  
University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies  
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Joseph De Santis is an Associate Professor at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies in Coral Gables, Florida. His research focuses on the intersection of HIV risk and psychosocial/mental health issues among various vulnerable populations such as Hispanic men who have sex with men, transgender women, and people with HIV infection. Dr. De Santis has lectured nationally and internationally on topics related to the care of HIV-infected clients and their families. He has published his work on HIV risk and mental health in peer-reviewed journals and book chapters. Dr. De Santis is a member of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, the Southern Nursing Research Society, the American Assembly of Men in Nursing and Sigma Theta Tau International. He is the current President of the Metro-Miami ANAC and Secretary of the HIV/AIDS Nursing Certification Board (HANBC).



## Robert Duran, Ph.D.

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Robert J. Durán, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at New Mexico State University. He earned his doctorate in sociology from the University of Colorado. His research concerns racism in the post-civil rights era and community resistance, from gang evolution and border surveillance to disproportionate minority contact and officer involved shootings. As an urban ethnographer he has conducted interviews and observations of gangs, and the public response to marginalized groups, in Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah. Dr. Durán's 2013 book, *Gang Life in Two Cities: An Insider's Journey* was published by Columbia University Press. He is the recipient of the 2010 Hispanic Faculty and Staff Caucus Junior Faculty of the Year Award and the 2011 New Scholar Award from the American Society of Criminology Division on People of Color and Crime.



## Jaime Gandara, JD

Attorney at Law, El Paso County Public Defender's Office  
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Jaime E. Gandara, received his Doctor of Jurisprudence/Juris Doctor (J.D.) in 1983 from the Law School of the University of Texas at Austin. He was licensed on October 30, 1981. He has worked in private practice for 25 years. He has served as El Paso County Public Defender since November 13, 2006. His professional affiliations are with the State Bar of Texas and the El Paso Bar Association.



## Carl Hart, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Columbia University – Author of “High Price”  
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Carl Hart is an Associate Professor of Clinical Neurobiology in the Department of Psychiatry and an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Columbia University. He is also a Research Scientist in the Division of Substance Abuse at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. Dr. Hart received his undergraduate degree in psychology at the University of Maryland (1991), and completed his graduate training in Experimental Psychology and Neurobiology at the University of Wyoming, where he received a M.S. (1994) and a Ph.D. (1996). Since arriving at Columbia, Dr. Hart's research has focused on the evaluation of drug effects on workplace-relevant behaviors and the development and implementation of new executive cognitive tasks that can be used to assess the functioning of drug abusers.



## **Julia Lechuga, Ph.D.**

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Julia Lechuga received her Ph.D. from the University of Texas at El Paso in Health Psychology in 2008. In 2010, Dr. Lechuga completed a National Institutes of Health NRSA Ruth L. Kirschstein postdoctoral fellowship at the Medical College of Wisconsin at the Center for AIDS Intervention Research where she worked developing, implementing, and testing behavioral interventions to reduce the risk of HIV in drug users. Dr. Lechuga's research explores factors that influence the implementation, sustainability, and effectiveness of culturally tailored behavioral interventions to reduce the risk of infectious diseases in substance using populations and ethnic minorities as well as interventions that will reduce ethnic health disparities.



## **Mark Lusk, Ed.D., LMSW**

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Mark Lusk, a professor at the Department of Social Work at the College of Health Sciences is an experienced field worker and researcher in Latin America. Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese, he has lived in South America for over 20 years. He currently studies trauma among refugees. Mark is licensed in Texas as a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) and as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC). At the national level, he is licensed as a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW).



## **Bruce Mandt, Ph.D.**

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Bruce Mandt received his B.A. in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) in 2001. After graduation, he worked for the UW Psychiatry Department as a technician conducting sleep research in migratory songbirds. Bruce entered graduate school in 2004 in the Pharmacology Department at the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver). Specifically, Bruce studied differences in the effects of cocaine in an animal model of individual differences in drug reactivity. Bruce was awarded his Ph.D. in 2009 and that same year, started a postdoctoral fellowship in the laboratory of Dr. Richard Allen in the CU Denver Psychology Department. In 2013, Bruce joined the faculty in the CU Denver Psychology Department as Assistant Research Professor, where he continues to study behavioral and neurobiological variables underlying the “transition to addiction.”



