



Ambassador Lino Gutierrez

March 26, 1951 - May 3, 2025

Ambassador Lino Gutiérrez, 74, devoted husband, father and grandfather passed away May 3, 2025, surrounded by his loving family.

Born in 1951 in Havana, Cuba, Lino came to the United States with his parents in 1962 at the age of 11. He settled in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where his father was offered a professorship at the University of Alabama. Lino grew up a die-hard Alabama football fan and went on to attend both the University of Miami and The University of Alabama, where he received a B.A. in Political Science and an M.A. in Latin American Studies.

He began his career as a social studies teacher for the Dade County School System and the Urban League in Miami, Florida before joining the Foreign Service in 1977. Over the course of his 30 year diplomatic career, he served overseas in Latin America and Europe and stateside at the Department of State and the National War College. He held several venerable positions, including Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs and Acting Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs at the State Department. He was appointed US Ambassador to both Nicaragua and Argentina.

Following his retirement from the federal government, Lino served as the Executive Director of the Una Chapman Cox Foundation as well as an adjunct

professor at George Washington University and Johns Hopkins University. He loved teaching and took great joy in mentoring the next generation of public servants.

Lino was cherished by friends, family, students and colleagues for his warmth, humor and wit. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Miriam Messina, his daughters Alicia (James), Diana (Jim) and Susie, and his six grandchildren, Nico, Isa, Silvia, JJ, Luca and Hugo.

The family is deeply grateful to the staff at the Schar Cancer Institute: Dr. Adam Cohen, his PA Catherine Wood, and Neuro Oncology Nurse Hohyung, as well as Dr. Farrah Daly, Alexandria Hospital ICU and his longtime caregivers, Yenekal, Nardos and Addis.

In lieu of flowers, we ask that you make a donation to the National Brain Tumor Society (https://secure.braintumor.org/site/Donation2?df_id=9231&mfc_pref=T&9231.donation=form1&utm_source=google&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_campaign=btam25&utm_content=eg-donate-branded-btam&s_src=paidsearch&s_subsrc=google-055&gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAABwkyqIgjCi308yg5217YAwKda9dm&gclid=EAlalQobChMItv_x7ueMjQMVeUpHAR2iRi2YEAAYASAAEgJgW_D_BwE).

The family will celebrate a memorial service on Friday, May 9. Those who wish to pay their respects are invited to join us at Jefferson Funeral Home from 12:00 -1:00 pm. The prayer service will begin at 1:00 pm followed by a private burial.

Previous Events

Gathering

MAY 9. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel
5755 Castlewellan Dr
Alexandria, VA 22315-5516
(703) 971-7400

Memorial Service

MAY 9. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel
5755 Castlewellan Drive
Alexandria, VA 22315
(703) 971-7400
info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com
<https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com>

Tribute Wall

DB

“ Lino was a great professor, exceptional colleague, good friend and was loved and admired by the Elliott School community. He served as an adjunct professor at the Elliott School of International Affairs for over a decade, where he taught Cuba in the Global Arena, bringing together his Cuban heritage and diplomatic expertise. He loved teaching and took great joy in mentoring the next generation of public servants. Lino was cherished by friends, family, students, and colleagues for his warmth, humor, and wit. Que descanse en paz.

Diego Abente Brun - May 28, 2025 at 08:19 PM

CM

“ Unida al dolor por la partida de Lino. Nunca olvidaré sus atenciones y delicadeza cuando los visitamos en Buenos Aires y disfrutamos de gratos momentos, paseos y camaradería. Fue un viaje maravilloso donde pudimos estrechar nuestros lazos de cariño y familiaridad. Como profesional excelente. El mejor tributo a su memoria es recordar su buen sentido de humor y su amor hacia Miriam y "las niñas" . Descanse en paz . Desde la distancia un abrazo cariñoso para toda la familia. Vanessa Rodríguez Messina

