PUERTO RICO LOUIS STOKES

ALLIANCE FOR MINORITY PARTICIPATION

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The PR-LSAMP BRIDGE TO THE DOCTORATE PROGRAM

The Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Program, an initiative within the LSAMP Program, began in August of 2003, with ten former undergraduate PR-LSAMP students being awarded fellowships for their first two years of graduate studies at UPR-Rio Piedras. Since then, 36 additional fellowships have been awarded, for a total of 46 Fellows.

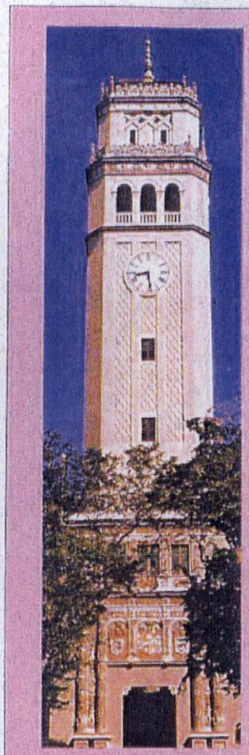
The two institutional sites that have participated in the BD Program are UPR-Rio Piedras and UPR-Mayaguez, the island's two major higher educations institutions with graduate programs in STEM fields. The breakdown of Fellows by STEM discipline is: Twenty-two in Chemistry; ten in Biology; seven in Physics; three in Engineering; two in Mathematics, and two in Marine Sciences.

Each Fellow receives a $30,000 fellowship per year, for their first two years of graduate studies. These funds are distributed as follows: $1,500 per month plus three bonuses of $4,000 each for academic progress -one in December, one in May, and one in July. The BD Program also covers the Fellows' tuition and institutional fees; the health plan, and provides funds for travel and educational materials.

A Support Program includes a series of workshops, seminars, field trips, and the Annual Transdisciplinary Research Conference to enhance the Fellows' academic preparation. At least five of these activities are joint activities with Fellows from the following Cohort, to exchange experiences and establish networking collaborations, including presenting their research projects at the annual Puerto Rico Interdisciplinary Scientific Meeting and the annual Puerto Rico EPSCoR Meeting. All Fellows must serve as mentors to an undergraduate PR-LSAMP student, and must visit at least one high school each year to serve as role models to high school students, and share with them their academic experiences and career plans. Former Fellows now serve as resources in PR-LSAMP workshops.

Prepared by: Dr. Ana C. Piñero and Mrs. Ana M. Feliciano

BDP COHORT I



Institutional Site for the BD Program

The University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras (UPR-Rio Piedras) is the flagship institution of the Island's public higher education system. Located in the San Juan metropolitan area, UPR-Rio Piedras enrolls almost 18,000 undergraduate students and over 3,000 graduate students. The large majority of students, 98%, are Puerto Rican; 68% are women, and 60% are first generation college students. The institution grants bachelors' degrees in 69 areas of specialization, 10 master's degrees in 43 areas of specialization and three doctoral degrees (Ph.D., J.D. and Ed.D.) in 14 areas of specialization. Although the Carnegie Foundation classifies UPR-Río Piedras as a Research Intensive University, it is positioned to become a Research Extensive University while maintaining its commitment to quality undergraduate education. Nationwide, 10% of the Hispanics who earned a Ph.D. degree in a natural science field from 1996 to 2001 attained their BS degree from UPR-Río Piedras.

"The PR-LSAMP Bridge to the Doctorate Program will contribute to increase the pool of highly qualified STEM PhDs in research and/or university teaching. This will have a long-term impact in Puerto Rico, particularly when taking into consideration the cumulative effect of graduates' life careers in academia and the thousands of students whose learning will be impacted".

Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Coordinator

Prof. Javier Figueroa, the Assistant Coordinator of the PR-LSAMP Program is the BD Coordinator. His field of specialization is Biology and Ecology. He has conducted research in Population Biology, biogeographical distribution and systematics of the Order Odonata in neotropical environments with emphasis in the Greater Antilles.

UPR Resource Center for Science and Engineering
P.O. Box 23334; San Juan, Puerto Rico 00931-3334
Tel. (787) 765-5170, ext. 2012; FAX (787) 766-1293, E-mail: j_figueroa@upr.edu

Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Participants

Karilys González

Undergraduate Institution:UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Chemistry
BS Degree in Chemistry (June 2003)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: To become a researcher in an industrial setting to develop specific dyes to improve resolution in magnetic resonance images and teach college level courses.

