

# MICHAEL AHN PAARLBERG

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CONTACT INFORMATION	Department of Political Science Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond, VA 23284	Email: <a href="mailto:mapaarlberg@vcu.edu">mapaarlberg@vcu.edu</a> Web: <a href="http://www.michaelpaarlberg.org">www.michaelpaarlberg.org</a>
ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS	<b>Virginia Commonwealth University</b> , Richmond, Virginia Associate professor of political science	2018 - present
	<b>University of Pennsylvania</b> , Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Postdoctoral fellow, Center for the Study of Ethnicity, Race, and Immigration	2017 - 2018
PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS	<b>Center for International Policy</b> Senior Nonresident Fellow	2025 - present
	<b>Bernie Sanders for President 2020 campaign</b> Chief foreign policy adviser for Latin America	2019 - 2020
	<b>Institute for Policy Studies</b> , Washington, DC Associate fellow	2016 - present
	<b>Organization of American States</b> Election monitor and coordinator (Brazil, El Salvador, Colombia)	2014 - present
	<b>The Guardian</b> Contributing columnist, labor and immigration policy	2009 - 2019
	<b>Washington City Paper</b> Contributing writer	2009 - 2019
	<b>Center for American Progress</b> , Washington, DC Consultant and researcher, American Worker Project	2008 - 2009
	<b>Service Employees International Union</b> , Washington, DC Research analyst, Health Systems Division	2003 - 2007
EDUCATION	<b>Georgetown University</b> , Washington, DC Ph.D., Political Science Dissertation: <i>Diaspora Outreach by Latin American Parties</i>	2017
	M.P.P., Public Policy Thesis: <i>Labor Policy in New Democracies</i>	2009
	<b>Williams College</b> , Williamstown, Massachusetts B.A., Political Science with honors	2002
ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS: JOURNAL ARTICLES	“The Sanctuary Scale: Measuring Immigrant Protections in Cities of Refuge.” With Benjamin Gonzalez O’Brien, Loren Collingwood, and Jordin Tafoya. <i>International Migration</i> Vol. 63, no. 5 (2025)	
	“Sanctuary Policies and the Influence of Local Demographics and Partnership.” with Benjamin Gonzalez O’Brien and Loren Collingwood. <i>Urban Affairs Review</i> Vol. 60, no. 1 (2023)	

“Transnational Gangs and Criminal Remittances: A Conceptual Framework.”  
*Comparative Migration Studies* Vol. 10, no. 24 (2022)

“Hometown Associations and Parties as Vehicles for Mexican Electoral Campaigns in the US.” *Representation* (2020)

“Competing for the Diaspora’s Influence at Home: Party Structure and Transnational Campaign Activity in Latin America.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* Vol. 45, no. 4 (2019)

- Republished in Délano Alonso, Alexandra and Harris Mylonas, *The Microfoundations of Diaspora Politics*. Routledge (2021)

“Transnational Militancy: Diaspora Influence over Electoral Activity in Latin America.” *Comparative Politics* Vol. 49, no. 4 (2017)

- *Honorable mention, best journal article, American Political Science Association Migration and Citizenship section 2018*

**ACADEMIC  
PUBLICATIONS:  
CHAPTERS, EDITED  
VOLUMES**

“Central America’s Maras: A Negative Case of DTO Evolution.” In Cutrona, Sebastian and Rosen, Jonathan, eds. *Cocaine: Criminals, Routes, and Markets*. University of New Mexico Press (2025)

“Turcos and Chilestinos: Latin American Palestinian Diaspora Nationalism in a Comparative Context.” In Alkazemi, Mariam, and C. E. Youakim, eds. *Arab Worlds Beyond the Middle East and North Africa*. Lexington (2021)

“Anti-Party Skew and Variation in Diaspora Outreach by Mexican Parties.” In Kernallegenn, Tudi and Emilie van Haute, eds. *Political Parties Abroad: A New Arena for Party Politics*. Routledge (2020)

“Day Laborers and Low-Wage Immigrant Workers.” In Huerta, Iglesias-Prieto, and Brown, eds. *Contemporary Issues for People of Color in the U.S. Today: Immigration*. Greenwood (2016)

**PROFESSIONAL  
PUBLICATIONS**

“Trump’s Wag the Dog Moment.” *International Policy Journal*, Center for International Policy 2025

“The Palestinians in El Salvador.” *Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question*, Institute for Palestine Studies. 2025

“El Salvador, Trump, and the Transnational State of Exception.” *International Policy Journal*, Center for International Policy 2025

