



Center for  
Collaborative Research  
in Health Disparities

### CCRHD-RCMI PROGRAM

PO Box 365067  
San Juan PR 00936-5067  
Tel: (787) 763-9401  
Fax: (787) 758-5206  
E-mail: rcmi.rcm@upr.edu  
URL: <http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu>

### ADMINISTRATION

Emma Fernández, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator

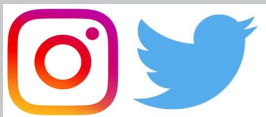
Jordana Ramirez  
Carol Torres  
Carmen Doris Cintrón  
Margarita Díaz

### RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

Jorge Duconge, Ph.D.  
Pablo Vivas, Ph.D.  
Cristina Palacios, Ph.D.  
Maribel Campos, M.D.  
Carmen Vélez, Ph.D.  
Edda Santiago, Ph.D.  
Carmen Cadilla, Ph.D.  
Gregory Quirk, Ph.D.  
Loyda Meléndez, Ph.D.  
Mark Miller, Ph.D.  
Adelfa Serrano, Ph.D.  
Abiel Roche-Lima, Ph.D.  
Wilfredo De Jesús, M.D.  
José G. Conde, M.D., M.P.H.

448

Number of graduate degrees (PhD, MD, DMD, PharmD, MS, MPH) conferred by the UPR Medical Sciences Campus in academic year 2017-2018.



# WEBNEWS

September 2018

## SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS



**Erica Pawlak, Ph.D.**  
*Multiplexed, Digital Quantification of RNA, DNA and/or Proteins*  
September 4, 2018



**Veronica Miller, Ph.D.**  
*The Role of Drug Development and Regulatory Approval in Public Health*  
September 11, 2018



**Igor Rogozin, Ph.D.**  
*Aberrant translation as a putative causative factor for autism: support from medical data mining*  
September 18, 2018

## NEW RESEARCH GRANT AWARDS

The Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust is announcing two grant programs. The **Advanced Research Grants Program (ARG)** will provide proof-of-concept funding to advance locally developed science and technology projects to a point where they



will be able to be further developed through alternate sources and/or commercialized. The **Catalyzer Research Grant Program (CRG)** aims to help local researchers increase their probabilities of success in securing federal funding for their research and development activities, specifically providing bridge funding to help researchers to position their R&D proposals competitively prior to the submission, or resubmission, to private or federal agencies. <https://prsciencetrust.org/research-grants-program/>

## ENTREPRENURIALSHIP



Scientists from the UPR Medical Sciences Campus have created MBQ Pharma, the first biopharmaceutical company in Puerto Rico focused on developing academic discoveries into products for preventing metastasis in cancer patients. MBQ Pharma was founded by three professors from the UPR-MS: Drs. Surangnie Dharmawardhane, Cornelis Vlaar and Eliud Hernandez O'Farrell. The investigators have been granted two patents by the US Patent and Trade Mark Office. All three professors received seed monies support from the RCMi Program. Congratulations to our academic entrepreneurs.

## MORTALITY REPORT AFTER MARIA

On September 19, 2018, investigators of the UPR School of Public Health conducted a panel discussion on the effects of Hurricane Maria on mortality and the lessons learned after this natural disaster. Panelists included Drs. Cruz M. Nazario, Cynthia Pérez and Eric Suarez. A special presentation by Dr. Ada M. Alemán from



the School of Health Professions was also part of the agenda. Panel presentations focused on the results of the mortality report published by the Milken Institute of George Washington University School of Public Health and the School of Public Health at the UPR Medical Sciences Campus. The presentations were followed by a period of comments, questions and answers in which the audience participated actively. The Puerto Rican Association of University Professors sponsored this special activity.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



On September 28, 2018, the Center for Collaborative Research in Health Disparities (CCRHD) received the visit of Dr. Timothy Dye, Director of the Center for Global Health Research at the University of Rochester, New York. Dr. Carmen Velez, director of the CCRHD-Community Engagement Core and a member of the Global Research Network will be collaborating with Dr. Dye on a project, to be conducted in Puerto Rico, to explore the challenges of genetic evaluation for prevention and outreach in cancer and chronic diseases. This study emerges from a need identified in the Puerto Rico Testsite for Exploring Contamination Threats (PROTECT) project that explores the relationship between environmental pollution and preterm delivery in the North Center of Puerto Rico. Dr. Dye was accompanied by Drs. José Pérez Ramos and Scott McKintosh from the University of Rochester, Dr. Angela Sy from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and Ms. Colleen Murphy, graduate student at the UPR School of Public Health.

## CONGRATULATIONS



The Center for Collaborative Research in Health Disparities congratulates Dr. José Rodríguez-Medina on his designation as Acting Dean of Research at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. Dr. Rodríguez-Medina is the director of the Department of Biochemistry and Nutrition and former Associate VP for Research of the UPR System. He served as Director of the RCMi Molecular Sciences Facility for over 25 years.