

SJBSM JOURNAL



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KEY DATES

December 21, 2018 - January 6, 2019: Winter Break

February 28, 2019:
Interdisciplinary Research Symposium

March 15, 2019: Match Ceremony

CONGRATS GRADUATES OF 2018

By Ferdinand J. Meléndez Padilla, MS4

With the sounds of the orchestra's trumpets, saxophone, and cellos evoking feelings of victory and triumph, the 39th Graduation Ceremony of the San Juan Bautista School of Medicine took place on

Sunday, May 27th, 2018, at the "Sala Sinfónica Pablo Casals" of the "Centro de Bellas Artes de Santurce Luis A. Ferré" in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Approximately 1,000 people gathered at the event to witness one of the biggest milestone achievements of 74 students receiving their diplomas, along with some special recognitions and awards. Among these students, 48 were from the Medical program, 16 from the Public Health program, and 10 from the Nursing program.

The ceremony was dedicated to Ms. Maggie González, Secretary of the Dean of Student Affairs, for her unconditioned dedication and service to student extracurricular affairs. In addition, the graduation's commemoration not only counted with the participation of the school's deans, faculty, staff, student council, and class

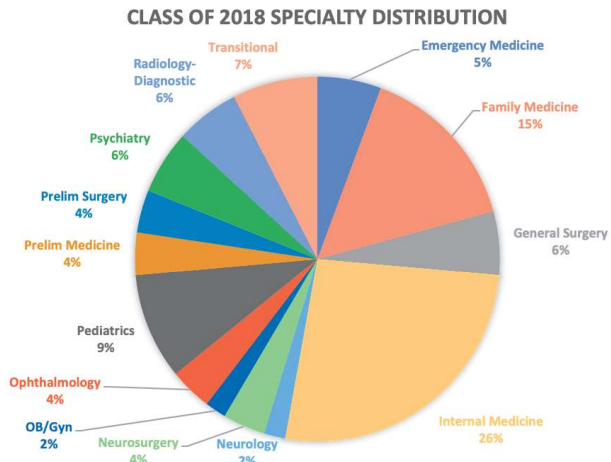


Congratulations to the Class of 2018!

directives, but also with the presence of Dr. Ricardo Arribas, MD, a psychiatrist and exemplary SJB alumnus who gave an inspirational speech to the future health care professionals. The awards that were bestowed upon selected students were the Community Service/Leadership/Humanism Award, School's Loyalty Dr. Yocasta Brugal Award, Board of Trustees Award Dr. Juan A. Chavez Abreu, Biomedical Science Award, and Clinical Sciences Award.

Lastly, the ceremony concluded with the student's exit parade, which was filled not only with nostalgia for all the memorable and meaningful moments each student lived within SJB's walls, but also with infinite excitement for what awaits in the future for each of those 74 graduated students.

CLASS OF 2018 MATCH DATA



San Juan Bautista School of Medicine graduating Class of 2018 specialty distribution and general geographical distribution.

- The 2018 Match was the largest yet with a grand total of 62,747 applicants.
- 56,093 applicants tried for one of 30,232 first-year (PGY-1) residency positions.
- 6,096 applicants tried for one of 2,678 advanced (PGY-2) residency positions.
- 62.7% of U.S. Senior applicants were matched with a residency program of their choice.
- 82% of SJBSM Seniors matched with a residency program of their choice.

AAMC'S ASPIRING DOCS DIARIES

By Christina Amador, MS2

Fernando Rivera, MS4, was published in the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) blog "Aspiring Docs Diaries", where he vividly describes his post-Hurricane María experience assisting patients in the rural areas of Puerto Rico. Rivera aspires to become an emergency physician. He is the former president of the Emergency Medicine Interest Group and American Medical Association Chapter of SJBSM. He is passionate about providing quality healthcare to minorities and reducing disparities.

An excerpt from his article reads, "We spent the entire day with the Aguas Buenas mayor, going door by door under the intense sun, checking patients, seeing if they had medications and their basic needs covered... We found bedridden people and older people who couldn't feed themselves; I can't imagine what would have happened if we didn't get there on time".

The full article can be found at: www.aspiringdocsdiaries.org/a-heart-to-heart-experience



