

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW**

PRESENTS

*The Eleventh Annual
Hispanic Law Conference:
Latino Perspectives on the 2008 Election*

**WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW
4801 MASSACHUSETTS AVE,
6TH FLOOR
WASHINGTON DC, 20016**

MARCH 5, 2008



ELEVENTH ANNUAL HISPANIC LAW CONFERENCE

3:30-5:00 PM: SOCIAL MENTORING (HIGH SCHOOL/JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENTS)

The focus of these sessions is to expose high school and junior-college Latino/a students to a wide range of higher education alternatives and opportunities. It is conducted by members of the American University community and the Hispanic College Fund.

- **HISPANIC COLLEGE FUND WORKSHOP 1: WHY GO TO COLLEGE?**
- **HISPANIC COLLEGE FUND WORKSHOP 2: STRATEGIC APPLICATION PROCESS.**

Hispanic College Fund Mission:

The Hispanic College Fund provides talented and underprivileged Hispanic youth with vision, mentors, resources and scholarships. We are passionate about our mission to develop the next generation of Hispanic professionals and it's our partnerships with business, government and foundations that are making their success a reality.

3:30-5:00 PM: CAREER FORUM (LAW STUDENTS & ALUMNI)

The career forum will offer JD and LL.M. students from the Washington College of Law and other law schools an opportunity to interact and exchange information with representatives of organizations in the private, public, and non-profit sectors during the table-talk career forum.

Confirmed Organizations for the Career Forum:

Amnesty International USA
Arnold & Porter LLP
CASA de Maryland
Crowell & Moring LLP
Jones Day
Law Offices of Miriam B. Riedmiller
Montgomery County Office of the Public Defender
National Capital Legal Services
Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP
The Legal Aid Society of DC
U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Opportunity Commission
US Department of State
White & Case LLP
Wiley Rein LLP
WilmerHale

5:00-6:30PM: DEBATE: LATINO PERSPECTIVES ON THE 2008 ELECTION

Representatives of major political parties will address topical questions raised by law students from the U.S. and Latin America. The debate will be moderated by **Dean Claudio Grossman**, Washington College of Law, and webcast live at www.wcl.american.edu/hispanic.

Welcome Remarks : **Claudio Grossman**, Dean, Washington College of Law and Raymond Geraldson Scholar for International and Humanitarian Law and **Loretta Garcia**, President, Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia.

Democratic Perspective on the 2008 Election: Moses C. Mercado, Senior Vice President, Ogilvy Government Relations; Former Deputy Executive Director; and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for Governor Howard Dean at the Democratic National Committee.

Republican Perspective on the 2008 Election: Juan Carlos Benitez, Senior Vice President for Cassidy and Associates and Former Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices to the Bush II Administration.

6:30-7:15 PM: ALUMNI NETWORKING RECEPTION

Hosted by the Latino/a Alumni Association of the Washington College of Law (LAAW)

LAAW Board: Maryam Ahranjani ('01), Lynda Cevallos ('01), Agustina Del Campo ('05), Manuel Garcia ('00), Eric Garduño ('01), Juan Henao ('05), Lucero Ortiz ('07), Carlos Quintana ('00), Natasha Quiroga ('07), Shirley Rivadeneira ('04), Juan Sempertegui ('07)

7:15-9:00PM: ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Welcome Remarks: Dean Claudio Grossman, Washington College of Law

Master of Ceremony: Professor Anthony Varona, Washington College of Law

Keynote Speaker: Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D – MI)

Annual Diversity Award: *In recognition of an individual or organization that has contributed to the advancement of the Hispanic community of the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.* **Recipient: The Hispanic College Fund**

Edward Bou Alumni Award: *Named after Mr. Edward Bou, class of '58. Presented annually to a WCL graduate with a demonstrated commitment to our Latino community.* **Recipient: Manuel Garcia, Class of '00**

LaLSA Scholarship: *Awarded to Latino high school and college students who have demonstrated the desire to continue their education and a commitment to community service.*

