

# RCMI Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1



Administrative  
Core



START



CTIHD - CEC



Publications



RCMI Program Grant U54MD007579



## Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program 2023

On Saturday, January 28th, 2023 PHSU celebrated the BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) Camp for students interested to enroll in the program. Nashaly Irizarry and Yesenia Escobales (PhD students of the Biomedical Sciences Program) offered a Neuro workshop demonstrating the anatomy of the brain, where students actively participated.

- Myrella Cruz (Lab Supervisor)

## NCURA Workshop

On February 6 and 7, 2023, a group of RCMI and ORD research administrators attended a workshop on financial research administration offered by NCURA (National Council of University Research Administrators). We learned the latest modifications to the uniform guidance code. These included: roles and responsibilities of research administrators, the importance of Financial Conflict of Interest yearly preparation, do's and don'ts of subawards, Fundamental of Research Administration, and many more.



“ My research interests are health psychology, dissemination and implementation of evidence-based treatments (e.g., Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia, Behavioral Activation), e-health, and the cultural adaptations of treatments. My research has focused on studying the impact of psycho-oncology interventions on the psychological adjustment of cancer patients, survivors, and co-survivors, and addressing physical activity as a psychosocial, behavioral intervention. ”

MEET

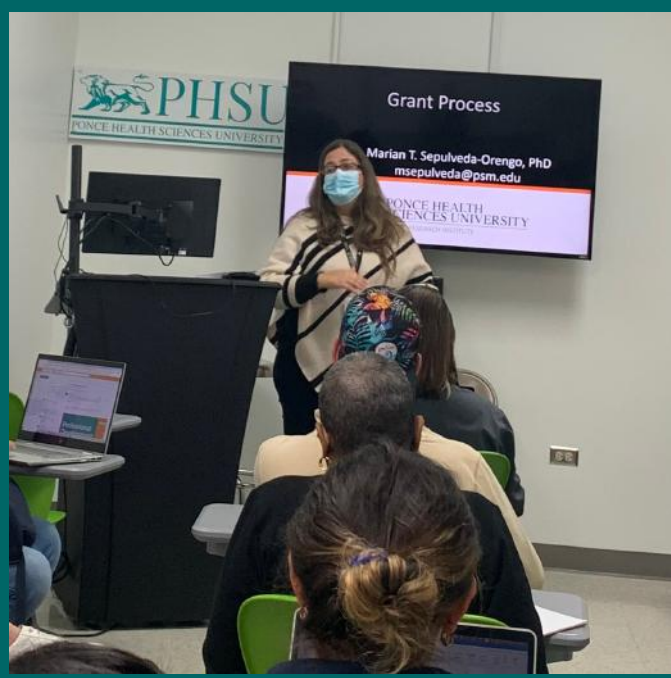
**Jennifer Morales, Ph.D.**  
(Assistant Professor)



# Administrative Core

RCMI collaborated with PRI personnel in organizing professional development activities.

## Grant Process Seminar | February 10, 2023



The seminar, aimed at Biomedical Sciences PhD students, described and simulated the NIH review process of the study section in a training grant application.

*"Students needed to understand the contents of the study section and how reviewers score the overall impact and percentile after evaluating their research proposal. The experience of giving this seminar was gratifying, as I noticed that the students realized the implication of writing their proposal in a simple, specific, and organized way to facilitate the evaluation of the reviewers and, therefore, obtain an excellent final score."*

- Marian T. Sepúlveda-Orengo, PhD  
Assistant Professor

## "All of Us" NIH Site Visit | February 17, 2023



On February 17, 2023, "All of Us" NIH officials visited our institution to learn the progress of the RCMI administrative supplement and the vital role that "All of Us" plays in our community and future research opportunities. Dr. Normarie Torres-Blasco presented the preliminary findings and challenges of the supplement-granted project: "Hispanic/Latinx mental illness and co-existing chronic health conditions."

This visit allowed the awardees, researchers, and students familiarize themselves with the "All of Us" workbench and gain basic understanding of available data. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and share some details about their own research projects.