Fernando Rivera, MS4

FOURTH ANNUAL HEALTH FAIR

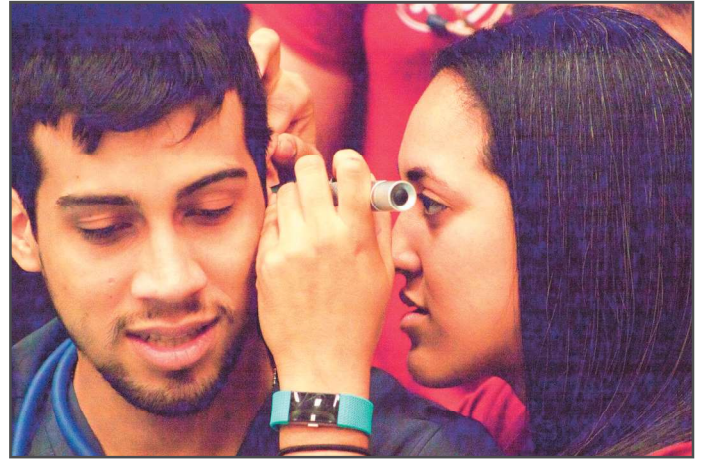
By Christina Amador, MS2

The vision San Juan Bautista medical students have for community health is more than a school motto; it is a true passion fueling the creativity and determination necessary to orchestrate the yearly Health Fair, ¡Salud y Bienestar, En Familia! This year marked the fourth year in a row that SJBSM students and Latino Medical Student Association came together to serve the community. The "4ta Feria de Salud Comunitaria" was held on the SJBSM campus, on Saturday, March 17th, 2018, from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM, and it inspired so many to participate! More than 15 organizations offered health services such as glucose and cholesterol testing, pelvic exams, bone mineralization surveying, TRIAGE, and for the first time, chiropractic care! The fair also offered educational prevention and health counseling on topics such as endometriosis, depression, exercise, nutrition, ophthalmology, and pediatrics, to name a few.



Joanie Figueroa, MS2, volunteers at the pediatrics booth.

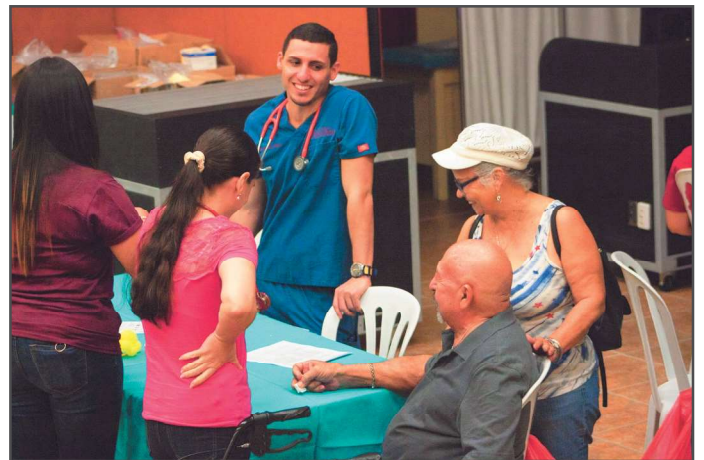
In charge of coordination was Santos Ortiz, an outstanding MS3 whose devotion for being a positive agent of social change through public health is unparalleled. Ortiz, along with his planning committees, worked incessantly since November 2017 to manifest a holistic fair that offered complete health services within a comfortable setting, with zero cost to the community of Caguas and its neighboring towns. Through the hard work and efforts of volunteers, the fourth annual Health Fair exceeded its expectations to impact the Puerto Rican community's health issues. Santos hopes next year's fair "stays



Ananias Motta, MS2, and Andrea De Leon, MS2, work the triage service.

alive, and that the tradition to host the fair passes from class to class, with every new fair breaking the standards of the previous year."

Following are the names of students who greatly contributed to the planning of the fair alongside Santos, making it a success. On behalf of the SJBSM family, thank you for your endeavours and dedication: Danilea Carmona, MS3; Koby Bonilla, MS3; Ashley Lugo, MPH; Juan Ortiz, MPH; Abner Alemán, MS2; Joanie Figueroa, MS2; Rosa Frias, MS2; Fabiola Rodríguez, MS3; Xiomara Molina, MS2; Jessica Rodríguez, MS2; Charles Castro, MS2; Students from UPR Mayagüez, UPR Río Piedras, & UIPR Metro Campus.



The health fair was a success for students and patients alike.

GOOFY GAMES 2018

By Cristina M. Casas Loyola, MS3

On Friday, April 6, 2018, the famous "Goofy Games" were held, in keeping with tradition at San Juan Bautista School of Medicine for the past few years. The purpose of these games is to provide an environment of fun and fraternization where the students of the medicine, nursing, and public health programs come together. They are organized by the Student Council in collaboration with the Dean of Student Affairs.

Among the games played were messy twister, an obstacle course featuring water slides, basketball tournament, ping pong tournament, and volleyball tournament. In addition, the students of the different programs took advantage of the opportunity to raise funds for their respective classes by making sales of pizza, hot dogs, nachos, as well as other snacks and beverages. Pedro Rodríguez, MS4 and former president of the SJB Student Council, commented, "The Goofy Games are a school tradition, and they should always be held because they make our school fun, unique, and united." Congratulations to the Class of 2020 for being the winner!



Class of 2020 wins the Goofy Games!

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY COLLABORATES WITH SJBSM

By Cristina M. Casas Loyola, MS3

San Juan Bautista School of Medicine has always been characterized by its active participation in community activities. On March 25-29, 2018, free health service fairs titled "Unidos Por Un Pueblo Saludable" were held in the towns of Patillas, Arroyo, Maunabo, Yabucoa, and Vieques. The fair was hosted by Lewiz Katz School of Medicine - Temple University, Greenfield Foundation, Academia Médica del Sur, and San Juan Bautista School of Medicine. The services offered included vital signs, glucose levels, flu vaccinations, OB/GYN services, cardiology services, basic dental examination, psychiatry, general medicine, and prescribing of medications as necessary. In addition, free food and several clothing articles were donated to patients visiting the clinic.

The contact for the mission trip was made in November 2017 at AAMC's annual meeting by Danilea Carmona, MS3, when Temple University students expressed their desire to organize the activity. She then referred them to Dr. Burgos, Dr. Miranda, and Dalilah Reyes, MS3. Danilea said, "I think these kinds of activities help remind us about those in need and how



José Alvarado, MS3, administers an influenza vaccine at the free clinic in Yabucoa.

we can make an impact. It also gives us additional motivation to reach our goals. In addition, working with entities that are not based in Puerto Rico helps us learn from each other's work and culture. Moreover, these hands-on experiences help us get real life cases that give us the space to apply our knowledge and grow beyond the written knowledge."

THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ON A MEDICAL STUDENT

By Cristina Diaz Marty, MS3

Leading and participating in a variety of community service activities has been essential in my development as a medical student and has positively affected my point of view towards how to provide the best quality care. In this article I will provide examples about this, and the experiences will speak for themselves.

Hospital del Niño & San Jorge Children's Hospital - AESR

Pediatric patients who are diagnosed with cancer, genetic diseases, or other conditions that can lead to a disability can easily fall into depression or give up on themselves. But, if we use the right words and put ourselves in their shoes, we can probably get a big smile and even a rise in their motivation to keep on fighting. I promise that these smiles will be forever remembered. In this case, the experiences are mostly motivational, which is the first step in providing the best care since the patient's point of view towards their disease is the main factor in improving doctor-patient relationship and patient compliance.

Elderly home visits – Med Students for the Elderly

Unfortunately, a significant amount of the elderly population is either forgotten or treated as a thing instead of as a person. They are used to visiting the doctor and being identified as multimorbidity and polypharmaceutical cases. I feel my chest tighten every time I visit an elderly home and they cry saying things like "My family doesn't care anymore", "No one listens to me", "I'm forgotten", "I'm hopeless", "I feel like giving up..."



Cristina participates in a medical relief mission at Yabucoa, Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria.



Cristina visits an elderly home after Hurricane Maria.

These visits have helped me view each case as a completely individual one and realize how important it is to understand the whole background and feelings of the patient before jumping to conclusions. If a patient feels hopeless and alone, they won't find a reason to get better. Sometimes they just need someone to sit down and truly listen to them. This is why we have created activities where we bring them music, memory games, physical therapy exercises, and spend time listening to their stories, while trying to make them smile. In this case, the main goal is to improve their quality of life.

Post-Hurricane Maria Community Clinics – Por Una Sonrisa

One of the experiences that affected me the most was going to the Puerto Rican community to provide medical relief after Hurricane Maria. Seeing low income patients, lack of treatment, exacerbation of diseases, and pain... a lot of pain.

My first patient told me specifically, "I just want to kill myself, I can't handle this disaster anymore." My second patient said, "My mom just passed away because she couldn't receive her dialysis after the hurricane." This was followed by a patient with uncontrolled diabetes due to his insulin being damaged because of the lack of electricity. And so on...

It is amazing when we learn the diverse and complex medical knowledge from our huge books. But the details missing from the books are only obtained through these experiences, and that's when one transforms from a "robot" into a humanitarian physician that is focused on treating the patient instead of the disease.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

These students published or gave presentations at conferences all over the United States, representing our school and showing off their hard work. Congratulations!

Ana Recinos Baez, MS3

Poster presentation: *Evaluating Translations and Reading Levels of the National Diabetes Preventions Program Targeting the Hispanic Population in the US*

NIDDK Diabetes Research Center - Medical Student Research Program 2017, Nashville, TN, August 3 & 4, 2017.

Andrew R. Blundell, MS3

Poster presentation: *A deep dive into the diagnostic utility of eos- and baso-C4d.*

American Medical Women's Association 103rd Anniversary Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, March 23, 2018.

Latino Medical Student Association National Conference, Miami, FL, April 14, 2018.

Andrew Engel, MS3

Oral presentation: *A role for Laparoscopy in the Age of Robotics*

Minimally Invasive Surgery Week, San Francisco, CA, September 8, 2017.

Cristina M. Font, MS3

Poster presentation: *Musculoskeletal injections and the risk of lymphedema: a case series.*

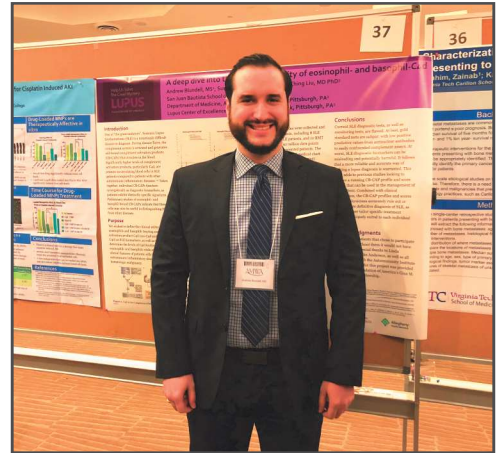
American Medical Women's Association 103rd Anniversary Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, March 23, 2018.

Latino Medical Student Association National Conference, Miami, FL, April 14, 2018.

