

Latinxs and Hispanics in the Mathematical Sciences



Paul Hurtado

Associate Professor, University of Nevada, Reno

"For me, Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to collectively appreciate the long and colorful history of the communities and cultures born from the meeting of European and American peoples a few centuries ago, and all that has happened since. There's a lot of injustice and sorrow in that history, but also a lot of reinvention and cultural evolution that has brought us the diverse Hispanic cultural landscape that exists today globally, within the U.S., and in our local communities. It's also a time I think about where my family sits in that landscape, and to celebrate that."

Paul Hurtado is an Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Paul has been interested in biology since childhood, and his interest in science and math was encouraged by his parents Mary "Fran" Hurtado (née Kronwitter) and Mike Hurtado. He graduated from Central High School in Pueblo, CO in 1998 and enrolled at the local university as a double major (Biology & Chemistry) with thoughts about maybe minoring in Mathematics. While at the University of Southern Colorado (USC; now Colorado State University—Pueblo), Paul was torn between pursuing biology or mathematics. Eventually, he realized he could do both when he was introduced to mathematical biology. Paul graduated with three majors: a B.S. in Mathematics, and a B.S. in Biology/Chemistry. He subsequently matriculated into the Center for Applied Mathematics at Cornell and received a Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics under Dr. Stephen P. Ellner. Paul joined UNR's faculty in 2015, after a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Mathematical Biosciences Institute and the Aquatic Ecology Laboratory at The Ohio State University.

In his current position, Paul teaches a range of courses and advises undergraduate and graduate researchers. Paul's research lies at the intersection of the natural sciences and mathematics. He uses techniques from dynamical systems, probability, and statistics to develop and analyze mathematical models of biological systems to address biological questions of interest in fields like ecology, epidemiology, and immunology.

Paul's first bit of advice for students is, "find a good set of mentors who complement one another well, who will challenge you, and whose combined efforts will help support you in pursuing your academic and non-academic goals." Second, he tells students to "*work hard and play harder*" and find a healthy balance between work, family, and your other interests." Third, for students interested in combining math and another subject: "immerse yourself in both fields, and be creative in how you build expertise. Invite yourself to a lab group meeting, for example. Those experiences and contacts will be invaluable when tackling multidisciplinary projects."

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](https://lathisms.org).

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