

Latinxs and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences



Claudia Falcon

Claudia Falcon completed her Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC). From an early age, she knew she enjoyed mathematics when her parents motivated her to participate in mathematics olympiads representing her native Cuba. After immigrating to the US during high school, Claudia was fortunate to have mentors that encouraged her to take advanced physics and mathematics classes and informed her about scholarships for college. She attended UNC as an undergraduate mathematics student, where her interest in the applications of math blossomed during her involvement in The Joint Applied Math and Marine Sciences Fluids Lab at her university, which is an interdisciplinary research lab, combining math and physics research.

Her Ph.D. advisors Professors Roberto Camassa and Richard McLaughlin left her with a positive experience as a mentee which makes her passionate about research mentoring. In 2016, Claudia joined the Department of Mathematics at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), as a postdoc of Professor Andrea Bertozzi. At UCLA, Claudia continued to mentor students during UCLA's Computational and Applied Math Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) and through research seminar directed courses contributing to UCLA's Applied Mathematics Laboratory. Claudia Falcon's research interests are in the field of fluid dynamics, differential equations, and mathematical modeling with a combination of analytical, numerical, and experimental tools. The applications of her projects relate to other fields in applied mathematics, such as mathematical biology and physical oceanography.

Through her work in academia, and her personal trajectory, Claudia Falcon has been interested in providing opportunities to those students that would not otherwise have them. The exposure to research increases students' level of confidence in mathematics and encourages them to pursue a career in the STEM fields. As a measure of their research impacts, she has co-authored manuscripts with undergraduate students, and many continue working with her, even after the research program has ended. As a consequence, many of her students go on to being accepted at top graduate institutions in mathematics and even obtaining the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. Extending the concept of undergraduate research, Claudia has recently partnered with the program Girls Talk Math, a two-week mathematics day camp for high school girls, to start a sister chapter at UCLA. She is fortunate that her field of research contains a wealth of problems that are interesting in to a diverse audience.

"Hispanic heritage is a big part of my identity. In particular, the immigrant story highlighting the sacrifices made by parents so that their children could have a better future. Hispanic Heritage Month means the celebration and recognition of all of the stories of resilience that makes us unique in our journey towards contributing to our communities. Whether it is escaping the Cuban dictatorship and starting from nothing in the U.S., or being part of a Hispanic American family for many generations, Hispanic Heritage Month showcases the union of Latinxs from different walks of life and emphasizes their contributions to our community in our new country."

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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