

# THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE CUBAN ECONOMY

*RECOVERING CUBA*  
2025 CONFERENCE MATERIALS

MATERIALS INCLUDED:

DAILY AGENDA

SESSION INFORMATION

SPEAKER HIGHLIGHTS

**24-25 OCTOBER, 2025**

MIAMI, FLORIDA

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PAGE 3</b>	<b>Letter from the President</b>
<b>PAGES 4-7</b>	<b>Conference Schedule</b>
<b>PAGES 8-9</b>	<b>ASCE Board Members, Organizational News, and Conference Speakers</b>
<b>PAGES 10-11</b>	<b>Jorge Perez-Lopez Conference Prize Winners</b>
<b>PAGES 12</b>	<b>Conference Sponsors</b>
<b>PAGES 13-14</b>	<b>Additional Conference Information</b>
<b>PAGES 15-21</b>	<b>Panel Participants of the 2025 ASCE Conference</b>

# A letter from the president.

Dear colleagues and friends,

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE) — the pre-eminent conference on Cuba's economy. Cuba today is impoverished, corrupt, and opaque. It is not a member of the IMF, the World Bank, or any multilateral statistical system, and no public institution publishes reliable data on its GDP, inflation, or exchange rate. Among nations in crisis, Cuba stands apart, not only for its decline, but for how little the world truly knows about it. ASCE remains the leading forum where these gaps are confronted with evidence, rigor, and transparency.

Our theme, "Recovering Cuba," reflects both the scale of the crisis and the inevitability of change. Cuba is not merely struggling—it is spent. Blackouts now last days, not hours; hospitals lack the most basic supplies; and its population is draining away in search of light, medicine, and hope. As John Maynard Keynes observed, "The inevitable never happens. It is the unexpected always." Cuba's unraveling has long been predicted, but when it finally breaks, it will do so abruptly—demanding rapid action, decisive support, and credible planning. ASCE's task is to meet that moment with substance, rigor, and foresight—to turn analysis into the foundation for recovery.

We open this year's program with an exceptional panel on Cuba's Current Economic and Political Situation, featuring Jorge I. Domínguez, Emilio Morales, and Omar Everleny Pérez Villanueva—three of the most informed and influential voices on Cuba's crisis and its future.

We are honored to welcome Dr. Nora Gámez Torres as our Keynote Speaker, whose reporting has brought clarity and depth to Cuba's evolving reality, and Dr. Alejandro Portes, the Carlos Díaz-Alejandro Lecturer, whose work has profoundly shaped understanding of the Cuban diaspora and its role in national transformation.

This year also marks the launch of The Cuba Transition Policy Address — Honoring Roger Betancourt, to be delivered by Mr. Emanuelis Zingeris, Vice President of the Council of Europe and a long-time advocate for democracy and human rights. Going forward, this annual address will honor members whose scholarship and service have advanced ASCE's mission.

We are privileged to welcome distinguished and new participants whose expertise deepens our dialogue: Dritan Nesho, Omar Zambrano, Monica García, and José Pineda on the interconnections between Cuba's crisis and regional developments; Tessie San Martín, Thomas Laryea, Natalia Delgado, and Mariusz-Jan Radło on reconstruction and long-term financing; Tony Costa leading the agriculture session; and Maria Werlau, joined by Ambassador Otto Reich and Hugo Acha, on Cuba's security challenges. We are also honored by the participation of Arkadiusz Mularczyk, Rafał Bieniada, and Senator Adam Bielan of Poland, who bring experience from Europe's democratic transitions to the discussion of Cuba's path forward.

Panels on humanitarian response and economic stabilization—led by Armando Ibarra, Gustavo Arnavat, and others—remind us that the challenges we study are lived realities demanding coordinated action. We also recognize Enrique Pumar, chairing the Jorge Pérez-López Student Panel, and the next generation of scholars whose work ensures ASCE's mission endures. Long-time contributors such as Lorenzo Pérez and Gary Maybarduk continue to exemplify ASCE's enduring commitment to rigorous, apolitical analysis.

The program is rich—too rich to name everyone here—and that is precisely ASCE's strength. This is not a conference of selfies and swag; it is a conference of ideas, evidence, and engagement. Each panel offers depth, each discussion builds connection, and each participant contributes to the collective effort to analyze, understand, and help rebuild Cuba's future.

I encourage all of you—especially our long-time members—to welcome new colleagues, make introductions, and build the relationships that sustain this community. ASCE's strength lies not only in its research but in its continuity—a network of trust, expertise, and collaboration that spans generations and disciplines.

We remain guided by the legacy of ASCE's founding members, who established this association to fill a massive void: the need for dispassionate, fact-based research on the economy and society of Cuba. That mission endures and grows more urgent each year. The work presented here is read not only in Washington, Miami, and Madrid, but also in Havana. As conditions deteriorate and the prospect of sudden change increases, the relevance of ASCE's work will only expand, helping inform the moment when analysis must become action, and ideas must become the architecture of recovery.

We extend our appreciation to Florida International University and the Cuban Research Institute, our generous hosts, whose collaboration and support sustain ASCE's mission and enrich this conference. We are also deeply grateful to our sponsors and partners—DevTech Systems, the Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba, The Cormac Group, and CollaborateUp—whose commitment to evidence, dialogue, and democratic development embodies the spirit of ASCE's work. Their continued support helps ensure that this conference remains a space for independent inquiry and enduring collaboration.

Sincerely,



Rafael Romeu, Ph.D.  
President of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy

# FRIDAY OCT. 24

8:30-9:00 AM	Registration	
9:00 - 10:30 AM	Session 1: Cuba's Current Economic and Political Situation	RDB 1100
10:30 - 10:45 AM	Coffee Break	
10:45 - 12:15 PM	Session 2: Venezuelan Economic Collapse and the Shifting Global Economic Conditions Session 3: El totalitarismo cubano: dimensiones domésticas, externas, y evolutivas	RDB 1009 RDB 2006
12:15 - 1:30 PM	The Cuba Transition Policy Address — Honoring Roger Betancourt	RDB 3100
1:30 - 3:00 PM	Session 4: Cuba's Electric Power Generation Challenges Session 5: Cuba in Retrospect: Economy, Politics, and Reform	RDB 1009 RDB 2006
3:00 - 3:15 PM	Coffee Break	
3:15 - 4:45 PM	Session 6: Challenging Control in Authoritarian Regimes: Food Policies in Cuba and Venezuela Session 7: Technology and the Future of Financial and Monetary Policy Session 8: Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela	RDB 1009 RDB 2006 RDB 1081
4:45 - 5:00 PM	Coffee Break	
5:00 - 6:00 PM	Carlos Díaz-Alejandro Lecture	RDB 2006
6:00-8:00PM	ASCE Cocktail Event	RDB 3100

## Session 1: Cuba's Current Economic and Political Situation

- Chair: Rafael Romeu, DevTech Systems, ASCE President
  - Omar Everleny Pérez Villanueva, Centro Cristiano de Reflexión y Diálogo, Cuba, "La realidad de la economía cubana en el 2025: ¿Habrá solución?"
  - Emilio Morales, Havana Consulting Group, "Cuba's Financial Crisis"
  - Jorge I. Domínguez, Harvard University (retired), "Between Polycrisis and Paralysis: Contemporary Cuban Politics"

