



Press Release

September 2011

University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus awarded \$13.6 million by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support collaborative research program

RCMI PROGRAM

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The Research Centers in Minority Institutions (RCMI) Program at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus has been awarded \$13.6 million for the next five years to continue facilitating the development of competitive research in the Medical Sciences Campus. The Program will focus on developing a more efficient and competitive research infrastructure at the Medical Sciences Campus to conduct translational studies in health disparities affecting the Puerto Rican population.

The announcement was made by Dr. Emma Fernández-Repollet, Professor of Pharmacology and Principal Investigator of the RCMI Program. “Addressing and understanding health disparities is critical for modifying factors associated to the health status and quality of life of our population”, expressed Dr. Fernández-Repollet. Toward this end, the RCMI Program will develop infrastructure and provide support services to facilitate the conduct of collaborative research in health disparities. Service activities to be supported will include, among others: the Translational Proteomics Center, the Center for Translational Genomics in Health Disparities and Rare Diseases, the Infectious and Global Diseases Program, the Translational Neurosciences Program, and the Center for Information Technologies and Telecommunications. A Collaborations and Partnerships activity will help facilitate collaborative efforts and disseminate services and achievements. Funds provided to these facilities will provide technical personnel, highly specialized equipment, reagents, and laboratory supplies to investigators developing these research facilities.

In addition, professional development of promising research faculty, will be approached through a series of activities including a mentoring program designed to foster the development of successful research careers and technology transfer. This will be complemented by a pilot project program which will provide small grants to junior investigators interested in conducting basic and translational studies in the areas of cancer, infectious diseases, neurosciences and neurological disorders and diabetes. Many of these activities will be supported utilizing the information technology infrastructure developed in the previous cycle by the Center for Information Technologies and Telecommunications.

Total support from the National Centers in Research Resources (NCRR) to the RCMI Program at the Medical Sciences Campus since its inception in 1986 will reach over \$50 million. The new program will support eleven (11) technical specialists and will impact over thirty (30) biomedical investigators during the next five years (2011-2016). Dr. Fernández-Repollet is assisted by Dr. José G. Conde in the direction of the Program.

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\$13.6 million

The amount of total costs awarded to the RCMI Program for its 2011-2016 budgetary cycle.