

Southwest Region

July 2023 to June 2024

Sara Ayers-Rigsby, MA, RPA, Director
Natalie De La Torre Salas, MA, RPA, Public Archaeology Coordinator
Victoria Piotrowski, Graduate Assistant
Oscar Pereira, Graduate Assistant



Photo 1: Natalie De La Torre Salas at event organized by Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge

First Quarter Highlight: Address Archaeological Heritage of All Florida Communities-Honrando Nuestra Historia Series of Events

Natalie De La Torre Salas coordinated a series of events with local partners in Southwest Florida and beyond as part of the statewide event series Honrando Nuestra Historia. Events ranged from online talks focused on Latine history and culture, to in person gatherings throughout the region at locations like the Immokalee Pioneer Museum.

The monthlong series of programs involved 15 events including virtual lectures, in person programs, and exhibits.

10	11	12	13	14	15 FAMILY FUN NIGHT - J.N. DING DARLING EVENT VIRTUAL CAFECITO: DR. ALBERT GONZALEZ	16 CELEBRANDO LATINE - IMMOKALEE MUSEUM
17	18	19	20 VIRTUAL CAFECITO: ADAM KNIGHT	21	22	23 FAMILY FUN DAY - MIHM
24	25	26	27	28 ACROSS THE FLORIDA STRAITS TO CUBA - CLEWISTON MUSEUM EVENT	29 HISTORY HAPPY HOUR - FL TRUST + FPAN VIRTUAL CAFECITO: DR. ANDRES GARZON	30 COMMUNITY UPDATE RESEARCH - ANTHRO MAGGIE



OCTOBER 2023



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 DISASTERS AND US LATINE HERITAGE - CAPE CORAL MUSEUM + FPAN	4 INTRO. TO MEXICAN ARCHAEOLOGY - BONITA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY + FPAN	5	6 VIRTUAL CAFECITO: GELENIA TRINIDAD RIVERA	7 BAILE Y COMIDA - MOUND HOUSE THE ANCESTOR'S TABLE EXHIBIT - IMMOKALEE MUSEUM JILONA LIGHTHOUSE TOUR
8	9 VIRTUAL CAFECITO: DR. NYDIA PONTON	10	11 BILINGUAL ARCHAEOLOGY STORY TIME - NORTH FT MYERS PUBLIC LIBRARY + FPAN	12	13	14

Photo 2: Event Calendar



Photo 3: De La Torre Salas with volunteer at CRPT

Second Quarter Highlight: Preserving Historic Cemeteries: CRPT at the Frierson Hendry Cemetery

Natalie De La Torre Salas led a CRPT workshop at the historic Frierson Hendry Cemetery in Fort Myers. This cemetery was established in the 1870s and is thought to be the oldest cemetery in Fort Myers. Over the course of the morning, participants learned about laws protecting historic cemeteries, methodology, and issues surrounding cemetery management before heading out to an afternoon practical session to clean headstones with D-2.



Third Quarter Highlight: Calusa Coast and Florida Archaeology Month event series

Throughout 2024, Natalie De La Torre Salas collaborated with multiple organizations in the area including Lovers Key State Park, the Randell Research Center on Pine Island, the Marco Island Historical Society, and many others to put together a series of events in March highlighting the archaeological record of the area. The Calusa Coast event series included talks, festivals, and presentations. The program is a collaborative effort between museums and educational organizations in Southwest Florida to educate people about the archaeology and ethnography of the Indigenous peoples of Southwest Florida. This year the program had over eight events, ranging from archaeology festivals to Community Conversation about Heritage At Risk.

Other Highlights

- De La Torre Salas participated in COP28 in Dubai as part of the Latino Climate Heritage Council.
- De La Torre Salas completed Archaeological Resource Management training.
- Ayers-Rigsby provided assistance to the State Division of Historical Resources with a potential 872 case. This case received significant media attention including [WINK](#), [New-Press](#), and [WBBH](#).
- Ayers-Rigsby's ongoing efforts at Ortona Mounds (Glades County) were documented as part of an WGCU mini podcast, [Forgotten Park](#).