“Demystifying the Border Crisis.” *VCU Institute for Democracy, Pluralism and Community Empowerment* 2024

“Venezuela’s People, Not Government, Deserve Solidarity.” *Center for International Policy* 2024

“The Emerging Gang State in El Salvador.” *Global Americans* 2022

“Gang Membership in Central America: More Complex Than Meets the Eye.” *Migration Policy Institute* 2021

“EEUU, una presidencia pandémica en un año de elecciones.” *Barcelona Centre for International Affairs Anuario Internacional 2020* 2020

	"Mexico's Diaspora Electorate." Wilson Center	2018
	"Cómo se corteja el voto de la diáspora salvadoreña." El Faro Académico	2018
	<i>Agricultural Cooperatives: Opportunities and Challenges for African American Women in the South</i> , Institute for Policy Studies	2018
	"New York's Experience after the Tipped Minimum Wage Increase," with Teófilo L. Reyes, Institute for Policy Studies and Restaurant Opportunities Centers United	2018
	<i>The Human Trafficking of Domestic Workers in the United States</i> . with Sameera Hafiz, Institute for Policy Studies and National Domestic Workers Alliance	2017
	<i>Unpredictable, Unsustainable: The Impact of Employers' Scheduling Practices in D.C.</i> . With Ari Schwartz, Michael Wasser, and Merrit Gillard, DC Jobs with Justice	2015
	<i>Making Contracting Work for the United States</i> . with David Madland, Center for American Progress	2008
<b>BOOK REVIEWS</b>	"Migration and Democracy: How Remittances Undermine Dictatorships." <i>Journal of Race, Ethnicity and Politics</i> 2022	
<b>BOOK PROJECTS</b>	<i>Diaspora Democracy: Migrants, Parties, and Transnational Elections from Latin America to the U.S.</i> under revise & resubmit with Oxford University Press	
	<i>Sanctuary Policy in Restrictionist Times: Rhetoric, Reality and the Politics of Immigration</i> . With Benjamin Gonzalez O'Brien and Loren Collingwood. Invited for submission to Stanford University Press.	
<b>WORKING PAPERS</b>	"When Crime Undermines Peace: Political Violence and Criminal Victimization in Colombia's Peace Plebiscite (under review)	
	"Voting Here and There, Differently: Divergence as Strategy in Migrant Political Engagement." with Gulcan Saglam (under review)	
	"Much Ado About Nothing? Local Immigration Policy and the MS-13 'Threat.'" with Loren Collingwood (under review)	
	"The Prior Socialization of Mexican Immigrants and their Political Participation in the United States." with Michael Jones-Correa	
	"Why Do Emigrants Vote? Evidence from a Transnational Voter Mobilization Experiment." with Elizabeth Iams Wellman	
<b>COURSES TAUGHT</b>	<b>Virginia Commonwealth University</b> Political Science 109: Comparative Politics Political Science 320: Research Methods Political Science 353: Latin American Politics and Government Political Science 389: Politics of Immigration Political Science 391: Politics of Labor	2018 - present
	<b>Georgetown University</b> Government 340: Latin America's Turn to the Left Masters of Science in Foreign Service 527: Statistical and Analytical Skills International Politics 320: Quantitative Methods for International Politics	2009 - 2012

**SELECTED OP-EDS**

- “The US Can’t Treat Venezuela Like Panama.” [The New Statesman](#) Jan. 6, 2026.
- “Latin America’s Pink Tide Is an Opportunity for Washington.” [Foreign Policy](#) Nov. 11, 2022.
- “Why Is America Cooperating with Militaries Running Criminal Rackets?” [Foreign Policy](#) Aug. 3, 2021.
- “Want to Counter Authoritarianism in Central America? Follow the Money.” [Foreign Policy](#) June 21, 2021.
- “The US Approach to El Salvador’s Authoritarianism Must Be Bold.” [Univision](#) May 10, 2021.
- “The Elections in El Salvador Could Make or Break Biden’s Central America Policy.” [The Washington Post](#) Feb. 25, 2021.
- “China was already winning over the US’s neighbors. Trump’s COVID-19 response just makes Beijing’s job easier.” [Business Insider](#) Aug. 27, 2020.
- “El Salvador’s President Sent Troops to Occupy the Legislature. Here’s What’s Going On.” [The Washington Post](#) Feb. 17, 2020
- “It’s Not Just a Coup: Bolivia’s Democracy Is in Meltdown” [The Washington Post](#) Nov. 13, 2019
- “Paying Tipped Workers Better Wouldn’t Lead to Fewer Restaurant Jobs” [The Washington Post](#) Jan. 16, 2018
- “Don’t Believe the Trump Admin: MS-13 Is Not Ravaging the U.S.” [The Washington Post](#) Oct. 11, 2017
- “The Pinochet Myth is Alive and Well Among Pundits Who Write About Egypt” [The New Republic](#) Mar. 2, 2014
- “A Recent Study Says Unionized Companies Actually Pay Less. The Truth Is a Bit More Complex.” [In These Times](#) Feb. 19, 2015

**SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES**

- “Venezuela y Cuba están en la mira de Trump: cómo queda ahora Nicaragua ante la debilidad de sus mayores aliados.” [CNN en Español](#) Jan. 23, 2026.
- “Trump to meet Venezuelan opposition leader, who vowed to share Nobel Prize.” [ABC News](#) Jan. 15, 2026.
- “Maduro indicted.” [BBC News](#) Jan. 7, 2026.
- “Human Rights Defenders Are Fleeing El Salvador as Bukele Cracks Down.” [Rolling Stone](#) July 17, 2025.
- “The Post-Future Has Arrived in Argentina – and It Looks Remarkably Like the Past.” [The Nation](#) May 9, 2025.
- “Takeaways from Trump’s Meeting with Bukele.” [Live Now Fox](#) April 14, 2025.
- “US Has Responsibility to Return MD Man from El Salvador: Expert.” [ABC News](#) April 14, 2025.

“They Were Called Gang Members and Deported. Families Say Their Only Crime Was Having Tattoos.” [Los Angeles Times](#) March 23, 2025.

“With Venezuelan Deportations, Is Trump Taking a Page from El Salvador’s Playbook?” [Christian Science Monitor](#) March 18, 2025.

“Trump está ‘dispuesto a hacer tratos con líderes autoritarios’ si frenan la migración.” [Focos TV](#) November 11, 2024.

“Is Venezuela Changing How the Left Responds to the Dictatorial Left?” [WLRN](#) Sept. 6, 2024.

“Is Nicaragua’s Dictatorship Nearing Its End?” [Foreign Policy](#) August 25, 2024.

“Michael Paarlberg, exasesor de Sanders para América Latina: ‘El Gobierno de Maduro es un lastre para la izquierda.’” [El Diario](#) August 6, 2024

“How Four U.S. Presidents Unleashed Economic Warfare Across the Globe.” [Washington Post](#) July 25, 2024

“War on Gangs Forges New El Salvador. But the Price Is Steep.” [Associated Press](#) March 22, 2023.

“Amid Surge in Migrants to US, Where Are They Coming From?” [Miami Herald](#) Sept. 21, 2022.

“Chaos Rules.” [Frank News](#) May 17, 2022.

“The 10,000 Ukrainians Just Processed at the Border Show the US Government Can Do Better.” [Mother Jones](#) Apr. 14, 2022.

“Análisis sobre El Salvador y los efectos de la presidencia de Nayib Bukele.” [IQ Latino](#) Nov. 12, 2021.

“Las relaciones entre EEUU y El Salvador son las peores desde la guerra civil.” [El Mundo](#) May 21, 2021.

“In El Salvador a New Security Minister with a Dubious Past.” [Insight Crime](#) Apr. 2, 2021.

“Ulloa usa lobista para protestar por artículo.” [La Prensa Gráfica](#) Mar. 3, 2021.

“Bernie’s Approach to Latin America’s Socialist Leaders Wouldn’t Be That Radical.” [Huffington Post](#) March 17, 2020.

“Migration Likely to Top Agenda When Trump Meets El Salvador’s Bukele.” [New York Times](#) Sept. 25, 2019.

