



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
~~Cancer~~ Center

Making Cancer History®

CENTRO
COMPRESIVO
DE
CANCER
universidad de puerto rico

Research Capacity Building and Competitiveness

Ana Patricia Ortiz, PhD, MPH

Investigator, University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer Center
& University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus

Principal Investigator

UPR/MDACC Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research

Brad R. Weiner, PhD - Contact PI (UPR)

Reynold Lopez, MD - PI (UPR)

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Sharon Giordano, PhD, PI (MDACC)

Cullen Taniguichi, MDPH, PI (MDACC)

U54 UPR/MDACC Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research
U54 CA096297 – CA096300 (Funding period 2019-2024)

UPR/MDACC Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research

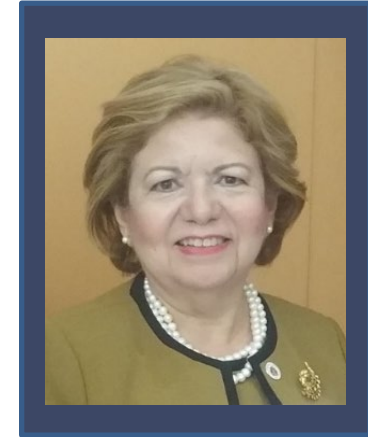
Research Education Core (REC)



Elizabeth Travis, PhD
Co-Leader
MD Anderson



Reynold López, MD
Co-Leader
UPR



Ilka Ríos, DMD, MS
Program Director
UPR

(NCI Grant #2U54CA096297-18)

Coordinator:
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<https://uprmdacc.upr.edu>



The Partnership supports the University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer Center (UPRCCC) in building research capacity and competitiveness by:

- Establishing collaborative partnerships in key research areas
- Promoting development opportunities for faculty and students
- Providing access to research resources and grant support


Courses

Course Name	Course Code	Contact Hours	Credits (semester)	Times Offered in the period
Enhancing verbal, analytical reading, and writing skills for Cancer Research	INTD 5125 7125, 8125	36	2	2
Responsible Conduct in Research with Emphasis on Cancer Projects	INTD 5135, 8135	36	2	2
Research Methodology and Design Focused on Cancer Research	INTD 5145, 8145	36	2	2
Data Analysis in Cancer Research	INTD 5064, 8065	36	2	1
Advanced Topics in Cancer*: Cancer Biology (2023)	INTD 5997, 8996	30	2	4
Totals				11

*Topics are different each year. Other topics offered in the period were: Cancer Prevention, Cancer Genetics, and Emerging Technologies for Detection and Treatment of Cancer.

**** Research Education Core Online Platform – Powered by RCM Online (went live on July 2022),**

Welcome
Research Education Core Online Platform – Powered by RCM Online




UPR/MDACC Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research
USA CA094297-CA096300

Objectives

The Research Education Core Online Platform's purpose is to disseminate and make accessible Cancer Research Content to Health Professionals, Faculty Investigators and Students. Our main objectives are:

1. Provide access to Cancer Research Education
2. The Content deals with the different branches in the scope of Cancer and Health Disparities including Cancer Research, Cancer Medicine, Population Sciences, Responsible Conduct in Research, Research Methodology and Design, Clinical Training and Data Analysis in Cancer Research.
3. Each Module offers 3 to 5 contact hours.
4. Users can access the modules at any time, and re-load when they wish.
5. Users who complete the modules, including a post-test, receive a certificate generated by the platform.

Modules



Introduction... (00:00:00)

Training Opportunities

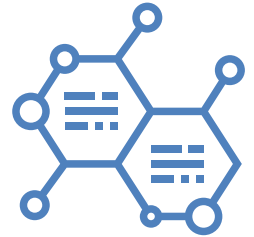
Summer Research Experience at MD Anderson

- Medical Students and Undergraduate Students
 - 2020: COVID19
 - 2021: 15 students
 - 2022: 14 students
 - 2023: 8 students



Semester Assistantship Program at UPR

- Undergraduates and graduate students sponsored
 - 2020: 6 students
 - 2021: 11 students
 - 2022: 20 students
 - 2023: 17 students



