

Our Team

Website content · July 2026

Editorial criteria applied to all bios

- Third person, without exception.
- Even length of 90 to 130 words per profile.
- Same internal order: who they are and where they come from · academic background · teaching experience · methodology and contribution to the academy.

ACADEMIC COORDINATION



Mónica Martínez G.

Academic Coordinator

United States · Spanish / English

Mónica Martínez is a bilingual professional with over twenty years of experience in operations management, program coordination, and educational leadership within a prestigious binational center. Throughout her career she has led strategic institutional projects, optimized organizational processes, and guided teaching teams toward operational and academic excellence. Her pedagogical background in teaching English as a second language across schools and universities, with learners of all ages, gives her a deep understanding of language acquisition methodologies, curriculum implementation, and classroom dynamics. At Isabella & Ferdinand she supports the teaching faculty in their pedagogical practice, strengthens communication with families, and ensures a top-tier academic structure for students.



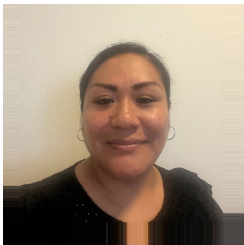
Luciana Paz

Project Coordinator

Spanish / English

Luciana Paz is the academy's Project Coordinator, where she oversees the planning and execution of educational programs and events. With over a decade of experience in project coordination, she is adept at assessing needs, troubleshooting challenges, and ensuring seamless collaboration among diverse teams. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Tampa and is currently a Transformational Leader fellow at Emerson College. She previously served as Chair of the USDA Hispanic American Cultural Effort (HACE), where she revitalized the Spanish Lunch Initiative, and founded Growth Dialogues Talks, a leadership development space for USDA professionals. At Isabella & Ferdinand she organizes logistics, manages timelines, and ensures every project meets the needs of the community.

BILINGUAL PROGRAM · Curso Bilingüe

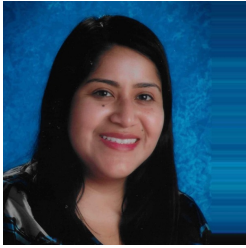


Carola Orellana

In-Person Teacher · Early Childhood Education

Bolivia · Spanish

Carola Orellana, originally from Bolivia, combines her training as a systems engineer with her calling for early childhood education, bringing a distinctive perspective to children's first stages of learning. She holds an Associate degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and is continuing her studies toward a Bachelor's in Education. She taught computer science for two years in Bolivia and, since arriving in the United States in 2018, has spent eight years teaching in schools across Washington, D.C. and at Isabella & Ferdinand. Her practice integrates early literacy strategies and social-emotional development in environments where children explore, create, and build solid academic foundations.



Mayra Rosenblatt

In-Person Teacher · Elementary

United States · Spanish / English

Mayra Rosenblatt has been teaching Spanish for fifteen years, with experience in early childhood, elementary, middle school, and high school education in Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia. She especially enjoys working with first grade, where this will be her sixth year. What she values most about teaching is the moment children first learn to read and begin to see the world through a different lens. Outside the classroom, she spends her time with her family: she has three daughters involved in dance and volleyball, and she serves as assistant coach for one of their volleyball teams.



Camila Castro

Teacher Assistant · Early Childhood Education

Bolivia · Spanish / English

Camila Castro is a bilingual instructor experienced in supporting children ages 4 to 8 who are building their first foundations in Spanish. She is pursuing a degree in Business Technology Administration at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and is studying a third language, strengthening her multicultural profile. She began at Isabella & Ferdinand supporting teachers with groups of 2- to 4-year-olds and, after her first year, joined the bilingual team, where she has spent two years with students ages 5 to 8. Her methodology rests on patience, clarity, and practical examples that connect the language to real situations; she also prepares educational materials and supports communication between families and teachers.