For more information on the "All of Us" Research Program, visit: <https://allofus.nih.gov/>

# Administrative Core

## Seed, Soil, and Science Ecosystems: Cultivating Awareness and Connections between the American Psychosomatic Society | March 7, 2023

Moderator: Guillermo Armaiz, PhD, Ponce Research Institute

Paige A. Green, PhD, MPH, FABMR, National Cancer Institute (NIH)

This event was held for faculty and trainees from the Schools of Medicine and Behavioral & Brain Sciences. Some of the research interests discussed were:

- Psycho-oncology
- Stigma, trauma, anxiety disorders
- Mental health disparities
- Transgender mental health and associated disparities
- Community engagement and participatory-based research
- Women's health
- Cancer Biology
- Neuroscience



### Speakers:

- Dr. Larissa Avilés Santa, National Institute on Minority Health, and Health Disparities (NIMHD)
- Dr. LeeAnn Bailey, National Cancer Institute (NIH)
- Dr. Tené T. Lewis, Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University
- Dr. Lymarie Maldonado Báez, National Cancer Institute (NCI)
- Dr. Carolina Solis Sanabria, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)
- Dr. Amanda M. Acevedo, National Cancer Institute (NCI)
- Dr. Elizabeth Necka, National Institute of Aging (NIA)



# Strategic Academic Research Training

Investigator Development Core

Enhances scientific diversity in junior faculty scholars.

**Maternal depression, adverse neighborhood conditions during pregnancy and gestational epigenetic aging | January 12, 2023 | Biomedical Seminar by Allison Appleton, D.Sc, MPH**



## RCMI START CORE

Strategic Academic Research Training

**Richard J. Noel Jr., Ph.D.**  
Chair of Basic Sciences Department  
Professor

Professionalism and Etiquette in E-mail Communication

ACADEMIC RESEARCH CAREER ADVANCEMENTS  
FOR JUNIOR RESEARCHERS IN PHSU/PRI

Place: Academic Building - Room 101  
Date: Monday, February 13, 2023  
Hour: 11:30am - 12:30pm  
Please Confirm Attendance

\*Participation required for RCMI Funding\*



For information please contact

[maria.santiago@psm.edu](mailto:maria.santiago@psm.edu) | [frances.lizarray@psm.edu](mailto:frances.lizarray@psm.edu)

Professionalism and Etiquette in E-mail Communication | February 13, 2023

How to Prepare a Budget | March 10, 2023

Claris Vega

[cvega@psm.edu](mailto:cvega@psm.edu)

Víctor J. Gómez Díaz

[vgomez@psm.edu](mailto:vgomez@psm.edu)

[Click here to view full powerpoint presentation](#)

## RCMI START CORE

Strategic Academic Research Training

**Claris Vega, MBA**

Director of Office of Research Development  
**Víctor J. Gómez Díaz, BA**  
Program Assistant

How to Prepare a Budget

ACADEMIC RESEARCH CAREER ADVANCEMENTS

FOR JUNIOR RESEARCHERS IN PHSU/PRI

Place: Zoom Meeting  
Link: <https://psu.zoom.us/j/83475396288>  
Meeting ID: 834 7539 6288  
Date: Monday, March 20, 2023  
Hour: 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Please Confirm Attendance

\*Participation required for RCMI Funding\*



For information please contact

[maria.santiago@psm.edu](mailto:maria.santiago@psm.edu) | [frances.lizarray@psm.edu](mailto:frances.lizarray@psm.edu)

PHSU faculty can enroll in START through the following link:

<https://bit.ly/3Ha23en>

<https://www.psm.edu/pri/rcmi/>



# Community Engagement Core

2023 Community Forum (CTIHD)

## A New Generation of Community Investigators and Health Promoters



**Jorge Motta**

CEC Research Assistant

On Friday, February 17th, 2023, a Community Forum was held by the Community Training Institute for Health Disparities (CTIHD) in PHSU's East Campus. The activity had 45 participants, including community trainees and ex-alumni from the CTIHD Community Investigators program and Community Health Promotion program, academic investigators (PHSU professionals from Public Health, Psychology, and Biomedical Sciences), staff from the PHSU-RCMI Program, and students from different academic programs.