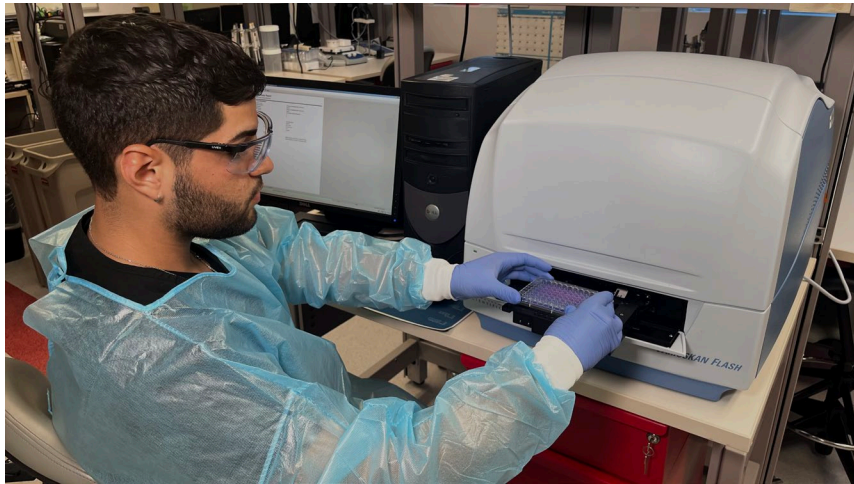
MD/PhD

- Partnership between MD Anderson, UPR School of Medicine, and MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.
 - 19 students enrolled
 - 12 MD/PhD alumni
 - 1 MD/MS alumni

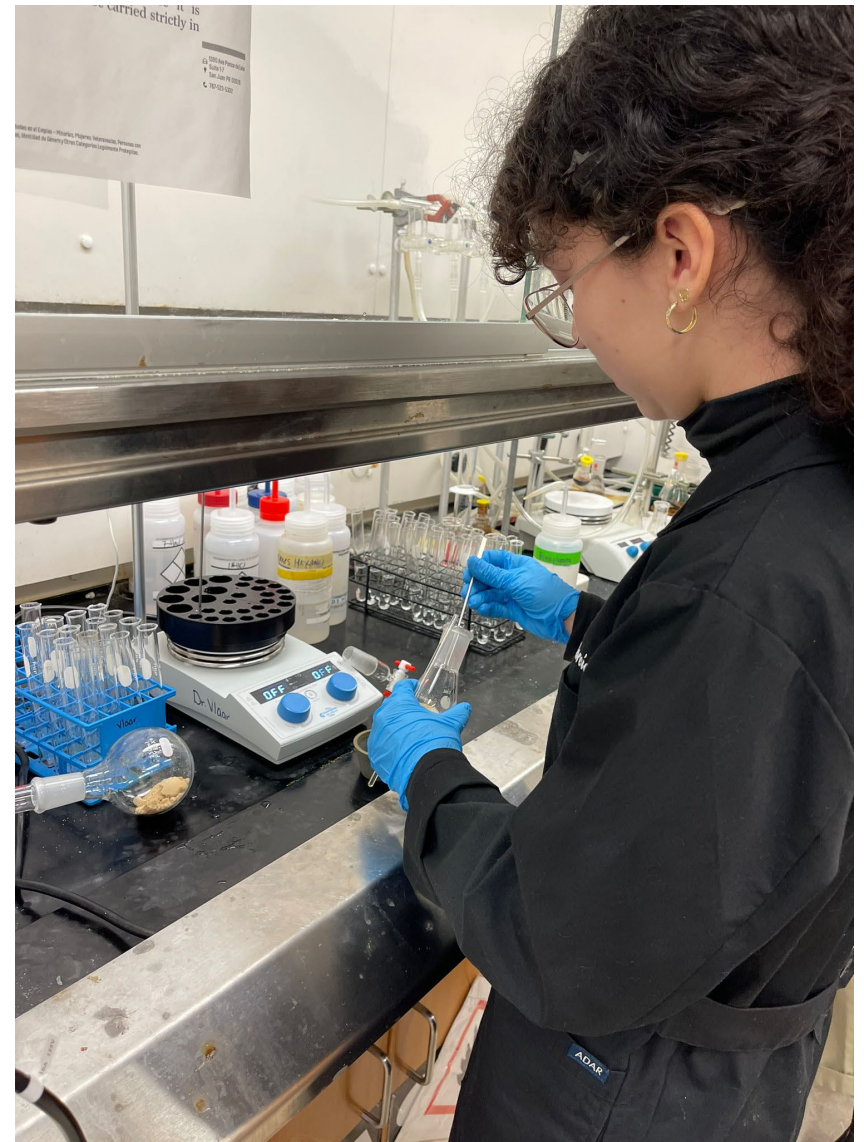




Summer Students



Angel Amaral, Undergraduate Student
Dr. Josue Perez Santiago Lab



Jaelismarie García Rivera,
Undergraduate Student
Dr. Cornelis P. Vlaar Stoop Lab

MD PhD Dual Degree Trainees and Alumni Track & Achievements (2008-2023)