## Session 2: Venezuelan Economic Collapse and the Shifting Global Economic Conditions

- Chair: Sonia Cavallo Runde, DFR Global and former Argentine Ambassador to the OAS
- Discussant: Bryan Roberts, DevTech Systems
  - Dritan Nesho, HarrisX CEO, Poll results
  - Omar Zambrano, Chief Economist, ANOVA Policy Research, "Economic Collapse and Human Capital: Impact of Venezuela's Economic Crisis on the Educational Level of the Labor Force"
  - Mónica García, Fayetteville State University, "The Elusiveness of Life: Evidence from Venezuelan Migrant Mothers in Colombia"
  - José Pineda, Director of Economics, DevTech Systems, and Rodolfo Méndez, Senior Consultant, DevTech Systems, "U.S. Disengagement from the Global Economy: Differential Effects on Integrated vs. Isolated Economies"

## Session 3: El totalitarismo cubano: dimensiones domésticas, externas, y evolutivas (patrocinado por Cuban Research Institute, FIU)

- Moderador: Armando Chaguaceda, Gobierno y Análisis Político AC
  - Alina Barbara López Hernández, CubaxCuba, Laboratorio de Pensamiento Cívico, "Cuba: del autoritarismo populista al autoritarismo antipopular. La actitud de la intelectualidad"
  - Sebastián Arcos Cazabón, Cuban Research Institute, FIU, "Estadío post-totalitario actual de Cuba y alternativas posibles"
  - Elaine Acosta, Cuban Research Institute, FIU, "La sociedad cubana frente al envejecimiento y empobrecimiento acelerados: transición socioestructural y agencia de la sociedad civil"
  - Armando Chaguaceda, Gobierno y Análisis Político AC, "El régimen cubano y la cooperación autocrática regional"

## Luncheon: The Cuba Transition Policy Address — Honoring Roger Betancourt, given by Emanuelis Zingeris

## Session 4: Cuba's Electric Power Generation Challenges

- Chair: Jorge R. Piñón, Visiting Research Fellow, The Energy Institute, The University of Texas at Austin
  - Juan A.B. Belt, International Finance and Economics, LLC, "The Cuban Power Sector: The Achilles Heel of the Economy"
  - Armando Camacho Costales, "El impacto del shock energético sobre las empresas estatales y sobre la producción"
  - Ricardo Torres, American University, "Cuba's Energy Crisis: Structural Issues and Prospects"
  - Carlos Martínez, George Mason University, "Measuring the Impact of the Cuban Revolution in CO2 Intensity"

## Session 5: Cuba in Retrospect: Economy, Politics, and Reform

- Chair: Lorenzo Pérez, IMF (retired)
- Discussant: Luis Locay, University of Miami
  - John Devereux, Queens College, City University of New York, "Two Centuries of Cuban Economic Growth"
  - Daniel I. Pedreira, Florida International University, "The Perfect Storm: Reestablishing U.S.-Cuba Relations in 2014"
  - Tamarys L. Bahamonde, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York (CUNY), and Research Fellow, Center for Latin American and Latino Studies (CLALS), American University, "La toma de decisiones del estado cubano durante los ciclos de crisis-reforma-contrarreforma (1990-2025)"

## Session 6: Challenging Control in Authoritarian Regimes: Food Policies in Cuba and Venezuela

- Chair: Germán Quintero, Data Researcher, 4Métrica; Academic Coordinator, Food Monitor Program
  - María Isabel Puerta Riera, Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Valencia College, "From Hunger to Control: Food Policies in Authoritarian Regimes such as Venezuela"
  - Jorge Domínguez, Harvard University (retired), "Food Policy in Cuba Under the Ideology of State Socialism"
  - Sergio Ángel, Associate Professor and Lead Researcher, Programa Cuba at the School of Politics and International Relations, Sergio Arboleda University, Colombia, "A Comparative Analysis of Cuba's Hunger Maps: From the World Food Program's Machine Learning Model to the Food Monitor Program's Food Security Index"

## Session 7: Technology and the Future of Financial and Monetary Policy

- Chair: John Devereux, Queens College, City University of New York
- Discussant: Pavel Vidal, Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia
- Discussant: José Pineda, DevTech Systems
  - María Barreiro Palafox and Rakeel Dassinger, DevTech Systems, "From Blackouts to Battered Markets: Energy Deficits and Exchange Rate Dynamics in Cuba"
  - Tim Parsa and Erich Cruz, Cloud Money Ventures, "The Cuba Sandbox Experiment (CSE)--Cuba's first independent U.S. dollar-denominated financial service"
  - José J. Nieves, El Toque.com, "Progress Report on the Construction of elTOQUE.MARKET: An AI-Powered Platform Advancing Economic Transparency in Cuba's Informal Markets"

## Session 8: Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela: Yesterday and Today

- Session organizer: Silvia Pedraza
- Chair: Rogelio de la Torre
- Discussant: Omar Zambrano, Chief Economist, ANOVA Policy Research
  - Silvia Pedraza, Professor of Sociology and American Culture, University of Michigan, "Cuba and Nicaragua: Origins and Early Stages of the Revolution"
  - Carlos A. Romero, Profesor Emérito de Ciencias Políticas, Universidad Central de Venezuela, "Cuba and Venezuela: Two Contrasting Foreign Policies"
  - José Manuel Puente, Profesor de Economía, Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración (IESA), Caracas, Venezuela, and Profesor Asociado IE-Madrid, "Cuba y Venezuela: Dos Colapsos Económicos, Sociales y Migratorios en una Misma Revolución"

## Carlos Díaz-Alejandro Lecture, given by Alejandro Portes

# SATURDAY OCT. 25

8:30-9:00 AM	Business Meeting and Registration	
9:00 - 10:30 AM	<b>Session 1:</b> Confronting Cuba's Humanitarian Emergency <b>Session 2:</b> Rebuilding Civic Culture in Post-Communist Cuba	RDB 1009  RDB 2006
10:30 - 10:45 AM	Coffee Break	
10:45 - 12:15 PM	<b>Session 3:</b> The Jorge Perez-Lopez Student Panel <b>Session 4:</b> Crisis, Care and Remittances: Demographic, Economic and Gender Crossroads in Cuba <b>Session 5:</b> Tourism and Investment	RDB 1009 RDB 1081 RDB 2006
12:15 - 2:00 PM	Keynote Address	RDB 3100
2:00-3:30 PM	<b>Session 6:</b> Long-Term Reconstruction Investment and Recovery Funding <b>Session 7:</b> Cuban Agriculture Challenges	RDB 2006  RDB 1009
3:30 - 3:45 PM	Coffee Break	
3:45 - 5:15 PM	<b>Session 8:</b> Security Challenges in Cuba's Transition: Preventing Deterioration <b>Session 9:</b> After the Fall: Planning for Cuba's Economic Reformation	RDB 2006  RDB 1009



## Session 1: Confronting Cuba's Humanitarian Emergency

- Chair: Armando Ibarra, Founder, Advocacy+Insights
- Discussant: Teo Babún, President & CEO at Outreach Aid to the Americas, Inc.
- Discussant: Gustavo Arnavat, Founder & Executive Chairman of the Cuba Foundation
  - Rafael Romeu, DevTech Systems, and Gabriel Di Bella, IMF, "Cuba Balance of Payments Gaps: Options and Challenges"
  - Luis R. Luis, International Research & Strategy Associates LLC (IRSA), "Private Foreign Capital in a Free-Market Cuba"
  - Arkadiusz Mularczyk, Member of the European Parliament, Vice Chair of the Subcommittee of Human Rights

