**Bio**

Alejandra Parra was the Executive Director for the Office of FIU Global Mobility. This office houses the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) and the Office of Education Abroad (OEA). In her role with ISSS, she oversaw the operations of the ISSS at the Modesto A. Maidique and Biscayne Bay campuses; and she was an integral member of the FIU team that promotes and supports the university’s continuous efforts for comprehensive internationalization. Dr. Parra was in the field of international education for over thirty years. Prior to joining the FIU ISSS, she held leadership positions at Nova Southeastern University (NSU), first as Assistant Director of the International Career Development Center at the Fischler College of Education, Associate Dean for International Affairs, and Associate Director for the Office of International Affairs.

Dr. Parra earned a B.A. in Teaching English as a Second Language and also in Translation and Interpretation from the Córdoba National University in Córdoba, Argentina; an M.A. in Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (TESOL) from the Monterey Institute of International Studies, CA; and an Ed.D. in Instructional Technology and Distance Education from Nova Southeastern University with dissertation work that focused on international cooperation in higher education. She was an active member of international organizations, Dr. Parra served as NAFSA Academy Coach, and hold the position of Chair for the Florida Association of International Educators (FAIE). Her hands-on experience with inbound and outbound mobility and direct participation in academic programs, program development and international education initiatives gave Dr. Parra critical leadership skills needed for FIU to broaden and deepen our campus internationalization efforts.

**Tributes to Dr. Alejandra Parra**

We are deeply saddened to share with you that Alejandra Parra, Ed.D., Executive Director for the Office of Global Mobility, passed away on March 16, 2023, surrounded by her loved ones, after a long battle with cancer. Her radiant smile, infectious laugh, and boundless energy will be sorely missed by everyone who knew and loved her.
The consummate international educator, Dr. Parra had an unending passion for promoting and facilitating learning experiences across the globe. Throughout her 30-year career in the field, she nurtured thousands of international students and scholars, guiding them toward achieving their academic and professional goals. Dr. Parra also expanded the range of study abroad programs across the globe to meet students’ needs and provided guidance to faculty and staff to ensure that all learning experiences were of the highest quality.

Dr. Parra’s comprehensive knowledge in global mobility, both in and outbound, across higher education served as the critical backbone that kept our international community safe and on track towards its educational goals when the COVID-19 pandemic arose in Spring 2020. The unprecedented challenges the global pandemic presented required countless hours of responding to students’ and faculty’s needs and the recalibrating of office operations to virtually serve our 4,000 international students while ensuring compliance with the quickly changing U.S. entry requirements. Collaborating with the Office of Global Learning Initiatives, under her leadership, the team created and ran professional development workshops for faculty to offer 30 innovative virtual study abroad courses with a combined enrollment of over 2,100 students.

Dr. Parra was regarded with the utmost esteem by international education peers throughout Florida. She held multiple leadership positions, including Chair for the Florida Association of International Educators, Florida Representative for the Executive Board of NAFSA Region VII, and NAFSA Academy Coach. Last year, Dr. Parra was recognized with the NAFSA Association of International Educators Region VII 2022 International Excellence Award.

Dr. Parra first joined FIU in March 2017 as Senior Director for the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. In September 2018, she also assumed responsibility for the Office of Education Abroad, which expanded her oversight of global mobility of in and outbound students. Prior to joining FIU, she served as Director of Study Abroad at Nova Southeastern University. She received an Ed.D. in Instructional Technology and Distance Education from Nova Southeastern University, with dissertation work focused on international cooperation in higher education.

Dr. Parra is survived by her husband Sergio, her sons Federico and Andres, and her mother. To honor her legacy, please consider making a donation in her name to the FIU Office of Study Abroad Scholarship Fund.

Elizabeth M. Béjar,
Provost, Executive Vice President, and Chief Operating Officer
Florida International University

Dear Study Florida members,

 It is with great sadness that I share with you the passing of our friend and colleague, Dr. Alejandra Parra.

 For those who knew her, Alejandra was a true leader for international education in our state. Not only did she befriend and mentor many of us, she dedicated years of professional service to two Study Florida member institutions, Nova Southeastern University and Florida International University, where she encouraged many colleagues to become involved in the consortium. Alejandra previously served as Chair of our sister organization, FAIE, and I recall working closely with her over the years, especially around the FILC conference.

Alejandra also served on the board of Study Florida for several years as Member-at-Large and FAIE liaison. As Dan Rodkin recalls, Alejandra was the driving force behind beginning the FAIE-Study Florida relationship and initiating the scholarship program. As FAIE Chair, she began the tradition of inviting Study Florida to give an update at their annual conference, which Kelly just delivered a few weeks ago. It is safe to say that every student who has and will receive one of the FAIE-Study Florida scholarships is benefiting from Alejandra’s enduring impact on our organization.

Above all, I remember Dr. Parra as perennially kind, friendly, and dedicated to the mission of international education.

Andrew Stephens
Chair, Study Florida
Director of Experiential Learning
NSU University School

Dr. Alejandra Parra was one of the staunchest supporters of international education and the Florida Association of International Educators. She was on the board for almost ten years, first as Admissions Coordinator while she was at Nova Southeastern University, and then later serving as FAIE chair during her time at Florida International University. She was instrumental in making the 2019 conference a success in Miami. She spearheaded many initiatives to grow FAIE's reach and influence in the state, strengthening relationships with the Florida Consortium for International Education and Study Florida. She initiated the creation of FAIE-Study Florida scholarships, which are awarded annually to international students pursuing higher education at a college or university in Florida. We were proud to honor her with our You Made a World of Difference award in 2022.

She was a genuinely warm and lovely person. Countless students and practitioners have benefited from her passion and generosity. She was never stingy with her support, encouragement, and expertise. FAIE wouldn't be the organization we are today if it weren't for her, and she will be sincerely missed as one of the most inspiring international educators in our state.

Victoria Dolce, MA
State Chair
Florida Association of International Educators

Alejandra was a great lady, with such a gentle spirit. She was kind and thoughtful. Although she and I both worked at NSU and FIU,  our paths did’t always cross, but when it did, she was genuinely caring! You will be missed here on earth, but I know you are with our Savior in heaven! To her family, I offer my condolences to you and pray that you will take comfort and have some semblance of peace knowing the legacy that Alejandra as a wife, mother and friend left behind. God bless you!

Sheryl-Ann Mullings-Black
*Advisor,*FIU-College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Alejandra Parra, Executive Director of Global Mobility at Florida International University, passed away, surrounded by her loved ones, on March 16, 2023. Alejandra served as Chair for the Florida Association of International Educators, Florida Representative for the Executive Board of NAFSA Region VII, and as a NAFSA Academy Coach. She was recognized with the 2022 NAFSA Association of International Educators Region VII 2022 International Excellence Award. Her radiant smile, infectious laugh and boundless energy will be sorely missed by many.

[**NAFSA: Association of International Educators**](https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-nafsa/memoriam)