Enrolled students
(2008-2023)

19



Alumni
MD PhD

12**

Alumni
MD MS

1**



Publications

136***



Other Fellowships,
Scholarships &
Awards

28****



Grants,
Fellowships
& Supplements

15

** Academia (2), Private (2), Residencies & Fellows (7)

*** Include publications not included in Pubmed

****Does not include travel awards

5 Diversity Supplements

Name	Award Number	Title	Mentor
Marivelisse Soto, DrPH	NCI Parent Grant: U54CA096297	UPR/MDACC Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research	Dr. Ana P. Ortiz (UPR)
Luis Segarra, MD	NCI Parent Grant: U54CA096300	UPR/MDACC Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research	Dr. Curtis Pettaway (MDACC)
Dalissa Negrón Figueroa, BS	NCI Parent Grant: R21CA277332	Identifying Novel Radiation Sensitizers in Cervical Cancer	Dr. Lauren E. Colbert (MDACC)
Ariana Acevedo Diaz, BS	NCI Parent Grant: R01ACA227517	The Role of HIF2 in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma	Dr. Cullen Taniguchi (MDACC)
Alanis Rodríguez, BS	NIDCR Parent Grant: 5U01DE028233	Targeting the immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment to enhance efficacy of radiotherapy and immuno-radiotherapy for oral cancer	Dr. Andrew Sikora (MDACC)



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Postdocs

Recruited

Past and

Current

Cycle (2013-2023)

Institution	Name	Research Interest
UPR/UPRCCC	Ingrid Montes, PhD	Genomics
	Jean Ruiz, PhD	Gastric Cancer
	Julyann Perez, PhD	Colorectal Cancer
	Jeyshka Reyes, PhD	Ovarian Cancer
	Marivelisse Soto, MS, DrPH	Health Disparities in Social Determinants of Health
	Maria del Mar Gonzalez, PhD	Microbiology in Cancer Genomics
UT Health Sciences & MDACC	Khaled Mohammed, PhD	Translational Cancer in Nanotechnology
	Chi-Fang Wu, PhD, MS	Health Services Research
	Karem Court, PhD	Ovarian Cancer
	Janice Santiago, PhD	Ovarian Cancer



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New Faculty and

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Research Scientists
Recruited UPRCCC
with involvement
(previous/current) in
CPACHE Grant

Institution	Name	Faculty Rank	Department
UPRCCC	Maria del Mar Gonzalez, PhD	Associate Investigator	Cancer Biology
	Ingrid Montes, PhD	Research Scientist	Cancer Biology
	Jeslie Ramos, MS	Research Scientist	Cancer Control and Population Sciences
	Josue Perez, PhD	Associate Professor	Cancer Biology
	Karen Ortiz, DrPH	Assistant Professor	Cancer Control & Population Sciences
	Marievelisse Soto, DrPH	Assistant Professor	Cancer Control & Population Sciences
	Axel Gierbolini, DrPH	Assistant Investigator	Cancer Control and Population Sciences
	Hilmaris Centeno, MS	Research Scientist	Cancer Biology
	Rocio Rivera, MD, PhD	Assistant Investigator	Cancer Biology/Cancer Medicine
MDACC	Janice Santiago, PhD	Instructor	Experimental Therapeutics

*Recruitment and or previous involvement in the U54 Partnership

Post CPACHE



Maria del Mar Gonzalez-Pons, PhD
Associate Investigator
UPRCCC

K22 - NIH

5K22CA226395

Principal Investigator

Host Genetic Susceptibility to Gut Microbiota
Driven Colorectal Carcinogenesis

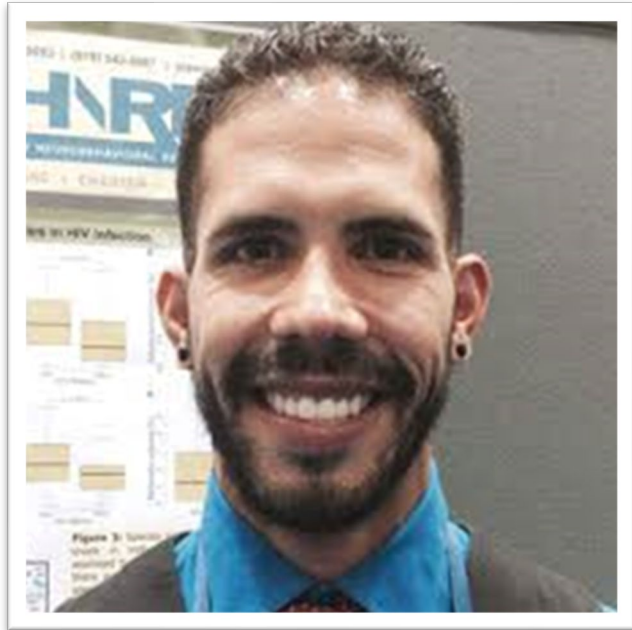
RCMI - NIH

Principal Investigator

Project: Interplay between gut bacteria and
metabolites in the development of
colorectal adenomas

