

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY



CENTER FOR LATINO/A  
and LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

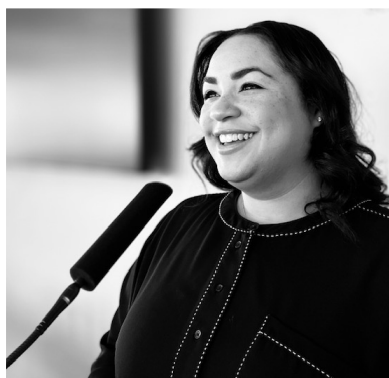
# EL NUEVO COMIENZO

2022 LATINA/O/X AND NATIVE  
STUDENT GRADUATION CELEBRATION

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MONDAY, MAY 2, 2022 | 6-8 P.M.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

RACHEL  
YAKAMURA

**Rachel Yamakura (B.A., Africana Studies, 2008)** is an equity and inclusion expert, social justice luminary, and cultural innovator. Well-known for her expertise and effervescence, Rachel is a relatable bridge-builder who captivates, inspires, and mobilizes those with whom she connects.

Currently serving as Lansing Community College's inaugural Director of Equity and Inclusion, Rachel leads a diverse team in

developing and implementing strategies to embed into all college procedures, operations, and policies. Prior to joining Lansing Community College, Rachel served as a policy planner for SEMCOG where she spearheaded the creation of the organization's inaugural Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) team and committee. She pioneered the development and implementation of anti-racism and other social justice initiatives within the organization, which now ensures that all regional plans and proposals are crafted through a powerful DEIA lens.

Since childhood, Rachel has been dedicated to helping communities and organizations eradicate barriers related to race, ethnicity, immigration status, diverse-ability, sexual orientation, gender, and various additional identities of underrepresented and marginalized individuals. Her goal is to establish a more equitable future for everyone through forming strategic partnerships to revolutionize and reshape public institutions and public policy.

In her spare time, Rachel serves on non-profit boards and volunteers with various organizations to promote anti-racism and achieve social justice for the betterment of all communities. Rachel graduated from University of Michigan-Dearborn with a Master of Public Administration and Policy and earned a Bachelor of Arts from Wayne State University.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### **Smudging Ceremony – Ceremonia Indígena**

Dr. Sandra Gonzales, Associate  
Professor, Bilingual/Bicultural  
Education

### **Honor Song – Honrar a Nuestros Graduados**

Giizhigad, Anishinaabe

### **First Welcome: Wikwemikong, Unceded Territory – Primera Bienvenida**

Giizhigad, Anishinaabe

### **Welcome – Bienvenida**

Tamara Serrano Chandler, LAS  
Advisor

### **Greetings – Saludos**

Dr. Jorge L.Chinea, Director,  
Center for Latino/a and Latin  
American Studies (LAS)

### **Keynote Speaker – Ponente de Apertura**

Rachel Yamakura, Director of  
Equity & Inclusion, Lansing  
Community College, WSU '08

### **Student Speakers – Orador/a Estudiantil**

Nathalie McCabe  
M.Ed., Art Education

Edgar Hernandez Armenta  
B.S., Mechanical Engineering

Alyssa Vasquez  
B.S.N.

### **Graduate Awards – Reconocimientos**

### **Graduation Round Dance Song**

Giizhigad, Anishinaabe

### **Musical Performance**

Mariachi Femenil Detroit

### **Class of 2022 Exit – Salida de la Clase del 2022**

*"You cannot value dreams according to the odds of their coming true. The real value is in stirring within us the will to aspire."*  
~ Sonia Sotomayor, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court



## EL OBJETIVO DEL NUEVO COMIENZO

The purpose of “El Nuevo Comienzo” is to highlight the success and achievements of Latina/o and Native graduates at Wayne State University and provide a time and space for honoring the support and contributions of family, friends, mentors and the community. El Nuevo Comienzo is open to all undergraduate, graduate and professional school students from Wayne State University and is co-hosted by the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies and the NDN Learning Community — “a community of learning for Native/Aboriginals and allies.”

### About sweetgrass and smudging

Sweetgrass is considered the sacred hair of Mother Earth. It is one of the most important ceremonial plants used by indigenous people across the Americas as an incense and purifying herb. Sweetgrass is often braided, with each strand representing mind, body and spirit. When tied into a circle, it represents the sacred medical wheel, reminding us to walk in a way that our ancestors would be proud of.