## Session 2: Rebuilding Civic Culture in Post-Communist Cuba

- Chair: Juan Carlos Espinosa, Florida International University
- Discussant: Alfredo Cuzán, University of West Florida
  - Enrique S. Pumar, Santa Clara University, "Civic Culture, Political Culture, and Education: The Long and Winding Road"
  - Ted Henken, Baruch College, CUNY, "Becoming Journalists, Becoming Independent: Bloggers, Journalists, and the 'Great Convergence' of Independent Digital Cuban Media, 2010-2020"
  - Adam Bielan, Member of the European Parliament, Committee on Regional Development
  - Rafal Bieniada, University of Warsaw, Faculty of Journalism and Political Science

## Session 3: Jorge Pérez-López Student Panel

- Chair: Enrique Pumar
- Organizers: María Barreiro Palafox and Rakel Dassinger
  - Manuel F. Pérez Archila, Princeton University, "Dissenter within the dissension: Cuba in the life and work of Carlos F. Díaz Alejandro" - Graduate First Place
  - Ryan Jones, New York University, "Market Socialism? The Role of Small Business Owners in the Cuban Economic Transformation" - Undergraduate First Place
  - Laurine Chapon, Sorbonne Nouvelle University, "A House in Cuba - Housing and Migration in a Time of Crisis" - Graduate Second Place
  - Richard "Rex" Crespin, University of Georgia, "The Imperative for Increased Investment in Cuban Mines" - Undergraduate Second Place

## Session 4: Crisis, Care and Remittances: Demographic, Economic and Gender Crossroads in Cuba

- Chair: Denisse Delgado Vázquez, Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service
- Discussant: Omar Everleny Pérez, Centro Cristiano de Reflexión y Diálogo, Cuba
  - Juan Carlos Albizu-Campos Espiñeira, Centro Cristiano de Reflexión y Diálogo, Cuba, "Demographic or systemic crisis?"
  - Elaine Acosta, Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University, "Care, migration, and sustainability of life in Cuba: Between structural crisis and daily survival"
  - Denisse Delgado Vázquez, Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service, "Transnational Care Economies: Gender, Migration, and Remittances"

## Session 5: Tourism and Investment

- Chair: María Dolores Espino, St. Thomas University (retired)
- Discussant: Mario González-Corzo, Lehman College, CUNY
  - Paolo Spadoni, Augusta University, "Rebirth Rather Than Recovery: The Post-COVID Path for the Cuban Tourism Industry"
  - Walter Palomino-Tamayo, ESAN Graduate School of Business, Lima, Peru, and Julio Cerviño, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid, "Service Delivery and Satisfaction under Socialism: Contrasts with Western Economies"
  - Diana Yudixta Bautista Martínez, Attorney at Law, Milan Bar Association (Ordine degli Avvocati di Milano), "No hay mal que dure cien años, o inversión que lo resista: País estancado, derechos atrapados. El desafío jurídico de recuperar Cuba"

## Luncheon: Keynote Address given by Nora Gámez Torres

## Session 6: Long-Term Reconstruction Investment and Recovery Funding

- Chair: Tessie San Martín, CEO of FHI360
- Discussant: Javier García-Bengochea, M.D., FAANS, Board Certified Neurological Surgeon
  - Larry Catá Backer, Professor of Law and International Affairs, Penn State University, "Legal-Institutional Foundations for Reconstruction"
  - Thomas Laryea, Of Counsel at Orrick and former IMF legal counsel, "Sovereign Debt Restructuring in Political Transitions"
  - Natalia Delgado, Senior Research Scholar, Columbia Law School and Director, Cuba Capacity Building Project, "The Critical Role of an Independent Judiciary in Creating Certainty for Economic Investment and Growth"
  - Mariusz-Jan Radło, Head of Global Economic Interdependence Department, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, "Economic Transition in Poland: Insights for Cuba"

## Session 7: Cuban Agriculture Challenges

- Chair: Tony Costa, Chairman Emeritus, Costa Farms Inc.
- Discussant: Jorge Pérez-López, U.S. Department of Labor (retired)
  - William A. Messina, University of Florida, "Cuban Agriculture in a Death Spiral? Can It Recover?"
  - Federico Sulroca, "Las cooperativas y su posible transformación para un nuevo modelo económico en la agroindustria de la caña de azúcar"
  - Bryan W. Roberts, DevTech Systems, "Exit from Monocrop Export Dependency: Historical Experiences of Western-Hemisphere Countries"
  - Suzanne Morse Moomaw, University of Virginia, and Tyler Hinkle, EPR PC and University of Virginia, "The Batey After the Mill: Sugar's Legacy in Cuba's Economic Recovery"

## Session 8: Security Challenges in Cuba's Transition: Preventing Deterioration

- Chair: María C. Werlau, Executive Director, Free Society Project/Cuba Archive
- Discussant: Otto Reich, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs
  - Hugo Achá, Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba, "Combatting Cuban Transnational Organized Crime"
  - Michael Cevallos, Florida Atlantic University, "Regime Uncertainty and the Emergence of Underground Institutions in Cuba"
  - Maibort Petit, Journalist, "How the Convergence of Venezuela, Cuba, and Bolivia has shaped a transnational structure functioning as a Global Criminal Corporation"

## Session 9: After the Fall: Planning for Cuba's Economic Reformation

- Organizer: Gary Maybarduk, U.S. Department of State (retired)
- Discussant: Lorenzo Pérez, IMF (retired)
  - Gary Maybarduk, U.S. Department of State (retired), "Planning for the Reformation: A Concept Paper"
  - Mauricio de Miranda, Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia, "Institutional Changes for the Transformation of the Cuban Economy"
  - Pavel Vidal, Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia, "Macroeconomic Imbalances and the Role of State Enterprises and GAESA in Policy Options"
  - Juan Tomás Sánchez, "Transition to Private Contracts in Sugar Production in Cuba From the Perspective of Conflict Resolution: Balancing Speed and Stability Under the Law"

**SERGIO DÍAZ-BRIQUETS**  
Board Member

**JUAN THOMAS SANCHEZ**  
Treasurer

**ALFRED CUZÁN**  
Board Member

**JORGE LUIS ROMEU**  
Assistant Treasurer

**LARRY CATA-BACKER**  
Board Member

**RICARDO TORRES PÉREZ**  
Board Member

**BRYAN ROBERTS**  
Board Member

**ROGER DE LA TORRE**  
Board Member

**IVETTE LOCAY**  
Board Member

**VICTORIA LOCAY**  
Secretary

**LUIS LOCAY**  
Previous President

**RAFAEL ROMEU**  
President of ASCE

**LUIS R. LUIS**  
Assistant Treasurer

**DENISSE DELGADO**  
*The Happenings* Editor

# **2025 BOARD** **&** **ASCE UPDATES**

## **Organizational Growth & Outreach**

- Expanded ASCE's reach through engagement with over 100 potential sponsors and 20+ new institutional partners.
- Established active connections with more than 20 universities to strengthen student membership and academic collaboration.
- Enhanced social media presence, increasing visibility across academic and policy networks.
- Welcomed 10+ first time ASCE Members, new sponsors and renewed partnerships supporting ASCE's research and programming.

## **Academic Excellence & Next Generation Leadership**

- Received over 20 submissions for the Jorge Pérez-López Student Prize, reflecting strong global interest from emerging scholars.
- Continued to elevate student participation in ASCE panels, workshops, and research publications.