Daniel Caballero

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
BS Degree in Biology and Chemistry (June 2003)
Graduate Major: Biochemistry
Career Goal: To become a university professor in the fields of Biochemistry and Biophysics and do research in the area of of Ion Channel Biophysics.

Omar A. Cruz Nieves

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Biology and Chemistry
BS Degree in Biology and Chemistry (June 2003)
Graduate Major: Biochemistry
Career Goal: To become a professor and researcher in Biochemistry and Biophysics, specifically in the area of ligand-gated ion channels such as the nicotinic acetylcholine receptor (and a famous race car driver!).

Betzaida Castillo Cruz

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Humacao
Undergraduate Major: Industrial Chemistry
BS Degree in Industrial Chemistry (May 2002)
Graduate Major: Biochemistry
Career Goal: To become a professor and researcher in the field of Biochemistry in the areas of Biotechnology and non-aqueous enzymology.

Azlín Biaggi Labiosa

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayagüez
Undergraduate Major: Chemistry and Physics
BS Degree in Chemistry (June 1999) and Physics (June 2003)
Graduate Major: Chemical Physics
Career Goal: To become a college professor in the field of solid state physics and do research in the field of nanotechnology, particularly with nanocrystalline silicon films.

Luzed Díaz Pérez

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Biology
BS Degree in Biology (December 2002)
Graduate Major: Cellular Molecular Biology
Career Goal: I would like to become a college professor in the field of cellular and molecular biology; my main interests are in the area of biological membranes.

Marilyn García Arriaga

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Chemistry
BS Degree in Chemistry (June 2002)
Graduate Major: Organic Chemistry
Career Goal: Teach and conduct research in the field of Organic Chemistry.

Agustín Díaz Díaz

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Chemistry
BS Degree in Chemistry (June 2003)
Graduate Major: Inorganic Chemistry
Career Goal: Conduct research in the field of Bioinorganic Chemistry developing artificial photosynthesis systems.

Yamaris Pacheco Moctezuma

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Chemistry
BS Degree in Chemistry (July 2002)
Graduate Major: Biochemistry
Career Goal: To secure a position in an internationally competitive pharmaceutical and conduct research in the areas of biochemistry or biotechnology.

Jessica Oyola Cintrón

Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Río Piedras
Undergraduate Major: Chemistry
BS Degree in Chemistry (June 2003)
Graduate Major: Chemical Physics
Career Goal: To be a college professor and a researcher in the field of Biophysics developing structural and conformational studies for azurin from pseudomones aeruginose (blue copper protein).

BDP COHORT II

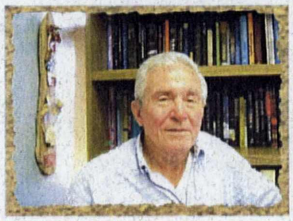
"With these additional 12 BDP fellows at UPR-Mayaguez, PR-LSAMP has awarded 22 fellowships for graduate studies in STEM fields. The UPR-Mayaguez program is mirrored on the successful BD Program implemented at UPR-Rio Piedras last year. Together they will help build a highly competitive STEM education and research workforce required to enhance Puerto Rico's economic development and to assist in meeting the national need for a diverse STEM workforce."

Dr. Manuel Gomez.

Bridge-to-the-Doctorate On-Site Coordinator

Dr. Juan G. Gonzalez Lagoa is the director of the Resource Center for Science and Engineering in Mayaguez and the on-site BD Coordinator for the PR-LSAMP Program. His field of specialization is Marine Biology.

Address:
UPR Resource Center for Science and Engineering
P.O. Box 9027; Mayaguez, Puerto Rico 00681-9027
Tel. (787) 831-1022; FAX (787) 832-4680
E-mail: drj.gonzalez@gmail.com



Madalis Casiano
Undergraduate Institution: Pontifical Catholic Univ.
BS Degree in Chemistry (2005)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. in Chemistry, become a college professor and conduct research.

Lourdes Cabello
Undergraduate Institution: Pontifical Catholic Univ.
BS Degree in Industrial Chemistry (2005)
Graduate Major: Applied Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. in Bio-Chemistry, and become a college professor in this field .

Deborah Acevedo
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree in Chemistry(2004)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Become a researcher in Iorganic Chemistry and a faculty member at UPR Mayaguez

Yashira Estrada
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree : Biology (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Marine Sciences
Career Goal: Become a researcher in the field of Marine Science, involving coral reefs, sharks and some mammals.

Yeira Padilla
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree: Chemical Engineering (May 2003)
Graduate Major: Chemical Engineering
Career Goal: To pursue a career in industry and conduct research focused on environmental fields and alternative energy resources

Olga Abreu
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree: Biology (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Marine Sciences
Career Goal: To obtain a Ph.D. in Marine Biology and teach at the University and serve as a role model for future Marine Sciences Majors.