## **Enrique Mata, MSPH, BSN, RN, APHN-BC.**

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Enrique Mata is a Senior Program Officer with Paso del Norte Health Foundation. With over 15 years of experience working in the philanthropic sector, Mr. Mata contributed to the design, implementation and evaluation of numerous multimillion dollar health promotion and disease prevention initiatives. Prior to his work with the Foundation, Mr. Mata established several businesses in the El Paso area; all are still active and prospering. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from The University of Texas at El Paso and a Master of Science in Public Health Degree from Walden University.



## **Holly Mata, Ph.D., CHES**

Research Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, UTEP  
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Holly Mata, PhD, CHES is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center at the University of Texas at El Paso. Her research focus is health equity policy. Currently, she is involved in smoke-free policy implementation and evaluation, and serves as a mentor to the City of El Paso Department of Public Health in their Public Health Accreditation process. Her prior work experience includes teaching psychology courses at college campuses on military bases, drug and alcohol counseling in tribal and community mental health settings, school counseling, and counseling for victims and child witnesses of intimate partner violence. She has published and presented regionally and nationally in the areas of social determinants of health, Hispanic health, tobacco-related disparities, and policy advocacy to build health equity. Holly is on the Board of Directors of the Directors of Health Promotion & Education, and mentors interns in their Health Equity Internship program. She is also active in the Society for Public Health Education, currently serving as co-Chair of the Health Equity Community of Practice and as an Associate Editor (Career Development) for Health Promotion Practice.



## **Brian McCabe, Ph.D.**

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Brian McCabe is a Research Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing and Health Studies at the University of Miami. He earned his PhD in Counseling Psychology at the University of Miami. He completed his Doctoral Psychology Internship at the VA Ann Arbor HealthCare System/University of Michigan, has Masters Degrees in Community Counseling and Mental Health Counseling from Indiana University, and has a BA in Psychology from Purdue University. His research interests are the etiology and treatment of mental health and substance use disorders, health disparities in the incidence of and interventions for substance use and mental health disorders, longitudinal analysis methods, and the influence of culture on psychological measurement. He is currently the principal investigator on two projects that examine alcohol and drug screening and intervention for college students.



## **Victoria Mitrani, Ph.D.**

Professor and Associate Dean for Research  
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Victoria Mitrani, PhD., a Hispanic clinical psychologist, has over 20 years' experience as a researcher focused on family-based interventions for HIV, substance abuse, and co-morbid health conditions. She is Co-PI and Research Director of the NIMHD-funded Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro (Grant #2P60 MD002266), which is focused on the development, testing and dissemination of culturally tailored interventions to address HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted infections, substance abuse, intimate partner violence and associated mental health conditions. For the past 15 years her primary area of research has been investigating Structural Ecosystems Therapy (SET), a family-ecological intervention that Dr. Mitrani has participated in developing, for minority women with HIV and substance abuse.



## **Magdalena Morales-Aina, MA, LPC-S**

Director  
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Morales-Aina has an Associate of Applied Science degree in Law Enforcement, a Bachelor of Science in Social Psychology, a Master of Arts in Counseling, and is a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor (LPC-S).

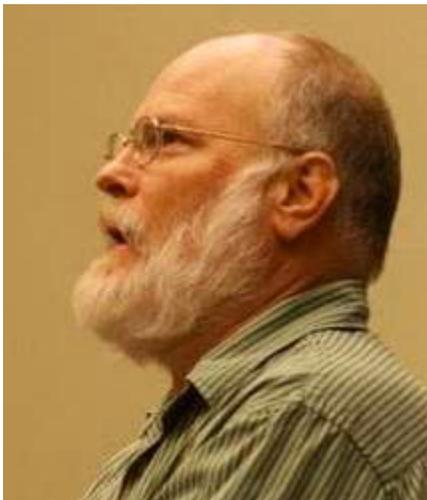
As the Director of the West Texas CSCD, Magdalena Morales-Aina has overall responsibility for the administration, management, and supervision of all departmental operations, activities, and the development of agency policies and procedures. The director reports directly to the judges trying criminal cases in El Paso County, Hudspeth County, and Culberson County.



## Hector Olvera, Ph.D.

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Hector Olvera's current research work is focused on environmental health and biomedical instrument development. Specifically, he has developed and tested a successful method for ultrafine particle deposition measurement in children and a sampling method for lung lining fluid extracted from human breath. Broadly defined, Dr. Olvera's research program aims at effectively integrating biomarker use as well as advance statistical tools into environmental exposure assessment. Dr. Olvera is currently working on the enhancement and characterization of the exposure system he developed for ultrafine particle exposure to include new analytical capacity that will result in a highly accurate human exposure system to be implemented in an environmental toxicology study of cardiovascular disease.