## **Institutional Strength & Visibility**

- Strengthened ASCE's membership base and digital footprint through improved communications, online programming, and outreach campaigns.
- Expanded collaboration with policymakers, economists, and international institutions focusing on Cuba's economic transition.
- Reinforced ASCE's leadership role as the premier forum for analysis and dialogue on Cuba's economy and future.



# ASCE CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



**NORA GÁMEZ TORRES**

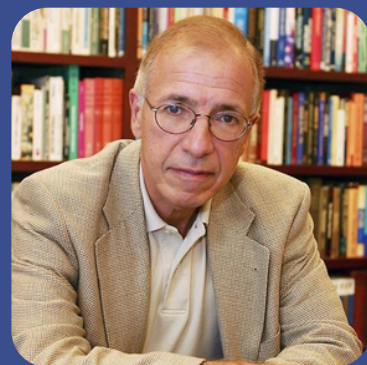
*Keynote Speaker*

Nora Gámez Torres, Ph.D. is the Cuba/U.S.-Latin American policy reporter for el Nuevo Herald and the Miami Herald. She studied journalism and media and communications in Havana and London. She holds a Ph.D. in sociology from City, University of London. Her work has won awards by the Florida Society of News Editors and the Society for Professional Journalists.

Alejandro Portes, Ph.D. is a prominent Cuban-American sociologist, Howard Harrison and Gabrielle Snyder Beck Professor of Sociology at Princeton University, and Professor of Law and Distinguished Scholar of Arts and Sciences at the University of Miami, recognized for his influential work on immigration, transnational communities, and the sociology of economic life. Among his many accolades, he received the 2019 Princess of Asturias Award in the Social Sciences.

**ALEJANDRO PORTES**

*Carlos Diaz-  
Alejandro Lecturer*



**EMANUELIS ZINGERIS**

*The Cuba Transition Policy  
Address — Honoring  
Roger Betancourt*

Emanuelis Zingeris, Ph.D. is a Lithuanian politician, philologist, and museum director who has served multiple terms in Lithuania's Seimas (parliament), chairs its foreign affairs committee, and is also a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he is active in human rights and democratic initiatives.

# MEET OUR **JORGE PEREZ-LOPEZ** *STUDENT PRIZE WINNERS*



**MANUEL F. PÉREZ ARCHILA**

First Place Graduate Winner  
Princeton University, Ph.D. Candidate



**RYAN JONES**

First Place Undergraduate Winner  
New York University, B.S. Sociology



**LAURINE CHAPON**

Second Place Graduate Winner  
Sorbonne Nouvelle University, Ph.D.  
Candidate



**RICHARD "REX" CRESPIN**

Second Place Undergraduate Winner  
University of Georgia, BBA Finance  
and International Business

**"DISSENTER WITHIN  
THE DISSENSION:"  
CUBA IN THE LIFE  
AND WORK OF  
CARLOS F. DIAZ  
ALEJANDRO**

Manuel F. Pérez Archila

*This paper is part of a larger research agenda on the contributions of Carlos Diaz Alejandro to economic thought, and builds on and expands arguments and archival research previously developed in "Beyond Structuralism and Neoliberalism: The Lives and After-Lives of Carlos F. Diaz-Alejandro".*

**MARKET SOCIALISM?  
THE ROLE OF SMALL  
BUSINESS OWNERS  
IN THE CUBAN  
ECONOMIC  
TRANSFORMATION**

Ryan Jones

*This study concerns the changes in the political economy of Cuba resulting from the introduction of reforms legalizing self-employment and the establishment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) after decades of a fully planned economy.*

**A HOUSE IN CUBA -  
HOUSING AND  
MIGRATION IN A TIME  
OF CRISIS**

Laurine Chapon

*International migration, both outbound and return, is profoundly reshaping Havana's urban fabric—altering housing markets, deepening social inequalities, and transforming neighbourhoods—while redefining the relationship between the Cuban state and its diaspora amid a deepening national crisis.*

**THE IMPERATIVE FOR  
INCREASED  
INVESTMENT IN  
CUBAN MINES**

Richard "Rex" Crespin

*Cuba holds vast but underdeveloped reserves of critical minerals vital to the global green energy transition, yet realizing this potential requires overcoming economic constraints, environmental damage, and attracting strategic foreign investment.*

