Latin American artists are a source of inspiration and cultural diversity. An example is Rufino Tamayo, a Mexican painter of Zapotec origin, who combined popular with indigenous elements of his country, creating a unique and colorful style.
Dear HOT members,

It is with honor and excitement that I am writing my first message as President of our organization. I still remember when I heard about HOT; it was the 2009 SOT Annual Meeting, and I was invited to their reception. Almost immediately, I wanted to not only join HOT but also help in the organization. By then, Dr. Minerva Mercado-Feliciano was the Editor of Toxenlaces, and I asked if I could help her. She mentored me on Toxenlaces, and in 2011, I took the role of Editor for three years. From there, I have been involved in the HOT Executive Committee (EC) as Secretary (2014-2016), Councilor (2016–2018), and in 2021, I was elected to be part of the Presidential line, which took me to become President for the period 2023-2024.

During all those years working with the HOT EC, I have met amazing members and learned so much, but more importantly, I have seen the hard work, dedication, and responsibility involved in being in the EC to work for the members of this remarkable organization. Therefore, being a HOT President is a privilege, but it comes with the responsibility of continuing the successful leadership of the HOT Past Presidents. In this context, I want to recognize the astounding work of the previous HOT EC, led by Dr. Teresa Palacios-Hernández, and thank the outgoing officers, Dr. Alexandra Maria Mota Antures (Councilor), Dr. Federico Leonardo Sinche Chele (Councilor), Dr. Luma Melo (Postdoctoral Representative) and Madeline Vera-Colón (Graduate Student Representative).

The 2023-2024 HOT EC is composed of experienced members of previous HOT ECs: Dr. Carmen Rubio Armendáriz (Vice President), Dr. Kelly Salinas (Vice President-Elect), Dr. Teresa Anguiano (Secretary), Dr. Ángelica Jiménez (Treasurer), Teresa Palacios-Hernández (Past President), Julieta Martino (Councilor), Jorge G. Muñiz Ortiz (Councilor), Alejandro Ramírez-Lee (Councilor), Julia Rezende da Silva (Graduate Student Representative) and Rodrigo Queijo (Toxenlaces Editor); and new members, which I want to welcome and wish them a productive term, Dr. Ana Juan-García (Treasurer), Dr. Jessica Jimenez (Councilor), Dr. Ramsés Santacruz Márquez (Postdoctoral Representative) and Andy Joel Taipe Huisa (Toxenlaces Editor Assistant).

The 2023-2024 HOT EC is here to work for you, serve you, and provide you with tools to enhance and advance your professional and scientific career. We have already started working to achieve those goals. The Education and Scientific Committees are preparing webinars on topics of interest to be presented next year. They are also preparing a mentoring activity for the upcoming SOT Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City. Stay tuned for both announcements! The Global Outreach Committee is working to continue the relationship with our current 18 Sister Organizations. They are planning to have HOT representation at the 12th Congress of Toxicology in Developing Countries (CTDCXII) organized by the Sociedad de Toxicologia de Chile and the International Union of Toxicology (IUTOX) to be held next year. I will let you know more details as the plans progress.

One of the priorities of our organization, which I want to emphasize during my term, is the support to students to attend national and international conferences. As you may remember, last year, our organization celebrated reaching the perpetual status of our Endowment Fund, named the HOT Award Fund. The goal of this fund is to provide financial awards to HOT members whose studies and/or research interests are in the field of Toxicology. These awards will support their development through various educational and scientific activities, including attendance at international scientific meetings, symposiums, workshops, courses, and internships, among others. Because of this great achievement, the HOT has now secured funds to provide awards to its members, including those applying for HOT Travel Awards to attend the SOT Annual Meetings.
However, it is still important to increase the funds of our Endowment so that HOT can provide financial support to a greater number of members. Therefore, our Endowment Subcommittee is working hard to implement strategies to reach more donors. I encourage all members to consider contributing to this cause; any amount will help to support the career development of our members, like our graduate students and postdocs. If you are interested in making a donation to our Endowment Fund, please send us an email to our general contact. In this context, I also want to encourage our graduate student and postdoc members to apply for our Travel Awards. Detailed information can be found on our website, and the HOT Awards Committee is actively promoting these opportunities. Stay tuned for more information!

