

Medical anthropologist chosen for new chair in public health

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msparace@tulane.edu

[Arachu Castro](#), who has earned international recognition for her research into infectious diseases and women's health in Latin America and the Caribbean, has been invested into the Samuel Z. Stone Chair of Public Health in Latin America at the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.



Arachu Castro, the inaugural holder of the Samuel Z. Stone Chair of Public Health in Latin America, gives remarks at the investiture ceremony. She wears regalia from her university in Spain, with colors representing her undergraduate and doctoral degrees. (Photo by Tracie Morris Schaefer)

Castro came to Tulane last January from Harvard Medical School where she was associate professor of global health and social medicine. She also held the position of medical anthropologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

A ceremony on Thursday (Sept. 19) honored Castro as the inaugural chairholder and celebrated her accomplishments in global health.

Castro founded a program to drastically reduce the rates of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis in Latin America and the Caribbean through improved diagnosis and prenatal care. Her current research analyzes

primary care throughout the region to better understand and improve healthcare systems serving people living in poverty.

The Stone Chair, a joint appointment between the [Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies](#) and the [School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine](#), was established by gifts from the Zemurray Foundation and is named for the late grandson of its founder, Samuel Zemurray. A businessman, financier and philanthropist, Samuel Zemurray was a lifelong Tulane supporter.

The chair's namesake, Samuel Z. Stone, was an internationally renowned author, researcher and scholar and emeritus member of the Board of Tulane. The Stone family continues an outstanding legacy of philanthropy at Tulane, providing for numerous professorships, endowed chairs, scholarships, library holdings, research collections and centers and institutes.

Tulane President Scott Cowen praised the gifts from the Zemurray Foundation that support Castro's groundbreaking work. "When I look at you," Cowen said to Castro at Thursday's ceremony, "I see the faces of the people you will help. â?¡ We are honored by your presence."

Mary Sparacello is a writer in the Office of Development.