Luis A. Rodriguez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree: Civil Engineering (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Geotechnical Engineering
Career Goal: To become a profesor and researcher in Geotechnical Engineering, specifically in the area of Deep Foundations

Luis Gonzalez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree: Civil Engineering (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Structural Engineering
Career Goal: To complete a Ph.D. degree in structural engineering, conduct research in structures and apply the knowledge gained to the field of design and construction

Laura Granell
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Mayaguez
BS Degree: Chemistry (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Receive my master degree in Chemistry and continue studies towards a Ph.D. in Biochemistry to become a professional in the academic world and the chemical industry

Priscilla Santiago
Undergraduate Institution: Pontifical Catholic Univ
BS Degree : Chemistry (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Complete my MS degree in Chemistry and a Interdisciplinary Ph.D. degree in Biochemistry and Biophysics. I would like to work as a researcher in the pharmaceutical industry and as a professor and mentor at the

Miguel Gonzalez
Undergraduate Institution: Interamerican Univ.
BS Degree: Chemistry (May 2004)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Receive my master degree in Chemistry and a Ph.D. degree in Biochemistry to become a recognized professional in the academic and the chemical industry sectors.

Yaritza Maldonado
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Humacao
BS Degree: Marine Biology (December 2004)
Graduate Major: Biological Oceanography
Career Goal:

The University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez (UPR-Mayaguez), the second largest campus of the University of Puerto Rico System, was selected by PR-LSAMP as the second site for the 2004 BDP fellowships. Located in the western part of the Island, UPR-Mayaguez enrolled a total of 11,079 undergraduate students and 1,069 graduate students in the Fall of 2003. Forty percent of its undergraduate students are enrolled in the School of Engineering, the main and largest school of engineering in Puerto Rico. In 2004, UPR-Mayaguez awarded 1,063 BS degrees in STEM fields. At the graduate level, 170 MS degrees and 11 PhD degrees were awarded in 2003.

UPR-Mayaguez awards bachelor's degrees in agriculture, arts, sciences, business administration and engineering with 56 areas of specialization; master's degrees in 45 areas of specialization and doctoral degrees in 4 areas of specialization.

Thirteen percent of the Hispanics nationwide who obtained a PhD in an Engineering field received their BS at UPR-Mayaguez.

BDP COHORT III

These twelve Fellows increase the total number of BDP Fellowships in Puerto Rico to thirty four: Twenty two at UPR-Rio Piedras (Cohorts 1 and 3) and twelve at UPR-Mayaguez (Cohort 2). All ten Fellows from Cohort 1 are in a PhD Program and are expected to complete the degree requirements by 2007. The twelve Fellows from Cohort 2 will complete in 2006 their second year of graduate studies. There is no doubt that the Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Program is significantly contributing to the preparation of the next generation of scientists in Puerto Rico and in the US Mainland, increasing the nation's pool of well-prepared, competent scientists with diverse views". Dr. Manuel Gomez, PI

Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Coordinator

Prof. Javier Figueroa, the Assistant Coordinator of the PR-LSAMP Program is the BD Coordinator. His field of specialization is Biology and Ecology. He has conducted research in Population Biology, biogeographical distribution and systematics of the Order Odonata in neotropical environments with emphasis in the Greater Antilles.

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UPR Resource Center for Science and Engineering
P.O. Box 23334; San Juan, Puerto Rico 00931-3334
Tel. (787) 765-5170, ext. 2012; FAX (787) 766-1293
E-mail: j_figueroa@prlsamp.org

Ana V. Longo
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Biology (2005)
Graduate Major: Population Biology
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. in Biology, become a college professor and conduct research for the conservation of our biodiversity, especially our amphibians.

Dámaris Suazo
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Humacao
BS Degree in Industrial Chemistry (2005)
Graduate Major: Analytical Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry, become a college professor in this field and conduct research in Electrochemistry.

Yisaira Diaz
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Humacao
BS Degree in Chemistry(2005)
Graduate Major: Physical Chemistry
Career Goal: Once I obtain my Ph.D. I want to become a college professor in the field of Physical Chemistry and Photochemistry, and conduct research in this area.

Enid Contes
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Chemistry (2005)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. in Chemistry and pursue research in nanotechnology.

