

# Latinxs and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences



## Laura P. Schaposnik

Laura was born and raised in La Plata, Argentina. Her mother, Patricia Massolo (1950-1993), was a nuclear physicist and her father, Fidel A. Schaposnik, is a theoretical physicist working at the University of La Plata, UNLP. The daughter of two physicists, she spent her childhood surrounded by science, travelling around the world for her parents' conferences and work trips, and discovering the importance of collaborations among people from different origins.

After receiving her degree of Licenciada en Matemáticas from the UNLP she moved to England, where she obtained her DPhil from the University of Oxford with a prestigious Clarendon Scholarship. She was post-doctoral researcher at the University of Heidelberg and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, and she received a Humboldt fellowship which she held at FU Berlin and the University of Oxford. She moved to Chicago to take up a faculty position at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in 2015, where she is currently an Associate Professor. Since moving to Chicago she has been much more in touch with Latinx matters, realizing the importance and impact that ones' efforts may have.

Laura's research focuses on the study of the geometry and topology of the moduli spaces of decorated bundles, especially Higgs bundles and Hitchin systems, and geometric structures they parametrize. Laura's research interests also span applications of geometry within different areas of science, as well as the understanding of human behaviour. She has published papers on a range of mathematical applications including the study of the structure of icosahedral viruses, the growth of crystals, the propagation of diseases and the spread of rumours.

Laura has been mentoring through informal meetings, teaching, and outreach activities for over a decade. In particular, her efforts have been focused on contributing to advancements in diversity within the community. She has been an active member of the Association of Women in Mathematics (AWM), which she represented within the Joint Committee on Women (including as co-chair), and has volunteered to be academic jury for different student competitions across the world.

Since female and hispanic graduate students sometimes lack role models from which to learn, she has taken an active role in advising and mentoring them. She has also been very active giving lectures at schools for undergraduate women, and is currently co-organizing GROW 2020 (Graduate Research Opportunities for Women 2020), which is one of the largest events for young women in the country.

*"Hispanic Heritage Month has always served as a great setting to showcase the efforts and accomplishments of Latinxs, as well as the barriers to achieving success. This is especially pertinent in the midst of the COVID-19 epidemic, and the varied approaches of different countries and social groups to this crisis. In particular, it has made me proud to be from Argentina: a country where the guiding philosophy has been that the economy can eventually recover, but lives lost can never be brought back. I believe Argentina is providing a clear example of how a country can flatten the infection curve."*

---

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](http://LATHISMS.ORG).

*Thanks to the American Mathematical Society for support of Lathisms.*