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UNIVERSITY | CAMDEN



**UNA**

# BULLETIN

## HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER FOR ETHICS, EQUITY AND TRANSPARENCY (HECEET)



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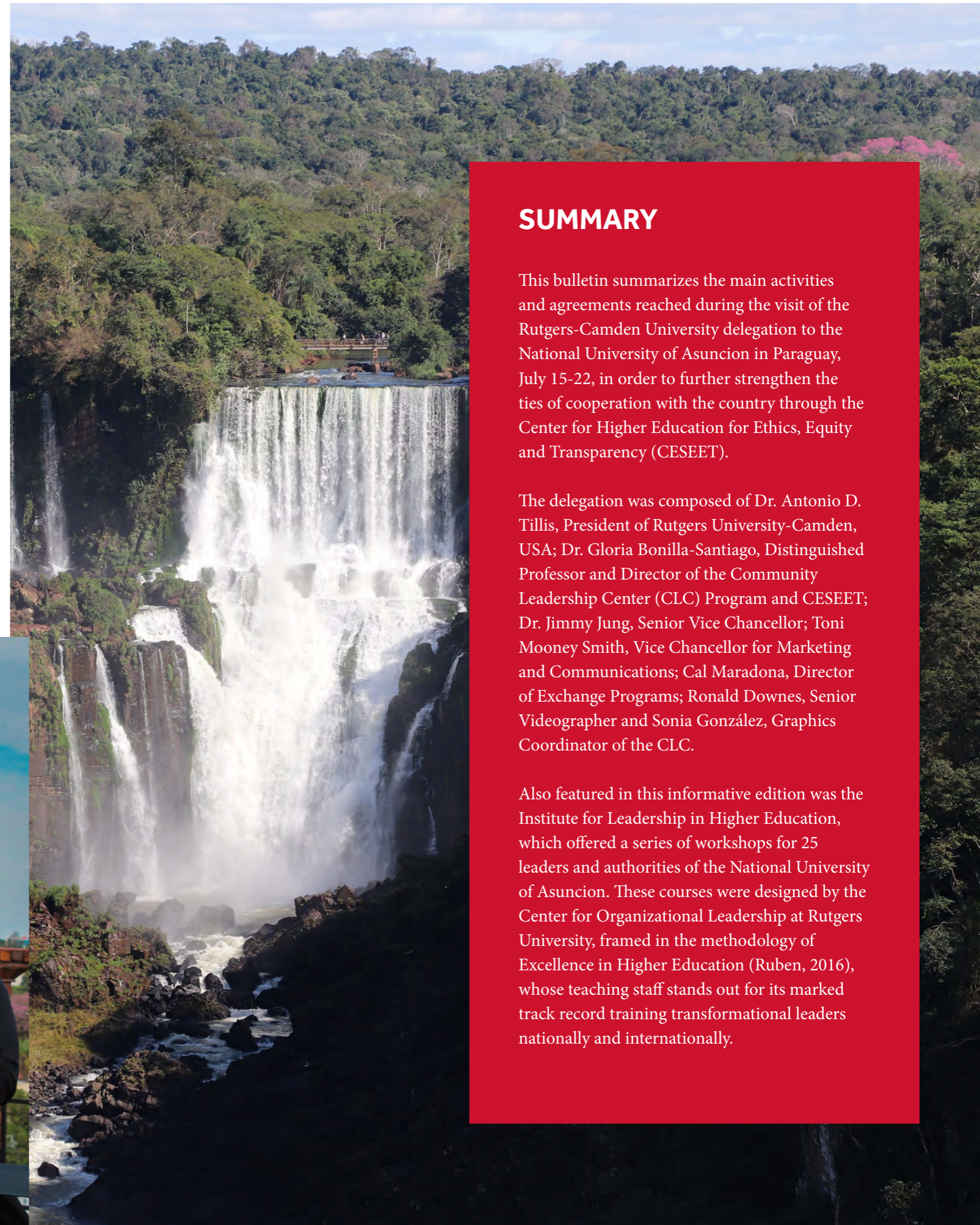
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## SUMMARY

This bulletin summarizes the main activities and agreements reached during the visit of the Rutgers-Camden University delegation to the National University of Asuncion in Paraguay, July 15-22, in order to further strengthen the ties of cooperation with the country through the Center for Higher Education for Ethics, Equity and Transparency (CESEET).

