



NATIONAL HISPANIC SCIENCE NETWORK

Issue 1

EL FARO

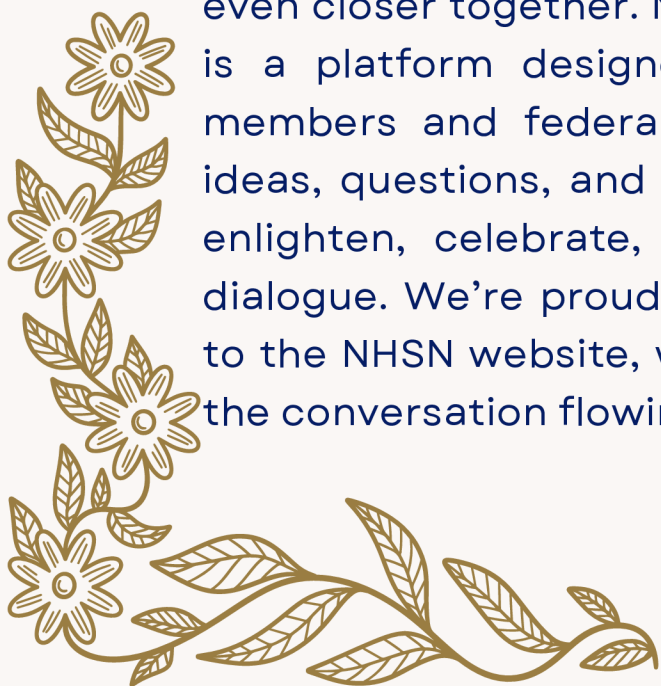
March 2025

## NHSN's Quarterly Newsletter

# ¡BIENVENIDOS!

Welcome back to *El Faro: La Voz de la Red*, our quarterly member newsletter!

Named *El Faro: La Voz de la Red*, meaning “The Lighthouse: The Voice of the Network,” this initiative was launched as a guiding light to bring our NHSN community even closer together. More than just a publication, *El Faro* is a platform designed to amplify the voices of our members and federal liaisons. Each issue reflects the ideas, questions, and insights of our network, aiming to enlighten, celebrate, challenge, and spark meaningful dialogue. We're proud to keep *El Faro* closely connected to the NHSN website, with frequent cross-linking to keep the conversation flowing and the community engaged.



# In This Newsletter:

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Leadership Committee (ECLC) Chairs

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# WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE ECLC CO-CHAIRS

¡Saludos, National Hispanic Science Network (NHSN) members!

We are thrilled to bring you some exciting updates from the **Early Career Leadership Committee (ECLC)** as we continue to expand opportunities for early-career scientists within NHSN. As your ECLC Co-Chairs, **Angel Algarin, Ph.D.** (Behavioral Sciences) and **Adelis Cruz, Ph.D.** (Basic Sciences), we are committed to fostering professional growth, leadership development, and greater visibility for early-career researchers in our network.

## Exciting Changes: Consolidation of El Faro & Social Media Committees

One major update is the **merger of the El Faro and social media committees** into a single, more efficient team. This change will allow us to better coordinate NHSN press releases with timely and engaging social media responses. We are also thrilled to introduce **Elizabeth Sneddon-Yepes, Ph.D. as our new Editor-in-Chief**, leading this newly combined committee with a fresh vision to enhance NHSN's communication and outreach. We encourage members who are passionate about science communication and dissemination to get involved!

## Upcoming ECLC Meetings – Join Us!

We invite all early-career members to attend our upcoming ECLC meetings, where we will discuss ongoing initiatives, networking opportunities, and leadership roles:

 April 14 at 3:00 PM EST

 May 12 at 3:00 PM EST

If you would like to be added to the calendar invites or the listserv, please email the ECLC co-chairs at [nhsn.eclc@gmail.com](mailto:nhsn.eclc@gmail.com).