Recipients: Lorena Molina, Thomas S. Wootton High School, Maryland and **Isela Melendez**, Wakefield High School, Virginia

Premio Inspiración: *Given annually to a Juris Doctor (JD) student who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to the Latino/a community nationally or internationally.* **Recipient: Sebastian Amar, J.D. '08**

Goldman-Grossman Award: *Established in honor of Professor Robert Goldman and Dean Claudio Grossman, renowned experts in the Inter-American legal system and pioneers of the International Legal Studies Program. It is given annually to a Legum Magister (LL.M.) student.* **Recipient: Maria Jose Veramendi, LL.M. '08**

Dean Claudio Grossman



Claudio Grossman is Professor of Law and Dean of American University Washington College of Law and the Raymond Geraldson Scholar for International and Humanitarian Law. Since his appointment as dean in 1995, WCL has further developed its intellectual creativity, pursuing numerous and exciting initiatives such as: dual degree programs; the LL.M. in Law and Government Program; the Supervised Externship Program; the S.J.D. Program; new LL.M. specializations; a joint LL.M./MBA degree; summer and semester abroad programs; the International Arbitration Program; the Intellectual Property Program; new clinics; and integrated sections and electives within the first year curriculum.

Dean Grossman is Vice Chair of the United Nations Committee against Torture, and a member of the Commission for the Control of Interpol's Files. He also serves as the Chair of the AALS Committee on International Cooperation. Dean Grossman was the President of the College of the Americas from November 2003-November 2007. He was a member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights from 1993-2001, where he served in numerous capacities including President (twice), First Vice President (twice), Second Vice President, the Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Populations, and Observer of the AMIA Trial.

Dean Grossman is also the author of numerous publications regarding international law and human rights and the recipient of numerous awards for his work in those fields. In 2007, Dean Grossman was awarded the Charles Norberg International Lawyer of the Year Award from the Washington chapter of the Inter-American Bar Association.

Ms. Loretta J. Garcia



Loretta Jean Garcia provides a broad range of legal services to businesses, organizations and individuals focusing on the resolution of disputes through negotiation, mediation and litigation. Ms. Garcia advises businesses and nonprofit organizations on issues including formation, structuring and restructuring, board governance, employment and labor issues, regulatory compliance, discrimination avoidance, and employment-related immigration. She writes and negotiates contracts (including English/Spanish), such as employee/consultant or termination agreements, teaming and venture arrangements, and transaction contracts. She represents client interests in regulatory enforcement proceedings and litigation. She also advises clients about laws and legislation and advocates their positions before governmental agencies.

For individuals, Ms. Garcia provides legal services in family law, including prenuptial and postnuptial agreements, separation and property settlement agreements, child custody and support arrangements, adoptions, and mediation and court hearings. She advises and represents employees with respect to employment and contractor agreements, disputes with employers, and severance arrangements. Ms. Garcia prepares estate documents and assists in resolving estate and probate disputes, including preparation of a plan for resolution, and representing the interested party in mediation and court hearings. She also advocates on behalf of students needing special education services, representing the student and family in meetings with school and district officials, and representing the student and family in due process hearings.

Active in community and professional organizations, Ms. Garcia is President of the Hispanic Bar Association of DC and is a founding board member of the HBA-DC Foundation. She previously served as HBA-DC Treasurer and board member. She is an active member in the Bar Association of Montgomery County and is a former board member of the Maryland Hispanic Bar Association. A long-standing member of the mandatory DC Bar, Ms. Garcia has served on its board of governors and several committees. She is a committee chair, former Treasurer and board member of the Women's Bar Association of DC. Ms. Garcia is past chair of the Policy Board of Legal Counsel for the Elderly in DC. She also has co-chaired several committees of the Federal Communications Bar Association.

