

Geovanny Mendoza González

Barranquilla Java User Group (BAQJUG) · Barranquilla, Colombia

I have run a Java user group on Colombia's Caribbean coast for ten years. Ten years of meetups, one conference, and a lot of university classrooms. Colombia is not short of Java talent. We have a Java Champion, and an active community in Bogotá. What we do not have is a path from the ordinary developer to the JCP. Almost nobody I teach has heard of it. That gap is what I want to work on.

The classroom is where Java is losing

Computer science programs here still teach Java as it was in 2009. No records, no sealed classes, no pattern matching, taught by professors who learned the language on Java 6. Java now ships a release every six months and no curriculum in the region has adjusted to that. Students graduate convinced Java is slow and verbose, then join a company running Java 21 or 25 and relearn it on the job. That is not a marketing problem, it is a pipeline problem. It is what I see in every Colombian classroom I walk into, and the JUGs I work with across the region describe the same thing.

BAQJUG attacks it directly. In 2026 we ran sessions at Universidad Autónoma del Caribe, Universidad del Norte, Universidad Simón Bolívar, Unicorsalud and IDITEK on what each release since Java 8 actually changed, how to plan a version migration without breaking production, virtual threads, and Spring AI. At Uninorte's Feria Gamer we reached more than 400 students. Students who walk in thinking Java is legacy walk out asking how to install JDK 25. I want to package this so any JUG can run it, and get students registered as Associate Members before they graduate rather than years later.

The language wall

Nearly everything the JCP publishes exists in English only. For most developers in Spanish-speaking Latin America that is a wall before the first sentence, and it is why our JUGs are full of Java activity and almost empty of JCP participation. I would start with Spanish versions of the membership and participation guides.

Who is actually at the table

Brazil has a voice on the Executive Committee through SouJava. Spanish-speaking Latin America has none, and not for lack of activity. Bogotá JVM, GDL JUG, Java Dominicano, Java México, JUG Costa Rica, JUG Guatemala, JUG Nicaragua, JUG Panamá and PeruJUG run annual conferences and monthly meetups across the region, and several of us have nominated ourselves for this seat before.

So I am not asking to speak for them, because none of them appointed me. I am asking for one seat where the region is in the room and where whoever holds it reports back in Spanish. I intend to be that person. If the seat goes to another JUG from the region, Java still comes out ahead.

Showing up, and reporting back

A seat is attendance, reading, and voting on time. I organized DevJVM with 277 attendees and eighteen speakers across three tracks, and eleven community events between March and September this year. I can keep a commitment on a calendar. I would also publish a short public summary in Spanish after each EC meeting. If nobody in the region can follow what the Executive Committee decides, the seat is decorative.

What I bring

Not a large company's roadmap. A small group that has done this for ten years without much budget, and a regional network that answers when I ask them something. The JCP already counts BAQJUG as a Partner Member. I am asking for the seat so that the counting turns into a voice.