Dalilah Reyes De Jesus, MS3, and Anel R. Gonzalez, MS4

Oral presentation: *The Aftermath of Hurricane Maria*

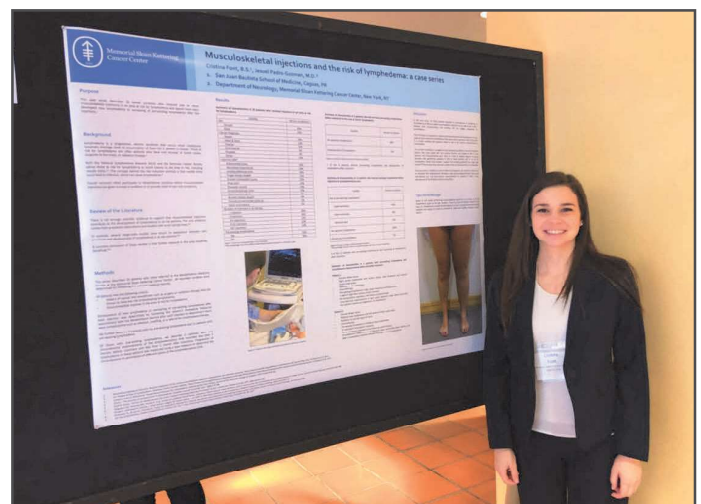
20th Annual Healthcare Missions Symposium, University of Toledo, OH, March 17, 2018.



Andrew Blundell, MS3, presents his research poster at the AMWA Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Andrew Engel, MS3, gives an oral presentation in San Francisco, California during Minimally Invasive Surgery Week.



Cristina Font, MS3, presents her poster on musculoskeletal injections and the risk of lymphedema in Miami, Florida at the LMSA National Conference.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

These students published or gave presentations at conferences all over the United States, representing our school and showing off their hard work. Congratulations!

Danilea M Carmona Matos, MS3

Oral presentation: *Characterization of somatostatin receptors (SSTRs) expression and anti-proliferative effect of somatostatin analogues in aggressive thyroid cancers*

American Academy of Endocrine Surgeons, Durham, NC, May 6, 2018.

Oral presentation: *Competencies and areas for improvement in Surgical Clerkship Instructors: A Qualitative Study*

Society of Asian American Surgeons 3rd Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI, September 27, 2018.

Elsa C. Rodriguez, MS4 & Melissa Milián, Nursing student

Oral presentation: *Mental Well-Being Analysis of Puerto Ricans after Hurricane Maria*

Puerto Rico Disaster Preparedness and Response: Building Capacity - A Case for Care Integration Symposium, San Juan, PR, August 10, 2018.

Lilliana Serrano Arroyo, MS3

Poster presentation: *Sex differences in clinical characteristics of Puerto Rican patients with rheumatoid arthritis*

Pan-American League of Associations of Rheumatology Congress (PANLAR 2018), Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 9, 2018.

Nelson X Del Pilar, MS3

Publication: *Lifestyle Medicine and the Management of Cardiovascular Disease*

Current Cardiology Reports, October 4, 2017.

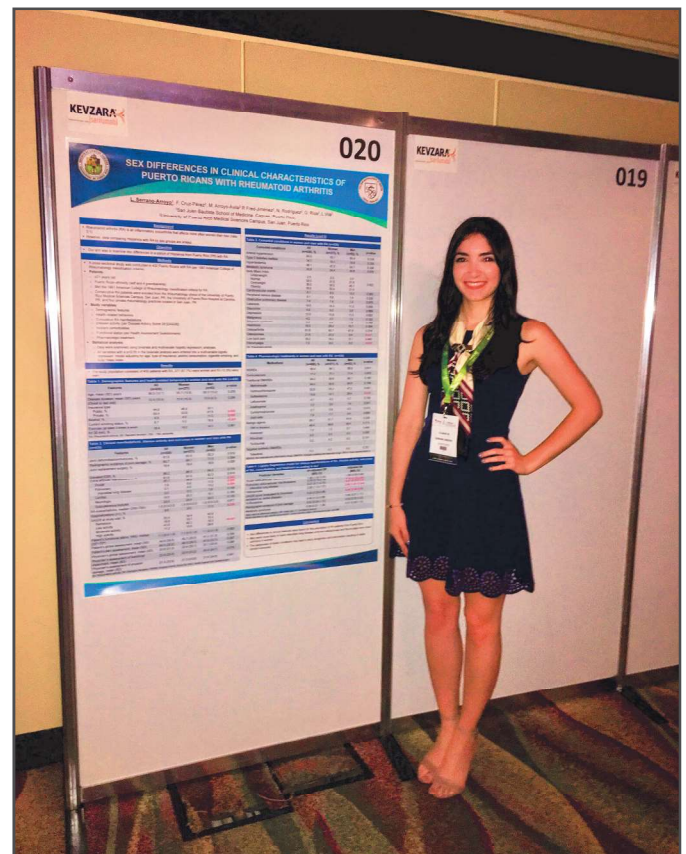
Santos R. Ortiz Comas, MS3

Poster presentation: *Vaccine Hesitancy among the population who uses the services of a Private Hospital in Puerto Rico*

Beyond Flexner Alliance Conference, Atlanta, GA, April 10, 2018.



Elsa C. Rodriguez, MS4, and Melissa Milián, 2nd year nursing student, give an oral presentation in San Juan, Puerto Rico about their research following Hurricane Maria.



Lilliana Serrano Arroyo, MS3, presents her research poster in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

STUDENT AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to San Juan Bautista School of Medicine's most recent student award winners!



Casey Gilman, MS1

R.D. LaPenta Medical Scholarship

Casey was awarded a scholarship of \$18,000 per year from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation to support her during her medical studies.



Danilea M Carmona Matos, MS3

Howard Hughes Medical Institute Medical Research Fellows Program Award

Danilea was given this award for one year of research funding to work on thyroid cancer translational research at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine Department of Surgery under Dr. Herbert Chen, MD FACS and Dr. Renata Jaskula-Sztul, PhD.



