

Summer  
2015



# Cuba Travel Seminar

FINDINGS FROM FUNDERS' MARCH 2015 TRIP

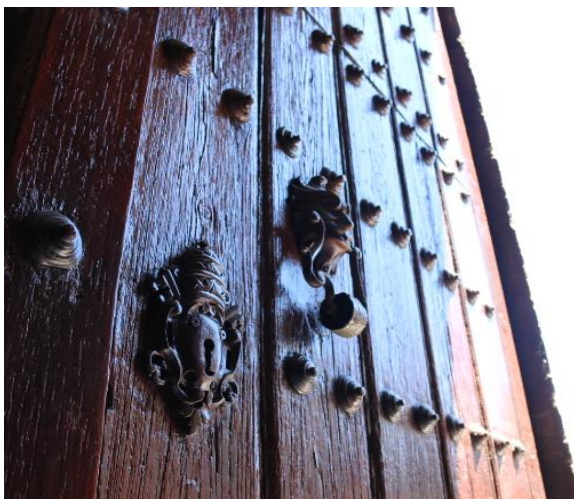
# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Funders Study Seminar .....	6
<b>The Trip at a Glance</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Key Meetings .....	8
Healthcare System Overview .....	9
Nonprofit Foundations in Cuba.....	10
Old Havana With Architects and Historians .....	11
Growing Entrepreneurship .....	12
Arts and Culture .....	13
Environmental Richness.....	15
<b>Next Steps</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Images from the Seminar</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix</b> .....	<b>19</b>
I. Study Trip Itinerary .....	19
II. Participant Organizations.....	26

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through their interest in rapprochement and renewed ties, after 55 years of more confrontation than collaboration, the United States and Cuba are now focusing on the future.

When Presidents Barack Obama and Raúl Castro announced in December 2014 that their two countries were working toward renewed diplomatic relations, Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP) had drawn from its transnational network a group of funders, most of whom had never visited Cuba, for an educational trip in the spring. It is a diverse group that represented a variety of U.S. locations and interests and who work day in and day out on social change.



The purpose of the travel seminar was to learn from Cuban NGOs about best practices in health, education, environment and the arts. It was planned in consultation with experts in the field, among them Ben Rodriguez-Cubeñas from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. The group, which visited Havana and Pinar del Río from March 16 to 22, 2015, includes 23 philanthropic leaders.

In addition to site visits to projects in program areas of interest to the funders, the group toured Old Havana with architects and historians, participated in in-depth discussions on such topics as the current civil sector landscape, environmental and agricultural needs, and how, fostered by recent laws in Cuba, the country has been developing an entrepreneurial sector (*cuentapropistas*). Informal discussions also took place with experts from the island, and U.S. and Spanish diplomats.

Based on the findings from the 2015 Cuba Travel Seminar and the announcement in July 2015 that both countries would replace their Interests Sections with full embassies, HIP is exploring strategies that could support ongoing learning among Latin American funders to strengthen their understanding of Cuba and its people. HIP is also beginning to plan for a second trip in March 2016 and polling its network of leaders to ascertain what civil sector activities would be most appropriate, perhaps with an emphasis on a program area, such as environmental studies and urban planning. In addition, Hispanics in Philanthropy will convene funders' briefings in the U.S. and Latin America, and is considering the establishment of a Cuba Advised Fund to support this work.



Indoor mural in Havana.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the years, HIP leaders have refined their vision of civic activism as transcending national borders. While focused primarily in the U.S. for the past 30 years, HIP has worked with foundations in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Argentina. It has promoted binational projects that recognize that families and communities live both here and there.

Nine years ago, HIP established an office in Mexico City, which manages this portfolio of initiatives and investments. A trip to Cuba, which Atlantic Philanthropies and others supported, was one more step in this body of work.

As a transnational organization that is engaged in matters related to Latin America, HIP saw an opportunity to join think-tanks, experts and U.S. administration officials in changing a Cold War policy that has not helped the Cuban people nor their families in the United States. Over the past decade, some of the changes that Cuba has instituted include:

- The 2014 foreign investment law that opened the door to outside investments in Cuba in all areas except education, health and defense.<sup>1</sup>
- A 2010 self-employment law that encouraged unemployed workers to start their own businesses. The number of entrepreneurs subsequently increased from three percent to 11 percent.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “Wanted: Foreign Investment in Cuba.” Inter Press News Agency. April 1, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> “Foreign Investment in Cuba: Will ‘Serious Changes’ Open a Floodgate?” Knowledge@Wharton. April 7, 2015.



- The island’s 2013 immigration legislation, which is seen as a step to promote legal, orderly and secure migration.

All were good signs for revitalizing Cuba’s state-led economy and strengthening bridges among the two countries. A Brazilian initiative quickly appeared to take advantage of deep tax cuts and other investor incentives with a mega project that will turn the Port of Mariel into a large capacity port that will surpass Havana’s harbor facilities in trade.<sup>3</sup>



*Worker washes down Old Havana building.*

Cuba was not alone in seeking improvements. In 2014, there was a remarkable thaw in the White House policy nearly 55 years after the U.S. imposed a trade embargo on Cuba in 1960. (The U.S. had broken off diplomatic relations in 1961, although low-level diplomatic Interest Sections have long been maintained by the U.S. in Havana and by Cuba in Washington, D.C., in addition to its U.N. Mission in New York City.)

“We cannot keep doing the same thing and expect a different result,”<sup>4</sup> President Obama said in announcing on Dec. 17, 2014, that he would pursue full diplomatic relations with Cuba.



