



TITLE V

MSC - UPR

CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH (CTR) WITH AN INTERDISCIPLINARY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY FROM UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PUERTO RICO

NEWS



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Initial Activity of February 3, 2021

An Interdisciplinary team of Faculty members from the Medical Sciences Campus of the University of Puerto Rico (MSC, UPR), led by Dr. Rubén García García and Dr. Margarita Irizarry Ramírez, achieved the approval of the Title V Proposal entitled: Clinical and Translational Research (CTR) with an Interdisciplinary and Entrepreneurial Approach for Students and Faculty from Undergraduate Programs in Puerto Rico. This effort sponsored by the Federal Department of Education, was awarded a total budget of \$ 3 million over a period of five years - October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2025 (Grant number: P031S200104). The overarching goal of the project is to provide development opportunities in clinical and translational research with an interdisciplinary approach and entrepreneurship to students and faculty from science and health science programs in Puerto Rico at different stages of development in their field. From its framework of action, this proposal will contribute to provide platforms to promote and encourage the development of clinical and translational researchers in Puerto Rico.

Wednesday, February 3, 2021 marked the launch of the Project through a virtual session where the different components of this new opportunity was presented to the Academic Community. Our energetic team of Co Coordinators engaged the audience that included representation from the 11 Campuses of the University of Puerto Rico and other higher learning institutions established within and beyond our archipelago.



Leaders and collaborators of the Title V Project UPR-MSc, and attendees, Initial Activity

Dr. Margarita Irizarry Ramirez, Co-Director of the Project Activity and Co-Coordinator of the Component 2, was the moderator of the activity. Dr. José Hawayeck, Dean of Academic Affairs of the MSC, offered a message on behalf of Dr. Segundo Rodriguez Quilinchini, Chancellor of the MSC. He was followed by Dr. Rubén Garcia Garcia, Principal Investigator and Project Director, who presented a brief introduction to the Project and the spirit behind its development and goals, including the remarkable achievement of an almost perfect score during the process of competitive review (109.66 of 110 points). Dr. García also acknowledged the presence of Project collaborators, and special greetings were extended to Dr. Maria del Pilar Toral, External Project Evaluator, and Ms. Margarita Melendez, as our Sponsor's Program Officer.

The comprehensive presentation aligned the participation of each Co Coordinator of the constituents of the integrated program with their role within the Interdisciplinary team. Component 1 better known as the Center for Research, Entrepreneurship and Scientific Collaborations (CRESCO), was presented by Dr. Efraín Flores Rivera, Co-Coordinator of Component 1 - CRESCO and Dr. Lizbelle De Jesús Ojeda, Co-Coordinator of Component 1 - CRESCO and Academic Coordinator. This component is the backbone of the project. CRESCO is a physical and virtual space in the MSC Library. It is the headquarters for training in translational clinical research skills and scientific entrepreneurship.

Component 2 will develop and implement the training strategies associated to didactic and practical skills development in the field of financial literacy and science entrepreneurship. Training objectives and scope of the programs included within this element our Project where presented by Dr. Maribel Campos Rivera, Co-Director of the didactic portion of Component 2 dedicated to financial literacy and scientific entrepreneurship (FLSE) and the practice based training experiences proposed under the scientific entrepreneurship mentoring team (SEMT). Dr. Margarita Irizarry Ramirez addressed the audience as Co-Coordinator of all Project Activities and capacity enhancement opportunity integrated to Component 2- through the pilot project programs (PiP). Prof. Edgardo Rosado Santiago, Liaison of the School of Health Professions and Dr. Juan Carlos Soto Santiago, Liaison of the School of Nursing, presented their plan to expand the reach of the clinical and translational training (CTR) course and the development of a continued education platform that will target established health professionals. This unique CTR offering, capitalizes on the interdisciplinary approach predicated by their leadership into their training, and unites as peers trainees at different stages of professional development. Brought together, the experiences and interactions supported by the CTR and FLSE training for students of undergraduate and graduate programs, faculty, and health professional, will surely serve as a launching platform for the success of our ever-growing community. Participants then had the

opportunity to interact with members of the leadership team, acknowledging existing collaborations and prospective members of our network of contributors.

Within their closing remarks, Ms. Margarita Meléndez expressed her enthusiasm with the achievements accomplished to date by our team, and Dr. Rubén García García invited the audience to participate in the Clinical and Translational Research Week, that has been scheduled from May 3 to 5, 2021, as a joint activity with the 10th Annual Title V Project Research Symposium and The Alliance: Hispanic Alliance for Clinical and Translational Research, Scientific Day. Our launch achieved the engagement of a broad range of stakeholders to our effort, and we are confident that this program will further enhance our institution's capacity to promote active participation of our graduates in the development of innovative solutions across the clinical and translational research spectrum.

Dissemination of the Title V MSC 2020-2025 project.

An abstract for a poster presentation was submitted to the upcoming Association for Clinical and Translational Science (ACTS) 2021 meeting , to be held from March 30 to April 2 2021. The abstract has been accepted for publication and is titled:

"Title V Medical Sciences Campus Project (TVMSC) : Clinical and Translational Research (CTR) with an Interdisciplinary/Entrepreneurship (IE) approach for Students and Faculty (UgS, UgF) from Undergraduate Programs (UgP) in Puerto Rico: an initiative for an early jumpstart in CTR and Scientific Entrepreneurship (SE) in a virtual scenario 2020-25".



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Leaders and collaborators of the Title V Project UPR-MS

Initial visit by María del Pilar Toral Correas, PhD as external evaluator of the Title V RCM Project

Our team of Faculty and activity coordinators hosted the first evaluation session by the firm Eduprop y Asoc, Inc. represented by María del Pilar Toral Correas on January 28, 2021. Leaders and Co coordinators shared the progress achieved to date, including projections about the emerging opportunities that will be incorporated as part of the proposal.



Leaders and collaborators of the Title V Project UPR-MSU led by Dr. Rubén García García meet virtually with the external evaluator Dra. María del Pilar Toral Correas

The interaction was further informed by participants of prior trainings at different stages of development within the CTR program, with particular attention to aspiring researchers that have applied to the new Pilot Program (PiP), that will be sponsored through this effort. Initial feedback reinforced the experience and commitment of the Leadership

team demonstrated by the milestones reached during the 4 months span since the initial funding date.