The elders say that all ceremonies must be entered into with a good heart. To do a smudging ceremony, burn one end of the sweetgrass, rub your hands in the smoke, and then gather the smoke and bring it into your body or rub it onto yourself, especially onto any area you feel needs spiritual healing. Keep praying all the while that the unseen powers of the herbs will cleanse your spirit. (Source: native-languages.org)



## EL NUEVO COMIENZO 2022 PLANNING COMMITTEE

### **Dr. Jorge L. Chinae**

Professor of History  
Director, LAS

### **Tamara Serrano Chandler**

Academic Advisor, LAS

### **Melissa Miranda Morse**

Assistant Director, LAS

### **Dr. Sandra M. Gonzales**

Associate Professor, College of  
Education, and Coordinator,  
NDN Learning Community

### **Tina Lyles**

Manager, Special Events

### **Elizabeth Rykalsky**

Event Specialist, Special Events

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Interim Director, Office  
of Multicultural Student  
Engagement

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Associate Director, Computing  
& Info Technology

### **Ana Calandrino**

Director, COE Upward Bound  
Program

### **Alexis Estes**

Student, NDN Learning  
Community and NASO

### **Diana Garcia Rivera**

LAS Student, Graphic Designer

### **Alexa Lopez**

LAS Student

### **Andrea Meza**

LAS Student, LatinX Student  
Association Representative

# EL NUEVO COMIENZO CLASS OF 2022

## College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

### Jishell Alvarado-Vest

B.A., Psychology  
Minor: LAS

### Jose Arizmendi-Gomez

B.A., Spanish  
Minors: Public Health, LAS

### Denisha Barnett

B.S., Criminal Justice  
Minor: Forensic Investigation and Policing, LAS

### Nicolas Cedo

B.A., Political Science  
Minor: LAS

### Josefina Diaz-Orsi

B.A., Political Science  
Minors: Music Technology, LAS

### Pamela Esparza

B.S., Public Health  
Minors: Nutrition and Food Science, LAS

### Esther Guerrero

B.S., Public Health  
Minor: LAS

### Andrea Gutierrez-Cardenas

B.A., Psychology  
Minor: LAS

### Joelle Joyner

B.A., Asian Studies and B.S., Public Health

### Kimberly Kleinhans

Graduate Certificate, Nonprofit Management

### Alexa Lopez

B.A., Political Science  
Minor: LAS

### Daniela Lupercio

B.A., Political Science  
Minor: LAS

### Maria Fernanda Manzanares Bobadilla

B.S., Mathematics  
Minor: Statistics

### Avelycia Ortiz

B.S., Criminal Justice  
Minor: Forensic Investigation and Policing

### Jasmin Perez

B.S., Mathematics  
Minor: LAS

### Alayna Rios

B.A., Communication Science and Disorders  
Minors: Spanish, LAS

### Tatyana Rios

B.A., Sociology  
Minor: LAS

### Brenda Rodriguez

B.A., Psychology  
Minor: LAS

### Ricardo Rodriguez

B.S., Criminal Justice  
Minor: LAS

### Mariana Sierra

B.S., Neuroscience  
Minor: LAS

### Alexis Trinidad

B.S., Criminal Justice  
Minor: Forensic Investigation and Policing

### Sara Ybarra

B.A., Anthropology  
Minors: Digital Art and Photography, LAS

## School of Social Work

### Isabella Buentello

B.S.W.  
Minor: LAS

### Daisy Diaz

M.S.W.

### Estenia Elisevich

M.S.W.

### Leisly Torres

M.S.W.



**Mike Ilitch School of Business****Fernanda Alvarado**

B.S., Accounting

**Stephania Alyateem-Velasquez**

B.S., Management Information Systems

Minor: LAS

**Mariana Beltran**

B.S., Finance

Minor: LAS

**Jorge Fernandez**

B.S., Management Information Systems

Minor: LAS

**Jonathan Guevara**

B.S., Accounting

Minor: LAS

**Elba Lara-Eddington**

B.S., Management Information Systems

**Luis Sanchez**

B.S., Management

Minor: LAS

**Roel Villarreal**

B.S., Management

Minor: LAS

**Humberto Villarruel**

B.S., Finance

Minor: LAS

**Berenice Zepeda**

B.S., Marketing Management

Minor: LAS

**College of Education****Marlena Frontera**

M.Ed., Learning Design and Technology

**Heather Garcia**

B.S., Kinesiology

Minor: LAS

**Daniela Garibay**

B.S., Elementary Education

**Natalie McCabe**

M.Ed., Art Education

**Leslie Ortiz**

B.S., Kinesiology

**Yasmin Uresti-Balderas**B.S., Exercise and Sports Science  
Minor: LAS**College of Nursing****Martha Huerta**

B.S.N.

**Amada Macias**

B.S.N.

**Alyssa Vasquez**

B.S.N.

Minor: LAS

**Rosario Velasquez-Cervantes**

B.S.N.

**College of Engineering****Edgar Hernandez Armenta**

B.S., Mechanical Engineering

**Carlos Martinez**

B.S., Mechanical Engineering

**Ezequiel Olvera-Nava**

B.S., Mechanical Engineering

Minor: LAS

**Jorge Sanchez**

B.S., Mechanical Engineering

Minor: LAS

**College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts****Miguel Diaz**

B.F.A., Art

**Elena Marcozzi**

B.F.A., Art Honors, University Honors Co-Major

Minors: Psychology, LAS

**Daisy Ramirez**

B.A., Communication Studies

Minor: Spanish

**Graduate School****Anali Zavala-Ramos**

M.S.W. and M.S., Public Health

**Wayne Law****Sierra Yslas**

J.D.

**“Looking behind, I am filled with gratitude;  
looking forward, I am filled with vision;  
looking upwards, I am filled with strength;  
looking within, I discover peace.”  
– Quero Apache prayer**



**Wayne State University Board of Governors**

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