The delegation was composed of Dr. Antonio D. Tillis, President of Rutgers University-Camden, USA; Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, Distinguished Professor and Director of the Community Leadership Center (CLC) Program and CESEET; Dr. Jimmy Jung, Senior Vice Chancellor; Toni Mooney Smith, Vice Chancellor for Marketing and Communications; Cal Maradona, Director of Exchange Programs; Ronald Downes, Senior Videographer and Sonia González, Graphics Coordinator of the CLC.

Also featured in this informative edition was the Institute for Leadership in Higher Education, which offered a series of workshops for 25 leaders and authorities of the National University of Asuncion. These courses were designed by the Center for Organizational Leadership at Rutgers University, framed in the methodology of Excellence in Higher Education (Ruben, 2016), whose teaching staff stands out for its marked track record training transformational leaders nationally and internationally.







## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN RUTGERS UNIVERSITY AND UNA

On Monday, July 18, the President of the National University of Asuncion, Prof. Dr. Zully Vera and the President of Rutgers University-Camden, Dr. Antonio Tillis, signed a Memorandum of Understanding in order to continue the bilateral collaboration between both institutions. This meeting was held in the meeting room of the University Superior Council of UNA and was also attended by members of the Rutgers Delegation, the Vice Chancellor of UNA, Deans, Vice Deans, Heads of Office and General Directors.

These efforts began 5 years ago, in 2017, and seek to promote the internationalization of both houses of studies, the development of cooperative forces in research and academic publication as well as the exchange of students and School.



### MEETING WITH THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO PARAGUAY

On Monday, July 18, members of the Rutgers University delegation met at the residence of Evelyn Rodriguez, USAID representative in Paraguay, accompanied by Marc Ostfield, U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay. Those present shared a pleasant and relaxed evening sharing about the impact of the collaboration between Rutgers and UNA, and how to continue strengthening the relationship between the different institutions represented.



## HONORARY CEREMONY FOR DOCTORS HONORIS CAUSA

Dr. Antonio Tillis, President of Rutgers-Camden University, and Dr. Gloria Bonilla Santiago, Director of the Rutgers-Camden Community Development Center and Director of the Higher Education Center for Ethics, Equity and Transparency (CESEET-UNA), received the honorary degrees of Doctor and Doctor Honoris Causa from the National University of Asuncion, from the UNA authorities.

The table of honor was presided over by Prof. Dr. Zully Vera, rector of the UNA; Eng. Cristian Cantero, general secretary of the UNA; Prof. Dr. Viviana Ríos Morínigo, godmother of the doctoral candidate and dean of the School of Veterinary Sciences (FCV-UNA) and Prof. Architect José Insfrán, sponsor of the doctoral candidate and dean of the School of Architecture, Design and Art (FADA-UNA).

The doctoral candidate's godfather described Dr. Gloria Bonilla Santiago's career and her commitment to education in our country and described her as a "passionate educator". The doctoral candidate's godmother also highlighted the work of the academic, "a leader in higher education". The ceremony took place at the St. Lawrence Campus Convention Center on Monday, July 18.







## MEETING WITH THE AFRO-PARAGUAYAN COMMUNITY KAMBA KUÁ

At the end of the day on Monday, July 18, the Rutgers University delegation, accompanied by the Rector of UNA, Prof. Dr. Zully Vera and General Directors of the Rectorate, visited the Afro-descendant community of Kamba Kuá, the best known Afro-descendant presence in Paraguay.

During the tour they visited some social facilities of the community, such as the Basic School No. 4693, San Baltazar and the community center, where they witnessed the handicraft process of making the drums typical of the traditional dances. The visit ended at the Club 6 de Enero stadium.



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN RUTGERS UNIVERSITY AND BECAL

On July 19, the Rector of the National University of Asunción, Prof. Dr. Zully Vera, the Rector of Rutgers-Camden University, Dr. Antonio Tillis, and the General Coordinator of the Carlos Antonio López Scholarship Abroad Program (BECAL), Dr. Andrea Picasso, signed a multilateral agreement that will allow student and School mobility. This meeting took place in the meeting room of the University Superior Council of the UNA and the authorities of the UNA were witnesses of honor.

This Memorandum of Understanding arises from the work of the Rutgers-Camden Center for Community Leadership in Paraguay with the National University of Asunción (UNA) and other allied organizations. It focuses on three specific areas: science, technology and innovation; and seeks to provide students and professors with opportunities for academic exchange, research and graduate study abroad.



## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE CULTURE OF LAWFULNESS

On July 19, the International Conference “Establishing a Culture of Lawfulness through Higher Education in Paraguay” was organized by CESEET-UNA. This activity was held in the framework of the visit of the delegation from Rutgers-Camden University and took place at the UNA Convention Center at the San Lorenzo Campus. In her opening remarks, UNA President, Prof. Dr. Zully Vera de Molinas, highlighted the importance of CESEET as a joint project, the first of its kind in the country.

Amir Masliyah, Minister Counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Paraguay, congratulated Rutgers University for the commitment shown in the creation of the transparency unit at UNA, in the training of ethics ambassadors, both in the public and private sectors.

*“... Desde ya nuestro deber como universidad es formar una generación de profesionales no solamente con elevada capacidad académica y alto sentido de patriotismo sino que también queremos construir un país sustentado en valores”.*



**Prof. Dra. Zully Vera**  
Rectora de la Universidad Nacional de Asunción



**Amir Masliyah**  
Minister Counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Paraguay

*“For the past 3 years the U.S. government has supported an alliance between UNA and Rutgers University to strengthen the culture of lawfulness in Paraguay. From the academic sector this alliance seeks to ensure that higher education not only transfers knowledge and technical skills but also values such as transparency, ethics and equity.”*





## CLOSING OF ONE STAGE OF CESEET AND BEGINNING OF A NEW ONE

On Tuesday, July 19, the closing ceremony of the CESEET project was held at the Sheraton Hotel in the city of Asuncion. Dr. Gloria Bonilla Santiago, Project Director, and Dr. Alfonso Velázquez, USAID Rule of Law Specialist, shared words of welcome, followed by the presentation of CESEET's institutional video; testimonies of the Ambassadors for Ethics, Equity and Transparency; and the impact and projections of the center as it enters a new phase.

an end, but rather a continuation of the joint work to achieve through higher education a society with greater well-being based on values such as ethics, equity and transparency.

Although the visit of the delegation from Rutgers University represents the end of the project financed by USAID, Dr. Tillis indicated that this does not mark

This meeting was attended by Prof. Dr. Zully Vera, Rector of UNA; Prof. Dr. Miguel Torres, Vice Rector of UNA; Lic. Celina Lezcano, Minister of Women; Dr. Claudelina Marín, General Director of INAES; Evelyn Rodríguez, USAID Representative in Paraguay; Dr. Julio Noguera, Director of SENAC; Mag. Nelly Monges, Vice Rector of UNI; among other distinguished guests.

## FRATERNITY WITH THE AFRO-PARAGUAYAN KAMBÁ KOKUÉ COMMUNITY

Dr. Gloria Bonilla Santiago, one of the distinguished panelists at this meeting, remarked during her presentation that higher education institutions are in a key position to lead the change needed to establish a culture of Lawfulness and that CESEET was prompted because corruption is considered one of the most critical barriers to meaningful democracy, economic wealth, and human well-being. It is also a contributing factor to the erosion of social trust.

Dr. Antonio Tillis' keynote address focused on "Equity in Higher Education with a Focus on Vulnerable Communities".

The conference continued with presentations by Dr. Jimmy Jung, Vice Chancellor of Rutgers University-Camden on Successful Change Management in Higher Education and concluded with a presentation by Prof. Cal Maradona, Director of Overseas Programs at Rutgers University-Camden, on the Cultural Richness that is generated in Academic Exchanges. During his presentation, he shared experiences and also announced the first delegation of Rutgers students to Paraguay for 2023, as well as the formation of a delegation of Paraguayan students to the U.S. university for the following year.



On July 20, the delegation was received by the inhabitants of Kambá Kokué, a community of Afro-descendants, located in the outskirts of the city of Paraguari, in the countryside.

*"Advocating for equity is not an easy mission; it requires a commitment to examine and correct bias and racism in everyday actions. To achieve equity, organizations must be willing to transform their beliefs, their values, and orient themselves in actions that change their behaviors and perceptions. This work must begin within the organization."*

**Dr. Antonio Tillis**  
Chancellor of Rutgers University-Camden.



The visitors were accompanied by Prof. Dr. Zully Vera, Rector of the UNA; C.P. Marcelo Simbrón, Mayor of Paraguari; Eng. Juan Carlos Baruja, Governor of Paraguari; academic, municipal and departmental authorities, in an emotional reception with music and typical dances performed by students from the city of Paraguari. The meeting ended with the planting of seedlings, which bore the names of each of the members of the Rutgers delegation.





