

SJBSM JOURNAL



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NEW STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

The following is a list of Student Organizations/Associations that were started in the past year, along with name of the contact person and their email handle.

SJBMS Precision Medicine Interest Group (SJBPMG)

Nelson O. Reyes (*nelsonrp*)

Mind Over Matter Association

Gabriela Rosario (*gabrielarr*)
Andrea Rosa (*andrearv*)

Movilización Comunitaria SJB

Luis E. Román (*luisrs*)

Medical Imaging Interest Group

Melyorise Sepúlveda (*melyorises*)

Health Ecology Club

Clarissa Correa (*clarissacr*)
Andrea Rosa (*andrearv*)

Proyecto Arbona: Health Policy Interest Group

Sebastián A. Matos (*sebastianm*)

MATCH 2021

By Melyorise Sepúlveda Chervony, MS3

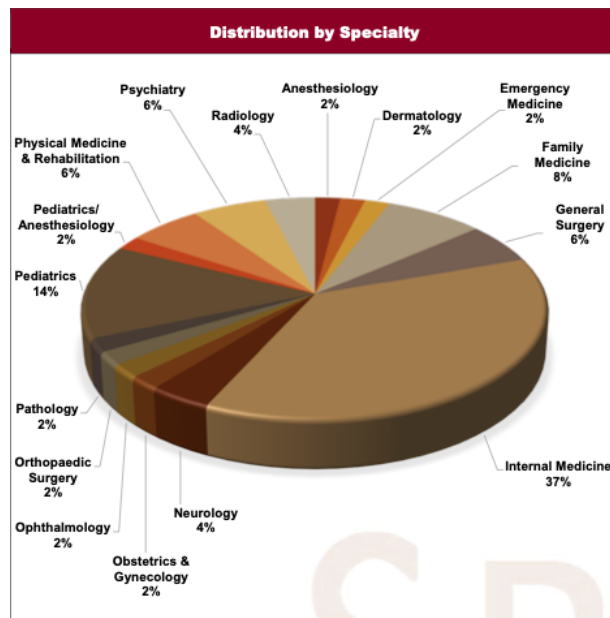
Each year medical students go through the grueling process of the MATCH, which places them in residency programs that will ultimately train them in their specialty of choice. It is an intense but necessary part of each student's journey and we all look forward with excitement to MATCH day.

Ms. Yaidy Cruz, who every year guides students through the MATCH

process, reports that this year 90% of SJB applicants matched in their chosen specialty, distribution below.

Additionally, the geographical distribution this year places 57% of the students across the United States mainland and 43% in local programs in the Island.

Congratulations to all the students who matched!



MATCH data provided by Ms. Yaidy Cruz

KEY DATES

June: LBGTQ Pride Month

June 28 - July 2: CPX Class 2022

Third year mandatory orientation will be in August on a date between 2 - 13, to be announced later.

MS3 Perspective on Rotations During COVID-19

By Andrea P. Pereira MS3

As a medical student, you spend the first two years of medical school preparing, planning, and longing for the day you finally put into practice everything you have learned. Third-year medical students are usually purposed to gain the necessary professional expertise as they look forward to exercising their profession through solving different health-related challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a massive setback to medical practitioners worldwide. Even medical students experienced significant challenges in their academic exercises. While doctors, residents, nurses, and other health care workers battling at the front lines had a definite purpose of helping fight the pandemic, medical students, on the other hand, faced another problem. Our medical rotations were put on hold, and suddenly, medical students became more of a liability than help in the field. Furthermore, once rotations were green-lighted, concerns about fulfilling the academic requirements arose. The shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), the inability to allow students to scrub into surgical cases, and the forced limitations placed on patient interaction would affect our medical education. Thus, living this “new clerkship experience” was intimidating and stressful, for all of us mainly because of the uncertainty we were facing.

At first, it felt as if medical students had been left in the dark; no in-person lectures, no group studying, and limited patient encounters deemed as if our medical education was being compromised. It was hard having to sit back and not be helpful during a global medical emergency, but staying grounded and not letting the pandemic consume us was exactly what we needed to do. During my first rotation, in internal medicine, I had the opportunity to interview patients filled with anxiety and fear of the COVID-19 virus. As a medical student, I was able to provide relief to many of these patients by giving them reliable information about the virus and transmitting hope and reassurance that practicing social distancing and following the guidelines placed by the CDC would help flatten the curve sooner. Likewise, a few months later, during my family medicine rotation, I had patients experiencing similar feelings but this time about the COVID-19 vaccine. I felt it was my duty to offer them reliable resources and information so they could make an educated decision. about whether to get it or not. The counseling I provided in both situations was ironically derived from the same perspective I gained as I went through my third-year medical school rotations. I had to keep in mind that we may not be the ones providing direct care for COVID-19 patients, we all had important roles to play. Besides, our time will come soon enough. In the meantime, the best thing I could do was maintain a positive mindset and acknowledge that this was

temporary, and we just had to get through it the best way possible.