It is already a fact that HOT has a significant presence at the SOT Annual Meetings. That is not only due to our successful mentoring activities but also to our Annual Receptions. This event is important for our organization because not only can we show our dancing moves but also because we meet to celebrate our achievements as an organization, recognize our outstanding members, and thank our sponsors. The HOT Sponsors play a crucial role because their contributions allow our organization to operate. The Sponsorship Subcommittee is working hard and has already launched a sponsorship campaign. I want to take this opportunity to thank the members and companies who have responded to this campaign and become HOT Sponsors; thank you for your generosity and support. If you also wish to become a HOT Sponsor, please send us an email to our general contact.

The HOT is a great organization, and you are the star. We want to hear from you, we want to know you better, and we want the world to know what a successful Hispanic/Latin scientist you are. The HOT has several ways to spotlight you; one is the one you are reading right now, our seasonal newsletter Toxenlaces. Our Communications Committee and the Toxenlaces Editor’s team are always looking for fascinating news from our members to be included in each issue. I strongly encourage our graduate students and postdocs to participate in the “Trainee Wall”, a space exclusively dedicated to you. The Nominating Committee has also already started working to highlight our members; the goal of this committee is to increase the visibility of our members within the SOT. This committee has already nominated some members as candidates for open positions on the 2024-2025 SOT Board and Committees and is currently looking for members for the open positions on the 2024-2025 HOT EC. You have already received the email regarding nominations, and I hope you nominated yourself. Both elections will happen soon, and the results will be announced in Toxenlaces and on our social media platforms. Stay tuned!

With the extensive work already underway by the 2023-2024 HOT EC, I am optimistic we will have a very productive year for the benefit of the members. Remember, your participation in all the EC planned activities and initiatives is crucial. As our slogan, Building Bridges Through Toxicology, says, the goal of HOT is to expand the professional network of its members. Therefore, if HOT facilitates connections and professional relationships, then use these opportunities, participate, and get involved; that is what makes our organization stronger.

Best regards,

Veronica Ramirez Alcantara, PhD
2023-2024 HOT President
Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists
Contents

EDITORIAL BOARD

Rodrigo Gonçalves Queijo
Andy Joel Taipe Huisa
Veronica Ramirez Alcántara
Carmen Rubio Armendáriz
Teresa Anguiano
Teresa Palacios-Hernández
Julia Rezende da Silva
Kelly Salinas
Alejandro Ramirez-Lee
Ana Juan García

4 HOT Executive Committee
5 HOT Award Applications
6 HOT Professional Wall
8 HOT Professional Tip
11 Hispanic Heritage Month
12 HOT Webinar Review

BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH TOXICOLOGY
HOT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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HOT AWARDS

APPLY NOW!

HOT Travel Award
The HOT has provided Travel Awards since 2005 to outstanding students and postdoctoral trainees of Hispanic/Latino origin working in the area of toxicology research. The HOT Travel Award consists of monetary funds to help with the costs associated with presenting their research and attending the SOT Annual Meeting. The HOT Travel Awards are provided by funds from the HOT Endowment and HOT sponsors. HOT will give preference to first-time applicants with a high-quality research project. Previous winners may apply with the understanding that the likelihood of winning a second award may be linked to funding availability after all first-time applicant winners have been selected.

SEE MORE AND APPLY

HOT Distinguished Toxicologist Award
The Distinguished Toxicologist Award is given each year to a toxicologist of Hispanic/Latino origin whose work exemplifies the mission of the HOT-SIG by contributing to the advancement of the field of toxicology. Scientific and/or regulatory accomplishments and/or community services will be considered during the review.

SEE MORE AND APPLY

Deadline: January 11, 2024

More Informations:
HOT Awards Committee
Jorge G. Muñiz Ortiz
jg.muniz.ortiz@outlook.com
Carmen Rubio Armendáriz
crubiotox@gmail.com
MYCOTOXINS IN FOOD:
a food safety matter.

BY ANA JUAN-GARCÍA

Hundreds of mixtures of compounds are listed as possibly occurring in raw and processed materials destined for human food and animal feed; mycotoxins happen to be one of them. Mycotoxins are secondary metabolites produced by some genera of fungi such as Aspergillus, Penicillium, and Fusarium. The perfect environment for fungi to grow is crops and foodstuffs such as cereals, nuts, dried fruits, apples, coffee beans, etc. where nutrients and ideal conditions of temperature and humidity are present (Oueslati et al., 2020; Warnatzsch et al. 2020). Nowadays, a relevant aspect influenced by climate change is their presence in geographical areas where fungi and mycotoxins are not commonly present.
The importance of food safety in mycotoxins present in food lies in the effects which can go from acute to chronic toxicity (immunotoxicity and cancer) both in humans and livestock a fact that has been brought to regulation for many of them either at the European level or internationally. Mycotoxins receiving the most attention as potential hazards to human and animal health include: aflatoxins, ochratoxin A, sterigmatocystin, patulin, penicillic acid, citrinin, zearalenone and the toxic trichothecenes (EFSA, 2019).