## MEETING WITH UNA BRANCH AUTHORITIES

The Rutgers University delegation, UNA authorities and the CESEET team in Paraguay visited the School of Economic Sciences of the UNA Paraguari Branch on Wednesday, July 20.

The meeting brought together the authorities and representatives of the academic units of the UNA - based in the department of Paraguari, including the School of Economics, School of Philosophy, School of Nursing and Midwifery, School of Law and Social Sciences. The purpose of the meeting was to join efforts and advance in a joint agenda that promotes equity and facilitates study, exchange and research opportunities

for teachers and students from the interior of the country.

*“We are amazed with the country, we seek to carry out student exchange so that our students come to Paraguay to nourish themselves with the culture... with this type of work many students can be trained, may equity be for everyone.”*

*Dr. Antonio Tillis  
Chancellor of Rutgers University-Camden*

## VISITS TO THE ITAIPÚ AND YACYRETÁ HYDROELECTRIC



The Rutgers delegation, together with UNA authorities, visited on Saturday, July 16, the Itaipú hydroelectric dam, and on Thursday, July 22, the Yacyretá Binational Entity; in order to learn about its impact on Paraguay's development and economy, identify lines of research related to water resources, renewable energies, hydroelectric energy, hard sciences and the environment linked to energy sovereignty.

## UNA'S YOUNG RESEARCHERS' CONFERENCE

The JJI-UNA have been held since 2007 and more than 2,000 young researchers have participated in them, demonstrating initiative and a great professional capacity, who throughout these years have obtained more than 50 international awards for their research. This has consolidated the Conference as the main space for scientific initiation in Paraguay.

After two virtual editions, the XVI JJI-UNA was held on July 21 and 22, at the branches of the UNA in the Department of Misiones. The thematic areas included natural sciences, medical and health sciences, agricultural and veterinary sciences, engineering and technology, social sciences and arts and humanities.

Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago participated in the official opening ceremony of the event at the Roseño Cultural Center in the city of Santa Rosa de Lima, where she gave a keynote lecture entitled: “Passion, purpose and resilience in research”, which was dedicated to young people who are beginning their experience as researchers. The Rutgers delegation, the CESEET team in Paraguay and UNA authorities accompanied her in this meeting.





## INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

On July 26, 28 and 29 and August 2, 4, 5, 9 and 11, the Institute for Leadership in Higher Education was held with 25 selected members of the National University of Asuncion, among them the Rector Prof. Dr. Zully Vera and the Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Miguel Torres, deans, vice deans and the team of directors of the Rector's Office. This program is part of the transformation efforts towards the "New University Model at UNA".

This series of 8 modules seeks to provide tools that promote Higher Education Excellence with the mentoring of experts Ralph A. Gigliotti, Brent Ruben and Cristine Goldthwaite from the Center for Organizational Leadership at Rutgers University-Camden.

The institute presents a guide to transformational leadership inspired by Malcolm Baldrige's Performance Excellence program. This guide is based on the following courses of action:

- Identify roles and responsibilities,
- Promote values, ethics and integrity,
- Understand the importance of internal and external communication,
- Establish a plan and planning process,
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in the organization,
- Identify needs and expectations.



*"These are 5 years of uninterrupted work, basing our work strategy on 3 main forces: equity, access and social justice as a sign that the university serves as the best vehicle, as these imperatives are present today within the mission of the public university."*

**Gloria Bonilla Santiago**  
**Doctor Honoris Causa of the UNA**

## INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION OF UNA RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project entitled "Procuring Human Teeth for Dental Education: A Cross-Cutting Study to Create Ethical and Transparent Processes" has been approved for publication in the Journal of Dental Education, a highly regarded peer-reviewed journal in the field of dental sciences, which includes a wide variety of scientific research on dental education.

The principal investigator of the National University of Asuncion, Dr. Ma. Soledad Meza, and her team have developed this research project supported by Rutgers mentors, Professors Kimberlee Moran and David Salas.

This great achievement was possible thanks to the efforts led by CESEET in the production of new scientific knowledge that impacts different sectors of Paraguayan society and whose cross-cutting themes are ethics, equity and transparency.

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