*Arcade-like windows offer an appealing architectural detail.*

Although the trade embargo cannot be lifted without Congressional action on U.S. Treasury and other laws, the updated U.S. Cuba policy also includes: loosening some travel restrictions between the U.S. and Cuba; allowing U.S. citizens to more freely send remittances to the island; expanding bilateral trade, and increasing access to communications among Cubans.<sup>5</sup>

The two leaders followed up their December announcements with an April 2015 meeting at the Summit of the Americas in Panama. On May 29, the U.S. State Department dropped Cuba from the list of nations that sponsor terrorism, which now includes only Iran, Sudan and Syria. The move was expected to ease Cuban access to foreign trade markets. On July 1, the two countries announced they had agreed to restore full diplomatic relations and to reopen embassies in each other’s capital.

After the December 2014 announcements, Pew Hispanic Research found that 63 percent of Americans agreed with the major U.S. policy shift.<sup>6</sup> The change has also led to soul-

<sup>3</sup> “Cuba Sees Its Future in Mariel Port, Hand in Hand with Brazil.” The Inter Press Service News Agency. Aug. 22, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> “FACT SHEET: Charting a New Course on Cuba.” The White House. 17 December 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

searching discussions along old fault lines in the Cuban-American community across the U.S.

Florida and its Cuban-American community favored normalization of relations between the two countries by 63 percent and 62 percent, respectively, according to a bipartisan poll conducted in January 2014 for the Atlantic Council. Indeed, both groups favored normalization even more than the 56 percent support it received from respondents nationally.<sup>7</sup>

The 2014 FIU Cuba Poll, which surveyed 1,000 Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County, Florida, between February and May of that year, prior to the presidential announcements, found that 68 percent of those surveyed favored renewal of diplomatic relations. It found majority support for diplomatic relations through all age groups up to age 70, after which the support by respondents dropped to one-third. Those who were aged 18-29 favored diplomatic ties by 90 percent.<sup>8</sup>

### ***FUNDERS STUDY SEMINAR***

When the new bilateral policy was announced in late 2014, the Cuba Travel Seminar funders group that HIP had been planning for more than a year took on greater urgency and

relevance because new doors and opportunities were opening.

‘The resilience and spirit of the people; the amazing talent of young people; the safety and ease I felt walking through Old Havana; AND, people thought I was *cubana*, which made me feel at home!’

Retha Robinson,  
San Francisco Foundation

In some ways, HIP had laid the foundation for this trip in 1999, when it led a small group of funders on a five-day study tour of Havana, where the group met with high-ranking Cuban officials, visited health facilities

and conferred with leaders of emerging nonprofits and international organizations that were operating on the island.

“The HIP group was a diverse group of very bright, very talented people,” said Hector Mujica, the Google social responsibility strategist & policy lead for U.S. Hispanic community outreach, in looking back on the Study Seminar. “... I was constantly impressed by the backgrounds and stories of the individuals on the trip. They each inspired me in different ways – and made my time there very special and unforgettable.”

---

<sup>6</sup> “Most Support Stronger U.S. Ties with Cuba.” Pew Research Center. 16 January 2015.

<sup>7</sup> “US-Cuba, A New Public Survey Supports Policy Change,”

<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/reports/us-cuba-a-new-public-survey-supports-policy-change>

<sup>8</sup> “2014 FIU Cuba Poll: How Cuban Americans in Miami View U.S. Policies Toward Cuba,”

<https://cri.fiu.edu/research/cuba-poll/2014-fiu-cuba-poll.pdf>



Bustling Havana street scene in March 2015

The itinerary included:

- Learning about Cuba's education and health systems
- Hearing from Cuban experts about the economy, recent laws allowing small businesses, and plans for new initiatives
- Exploring Old Havana with a group of architects and historians
- Traveling to Viñales Valley in Pinar del Río and visiting large tobacco farms and rural towns
- Conversations with Cuban poets, writers, filmmakers, painters, and other artists
- Meeting with diplomats, such as the head of the U.S. Special Interests Section and the Spanish Ambassador.

'I loved the youth orchestra -- they were outstanding. I also enjoyed the discussion of philanthropic opportunities. The restoration of Old Havana as the backdrop amid the other crumbling infrastructure. Fascinating place!'

Mary Skelton Roberts,  
Barr Foundation



## THE TRIP AT A GLANCE

### **KEY MEETINGS**

During the week-long visit, the changes under way in Cuba were evident in the study group's visits with entrepreneurs, artists, architects, historians, farmers, Cuban officials and diplomats.



*The group visiting Spanish Ambassador Juan Francisco Montalbán Carrasco and his wife, Pilar. **From left to right, rear row:** Hector Mujica, Google; Betsy Campbell, Rockefeller Brothers Fund; Sylvia Perez, Cleveland Foundation; Oscar Fernandez, Cuba Cultural Travel; Retha Robinson, The San Francisco Foundation; John Govea, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Rene Pintolugo, Fundación Comunitaria de Puerto Rico; **second row from rear:** Eliana Murillo, Google; HIP Chair Nelson Colón, Fundación Comunitaria de Puerto Rico; Sandra Hernandez, The California Healthcare Foundation; Ambassador Montalbán Carrasco; Alicia Phillips, The Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta, and Mary Skelton Roberts, The Barr Foundation; **third row from rear:** Helen Dorado-Alessi, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation; Aida Alvarez, Latino Community Foundation; HIP Vice President Gracia Goya; Sandy Vargas, Minneapolis Foundation, and Ben Rodríguez Cubeñas, Rockefeller Brothers Fund; **fourth from rear:** artist Viviana Paredes; Rebeca Barrera, Scholastic, Inc.; David Villa, Marguerite Casey Foundation, and Miguel Bustos, Wells Fargo; **front row:** HIP President Diana Campoamor; Elena Villa, and Lourdes Miranda, The Miranda Foundation.*

The group met with the U.S. Interests Section Chief of Mission Jeffrey De Laurentis, who hosted a conversation about on-going developments in U.S.-Cuba relations. The topics included the potential impact that normalized relations might have on the island's economy, as well as the impediments that were then still obstructing normalization.