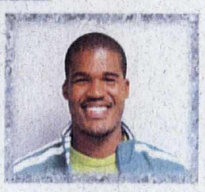
Giselle M. Flores
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Chemistry (2005)
Graduate Major: Biochemistry
Career Goal: Enhance my knowledge and research abilities in the area of biochemistry and biotechnology by obtaining a Ph.D. and a post-doctorate in this area.

Pamela Medina
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Biology (2005)
Graduate Major: Biology
Career Goal: Pursue post-doctoral studies in conservation biology to directly contribute to the conservation of all species of animals, especially amphibians and reptiles.

Manuel Rivera
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Physics (2005)
Graduate Major: Physics
Career Goal: To conduct fundamental research in physics that will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge but will also provide insight on areas that overlap with other disciplines.

Sofia Burgos
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Humacao
BS Degree in Marine Science (2005)
Graduate Major: Coastal Marine Biology
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. And continue research on viroplankton in different streams and lakes in Puerto Rico.

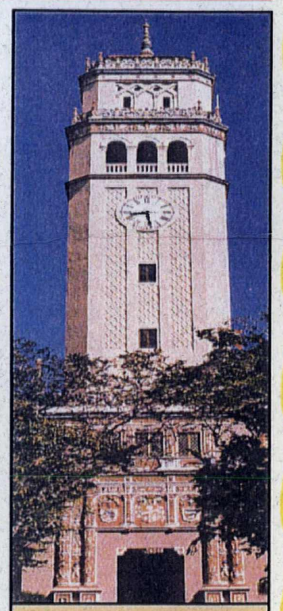
Francisco Solá
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Physics (2005)
Graduate Major: Solid State Physics
Career Goal: Become a Physics Professor and do research with nanoscale semiconductors and its applications.



Felix Araujo
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Biology (2005)
Graduate Major: Molecular Evolution
Career Goal: Obtain a Ph.D. in Molecular Evolution.

Jose A. Gonzalez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Aguadilla
BS Degree in Biology (2005)
Graduate Major: Molecular Biology
Career Goal: To obtain a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology.

Yazmin E. Martinez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Physics (2005)
Graduate Major: Physics
Career Goal: Complete a Ph.D. in meteorology and/or oceanography and collaborate in the development and implementation of an undergraduate and graduate program in earth sciences in PR.



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BDP COHORT IV

Through the Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Program, PR-LSAMP has awarded a total of 46 fellowships to former PR-LSAMP undergraduate STEM students for their first two years of graduate studies. This year we conducted the first external evaluation on the academic progress of Cohort I (2003) and results showed that Fellows outperformed their peers in all categories; the average number of credits completed was substantially higher; publications were greater; presentations of research projects in national scientific conferences were nearly doubled, and first time passing grades on qualifying exams was much higher. The BD Program has indeed proved to be very successful in helping students achieve academic excellence while pursuing their doctoral studies"

Dr. Manuel Gomez, PI

Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Coordinator

Prof. Javier Figueroa is the Assistant Coordinator of the PR-LSAMP Program and the BDP Coordinator. His field of specialization is Biology and Ecology. He has conducted research in Population Biology, biogeographical distribution and systematics of the Order Odonata in neotropical environments with emphasis in the Greater Antilles.

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E-mail: j_figueroa@prlsamp.org

Pamela Vallejo
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Physics (2006)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Complete a Ph.D. and pursue research in material science working specifically with photoluminiscent properties of silicon nanoparticles.

Griselle Hernandez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Chemistry (2006)
Graduate Major: Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain a Ph.D. in organic chemistry and continue research either in the academia or the industry.

Mariely Hernandez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Cayey
BS Degree in Mathematics(2006)
Graduate Major: Mathematics
Career Goal: Obtain a Ph.D. in this area to become the best statistics professor ever, and motivate students to pursue studies in this field.

Pablo Hernandez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Biology (2004)
Graduate Major: Biology
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. and continue post-doctoral studies to be better prepared for an academic position as a professor and researcher.

Francheska Ruiz
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Humacao
BS Degree in Biology-Wild Life Mgmt (2006)
Graduate Major: Ecology
Career Goal: Obtain my Ph.D. and continue to do research in Environmental Biology and Conservation with an interdisciplinary approach.

Edward Aviles
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Chemistry (2006)
Graduate Major: Analytical Chemistry
Career Goal: Specialize in nanotechnology focusing in subnanostructuring of catalyst for direct methanol fuel cell in order to find alternatives for sources of energy.

Ivan Lopez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Physics (2006)
Graduate Major: Physics
Career Goal: Obtain a high quality education while engaging in productive research projects, to become a professor and researcher.