If you know of an early career researcher who needs a community, we encourage you to invite them to ECLC and NHSN! By providing a supportive community of peers, we hope to support NHSN's mission to mentor the next generation of multidisciplinary scientists.

## Leadership Opportunities – ECLC Elections in August!

We are also **excited to announce elections for new ECLC Co-Chairs in August!** The new leadership team will be formally introduced at the next ECLC meeting following the elections. This is a fantastic opportunity to take on a **leadership role within NHSN**, help shape the future of early-career engagement, and develop valuable professional skills.

Those interested in **Behavioral Sciences leadership** should reach out to **Angel Algarin**, and those interested in **Basic Sciences leadership** should reach out to **Adelis Cruz**.

## Responsibilities of ECLC Co-Chairs:

- ✓ Organizing and leading ECLC meetings
- ✓ Coordinating early-career initiatives and professional development opportunities
- ✓ Engaging NHSN members in leadership, networking, and mentorship programs
- ✓ Supporting NHSN's communication efforts, including social media and press releases
- ✓ Working with NHSN leadership to advocate for early-career scientists
- ✓ Planning events, including the Early Career Investigator Panel at the annual NHSN conference

If you are looking to build leadership experience, grow your professional network, and make an impact within NHSN, we encourage you to consider running for **ECLC Co-Chair!**

We are excited for all the growth and opportunities ahead and look forward to working with you. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or want to get more involved.

*¡Nos vemos pronto!*

**Angel Algarin & Adelis Cruz**

ECLC Co-Chairs

National Hispanic Science Network

 [nhsn.eclc@gmail.com](mailto:nhsn.eclc@gmail.com)



# *A Message of Hope*



Dear colleagues,

I am writing to you to encourage you, inspire you, and challenge you to keep up the work you are doing. To recommit to your goals and principles. To not let the current environment deter you from achieving your goals. Now more than ever, it is important to stand as a community, to support each other and to be there for others when they need to take a minute to rest. Growing up, my mother would always have a saying for each time and event. One comes to mind now. No hay mal que dure 100 años ni cuerpo que lo resista. I think it translates into, “this too will pass”. I honestly believe this is the case.

I know many of you may wonder how to navigate these turbulent times. My advice is with caution, dedication, focus, patience, courage, faith, and enthusiasm. Follow your principles and do not waiver as you pursue your research and service goals. Get up each morning and be grateful and proud of what you have achieved thus far. If you need help, reach out. If you are tired, take a break. If you doubt yourself, lean on your colleagues, mentors, and peers. Together we will get through these challenging times and one day we will look back and use this experience to encourage and inspire those that come after us. Most important, find that which gives you joy and let that be the light at the end of the tunnel that keeps you engaged in the journey!

Best wishes,  
Patricia  
NHSN Co-President





# Meet the Steering Committee!



**Margarita Alegria, Ph.D.**

Harvard Medical School

[Email me!](#)



**James Anthony, Ph.D.**

Michigan State University

[Email me!](#)



**Tara Bautista, Ph.D.**

Northern Arizona University

[Email me!](#)



**Carlos Bolaños Guzman,  
Ph.D.**

Texas A&M University

[Email me!](#)



**Miguel Cano, Ph.D.**

University of Texas,  
Southwestern

[Email me!](#)



**Felipe Castro, Ph.D.**

Arizona State University

[Email me!](#)

# Meet the Steering Committee!



**Alice Cepeda, Ph.D.**  
Arizona State University

[Email me!](#)



**Adelis Cruz, Ph.D.**  
National Institute of  
Mental Health

[Email me!](#)



**Patricia Molina, M.D., Ph.D.**  
Louisiana State University

[Email me!](#)



**Laura O'Dell, Ph.D.**  
University of Texas, El Paso

[Email me!](#)



**Flavia Souza-Smith, Ph.D.**  
Louisiana State University

[Email me!](#)



**Avelardo Valdez, Ph.D.**  
University of Southern  
California  
[Email me!](#)



**Arturo Zavala, Ph.D.**  
California State University,  
Long Beach

[Email me!](#)

# The History of NHSN



"Everything begins with an idea" - Earl Nightingale | 

In January 1999, a pivotal conversation took place that would shape the future of Hispanic/Latino representation in science. On January 7–8, then Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Dr. Alan I. Leshner (who served from 1994–2001), met with community leaders to reimagine the structure of NIDA's Hispanic/Latino Researchers and Scholars Work Group.

