

LACEA, The Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association

by MAURICIO CARDENAS | Latin America Initiative, The Brookings Institution | mcardenas@brookings.edu
and MARCELA ESLAVA | Universidad de los Andes | meslava@uniandes.edu.co

Editor's note: The Summer issue of the *Forum* included a section devoted to the activities of a number of professional associations that serve Latin Americanists around the world. For the most part these focus on sub-regions of the Americas, or draw on experts on the region from different parts of the world. Another sort of professional association is discipline-based, and we are pleased to present here two examples: the Latin American and Caribbean Economics Association (LACEA) and the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers, both of which are described in this section in brief accounts by their officers. ■

The Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association was founded in July 1992 to encourage greater professional interaction and foster increased dialogue among researchers and practitioners whose work focuses on the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Since its inception, LACEA has grown to an organization with an annual average of 800 active members. Besides organizing activities of interest for economists in general, LACEA sponsors four specialized research networks: the Network on Inequality and Poverty (NIP); the Political Economy Group (PEG); the Regional Integration Network (RIN); and the Workshop on International Economics and Finance. Information about LACEA's history, bylaws, and activities can be found at www.lacea.org.

Every year, LACEA and its associated networks organize meetings attended by economists and social scientists with an interest in LAC. Starting from 1996, the Association has held annual meetings in Mexico City (2), Bogotá (2), Buenos Aires, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Madrid, Puebla, San José Costa Rica and Paris. These meetings have been joint with the Latin American Chapter of the Econometric Society since 2006. The 2007 Annual Meeting was held at the Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá. That meeting gathered close to 800 participants; the program featured over 300 contributed papers and several invited sessions and lectures by recognized economists. Besides the Annual Meeting of LACEA, each of the associated networks organizes regular meetings focusing on the specific areas of interest. The programs of these meetings feature a few papers chosen, through competitive processes, from a pool of submitted documents. These meetings allow lengthy and detailed discussion of each of the papers presented, contributing to the quality of research by LACEA members.

Since 2000, LACEA has been publishing its own journal, *Economía*, that has recently released its fourteenth issue. Modeled after the Brookings Papers on Economic Activity and published by the Brookings Press, *Economía* is a policy journal, that is, one in which new theories or techniques are applied to policy questions. The journal seeks papers on issues that are both at the forefront of the policy agenda and of broad interest to countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. *Economía* aims for the highest standards of theoretical and statistical rigor, but only publishes papers that are written in a style and language that make them accessible to policymakers.

LACEA also provides other services to its members. All LACEA members currently have access to JSTOR's Economic and Business Collection. They also receive LACEA's monthly Newsletter, featuring job postings, calls for papers, and other announcements of interest to our membership. In 2008 LACEA organized a short course on Applied Microeconomic and Panel Data techniques, as part of a broader reaching training program sponsored by the Global Development Network.

In sum, the Association is already playing a leading role in the Economics profession in the region. Its annual meetings are considered world class in terms of size and quality. Also, LACEA is considered one of the most active regional partners of the Global development Network, an international organization based in Delhi, India. ■