Ms. Garcia is licensed to practice law in Maryland and the District of Columbia. She is a 1984 graduate of Georgetown University Law Center and holds a Master of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University. Ms. Garcia has two decades of experience as an attorney, including positions with MCI Telecommunications Corporation, the Federal Communications Commission, and the law firms of Dow Lohnes and Albertson, and LeBoeuf Lamb Leiby & McCrae (DC).

Ms. Garcia is trained as a mediator under Maryland law. She is a member of the Maryland Council for Dispute Resolution, serves on the panel of mediators for the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights, and is on the Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee of the Bar Association of Montgomery County. Ms. Garcia is conversant in Spanish and French.

Mr. Moses Mercado



With more than fifteen years of experience at the highest levels of Congress, national politics and corporate lobbying, Moses C. Mercado has developed an expertise in the development of public policy and managing effective public affairs campaigns. Mercado is a premier political organizer who has designed and executed winning strategic plans for leading public officials including U.S. Senator Barack Obama, Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean, U.S. Senator John Kerry and U.S. House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt. Currently, Mercado has been working as a senior advisor to Senator Obama's presidential campaign organizing and overseeing efforts in XX states.

Most recently, Mercado was a Managing Director at Ogilvy Government Relations in Washington, DC. In that capacity, Mercado advised Fortune 100 (50?) companies, financial institutions and national trade associations on successfully navigating legislative and regulatory challenges. In particular, Mercado developed comprehensive strategic plans to stabilize crises through the coordination of legislative advocacy, coalition building, paid media, grassroots organizing and media outreach. Mercado had previously served as Vice President of Federal Affairs to the American Insurance Association where he shaped the association's public policy goals and advised the nation's leading insurance companies

Mercado's political and public policy experience includes high ranking jobs in the U.S. House Democratic Leader's office and the Democratic National Committee. As the DNC's Deputy Executive Director of Inter-Governmental Affairs, Mercado was responsible for outreach and communications to Members of Congress, Governors, Mayors and local elected officials. Prior to that, as Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Policy Advisor to House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt, Mercado managed day-to-day operations of the Leader's office and served as liaison Members of the Democratic Caucus with an emphasis on newly-elected Members. Additionally, Mercado served as an advisor to Senator John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign overseeing efforts in the critical swing state of New Mexico.

A native of Texas, Mercado is a graduate of the University of Texas and received a law degree from South Texas College of Law in Houston. He is a member of the Texas Bar and the American Bar Association. As an At-Large Member of the Democratic National Committee, Mercado will also serve as a super delegate to the 2008 Democratic National Convention.

Mr. Alberto Benitez



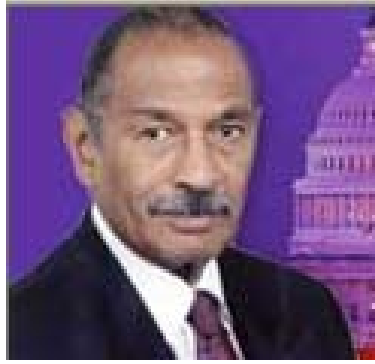
Juan Carlos Benitez is a major leader in the Republican Hispanic community. He was named as one of the most influential Hispanic Men by Hispanic Business Magazine in 2002 and makes regular appearances as a Republic Strategist and Analyst for MSNBC, CSPAN, CNN en Español, Unívisión, Telemundo, Azteca América, Voice of America and Epicentro Político.

Currently, Mr. Benitez works as Senior Vice President for Cassidy and Associates. He presently serves as one of two in-house international relations specialists and has particular expertise in labor, employment and justice issues. Prior to coming to Cassidy and Associates, he worked as Special Counsel to the United States Department of Justice in the Immigration and Related Unfair Employment Practices Division after being nominated by President George W. Bush and confirmed unanimously by the Senate in 2001. As Special Counsel, Mr. Benitez was the highest-ranking Hispanic presidential appointee at the Justice Department.