Dalilah Reyes De Jesus, MS3

US Public Health Service Excellence in Public Health Award

Dalilah was recognized for her contribution to public health and to the goals and priorities of Healthy People 2020 and the National Prevention Strategy.



Elsa C. Rodríguez, MS4

AAN Visiting Medical Student Diversity Scholarship

Elsa was awarded \$2,000 by the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) in September 2018 to support her during her visiting rotation in Neurology.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AT SJBSM

These are San Juan Bautista School of Medicine's currently active student-led organizations. For more information on how to get involved, please contact the respective presidents for each group.

American Medical Association, Andrew R. Blundell & Fernando Rivera

American Medical Women's Association, Cristina M. Font

American Physician Scientists Association Puerto Rico Chapter, Emile R. Vieta Ferrer, Yonatan Carl, & Marina Stukova

Anesthesiology Interest Group, Ediricardo Rodríguez & Alyssa Gonzales

Cardiology Interest Group, Pedro Colón Ortiz

Christian Medical and Dental Association, Maite Iglesias

Christian Student Association, Alessandro Ávila

Curitas Pal Barrio, Pedro Rodríguez

Dermatology Interest Group, Andrew R. Blundell

Emergency Medicine Interest Group, Santos Ortiz

Family Medicine Interest Group, Michelle Marquez

Infectious Diseases Interest Group, Moisés Cintrón & Adriana Gordon

Internal Medicine Interest Group, Alexandra Lozano

Internal Medicine-Pediatrics (Med-Peds) Student Association, Yadier Brito Cuas

Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), Wendel Estrada Piñero

LGBTQ and Allied Health Professionals Student Association, Jonathan Casazola & Lisete Mole

Lifestyle Medicine Interest Group, Gabriel Ruiz, Daniel Almodovar, & Michelle Zaydlin

Med Students for the Elderly, Cristina Diaz

Obstetrics and Gynecology Interest Group, Paola Colón

Oncology Interest Group, Keishla Garcia

Ophthalmology Interest Group, Emile R. Vieta Ferrer

Orthopedic Surgery Interest Group, Christina Amador

Paws Impacting Lives in the Medical Community, Rosa Frias

Pediatrics Interest Group, Keishla Gonzalez

Por Una Sonrisa Community Health Clinics, Carolina E. Guerrero Díaz & Dalilah Reyes

Psychiatry Interest Group, Gerardo Collazo

Radiology Interest Group, Jamie Rosado

SHINE Student Health in New Experiences, Vicente J. Covas

SJB Meditative Movement Club, Kavina Jani & Casey Gilman

SJB Student Council, Dalilah Reyes

Student Interest Group in Neurology, Fabiola Rodríguez García

Surgery Interest Group, Yensea Costas

Wilderness Medical Society, Zachary Vega

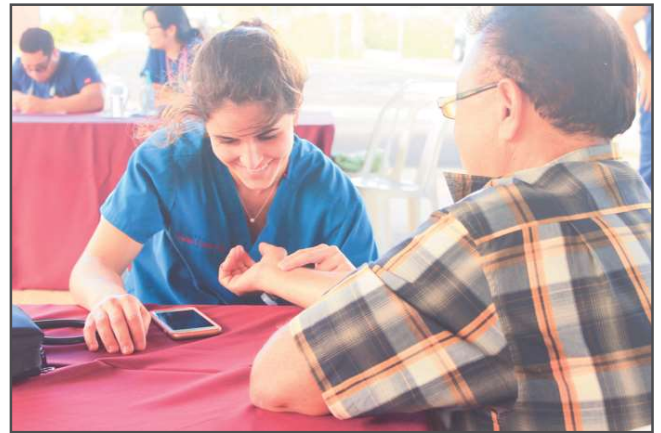
"POR UNA SONRISA" COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICS

By [Alexandra M. Canabal-Montalvo, MS4](#)

Educating and directly impacting underprivileged communities in Puerto Rico is one of the main goals of "Por Una Sonrisa", an association founded by Carolina E. Guerrero Díaz, MS3, who said, "It was the perfect opportunity to start helping communities in need around our beautiful island, and engage future physicians in activities that would enhance their commitment and empathy toward humanity."

As a collaborative effort with physicians and pharmacists working as a team to bring free health care clinics to areas most in need after Hurricane Maria, the first clinics were created in Yabucoa and have extended throughout different communities in Caguas. They have also worked with the public health association in activities held during the public health week, and have future plans with other associations.

SJB students and members of the association were able to apply their medical knowledge learned from books and courses and practice their physician-patient relationships



Carolina E. Guerrero Diaz, MS3, assesses peripheral pulses of a patient during clinics.

through the assessment of a full medical history and physical examination. In addition, they were able to help patients obtain needed medications at a free cost. Via the creation of a funding page in January, students have been able to continue raising the necessary funds to buy supplies and medications, which have positively impacted the lives of all patients who visit the clinics.

EMERGENCY MEDICINE MEETING

By Elsa C. Rodriguez, MS4

Medical students from all four Puerto Rican medical schools came together on March 17, 2018 to showcase their interest for Emergency Medicine. This event provided a meeting place for students, faculty, residents, and attendings to share their interests, network, and educate themselves on future opportunities.

