

RCMI PROGRAM

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ADMINISTRATION

Emma Fernández, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

KEY ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

Carmen Cadilla, Ph.D.
Gregory Quirk, Ph.D.
Loyda Meléndez, Ph.D.
Mark Miller, Ph.D.
José Rodríguez-Medina, Ph.D.
Adelfa Serrano, Ph.D.
José G. Conde, M.D., M.P.H.

KEY ACTIVITY LEADERS

Marcia Carlyn, Ph.D.
Luis J. Montaner, D.V.M.

28

Number of investigators awarded seed monies as part of the RCMI Faculty Development Program during FY 2011-2016.



@rcmienews

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Dr. Emma Fernández-Repollet, Principal Investigator of the RCMI Center for Collaborative Research in Health Disparities at the UPR Medical Sciences Campus visited the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) on October 19-21, 2016. During her visit, Dr.

Fernández-Repollet met with more than 20 investigators at the College of Science, especially those associated with the RCMI Border Biomedical Research Center. She also toured RCMI research facilities and met with UTEP administrative officials, doctoral fellows and graduate students. Several areas of potential collaborations were identified and will be the focus of future interactions. The visit concluded with a seminar presentation entitled *Community Engagement: Challenges and Opportunities for Basic Scientists*. Dr. Fernández-Repollet was impressed with the research achievements and enthusiasm of the investigators and the hospitality of administrative officials.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER



The Technology Transfer Office of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust delivered three University-Industry Collaboration workshops in October. The workshops targeted faculty with active research programs in life sciences, biotech, agbio, and industrial biotech. The content was focused upon opportunities for partnerships with industry at the upcoming Biolatam 2016 partnering conference to be held in San Juan, PR. Participants learned about setting expectations, making contacts, searching for potential industry partners, preparing profiles, and conducting a pre-arranged partnering business meeting at Biolatam using its partnering software. Over 30 researchers attended the workshops.

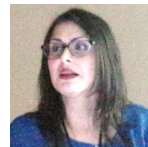
CONGRATULATIONS



Dr. Gregory Quirk was recognized for his Research achievements by the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust. Over the past 20 years, Dr. Quirk's research program on

fear learning has brought competitive research grants, high-profile publications in *Nature* and *Science*, and first-class training opportunities for undergraduate and doctoral students living in Puerto Rico. Dr. Quirk is a recipient of a Merit Award from the National Institutes of Health and serves as director of the RCMI Pilot Project Program.

SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS



Dr. Ingrid M. Montes Rodríguez
Expression and Characterization of the Lucina Pectinata Oxygen and Sulfide Binding Hemoglobin Genes, Their Regulation and Evolution
October 4, 2016



Dr. Jonathan D. Geiger
Endolysosome Involvement in Pathogenesis of HIV-1 Associated Neurocognitive Disorder and Alzheimer's Disease
October 18, 2016



Dr. Ernesto C. González Reyes
An Overview of the Neonatal Screening Programs in Cuba and Latin America
October 25, 2016



Biochemistry Research Education Display
Vladimir Vélez Segarra,
Ednalise Santiago Cartagena
October 11, 2016

RESEARCH EVENTS



Puerto Rico's first research and innovation summit designed to showcase premier science and technology projects was held

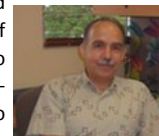


on September 17, 2016. The event enabled effective networking to enhance collaborations. Forward Summit, allowed participants to exhibit their latest technological and scientific discoveries among

local and international attendees. Several investigators of the UPR Medical Sciences Campus participated in the event.

SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENT

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) and Becker Muscular Dystrophy (BMD) are genetic conditions characterized by weakness and muscle wasting. In addition, they are associated to weakness of the heart. DMD and BMD conditions occur almost exclusively in males. Males with DMD usually live into their twenties, while males with BMD may survive into their forties or beyond. This is the first report about the prevalence and genetic characteristics of DMD and BMD in Puerto Rico. The prevalence of these conditions was found to be similar to that reported worldwide. In addition, genetic characteristics were very similar to those reported in other parts of the world. Staff and infrastructure of the RCMI Center for Collaborative Research in Health Disparities provided support in the design of the study and in the management and analysis of the study database.



Ramos E, Conde JG, Berrios RA, Pardo S, Gómez O, Mas Rodríguez MF. Prevalence and Genetic Profile of Duchene and Becker Muscular Dystrophy in Puerto Rico. *J Neuromuscul Dis.* 2016 May 27;3(2):261-266. PubMed PMID: 27854217