



Jornada Costarricense – Speakers



Isabel Montero de la Cámara (Ambassador of Costa Rica to Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Poland, since 2012) studied Philosophy at the University of Costa Rica and Dramatic Arts in Paris. She began working at the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and served at the Embassy in Bonn (1974-78 and 1985-93). In 1978 Germany honoured her with the Grosses Bundesverdienstkreuz. She was promoted to Ambassador in 1996, and held office in Switzerland, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia (2003) and the Russian Federation (2007). At Headquarters she served in the Foreign Policy Division, as assistant to the Minister for the Organization of American States and Candidacies, Deputy Director of the Diplomatic Academy, Director for Religious Affairs and Protocol. Besides her diplomatic activity she was well known for her acting and received the Costa Rican National Prize of Theatre. costa.rica@bluewin.ch



Patrick Stach (Board of Governors, University of St.Gallen) studied Law at the University of St.Gallen and received his PhD in 1991 with a dissertation on precautionary measures. Aside from his various memberships in distinguished associations and boards of directors, Dr. Stach has authored publications of the Code of Obligations and on legal issues in the field of Medicine in prestigious journals. Corporate, family and inheritance law are among the areas of Dr. Stach's practice (including all courts of the Principality of Liechtenstein) and topics on which he gives regular lectures. Furthermore his office executes wills and tenures a notary public. stach@stach.ch



Yvette Sánchez (CLS-HSG), Director of the Centre for Latin American Studies and Full Professor of Hispanic Cultures at the University of St.Gallen. She is engaged in several research projects in the Latin American area basically attempting to bridge the gap between cultural studies and social sciences, e.g. directing the postgraduate program *The Dynamics of Transcultural Governance and Management in Latin America*. As a major case of transcultural processes she has done research on the US Latinos. Prof. Sánchez is currently editing several books, including a manual on *Transculturalism and Business in the BRIC States*. yvette.sanchez@unisg.ch



Stefan Burgdörfer (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Costa Rica and Panamá Office) holds a Master's Degree in History, Communication and Political Sciences from the Free University of Berlin. He was funded by the KAS, and also spent some months at the American University in Washington D.C., U.S.A. From 1999 to 2007 he worked both as an intern and a freelance journalist for different media. Between 2008 and 2010 he organized seminars at the Journalism Academy of the KAS. From 2010 to 2014 he was editor-in-chief of the KAS *Auslandsinformationen/International Reports*. Since August 2014, he has been the director of the KAS Office Costa Rica-Panamá in San José. stefan.burgdoerfer@kas.de



Julia Schünzel (Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg) is currently working on a Master's degree in International Area Studies and an additional one in Economic Law, where she focuses on international relations in the European Union. She is a member of the leadership committee of the organization Solidaridad e.V. Halle, an NGO that aims to provide education in and about Latin America. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Romance Studies and Economic Science from the University of Halle-Wittenberg, with a focus on Latin America, migration and economic development. In 2013, she completed her bachelor's thesis on migration between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, focusing on the economic and political aspects of the migration flow. julia.schuenzel@posteo.de



Peter Grüttner (University of Halle) received an M.A. in Latin American Studies from the Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg. His publications include a volume on NICT and traditional media in Costa Rica (2007), and a number of articles and translations discussing selected topics within the Ibero-American cultures. In 2013 he went to Brazil on a DAAD scholarship to start the research for his Ph.D. project, which focused on the representation of space and power in Brazilian media. Employing a Cultural-Studies approach he researches and lectures on Latin American visual icons, food and colonialism, and representations of history in Lusophone films and photography at Halle University. Off campus he teaches young adults the basics of IT. peter.gruettner@gmx.net



Charlotte Robert (Fleur de Café Ltda) fell in love with coffee flowers during a stay in Costa Rica when she was learning Spanish. She is the founder and president of Fleur de Café. After more than 20 years in SECO, she left in order to make her dream come true: create a perfume with coffee flowers. It took the perfume four years of technical development and one year to find investors until it reached the market in 2008. Fleur de Café has so far won five awards including the International Star Award for Quality. charlotte.robert@fleurdecafe.ch



Ulrich Frei (FUNDES, San José) has been the Executive Director of FUNDES International, based in Costa Rica since 2008. He graduated with a Master's Degree in Pharmacy from the Ecole Suisse de Droguerie and an MBA from IMD in Lausanne. He has considerable management experience and has held various senior management positions, among others in Química Suiza S.A, Novartis A.G. and CIBA-GEIGY A.G., working in Peru, Venezuela, Chile, Indonesia and Hong Kong. Before that, Mr. Frei had been the general manager of SENN CHEMICALS AG in Switzerland, where he led operations, including subsidiaries in France and the USA. ufrei@fundes.org