"In my opinion, a great way to improve the emergency medical system of Puerto Rico is by uniting students and physicians from the entire island to discuss common goals and come up with a plan of action, and I think that was achieved during this event," said Fernando Rivera Alvarez, MS4 and



Medical students, residents, and physicians from all over Puerto Rico were in attendance at the Emergency Medicine Meeting.

former president of SJB's Emergency Medicine Interest Group.

Events like these are a great way to become informed about different specialties, residency opportunities, and innovative techniques being used in medicine. Stay tuned for upcoming events by SJB's Emergency Medicine Interest Group!

NEWEST STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Internal Medicine-Pediatrics (Med-Peds) Student Association

For more information, contact Yadier Brito Cuas, MS3, at yadierbc@sanjuanbautista.edu

Cardiology Interest Group

For more information, contact Pedro Colón Ortiz, MS4, at pedroco@sanjuanbautista.edu

SJBSM FACULTY AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to San Juan Bautista School of Medicine's most recent faculty award winners!

Martha Eugenia Garcia Osorio, MD, MSc

Travel Grant for the Sex and Gender Health Education Summit in Salt Lake City, Utah

Carmen Hernandez, MD

Participation in the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine Training and Using Standardized Patients for Teaching and Assessment course center directors.

Shirley Valentin-Berrios, Ph.D.

Travel Grant to participate in the 2018 NBME Invitational Conference for Educators (NICE) Written Assessment Track Participant

Raul Ferrer, MD

Travel Grant to participate in the 2018 NBME Invitational Conference for Educators (NICE) Written Assessment Track Participant

LMSA 13TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

By Danilea M. Carmona Matos, MS3

SJB shone at the Latino Medical Student Association National and Southeast Regional Conference held in Miami, FL on April 13-15, 2018.

Two of our students, Danilea Carmona, MS3, and Laura Franqui, MS4, won a scholarship to attend the LMSA National Conference.

Our students were recognized for their great partnership with the Puerto Rico Emergency Task Force and their dedication to working with the community and undergraduate students in successful activities even



Emile Vieta Ferrer, MS3, (middle) accepts the first place award for his poster presentation.

after a major emergency situation. Our classmate Emile Vieta Ferrer, MS3, won First Place at the Poster Presentations! Congratulations, Emile!

PEDIATRICS INTEREST GROUP PANEL

By [Elsa C. Rodriguez, MS4](#)

On the evening of March 23rd, 2018, the Pediatrics Interest Group, led by Dalilah Reyes, MS3, hosted a conference that united the four Puerto Rican medical schools. This conference was intended to stimulate interest about the field of pediatrics. The presidents of the Pediatrics Interest Groups of all four medical schools were in attendance, as well as four current pediatrics residents and physician faculty members.

Guest speaker Dr. Yasmin Pedrogo, President of Association of American Pediatrics (AAP) PR chapter, spoke about the mission of AAP and the benefits of becoming a member. She also discussed her focus on promoting events for disaster preparation and post-resilience conferences. After this segment, there was a panel of four pediatric residents who answered questions regarding their experiences in 4th year and residency, recommendations for interviews, and their experiences throughout the process. A Q&A session was later open for students who had specific questions.



Laura Rivera Davila, MS4, speaks at the Pediatrics Interest Group Panel.

"We are extremely proud of this event's outcome," said Laura Rivera Davila, Public Relations officer for SJB's Pediatric Interest Group. "Looking out into the crowd, I was excited to see students from all medical classes engaged and taking notes as the guests spoke. I am glad we were able to pull off such an important event and I am very thankful to all those who donated their time to be there."

HELPING OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN MOROVIS

By [Cristina M. Font, MS3](#)

The Oncology Interest Group, in conjunction with members of the Radiology Interest Group, Family Medicine Interest Group, Psychiatry Interest Group, Intermetro Medlife, and other independent volunteers, traveled to Morovis, Puerto Rico on November 5, 2017, to deliver donated goods shortly after Hurricane Maria devastated the island. Morovis was a community that was severely affected by the storm. The students collected items at school that were donated by the SJBSM Community. In addition, they received items that were donated by MAPFRE and Hospital Pediátrico de Centro Medico.

The event was led by Keishla M. Garcia, MS4 and President of the Oncology Interest Group. Over 35 families were given donations, including people who were bedridden and many children who lived in the community. Trays of food and cold



SJB students are always grateful to serve their communities!

beverages were also distributed so that the families could enjoy a hot lunch and cooling refreshments. In addition to distributing the donations, the students were able to share with the families and provide comfort in such a difficult time.

SJB IN THE COMMUNITY

Students at San Juan Bautista School of Medicine are very active in the community. Here are some of the events at which students participated this year. Thank you for all of your hard work in community service!



On September 15th, members of the Christian Student Association organized a clinic called "Punto de Esperanza", which brought medical services to people in need at the Iglesia Alianza Cristiana y Misionera de Santurce.



On October 13th, members of the student organization Paws Impacting Lives in the Medical Community volunteered with therapy dogs at Puerto Rico Children's Hospital in Bayamon, PR.



SJB students lent a hand at the Clínica Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal M.I. of Turabo Gardens in Caguas, PR on October 20th.



On September 22nd, students at SJB volunteered their time and services at the health clinic for the deaf population of Puerto Rico.



From November 18-21, a group of SJB students spent a week making house medical visits in the Puerto Rican communities of Yabucoa, Juncos, and Isla Nena.



