

## ARTURO LOPEZ-LEVY

### Featured Alumnus

*Current location: Fremont, California*  
*Dialogue Role: Graduate Intern, 2004*



#### **What is your occupation or most recent work experience?**

I am an assistant professor of Political Science and International Relations at Holy Names University in Oakland, California. Most of my experience is as a professor, analyst (consultant) for political risk firms, NGO's, and governments. I am a public intellectual in the United States and Cuba.

#### **What has surprised you most about your career?**

Plateaus are very important but underestimated in most professional careers. It is easy to get enthusiastic when you are climbing to a new level or when you need to fight not to fail in the middle of a tempest. But there is a lot to learn during the plateaus if you have always a student-attitude and find ways to motivate your intellectual search. These are the times for you to look at different questions and think about your own agenda with different approaches beyond the traditional ways.

#### **What advice would you give to a young professional?**

For a young professional at the Dialogue, presumably planning a career related to the Americas, I will suggest paying attention to the activities at the intersection between international relations and domestic politics that take place in the organization. Second, if your interest is to learn, be suspicious of your own ideological rigidities and search for comparison beyond regions. Using Isaiah Berlin's advice, be a fox, not a hedgehog.

#### **What was your most impactful Dialogue moment/experience?**

At the Dialogue, I had the honor to meet Peter Vaky, a legend among US diplomats in the Western Hemisphere for his knowledge and his values. Before I went to the Dialogue, I already knew about his role highlighting the importance of coherence in the defense of human rights for American image in the region. He also proposed a well thought rational approach to Cuba as early as the end of the Johnson Administration. Mr. Vaky even reviewed a memo/essay I wrote for an essay contest on creative thinking in foreign policy of the American Academy of Diplomacy. His feedback was quite useful, and the essay received the first prize. Every time I am invited to give an opinion for the Advisor or to present at a panel, I think about people like Pete as the audience. The alumni's relationship with the Dialogue should never be an experience of the past. When one of my students is interested in gender and power in the Americas, I recommend them to look at the Dialogue webpage on the subject because I know of the great work and pluristic visions that Joan Caviano gathers there. I still exchange views with Peter Hakim. When I am lucky, he answers with questions that make me think again.