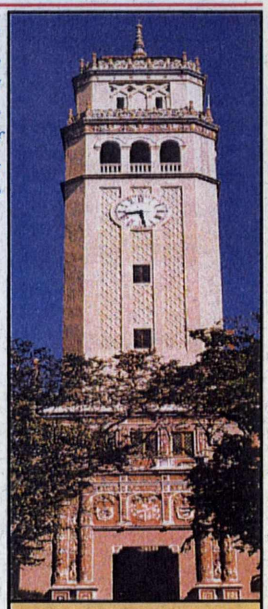
Maria del Mar Garcia
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Chemistry (2006)
Graduate Major: Analytical Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain a Ph.D., enhance my knowledge in Biotechnology and contribute to the development of biosensors and devices to improve the quality of life.

Jesuan Betancourt
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Physics (2006)
Graduate Major: Chemical Physics
Career Goal: Complete my Ph.D. , continue my research and become a college professor.

Fernando Piñero
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Mathematics (2006)
Graduate Major: Mathematics
Career Goal: Become a professional mathematician and work in the application of algebra to real-world problems.

Barbara Casañas
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-
BS Degree in Chemistry (2006)
Graduate Major: Inorganic Chemistry
Career Goal: Obtain a Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry and become a researcher.

Yanira Enriquez
Undergraduate Institution: UPR-Rio Piedras
BS Degree in Chemistry (2006)
Graduate Major: Analytical Chemistry
Career Goal: Work in the pharmaceutical industry doing characterization, analysis and structural determinations of biological compounds. Becoming a college professor is also part of my career plans.



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Piedras ■

Evaluation of Cohort I of the PR-LSAMP Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Fellowship Program

Since Cohort I of the BD Program (10 Fellows) completed its two year program in July 2005, and have now completed their third year of graduate studies, PR-LSAMP undertook an external evaluation of the program, based on a two-prong approach: academic progress of BDP Fellows as compared to non-Fellows, and overall evaluation of the BDP Program by Cohort I Fellows. Two questionnaires were developed and administered. One was designed to obtain baseline data, progress data, and follow-up data of BDP Fellows and non-Fellows. The second questionnaire emphasized qualitative data to obtain the Fellows' opinion of the BD Program.

The site of Cohort I Fellows was UPR-Rio Piedras, and Fellows and non-Fellows are pursuing graduate studies in a science field, with August 2003 as the entering date. All BDP Fellows from Cohort I are now in a PhD program, and are expected to graduate in May 2008. Academic progress was measured in terms of GPA, number of graduate course credits approved, passing the qualifying exams, publications in scientific journals, and presentation of research project in scientific conferences. The following table summarizes the academic progress of BDP Fellows and non-Fellows in each of these categories:

Category	BDP Fellows	Non-Fellows
Average GPA in graduate studies	3.85	3.63
Average number of graduate course credits approved	50.2	42.9
Average number of publications in scientific journals	1.2	0.68
Average number of presentations in scientific conferences	7.3	3.7
Passed Qualifying Exams	88% in the first try	65% in the first try

In terms of professional aspirations, all BDP Fellows expressed interest in post-doctoral studies, while 72% of non-Fellows express a similar interest. Seventy percent (70%) of BDP Fellows plan to seek a position in academia, and 60% plan to remain in Puerto Rico; 53% of non-Fellows plan to obtain a job in academia, and 94% percent plan to stay on the island.

Taking into account the opinions expressed by the BDP Fellows in the interviews about all aspects of the program, the external evaluator concluded that "the program was indeed a help in launching a successful pursuit of a research-based PhD in the natural sciences. Although the controls for the program in Puerto Rico are possibly stricter than elsewhere, it appears that they have served the purpose of successfully retaining students in a doctoral program with academic excellence".

The First Transdisciplinary Research Conference

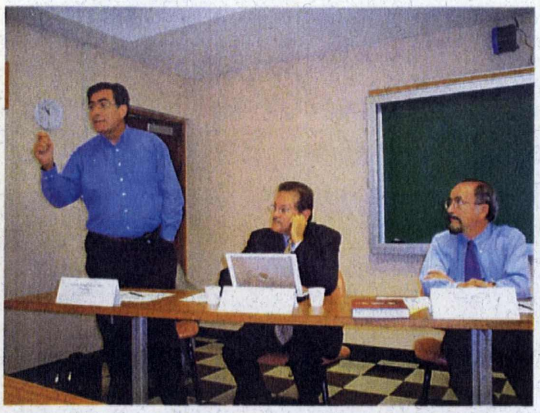
In December 2005 the BD Program held the First Transdisciplinary Scientific Research Conference for faculty, researchers and graduate students. The topic selected was Nanotechnology. The Plenary Speaker was Dr. Gunther Oberdorster from Rochester University with the topic: *"Engineered Nanoparticles: Can They be Harmful?"*. Other speakers included: Dr. John Carlisle, from Argonne National Laboratory; Dr. Diego Díaz, from Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology; Dr. Luis Solá, from Dupont of Puerto Rico; Dr. Ram Katiyar, Dr. Carlos Cabrera, and Dr. Gerardo Morell, from UPR-Rio Piedras; and Dr. Miguel Castro and Dr. Carlos Rinaldi, from UPR-Mayaguez. Graduate students, including PR-LSAMP BDP Fellows who are conducting research in this field, presented their research projects in a poster session. Approximately 200 STEM faculty members and graduate students attended the conference.