The Forum was led by Dr. Julio Jiménez, Professor and Director of the CTIHD. He explained that the forum serves as a co-learning experience to promote the exchange of ideas between community members and academic investigators.

Attendees were divided into three discussion groups. In the first, the Community Investigators Program ex-alumni spoke with current community trainees about their research projects and experience in the CTIHD. In turn, community trainees inquired about the elaboration of research proposals, how to identify potential research subjects, and discussed the general program and classes, among other topics.

In the second group, ex-alumni from the Community Health Promoters and community trainees similarly discussed their health promotional plan projects. Additionally, Dr. Iris Martínez, PHSU Professor, Health Educator, and Epidemiologist, was available as a resource to better understand health promotion processes and integrate them with research. Both discussions served as a place where the CTIHD alumni could interact as peers, learn more about their projects, and create links among themselves.

Finally, the third group consisted of academic investigators and Dr. Nina Wallerstein, Professor and Director of the Center of Participatory Research from the University of New Mexico. During this session, they had an open discussion about their current engagement with the community and their level of involvement, potential strategies to aid in approaching communities and developing partnerships.



**Jeannie Aguirre**

CEC Research Assistant

# Community Engagement Core

## 2023 Community Forum (CTIHD)

### A New Generation of Community Investigators and Health Promoters

After, the Community Investigators Program presented their current, potential pre-pilot proposals for their final projects in the CTIHD. These presentations, developed by community trainees, had the objective to obtain feedback and possibly foster partnerships between community trainees and academic researchers. Successfully, the proposals were praised by the investigators, and students were able to network with other attendees.

The activity was very well received, with reports of 100% satisfaction. Participants left feeling more empowered, taking with them a greater understanding of the importance of developing relationships between academia and the community. Some expressed the need for more activities where the general public should be invited to learn about the current work of their community leaders. Hence, the Community Engagement Core plans to continue this forum and other future activities to keep fostering connections between academia and the community to aid in reducing health disparities.



# Publications



Caleb Esteban, PhD

**Quality of Life and Psychosocial Well-Being among Intersex-Identifying Individuals in Puerto Rico: An Exploratory Study**



Orlando Torres  
Graduate Student

**Sex-dependent effects of microglial reduction on impaired fear extinction induced by single prolonged stress**



Ernesto Rosario, PhD

**Review of the psychometric properties of the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) Spanish version in a sample of Puerto Rican workers**



Mary Rodriguez-Rabassa, PsyD, MSc

**Stressors and Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Vulnerable Hispanic Caregivers and Children**



Eliut Rivera-Segarra, PhD

**COVID-19 impact on the psychological health of Latinx transgender and non-binary individuals in mainland United States and Puerto Rico: A mixed-methods study.**



Ernesto Rosario, PhD

**Psychometric Properties of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) in a Sample of Workers**



RCMI Symposium  
on Health Disparities

# SAVE *the* DATE

2nd RCMI Symposium on Health Disparities

**MAY 6<sup>th</sup>,**  
**2023**

Complejo Ferial de  
Puerto Rico  
Juan H. Cintrón García  
Ponce, Puerto Rico

## Discussion Panels:

- Gender Minorities
- Health Disparities in Elderly Communities
- Prostate Cancer



Scan the QR Code to register!

# Editorial Board

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Chief Advisor

## Contact Us

Maria Santiago  
[marsantiago@psm.edu](mailto:marsantiago@psm.edu)  
787-840-2575 Ext. 4746

Stephanie Batista  
[sbatista@psm.edu](mailto:sbatista@psm.edu)  
787-840-2575 Ext. 4711

Frances Irizarry  
[firizarry@psm.edu](mailto:firizarry@psm.edu)  
787-840-2575 Ext. 4752

Doris Andujar  
[dandujar@psm.edu](mailto:dandujar@psm.edu)  
787-840-2575 Ext. 4783

Amarilys Santiago  
[amsantiago@psm.edu](mailto:amsantiago@psm.edu)  
787-840-2575 Ext. 4720

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