



Newsbits

- Check out the [Young Leaders of the Americas' initiative](#) and look forward to Partners becoming involved in the future.
- Is Partners working with Cuba? Here's the [answer](#)
- Visit [NC Museum of History](#) lobby [exhibit](#) on the Los Jets soccer team and other exhibits on Latino history.
- [Bolivia creates its own computers.](#)
- [Articles](#) from the *What Works!* conference from the [Kansas Leadership Center](#).
- NC Partners member [Darius Stanton](#) has an [environmentally-conscious clothing site](#).
- [End of year message](#) from CEO Partners of the Americas [Steve Vetter](#)
- [NewGen Peacebuilders](#) is training a new generation to achieve a peaceful world.

PartnersCounts Hours

Partners of the Americas wants to be able to show grantees and Donors that this organization really does make a difference In North and South America. Please log in your volunteer hours at

www.partners.net/partnerscounts

Chapel Hill, NC

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The attendees of the NC Partners of the Americas annual Sunday meeting had the pleasure of welcoming as their guest speaker Alejandro Bilbao La Vieja R., Counselor of Political and Legal Affairs, representative of the Bolivian embassy in Washington DC. He was entertained for dinner Saturday evening and hosted for a homestay at the residence of Leon and Sallie Abbas.

He spoke of the changes under current president Evo Morales. At the start of his term in 2006, there was an arrangement of sharing between the national concerns of utilities - telephone, oil, electric - and private companies. It was intended that the income would be used to benefit the general population of Bolivia. However, the split of 49% and 51% of public vs. privatized ownership was not working, so the Bolivian government made the move to nationalize these industries.

La Vieja stated that Bolivia has been moving forward in creating its own industries, such as making its own lithium batteries by drawing from its large resources of lithium found at Salar de Uyuni, a huge salt flat that is the largest in the world. Counselor La Vieja learned in turn of the many kinds of projects done in the exchanges between North Carolina Partners of the Americas, and its co-sponsorship with Cochabamba.

Bolivian Consul Makes Special Visit to NC Partners of the Americas Meeting



We informed him too that many of these projects extend beyond the area of Cochabamba such as the national workshops in autism, medicine, and music. This interchange of information went well beyond of what he knew of Partners .

He expressed an interest in developing a closer cooperation with our Partnership and the Embassy. At the end of the meeting, La Vieja was presented with a history of the North Carolina - Cochabamba Partners of the Americas.

- Sallie Abbas

A New Initiative: Sembrar

UNC-Chapel Hill, NC

In Spanish, *sembrar* means to cultivate. The primary objective of Sembrar is to create a global education community of UNC students in parallel with the Kenan Institute of private enterprise's mission and Partners of the America's goal to create lasting solutions for the hemisphere's greatest challenges. First, Sembrar will develop partnerships between Latin American incubators, accelerators, and universities.

Through the partnerships, teams of UNC students will join high-potential Latin American startups for ten weeks. Each student will put into practice their business education to provide strategic technical guidance that will accelerate the growth of one selected startup. Sembrar will focus on start-ups with the potential to expand globally, with the ultimate goal of creating a "soft landing" opportunity .

In North Carolina, Sembrar strategically creates a bridge for UNC and these innovators for the fastest growing economies in Latin America. Latin American entrepreneurs get to leverage student skills and UNC resources to spark local economic development by accelerating their venture. If you know of a business startup in Bolivia or Colombia that would benefit from this interaction, you can contact David Ball at David_ball@kenan-flager.unc.edu. For more information, click [here](#) .

The Joys Of Intercultural Teacher Exchange: Mavel Vargas

Interested in working with a dynamic group of young people?

NC POA is having their first subcommittee Saturday meeting where you can learn more about

PartnersCampus.

When: January 30, 2016, 10:00 am

Where: Whole Foods, Elliott Rd. Chapel Hill, NC

For more information, please contact Karen Brown at kareneslbrown@gmail.com

Raleigh/Durham — One of the first facts I learned about ESL teacher in residence Mavel Vargas when hosting her was that she had never traveled outside of Bolivia. It certainly was not evident when the second thing I learned about her was her sense of adventure. She was excited to visit different schools, try out different foods, and learn about NC history. Her sense of adventure and sense of humor were infectious.

Mavel was able to attend numerous professional development workshops at a Fayetteville community col-

lege, the Wake county public school system, and the PD Institute in Boone. At these institutes, she was introduced to the concept of thinking maps for communicative approaches in ESL and using formative assessments. She was also introduced to evidence-based writing for ESL and literacy. In the Cumberland County schools, she attended a workshop in using digital tools for ESL learning. Mavel's visit also coincided with the Carolina TESOL conference where she was able to meet with ESL teachers from across the Southeast and experience Myrtle Beach.

During my leg of hosting, Mavel she visited a local middle and elementary school where she talked and answered any questions about Bolivia and, on Halloween, explained La Casa de Arche Cobija, a haunted house where a female phantom with a Romeo and Juliet fate makes the house uninhabitable until the house is put on market again. (True story).