Later on, the group visited the home of the Spanish ambassador.

Throughout the years, Spain has stood as a good friend to Cuba and an important diplomatic supporter. The reception hosted by Ambassador Juan Francisco Montalbán

Carrasco and his wife, Bolivian photographer Pilar Ruby, provided for deep, thoughtful discussion about Cuba's shifting landscape.



*U.S. Interests Section Chief of Mission Jeffrey De Laurentis and Eliana Murillo, head of Multicultural Marketing at Google*





*Study Seminar members meet in Havana with CENESEX's Mariela Castro, center.*

To round out the travel seminar's conversations regarding international relations, the group met informally with representatives of Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREX). They provided attendees a stronger understanding of the Cuban government's perspective of the recent foreign policy developments and upcoming opportunities.

In addition to international representatives, the travel seminar also visited with Mariela Castro, daughter of Raúl Castro, at the Cuban National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX), which she heads. The group learned about CENESEX advocacy efforts around sexual and LGBT, rights as well as the Center's priority of disseminating sex education resource on the island.

### ***HEALTHCARE SYSTEM OVERVIEW***

The travel seminar group attended a lecture on the Cuban health care system with Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba (MEDICC), a nonprofit organization working to enhance cooperation among the U.S., Cuban and global health communities aimed at better health outcomes and equity. During the lecture, the group heard about Cuba's health system and its evolving health policies, practices, research and education.



Almost all Cuban medical students are required after receiving their medical degree to specialize in family medicine, with a one year internship and two-year residency. They can then select a second specialty. But the network of polyclinics that provide primary care counts on physicians who are family medicine practitioners. The 241-polyclinic system was revitalized in 2002 to offer 22 services, with the addition of ultrasound, X-ray and

endoscopy, emergency care and traumatology; clinical laboratory; family planning; perinatal care and laboratory, immunizations, diabetic and elder healthcare.<sup>9</sup>

The strong primary health care system also helps prevent disease or catch problems early. Among other benefits, the World Health Organization has praised it for its role in Cuba's

'First and foremost, it is important for funders to understand the complexities of investing and charitable giving in Cuba... [and] the role of the government in basic care of its citizens and what gaps exist for philanthropists to play a role.'

Hector Mujica, Google

comprehensive national cancer plan, for identifying possible cancer patients and referring them to specialized centers for diagnosis and treatment.<sup>10</sup>

The Center of Molecular Immunology (CIM) has worked on anti-cancer treatments and vaccines, and has patented at least two vaccines for advanced lung cancer. The Havana-based research center is on the cutting edge of a growing biotechnology sector in Cuba.<sup>11</sup>

### ***NONPROFIT FOUNDATIONS IN CUBA***

The group attended a lecture on Cuban foundations organized by Havanada, a philanthropic consulting firm that focuses on nonprofit sustainable development projects and social enterprise initiatives in Cuba and the Caribbean Basin. Its two partners have extensive experience in project design, management and evaluation. Havanada assists international NGOs, international development agencies, social and ecological impact funds, philanthropists, individual social investors or independent social entrepreneurs who are interested in undertaking, funding or supporting social or environmental projects in Cuba.

This lecture was held at Nazdarovie restaurant on the *malecón*, a seawall and broad sidewalk that run along the harbor's edge in Old Havana. Owner Gregory Biniowsky is an attorney from Canada who moved to Cuba over 20 years ago. Six months ago, he and his Cuban wife, attorney Danelys Coz, opened Nazdarovie as a labor of love and to pay homage to the Soviet women who settled and established families in Cuba. They have created a nostalgic space that is full of memories for the thousands of Cubans who spent "the best years of their youth" studying at universities in the Soviet Union -- a sentiment that transcends politics and ideology.

---

<sup>9</sup> Cuba's Primary Healthcare Revolution: 30 Years On," Bulletin of the World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/5/08-030508/en/>

<sup>10</sup> Cuba - Battling Cancer With Biotechnology, [http://www.who.int/features/2013/cuba\\_biotechnology/en/](http://www.who.int/features/2013/cuba_biotechnology/en/)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



*Cars travel along the malecón bordering the harbor in Old Havana*

### ***OLD HAVANA WITH ARCHITECTS AND HISTORIANS***

The historical and architectural wealth of Old Havana was covered in one of the group's visits there with Cuban architects and historians.

After at least a couple of false starts, Spanish authorities succeeded in founding Cuba's sixth settlement on the western side of a deep bay in 1519, some 27 years after Columbus discovered the island on the first of his three voyages to the New World. Havana, situated on the Caribbean island's northwest coast, became so valued as a stopping point for treasure-laden galleons outbound for Spain and supply ships inbound to the New World that it was repeatedly attacked and burnt down by pirates and French corsairs. It was also occupied for a year by the British crown before reverting to Spain.



The island achieved independence after the 1898 Spanish-American War.