Monika Nikolic (Proyecto Mosaico, Nicaragua) studied Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology at the Free University of Berlin and the Universidad de Costa Rica. In 2014, she completed her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology at the Institute for Latin American Studies (LAI), at the Free University of Berlin. In her thesis *Identität in der Küche. Kulturelle Globalisierung und regionale Traditionen in Costa Rica* (transcript, 2015), she examines the global-local relationship in the field of cuisine and eating habits as identity markers in Costa Rica. She explores the influences of tourism and transmigration on local actors and their construction and display of their identities in culinary discourse. She did fieldwork in Costa Rica and is currently working for Proyecto Mosaico e.V. in Granada, Nicaragua, in the field of volunteer coordination and management. mona.nikolic@web.de



Claudia Ávila is a choir conductor and pianist. She graduated from the Universidad de los Andes in 2008. Since she moved to Basel in 2009, Claudia Ávila has studied singing (early music) at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. Her interests are wide: she sings from early 15th-century to contemporary music, and folk music from Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile and Peru. She has taken additional repertoire and style training with various masters, and opera training. She has attended different master classes in Switzerland and Germany, and has participated in opera staging and acting workshops. claudiaa.22@gmail.com



Vittoria Pagani obtained the classical guitar diplomas of the 1st and 2nd level (Bachelor and Master) at the "Istituto Superiore di Musica G. Cantelli" in Italy. She studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Basel since 2010. In 2008 she won the "Nazionale delle Arti" award in guitar performance, and in 2009 she won the first prize in the "Internazionale di interpretazione Musicale Carlo Mosso". Her interests in world music led her to take flamenco guitar and theory lessons at the Conservatory of Murcia (Spain) as well as modal improvisation and Indian music classes under the guidance of Ken Zuckerman in Basel. pagani.vittoria@gmail.com



Johann Dähler (Swiss Tropical Fruit Marketing). After having completed the Agricultural College in Switzerland, on his way to Costa Rica by a cargo ship, he stopped and decided to stay in Ivory Coast buying a pineapple plantation and cultivating the fruit successfully, until a massive drop in pineapple prices and the start of the civil war in the country forced him to return to Switzerland. Later, he started to build up a family business with his sons in Costa Rica cultivating pineapples and other fruits. He then went back to Ivory Coast, where he rebuilt the business of fruits, cocoa and rubber together with his daughter. Today Johann Dähler regularly commutes between Costa Rica, Ivory Coast and Switzerland. ceo@swisstropical.ch



Steffen Tolle (Finpuls AG) has over 25 years of expertise in banking and finance. He started his career at Wegelin & Co. Private Bankers in 1991, was elected Managing Partner in 1999 and held this position for 14 years. He studied business administration with a major in finance and accounting at the University of St.Gallen and obtained his Ph.D. with the thesis "Dynamic Hedging-Strategies using SMI-Futures". He has authored various publications, and was co-author of „Structured Products in Wealth Management“. He is a member of the Swiss Society for Financial Market Research. In addition to his advisory activities, he is the founder and president of two charitable foundations in Costa Rica: "EduNámica", dedicated to give marginalized children and youth equal access to education, and "Ecovida", which engages with ecology and wildlife. steffen.tolle@tuanis.ch



Marco Tschapka (Universität Ulm) did his Ph.D. at the University of Erlangen and today is a Professor at the Institute of Evolutionary Ecology and Conservation Genomics at the University of Ulm, as well as a research associate at the Smithsonian Tropical Institute in Panama. His research focuses on the interaction between bats and plants, especially bat-pollinated flowers. He has studied adaptations in the foraging behavior of certain nectar-feeding bats, like the elongation of muzzles and tongues and the ability for hovering in front of flowers. Prof. Tschapka also studies behavioral and disease ecology of bats and arachnid communities. He works with his students on projects in Costa Rica, México, Panamá, Ghana and Tanzania. marco.tschapka@uni-ulm.de



Susanne Müller-Using (Costa Rica-Zentrum, Universität Osnabrück) was raised in Mexico. She is an expert in culture-comparative educational theory. She acts as Scientific Director of the Costa Rica Research Center at Osnabrück University. She did comparative cultural and religious studies as well as philosophy at Philipps-Universität Marburg and educational studies at Bielefeld University, where she obtained her Ph.D. in 2009. Her research is mostly based on international and intercultural comparison, currently focusing on university and teacher education in Costa Rica and Central America. She is especially interested in the fields of: pedagogic ethics, empathy, values and human rights education (primarily in teacher education), creativity and individual talent(s), pedagogic professionalization as well as teacher education and advanced training. susamuel@uos.de



Philippe G. Nell (SECO), Minister, Head of Americas Unit, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Bern. He is in charge of trade and investment issues that concern Swiss firms across the Americas and has published several articles on Swiss economic integration policy and specific WTO negotiations. He is the editor of the yearly *Swiss-Latin American Economic Relations Report* (SECO) and lecturer at the European Institute of the University of Basel and at the University of Fribourg. philippe.nell@seco.admin.ch

