

Latinxs and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences



Cynthia Oropesa Anhalt

Cynthia Oropesa Anhalt is an Associate Research Professor in the Department of Mathematics at her alma mater, The University of Arizona, in Tucson, Arizona. Daughter of a large mining truck mechanic, and later a realtor, and a seamstress-mother, Cynthia grew up attending public schools in Tucson and attended The University of Arizona as a first-generation student. Her family emigrated from Sonora, Mexico to Arizona when she was three years old, and she is grateful for her family's unwavering love and support in her education. She was raised in east Tucson near Davis Monthan Air Force Base, where she attended school with students from military families from different parts of the country. Her family's belief in education as a critical component for success inspired her to achieve in mathematics. Her interest in the mathematical preparation of teachers stems from her own experiences as a teacher of mathematics in the K-12 system and from her post-doctoral work with the National Science Foundation funded project, Center for the Mathematics Education of Latino/as. She is passionate about the teaching quality in Latinx/Hispanic communities and about the education of future teachers who will work in these communities. Through graduate school and post graduate, she connected with a number of mentors in the mathematics education community, specifically with those whose research interest is in mathematics education with a focus on teaching and learning for equity and social justice for underrepresented minority students. She continues to build life-long collaborations that aim to establish networks between mathematics educators and mathematicians on common goals in improving mathematics education.

Her research interest lies in the area of mathematical modeling in teacher preparation and student learning, with a particular emphasis on cultural relevance which leverages students' backgrounds for meaningful learning and teaching practices aimed at inclusion, equity, and social justice. Her publications include book chapters and articles in peer-reviewed journals, such as the Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education, Mathematical Teaching and Learning, Mathematics Teacher, and others. Her work in equity and social justice in mathematics education has influenced mathematics teacher preparation, especially for Latinx/Hispanic students through several National Science Foundation (NSF) grants.

"Hispanic Heritage Month means celebrating the positive contributions made by Latinx and Hispanic American people to recognize the presence of our rich heritage and culture in our diverse country. By celebrating the accomplishments, we bring a renewed awareness of the Latinx/Hispanic heritage and culture and its growing presence and influence on American culture. Growing up a Latinx/Hispanic female and studying mathematics and education allows me the privilege to support and advocate for Latinx/Hispanic students at the University of Arizona, a recently and proudly recognized Hispanic Serving Institution."

Lathisms was founded in 2016 in order to showcase the contributions of Latinx and Hispanic mathematicians during Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated in the United States from September 15 and October 15 every year. During this time, we feature/reveal a prominent Latinx/Hispanic mathematician daily. See all the featured mathematical scientists at LATHISMS.ORG.

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