“New Study Shows NY Restaurant Jobs Increase Despite Tipped Minimum Wage Hike.” [Eater](#) Nov. 20, 2018

“A New Economic Model for the South: Ditch Corporate Welfare and Fund Agricultural Co-ops.” [In These Times](#) Nov. 16, 2018

“Adios al mito: Pinochet no mejoró la economía chilena.” [La República](#) (Peru) Sept. 22,

2018

“Académico estadounidense derrumba el mito de que Pinochet mejoró la economía chilena.” [CNN Chile](#) Sept. 13, 2018

“Is Raising Wages for Tipped Workers Worth It?” [US News and World Report](#) June 21, 2018

“SCOTUS Hears Arguments in Case That Could Upend Unions.” [KPFK Los Angeles, KPFA Berkeley, & Free Speech TV](#) June 22, 2018

“The Gangs of Nantucket: Fear and Politics.” [WGBH Boston](#) Nov. 15, 2017

“Comienza la era Trump.” [Telam](#) (Argentina) Jan. 20, 2017

“La Cuba americana di Marco.” [Radiotelevisione Svizzera Italiana](#) (Switzerland) Mar. 15, 2016

#### INVITED LECTURES

“The Bukele Model of Security and State Management of Criminal Gangs in El Salvador.” Universidad Central de Chile, Universidad Diego Portales, and Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile May 8 – 10, 2024

“State Responses to Gangs and Criminal Violence.” University of Oklahoma March 24, 2023.

“El Salvador: Democratic Challenges in an Emerging One-Party State.” University of Nevada Las Vegas Sept. 22, 2021.

“Campaigning Abroad: Transnational Elections and Diaspora Influence in Latin America.” Boston University, Boston, MA. Mar. 22, 2018

“Campaigning Abroad: Transnational Elections and Diaspora Influence in Latin America.” Amherst College, Amherst, MA. Mar. 20, 2018

#### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Transnational Democratic Backsliding: El Salvador’s Diasporic Mobilization.” American Political Science Association annual meeting, Philadelphia 2024

“Persistence of Values of Failed Integration: Why do Turks in the EU (still) Support Erdogan?” International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion annual conference, Lisbon 2024

“Data Driven Approaches to Global Conflict.” Hosted by State Department Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, Alliance for Peacebuilding, and VCU Political Science, Richmond 2022

“MS-13 and the Criminalization of Central American Migration.” Southern Political Science Association annual meeting, San Juan 2020

“Local Immigration Policy and the MS-13 ‘Threat’” (with Loren Collingwood). American Political Science Association annual meeting, Washington, DC 2019

“Transnational Remittances of Organized Crime from Migrant-Receiving to Migrant-Sending States: The Cases of MS-13 and Satudarah.” International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion annual conference, Malmö 2019

“Latin American Asylum in the US: Expert Witnessing in the Age of Trump.” Latin

American Studies Association, Boston 2019

“The Transnationalization of Migrant Gangs.” International Conference of Europeanists, Madrid 2019

“The Prior Socialization of Immigrants and Their Political Participation in the United States” (with Michael Jones-Correa). American Political Science Association annual meeting, Boston 2018

“Transnational Campaigning within a Skewed Diaspora: Mexican Parties in the U.S.” Latin American Studies Association annual congress, Barcelona 2018

“Partisan Skew and Infrastructure: Historical Legacies of Migration on Diaspora Outreach by Latin American Parties.” Political Parties Abroad: A New Arena for Citizenship? conference, Université Catholique de Louvain 2018

“Emigrant Engagement in Homeland Elections: A Survey of the Dominican Diaspora Electorate in New York” (with Elizabeth I. Wellman). International Studies Association annual conference, Baltimore 2017

“Partisan Consensus and Diaspora Electoral Participation: A Case Study of the Dominican Republic.” Advances in the Comparative Study of Emigrant Policies workshop, German Institute of Global and Area Studies Hamburg 2016

“Diaspora Outreach and Anti-Party Sentiment in Mexico.” Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting, Chicago 2016

“Party Motivations for Diaspora Campaigning: A Case Study of El Salvador.” Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting, Chicago 2015

“Diaspora Influence over Voter Preference in Latin America.” Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting, Chicago 2014

“Diaspora Partisan Political Strategies in El Salvador and Latin America.” International Political Science Association world congress, Madrid 2012

**GRANTS AND  
SCHOLARSHIPS**

Georgetown University: Jill Hopper Memorial Fellowship, Herbert Roback scholarship, US Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies scholarship, Korean American Scholarship Foundation fellowship

**PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICE**

Expert witness in hearings for asylum seekers on Latin America security conditions

Program co-chair, APSA 2020, Migration and Citizenship section

Council member, LASA Expert Witness section

Reviewer, *Journal of Politics*, *World Development*, *Latin American Politics and Society*, *Journal of Latin American Geography*, *Migration Studies*, *Journal of International Migration and Integration*

**LANGUAGES**

English and Spanish (fluent), Portuguese (proficient), Korean (intermediate)

**SOFTWARE**

R, Stata, SAS, SPSS, GIS, LaTeX