Today, I can say that I am satisfied with my medical education this year. Even though the pandemic affected us in many ways, I feel gratified that I contributed to providing health care to patients in a time of need. Thankfully, our clerkships became more flexible with time, and we were allowed to perform procedures and interact more with patients. I want to thank all of the attendings and clerkship directors for providing us with other ways to gain our medical knowledge this year. Last but not least, I'd also like to thank and congratulate my classmates from the SJB MD Class of 2022 for the social and emotional support I received from them during this year. May we never forget how hard times can make us stronger together and more passionate about our careers.



Melyorise Sepúlveda with baby Matilde (MS3) and Andrea Pereira (MS3) during their surgery rotation at Ashford Medical Center.



MS3 students during their internal medicine rotation with Dr. Cartagena. From left to right: Natalie Fernandez, Edison Martinez, Adriana Candelaria, Xiomara O' Farrill, Andrea Pereira, Idarmis Torres, and Alan Marquez.

GOLD HUMANISM HONOR SOCIETY

By Carolina Huertas Ayala, MS3

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation initiated The Gold Humanism Honor Society in 2002 with the goal of identifying and recognizing individuals who serve as role models and advocate for high quality and humanistic medical care. Our school became part of the 160 chapters nationwide in 2015. On May 14th, SJB inducted a group of eight incredible third year medical students (MD Class 2022) who were chosen by their peers because of their performance during clinical rotations and community service activities. Dr. Jorge S. Meléndez García the medical director of Centro Médico Diagnóstico Muñoz Rivera was the main speaker of the activity. He was chosen by the students to be inducted into the society because of the genuine humanistic care he provides to his patients.



From left to right: Gabriela Guadalupe, Carolina Huertas, Edison Martínez, Casey Gilman, María Carvajal, Adriana Candelaria, Marjorie Suarez, and Natalie Fernandez.

STUDENT AWARD WINNERS

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



Edison Y. Martínez , MS3

Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

Edison will be traveling this summer to various locations in the USA, all expenses paid, to learn more information and treatment strategies for people struggling with addiction.

University of Connecticut

He also received a scholarship to complete his surgical rotation as a visiting student.



Alexandra Rincones, MS3

Veteran Affairs Caribbean Health System

Alexandra received the IRP Exceptional Achievement Award given to a research assistant that has made the institution proud with their accomplishments.

American Academy of Neurology

Alexandra also received a scholarship to attend 2021's AAN Virtual Annual Meeting.



Juan A. Silva Aponte, MS2

Intellectus Foundation Grant

The school recommended Juan to be awarded this grant due to his exceptional academic performance and commitment to the community.



Rosa Lizeth Frías, MS3

Medical Student Rotation for Underrepresented Populations grant from the Conquer Cancer Foundation

Rosa will be doing a 4th-year elective rotation in Clinical Oncology at the Dana-Farber Harvard Cancer Center in Boston, MA



Francisco J. Rodríguez

Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Francisco received the 2021 Looking to the Future Medical Students Scholarship. This is a scholarship given to students interested in pursuing cardiothoracic surgery and provides the opportunity to obtain mentorship and attend the STS Annual Meeting.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

These students published or gave presentations at virtual conferences representing our school and showing off their hard work. Congratulations!



