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# History of OLAS: Growth and Continued Presence

In 2009, the Spanish Club and OLAS united to create the present vision and profile: to enhance the university experience for Latino students, educate others about Latino cultures, and place language at the core of its cultural values.



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María Díaz and Dr. Corinne Pubill added another essential dimension to the organization's profile: community service. Since then, OLAS has served Latino communities through projects such as the 2010 Census and Dream Act information sessions, where members acted as interpreters; provided ongoing mentorship at Pinehurst Elementary School; and supported health services in Wicomico County during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the fall of 2018, after a brief hiatus, OLAS resumed activities when student Nelcy Ávila met Dr. Pubill. OLAS students organized film discussions of Latin American movies and conversation hours, known as "Sobremesa," at various Latino restaurants around town.



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Since then, OLAS has continued its work, remaining true to the dreams of its founders while adapting to the needs and interests of today's students, who, regardless of origin, find in OLAS a space for cultural exchange and personal growth through leadership and community service. For 20 plus years, OLAS has been building bridges on campus and in the community.

“ There weren't many students who identified as Latino ... Dr. Pubill explained that she had the vision of bringing back OLAS as a professional and strong organization, and I agreed with that. So, we both worked on it. ... Our vision was focused on engaging with the Latino community beyond the university.”

– Nelcy Avila, Interview, March 2024

1. OLAS members on Conway Hall lawn at Salisbury University, May 16, 2019
2. OLAS table dedicated to Colombia at Multicultural Fair, from left to right: Daniel Cruz, Thomas Zinzi, Oscar Hernandez, Jasmine Lopez, Angela Cordoba-Flores, Jocelyn Galvan, and Vanessa Reyes-Umanzor, Salisbury University, Guerrieri Student Union, December 1, 2023
3. OLAS Executive Board introducing the organization at the first meeting of the semester at Salisbury University, Guerrieri Student Union, September 2012
4. OLAS Cookout, Salisbury University, May 10, 2013
5. OLAS members at first meeting of the semester, September 9, 2014
6. OLAS executive board, from left to right: Camila Esquivel-Goelkel, Kelly Martinez, Theo Rafael Marroquin-Gamez, Angela Cordoba-Flores, Thomas Zinzi, Abigail Osorio-Torillo, and Oscar Hernández at Student Involvement Fair, Salisbury University, September 2024



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