Her cultural activities included visiting the NC beach, NC Museum of History, the Charlotte Latino festival, and Halloween. The NC Symphony featured vocalist Gabriel Kahane's libretto retelling of the [Guide to the](#)

[48 States](#), which commissioned unemployed writers to create an American guide in the 1930's.

Her visit culminated in a social gathering held at the home of Katushka and Juan Olavé where she was presented with a certificate of completion for ESL teacher training. She said she would go forward with her teaching not afraid to use digital tools in the ESL classroom

- Virginia Freedman



At the NC Museum of History with Mavel Vargas and Virginia Freedman



Mavel receives certificate for completing the online LINC's ESL teacher training from the NC community college system.



Annual NCPOA board meeting



ESL teachers meet at the NCPOA social event for Mavel Vargas



Dan Rearick and Sallie Abbas at Mavel Vargas' social

OPPORTUNITIES 2016

Youth Ambassadors Will Go to Colombia in 2016

Eleven youth and one mentor will be chosen to travel to Colombia and Washington DC between the dates of July 5th and July 30th. Applicants will be selected on needs-based and merit-based criteria with grades, commitment to community, Spanish language abilities, and interest in leading a project after the program has stopped. A mentor will be considered with significant youth, travel, language, and leadership experience. For more information, please watch the national website. If you are interested in nominating a student, please contact Karen Brown at kareneslbrown@gmail.com.

Delmar Funds Available for Projects

Delmar Funds have become available to the NC Partners of the Americas chapter. It should be a project considered important by both the Cochabamba and NC Partners of the Americas. Evidence shall be presented by either Partnership that other sources of funds were explored and no funds could be found for the proposed project. Priorities for funding should be given to agencies and organizations that serve children and families and people with disabilities and medical conditions. If you have an idea for a project and are seeking funding, please contact Sallie Abbas at swabbas@nc.rr.com.

Panama Teach Ready for Applications

Looking for qualified teachers to teach English in Panamanian schools 5-6 weeks in Summer 2016. Will receive living per diem, international airfare, and homestay accommodations.

Requirements:

- **Must be US citizen residing in the United States**
- **Must hold degree in education, English, ESL, or EFL**
- **Spanish proficiency preferred but not required**
- **Has ESL/EFL certification or substantial ESL experience**
- **At least 1 documented experience of teaching in a US classroom**
- **International experience preferred as well as leadership, flexibility, and maturity.**

For more information: <http://partners.net/panama-tacher-match>

Pay your dues easily online now!
Go to the Website www.ncboliviapartners.org, go to the DONATE page, and you'll be able to make a secure payment of dues or other donation!

Cochabamba Partners

President: Lic. Lupe Buendia

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Subcommittees:

Environmental: Jose Miguel Valdivia

Education/Arts/Culture: Silvia Quiroga

Mujer and Familia: Lic. Claudia Jimenez and Univ. Alejandra Fuentes
 Dra. Marlene Mercado

Sports, Rehabilitation: Phoebe Johnson

Science and Technology: Dr. Saul Escalera

Health: Vacant

NORTH CAROLINA PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAS OFFICERS

Karen Brown, Current President
 Deborah Wilkes, Vice-President
 Virginia Freedman, Secretary
 Laura Cernikova, Treasurer
 Christian Stalberg, Past President

Members: Includes the Executive Committee above and Hank Graden, Sallie Abbas, Judy Gibson, Steve Gibson, Katushka Olave, Carlos Vargas, Ivo A. Pestana, Benson Timmons, Lori Snyder, Jessica Kinard, Keyla Duin, Richard Whitmore, Kathryn Johnson, Jaclyn Coats,

Subcommittees and Chairs: (chairs are in bold)

Autism Project- **Hank Graden**
 Culture and the Arts - **Daniel Johnson**, Kitty Stalberg,
 Health and Clinical Practices - **Carlos Vargas**, Ben Timmons
 Agriculture - **Steve Gibson**, Don Hopkins
 Emergency Preparedness- Vacant
 Education - **Karen Brown**, Laura Cernikova, Richard, Whitmore, Deborah Wilkes
 Environment and Natural Resources- **Darius Stanton, Darren Legge**
 Sports - Vacant
 Membership - **Katushka Olave**, Sallie Abbas
 (The committees Women and Development and Democratic Initiatives are not active.)
 Newsletter Editor- **Virginia Freedman**

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

SO YOU ARE INTERESTED IN WRITING A PROJECT-BASED GRANT BUT DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET STARTED?

This year's program activities will focus on three themes that work to:

- increase English language learning;
 - increase and strengthen university partnerships; and
 - engage youth, and promote economic empowerment and social inclusion.
- (1) If you have an idea for a project, write to the corresponding subcommittee chair. The chair will be the person that has the contacts, and helps plan the itinerary. For help with visas and the necessary paperwork, please email the president and vice-president of the Executive Board.
- (2) **Travel Grants** for volunteers and community leaders to visit partner chapter to participate in skills training, give presentations and workshops, build program action plans, and participate in community projects. Travel grants are reviewed on a first come, first served basis. Travelers from Latin America are now required to apply for a J-1 visa and are no longer allowed to travel to the US on a tourist visa. Complete instructions and application are [here](#)
- (3) **Teacher-in-Residence Grants** are travel grants for English teachers and administrators to share methodologies and pedagogy for teaching English as a second language, including methodologies for reaching out to marginalized communities. Travel requests are reviewed on a first come, first served basis. Travelers from Latin America are now required to apply for a J-1 visa and are no longer allowed to travel to the US on a tourist visa. Complete instructions and application are [here](#)
- (4) **Public-Private Partnership Events** to bring together volunteers and community leaders from throughout the region to share effective practices and build multi-national networks that include the US. Information on upcoming events will be sent out soon. If you are interested in hosting an event on one of the priority areas, please contact Melissa Golladay.

Contacts:
 Carmen Sepassi, Senior Program Officer, csepassi@partners.net
 Melissa Golladay, Director, mgolladay@partners.net
 Barbara Bloch, Membership Specialist, bbloch@partners.net

2015 Musician Exchanges for Partners

By Kitty Stalberg and Virginia Freedman

Local Jennifer Curtis is an artistic treasure of North Carolina. As a violinist, Jennifer Curtis eliminates musical genre boundaries and acts as a musical ambassador while she travels the globe with members of the International Contemporary Ensemble. (ICE).

As a travel grant recipient for a musical and cultural exchange with NC Partners of the Americas and Cochabamba, she was able to teach masters classes to the Bolivian national orchestra and aspiring students of music. In Cochabamba, her itinerary included workshops at Fundacion Sinfonico , violin masterclass at Instituto Eduardo Laredo, workshops with UMSS students, rehearsals and concert for at the Center Simon Patina , and coaching in studio violinist Adolfo Taborgo. In Paz, Curtis' busy schedule included rehearsals and concert with Al Alto chamber orchestra. Master class at the Escuela Municipal de las Artes, and collaborations with the Save the Children music/arts programs.

La Paz student Juan Marcos also likes to mix musical genres. A student at the Conservatorio Nacional de Bolivia , he plays



Violinist Jennifer Curtis playing to the llamas in Bolivia.

drums in the NOIS Bolivian pop rock band, EN SU VERBDAD Christian band, and Ensemble de Percusion Conservatorio Nacional de Musica. During his three weeks in North Carolina, he was able to lead drum workshops in Bolivian folk music, global rhythms, and classical percussion.

Marcos visited the "Big Three" university musical departments in Raleigh-Durham as well as NC School of the Arts and other NC schools.

Many more events could be described of both visits, but the pictures taken in Bolivia and North Carolina can tell the story.



Juan Marcos and Jennifer Curtis perform in Saxapahaw



Juan Marcos and Jennifer Curtis performing



Jennifer teaching a master class with bare feet.

With Jonathan Kremer, Ethnomusicologist at North Carolina State



Juan Marcos teaching a Bolivian folk music workshop at East Chapel Hill high school



Juan Marcos giving a geography lesson on Bolivia



Juan Marcos inside the instrument room at UNC

**NEW
GENERATION
PEACEBUILDERS**

**ACCEPTING
APPLICATIONS
FOR SPRING
2016**

NewGen Peacebuilders is a youth peace education program for high school and university students ages 14-24. The program recognizes and conveys "peace principles" that are consistent across cultures while being flexible enough to adapt for local context and circumstances. The program was designed by Patricia Shafer in collaboration with other Rotary Peace Fellows. Pat spoke at the 2015 NC Partners annual meeting. For more information, please click [here](#)

THANKS TO OUR 2015 DONORS

-SALLIE ABBAS
-JUDY PAGE
-WILLIAM POWERS
-DARIUS STANTON
-RODNEY SWINK
-DELMAR FOUNDATION
-FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF CARY

NC PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAS NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Jacklyn Coats

Jacklyn Coats, owner of Carolina Speaks, is a certified Spanish/English language pathologist. She works with infants to octogenarians and has experience working with clients with a variety of illnesses or disabilities. In 2013 and 2014, she spent several weeks working in a community clinic in Orizaba, Mexico providing language and speech evaluations. She will be participating in the Autism project. Her website is www.carolinaspeaks.com



Janis Holden-Toruno

Janis Holden-Toruno is an ESL curriculum specialist and state level assessment trainer for the NC community college system. Recently, she travelled to Cochabamba and La Paz as an ESL teacher in residence.

She created a formative assessment training video for Centro Boliviano Americano that was recognized by the US embassy in Bolivia. Currently, she is translating *In Order Not to Be Alone*, a compilation of children's writings who live in prison because their parents are incarcerated.