Cristihan Castro

Teacher Assistant · Early Childhood Education

Bolivia · Spanish / English

Cristihan Castro, originally from the city of La Paz, Bolivia, is an educator committed to teaching Spanish and to supporting students as a whole. He stands out for his ability to connect with children through activities that combine play, conversation, and meaningful experiences that develop their language skills. As a teacher, he guides students through early literacy work and makes sure every child feels heard, valued, and motivated. His work reflects a deep commitment to early childhood education and to building a safe environment in which students move forward in their Spanish learning and in shaping a strong, positive cultural identity.



Tatiana Cabrera

Teacher Assistant · Early Childhood Education

El Salvador · Spanish

Tatiana Cabrera is part of the teaching team at Isabella & Ferdinand® Academia de Español™, where she guides children ages 4 to 6 through their first steps in learning Spanish. With experience in early childhood education and as a preschool teaching assistant, she creates a warm, dynamic, and safe environment in which students learn through play, communication, and creativity. Her patience, her empathy, and her ability to connect with the youngest learners allow her to foster confidence, respect, and enthusiasm for discovering a new language.

IMMERSION PROGRAM · Curso Inmersión



Rossana Alosilla

Spanish Language Instructor · Art Educator

Peru / United States · Spanish / English

Rossana Alosilla is a bilingual Peruvian-American educator with an extensive career in education, art, and cultural studies. She holds two Bachelor's degrees, in Art History and Art Education, as well as Master's degrees in Art History and Education. In Peru she taught Art, Art History, Literature, and Spanish in school and university settings, and served as Director of the Museum at the National University of San Marcos. Since moving to the United States in 2006 she has taught Spanish and Art in public and private settings, including Montessori and Reggio Emilia schools. She enjoys working with children ages 4 to 8, creating multisensory experiences that integrate language, art, and culture. She served as a Spanish-speaking docent at the Lowe Art Museum, applying the Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) methodology.

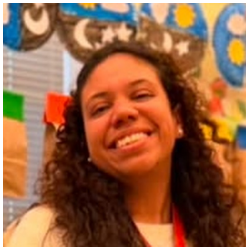


Miriam Ybarnegaray

Art Teacher in Spanish · Early Childhood

United States · Spanish / English

Miriam Ybarnegaray is a visual artist and early childhood teacher with more than ten years of experience teaching children in the United States, Latin America, and Africa. She holds a degree in Visual Arts with a concentration in easel painting from Universidad de Arte Ganexa (Panama), the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, and 90 hours of early childhood education training. She has been part of the Isabella & Ferdinand team since 2018, teaching art in Spanish to children ages 2 to 6, and has organized 18 student art exhibitions, handling the entire process from the classroom to the event itself. Her methodology places art at the center of learning: children explore painting, drawing, and sculpture, and their work culminates in real exhibitions.



Yusbely Morales

Spanish Teacher · Early Childhood

Venezuela · Spanish

Yusbely Morales is a Spanish teacher passionate about guiding children as they discover the language in a meaningful, enjoyable, and enriching way. She has experience working with children ages 3 to 8 in bilingual settings, designing learning experiences that foster language development, creativity, confidence, and a genuine enjoyment of learning. She is especially drawn to early childhood, believing the first years are essential for building solid foundations. Her teaching philosophy rests on respect, patience, empathy, and learning through play, exploration, and active participation, in a warm and motivating environment where every student gains confidence communicating in Spanish.



Oriana Cudemus - Riquezes

Spanish Teacher · Teens and Adults

Venezuela · Spanish

Oriana Cudemus - Riquezes holds a degree in Design and Communication Management and has more than five years of experience teaching Spanish as a foreign language, both at international academies and in private in-person and online classes. She enjoys working with teenagers and adults at intermediate and advanced levels, where she can guide fluid conversations about culture and current events. Her work is grounded in the communicative approach: she designs dynamic sessions built around real situations so students speak with confidence from day one. What motivates her most is watching students overcome their linguistic obstacles and gain confidence in how they express themselves.