Their ubiquitous presence and co-occurrence represent a major challenge to the health and well-being of humans and animals as well as for both food safety and regulation; so that, accurate detection and quantification become decisive in mycotoxins’ study (Penalva-Olcina et al., 2023; Bridgeman et al., 2023; Agahi et al., 2020). However, the effects of the combinations of mycotoxins on the cellular mechanisms are insufficiently known.

Warranties of food safety can be ensured if there is a good risk assessment contemplating toxicological evaluation and nowadays one of the main challenges in the toxicological evaluation is to shorten the distance from the in vitro results to the in vivo reality (Penalva-Olcina et al., 2023; Juan-García et al., 2019). In this sense, the importance of developing innovative cellular models like spheroids and organoids can give a better approach to impact positively the risk assessment for food safety. Nonetheless, another factor significantly impacting food safety regarding mycotoxin’s presence is climate change thus influencing three key components: sufficient food availability, access to these food supplies, and quality and use in terms of nutritional and cultural perspectives (Medina et al. 2017).

Thus toxicological studies contributing to food safety should be focused on research of toxic effects using the most innovative models that approach in vivo reality, including co-exposure assays with those mycotoxins with increased presence in food and feed.
HOW TO PREPARE A POSTER FOR A SCIENTIFIC MEETING?

Tips and strategies for creating a poster for a scientific meeting.

BY RAMSÉS SANTACRUZ MÁRQUEZ

One way to share the results of scientific research is through poster presentations. Poster presentations are widely used in the academic community. Thus, many scientific conferences include poster presentation sessions as part of their program. Poster presentations at scientific conferences can provide valuable opportunities for trainees to practice their communication skills and to receive feedback on their research. However, before presenting the poster, trainees need to create the poster. It is important that the poster contain the most relevant information for the research, but also that the poster has an adequate design and presentation. I would say that when creating a poster you need to think as a researcher to include the appropriate information, as a designer to make the poster look nice, and as a regular attendee at the poster session to consider what they will see and how familiar they are with the subject of your investigation. Thus, designing a poster can take 1-2 weeks. In the next lines, some advice to aid in creating a poster is provided.
• **LOOK AT THE WEBPAGE FOR THE MEETING THAT YOU ARE ATTENDING**
  Reading the specific poster requirements for the meeting you are attending will give you a general idea of what you need and might save you time. In general, you can find information such as poster display area (horizontal or vertical display and poster size), conflict of interest disclosures, and inclusion of logos, among other information.

• **SELECT THE STRUCTURE FOR YOUR POSTER**
  There are main sections you want to include in the poster (some might be specified on the webpage). It is common to structure the poster by including background, research objective, methods, results, and conclusions. You can use figures, images, and text to create the poster sections. As the figures and images are going to be presented in a poster, you want to make sure your images are high quality.

• **ORGANIZE YOUR DATA**
  Organize your data in a way that tells a story. Keep in mind that the poster will read from left to right. Think of a short and concise title that is descriptive of your research. It is important to include all authors contributing to the research and their institutional affiliation. Start adding the information throughout the different sections. Keep the text concise and clear, try to break up the text by using bullets or by numbering. Finally, consider your audience and what you want them to learn from your poster.

• **DESIGN YOUR POSTER.**
  Once you have all your data, figures, and images to be used on your poster, you need to start the proper design of the poster. The title should be large enough to be readable from far away, and important information and figures should be readable from about 7 feet away. Think about the contrast of images and graphics compared to the background of the poster so they pop out. You also want to think about the contrast between your font color and the background that you are using so your poster is easy to read. Finally, look at all the components of the poster and make sure they all are balanced across the poster space. This will help you get a consistent and clean layout.
• **RELY ON YOUR LAB MEMBERS TO GET FEEDBACK.**

Once you think your poster is done and you have read it over several times, you can print it on a standard printer paper and ask your lab mates to read over the poster to give you feedback. Getting their help is amazing as they can give you advice/suggestions on the poster content and figure design, and they will likely find details you overlooked. All the above, for sure, will increase the quality of your poster.