Mr. Benitez is the former President and Co-Founder of the Young Hispanic Republican Association and is a Vice-Chairman on the John McCain National Hispanic Advisory Board. He was the founding member of Adelante con Allen and is currently an active member of organizations such as RNC Hispanic Advisory Board and Hispanic Alliance for Progress Institute. In the past, Benitez was a member of the Hispanic National Bar Association as well as Chairman for the Latino Coalition.

A native of Puerto Rico, Mr. Benitez has a B.A. in Judicial Systems from Sacred Heart University in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He graduated cum laude from the Inter-American University Law School, where he also served as a Member of the Law Review Board. Mr. Benitez's leadership within the political, international affairs and employment opportunity communities over the years has won him several commendations and awards from prominent social and political organizations.

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.



Representative John Conyers, Jr., a Detroit Democrat, was re-elected to the 14th Congressional District in November 2006, to his 21st term in the U.S. House of Representatives. Congressman Conyers is also one of the 13 founding members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and is considered the Dean of that group. Formed in 1969, the CBC was founded to strengthen African-American lawmakers' ability to address the legislative concerns of Black and minority citizens.

In Mr. Conyers' 40 plus years in Congress, some of his major accomplishments include: the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, the Motor Voter Bill of 1993, the Martin Luther King Holiday Act of 1983, the Alcohol Warning Label Act of 1988, the Jazz Preservation Act of 1987, and was the driving force behind the Help America Vote Act of 2002. In response to problems experienced by voters during the 2000 Presidential Election, Rep. Conyers co-authored comprehensive election reform legislation to end discriminatory election practices, which was enacted in October 2002 and advances civil rights and protects voting rights, among other provisions.

In addition, Mr. Conyers is the principal author of the "End Racial Profiling Act," legislation that would ensure that the rights of all Americans are protected by banning racial profiling nationwide and by requiring all federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to take administrative steps to eliminate the practice. He is the recipient of many awards for leadership, including a Southern Christian Leadership Conference Award, which was presented to him by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Professor Anthony Varona



Antony Varona teaches Contracts, Administrative Law, Media Law, and Introduction to Public Law, and serves as the faculty director of the S.J.D. Program. Before joining the WCL faculty, he was an associate professor of law at Pace Law School in New York. Before that, he served as general counsel and legal director for the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay civil rights organization. He built HRC's legal department, directed its legislative, regulatory, and appellate amicus work, launched national law fellow and pro bono attorney programs, and served as counsel to HRC's board of directors and the organization's corporate, educational, and media initiatives.

Professor Varona taught as an adjunct law professor for three years at Georgetown University, and served as a Wasserstein Fellow at Harvard Law School. He serves on the board of directors of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), and is a member of the Society of American Law Teachers and the Hispanic Bar Association of Washington. He has served on the boards of the Human Rights Campaign and the Alliance for Justice, was on the New York Advisory Board for the American Constitution Society, was founding chairperson of the AIDS Action Council's Legal Advisory Board, and served as a member of the Judicial Selection Steering Committee of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

Professor Varona practiced communications law at the Washington offices of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP, and Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky & Popeo, PC. He began his legal career as an honors program attorney for the Federal Communications Commission.

Having earned his A.B. from Boston College, Professor Varona went on to earn a J.D. from Boston College Law School and an LL.M. from Georgetown University.

Professor Varona's scholarship has included articles concerning civil rights, employment discrimination, hate crimes, and communications law, published in law reviews associated with the College of William & Mary, the Universities of Michigan and Minnesota, and Catholic, Georgetown and Stanford Universities. He has lectured widely on these topics, and has appeared as a legal commentator on CNN, Headline News, Fox News Network, Court TV, MSNBC, and in a variety of major daily newspapers and legal periodicals.

Professor Varona serves on the Faculty Review Board of the *Administrative Law Review*, and as faculty advisor to the Latino/a Law Students Association (LaLSA) and *The Modern American*. He was named the Washington College of Law *Professor of the Year* for 2007, and was profiled by the *National Law Journal* in May 2000.

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