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[ENGLISH VERSION]

## **Hello Incoming Graduate Student,**

On behalf of the Latin American Graduate Organization of Students (LAGOS), welcome to the University of Pittsburgh and your new graduate school journey!

As an incoming graduate student, you may feel a mix of emotions but we hope to help make your transition a little smoother. This last year has brought many changes, uncertainties, and stressors. LAGOS exists as an organization to provide Latinx graduate and professional students ongoing support and advocacy, and guidance through the difficulties that graduate school and the current social and political climate bring.

LAGOS aims to bring together Latinx graduate students across the University to create a diverse academic community in which we can socialize, collaborate, and support each other in a safe space. We host monthly meetings, put on various Latinx-centered activities and events, and regularly partner with organizations around campus and the Pittsburgh community.

Like much of the United States, the Latinx community at Pitt is growing rapidly. In 2019, out of more than 9,000 graduate and professional students, about 130 were international students from Latin American origins. Another 378 are students from the United States who identify as Latinx or Hispanic. Of course, all of these students come from diverse backgrounds, countries, and have a wide range of personal and professional interests. However, we find common ground in the rich histories, cultures, and languages of our families and share new foods, stories, and music with each other.

Pitt is taking many steps to acknowledge our culture and be inclusive. For example, the Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations are in their 3rd year and there is currently a Latinx faculty cluster hire initiative underway. Additionally, LAGOS is currently leading a Latinx Graduate Student Mentoring Initiative to ensure faculty who do not identify as Hispanic or Latinx have the initial knowledge needed when working with students from our backgrounds.

Visit our website to learn more about LAGOS, get connected, and for a variety of resources to help you get settled in Pittsburgh. If you need help navigating anything or have questions, we are here to help. Do not hesitate to reach out to the LAGOS e-mail below, contact sheet on our website, or directly to any member from our executive board (contact information also on our website).

Lastly, we would like to invite you to a special Incoming Graduate Student Welcome Picnic at the Park, for which we will provide delicious food. Please consider joining us to start meeting new people and getting to know what Pittsburgh has to offer. We are continuously working with the university and public health guidelines to ensure this event is safe for everyone. More information and updates regarding this event is on our website.

We are passionate about serving the graduate student community and we hope to meet you during your time at Pitt.

**In Solidarity,  
2020-2021 LAGOS Executive Board**

\*We use Latinx as a gender-neutral and all-inclusive term for those that have origins in Latin American and Hispanic countries, families, and cultures.

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