The Second Transdisciplinary Research Conference

Held in May 2006, the conference's theme was again nanotechnology. Local and international researchers presented the latest research trends in this field. The invited speakers were Dr. Eric D. Isaacs, Center for Nanoscale Materials, Argonne National Laboratory, and Dr. Gregory N. Tew and Dr. Jim Watkins, Polymer Science and Engineering, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Fifty two STEM faculty members, 84 STEM graduate students, and 51 undergraduate STEM students attended the conference, which was held on May 5, 2006 at the Mayaguez Resort Hotel. Seventy five students presented their research projects in a poster session.

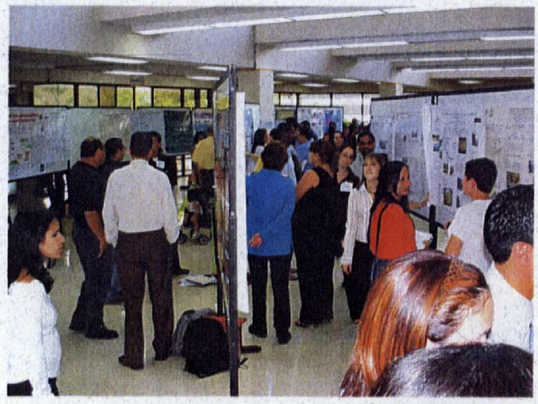
Local speakers included Dr. Oscar Perales (UPR-Mayaguez) - *"Size and Structure Control at the Nanoscale: Improving the Quality of the Building Blocks for Advanced Nanostructures"*, Dr. Luis Fonseca (UPR-Rio Piedras) - *"Nanocrystalline Silicon for Display Applications"*, and Dr. Nicholas Pinto (UPR-Humacao) - *"Fabrication and Electrical Characterization of Conducting Polymer Nanofibers Via Electrospinning"*.

Scientists as Entrepreneurs

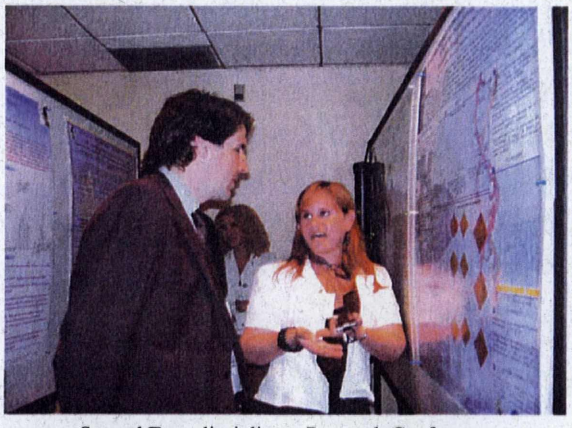


At the 2006 PR-LSAMP Advisory Board meeting, members had the opportunity to meet with a group of BDP Fellows, and were surprised that not one of them expressed an interest in becoming an entrepreneur. Following the Advisory Board's recommendation, PR-LSAMP offered the workshop "Scientists as Entrepreneurs", to expose BDP Fellows to successful entrepreneurs. Two local entrepreneurs were the main speakers: Dr. Manuel Figueroa, President, Virtual Educational Resources, Inc. (VERNET), a software development and ISP company located in Puerto Rico. Under his leadership the company grew from no revenues to $3M in two years while maintaining profitability. It is now the leading educational software development company in Latin America. The second speaker was Mr. Luis Romero, President of Optivon, Inc., a telecommunications company, that exports its systems to Europe, Middle East, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. They both explained the nature of entrepreneurship, the skills needed to be a successful entrepreneur, the challenges and opportunities of entrepreneurship in Puerto Rico, and how entrepreneurs contribute to the economic development of Puerto Rico. They described their life experiences as successful entrepreneurs and then interacted informally with the students.