• **SELECT THE APPROPRIATE SOFTWARE TO MAKE YOUR POSTER**

Before starting your poster, you need to find out which software to use. There are several software options you can use to create a poster. One popular option is the use of PowerPoint, part of the Microsoft Office package. However, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, and the open-source Scribus software are available. The selection of the software ultimately will depend on your access and knowledge of the different software.

Now you are ready! Print your poster, practice your presentation, and think about the possible questions you may get from the audience. Best of luck with your poster presentation!

Ramsés Santacruz Márquez, PhD
University of Illinois

Links of interest

1. [https://www.science.org/content/article/how-prepare-scientific-poster](https://www.science.org/content/article/how-prepare-scientific-poster)
2. [https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2024/poster-planning.asp](https://www.toxicology.org/events/am/AM2024/poster-planning.asp)
3. [https://guides.nyu.edu/posters/poster-basics](https://guides.nyu.edu/posters/poster-basics)
The Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists would like to congratulate and recognize the achievements and contributions of our Hispanic members! We are proud of our cultural roots and we embrace and celebrate them with lots of joy!

Thanks to all of you for having inspiring others to achieve success!

SEPTEMBER 15–OCTOBER 15, 2023
AUTHENTICALLY YOU:
how to embrace your identity in the workplace

BY JULIA REZENDE DA SILVA

In a collaborative effort, the Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists (HOT) and the Out Toxicologists and Allies (OTA) Special Interest Groups recently hosted a webinar titled "Authentically You: How to Embrace Your Identity in the Workplace" on September 12th at 7 pm ET. This insightful event aimed to empower trainees and early career scientists, helping them navigate workplace culture and foster community support. The overarching theme of the webinar revolved around advocating for yourself in the professional sphere while embracing your unique identity.

The webinar featured a panel of toxicologists with diverse backgrounds, sharing their expert advice and personal experiences on the benefits of workplace diversity and effective communication. Trainees were the primary focus, as they often need guidance and allies to navigate the professional realm while staying true to their authentic selves.

The event aimed to facilitate an open conversation on building confidence in the workplace, enabling participants to enhance their visibility as experts and individuals. It was a joint endeavor between HOT and OTA, with special thanks extended to Joanna Woo, Lauren Walker and Madeline Vera-Colón for helping me plan the webinar.
The panelists, drawing from their own career journeys, shed light on key decisions made when selecting their first jobs and how they found themselves to be a good fit. They emphasized the importance of self-advocacy to not only contribute to their company's growth but also to ensure their personal comfort in professional settings. It was unanimously agreed that such self-advocacy is more accessible in diverse spaces where institutions actively promote diversity not just in words but in culture and the resources they provide.

The panelists shared their personal experiences and highlighted how diverse teams bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and the ability to tackle challenges from various angles. They emphasized the power of diverse backgrounds in problem-solving and creativity.

The webinar was well-received by both participants and panelists, with positive feedback flooding the chat. Attendees expressed appreciation for the panelists' stories and diverse perspectives, which provided valuable insights into navigating the complex terrain of workplace diversity and authenticity.

Some suggested actions involve actively participating in professional organizations, utilizing your network to gather valuable information and perspectives, becoming a part of affinity groups within your workplace, and having open discussions with colleagues who share similar viewpoints.

In conclusion, our first HOT x OTA webinar served as a beacon of guidance and inspiration for trainees and early career scientists, empowering them to be their authentic selves while contributing to a more inclusive and diverse professional landscape. This event demonstrated that embracing your identity in the workplace is not only achievable but also essential for personal and collective growth.
HOT is a proud sponsor of the CTDCXII. We encourage our members to attend and present your research at this Congress organized by our Sister Organization, the Sociedad de Toxicologia de Chile (SoTox), in conjunction with the International Union of Toxicology (IUTOX).

IUTOX created the CTDC meetings to provide a forum for discussing toxicological problems facing developing countries in the future and exchanging views with toxicologists from all over the world, especially from developing countries and regions.

You can register for the CTDCXII here. However, act fast! The early Bird period ends on November 30, 2023. Program details and more information can be found at the CTDCXII website.
If your Hispanic Organization is planning a Toxicology meeting or if you are organizing a Toxicology event intended for a primarily Hispanic audience and want to promote it in the upcoming Toxenlaces issues, send an email to Julieta Martino, PhD (Councilor for Sister Organizations) at julieta.martino.pitt@gmail.com.

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<th>Sister Organization</th>
<th>URL</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Asociación Española de Toxicología</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aetox.es/">http://www.aetox.es/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asociación Latinoamericana de Toxicología</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alatox.org">http://www.alatox.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Associação Latino Americana de Patologia Toxicológica e Experimental</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alapte.com/">http://www.alapte.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asociación Toxicológica Argentina</td>
<td><a href="https://toxicologia.org.ar/">https://toxicologia.org.ar/</a></td>
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<td>Asociación Venezolana de Toxicología Médica</td>
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<td>Center of Environmental and Toxicological Research – University of Puerto Rico</td>
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<td>Escuela Académico-Profesional de Toxicología de la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima</td>
<td><a href="https://farmacia.unmsm.edu.pe/">https://farmacia.unmsm.edu.pe/</a></td>
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Established in September 2019, the purpose of this fund is to encourage students of Iberoamerican (Latin-American countries, Spain, and Portugal) heritage to start a career in toxicology. The fund will be used to provide awards based on scientific excellence and/or scientific progress to domestic or international Iberoamerican students (undergraduate and/or graduate students) and/or postdoctoral fellows whose studies and/or research interests are in the toxicological sciences, or to those individuals with the objective of promoting global outreach by increasing research/academic excellence, or leadership.

The fund was established with a generous gift from Ranulfo Lemus Olalde, 2019–2020 President of the Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists (HOT) Special Interest Group. HOT is an organization comprised of professionals of Iberoamerican origin with expertise in scientific areas associated with Toxicology. It serves as a focal point for interaction among Iberoamerican Toxicologists in the United States and the international Spanish and Portuguese-speaking scientific communities with emphasis in outreach to the Iberoamerican population. Its main goal is to provide a forum for the awareness and dissemination of toxicological information and issues as they relate to the Iberoamerican community.

Awards from the HOT Award Fund will be given to support the development of students and postdoctoral fellows through various educational and scientific activities, including, but not limited to: attendance at international scientific meetings to support presenters at scientific programs, symposiums, workshops, courses, internships, etc.

Use the online giving system or download the Donation form to make a gift to the Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists Award Fund.
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HOT ENDOWMENT FUND SPONSORS
HOT wants you to be part of the organization! To make it available to everyone, HOT accepts applications from non-SOT members to become HOT members. Yes, that is right! You only have to have the desire to collaborate with and be part of our great organization.

Your HOT membership provides you with valuable resources throughout your scientific career as for networking through the largest Hispanic toxicologist community, giving you opportunity for Travel Awards or serving as a mentor to the young Hispanic toxicologists; besides you receive the Toxenlaces newsletter!

Download the application by clicking on the following link: Non-SOT Member Application.

So, what are you waiting for? We are looking forward to receiving your application today!

Follow us on Facebook at: http://www.facebook.com/hispanicorganizationoftoxicologists
Don’t forget to visit also the SOT Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Society-of-Toxicology-SOT/163627880427831?fref=ts

Toxenlaces is the newsletter that informs Hispanic toxicologists in the United States and the international Spanish and Portuguese-speaking scientific communities about important toxicological events and issues occurring in our countries. It is electronically published and distributed to our membership and Sister Organizations in Ibero-America. Toxenlaces disseminates critical dates for events, health perspectives and funding and training opportunities. It serves as a toxicology forum for our members and other partner organizations, engages in educational outreach to the Hispanic communities and provides the essential elements to support networking among Hispanic toxicologists. Toxenlaces is open to receive collaborations from HOT and SOT members and Sister Organizations. You can collaborate with short scientific articles, news or notes related with toxicology. Other ways to collaborate is by nominating your peers or yourself for the HOT Trainee Wall. For more information about collaborating with Toxenlaces send an email to Rodrigo Gonçalves Queijo (Toxenlaces Editor) at rodrigogoncalvesqueijo@usp.br or Andy Joel Taipe Huisa (Toxenlaces Editor Assistant) at andyjth1792@gmail.com

The views expressed in this Toxenlaces issue do not necessarily represent those of the Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists (HOT) or Society of Toxicology (SOT).