Jose Alvarado, MS3, and Koby Bonilla, MS3 participated in the 5K against AIDS on December 1st.

UPCOMING MISSION TRIP OPPORTUNITY TO HONDURAS

By Moisés Cintrón II Agosto, MS3

A total of eight medical students from San Juan Bautista School of Medicine embarked on a medical mission trip to Honduras with a group from the University of Toledo from February 24th to March 2nd, 2018. Their relationship with the University of Toledo started after the participation of the students in a series of free health clinics in Puerto Rico for areas severely impacted by Hurricane María.

Dr. Richard Paat from the University of Toledo and Associate Faculty at San Juan Bautista School of Medicine has organized this annual trip to Honduras for 20 years and has an extensive team of about 80 health professionals and students. He has invited the students of SJBSM once again to his next mission trip to Honduras from February 23rd to March 3rd, 2019.

During the last trip, the students visited the rural mountain town of La Esperanza to provide different health services for communities that normally do not have access to hospitals or clinics. Their tasks included serving as medical interpreters for the Spanish-speaking population of this region, organizing the clinics, and actively participating in the care of the patients.



Koby Bonilla, MS3, treats a patient under the supervision of Dr. Richard Paat from the University of Toledo.

"In addition to serving as interpreters, we also served actively with patients, in triage taking vitals, in the clinic taking care of patients, performing pelvic exams, doing ultrasounds, helping with tooth extractions, and we also gave workshops to the community leaders," said Dalilah Reyes, MS3.

Their participation was not limited to medical care, since it also included health education through different workshops



SJB medical students arrive at one of the communities in Honduras.

for the community. "We were a very valuable resource for the people and the staff from the University of Toledo," said José Alvarado, MS3. "We gave talks about different medical topics such as the parasites that were in the area, worms, CPR, how to build latrines, how to wash the food, how to prevent illness, and all of this we taught to community leaders who would later teach the members of their community."

"In addition to seeing the great necessity, it impacted me to see so many children, because as opposed to Puerto Rico, there are more children than adults," said Dalilah. "Also, we did not see any chronic diseases in patients; basically, it was all infectious because they walk all the time, their diet is very different, and they don't utilize medication practically."

Not only did the students participate in many clinics after Hurricane María and go on this medical mission trip, but they have continued their work of community medicine by founding the student organization, "Por Una Sonrisa". José Alvarado, MS3, said "The University of Toledo left us supplies, and those of us that had participated in the clinics created 'Por Una Sonrisa'. With the supplies that the University of Toledo left us and money from fundraising activities and donations, we have been able to bring clinics similar to the ones done by the University of Toledo to Caguas, Yabucoa, and Vieques."

For more information on how you can participate in next year's mission trip to Honduras, contact Dalilah Reyes at dalilahrdj@sanjuanbautista.edu.

FEATURED SJBSM FACULTY MEMBERS

Dr. Yaritza Inostroza-Nieves received a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from the University of Puerto Rico, Humacao in 2007 and a PhD in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of Puerto Rico Medical Science Campus in 2013. In August 2012, Dr. Inostroza-Nieves joined San Juan Bautista School of Medicine (SJBSM) as Assistant Professor and Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Pharmacology. In 2016, she completed a post doc at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard School of Medicine as a Research Fellow in Medicine. She currently serves as Dean of Biomedical Sciences and Research at SJBSM and is in a research track tenured position. Dr. Inostroza-Nieves has been the principal investigator of the Abbvie Research Scholarship Program at SJBSM since 2017. She worked in the field of molecular immunology looking at the biochemical processes and signaling mechanisms in the immune system and has more recently become interested in the deleterious effects of inflammation in cardiovascular diseases (CVD) and potential therapeutics for these diseases. Her mentor, Dr. José R. Romero, is an expert on endothelin-1 function in signal transduction pathways involved in the development of CVD using *in vitro*, *ex vivo*, and *in vivo* models. Using the training provided by her mentoring team, Dr. Inostroza-Nieves will continue to gain expertise in inflammatory pathways involved in the development of CVD to identify new targets for the prevention and management of disease.



Yaritza Inostroza-Nieves, PhD

Research Interests:

Cardiovascular disease, inflammation pathway.

Mentors and Institutions:

José R. Romero, PhD
Brigham and Women's Hospital
Harvard Medical School

Alicia Rivera, PhD
Boston Children's Hospital
Harvard Medical School

Johnny D. Figueroa, PhD
Loma Linda University School of Medicine



Maricarmen Colón-Díaz, PhD

Research Interests:

Epigenetics, Endometrium, Infertility,
Endocrine Disruption.

Mentors and Institutions:

Idhaliz Flores, PhD
Ponce Health Sciences University

Zelieann Craig, PhD
University of Arizona

Dr. Maricarmen Colón-Díaz studied the role of epigenetic modifications including histone acetylation/deacetylation in the development of endometriosis during her PhD training. Her work, which resulted in three peer-reviewed publications, was one of the first to demonstrate that endometriosis has not only a genetic basis but also an epigenetic component. In 2012, she started at San Juan Bautista School of Medicine as an Assistant Professor in the Physiology Department, and she is currently the Chair of the Physiology/Pathology Department in a research track tenured position. She also worked on two collaborative projects with Caribbean Central University, focused on the detection of ER Stress markers using a proteomic approach in human prostatic cancer and microglial cells, and on the molecular mechanism of apoptosis.