## Bob Phillips, Ph.D.

Professor, Psychology, Eastern New Mexico University  
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Bob Phillips is a terrestrial from Roswell, New Mexico and is Coordinator of Human Services and Addiction Studies at Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell. With 35 years of experience, Bob serves as clinician, educator, trainer, and consultant in the fields of addictions treatment and the integration of behavioral health into primary medical care.

His research interests include program evaluation, youth risk and resiliency, and occupational health including risk and protective factors for burnout and compassion fatigue. In addition, he has served and led the human service professions at local, state, and national levels and organizations, including the New Mexico Addictions Education Network; the International Coalition of Substance Abuse Educators; and the National Association of Doctors of Behavioral Health.



## **Maria Elena Ramos, BSW**

Director, Programa Compañeros, Cd. Juarez, CHIH, Mexico  
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Maria Elena Ramos Rodríguez earned her degree in social worker from the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez in 1981 and holds two special study certificates from the Latin American Center for Social Work in “Social Management of Programs for Community Wellbeing” (1993) and “Community Health and Development” (1994).

During her 27 years of professional experience, she has focused her efforts and research in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and research among populations most vulnerable to substance abuse. In the policy arena, she has served as a spokesperson for the National HIV/AIDS Council of Mexico (CONASIDA), and, as a member of the steering committee for Mexico for the Global Fund (MCP-MEX), proposed prevention and harm reduction national strategies among men who have sex with men (MSM), female sex workers (FSW), and injection drug users (IDUs).



## **Nelson Tiburcio, Ph.D.**

Principal Investigator  
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Nelson J. Tiburcio, Ph.D. has been involved in drug treatment program planning, research, evaluation and outcome studies since the late 1980s. His professional expertise includes locating and interviewing hard to reach populations for clinical and research purposes; interviewer training; and coordinating follow-up studies with diverse groups. He is a Research Scientist member of the National Hispanic Science Network on Drug Abuse (NHSN) and is one of the founders and former Editor of the National Institutes on Drug Abuse (NIDA) NHSN Newsletter *El Faro: La Voz de la Red*. Dr. Tiburcio has directed federal and privately funded studies within the Institute for Treatment Services Research at National Development and Research Institutes (NDRI) in New York City. Presently he is Principal Investigator of a NIDA study examining how HIV+ former illicit opioid users access appropriate healthcare and provider networking services, and how these patients successfully sustain their abstinence and recovery efforts over time.



## Guillermo Valenzuela

Aliviane, Inc., Community Affairs Officer, El Paso, Texas  
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Guillermo Valenzuela is an expert on contemporary U.S-Mexico Relations and has over 15 years of behavioral health and drug demand reduction experience. He has worked with governmental and community based non-profit entities to assess and evaluate drug violence developments in Mexico and Latin America. In that capacity, Mr. Valenzuela has advocated for federal and state policy recommendations focused on the wellbeing of the underserved communities. He is currently the Community Affairs Officer at Aliviane, Inc. a non-profit community based organization in El Paso County. Aliviane has been providing services since 1970 through a broad range of prevention, intervention, and treatment programs focused on substance abuse, behavioral health, HIV services, homelessness, and education in Texas Region 10.



## Natalia Villegas, Ph.D., MSN, RN

Assistant Professor  
University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies  
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Natalia Villegas is a bilingual nurse that holds Bachelor's degree in Nursing and a Master's degree in Nursing from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. She completed a PhD in Nursing at the University of Miami in May, 2012. Also, she is a Registered Nurse, licensed in the State of Florida. Currently, she works as an Assistant Professor at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. Additionally, she is presently a post-doctoral fellow at El Centro, Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research, University of Miami.

Dr. Villegas is a nurse midwife and has worked as clinical nurse and research assistant in various settings. Her research interest lies in women's health, STI and HIV prevention and the use of technology for prevention. In addition, she works as a co-investigator and project director in the study SEPA III: The effectiveness trial, a study that targets Hispanic women at risk of acquiring HIV.



## Maria Luisa Zúñiga, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Social Work, San Diego State University  
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Maria Luisa Zúñiga is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work, San Diego State University (SDSU), Adjunct Professor in the SDSU Graduate School of Public Health, and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Division of Global Public Health, Department of Medicine at UC San Diego. Dr. Zúñiga is an epidemiologist who conducts Community-Based Participatory Research to study the intersection of alcohol and drug use, mental health, sexual risk behaviors and self-care practices that contribute to

poor health among diverse, vulnerable populations. She has worked extensively with Latinos living with HIV, U.S. Latino immigrant populations, and international and domestic migrants and their families in the U.S. and Mexico.