Natalie Fernández , MS3

Poster presentation: *Case Report: The Impact of Obesity Status on COVID-19 Hospital Admission in Two Puerto Rican Children*

41st Annual Research & Education Forum Virtual Modality RCM UPR

May 17 - 28, 2021



Francisco J. Rodríguez , MS2

Poster presentation: Hypoxia and Endothelin-1 in Microglial Cell Activation

International Stroke Conference 2021 December 14, 2020



Giannina C. Hernández, MS2

Poster presentation: Higher Prevalence of Concomitant Hyperparathyroidism in African Americans Undergoing Thyroidectomy

16th Annual Academic Surgical Congress February 3, 2021



Rosa L. Frías, MS3

Poster presentation: The Correlation of English Language Proficiency and Indices of Stress and Anxiety in Migrants from Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria: A Preliminary Study

New England Science Symposium (virtual) April 24, 2021



Natalie Weiner, MS2

Poster presentation: *The Challenges of Providing Family Centered Care During the Time of COVID-19*

Semana de la Investigación Clínica y Traslacional de PR 2021



Richard D. House, MS2

Poster presentation: *Anomalous Choroidal Pulsations in an Infant with Trisomy 18*

5th Interdisciplinary Research Virtual Symposium with the Latino Medical Students Association February 25, 2021



Clarissa Correa , MS2

Poster presentation: *Development of macromolecule-based drug delivery system nanoparticles for lung cancer therapy*

Cell Bio Virtual 2020 Online ASCB EMBO Meeting ENA 2020 EORTC NCL AACR 32nd symposium December 14, 2020

5th Interdisciplinary Research Virtual Symposium with the Latino Medical Students Association February 25, 2021

10th Scientific Day and 10th Title V Symposium May 5, 2021

Wandaliz Milan Alvarez, MS2

Poster presentation: *Development of Macromolecule-Based Drug Delivery System Nanoparticles for Lung Cancer Therapy*

ASPET Annual Meeting at EB 2021 (virtual)

SJBSM PUERTO RICO HEALTH JUSTICE CENTER UPDATE

by Dr. Linda Laras

The Puerto Rico Health Justice Center (PRHJC) is a comprehensive clinical forensic service for participants who have experienced sexual violence. It provides psychosocial screening, forensic interviews and evaluations, psychiatric and psychological assessments, forensic medical exams, therapy, court preparation, interdisciplinary-interagency case discussions, and expert testimony. Added to these services, the PRHJC has other projects such as a 24/7 Helpline and Court Watch.

During 2020 PRHJC obtained a total of more than \$2,000,000 in service grants. Since its onset, December 2015, the Center has serviced 538 victims of sexual violence, from disclosure to the case's closure. The different services provided by a multidisciplinary team of more than 20 expert professionals provide unique clinical experience and a database with multiple possibilities for research. This year PRHJC will have three vehicles for clinical services with the capacity for videotaped forensic interviews, virtual therapy, and forensic

colposcopy medical exams, one with a wheelchair and shower capacity.

Research is a priority in the PRHJC. The Research Division provides orientation and support for research regarding violence as a health issue. Presently there are six research projects in development as a result of the active participation of Dr. Linda Laras and Dr. Linda Pérez in the mentoring of medical students MS 2023 during their summer research internship: Profile of male child sexual abuse victims by Edgardo Torres; Sleep disturbances among victims of sexual violence by Andrea Rosa; Pediatric knowledge regarding child sexual abuse by Luisandrea Morales; Health-related behaviors among people in PR during COVID19 by Shania Aponte; Cooking as therapy for stress relief among professionals caring for sexual violence victims by Gabrielle Rivera, Raphael Rivera, Eileen Calo. Dr. Linda Pérez is also developing a new research project entitled "Cardiovascular risk factors in victims of child sexual abuse in Puerto Rico."

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE 2020 SUMMER SJBSM RESEARCH

by Prof. Estela Estapé

Since the inception of the required summer research experience, the SJBSM medical students could apply and compete for a position at SJBSM or other prestigious research summer programs across Puerto Rico, the USA, and other countries. This 'hands-on' summer research experience allows students to develop, conduct, and manage a research study providing students the opportunity to acquire biomedical, clinical, epidemiologic, and translational research skills.

By late March 2020, MD 2023 students began to receive cancellation letters due to COVID 19 until all in-person research rotations locally and in the USA were canceled by the end of April. SJBSM's curriculum committee decided not to cancel the 2020 Summer Research Internship and revise the activities consonant to a **virtual research experience**. The internship research objectives and competencies remained without any alteration. Once all students had mentors, the 2020 Summer Research Internship officially started in June 2020. The **radical changes** observed were going from almost 60% of the SJBSM medical students doing their summer research internship in an institution outside of Puerto Rico during 2014-2019 to only 9 % (n=5) in 2020 and from

presential laboratory to virtual experiences.