CARMEN RODRIGUEZ MESSINA - May 12, 2025 at 11:45 PM

AW

“ Deepest condolences to Ambassador Gutierrez's family. Lino was a good friend and valuable colleague, especially when we worked together in the Department of State's Western Hemisphere Affairs Bureau. He was a first class foreign service officer with an exemplary career. I also appreciated very much that after retirement Lino continued to provide important support for the Foreign Service as president of the Una Chapman Cox foundation. His colleagues will remember him with admiration and affection. Alec Watson

Alexander F Watson - May 12, 2025 at 12:32 PM

JR

“ Ambassador Gutierrez was a wonderful person and I will never forget the kindness he and his family extended to me and my young family during my first State Department assignment in Managua, Nicaragua. Don Lino was approachable, knowledgeable, a consummate professional, and kind. He left us much too soon. My thoughts and prayers go out to his loving family.

John C. Roberts - May 10, 2025 at 12:05 PM

JM

“ Our sorrowful condolence, Nini's and my own, go out to Miriam, daughters Alicia, Diana, and Susi, and to Lino and Miriam's beautiful grandchildren. Our colleagues in foreign affairs have lost a dear friend, a seasoned professional of the highest standards, a superior intellect and expert in all things Latin American and Caribbean, and a leader who cared for all who worked with him and for him. But Lino's love for his family guided him, and for them he leaves a rich legacy. For his many colleagues like me he leaves the memories of a shared Foreign Service life in the region, the messy bureaucracy of our democratic institutions, and the pleasures of retirement. Lino lived it all to the fullest, and we enjoyed it with him. To the fullest. We will miss Lino very much.

John F. Maisto - May 09, 2025 at 06:16 PM

GI

“ Ambassador Gutiérrez was a kind mentor and teacher. He always wanted the best for his students and looked out for us as we continued on pathways towards careers in international affairs. During my time at GW I was fortunate to take his class, while I have many fond memories of the class, my favorite memory is when he attended the GW Organization of Latin American Students Latino Professors Brunch and chatted with students who not only admired him for the person he was but also for the career he built. He was an inspiration to many of us Latino students at GW. Gracias, Professor, you will be greatly missed.

Gillian - May 09, 2025 at 11:59 AM

JN

“ My condolences to the Gutierrez family. I knew Lino from the beginning of his Foreign Service career in the ARA bureau and onwards through his decades of dedicated service to our country. He was one of the most knowledgeable officers about Western Hemisphere affairs. We will miss his friendly and intelligent approach to things. What a fine man! John Negroponete

John Negroponete - May 09, 2025 at 11:16 AM

CM

“ At GWU, there was no better colleague than Lino. He was passionate about diplomacy and incredibly knowledgeable and thoughtful. He engaged with our students so effectively and really cared about them and this was very much appreciated by us all. We will miss him deeply. Cynthia McClintock

Cynthia McClintock - May 09, 2025 at 10:18 AM

SE

“ Lino was the DCM at Embassy Nassau, The Bahamas when I served there in the early 1990's. He was the best "boss" I ever had in my entire career; I have so many fond memories of his warmth, his unfailing humor and his incredible decency. He was a genuine role model for me, and I can never repay how much I owe him for all I learned not only about the craft of diplomacy but the art of living. Godspeed dear friend; your memory will be an eternal blessing.

Scott Edelman - May 08, 2025 at 02:54 PM

WT

“ Ambassador Gutierrez was a very kind man. He often walked through the Embassy in Buenos Aires, greeting everyone and taking the time to sit and talk in the cafeteria with his colleagues of all levels. He had very high standards and insisted on our excellence in his professorial and friendly way. Ambassador Gutierrez made a lasting impact on those of us who had the great fortune to work with him. I send my sincere condolences to Miriam, their daughters, and grandchildren. Wendy Taylor

wendy taylor - May 08, 2025 at 10:23 AM

AG

“ To my beloved cousin Lino Gutierrez memory... From my kids and I in this sad moment.

Will be remembered you like the great and respectful father, husband, and human being. With all our heart, a prayer to the family.

God keep your soul.

Audry Gutierrez-Alea - May 07, 2025 at 01:03 PM

LF

“ Ambassador Gutierrez generously shared his extensive experience, guidance, and advice during my time as a 2014 Cox Fellow. He was a model of passion, commitment, and professionalism in supporting the Foreign Service. He was as personal inspiration that always cultivated the very best in us. Condolences to the Gutierrez family.