She specializes in the health of populations living in the U.S.-Mexico border region and in transnational health. Her binational/U.S.-Mexico border research with HIV+ Latinos has implicated illicit drug use, poor health and use of herbal complementary and alternative medicine with poor medication adherence.

## VIDA Administrative Staff

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## Rosemary Landa

Administrative Assistant, VIDA Project, UTEP  
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Rosemary Landa earned her A.A. in 2013 from El Paso Community College, and will begin pursuit of her B.A. in Organizational and Corporate Communication in the fall of 2014 at The University of Texas at El Paso. She began her career with The University of Texas at El Paso as an Administrative Assistant in 2005. Prior to that, she has worked over 30 years as an Account Manager and Employment Interviewer/Investigator in both the private sector and with the State of Texas.

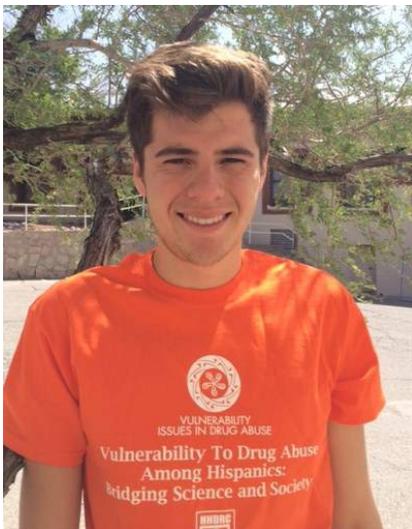
Currently, Ms. Landa was assigned to the Vulnerability Issues in Drug Abuse (VIDA) Project in August 2011 and has been responsible for the coordination of activities for the six research projects found in this grant.



## Sally Andrade, Ph.D.

Andrade & Associates; Consultant, VIDA Project  
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Sally J. Andrade heads a specialized consulting firm in El Paso, Texas, providing technical assistance to community-based organizations and other non-profit entities to increase the empowerment of low-income families and communities. She has more than 35 years' experience in applied research, program evaluation, strategic planning and policy analysis, focused on Latino parent education, health promotion and higher education access and success. Author of several books and articles on multicultural health promotion, Andrade has worked with government, private organization and community programs for family life education and substance abuse prevention in the United States and Latin America. Andrade's bachelor's degree is from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and her master's in Social Psychology from Trinity University. The University of Texas at Austin awarded her Ph.D. in Community Psychology.



## Christopher Medlin, C.Ph.T.

Undergraduate Research Assistant, VIDA Project  
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Christopher Medlin is a full time student at the University of Texas at El Paso and a certified and licensed Pharmacy Technician for the State of Texas. As part of the Cooperative Pharmacy Program at the University of Texas Austin and the University of Texas at El Paso, he will auto-matriculate into the University of Texas College of Pharmacy in the fall of 2014. Medlin has worked tirelessly in the health sciences, graduating from Maxine L. Silva Health Magnet High School for Healthcare Professions in the top ten percent of his class, and working for the Developing Research and Early Aspirations for Medical Scholars Program, where he worked towards informing and inspiring fifth and sixth grade students to pursue careers in the medical field.

Mr. Medlin began working for the VIDA Project in the spring of 2014, helping coordinate and organize all aspects of the 2014 VIDA Conference.

## HHDRC Administrative Staff

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### **Bibiana M. Mancera**

Project Manager, Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center, UTEP  
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Ms. Mancera earned her Bachelor's Degree in 1996 from the University of Texas at El Paso, and her Master's in 2006. She is currently working on her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences and plans to complete her dissertation by December of 2015. She is currently involved in the VIDA II (Violence, Intimate Relationships, and Drugs among Latinas/os), (PI, Provencio-Vasquez), (NIH), Phase II of the study, conducting focus groups with women and men regarding intimate partner violence, substance abuse, and high risk sexual behavior.

Ms. Mancera has over 14 years of experience within the University of Texas System, 11 of them with UTEP. She has served as the Project Manager for the HHDRC, a National Institutes of Health Disparities P20 Center of Excellence at the University of Texas at El Paso for five years. As the Project Manager, she oversees the day to day programmatic operations of the Center.



# VULNERABILITY TO DRUG ABUSE AMONG HISPANICS: BRIDGING SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

2014 VIDA Conference  
May 29-30, 2014 - El Paso, Texas



VULNERABILITY  
ISSUES IN DRUG ABUSE