## Institute/Center Data

### Directory Information

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<th>I/C Name:</th>
<th>Center for Administration of Justice</th>
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<tr>
<td>I/C Code:</td>
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<td>University:</td>
<td>FIU</td>
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<td>I/C Type:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I/C Director:</td>
<td>Luis Salas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discipline(s)</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>I/C Address:</td>
<td>ACI-331 Florida North Miami</td>
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<tr>
<td>I/C Telephone:</td>
<td>305 919-5952</td>
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<td>I/C E-Mail Address:</td>
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<td>Affiliated Universities:</td>
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### Mission and Areas of Focus

**Mission Statement:**
The Center for the Administration of Justice (CAJ) is a research and training center created in 1984 as a unit of the College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) at FIU. CAJ has engaged as one of the major resources in the field of justice development in Latin America. During its years of existence, CAJ has received over $12 million in research and training grants from federal, international and state sources. CAJ is carrying out the Hispanic Crime Prevention project funded by the State of Florida which has the primary goals to reduce the percentage of crime among Hispanics, provide information and support to law enforcement agencies, insure greater accuracy and reporting of crime against Hispanics in our state, and increase community's awareness of the crime prevention programs and services available to them. CAJ also has been involved in developing programs to combat corruption in Latin America. CAJ has had important programs in almost all Latin America and has contributed to the restructuring of the administration of justice systems in those countries. During the last year CAJ has also carried out projects restructuring the land-registries in several Central

### Key Terms:

**Areas of Focus**
- Administration of Justice
- Justice Development
- Crime Prevention
- Hispanic Crime Prevention
- Latin America Justice
- Anticorruption
CENTER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Executive Summary

The Center for the Administration of Justice was established in 1984 as a unit of the College of Health and Urban Affairs (CHUA) at Florida International University to engage in research, training and public education about the administration of justice in Florida and Latin America. With offices in Miami and overseas, CAJ has become a unique international resource at the forefront of justice sector reform in this hemisphere. “CAJ’s pioneering work called the attention of international agencies and the entire international community towards the justice sector problems in Latin American countries; because of it, law reform, modernization of judicial structures, and judicial training are, among others, essential components of the international cooperation that is trying to strengthen Rule of Law and Democracy in the Latin American Region” says Roberto Cuellar, Executive Director of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, a UN organization. While emphasizing its foreign mission, the Center is also committed to support crime prevention efforts directed at Hispanics in the United States.

CAJ employs a multidisciplinary and international staff of specialists, including lawyers, political scientists, public administrators and public policy analysts. It has become a leading source of information and leadership on justice sector reform issues in Latin America. Its assessments have been widely disseminated and have been critical in public policy-making throughout the region. The Center is also involved in research, technical assistance, preparation of reports and publications, training, and dissemination of information through the mass media. For the last three years, CAJ has supported a Website for the dissemination of information and free downloading of its publications. Public education has, and continues to be, one of its primary missions.

Since its inception, the Center has been at the forefront of research and planning in the field of justice administration in Latin America. “While being an academic entity, we stress our ability to identify and solve problems through the adoption of cost-effective and practical solutions,” says Professor Luis Salas, director of the Center. “Our in-house expertise combined with an extensive multi-cultural network of experts and resources allows us to provide high quality services to public sector clients throughout the hemisphere.” International donor agencies have recognized CAJ’s capacity to deliver quality work products in a timely fashion while ensuring sound fiscal management of donor's funds. Donor agencies have awarded over $16 million dollars to CAJ since 1984. Currently, the Center is administering multi-year assistance projects in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua.

Giving special emphasis on support to local efforts to strengthen and invigorate fair and independent justice systems, the CAJ regularly works with public officials, scholars and practitioners in Latin America. “The Center’s activities have had a profound and positive impact in all areas of Justice Administration in Latin America; CAJ has conducted and supported assessments and studies that pointed out, in advance enough, the deficiencies and dysfunctions of Latin American Justice systems and also proposed specific and concrete solutions at all levels of justice administration systems, promoting respect for human rights, due process of law and fair, efficient, and transparent justice systems”, said Justice Daniel Gonzalez Alvarez, President of the Criminal Section of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica.

CAJ is committed to providing high quality, personalized services to each of its clients. “Our unparalleled network of resources and extensive experience has resulted in the provision of
services in almost all areas of the justice spectrum. We have conducted assessments (limited and sector-wide), project identification and development, evaluation, technical assistance, and institutional development. Additionally, we have sponsored periodic conferences and issued major publications in this field,” says Professor Salas.

**Academic Mission**

The Center is cognizant of its academic responsibility as an academic unit of a major US university. It has furthered its academic mission by sponsoring workshops and seminars, sponsoring publications, development of a bibliographic database, entering into academic exchange programs and participating in academic workshops and meetings.

**Conferences and Training**

An integral part of the Center's academic mission is sponsoring major conferences on justice issues. “We have held national workshops in six countries to review the state of the justice sector and to encourage national leaders to address concerns raised in an evaluation of the sector. Additionally, we have conducted national seminars to review specific issues facing the sector,” added Salas. For example, incorporation of an investigative police force into the Attorney General's Office in Panama; money laundering seminars in Bolivia; restructuring of the Judicial Inspector’s Office, case tracking system design and training for the Judicial Inspector’s Office, the Public Defender’s Office and the Attorney General’s Office in Honduras; public corruption, interagency cooperation, criminal law, alternative dispute resolution, judicial career law, registries and court reorganization seminars and workshops in Honduras; public defender training in Bolivia, Honduras and the Dominican Republic; development of judicial training capability in Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, and training of judges and attorneys in modern trends in criminal law, constitutional law, criminal procedure and administrative law in Bolivia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela. All of these activities have been in support of or resulted in major reform initiatives.