Ximena De La Oliva

Spanish & ESL Teacher · Early Childhood and Elementary

Bolivia · Spanish / English

Ximena De La Oliva is a Spanish and ESL instructor who brings engaging, hands-on activities that spark curiosity and confidence in young learners. As part of Isabella & Ferdinand® Academia de Español™, she creates joyful, culturally rich lessons that help children explore the Spanish language and connect with its heritage in meaningful ways. Her professional experience in telecommunications and real estate adds strong communication skills, professionalism, and a warm, supportive approach to every interaction. Her goal is to inspire her students, foster an inclusive learning environment, and nurture a genuine love for language, guiding each child through their learning journey with patience and creativity.



Paola Urquizo

Teacher · Early Childhood and Elementary

Ecuador · Spanish / English

Paola Urquizo, originally from Quito, Ecuador, is a bilingual educator with more than a decade of experience supporting students' academic, social, and language development. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Development from the University of the Potomac and an Associate of Arts in Education from the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), and is currently pursuing a Master's in Multilingual Education with elementary teaching certification at Moreland University. She also holds CDA credentials for preschool and for infants and toddlers. She spent seven years at a Spanish immersion program in Washington, D.C., where she went on to direct the center, and since 2025 has taught third grade in Two-Way Immersion programs at Montgomery County Public Schools. Her practice draws on differentiated instruction and inclusive, multicultural environments that advance biliteracy.



Ernesto Avilés

Teacher · Charter/School

Colombia · Spanish / English

Ernesto Avilés has more than eight years of experience teaching Spanish and works primarily with schools and charter schools in the area. His approach combines personalized lessons with immersive cultural experiences: he guides students through grammar, pronunciation, and conversational skills while preparing them for DELE certification. In his classes, students find a dynamic learning environment where language mastery is built alongside an understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures.



Verónica Beard

Spanish Teacher · Schools

Bolivia / United States · Spanish / English

Verónica Beard is an educator and multidisciplinary professional passionate about learning and teaching Spanish as a second language. Her academic background includes five years of Architecture studies at Universidad Católica Boliviana and three years of Photography and Communication at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). In her teaching she draws on the Instituto Cervantes curriculum plan and, with elementary school children, translates that framework into highly visual, playful, and interactive experiences: songs, stories, games, and hands-on materials. Since 2024 she has taught Spanish online and, since 2023, has volunteered in community early childhood education. Her greatest specialty is the elementary and middle school stages, with a dynamic, participatory methodology in an environment built on trust.

DELE PROGRAM · Curso DELE



Ana María Pérez

DELE Program Coordinator

Colombia · Spanish / English

Ana María Pérez is a Colombian professional with a degree in Business Administration and a specialization in Occupational Health. With over sixteen years of experience in the education sector, she has served as a coordinator of educational programs, planning advisor, quality management leader, and citizen support leader in the Departments of Education in Colombia and at the Ministry of National Education of Colombia. Her expertise in administration and her commitment to education have made a significant impact in advancing educational initiatives. At Isabella & Ferdinand she coordinates the DELE Program, connecting student preparation with the organization of exam sessions.



Julio Fiol

DELE Instructor

Chile · Spanish

Julio Fiol is part of Isabella & Ferdinand® Academia de Español™'s elite team of instructors for adults. A lawyer and career diplomat, he has served as Ambassador of Chile in Japan and South Africa and represented his country before the UN, OAS, FAO, and WFP. He now brings this world-class expertise into the classroom, offering adult learners Spanish instruction enriched with intercultural insight, specialized vocabulary, and DELE exam preparation.



María Jesús Herrero, Ph.D.

DELE Instructor

Spain · Spanish / English · School-age levels: A1E, A2/B1E and B2/C1

María Jesús Herrero, Ph.D., is part of Isabella & Ferdinand® Academia de Español™'s elite team of adult Spanish instructors. A scientist and educator with over eighteen years of international experience in research and teaching across five continents, she brings scientific rigor, multilingual expertise, and a multicultural perspective to Spanish instruction. She works with both adult and school-age students and supports DELE exam preparation at the A1 school-age, A2/B1 school-age, and B2/C1 school-age levels.