# AND THEIR PAPER TOPICS

# ASCE CONFERENCE SPONSORS

## DIAMOND SPONSOR \$10,000



DEVTECH



FOUNDATION FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
IN CUBA

## GOLD SPONSOR \$5,000



**harrisx**  
A STAGWELL COMPANY

## SILVER SPONSOR \$2,500



## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Jorge Domínguez

Jorge Piñón

Bryan Roberts

Julio Cervino Fernández

Gustavo Arnavat

Lorenzo Pérez-Pujol

Sergio Díaz-Briquets

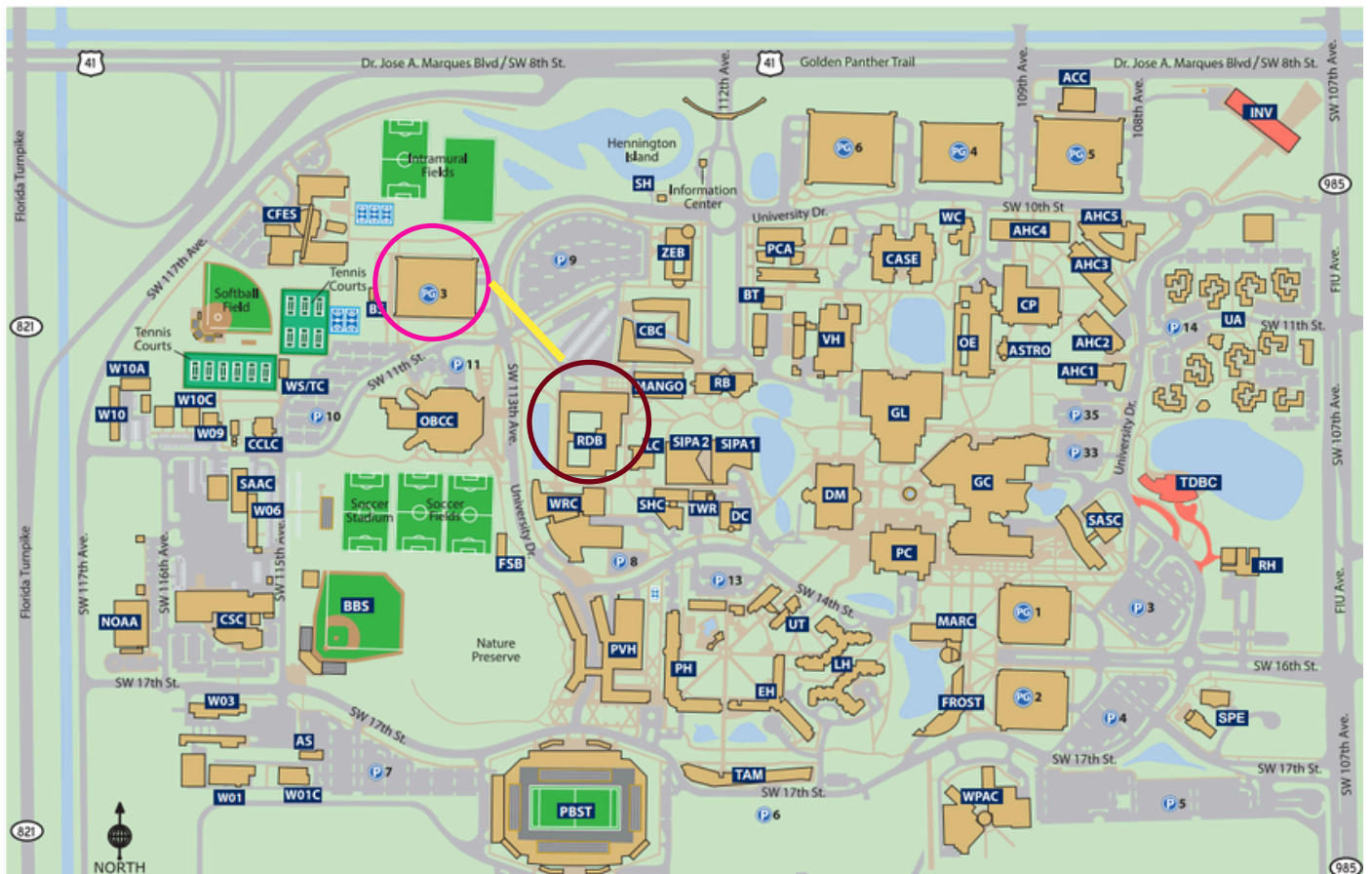


## ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

**FIU LAW SCHOOL ADDRESS: 11200 SW 8TH STREET, RAFAEL DIAZ-BALART HALL, MIAMI, FL 33199**

# PARKING

**Visitor parking is available at PG3: Panther Parking Garage. Please pre-pay and register your vehicle using the links in your email. Access the university via Golden Panther Trail/Route 40 and 112<sup>th</sup> Ave.**



- PG3: Panther Parking Garage
- FIU Law School

# **ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION**

## **REGISTRATION & CHECK-IN**

Registration and check-in will occur both days beginning at 8am.

## **FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS**

Lunch and light refreshments will be available free of charge to participants both days of the conference. We have all diet and food preference options available for your comfort. The cocktail reception is also free of charge.

## **VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE**

If you cannot attend in-person, but would like to join us virtually, please use the links to the corresponding panel sessions that will be sent out via email.



# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Adam Bielan**, Member of the European Parliament, Foreign Affairs Coordinator for the European Conservatives and Reformists Group, Bio: Member of the European Parliament and ECR Foreign Affairs Coordinator. He has served in the Polish Sejm and Senate and played a major role in shaping EU digital market policy.
- **Alejandro Portes**, Princeton University / University of Miami, “Carlos Díaz-Alejandro Lecture”, Bio: Alejandro Portes is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Princeton University and Research Professor at the University of Miami. A leading scholar on migration, development, and social change, he has authored more than 250 publications and several landmark books, including *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation*. His work has shaped the study of transnationalism and comparative development across the Americas.
- **Alina Bárbara López Hernández**, CubaxCuba, Laboratorio de Pensamiento Cívico, “Cuba: del autoritarismo populista al autoritarismo antipopular. La actitud de la intelectualidad”, Bio: Professor, essayist, and editor. Holds a Ph.D. in Philosophical Sciences and is a corresponding member of the Cuban Academy of History. Her work examines Cuban national reality through reinterpretation of its intellectual history.
- **Alfredo Cuzán**, University of West Florida, Bio: Alfred G. Cuzán is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of West Florida. His research spans comparative politics, U.S. political institutions, and Cuban studies, with a focus on predictive modeling and political forecasting. He has published widely on political systems and electoral cycles in both democratic and authoritarian regimes.
- **Arkadiusz Mularczyk**, European Parliament, “Confronting Cuba’s Humanitarian Emergency”, Bio: Polish lawyer and Member of the European Parliament representing the ECR group. Former Secretary of State in Poland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights.
- **Armando Camacho Costales**, Independent Researcher, “El impacto del shock energético sobre las empresas estatales y sobre la producción”, Bio: Telecommunications engineer, accountant, and writer passionate about technology, communication, and culture. Blogger at cubaenred.cubava.cu, he envisions a connected and open “Cuba 2.0.”
- **Armando Chaguaceda**, Gobierno y Análisis Político AC, “El régimen cubano y la cooperación autocrática regional”, Bio: Historian and political scientist, Principal Researcher at Government and Political Analysis AC (GAPAC). Specializes in democratization and autocratization processes in Latin America and Russia.
- **Armando Ibarra**, Advocacy+Insights, Bio: Armando Ibarra has more than a decade of experience in government, regulatory, and public affairs working with high-growth companies, industry groups, civic organizations, and policymakers. He has spearheaded landmark policy advocacy initiatives, navigated complex regulatory landscapes to enable first-of-a-kind technologies, and advanced metropolitan industries with multibillion-dollar economic impact. His work spans technology, telecom, tourism, infrastructure, sustainability, education, and social impact.
- **Bryan W. Roberts**, DevTech Systems, “Exit from Monocrop Export Dependency: Historical Experiences of Western-Hemisphere Countries”, Bio: Economist with 25+ years in policy and evaluation (DHS, IDA, USC CREATE). His research focuses on immigration, border policy, and the economics of security.
- **Carlos A. Romero**, Universidad Central de Venezuela, “Cuba and Venezuela: Two Contrasting Foreign Policies”, Bio: Political scientist and Professor Emeritus at Universidad Central de Venezuela. Served as advisor to Venezuela’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and visiting professor at universities in Spain, Brazil, France, and Colombia.
- **Carlos Martínez**, George Mason University, “Measuring the Impact of the Cuban Revolution in CO<sub>2</sub> Intensity”, Bio: Ph.D. student in Economics at George Mason University. Holds a B.S. in Economics from Rockford University; research focuses on comparative systems and economic history in Cuba.
- **Daniel I. Pedreira**, Florida International University, “The Perfect Storm: Reestablishing U.S.-Cuba Relations in 2014”, Bio: Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor at FIU’s Department of Politics and International Relations. Holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from FIU; author on Cuban institutions and political leadership.
- **Denisse Delgado Vázquez**, Georgetown University, “Transnational Care Economies: Gender, Migration, and Remittances”, Bio: Adjunct professor at Georgetown and American University; ASCE Board member; research on migration, remittances, and development; Ph.D. in Public Policy from UMass Boston.

# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Diana Yudixta Bautista Martínez**, Ordine degli Avvocati di Milano, “No hay mal que dure cien años, o inversión que lo resista: País estancado, derechos atrapados. El desafío jurídico de recuperar Cuba”, Bio: Diana Yudixta Bautista Martínez is an Italian lawyer of Cuban origin, practicing in Milan since 2012. She holds law degrees from the University of Havana and the University of Milan and has extensive experience in commercial, family, and international law, as well as arbitration and environmental regulation. Her research and publications focus on environmental law, foreign investment in Cuba, and human rights, and she has lectured internationally, including at ASCE and Columbia Law School events.
- **Dritan Nesho, HarrisX**, “Poll Results”, Bio: Entrepreneur and public opinion researcher affiliated with Harvard University. Founder and CEO of HarrisX; former Nielsen executive; Fellow at Harvard’s Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences.
- **Elaine Acosta González**, Florida International University, “La sociedad cubana frente al envejecimiento y empobrecimiento acelerados”, Bio: Cuban-born sociologist and Visiting Scholar at FIU’s Cuban Research Institute. Executive Director of Cuido60, specializing in aging, care, and rights in Latin America.
- **Emanuelis Zingeris**, Seimas of Lithuania / Council of Europe, “The Cuba Transition Policy Address — Honoring Roger Betancourt”, Bio: Emanuelis Zingeris is a Lithuanian philologist, museum director, and long-serving Member of the Seimas. A signatory of the 1990 Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania, he has chaired the Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee and served as Vice President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. A prominent advocate for democracy and historical memory, he also chaired Lithuania’s Jewish community and leads the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Regimes.
- **Emilio Morales**, The Havana Consulting Group, “Cuba’s Financial Crisis”, Bio: Cuban-born economist and CEO of The Havana Consulting Group. Author of Cuba: ¿Transición silenciosa al capitalismo? and Marketing Without Advertising.
- **Enrique S. Pumar**, Santa Clara University, “Civic Culture, Political Culture, and Education: The Long and Winding Road”, Bio: Enrique S. Pumar is the Fay Boyle University Professor of Sociology at Santa Clara University and an affiliated scholar at Georgetown University’s Institute for the Study of International Migration. A Fulbright Senior Scholar and author of over 50 publications, his research examines social change, education, and civic culture in Latin America. He serves on editorial boards and advisory groups focused on migration and democratic development.
- **Federico Sulroca Domínguez**, Independent, “Las cooperativas y su posible transformación para un nuevo modelo económico en la agroindustria de la caña de azúcar”, Bio: Federico Sulroca Domínguez is a Professor at the University of Havana, specializing in economic policy and cooperative systems. His research focuses on agricultural transformation, state enterprise reform, and the role of cooperatives in Cuba’s economic transition. He has contributed to national debates on sustainable development and agrarian modernization.
- **Gabriel Di Bella**, International Monetary Fund, “Cuba Balance of Payments Gaps: Options and Challenges”, Bio: Gabriel Di Bella is the International Monetary Fund’s Senior Resident Representative in Türkiye. His research and policy work focus on public debt sustainability, real exchange rates, and energy economics, as well as income distribution and transition economies. He has extensive experience in IMF program design and macroeconomic analysis across emerging markets.
- **Gary H. Maybarduk**, U.S. Department of State (retired), “Planning for the Reformation: A Concept Paper”, Bio: Gary H. Maybarduk is a seasoned economist and former U.S. Foreign Service officer with expertise in Latin American economic affairs, particularly the Cuban economy. As Economic and Political Counselor at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, he analyzed Cuba’s national accounts, trade, and reform processes. He has served in several challenging diplomatic posts, including Nicaragua and Sierra Leone, and continues to publish on regional economic and policy issues.
- **Germán Quintero**, 4Métrica / Food Monitor Program, Bio: Germán Quintero has over five years of experience designing and implementing educational programs for vulnerable and disabled populations, as well as leadership training for youth and women. He serves as Academic Coordinator for the Food Monitor Program, overseeing training processes and data collection. His work integrates education, inclusion, and social development across diverse communities.

# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Gustavo Arnavat**, The Cuba Foundation, Bio: Founder and Executive Chairman of the Cuba Foundation; former U.S. Executive Director to the Inter-American Development Bank. He previously served at the National Security Council and the U.S. Department of State. Arnavat holds degrees from Cornell University, Harvard University, and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.
- **Hugo Achá**, Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba, “Combatting Cuban Transnational Organized Crime”, Bio: Senior Research Fellow at the Center for a Secure Free Society and Director of Research and Outreach at the Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba. Expert in counterterrorism and transnational crime across the Americas.
- **Javier García-Bengochea**, Private Practice (Neurosurgery), Bio: Cuban-born neurosurgeon (Tulane MD); attending at Mayo Clinic Florida and Baptist Health. Specializes in spine surgery and adult spinal deformity reconstruction.
- **John Devereux**, Queens College, City University of New York, “Two Centuries of Cuban Economic Growth”, Bio: Professor of Economics at Queens College (CUNY) and specialist in economic history. His research focuses on long-run growth and institutions in Latin America.
- **Jorge I. Domínguez**, Harvard University (retired), “Between Polycrisis and Paralysis: Contemporary Cuban Politics”, Bio: Harvard professor (1972–2018) and leading scholar of Cuban politics. Author of *Inching Toward Democratization?* (Democratization, 2025).
- **Jorge Pérez-López**, U.S. Department of Labor (retired), Bio: Jorge Pérez-López is an international economist and leading authority on the Cuban economy. He served over three decades at the U.S. Department of Labor, where he directed the Office of International Economic Policy, and later became Executive Director of the Fair Labor Association. Now a consultant with The Havana Consulting Group, he has published extensively on Cuba’s economic reform, labor, and trade policy, including *Cuba Under Raúl Castro: Assessing the Reforms* (2013).
- **Jorge R. Piñón**, The University of Texas at Austin, “The Cuban Power Sector: The Achilles Heel of the Economy”, Bio: Veteran energy executive and scholar (Amoco, BP, UT Austin); testified before U.S. Congress; co-author of *Cuba’s Energy Future and Contemporary Cuba: The Post-Castro Era*.
- **José J. Nieves**, El Toque.com, “Progress Report on the Construction of elTOQUE.MARKET: An AI-Powered Platform Advancing Economic Transparency in Cuba’s Informal Markets”, Bio: José J. Nieves is a Cuban journalist and editor based in exile in Miami, where he leads El Toque and serves as Executive Director of the Más Voces Foundation. An ICFJ Knight Fellow and recipient of the 2023 LASA Media Award, he focuses on developing sustainable models for independent and exiled newsrooms. His work promotes press freedom and operational resilience for journalists reporting under authoritarian regimes.
- **José Manuel Puente**, Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración (IESA) / IE-Madrid, “Cuba y Venezuela: Dos Colapsos Económicos, Sociales y Migratorios en una Misma Revolución”, Bio: Economist and Full Professor at IESA (Caracas) and Associate Professor at IE University (Madrid). Holds degrees from the London School of Economics and the University of Oxford (Ph.D. in Political Economy). Consultant for the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.
- **José Pineda**, DevTech Systems, “U.S. Disengagement from the Global Economy: Differential Effects on Integrated vs. Isolated Economies”, Bio: Economist with 20+ years managing development projects for U.S. and UN agencies. Director of Economics at DevTech; former CAF, UNDP, and UNEP economist.
- **Juan A. B. Belt**, International Finance and Economics, LLC, “The Cuban Power Sector: The Achilles Heel of the Economy”, Bio: Senior economist with experience at USAID, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and Chemonics International. Specialist in infrastructure finance and private-sector development.
- **Juan Carlos Albizu-Campos Espiñeira**, Centro Cristiano de Reflexión y Diálogo-Cuba, “Demographic or Systemic Crisis?”, Bio: Economist and demographer; Ph.D.s from the University of Havana and the University of Paris X–Nanterre. Former professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy.
- **Juan Carlos Espinosa**, Florida International University, Bio: Dean and Fellow of FIU Honors College; Ph.D. in International Studies (University of Miami). Research focuses on Cuban political culture and arts as political expression.

# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Juan Tomás Sánchez**, Cuba Sugarcane Growers Association Inc., “Transition to Private Contracts in Sugar Production in Cuba from the Perspective of Conflict Resolution: Balancing Speed and Stability Under the Law”, Bio: Licensed Professional Engineer and longtime ASCE member with over 30 years of experience in project control and reconstruction. Holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Miami.
- **Julio Cerviño**, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, “Service Delivery and Satisfaction under Socialism: Contrasts with Western Economies”, Bio: Professor of Marketing and Co-Director of the Master’s in International Management at UC3M. Ph.D. (UAM); consultant to global firms on brand and international marketing.
- **Larry Catá Backer**, Pennsylvania State University, “Legal-Institutional Foundations for Reconstruction”, Bio: Larry Catá Backer (白轅) is the W. Richard and Mary Eshelman Faculty Scholar and Professor of Law and International Affairs at Pennsylvania State University. His teaching and research center on globalization, comparative governance, and corporate and constitutional law across systems in China, Cuba, the U.S., and the EU. A longtime ASCE member, he has published extensively on law, transnational institutions, and systemic reform.
- **Laurine Chapon**, Sorbonne Nouvelle University, “A House in Cuba – Housing and Migration in a Time of Crisis”, Bio: Ph.D. candidate in Geography (Sorbonne Nouvelle) and lecturer at École Normale Supérieure in Paris; researches Havana’s urban transformation and migration.
- **Lorenzo Pérez**, International Monetary Fund (retired), Bio: Retired IMF economist specializing in fiscal policy and macroeconomic stabilization. Advised governments across Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa.
- **Luis Locay**, University of Miami, Bio: Associate Professor of Economics; specializes in labor economics and development; research on transition economies and institutions in Latin America.
- **Luis R. Luis**, International Research & Strategy Associates LLC (IRSA), “Private Foreign Capital in a Free-Market Cuba”, Bio: Luis R. Luis is an international economist specializing in global finance and investments, and cofounder of International Research and Strategy Associates. Formerly Managing Director at Scudder Investments and Director of the Latin America Department at the Institute of International Finance, he has also held senior positions at major international banks and the OAS. A Fulbright scholar and former professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, he holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Notre Dame and has published extensively on emerging markets and the Cuban economy.
- **Maibort Petit**, Independent Journalist, Bio: Venezuelan investigative journalist based in New York. She covers corruption, organized crime, and illicit finance networks for Hispanic media and international outlets.
- **Manuel F. Pérez Archila**, Princeton University, “‘Dissenter within the Dissension:’ Cuba in the Life and Work of Carlos F. Díaz Alejandro”, Bio: Ph.D. candidate in Economics at Princeton University. Researches macroeconomics and international finance; former IMF staff; holds a B.S. from Columbia University.
- **María Barreiro Palafox**, DevTech Systems, Inc., “From Blackouts to Battered Markets: Energy Deficits and Exchange Rate Dynamics in Cuba”, Bio: Program Manager and Analyst at DevTech Systems. Experienced in international development, data analysis, and M&E; holds M.S. and B.A. degrees in Economics from the University of Maryland.
- **María C. Werlau**, Free Society Project/Cuba Archive, Bio: Co-founder and Executive Director of Cuba Archive; author and human-rights researcher; formerly with Chase Manhattan Bank; has written extensively on Cuba’s economy, law, and human rights.
- **María Dolores Espino**, St. Thomas University (retired), Bio: Professor Emerita of Economics; founding ASCE member; researcher on tourism and environmental policy in Cuba; contributor to policy analysis on Cuban reform.
- **María Isabel Puerta Riera**, Valencia College, “From Hunger to Control: Food Policies in Authoritarian Regimes such as Venezuela”, Bio: Adjunct Professor of Political Science at Valencia College and Colorado State University–Global Campus. Chair of the Latinx Studies Section of LASA; research on authoritarianism and governance in Latin America.
- **Mariusz-Jan Radło**, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, “Economic Transition in Poland: Insights for Cuba”, Bio: Professor and Head of the Global Economic Interdependence Department at the Warsaw School of Economics. Researches industrial policy, innovation, and global value chains; managing partner at SEENDICO Consulting.

# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Mario A. González-Corzo**, Lehman College, CUNY, Bio: Mario A. González-Corzo, Ph.D., is Professor of Economics and Finance at Lehman College (CUNY) and Lecturer in Finance at Columbia University's School of Professional Studies. His research focuses on financial asset ownership, entrepreneurship in transition economies, and economic reforms in Cuba's agricultural sector. A Faculty Fellow at the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, he has also held senior roles in global finance and consulting at PricewaterhouseCoopers and JP Morgan Chase.
- **Mauricio de Miranda**, Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia, "Institutional Changes for the Transformation of the Cuban Economy", Bio: Mauricio de Miranda Parrondo is Professor of Economics at Universidad Javeriana Cali in Colombia, where he specializes in international economics, development, and comparative political economy. His research focuses on the Cuban economy, institutional transformation, and the challenges of transitioning toward a market-oriented system. He is the author of numerous publications on economic reform and regional integration in Latin America.
- **Michael Cevallos**, Florida Atlantic University, "Regime Uncertainty and the Emergence of Underground Institutions in Cuba", Bio: Graduate student at Florida Atlantic University studying artificial intelligence and its intersection with institutional adaptation and informal economies.
- **Mónica García-Pérez**, Fayetteville State University / Duke University, "The Elusiveness of Life: Evidence from Venezuelan Migrant Mothers in Colombia", Bio: Distinguished Professor of Economics at Fayetteville State University and Senior Research Associate at Duke University. Research on health, labor, and immigration economics; Ph.D., University of Maryland.
- **Natalia Delgado**, Columbia Law School, "The Critical Role of an Independent Judiciary in Creating Certainty for Economic Investment and Growth", Bio: Senior Research Scholar at Columbia Law School and Director of the Cuba Capacity Building Project. Former General Counsel at Huron Consulting Group; J.D. from the University of Michigan.
- **Nora Gámez Torres**, el Nuevo Herald / Miami Herald, "Keynote Address", Bio: Award-winning journalist covering Cuba and U.S.-Cuba relations for el Nuevo Herald and The Miami Herald; Ph.D. in Cultural Studies from the University of Florida.
- **Omar Everleny Pérez Villanueva**, Centro Cristiano de Reflexión y Diálogo-Cuba, "La realidad de la economía cubana en el 2025: ¿Habrá solución?", Bio: Omar Everleny Pérez Villanueva is an economist affiliated with the Center on Christian Reflection and Dialogue in Cuba and former Director of the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy (CEEC) at the University of Havana. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Havana and a master's degree from CIDE in Mexico City, and has served as visiting professor at Harvard, Columbia, and other global institutions. Author of more than 80 publications, his work focuses on Cuba's economic reform, development, and the role of the non-state sector in national growth.
- **Omar Zambrano**, ANOVA Policy Research, "Economic Collapse and Human Capital: Impact of Venezuela's Economic Crisis on the Educational Level of the Labor Force", Bio: Chief Economist at ANOVA Policy Research. Former IDB and World Bank economist; focuses on Venezuelan labor markets, inequality, and recovery policies.
- **Otto Reich**, Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Bio: Veteran U.S. diplomat; former U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela and Assistant Secretary of State; consultant on Western Hemisphere affairs, trade, and investment.
- **Paolo Spadoni**, Augusta University, "Rebirth Rather Than Recovery: The Post-COVID Path for the Cuban Tourism Industry", Bio: Associate Professor of Political Science at Augusta University. Author of Cuba's Socialist Economy Today and Failed Sanctions; focuses on Cuban economic reform and U.S.-Cuba policy.
- **Pavel Vidal**, Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia, "Macroeconomic Imbalances and the Role of State Enterprises and GAESA in Policy Options", Bio: Professor of Economics; former Central Bank of Cuba economist; visiting scholar at Columbia, Harvard, and Oslo; consultant to the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.
- **Rafael Romeu**, DevTech Systems, "Cuba Balance of Payments Gaps: Options and Challenges", Bio: CEO of DevTech Systems and expert in fiscal policy, development, and financial markets. Former IMF and Federal Reserve economist; published on fiscal sustainability and macroeconomic reform.
- **Rafal Bieniada**, University of Warsaw, Bio: (No bio will be included as noted by user.)

# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Rakel Dassinger**, DevTech Systems, Inc., “From Blackouts to Battered Markets: Energy Deficits and Exchange Rate Dynamics in Cuba”, Bio: Administrative Assistant to the CEO and Business Development Associate at DevTech Systems. Holds a Master’s in European and Eurasian Studies (Democracy Studies); research on governance and democratic engagement.
- **Ricardo Torres**, American University, “Cuba’s Energy Crisis: Structural Issues and Prospects”, Bio: Research Fellow at American University’s Center for Latin American and Latino Studies. Holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Havana; leads a network of emerging Cuban scholars.
- **Richard “Rex” Crespín**, University of Georgia, “The Imperative for Increased Investment in Cuban Mines”, Bio: Richard “Rex” Crespín is a third-year student at the University of Georgia majoring in Finance and International Business with a minor in Spanish. He has interned at DevTech Systems on economic productivity research for the government of Nepal and worked with CollaborateUp to support blended finance initiatives in Latin America and Southern Africa.
- **Rodolfo Méndez**, DevTech Systems, “U.S. Disengagement from the Global Economy: Differential Effects on Integrated vs. Isolated Economies”, Bio: Dr. Rodolfo Méndez is an economist and statistician specializing in time series analysis, Bayesian econometrics, and international trade modeling. He holds a Ph.D. in Engineering (Bayesian Statistics) from Universidad Simón Bolívar and degrees in Finance and Economics from IESA and Universidad Central de Venezuela. His work applies advanced econometric methods to macroeconomic and trade forecasting using MATLAB, R, and Python.
- **Rogelio de la Torre**, Bio: (No bio provided.)
- **Ryan Jones**, New York University, “Market Socialism? The Role of Small Business Owners in the Cuban Economic Transformation”, Bio: Ryan Jones is the Founder and Executive Director of NOVA-TRAC, a transportation advocacy organization in Northern Virginia, and a recent graduate of New York University, where he studied sociology with a focus on international political economy and public policy. His thesis explores the private sector’s role in post-reform Cuba.
- **Sebastián Arcos Cazabón**, Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University, “Estado post-totalitario actual de Cuba y alternativas posibles”, Bio: Interim Director of the Cuban Research Institute (FIU); former Associate Director for Development at FIU’s School of International and Public Affairs; frequent commentator on Cuban politics and human rights.
- **Sergio Ángel**, Sergio Arboleda University, Colombia, “A Comparative Analysis of Cuba’s Hunger Maps: From the World Food Program’s Machine Learning Model to the Food Monitor Program’s Food Security Index”, Bio: Sergio Ángel is a political scientist and researcher specializing in human rights, governance, and technological innovation. He has led projects with organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy, Civil Rights Defenders, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Experienced in research design and qualitative analysis, he teaches and lectures on technology’s role in advancing academic and social impact initiatives.
- **Silvia Pedraza**, University of Michigan, “Cuba and Nicaragua: Origins and Early Stages of the Revolution”, Bio: Professor of Sociology and American Culture at the University of Michigan. Author of Political Disaffection in Cuba’s Revolution and Exodus; recipient of LASA’s 2025 Prize for Excellence in Cuban Studies.
- **Sonia Cavallo Runde**, DFR Global, “Venezuelan Economic Collapse and the Shifting Global Economic Conditions”, Bio: Argentine-trained economist and diplomat; former Permanent Representative to the OAS; MPP from Harvard Kennedy School; specializes in economic development and regional cooperation.
- **Suzanne Morse Moomaw**, University of Virginia, “The Batey After the Mill: Sugar’s Legacy in Cuba’s Economic Recovery”, Bio: Chair and Associate Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning at the University of Virginia; former Director of the University of Virginia Press; author of Smart Communities; research on postindustrial regeneration and civic planning.
- **Tamarys L. Bahamonde**, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York (CUNY) / American University, “La toma de decisiones del estado cubano durante los ciclos de crisis-reforma-contrarreforma (1990-2025)”, Bio: Assistant Professor of Public Administration at Medgar Evers College (CUNY) and Research Fellow at American University’s CLALS. Economist with a Ph.D. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy; studies Cuba’s crisis and reform cycles.



# 2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Teo A. Babún**, Outreach Aid to the Americas, “Confronting Cuba’s Humanitarian Emergency”, Bio: President and CEO of Outreach Aid to the Americas; over 30 years leading faith-based humanitarian networks. Frequent speaker at the UN and Freedom Forum; author of Faith and Freedom in Latin America.
- **Ted A. Henken**, Baruch College, City University of New York (CUNY), “Becoming Journalists, Becoming Independent: Bloggers, Journalists, and the ‘Great Convergence’ of Independent Digital Cuban Media, 2010–2020”, Bio: Professor of Sociology and Latin American Studies; former ASCE President; co-author of Entrepreneurial Cuba and co-editor of Cuba’s Digital Revolution; researcher on Cuban digital media and civil society.
- **Tessie San Martín**, FHI 360, Bio: CEO of FHI 360; expert in human development and inclusive economic growth. Former international development executive; advocate for gender equality and education; Ph.D. in Political Economy from Harvard University.
- **Thomas Laryea**, Of Counsel at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, “The Use of Sovereign Debt Tools, Political Risk Insurance, and Investor Protections: Legal Precedents from Post-Conflict or Post-Authoritarian Reconstructions”, Bio: Of Counsel at Orrick and former IMF senior lawyer; expert in sovereign debt restructuring and finance. Advisor on global sovereign and corporate debt cases.
- **Tim Parsa**, Cloud Money Ventures, “The Cuba Sandbox Experiment (CSE)”, Bio: U.S.-trained attorney and serial fintech entrepreneur (Uphold, Airtm, Air Protocol, Slyk). Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (Guatemala); specializes in compliant financial innovation in emerging markets.
- **Tony Costa**, Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba, Bio: Cuban-American human rights advocate and President of the Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba. Long-time leader at Costa Farms; promotes non-violent transition to democracy and civil society in Cuba.
- **Tyler Hinkle**, EPR, P.C. / University of Virginia, “The Batey After the Mill: Sugar’s Legacy in Cuba’s Economic Recovery”, Bio: Senior Planner at EPR, P.C. and Adjunct Professor at the University of Virginia. Focuses on long-range planning and rural development; recipient of the 2023 APA Virginia Distinguished New Professional Award.
- **Walter Palomino-Tamayo**, ESAN Graduate School of Business, Lima, Peru, “Service Delivery and Satisfaction under Socialism: Contrasts with Western Economies”, Bio: Professor of Marketing at ESAN Graduate School of Business in Lima, Peru; Ph.D. in Administrative Sciences and MBA from Tecnológico de Monterrey; researcher on marketing and international management.
- **William A. Messina, Jr.**, University of Florida, “Cuban Agriculture in a Death Spiral? Can It Recover?”, Bio: Agricultural economist at the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). Co-led collaborative Cuba research with the University of Havana from 1994–2023; advisor to U.S. congressional and executive agencies.

# NOTES

---