Over those centuries, Old Havana has maintained a remarkable visual integrity, which in 1987 earned it a UNESCO World Heritage designation. Eugenio Leal Spengler, Havana's official historian, has lovingly guided restoration projects within the Spanish walls that surround much of Old Havana.

"It's extremely important that I'm not seen as an embalmer of reality, nor as one who is frozen in time. I don't think that all things in the past were better. But I categorically affirm that one can't get to the future unless it's from the past," Leal Spengler said in a



CubaDebate interview. “This is important. To know the past well, to see what can be discarded and what endures, what is preserved, what prevails ... is what I try to do.”<sup>12</sup>

His and others’ labors of love have resulted in Old Havana having maintained a remarkable unity of character. Plazas surrounded by many buildings of outstanding architecture and narrow streets lined with more popular or traditional styles make up the historic city core.

It has five large plazas, each with its own architectural character: Plaza de Armas, Plaza Vieja, Plaza de San Francisco, Plaza del Cristo and Plaza de la Catedral. Spectacular neoclassical and baroque buildings that surround them include: the Havana Cathedral, the Old Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, Palacio del Segundo Cabo and Palacio de los Capitanes Generales.

### ***GROWING ENTREPRENEURSHIP***

The entrepreneurial sector has become more active in Cuba over the past five years. By May 2012, over 380,000<sup>13</sup> Cubans had gone into private enterprise.



*HIP President Diana Campoamor and Chef Douglas Rodríguez, the creator of Nuevo Latino cuisine, visit the Paladar Atelier with the seminar group. His restaurants include De Rodriguez Cuba, in Miami Beach, and Alma de Cuba, in Philadelphia.*

Many budding entrepreneurs took the concept of “home-grown” to heart and converted their homes into restaurants. Today, a number of successful *paladares*, are a welcome addition for the growing infrastructure for tourism to the island.

During HIP’s Travel Study Seminar, noted chef Douglas Rodríguez hosted a tour of

Havana *paladares*, cooked with some local chefs and helped to inspire culinary experimentation.

*Paladares* are most typically family-run. Héctor Higuera Martínez, for example, spent tens of thousands of dollars from savings and friends to transform the living room and the

‘I was impressed to see the type of initiative that the public is taking to create their own enterprises.’

Rebeca Barrera,  
Scholastic, Inc.

bedrooms of his guesthouse into Le Chansonnier, which opened in October 2014. Artworks by various local artists, including a found-metal collage of old oil and paint cans by artist and friend, Damián Aquiles, grace the dining room.

Paladar Mercaderes, owned by Yamil Alvarez, stood out among several that the study group visited. The lunch there was served in an impeccably restored home in Old Havana and is a

welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of the city. It is known for its excellent food,

<sup>12</sup> CubaDebate interview, February 2015.

<http://www.cubadebate.cu/especiales/2015/02/26/eusebio-leal-tiene-que-haber-una-paz-con-justicia-con-dignidad-con-decoro-y-con-respeto/#.VW-goc9VhBc>

<sup>13</sup> Lexington Institute <http://www.american.edu/clals/upload/LexingtonCubaEntrepreneurs-1.pdf>



service and ambience. The model for these restaurants first appeared during the post-Soviet economic crisis of the 1990s, when the Cuban government encouraged some small business activity.

In exploring the possibilities for civil sector participation in nurturing entrepreneurship in Cuba, the travel seminar group visited with Cuba Emprende Foundation (CEF) officials.

The organization helps Cuban entrepreneurs to start small businesses with the overarching goal of fostering an entrepreneurial culture and social progress on the island. The CEF is a U.S.-based 501(c)3 organization that supports the Roman Catholic Church of Cuba's Proyecto Cuba Emprende by raising money



*Cuba Emprende-trained small businessman makes things work.*

from private donations and performing in an advisory capacity. CEF is licensed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control and is solely funded by the private and philanthropic sectors. It does not accept funds from any government, including the U.S.

“I was very pleasantly surprised to visit the entrepreneurship center and to see all of these folks who were so ready to pioneer the way for entrepreneurship on the island,” said Mujica of Google, in looking back on the trip.

## ***ARTS AND CULTURE***

Cuba has long been a vibrant hub of music, painting, dance, film – in short, a cultural powerhouse. Cuba’s internationally renowned Ballet Internacional de Cuba is accessible to everyone and the public enjoys film festivals with free admission.

The Travel Seminar group had rare opportunities to attend a number of stunning musical presentations. The famous Havana Youth Orchestra performed a concert just for the group in the centuries old Seminario de San Carlos, behind the Catedral de La Habana. The group enjoyed a dance performance from Compañía Irene Rodríguez at the Centro Asturiano. Rodríguez is considered by many to be the finest flamenco dancer in Cuba, and she recently won first prize for choreography in an international competition with other Latin American countries.



*Havana Youth Orchestra musicians perform at the old Seminario de San Carlos.*



*Renowned Cuban musicologist Alberto Fayá playing in an Old Havana nightclub.*



*Compañía Irene Rodríguez dancers at Havana's Centro Asturiano.*

Professor Alberto Fayá, a musician and academic researcher who has won national awards in music and musicology, preceded a dinner outing with a special performance. Joined by his son in the band at an intimate nightclub in Old Havana, Fayá reviewed the history and influences of Cuban music, playing jazz, mambo, and the cha cha cha, as well as the romantic ballads of composer Ernesto Lecuona, among other works.