Lou Fintor - May 07, 2025 at 08:44 AM

LC

“ Lino was always very nice, and few times I saw him always asking for Erica

Lulu Creaven - May 07, 2025 at 08:28 AM

RK

“ Prof. Gutierrez was one of my favorite professors at GW. He wrote my recommendation letter for grad school. He had just as much love for his students as he did what he taught. Every class was started by discussing the “Cuban of the week” where he highlighted artists, musicians, authors etc, that inspired him. I still have a playlist titled, “Professor G’s Cuban of the week” with all of the artists and songs that he recommended. This playlist is now 4 years old, and I will continue to listen to it for many many more years RIP, Professor G.

Rebecca K - May 06, 2025 at 05:12 PM

SG



Susie Gutierrez - May 07, 2025 at 01:00 AM

YY

“ Lino was such a great professor who truly cared about helping his students succeed. He provided many opportunities for growth and personally helped keep my spirits up when I was struggling to feel like I belonged at GW. We spoke not that long ago when I asked for a reference. He was thoughtful, encouraging and funny as ever. He will be greatly missed. My condolences to his family.

Yesenia Yopez - May 06, 2025 at 04:07 PM

SG



Susie Gutierrez - May 07, 2025 at 01:01 AM

MP

“ Lino was my first professor at GW, for the Latin American and Hemispheric Studies cornerstone class. He was a great teacher who obviously loved the region and imparting his knowledge and experience on us. I also thoroughly enjoyed our back and forths about baseball. Lino, you will be missed

Mike Podesta - May 06, 2025 at 03:49 PM

SG



Susie Gutierrez - May 07, 2025 at 01:02 AM

CH

“ *Very saddened by this news. Extending condolences and sympathy to Miriam, her daughters, sons-in-law, and grandchildren. Amb Gutiérrez showed a depth of kindness and encouragement to my family and me in a rather trying set of circumstances around the birth of our youngest, Benjamin, while we were posted to the Embassy in Buenos Aires. Amb Gutiérrez was managing a rather large mission during a very tense, stress-inducing time in the U.S.-Argentina relationship, and a POTUS visit was just around the corner. The humanity and gentleness of spirit Amb Gutiérrez showed, right after the birth and for many months after, were quite moving and unique (in my experience) for a leader at that level. My family and I are praying for Heaven’s comfort and peace upon the greater Gutiérrez family.*

*In sympathy,
Clayton, Joanna, Nick, Kate, and Ben Hays*

Clayton Hays - May 06, 2025 at 12:40 PM

SG



Susie Gutierrez - May 07, 2025 at 01:04 AM

DM

“ *My condolences Miriam, to you, your daughters, and grandchildren. Lino was a wonderful and generous person, and always found a way to lift you up with kindness, humor, and encouragement. He was an inspiration to all. May his soul rest in peace. Sincerely,
Dennise Mathieu*

Dennise Mathieu - May 06, 2025 at 08:52 AM

SG



Susie Gutierrez - May 07, 2025 at 01:04 AM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Ambassador Lino Gutierrez.*



May 05, 2025 at 06:10 PM



“ *Lino and I became good friends in 1980 when we were both assigned to State’s Office of Central America Affairs. Since the countries for which we were responsible (El Salvador and Nicaragua) were that year the most crisis-ridden in the hemisphere, we shared the bond of working much longer hours than most of our colleagues. Lino was witty, warm, and keenly intelligent, and he took great pride in his wonderful family. Our deepest condolences, from Ralph, Alice, Jill, and Mark Braibanti*

Ralph Braibanti - May 05, 2025 at 06:07 PM



Susie Gutierrez - May 07, 2025 at 01:05 AM



“ *Larry Moody planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ambassador Lino Gutierrez.*

Larry Moody - May 04, 2025 at 10:17 PM

LM

“ *Larry Moody purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Ambassador Lino Gutierrez.*



Larry Moody - May 04, 2025 at 10:17 PM