Susana Paredes

In-Person Teacher · DELE Preparation

Perú · Spanish / English · Levels: A1/A2/B1 and B2/C1 school-age

Susana Paredes is a bilingual educator with international experience in Spanish language instruction and program management. She holds an MBA and a degree in Mass Communication, and combines her teaching experience with her background in intercultural communication to prepare students for the DELE exam with both academic rigor and cultural insight. She works primarily with adults and school-age students at the A1/A2/B1 and B2/C1 levels, and her approach pairs language instruction with knowledge of the Spanish-speaking world.

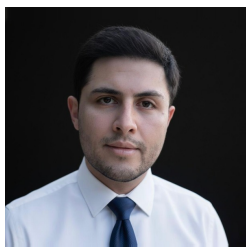


Lizeth Saavedra

Spanish Teacher · DELE Preparation

Bolivia · Spanish · Levels: A1/A2, B1/B2 and C1/C2 adults; A1/A2/B1 and B2/C1 school-age

Lizeth Saavedra is an architect, a graduate of the Faculty of Architecture and Arts at UMSA (Bolivia, 2002), with a certification in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language issued by the Instituto Cervantes, along with certificates in Development Project Management and Youth Mental Health First Aid. Since 2020 she has taught Spanish at Horace Mann School, Washington Global Charter School, and Commonwealth Academy, and has tutored privately at every DELE level. She is an examiner accredited by the Instituto Cervantes at levels A1/A2 school-age and adult, A2/B1 adult, B1/B2 adult, B2/C1 school-age, and C1/C2 adult. Her practice is grounded in ACTFL standards and proficiency-based instruction: she uses Spanish 90% of class time through comprehensible input and integrates the interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes. She is passionate about classrooms where mistakes are valued as part of learning.



Jorge Ferrel

Spanish Teacher · DELE Preparation

Bolivia · Spanish · Official DELE examiner, B2/C1 school-age

Jorge Ferrel Rivera was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia. He is a systems engineer and a teacher of Spanish and mathematics, passionate about teaching the language and its culture. He passed the Praxis: Spanish World Language (5195) exam of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with a score of 190/200 and holds certification from the Instituto Cervantes as an official DELE examiner (B2/C1 school-age). His engineering background lets him design lessons that are clear, structured, dynamic, and well organized. Although he works with a range of profiles, he especially enjoys children and teenagers, guiding them to gain confidence and express themselves fluently from their first lessons. His methodology is practical, participatory, and adapted to each student.



Óscar Míguez

DELE Instructor

Colombia · Spanish / English

Óscar Javier Míguez is a technology and information systems professional with more than 15 years of experience in project management, operations, and customer service at leading companies in the technology sector. Throughout his career he has worked with organizations such as IBM and Kyndryl, developing technology solutions, leading multidisciplinary teams, and driving digital transformation processes.

At Isabella & Ferdinand® Academia de Español™ he is responsible for administering and developing the institution's information systems, providing technical support for its academic, operational, and administrative platforms. His experience allows him to optimize the academy's digital processes and keep the technology tools that support teaching and institutional management running smoothly.

Beyond his technology profile, Óscar is part of the academic team as a teacher in the DELE program (Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera), contributing to students' preparation for the Instituto Cervantes international certifications. His combination of technological and educational experience brings an integrated perspective that strengthens innovation and academic excellence at Isabella & Ferdinand.

WORKFORCE



Gabriela Armendáriz, Ph.D.