R01 application submitted: Multiancestry
Gastric Pre-Cancer Cohort (MAGiC) (MPIs:
Gonzalez Pons/Cruz-Correa)

Post CPACHE



Josue Perez Santiago, PhD
Associate Professor
UPRCCC

R21-NIH

1R21CA264606

Principal Investigator

Cross Sectional Association of the Oral Microbiota and the Inflammasome with Oral HPV among HIV+ Adults

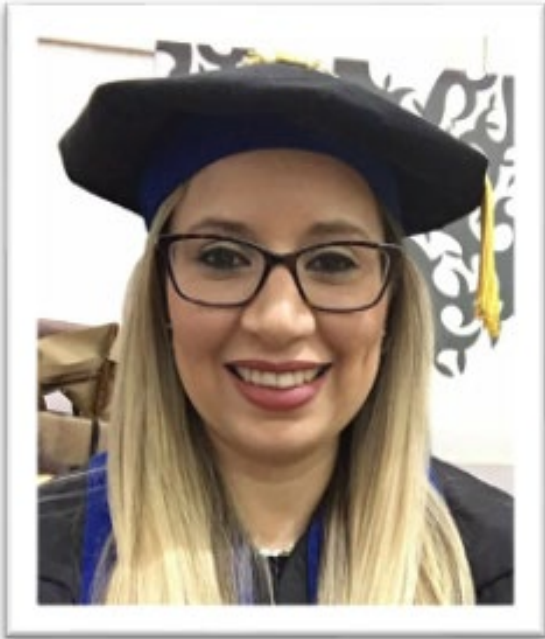
RCMI - NIH

Principal Investigator

The oral microbiome and its association with inflammation and cancer risk in HIV+ Adults

R01 application submitted: Multicentric study evaluating mechanisms of disparities in the natural history of oral and oropharyngeal HPV infection among Hispanic adults living with HIV (Ortiz, Perez, Salmeron, Palefsky)

Post CPACHE



**1st MD/PhD
recruited at the
UPRCCC**

Completed dual degree in
2017

Rocio Rivera, MD, PhD

Investigator

Pediatric Hematology Oncology

UPRCCC



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Examples of
Success Stories
(transition to
independent
investigators)



Post CPACHE



Ana Patricia Ortiz, PhD
Investigator
UPRCCC

1U54CA242646-04
2U54CA096297-18
1 R25 CA240120-04
1R56DE032668-01
1R01CA282424-01



Vivian Colon-Lopez, PhD
Investigator
UPRCCC

1 R01 CA232743-05
1OT2HL161827
3OT2OD026551



William Calo, PhD, JD
Associate Professor
Penn State Cancer Institute

1R37CA253279-41
P01CA250989-02
R01CA254659-02

Office of Cancer Research Training and Education Coordination (CRTEC), UPRCCC



Associate Director: Dr. Ana Patricia Ortiz

Goals

- Provide interdisciplinary cancer education, mentorship, and training opportunities to students, staff, and faculty focused on oncologic care.
- Support the development of the next generation of cancer researchers and health care professionals.
- Serve as a coordination center for all training and educational activities in cancer.

Cancer Prevention and Control (CAPAC) Research Training Program

NCI Grant # R25CA240120; Project Period: 09/01/2019 to 08/31/2024



- **LONG TERM GOAL:** Contribute to the development of the next generation of successful cancer prevention and control researchers by mentoring and fostering participants and providing the knowledge and skills to pursue a doctoral degree and/or academic and professional careers in cancer prevention and control research.
- 25 students recruited annually



Dr. Ana P. Ortiz (Program Director)
Dr. Guillermo Tortolero (Associate Director)
Dr. Marievelisse Soto (Assistant Director)
Camila Elías (Program Coordinator)



Conclusion



The UPR/MDACC Partnership has been instrumental in supporting students and faculty at all levels, in their career development.



Activities and infrastructure are being expanded to continue to support and help coordinate cancer training and education initiatives and programs in Puerto Rico in collaboration with the UPRCCC.