At present, she has a laboratory at SJBSM and is working on collaborative research with Ponce Health Sciences University and the University of Arizona on the link between environmental factors and epigenetic reprogramming in endometriosis. Her long-term professional goal is to build an active research group with a focus on women's reproductive health, specifically on how epigenetic mechanisms, by interactions between genes and external factors, shape women's predisposition to suffer from diseases that impair their reproductive capacity.

FEATURED SJBSM FACULTY MEMBERS

Dr. Linda Laras obtained a bachelor's degree from the University of Puerto Rico (UPR)-Mayaguez and medical degree from the Valencia School of Medicine in Spain. She completed a Master's in Public Health, focusing on Maternal Child Health, and a Postdoctoral Master's in Clinical Research at the UPR Medical Sciences Campus. She also completed a fellowship in Pediatric Adolescent Gynecology at Boston Children's Hospital. Dr. Laras is a recognized expert in Sexual Violence as a health problem. She has been recognized by national organizations and the Puerto Rico legislature for her work. She has published many peer reviewed articles, and she has given multiple conferences. She joined San Juan Bautista School of Medicine (SJBSM) in 2016 as an Assistant Professor in a tenured track position and is Director of the SJBSM Puerto Rico Health Justice Center (PRHJC). The PRHJC is structured for translational research, development of new interventions, and improvement of outcomes.

Dr. Laras's work includes direct patient education and research services. She has a team composed of nurses, psychologists, social workers, community outreach, media communicators, criminal justice coordinators, and epidemiologists. She has a coordinated network of 8 Hospitals called SAFE Hospitals that provide services to victims of sexual violence. She recently obtained \$600,000 to develop a 24/7 Help Line, which will begin this coming winter.



Linda Laras, MD, MPH, MS, FACOG

Research Interests:

Labial adhesions, sexual violence, repeat adolescent pregnancies.

Mentors and Institutions:

Timothy De Ver Dye, PhD
School of Medicine and Dentistry
University of Rochester Medical Center

Barbara L. Bonner, PhD
Director, Center on Child Abuse and Neglect
University of Oklahoma



Yamixa Delgado-Reyes, PhD

Research Interests:
Nanoparticles, Cancer.

Mentors and Institutions:
Kai Griebenow, PhD
UPR-Río Piedras Campus

Gabriel Barletta, PhD
UPR-Humacao Campus

Mallesh Pandrala, PhD
Stanford University

Dr. Yamixa Delgado-Reyes obtained a bachelor's degree in industrial chemistry from the University of Puerto Rico (UPR)-Humacao in 2007 and a PhD in biochemistry & biotechnology from the UPR-Río Piedras in 2015. She was an adjunct professor at the UPR system for two years. In 2017, she joined San Juan Bautista School of Medicine as an Assistant Professor and Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Pharmacology. Dr. Delgado is in a research track tenured position and has vast research experience working in projects focused on the following: molecular modeling and electron paramagnetic resonance simulations in protein dynamics; development of nanoparticles design, glycosylation of proteins, lipid-protein formulations, and drug delivery systems for cancer therapy; and understanding the therapeutic potential of novel metal-based anticancer compounds.

She earned several prestigious fellowships, from the NASA Space Grant Consortium, National Institute of Health, and National Science Foundation. In addition, these projects were published in different peer-reviewed journals and presented at local, national, and international scientific conferences. Her research laboratory at the SJB-Core Lab facility is focused on drug design, development, and delivery using nano-formulations for cancer therapy. She is also actively involved in collaborative research with various investigators in Puerto Rico and the United States to contribute to the advancement of cancer research and reducing health disparities.

FEATURED ALUMNUS

By Andrew Blundell, MS3

Dr. José Marrero, a graduate of San Juan Bautista School of Medicine, has distinguished himself as a community leader and has consistently shown his commitment to community service through his many community outreach programs. As founder and director of the program "Angels of the Night", Dr. Marrero has helped countless people in need throughout the northeast region of Puerto Rico. His initiative has been recognized many times in the local press, and he is considered by many a true life local hero.

Dr. Marrero exemplifies the core principals instilled at SJBSM, and he embodies the SJBSM mission of compassionate care for our communities. We congratulate Dr. Marrero and wish him continued success in all that he does. May you continue to lead and inspire us by your example.



Dr. José Marrero receives a prize recognizing his outstanding community service work.

SAN JUAN BAUTISTA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE RESEARCH CENTER

The San Juan Bautista School of Medicine, as a local minority-serving institution, has a mission to improve the health of the community by focusing on underserved populations and developing a productive research culture that aims to advance clinical and translational scientific discoveries and innovations.

To this end, SJBSM has recently created a Research Center (SJBSM-RC) to strengthen and expand the institution's commitment and efforts to enhance faculty scholarly productivity such as publications, grants, collaborations, and partnerships.

Its organizational structure currently includes two Advisory Committees (Institutional and External), the Office for Sponsored Research, the Research Core Laboratories, the Clinical Trials Unit, the Students' Research Program, and the Research Division of the Puerto Rico Health Justice Center.

SJBSM-RC activities for research career development will be available to the participating early-stage investigators.

Dr. Estela Estapé, a well-known leader in research mentoring and coaching, will serve as Director of the SJBSM-RC.

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