Each mentor chose the research topic (s) and the Internship's starting date to comply with the minimum requirement of 100 hours in no less than four (4) weeks and no more than eight (8) weeks. Nevertheless, the students have the choice to continue working with each respective mentor during the academic year to accomplish their goals. The Internship's requirement also remained the same: an oral presentation about their research project. The mentor/mentee research activity emphasis continued to be the same as previous years: producing a scholarly outcome by the end of the academic year, such as an abstract for an oral or poster presentation, develop a publication, or a research proposal.

This experience was the first time that all research activities for the summer internship were virtual. The medical students worked at a distance with their mentors in scientific writing and creativity. The expected outcomes include developing research proposals, case studies, reviews, communications, workshops, and even a book chapter. It will be remarkably interesting to compare this virtual research experience's outcomes with the previous years' scholarly outcomes.

STUDENT ASSOCIATION FAIR 2020 - VIRTUAL

By Carolina Huertas Ayala, MS3

In the beginning of each academic year we celebrate the Student Association Fair, an opportunity for first year students to familiarize with different groups that provide knowledge and skills according to their area of interest. This year was no exception; due to the challenges of COVID-19, the Deanship of Students Affairs and Information Technology Department took it upon themselves to provide us with a new experience, the first ever Virtual Student Association Fair.

On September 24th, 2020 a total of 19 Interest Groups used visual presentations through the Zoom platform to explain their mission, previous work accomplished, and future activities. A few of the groups that participated include: Latino Medical School Association, Lifestyle Medicine Group, Family Medicine Interest Group, and Dermatology Interest Group Association.

Mrs. Ilsa Centeno, counselor and organizer, said "Every group did an excellent presentation! The activity was a success with great participation from first year students of

every program: MD, MPH, and BSN. They were very enthusiastic!"

SJB is recognized by its active involvement with the community and year-round activities. This is possible due to the commitment of the different student associations to engage and grow with the people in the community.



Med-Peds Interest Group Vice-President Joanie Figueroa talks to the SJB Community in the first ever Student Association Fair held virtually.

ΑΩΑ HONOR SOCIETY

The following students were inducted into the ΑΩΑ Honor Medical Society this year.

From the class of 2021:

Xiomara Molina, Marina Stukova, Jorge Santiago, Sara Kurtevski, Abner Alemán, Andy Vega, Sofia Martir, Jose Irizarry, Charles Castro, and Benjamin Gonzalez.

From the class of 2022:

Edison Martinez, Maria Carvajal, Luis Roman, Marjorie Suárez, Evián Pérez, Natasha Mederos, and Gabriel Vélez

COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINIC

By Melyorise Sepúlveda Chervony

From the moment a vaccine against COVID-19 became available to certain populations, the school has committed to offer the community ample opportunities for vaccination by offering vaccination clinics throughout the past months.

Volunteer students from the nursing and medicine programs have facilitated the administration of the vaccine at each of these clinics under the guidance of Prof. Grisel Burgos.

Prof. Ángel L. Martínez, from the BSN program, offered training to students.



Third year medical student Gabriela Guadalupe administers vaccine to a member of the community in January 2021

ENDOTHELIN-1 STIMULATES MICROGLIA CELLS: ROLE IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

This research project's main findings suggest a novel ET-1 pathway for activation of microglia cell inflammatory responses that may provide essential information critical for our understanding of multiple sclerosis (MS) pathophysiology. Several students worked actively in this research project under the mentorship of Dr. Yaritza Inostroza, pictured here.

The project was presented by Claudia Arenas, MS3 at the ACTRIMS Forum 2020, in West Palm Beach, Florida, on February 27-29, 2020. ACTRIMS Scientific Program Committee awarded her an Educational Travel Grant. Claudia also presented this project in the Experimental Biology Virtual Meeting on April 2020 hosted by the American Physiological Society (APS).



From left to right : Diego Capo, MS1; Natalia Asenjo, MS1 UPR MSC; Yaritza Inostroza-Nieves, PhD; Yalimar P. Rivera, high school student; Claudia P. Arenas, MS3; Jean P. Moliere, MS3

THE 4TH INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The 4th Interdisciplinary Research Symposium, organized by the San Juan Bautista School of Medicine and the Latino Student Medical Association, was an exciting opportunity to integrate multiple academic levels, disciplines, and institutions. The Symposium was celebrated at the SJBSM facilities at Caguas, on Thursday, February 20, 2020, with more than 150 attendees. In summary, this 4th Interdisciplinary Research Symposium achieved its goal: "to join different disciplines and medicine to work together towards achieving better health and equity through team research."

