

NEWSLETTER

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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 (UPRP). 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 expected to complete a bachelor's in biological sciences and then pursue a PhD in that same field. The specific aims of this project are oriented towards student development and are achieved via the sponsoring of summer research internships at research-intensive institutions, the offering of a standardized verbal test course (aimed at improving GRE verbal scores and conversational English abilities), the promoting of responsible conduct in research, and the encouraging of community-based learning.

June Highlights

The RISE Program concluded the application process on June 4, 2012. We received 24 applications, all of which fulfilled the program's minimum requirements. Candidates were invited to be interviewed by the evaluation committee (composed of four faculty members from UPR-P, one staff member from the Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences (PSMHS), and one staff member from UPR-P. After reviewing the data collected during the interview process, 14 students were selected to become part of the Ponce RISE Program (nine official members, five adjunct members). **CONGRATULATIONS!**



"Pre-Interview presentation"

Resources:

- Dr. Edu Suarez
- Mr. José Albelo
- Prof. Grisobelle Virella

The PRISE Program Director and the Coordinator (Dr. Edu Suarez & José Albelo) participated in the TWD NIGMS meeting held in San Antonio, TX, June 12 to 15, 2012. While there, they acquired important information regarding the RISE program and met important figures from the RISE Program's sponsoring agency, the NIH.



The directors and coordinators of two RISE programs in Ponce (in attendance at the TWD Meeting). From left to right: Dr. Edu Suarez (UPRP-MBRS-RISE), Ms. Wendy Pacheco (PSMHS-MBRS-RISE), José Albelo (UPRP-MBRS-RISE), and Dr. Caroline Appleyard (PSMHS-MBRS-RISE).

New Rise Members

1. Yessenia Cedeño Ceceño
2. Angel Díaz Martínez
3. Paola Gómez Padilla
4. Roberto Morales Silva
5. Michael Manoharan Valerio
6. Angélica Pérez Burgos
7. Luis Rivera Perez
8. Jamie Rosado Alicea
9. Gabriel Toro Torres



New RISE Members with the Program Director & the Coordinator

NEW Rise Adjunct Members

- 1) Marielys Collazo
- 2) Nicole Martínez
- 3) Melanie Ortíz
- 4) Stacy M. Negrón
- 5) Lysmarie Figueroa

July Highlights

“For two weeks, program students participated in ‘The Summer Workshop Program’ (hosted by UPR-PRISE), where they acquired the necessary skills to work well in research laboratories, a must for the RISE Program.” – José Albelo, P.C.

Over **15** students participated for two consecutive weeks in workshops that prepared them for the lifestyle they will have for the rest of their academic careers and which will begin in August of 2012.

With over **60 intensive hours** of different topics that included math (algebra, pre-trigonometry, and pre-calculus basics), biology (genetics, botany, biometry, and microbiology), social sciences, chemistry and, still to come, a library database search workshop.

During the third summer of our program, students participated in internships in the United States.

Ms. Martha Echevarria Andino, 3rd year student, participated in a research project at the **Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Center of Excellence (FAZD-COE)** in College Station, TX, where she worked with the amniotic fluid of influenza virus infected eggs with Dr. Pam Ferro. (Picture: Martha Echevarria working with eggs)



Mr. Robert Lopez, 2nd year student, participated in a research project at the **University of Colorado Denver** with Dr. Sharilyn Almodovar (UPR-PRISE Program collaborator). Dr. Suarez joined them for a few days to complete some procedures.

Ms. Yanaira Alonso, 3rd year student, participated in a research project at the **University of Colorado Denver** with the GEMS Program (a federally funded program) under the direction of Dr. Sonia Flores (mainland mentor for the PRISE Program).

Upcoming Activities

August 30, 2012. Discussion Panel: **“From UPR-P to Graduate School, personal and professional experiences”** (Place: Conference Room, Building of Student Affairs, 12:00 noon – 1:15 PM)

Summer Workshops 2012



UPR-PRISE

Dr. Edu B. Suarez, Program Director
Mr. José O. Albelo, Program Coordinator
787-844-8181, ext. 3085
rise.ponce@upr.edu

*“A totally blind process can by definition lead to anything; it can even lead to vision itself”
-Jaques Monod*