*Hill-size limestone rocks, called mogotes, dot the edges of the Viñales Valley.*

### ***ENVIRONMENTAL RICHNESS***

For decades, Cuba has been a leader in the use of sustainable energy, organic agriculture and preservation of natural habitat. It has six UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, which were designated between 1984 and 1987: Baconao, between Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo province in southeastern Cuba; Buenavista, which straddles two national parks in the Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus and Diego de Avila provinces and borders the north-central coast; the Ciénega de Zapata National Park, wetland areas in Matanzas province on the southern coast; the Cuchillas del Toa in the mountainous Alexander de Humboldt National Park, near the island's eastern tip; the Guanahacabibes Peninsula, on Cuba's western tip, and the Sierra del Rosario mountains between Pinar del Rio and Havana provinces, from which you can see both the northern and southern coasts.



In addition to the preservation of natural habitats through the national park system and reserves, Cuban farmers have fostered organic agriculture.

The study group traveled to the Viñales Valley, an ecologically important area covering 132 square kilometers (51 square miles). It is home to one of the world's premier tobacco farms,

and chockfull of winding hiking trails and rock-climbing opportunities. The Viñales area is revered as one of Cuba's most stunning natural assets.

Later on, the group visited the family-run Finca Confianza. With a breathtaking view of the *mogotes*, the travel seminar group sat down for a true farm-to-table lunch of fresh, organic pineapples, citrus and other fruits and artichokes, plantains and other vegetables, chicken and roast pork. After lunch, the group toured the organic farm. Along with a visit to an organic tobacco farm, group members learned about sustainable agriculture, irrigation and the use of natural pest control, among other techniques. Some group members also met with representatives from Mexico City-based Fundación Hombre Naturaleza.

## NEXT STEPS

Recent renewal of U.S.-Cuba relations and the civil sector opportunities for empowering the Cuban people's 21<sup>st</sup> century aspirations highlight the growing need for this type of work. As the thaw continues, so will the need for philanthropic involvement and exchange. HIP sees these developments as positive signs and a natural component of our Transnational Program.



HIP would like these trips to be a resource to our network of leaders to expand the understanding of our countries of origin and to identify opportunities for civil society investments to help people. At the same time, increasing the information and collaboration between Cuba and our network in Latin America is an obvious way in which HIP can be an active partner.

Moving forward HIP plans to:

- 1) Conduct a second trip in this series in March 2016
- 2) Work with current and potential donors to facilitate projects in Cuba
- 3) Explore, through our Mexico City office, the possibility of broader exchanges with Cuban experts, scholars and entrepreneurs
- 4) Consider establishing a Cuba Advised Fund to support this work

Through a deeply rooted desire to increase awareness and understanding, a significant funder's network, and a commitment to providing resources and support, HIP will continue to seek opportunities to help civil sector leaders deepen their grasp of the issues that impact Latinos in the U.S. and throughout this hemisphere.



Thanks to  
Eliana Murillo  
for so kindly  
providing  
this report's  
photo images





*The group takes a break during a stop in the Viñales Valley.*

# APPENDIX

## I. ITINERARY



*Hispanics In Philanthropy Travel Seminar  
Journey to Cuba - Havana and Pinar del Rio*

**Monday, March 16 – Saturday, March 21  
with optional 2 Day Extension until March 23**

**3/6/2015 Itineraries are Subject to Change**

### **Sunday, March 15**

Participants will fly independently to Miami and congregate at the **Crowne Plaza Miami**. The hotel is located at **950 NW Le Jeune Road, Miami Beach, FL 33126 (305) 446-9000**. A briefing will be scheduled in the business center of the hotel.

### **Day 1 Monday March 16**

**8:30 am** Meet in lobby of the hotel for our bus transfer to airport. Our flight from Miami to Havana is on **ABC Charters Flight AA9426**, operated by American Airlines. Check-in is located in **Concourse D**. Enter through Door 1 and check-in at the AA counter.

*ABC Charters has the following luggage policy: All additional luggage fees must be paid in cash at the time of check-in. One carry-on and one personal item at no charge\*. First checked bag; \$20.00. Each additional checked bag; \$20.00. 70 lbs max weight per bag. 44 lbs allowed free; \$2.00 per pound over (including carry-on). No luggage fees apply on your return to Miami. \*Please be aware that in the event of a full flight into Havana you may be required to check your carry-on luggage for an additional \$20.00 fee.*

**11:30 am** Depart Miami for Havana. Flight duration is 1 hour.

**12:30 pm** Arrive in Havana. Clear customs and immigration, a process which takes about 1 hour.

**2:00 pm** Tapas at and refreshments **El Litoral** on the Malecon. This restaurant was recently acquired from the State by a co-op of restaurateurs.

**Hotel Parque Central** Neptuno, esquina Prado y Zulueta, Havana, Cuba Tel. 53 7 860 6627

**4:00 pm** Check-in to **Hotel Parque Central**. This five star hotel is considered the finest hotel in Havana and perfectly located in the central part of Havana. Your bags will be dropped off at the hotel and will be waiting for you upon check-in while we explore the historic area surrounding the hotel. All rooms include a safe deposit box free of charge.



**5:00 pm Lecture on Cuban Health Care System and the role of MEDICC.**

**Conner Gory**, MA & Senior Editor of MEDICC Review.

**Dr. Christine Mills**, MD FRCPC & Managing Editor of MEDICC Review.

**MEDICC:** Founded in 1997, Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba (MEDICC) is a non-profit organization working to enhance cooperation among the US, Cuban and global health communities aimed at better health outcomes and equity. We see that health care especially for underserved populations – can be informed by Cuba's singular universal health system and its evolving health policies, practice, research and education. We also see that the US and other nations' experience in medicine and medical research can inform practice in Cuba and the developing world. Above all, we believe that such cooperation is urgently needed to radically improve global health and achieve the birthright of health for all worldwide.