This important meeting, organized by Ana Anders, Special Advisor on Special Populations at NIDA, brought together a powerhouse of minds including Drs. Hortensia Amaro, Ernesto Chavez, Bryan Page, Isa Fernandez, Jose Szapocznik, Lula A. Beatty, Richard A. Millstein, Alberto G. Mata, and Avelardo Valdez.

From these conversations, a vision emerged and with the support of a NIDA-funded contract, the National Hispanic Science Network (NHSN) was born.

From 1999 to 2014, Dr. Jose Szapocznik led the charge as Principal Investigator and served as NHSN's Founding Chair from 2001 to 2009. He passed the leadership torch to Dr. Hilda Pantin, who served as Principal Investigator from 2009 to 2014. An early idea for the network included a Summer Research Training Institute, an initiative that came to life under a subcontract led by Dr. Avelardo Valdez from 2002 to 2008.

Over the years, NHSN's momentum has only grown, sustained by additional NIDA-funded grants. From 2009 to 2024, Drs. Patricia Molina and Avelardo Valdez served as Principal Investigators on an R13 Conference Grant and an R25 Training Grant, respectively. Dr. James Anthony also contributed as a Principal Investigator on an R25 Training Grant from 2010 to 2015.

What started as a conversation over two days in 1999 has evolved into a thriving network that continues to champion Hispanic/Latino voices in research by creating community, fostering mentorship, and shaping the next generation of scholars.



Previous NHSN logos



# The Original Steering Committee



"Everything begins with an idea" - Earl Nightingale



**Hortensia Amaro, Ph.D.**

Distinguished University  
Professor  
Florida International  
University



**Alex Kopelowicz, MD**

Professor & Vice Chair  
UCLA



**Joe Martinez Jr., Ph.D.**

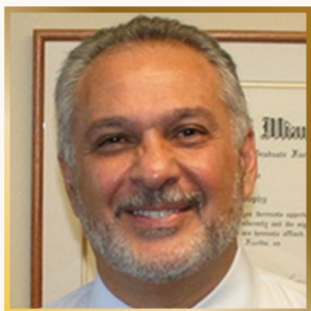
1944 - 2020

[In memoriam article](#)



**John Bryan Page, Ph.D.**

Professor Emeritus  
University of Miami



**Daniel Santisteban, Ph.D.**

Professor Emeritus  
University of Miami



**Jose Szapocznik, Ph.D.**

Chair Emeritus & Professor  
University of Miami



**Avelardo Valdez, Ph.D.**

**Professor**  
University of Southern  
California



**Nora Volkow, Ph.D.**

Director  
NIDA

We are deeply grateful to the original Steering Committee, whose vision, leadership, and dedication laid the foundation for the vibrant community that NHSN is today.

# Announcements

## NHSN Annual Conference

October 23rd – 25th

Miami, Florida



## Meet the 2025 Conference CoChairs!

**Flavia Barbano, Ph.D.**  
National Institute on  
Drug Abuse  
Staff Scientist



**Alyssa Lozano, Ph.D.**  
University of Miami  
Research Assistant  
Professor



**Kathryn Nowotny, Ph.D.**  
University of Miami  
Associate Professor



**Laura Ornelas, Ph.D.**  
University of New  
Mexico  
Assistant Professor





# Accomplishments

“What everyone in the astronaut corps shares in common is not gender or ethnic background, but motivation, perseverance, and desire—**the desire to participate in a voyage of discovery.**”

- Ellen Ochoa, Ph.D. The first Hispanic woman astronaut in space & engineer.