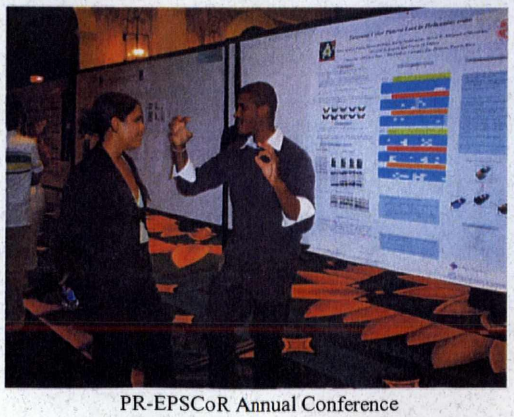
BDP Fellows Present their Research Projects at the Annual Puerto Rico Interdisciplinary Scientific Meeting, the Transdisciplinary Research Conference, and the Annual EPSCoR Meeting



2006 Puerto Rico Interdisciplinary Scientific Meeting

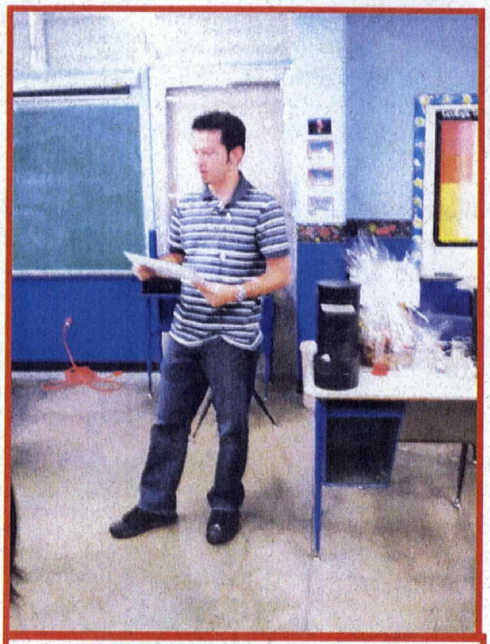


Second Transdisciplinary Research Conference

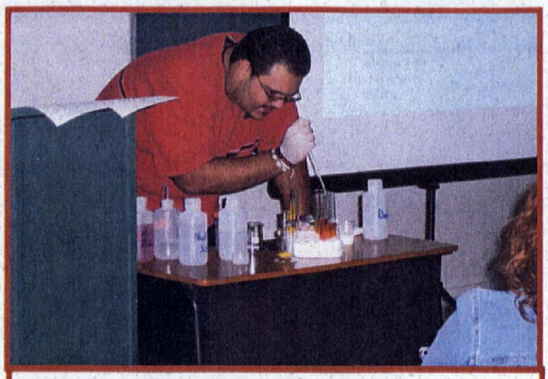


PR-EPSCoR Annual Conference

BDP Fellows Serve as Resources in PR-LSAMP Saturday Academies and Summer Academy for High School Students



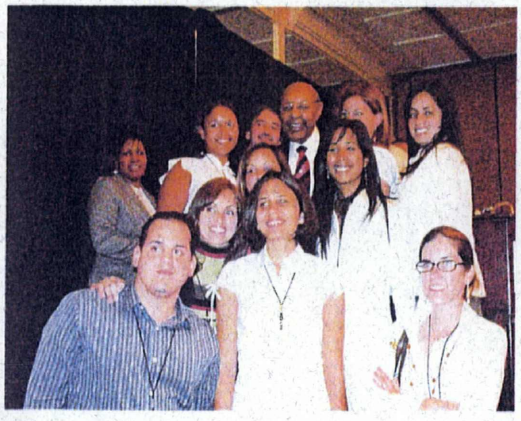
Life Science Academy,
Daniel Caballero, Cohort I Fellow



Chemistry Academy-Agustin Diaz
BDP Fellow-Cohort I

Physics Academy
Azlin Biaggi, Cohort I Fellow

BDP Fellows Participated in the 2006 Annual Joint NSF/HRD Meeting Washington, DC



PR-LSAMP Cohort III Fellows with Congressman Stokes (left), and with Dr. A. Hicks, LSAMP Director (right)

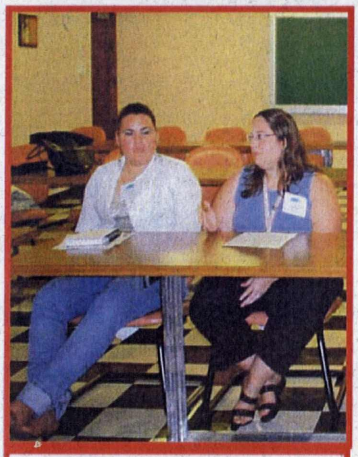
Dr. Arden L. Bement, Jr., NSF Director Meets in Puerto Rico with NSF Fellows (February 2006)

"Tell me about your educational and research experience, and where you forsee yourself in the year 2011" asked Dr. Arden Bement, NSF Director, at the roundtable discussions with NSF fellows at UPR-Rio Piedras and UPR-Mayaguez.