**Dr. Christine Mills** joined MEDICC Review in 2010. She has lived and worked in Latin America and Canada as a teacher, youth worker, translator, editor, health educator, physician and public health practitioner; her publications have appeared in both scientific and literary journals and anthologies.

**Connor Gorry** received a BA in Latin American Studies from New York University and an in International Policy from the Monterey Institute of International Studies. She joined MEDICC in 2004 and as an editor, she helped transform MEDICC Review into a peer-reviewed journal. She is the only foreign correspondent to have been embedded with Cuba's Henry Reeve Specialized Team in Disasters and Epidemics.

**6:30 pm** Meet in hotel lobby and walk across the street to **Centro Asturianos** for a private musical performance and dinner. Our evening begins with demonstrative lecture on **Cuban Music** at Bar Asturias by **Professor Alberto Faya** who has been working as a musician, professor and researcher within the Cuban musical world since 1973. He has won national awards in music and musicology. He will be joined by several young musicians who will treat us to a lively journey through the history of Cuban music.

**8:00 pm** Welcome dinner at **La Terraza**.

**9:30 pm** Return to the hotel.

**Day 2 Tuesday, March 17**

Complimentary **breakfast** is served at the restaurant in the lobby level from 7am to 10am.

**9:30 am** Meet in the hotel lobby and board bus.

**9:45 am Lecture on Non-Profit Foundations in Cuba.**

**Topics:** Challenges and opportunities in the non-profit world in today's Cuba. Examining current successful models and forecasting the non-profit landscape of the future.

**Ben Rodríguez Cubenas**, Program Director Rockefeller Bros. Foundation Fund.

**Gregory Biniowsky**, Founder & Partner Havanada Consulting.

Havanada is a philanthropic consulting firm which focuses on non-profit sustainable development projects and social enterprise initiatives in Cuba and the Caribbean Basin. Made up of two partners, each with extensive experience in project design, management and evaluation, Havanada assists international NGOs, international development agencies, social and ecological impact funds, philanthropists, individual social investors or independent social entrepreneurs who are interested in undertaking social or environmental projects in Cuba or funding/supporting such projects.

This event will take place at **Nazdarovie** restaurant on the **Malecon**. Gregory is an attorney from Canada who moved to Cuba over 20 years ago. Six months ago Gregory and his Cuban wife Attorney Danelys Coz opened Nazdarovie as a



personal 'oeuvre de coeur' & as a way to pay homage to the Soviet women who settled and established families in Cuba. They have created a space of nostalgia and memories for the thousands of Cubans who spent 'the best years of their youth' studying at universities in the USSR - a nostalgia which transcends politics and ideology.

**10:45 am** Walking tour of **Havana Vieja**. Please make sure to wear comfortable walking shoes! Thanks in part to history and ideology, Cuba -- and especially Havana -- is a treasure trove of architectural styles spanning six centuries. With buildings dating from the 16th through the 19th centuries, Havana is perhaps the most authentic colonial city in the Americas. Since 1982, when the city became a UNESCO World Heritage site, the government has embarked on an ambitious preservation and restoration program concentrated in the Old City. However, a severe lack of funding and materials has hampered efforts. Therefore, the decay and neglect of the past 40 years coupled with the destructive tropical weather continues to claim buildings every year.

**12:00 pm** Lunch at **Paladar Mercaderes**. This private restaurant is located in an impeccably restored home in Havana Vieja and is a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of the city and is known for its excellent food, service and ambience. Our affable host, **Yamil Alvarez**, is part of the young generation of successful Cuban entrepreneurs.

**2:00 pm** Visit to **Caritas Cuba Center** in Vedado with **Maritza Sanchez Abillud, National Director**.

Caritas Cuba is an organization of the Catholic Church which bears witness to God's love through actions that help to discover and protect the dignity of the most vulnerable people in society. Founded by a decree from the Bishops' Conference of Cuba in February 1991, it is currently one of the few independent non-governmental organizations in the country.

The organization operates via 11 diocesan Caritas and more than 600 parish and community Caritas, its staff in the national office, and a large number of volunteers who receive capacity building and training, in order to promote the professionalism and spirituality that are appropriate for the service of charity.

It implements various programs at a national level aimed at vulnerable groups in our society, with the hope that these people, accompanied by Caritas and their families, will be able to play a vital and supportive role in their own personal and social development and fully meet their own needs.

- o Senior Citizens Program
- o Human Development Groups Program for children, including those with disabilities and learning difficulties; adolescents and young people at social risk and their families
- o Learning to Grow Program for people with disabilities and their families
- o HIV/AIDS Program

Visit the home of **Josie Alonso Hernandez**, a historic mansion trapped in time and filled with dust covered antiques, family mementos and rustic charm.

**5:00 pm** Private performance by the **Havana Youth Orchestra**.

**6:00 pm** Return to Hotel.

Dinner on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.

### **Day 3 Wednesday, March 18**

**10:00 am** Attend a private dance performance of the **Compañía Irene Rodríguez**. We will receive a warm welcome by **Irene Rodríguez** and her company at the

**Centro Asturianos.** Irene is considered by many to be the finest flamenco dancer in Cuba and has recently won first prize for choreography from an international competition of all Latin nations.

