

NEWSLETTER

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What is PRISE?

PRISE is the acronym for the UPR "Ponce Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement." This program is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) under grant #1R25-GM096955-01, awarded to Dr. Edu Suarez, Associate Professor of the Biology Department at the University of Puerto Rico in Ponce. This proposal was written in collaboration with Prof. Grisobelle Virella-Corujo, Sponsored Research Officer and Chancellor's Assistant for the External Resources and Development Office.

What are the program's goals and objectives?

By fostering competitive research (with a particular focus on the biomedical sciences), UPR-PRISE will advance the mission and goals of UPR Ponce. The planned research activities will increase the intellectual and technical capabilities of our students, which will, in turn, create a pipeline of well-trained students who are expected to complete a BS in biology and then pursue a PhD in biomedical sciences. The specific aims of this project are oriented towards student development and are achieved by sponsoring summer research internships at research-intensive institutions, offering a standardized verbal test course (aimed at improving GRE verbal scores and conversational English abilities), promoting responsible conduct in research, and encouraging community-based learning.

January and February Activities:

✦ Thirteen students continue in their research rotations in collaboration with mentors at the *Ponce School of Medicine & Health Sciences*. Research areas include *physiology, genomics, molecular biology, and cancer, among others*.

✦ The first meeting of the Program's External Advisory Committee was held on January 17th, 2012, and was attended by **local and mainland US** members. Following the meeting, Dr. Emil Bogenmann (External Advisory Committee member from the Los Angeles Pediatric Hospital) met with PRISE students at UPR-Ponce's Research Laboratory.

✦ PRISE students took part in an Honor Program-hosted workshop titled "*Group Work*" that was offered by **Ms. Maribel Caraballo** (UPR-Ponce Staff); participants learned strategies for better coordinating work and performance and learned as well how to successfully apply these strategies to their own particular work needs.



✦ **Ms. Andrea Ramos** (former UPRP alumni and current PhD candidate) visited UPRP with her mentor **Scott Barolo** (from the *University of Michigan*). The two of them presented a variety of PhD programs and opportunities at their university.



Program announcements:

*Congratulations go to active PRISE student **Mariano Colon Caraballo**, who was **ACCEPTED** into the **Doctoral Program in Biomedical Sciences** at Ponce School of Medicine & Health Science. Well done, Mariano!*



✦ UPR-Ponce's Academic Senate recently approved two courses in the Honor Studies Program: "**English Vocabulary Development**" and "**Ethics in Scientific Research**."

✦ UPR-Ponce's sophomore Biomedical student, Samantha Ordaz-Moguel, has been selected to conduct research at the Center for Biological Sciences Laboratory at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina in Florianopolis, Brazil with investigator Dr. Freire. Dr. Freire's current research focuses on systems of biochemical and molecular defenses in aquatic organisms. PRISE Program encourages students like Samantha to work hard to consistently achieve their academic and professional goals in their near future.

Upcoming Trips & Activities:

✦ The 32nd Puerto Rico interdisciplinary Scientific Meeting (March 10th, 2012, University of Puerto Rico, Carolina)

- PRISE students Robert Lopez and John Alvarado will make an oral presentation describing their research.

✦ **FASEB: Experimental Biology**



At the meeting, Program students Mariano Colon, John Alvarado, Robert Lopez, and Martha Echevarria will present posters demonstrating their research.

For more information about the convention please visit www.experimentalbiology.org.

How to apply to the program?

- To get more information on how to apply to the program, please visit our web page: <http://prise.uprp.edu>.

Basic requirements

- GPA of 3.50
- Be enrolled as a biology major at UPRP
- Have 30 credits approved (except freshmen)
- Two (2) letters of recommendation
- Written Statement

UPR-PRISE

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