LSAMP Bridge-to-the-Doctorate, AGEP, and EPSCoR fellows shared their educational and research experience, and career plans with Dr. Bement during his visit to UPR-Rio Piedras and UPR-Mayaguez. Most fellows visualize themselves as professors and researchers at an academic setting, either in Puerto Rico or the US mainland. *"I have been very fortunate to be one of the recipients of a BDP fellowship, and as a professor I want to help others achieve their academic goals"* said, Daniel Caballero, now a fourth year doctoral student in biochemistry at UPR-Rio Piedras.

Muriel Campbell, an undergraduate chemical engineering student at UPR-Mayaguez, talked about the sustained support she has received from PR-LSAMP to do research and to travel to national scientific meetings. Muriel mentioned that at these meetings many researchers and peers are surprised to find out that she is only "an undergraduate student", because of the extent of her research and knowledge. She plans to pursue a PhD degree at Vanderbilt University. Giovanna Cartagena, a freshman student at UPR-Rio Piedras, shared her experience as a high school student in the PR-LSAMP Pre-College-to-College Program, and the research work she is now doing in a physics lab under the mentorship of Azlin Biaggi, a Cohort I BDP fellow and now an EPSCoR fellow.

Muriel Campbell, a Chemical Engineering student representing PR-LSAMP undergraduate participants, expresses how PR-LSAMP has provided her with valuable research opportunities.



Giovanna Cartagena, a freshman student at UPR Rio Piedras with lab mentor, Azlin Biaggi a former BDP Fellow from Cohort I.

Graduate and undergraduate STEM students talk about their future academic plans.

Luis Rodriguez, a Cohort II BDP Fellow, plans to obtain a PhD in Geotechnical Engineering

The Bridge -to-the-Doctorate Program: A History in Pictures

Contact Us!!

PUERTO RICO LOUIS STOKES ALLIANCE FOR MINORITY PARTICIPATION

PR-LSAMP CENTRAL STAFF: 787-765-5170

Dr. Manuel Gomez	*Principal Investigator*	*mgomez@upr.edu*	*x2001*
Dr. Ana C. Piñero	*Co-Principal Investigator*	*a_pinero@prlsamp.org*	*x2006*
Prof. Javier Figueroa	*Assistant Coordinator*	*j_figueroa@prlsamp.org*	*x2012*
Mrs. Ana M. Feliciano	*Management Coordinator*	*a_feliciano@prlsamp.org*	*x2016*
Ms. Liz Bultron	*Secretary*	*l_bultron@prlsamp.org*	*x2013*
Ms. Adalis Molina	*Student*	*a_molina@prlsamp.org*	*x2118*

PR-LSAMP LIAISON OFFICERS

University of Puerto Rico

UPR-Mayagüez
Prof. Jeannette Santos
(787)832-4040 x-2398
jsantos@ece.uprm.edu

UPR-Aguadilla
Prof. Migdalia Sotomayor
(787)890-2681 x-226
migsotomayor@yahoo.com

UPR-Arecibo
Dr. Maiella Ramos
(787)878-2830
maiellaramos2001@yahoo.com

UPR-Bayamón
Prof. Orlando González
(787)786-2885
Orlando_00614@yahoo.com

UPR-Río Piedras
Dr. Noemí Cintrón
(787)764-0000 x-2117
ncintron@caribe.net

UPR-Humacao
Dr. Denny Fernández
(787)850-9388
d_fernandez@webmail.uprh.edu

UPR-Cayey
Prof. Luis Pérez
(787)738-2161 x-2166
lperez@cayey.upr.edu

UPR-Ponce
Prof. Lizzette Roig
(787) 844-8181 x-2335
Lroig@uprp.edu

Pontifical Catholic University

Prof. Carmen Asencio
(787)841-2000
casencio@pucpr.edu

Inter American University

UIA-Bayamón
Prof. Rafael Canales
(787)279-1912 x-2115
rrcanales@bc.inter.edu

UIA-Metro
Dr. Rosa Brito
(787)250-1912 x-2603
rbrito@metro.inter.edu