**11:30 am Cuba Emprende Entrepreneur** program at **Centro Cultural Padre Feliz Varela.** We will be received by **Jorge Mandilego**, the Director of Cuba Emprende. The Centro houses most of the civil society/educational activities of the Catholic Church in Havana, including Cuba Emprende and various educational course offerings.

#### **Cuba Emprende Foundation**

The CEF is a US-based 501(c)3 charitable organization that supports the Catholic Church of Cuba's Proyecto Cuba Emprende by raising money from private donations and providing advisory support. The organization is licensed by OFAC and funded solely by the private and philanthropic sectors, and does not accept funds from any government, including the US.

#### **Proyecto Cuba Emprende (PCE) [www.cubaemprendefoundation.org](http://www.cubaemprendefoundation.org)**

PCE is a project of the Catholic Church of Cuba, although there is no religious content in its programs and the services are offered to all Cubans. Its mission is to offer training and advisory services to Cuban entrepreneurs who wish to start or improve a small business in order to contribute to the development of an entrepreneurial culture, social progress and to improve the quality of their lives. PCE replicates the extremely successful model developed over decades by Mexican non-for-profit organization Fundación ProEmpleo. PCE operates out of the Centro Cultural Padre Felix Varela in Havana and the Archdioceses of Camagüey and Cienfuegos. The projects provide current and aspiring entrepreneurs with eighty hours of classroom instruction in the areas of human development, marketing & management, finance & accounting, and sales & customer service, while they work on completing their business plans. Graduates are offered continued advisory services through the project's Incubator and the Center for Business Development (accelerator program). The project does not offer any funding or investment to students or graduates due to legal constraints in Cuba. Almost 1400 entrepreneurs have graduated from the month-long training program since 2012 and the program currently enrolls approximately 75 on a monthly basis. Approximately 450 businesses are members in its alumni network.

**1:00 pm** Lunch at **Doña Eufimia.** This private restaurant is a cultural landmark steeped in history and serves traditional Cuban *criolla* cuisine.

Visit the **Taller de Grafica Experimental.** The Taller is Havana's printmaking and lithographic workshop. It is a studio, a school and most of all, an art institution that preserves and develops the sophisticated art of print making with relative freedom of spirit and form.

**3:00 pm** Return to Hotel.

**3:45 pm** Meet in the hotel lobby and board our bus.

**4:30 pm** Visit the **Residence** of the **United States Interests Section (USINT) Chief of Mission, Jeffrey De Laurentis.**

**7:30 pm** Dinner hosted by **Cuban Artist Fund & Detras del Muro & Alain Darcourt of GLAC.**

Detras Del Muro is headed by curator and community leader Juan Delgado and is focused on grassroots large scale public art installations and performances. In 2012 he produced an extensive public art installation on the Malecon that was the highlight of the Bienal. The 2nd edition of Detras del Muro is planned for 2015. The Cuban Artists Fund is a New York City based founded in 1998 to support Cuban artists and cultural exchanges.

#### **Day 4 Thursday, March 19**

**8:30 am** Group meets in the hotel lobby and boards our bus for our day trip to **Viñales Valley**. Considered by many to be the most beautiful place in Cuba, the **Viñales Valley National Monument** holds stunning landscapes. The area is also famous for being the premier tobacco growing area in the world.

**11:00 am** Arrive in **Piñar del Río** for our visit to **Proyecto Grabadown**. The Grabadown Project was started ten years ago by Jesus Carrete and his daughter Linianna, who was born with Down Syndrome. What began as way for Jesus to share his love of art with his daughter has grown into a well respected community project supported by many other families who have discovered the benefits of engaging their special needs children with art and music. Starting with a simple printing press that offered the children a chance to express their creativity, the program has grown into a multi-discipline creative workshop where the children are encouraged to sing, dance, create art and take a more active role within the community.

Continue to the town of Viñales and meet CCT Representative **Yaniel Luis**.

**12:30 pm** Arrive **Finca Confianza** in the valley with stunning views of the mogotes. We will learn about the production of a multitude of organic fruits, vegetables, grain and tobacco. Lunch will be a community event on the farm where we will be served a large variety of organic fresh vegetables, fruits, chicken and roasted pork. This is a true farm to table experience.

**2:00 pm** Visit the home of **Ramón Vázquez León**, an artist born in Viñales, Pinar del Río, who graduated from the National School of Fine Arts in Havana. Ramon creates fantastic worlds full of allusions with his bright colors.

**3:00 pm** We will continue to explore the **Viñales Valley** on foot for an easy stroll with our local guide Yaniel. We will visit with rural farmers and sample some of their fresh produce. We will visit the tobacco farms that produce the world's finest cigars and enjoy a cigar rolling demonstration.

**4:30pm** Return to Havana.

**Evening** Return to Havana. Dinner on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.

#### **Day 5 Friday, March 20**

**9:45 am Lecture: Thirty Something in Cuba**. An intimate discussion with two young professionals that are navigating the rapidly changing landscape in Cuba. How does this generation feel about the recent economic reforms, increased freedoms and US-Cuba relations.

**Cristina Escobar Domínguez**, Cuban Television Broadcaster & Journalist.

**Angie Diaz Almira**, Travel professional, Entrepreneur & Child Advocate.

**Cristina Escobar** is an international commentator considered one of the most notable journalists of her generation. She currently hosts a weekly television talk show "Once a Week" that focuses on Cuba's state of affairs in the topics of arts, science, economics, politics and popular culture.

**Angie Diaz** is Co-Founder of CubaFoto, a charitable organization that provides portraits of children living in group homes (orphanages) as well as a pipeline of charitable donations from US visitors to needy children.