The Symposium had two poster sessions with a total of **60 scientific presentations** in the categories of clinical, basic, and behavioral sciences. The discussions during the posters were enthusiastic and provided multiple opportunities for networking and collaboration. SJBSM had 20 poster presentations and 40 posters distributed among nine local academic institutions. After the poster sessions, we were delighted to welcome Dr. Marcia Cruz -Correa, who delivered a motivating Plenary Conference entitled: "Precision Medicine and Hereditary Cancer: Novel Pathways in Clinical & Translational Research".

All posters were carefully evaluated by faculty using evaluation criteria that would allow the difficult task of selecting **first and second positions in the three poster categories**. The recognitions were given to the presenters at the closing of the event as follows:

Basic Sciences:

1. Bianca Serrano-Torres, CCR10 contributes to alcohol-induced liver injury; Universidad Ana G. Méndez
2. Lorraine N. Vélez Torres, Hurricane Maria Leaves High Levels of Indoor Mold Spores and Aspergillus Species in Moisture Damaged Homes in San Juan, Puerto Rico; University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus

Behavioral Sciences:

1. Linda R. Pérez Laras, Identifying Disclosure and Age as Risk Factors in Cases of Child Sexual Abuse in Puerto Rico 2016 – 2019; PR Health Justice Center, San Juan Bautista Medical School
2. Yimari Vargas Ramos, Ethnic and Racial Disparities in Gastric Cancer: A 15-year Population-based Analysis; University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus

Clinical Research:

1. Bryan Colón Morales, Pancreaticoduodenectomy For Pancreatic Adenocarcinoma Surgical Outcomes And 30-Day Mortality Predictive Factors: Single-Center Study; San Juan Bautista School of Medicine and the UPR-Medical Sciences Campus
2. Evián Pérez Rivera, Longitudinal white matter microstructural decline is faster in preclinical MCI/AD

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CURITAS PA'L BARRIO IS BACK

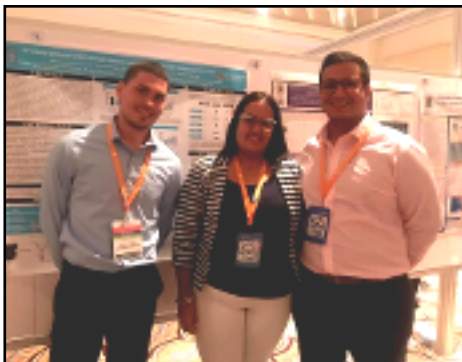
By Carolina Huertas, MS3

After a four year break, the group composed of volunteers known as “ronderos” is providing services to the homeless population found in Caguas, Puerto Rico. Trained by Iniciativa Comunitaria (IC) and their thoroughly experienced leaders, many SJB students and community members are now leaders of Curitas Pa'l Barrio. The group is committed to learn and promote the humane care that distinguishes IC and SJB within our community. During a “ronda”, the volunteers bring food, hygiene items, clothes, risk reduction measures for drug users, and most importantly a “conversation” for the participants. The latter is a safe space for them to feel heard and respected, usually ending in a hug (sadly, no longer happens due to COVID). The group is very excited to continue working and welcomes volunteers that genuinely want to build-up our community.



Ronderas (left to right): Ivelisse Figueroa, Marjorie Suárez, Andrea Rosado, Giulianna Betancourt, and Joanie Figueroa

MEDICAL STUDENTS WORKING ON INFERTILITY RESEARCH



Dr. Colón with students Saúl Santiago and Antonio Rodríguez

Several medical students have excelled in their basic sciences research work under the mentorship of Dr. Maricarmen Colón-Díaz. Of note, student Juliara Ortiz submitted a peer-review manuscript which was published online in February 2020. Students Saul Santiago and Antonio Rodríguez (see photo) won 3rd prize at the Puerto Rico Clinical Research Summit: Connecting the World in San Juan, PR. Lastly, Dr. Colón-Díaz received an invitation from Elsevier's editor of the book “*Medical Epigenetics, Second Edition*”, to be 1st author of a chapter in the subject area of “**Reproductive disease Epigenetics.**” Along with students Alexander Jaramillo, Edwin Soto, and Perla Elosegui as co-authors, the chapter was submitted this past November 2020 to Elsevier.

SJBSM
JOURNAL

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Special thanks to Andrew Blundell for trusting and preparing me (Melyorise) to take on the task of Editor.

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