Instructor · English for Adults and Community Programs

Mexico · Spanish / English

Dr. Gabriela Armendáriz is a bilingual educator, public health professional, and community engagement specialist with more than a decade of experience supporting individuals and families in the United States and Mexico. She holds a medical degree, a Master of Public Health in Nutrition, and a PhD in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior from the University of South Carolina. As a native Spanish speaker who has also navigated professional and academic environments in English, she understands the challenges that come with learning a new language. Through programs such as Vida Cotidiana and English for CNAs, she helps Spanish-speaking adults strengthen the English they need for everyday life, employment, healthcare, and professional advancement.



Sabrina Baldi

Spanish Instructor

Spain · Spanish / English

Sabrina Baldi is a native bilingual Spanish teacher (Spanish/English) with a year of experience teaching at Isabella & Ferdinand. Her classes combine structure with activities that invite students to speak without fear of making mistakes; her own students describe her as someone who makes them comfortable and pushes them at the same time. Her background in psychology gives her an uncommon advantage: she understands how students learn and stay motivated, not just what content to teach. Before turning to teaching, she worked at IE University advising international baccalaureate students. Demanding, but never intimidating.



Sandra Robinson

English and Spanish Instructor

United States · Spanish / English · Levels A1 and A2

Sandra Robinson has been teaching English for over seven years, working mainly with elementary students. During that time she has also taught Art, which lets her bring creativity and hands-on activities into her lessons. In recent years she has also taught Spanish as a foreign language to both children and adults, primarily at the A1 and A2 levels. She especially enjoys helping beginners gain the confidence to communicate in everyday situations. She believes learning a language should feel practical, interactive, and enjoyable, and adapts each lesson to her students' interests, goals, and learning style.

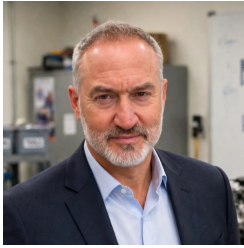


Leocadia (Lea) Díaz, Ph.D.

Multilingual Instructor · Spanish, French and English

Spain · Spanish / English / French

Lea Díaz is a multilingual educator, writer, and creative with extensive experience teaching Spanish, French, English, History, and Humanities across all educational levels, from early childhood to university. She holds a Ph.D. and is currently pursuing a Master's in Education at Hunter College. A native Spanish speaker and certified in French, she brings a multilingual and multicultural perspective to every classroom. Her teaching style is highly creative and student-centered, blending structured language instruction with storytelling, music, current events, and interactive projects that encourage real-world language use. She has also worked in curriculum development, program coordination, translation, and academic advising.



Mauricio Del Solar

Instructor · Automotive Technical English and Workforce Development

Bolivia · Spanish / English

Mauricio Del Solar is an international business executive, entrepreneur, certified automotive mechanic, and university lecturer with more than twenty-five years of experience in global sourcing, supply chain, product development, manufacturing, and international trade, leading teams and operations in the United States, China, Peru, and Bolivia. He earned his certification as an Automotive Mechanic in 1991 and has maintained a close relationship with vehicles, engines, and automotive restoration ever since. Between 2008 and 2010 he lectured in Business Administration at Universidad Real and taught the Textile Marketing module in the Master's in Textile Engineering at UMSA. He currently runs an international company dedicated to the restoration, import, export, and digital sale of classic vehicles. He enjoys working with adult learners and professionals; his methodology is practical, dynamic, and highly participatory.



Fernando Candia

Instructor

Bolivia · Spanish / English

Fernando Candia is an administration and project management professional with more than a decade of experience overseeing budgets, operations, and teams at companies in the United States. He holds a BBA in Business Administration and Management from Univalle University (Cochabamba, Bolivia) and is a certified ISO 9001:2015 auditor. He served as Office Manager at Microprobes for Life Science and, for nearly eight years, as Project Manager and purchasing and inventory manager at Paddock Swimming Pool Co, where he coordinated construction work, subcontractors, and schedules across cross-functional teams. He has also taught Spanish classes in companies and projects. His work rests on process optimization, vendor management, and clear organization of information. He has volunteered with Arco Iris de America, supporting social projects for children and adolescents in La Paz.