**12:00 pm** Lunch at **La Xana**. Contemporary Italian cuisine.

**1:30 pm** Bus tour of **Modern Architecture** in Western Havana. Few people realize the important place Havana holds as a treasure trove of 20th Century architecture. Our guide will be **Architect Pedro Vazquez Rodriguez**. Our tour will highlight some of the best examples to be found in this incredibly diverse area of the city where some of its most fascinating buildings were built using different architectural styles.

**3:00 pm** Artist studio visit: **The Merger** A collaborative venture created under the name of "The Merger" consisting of artists **Mario Miguel Gonzalez** (Mayito), **Niels Moleiro Luis**, and **Alain Pino**. The Merger recreates ubiquitous and mundane objects on a grand scale, presenting palatable socio-political metaphors to their viewers. We will be greeted by entrepreneur, jewelry artist & artist representative **Sandra Borges**.

**4:00 pm** Return to the hotel.

**5:30 pm** Meet in the hotel lobby and board bus.

**6:00 pm** Reception at the residence of the **Ambassador of Spain, Juan Francisco Montalban Carrasco** and his wife **Pilar**. The Ambassador will share his opinions on Cuban - European Union relations.

**8:15pm** Dinner at **Paladar San Cristobal**, one of Havana's most renowned and elegant restaurants. This cozy restaurant has a reputation of excellence in both atmosphere and local cuisine. The food is refined and balanced and the nostalgic atmosphere is unforgettable, adorned in a unique style of art nouveau.

#### **Day 6 Saturday, March 21 - Departure Day for Some Participants**

**10:00 am** Visit the **Museum of Cuban Art**. We will be greeted by art historian **Aylet Ojeda**. The museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban Art from the earliest days of colonialism to the latest generation of Cuban artists.

**12:30 pm** Hotel check out.

**3:40 pm** Depart Havana for Miami on **ABC Charter flight #AA9471** operated by American Airlines. Flight duration of 1 hour.

**4:40 pm** Arrive Miami International Airport. Clear customs and catch any connecting flights you may have. Please allow at least 3 hours for connecting flights.

#### **Day 6 Saturday Itinerary for the Remainder of the Group**

**10:00 am** Morning lecture TBD. This presentation will take place in the hotel business center.

**11:30 am** Visit the **Museum of Cuban Art**. We will be greeted by art historian **Aylet Ojeda**. The museum is dedicated exclusively to Cuban Art from the earliest days of colonialism to the latest generation of Cuban artists.

**1:00 pm** Lunch at the home, studio and world of **José Fuster**. Known as the Picasso of the Caribbean, Fuster has made a major contribution to rebuilding and decorating the fishing village of **Jaímanitas**, in the outskirts of Havana. Jaímanitas is now a unique work of public art where Fuster has decorated over 80 houses, beyond his own, with colorful, ornate murals and domes.

On our return to the hotel we visit the iconic **Hotel Nacional de Cuba** overlooking the Straits of Florida and the *Malecón*. When it opened in 1930, Cuba was a prime travel destination many illustrious guests including Frank Sinatra, Ava Gardner, John Wayne, Marlene Dietrich, Marlon Brando, and Ernest Hemingway.

**Visit Casa Vedado**, a fully restored upper middle class home from the turn of the century.

**5:00 pm** Return to the hotel.

Dinner on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.

#### **Day 7 Sunday, March 22**

Morning Free or Possible Lectures TBD.

Lunch on your own. Suitable recommendations will be provided.

Pending: Visit the **Fabrica de Arte Cuba** located in the Vedado neighborhood. This former power plant has been converted into a mixed use exhibition space featuring performance venues, photo exhibitions and art installations.



**3:00 pm** Visit **Callejon de Hamel** where locals dance **African Rumba** in the streets each Sunday.

Our host and guide will be Cuban scholar **Elias Aseff** who will explain the role of African religion and culture in Cuba and the importance of Santeria in everyday life. He will also explain how Afro Cuban religion has influenced the evolution of Cuban culture.

A short walk away is the home of a **Babalao**, (Yoruba Priestess) who will receive the group and explain via Elias the religious deities and elaborate alters in her home. The home is very large and many visitors pass thru during the day to give offerings. Continue to the **Arts and Crafts market**, a great place to interact with local, everyday artisans. You'll find just about anything here, a great place to find souvenirs or gifts for your friends and family back home.

**5:00 pm** Return to the hotel.

**7:30 pm** Dinner at **Habana VIP** in Vedado.

### **Day 8 Monday, March 23 - Departure Day**

**10:30 am** Hotel check out-and depart for Havana airport.

**1:30 pm** Depart Havana for Miami on **ABC Charter flight #AA9427** operated by American Airlines. Flight duration of 1 hour.

**2:30 pm** Arrive Miami International Airport. Clear customs and catch any connecting flights you may have. Please allow at least 3 hours for connecting flights.

## **II. PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS**

- 1) The Barr Foundation
- 2) The California Healthcare Foundation
- 3) The Cleveland Foundation
- 4) The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta
- 5) Fundación Comunitaria de Puerto Rico
- 6) Google
- 7) Hispanics in Philanthropy
- 8) Latino Community Foundation
- 9) Marguerite Casey Foundation
- 10) Minneapolis Foundation
- 11) The Miranda Foundation
- 12) Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- 13) Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- 14) The San Francisco Foundation
- 15) Scholastic, Inc.
- 16) Wells Fargo
- 17) Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation