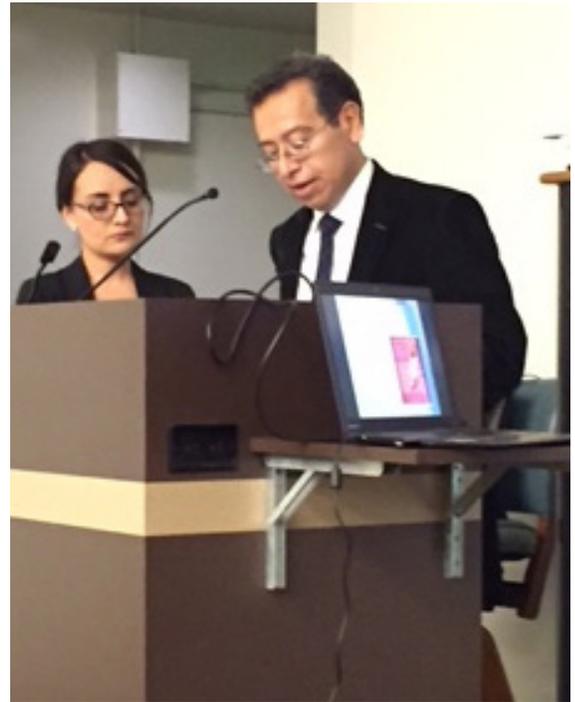


# International presenter shares research at LBSU

Early childhood teacher education proves to be a 'monumental task' in Mexico



*Photos courtesy of Dr. Charles Slater*

A constant uphill battle' is what the story of Greek mythological character, Sisyphus, embodies, and the job of educating the teachers of preschoolers in Mexico is comparable, according to Dr. Enrique Farfan's new book "Sisyphus in Early Childhood Education: Professional Values in the Preparation of Educators."

Dr. Farfan, a professor from the Universidad Pedagogica Nacional in Mexico City, and his colleague Dr. Rodrigo Lopez Zavala from the Autonomous University of Sinaloa studied the theme of educators' values in early childhood education in Mexico. Dr. Farfan presented the book at Long Beach State University with an audience of 80 faculty members, alumni and students on June 4.

"The book ... provides a conceptual approach to professional ethics and professional values," Dr. Farfan said in the presentation. "It begins with the origins of preschool education and continues to the present day in Mexico with an examination of preparation programs for teachers at the Sinaloa Teacher's College and the National Teachers' College

in Mexico City."

Dr. Farfan highlighted the importance of professional values of respect for the whole person. He was critical of values that place more emphasis on the technical and functional side of education. The role of the teacher is to develop the whole child.

Early childhood education in Mexico is completely taught by female teachers, many of whom face discrimination and unequal pay in their profession. He also observed connections between drug trafficking and early childhood education in the state of Sinaloa.

Dr. Charles Slater invited Dr. Farfan to LBSU and the recently formed Network of Early Childhood Leaders (NECL), chaired by Dr. Hawani Negussie. NECL provided translations and support for the presentation.

After the presentation, NECL held a panel response in which they discussed the potential relevance of the study's findings. Dr. Fawzia Reza discussed it's relevance to Pakistan and terrorist activity infiltrating the society and impacting

# Network of Early Childhood Leaders:

Dr. Hawani Negussie: Chair  
Dr. Jenifer Lipman: Vice-Chair  
Dr. Jen Solano  
Dr. Rosie Ramos  
Dr. Michelle Para  
Dr. Sandra Gonzalez  
Dr. Noemi Villegas  
Dr. Tawnie King  
Dr. Fawzia Reza  
Dr. Farah Khaleghi

early childhood education.

From the United States perspective, Dr. Farah Khaleghi talked about Headstart programs and concerns of adequate funding and the number of requirements imposed on the programs. Dr. Hawani Negussie related the study to her research on early childhood education in Ethiopia, where western ideas tend to predominate and push out local indigenous traditions and values.

NECL is working on hosting similar events and presentations in the future.



## Student Spotlight: Sara Gamez

Cohort 8 student gives back to foster care youth program that helped her

When she started pursuing her undergraduate degree, Sara Gamez felt like she didn't belong in college. She was a foster care youth and was experiencing the "imposter phenomenon."

She was invited to participate in the Renaissance Scholars program at Cal Poly Pomona. There she found community with other students who could relate to her and a staff that invested time in the students.

After graduating with her bachelor's degree and then earning her master's, Sara served in many roles that advocated for foster youth or underrepresented students at Cal Poly Pomona, California State University, Fullerton and as a high school counselor.

Through the Educational Leadership program at LBSU, Sara realized the larger impact she could have on students in an administrative position, so she applied for and got the position of Associate Director for Student Support and Equity at Cal Poly Pomona.

"I was so grateful for the opportunity that I had within the program and the resources I got, that I wanted to give back somehow," Sara said. "... It still keeps me connected in working with our foster youth student population."

"We just went through commencement

and I think that's the most impactful piece of it. There's not that many foster youth who make it through college, but to know that through the work we're doing in our department and through our program, we're able to impact their lives in a positive way and somehow support their success to actually graduate and slowly change those statistics. Seeing them start at our campus feeling very uncertain, but then crossing that stage with so much pride is the most exciting part of it."

Foster youth's transitions into and out of college using Schlossberg's Adult Transition Theory will be what she studies in her dissertation. She will also study how placement change impacts foster care youths' experience and stability in college.

Recently, Sara had the opportunity to be a graduate assistant to Dr. Rashida Crutchfield's study on food and housing insecurity in college students. She was exposed to research methodology in a different way than in the class through helping Dr. Crutchfield in the study, she said.

"It really allowed me to start practicing the skills I'm going to need in order to conduct my research," Sara said. "... As she was going through her project, it was really helpful for me to just really understand all the different pieces on a deeper level."



Photo courtesy of Sara Gamez.