## New positions

**Sarah Chavez, Ph.D.** - Starting a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at CSU, Fullerton in August 2025



**Laura Ornelas, Ph.D.** - Started a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at UNM in August 2024



## Publications

Click icons below for direct publication link!

**Algarin AB** & Shrader C. (2025) Advancing PrEP for HIV prevention: Innovations and the imperative to preserve comprehensive care. *BMC Global and Public Health*.



Moreno, O, **Rosales, R, Chavez, S**, Zelaya, D, Figuereo, V, & Bravo, A. (2024). Social anxiety and drinking behaviors: A cross-comparison analysis of Hispanic students in Hispanic-serving institutions vs. predominantly white institutions. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*.



# Accomplishments

**DuPont-Reyes, MJ**, Zou, W, Li, J, Villatoro, AP, & Tang, L. (2025) A machine learning language model approach to evaluating mental health awareness content across Spanish- and English-language social media posts on Twitter. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*.

**SPRINGER  
NATURE**

**DuPont-Reyes MJ**, Villatoro AP, & Tang L. (2025) Health Information Scanning and Seeking in Diverse Language, Cultural and Technological Media Among Latinx Adolescents: Cross-Sectional Study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*.

**PubMed**

Van Doorn, CE, Zelows, MM, & **Jaramillo, AA**. (2025) Pituitary adenylate cyclase-activating polypeptide plays a role in neuropsychiatric and substance use disorders: sex-specific perspective. *Frontiers in Neuroscience*.

**frontiers**

**Sneddon, EA**, Chonwattanakul, S, Bai, K, Kurup, P, Plasil, SL, Doyle, MR, Zahedi, S, Simpson, S, Sichel, BC, Othman, DN, Brennan, M, Palmer, AA, Kallupi, M, Carrette, LLG, de Guglielmo, G, & George, O. High Incidence of Estrous Cycle Irregularities in Heterogeneous Stock (HS) Rats is Associated with Severe Cocaine Addiction-like Behaviors.

**bioRxiv**  
THE PREPRINT SERVER FOR BIOLOGY



# Accomplishments

## Awards & Honors

**Amanda Acevedo-Morales** - Graduate Student Award from the Arizona Psychological Association (AzPA)



**Amanda Acevedo-Morales** - Culturally-Centered Addictions Research Training, Graduate Certificate, Northern Arizona University



**Minerva Rodriguez** - Graduate Student Scholarship Award from the American Psychological Foundation



**Henrique Oliva** - Travel scholarship for the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Annual Conference



**Thank you all for your contributions to science and participating in the voyage of discovery .**

**Want your accomplishment to be highlighted in our next issue?**

Email Elizabeth Sneddon-Yeppez, Ph.D.  
[easneddon@health.ucsd.edu](mailto:easneddon@health.ucsd.edu)



# A note from the editor:



Hi everyone,

I'm so excited and grateful to help bring *El Faro* back into the spotlight at NHSN! For those of you who don't know me, my name is Elizabeth, and I'm currently a postdoc at UC San Diego.

My NHSN journey began thanks to my fellow NHSN member and NSP mentor, Dr. Anel Jaramillo, who encouraged me to join. At the time, I was living in Ohio during my Ph.D. and struggling to find a sense of community. Joining NHSN has been incredibly impactful. It's been a privilege to engage with and help promote such a supportive, inspiring network.

Thank you all for being the kind of community so many early career scientists hope to find.

If you're interested in being featured in the next issue or if you have any topics you wish to see covered, I'd love to hear from you! You can email me by [clicking this link!](#)

Warmly,

Elizabeth Sneddon-Yeppez, Ph.D.



National Institute  
on Drug Abuse

Thank you to our funding sources!