



FOOD AND COMMUNITY

SPAN 247: Gastropoética Latinoamericana

Prof. Juan Suarez Ontaneda

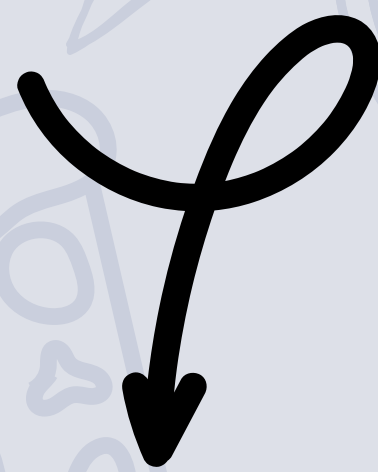
Field Sites: Puentes de Salud Philadelphia, PA, ACLAMO, PA

Alessia Seijas Fuenmayor '28, Lourdes Sankar '27, Marielle Soluri '28, Lucía Román Harter '26

The Process

Meeting 1

Our first session with the Lanzando Líderes program at Puentes de Salud, each group created an educational activity surrounding a Latin American food item such as pineapple, beans, coconuts, corn, and others. Some activities included hot potato trivia, identifying different types of the item, and preparing a snack with the food.



Meeting 2

Our second session was also with Puentes de Salud. We panned recipes that were accessible and easy for families to make. Our group made “Mangonadas” a special drink that is common in Mexican and Tex-Mex culture. We blended lime, mango, chamoy, and tajin together to make the delicious beverage. For many of the students, it was their first time trying the drink and we got to share our community and food that reminded us of home.



Meeting 3

Our third session was with students from ACLAMO at Bryn Mawr. In small groups of students from both ACLAMO and Bryn Mawr, we had discussions about various recipes and dishes that were significant to us. After our discussions, we led the students on a tour of Bryn Mawr, and ended with dinner together in the dining hall, where Associate Director for Administration of Dining services, Richard Clow explained about what goes into creating the dining hall menu.

Organizations



Puentes de Salud is a nonprofit organization that promotes the health and well-being of the immigrant Latino community in South Philadelphia through high-quality medical services, innovative educational programs, and community development.



ACLAMO is a nonprofit community service organization that provides educational programs, social services, and access to health and wellness programs to Latinos and other community members to empower them to fully achieve their life potential.

Student takeaways

I have worked with kids on several occasions and always find it fulfilling because they view the world differently than adults do--they are impressionable so we can teach them a lot but it is also an opportunity to learn from them. Last semester I had met some of the students from ACLAMO in another class and it was great to be able to see them again.

Lucia

We got to teach the kids of Puentes de Salud and ACLAMO about different ingredients and the foodways that allowed ingredients to be a part of our current diets and cuisines. I learned the true importance of food to be the people that you share it with. We got to have meals with both groups of kids and we talked about all the food we loved from our childhoods. Food is a connecting factor that connects people from any background, ethnicity, or community.

Lourdes

This experience allowed me to get out of my comfort zone and taught me so much about planning and interacting with kids. I was able to share my passion of food, spanish and higher education with kids that look like me!

Alessia

This was my first time working with high school-aged students, and this experience really taught me a lot. It was super interesting to get to know the kids and hear about their experiences as high school students in Philadelphia. Additionally, it was very rewarding to be able to hear about and share the different ways in which food connects people across different cultures and identities.

Marielle