CAJ has also managed regional conferences on major issues: information systems technologies, media-justice relations, court administration, gender issues facing the justice sector, alternative dispute resolution, property registration systems, civil procedure, and the impact of the justice system on indigenous communities. Additionally, CAJ has cosponsored meetings of Presidents of Latin American Supreme Courts and Presidents of Central American Supreme Courts to discuss common issues facing their systems. A variety of workshops and conferences have been coordinating in Miami to strengthen the capacity of Latin American Justice Commissions to adequately elaborate their mid and long-term workplans, Brazilian Justice Sector officials and Costa Rican Justice Sector officials have come to Miami to receive training in the areas of planning, justice administration, interagency cooperation and law school curriculum development.

In addition to these activities in furtherance of the improvement of the administration of justice in Latin America, “we have conducted a variety of workshops in Florida dealing with this State’s justice system,” said Salas. “Two years ago, for example, we cosponsored a workshop with the Dade County Bar Association on public ethics in South Florida. We have also sponsored training seminars on domestic violence and juvenile crime in Miami-Dade County and this year CAJ sponsored a regional workshop in Orlando on the problem of domestic violence in Central Florida and the justice system’s response.
**Academic Exchanges**

An integral component of our academic mission is the establishment of linkages with important similarly situated academic centers throughout the region. One of CAJ’s proudest achievements has been sponsoring doctoral law students from other countries to conduct their research in furtherance of their doctoral thesis. During the last two years, for example, CAJ has received doctoral students from the law faculties of the University of Valencia, and the Jaume I University in Castellón, Spain. These students have benefited from the Center’s expertise and been able to use its bibliographic database during their stay at the Center.

CAJ has also entered into a number of academic cooperation agreements with a number of foreign academic institutions. As part of these agreements, Center staff has participated in workshops sponsored by law faculties in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Israel, Nicaragua, Panama, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, and Uruguay. In recognition of its expertise, the Center assisted the law faculty at the University of San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador to develop a research center that could support the modernization of their judiciary. The Center also assisted the Law School of the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, reviewing and up-dating their curricula and establishing their master’s International Law Course (Cátedra).

**Documentation Center**

One of the major limitations of researchers analyzing the legal systems of developing countries is the lack of available documentation. Since 1984, CAJ has been acquiring and cataloguing Latin American source materials and developing one of the most comprehensive collections of legal materials on the region. These, and other resources, have been available to researchers from the region as well as the United States.

**Florida Activities**

In addition to its international mission, CAJ is cognizant of its responsibility to the State of Florida and has been engaged in a series of crime prevention initiatives in this State. The goal of this program, funded by Florida’s Attorney General, is to educate Hispanics in this State on crime prevention and the operation of the legal system. This is a project that began in 1995 with the goal of reducing the incidence of crime in the Hispanic community and to inform this community about the operation of Florida’s justice system.

CAJ maintains offices in Miami and Orlando to carry out this project’s activities. CAJ produces a monthly one-half-hour television interview show on criminal law issues broadcast on commercial and public stations in Miami and Orlando. A similar format is followed for radio broadcasts as well as the production of informational messages and public service announcements. These programs provide information with the objective of increasing the Hispanic community’s awareness and involvement in crime prevention programs and legal issues affecting them. Local public officials and community leaders are afforded an opportunity to appear in many of these programs to present their agencies’ position on justice issues of special concern to Hispanics. For example, judges appeared to discuss the issue of judicial retention in Miami-Dade County; Mayor Alex Penellas addressed the issue of gun control; experts addressed the growing concern over school violence; and representatives from community agencies explained the services available to victims of domestic violence.
An example of our efforts to educate the Hispanic community of important legal issues facing them was our effort informational campaigns on the changes proposed in the recently approved constitutional amendments in Florida. On the importance of the HCPP’s informational campaign on the Constitutional Amendments, Miami-Dade State Attorney Kathy Fernandez Rundle commented that:

“Special mention should be made of the HCPP’s informational efforts during the successful attempt to revise the Florida Constitution. The HCPP was extremely helpful in informing the Hispanic electorate about the issues on the ballot. The success of the entire Constitutional Revision process owes much to the even-handed explanations of the HCPP and their determination to insure that the Hispanic community had sufficient information to make informed and intelligent choices.”

The Future

“The future holds great promise for the Center as regional and national organizations act in furtherance of the Rule of Law and the FIU Law School becomes a reality. Opening of the FIU Law School will have a unique impact on the Center given its focus on law reform,” stated director Salas.

Democracy is now the rule rather than the exception in this hemisphere. Public opinion polls reveal a ground swell of support for justice reform among Latin Americans. Legal reform has entered the political agenda of parties and is an electoral issue. Unfortunately however, authoritarian forces have taken up the banner of legal reform and have called for “renovation” of the Judiciary. Concerns over crime have been addressed by increasing the size and power of police forces, militaries now patrol streets of Latin cities, criminal codes have become more repressive and due process rights are being curbed as reforms of criminal procedure are criticized as being too soft on crime. Although Rule of Law assistance cannot, in and of itself, turn the tide, a rethinking of the goals and practices of donors can at least furnish support to those who seek achievement of so lofty a goal as the Rule of Law. The work of institutions like the Center for the Administration of Justice will be critical as the democratization process in the region begins a new stage.