This April the Department of Media, Film, and Journalism Studies had the honor of welcoming Lourdes Garcia-Navarro, an NPR international correspondent based in Brazil, to campus as the winner of the Center's Anvil of Freedom Award and the 2016 Margolin Lecturer. Garcia-Navarro, affectionately known as “Lulu,” also gave the keynote speech for the University's Internationalization Summit Luncheon on April 15, speaking on “Parallel Lives: Stories from an Interconnected World.”

The Estlow Center's Anvil of Freedom Award is presented every year to honor individuals who make an outstanding contribution to democracy. The Morton Margolin Distinguished Lecturer is given in honor of the legacy of Morton Margolin, a journalist whose work enhanced understandings of business and economics through excellence in reporting.

Garcia-Navarro was recognized for her multimedia piece, “Look at This: Rain Forest Was Here,” which includes photo and audio coverage of how deforestation in the Amazon rain forest may be linked to Sao Paulo's drought and to worldwide climate change. In this piece, she draws comparisons between Brazil's current rapid deforestation and the 19th century deforestation of the western U.S., which similarly fueled the economic development of a nation.

Garcia-Navarro joined DU students and faculty on Thursday, April 14, speaking to two journalism classes and one international studies class about her work and her views on the world of journalism. She answered students' questions in both classes, eagerly linking the debates students are having in class with the debates journalists have in the field every day, stressing that the theory you learn in the classroom is absolutely a factor in the choices you make: the conversation doesn't end at graduation.

A number of South High School's Digital Media Club students were also in attendance, participating in candid discussions about the core focus of journalism and the challenges (and rewards) Garcia-Navarro faces in her work. She spoke frankly, stating that the concern for the role of journalism in society today, and into the future, is where most of the current tension lies: we have to decide, “what kind of society do we want to live in?”

As a journalist, “[I am] a person who wanders the world and tries to make sense of it,” she concluded with one group.

Graduate, undergraduate, and high school students left the conversations stimulated and excited, feeling charged to "get out and do something, change something," as South High student Seraphina Thiare said. But the students weren't the only ones who were inspired.

"I woke up at 3:00 in the morning and ended up rewriting my entire speech," Garcia-Navarro announced at the beginning of her keynote "Parallel Lives" at the Internationalization Summit the following day. "I was so inspired by some of the [students] that I spoke to here and some of the conversations that I was having." Instead of speaking about her project, “Look at This: Rain Forest was Here” as originally planned, she touched on many of the discussions she had had in the classrooms, speaking of the power of dissent, changing systems, the potential impeachment of Brazilian President Dilma Roussef, Zika virus, the Panama Paper leaks, and the role of the journalist in it all.

The Internationalization Summit, this year following the theme "Uncommon Intersections: Cultivating Multiple Perspectives at Home and Abroad," featured presentations and panels by students, faculty, and community members, and concluded with DU's annual CultureFest.

More information about the Summit may be found here.
A video of Lourdes Garcia-Navarro's keynote speech is available on the MFJS website. Click here to watch it now. View photos from the event on the department's Flickr page.