

## **Background Information**

The Universidad Central del Caribe (UCC) opened its doors in 1976. UCC was the first private medical school incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Currently, the UCC is a health-sciences university with fully accredited academic programs in Medicine, Medical Images Technology, Biomedical Sciences, and Substance Abuse Counseling. The UCC faculty members carry out extensive studies in basic and clinical biomedical research and provide specialized health care services.

Since 1976, UCC has been committed to providing educational opportunities to students from underrepresented backgrounds, as well as providing services to the communities where they live. Puerto Rico is home to a large number of Hispanic Americans. In fact of the roughly 50.5 million Hispanic Americans, 3.7 million (7%) live in Puerto Rico. The percentage of Puerto Ricans who obtain a college education is high. According to the Educational Attainment 2000 census, 24% of all Puerto Ricans have completed bachelor's degree.

UCC strives to provide underrepresented students with excellent opportunities for advanced education. In 2009, UCC received authorization from the Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education (PRCHE) to confer a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology, and in 2011 UCC received authorization to award a PhD in Neuroscience.

## **Number of faculty members in biomedical and behavioral science disciplines**

The Institutional Faculty Roster including the School of Medicine, the Substance Abuse Counseling Program, the Medical Images Technology Program, and the Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences, consists of a total of 183 full-time faculty members (38 of these being basic science faculty, 45% male and 55% female). There are 31 Professors, 73 Associate Professors, 76 Assistant Professors and 3 Instructors. There are 90 part-time faculty members and 327 ad honorem faculty members who provide services as mentors in clinical sites. Of the full-time faculty 15% hold Ph.D. degrees, 74% M.D. degrees, 8% Masters and 3% other degrees. More than 90% of the faculty is Hispanic; the non-Hispanics are from different cultures and backgrounds including American, European, Asian, Indian, Arabic and Latin-American faculty members.

## **Number of faculty engaged in research and with external support**

Of the 38 basic science faculty, 31 are engaged in biomedical and behavioral research. The corresponding number for the clinical and behavioral sciences faculty is 7. Nineteen (19) faculty members receive external funding as PIs in 26 active grants. Many of the remaining faculty members, mainly those in the clinical sciences, are supported by external funding for various roles in these projects.

## **Efforts to provide services to the underserved community**

University students and faculty are engaged in a variety of events and organizations providing a broad range of activities to the community. Services to and activities or underserved communities are organized into treatment services, health promotion events and career orientation activities.

University students and faculty provide free health clinics where screenings for conditions and orientations promoting prevention of health conditions for the community take place.

UCC students have organized interested groups dedicated to women and men health. These groups have been recognized for inspiring, nurturing and sharing their knowledge with younger men and women who aspire to become health professionals. They also coordinate gender specific health events, for example cardiovascular awareness events for women and prostate/testicular cancer events for men. The Urban Medicine student group has also been recognized for providing treatment to homeless

in Puerto Rico and its medical services in isolated communities in other Caribbean and Central American Countries.

UCC students and faculty also provide orientations to underrepresented undergraduate and high school students on how to become the next generation of health care professionals by gaining admission to college, graduate programs in the biomedical sciences and health profession programs. The activities include visits to high school and colleges, UCC campus tours, and a week-long "Introduction to Molecular Biology and Graduate School" hosted in the UCC campus.

Service to underrepresented populations goes from high school to the assistant professor level. UCC hosts underrepresented postdoctoral fellows and junior faculty members providing professional development activities and access to research equipment. These are not only available to UCC faculty but to faculty to other institutions on the island. This ensures an increase in the number of future underrepresented faculty members and funded researchers.

### **Total NIH R01 support in the last fiscal year**

1R01NS108778

Role of The Endo/Lysosome System in Synaptic Function

PI: Jorquera, Ramon

\$238,694

### **Institutional Data**

#### **Demographics of student body in the sciences**

UCC has a total fall enrollment for current academic year (2017-2018) of 466 students, 39% male and 61% female. The racial and ethnic profile is Hispanic 85%, Asian 0%, African-American 0%, Others 15%. The number of undergraduate students enrolled at UCC is 136 (100% underrepresented minority students). The number of students enrolled in graduate/MD programs are M.D. 281, Biomedical Sciences (PhD, MS, MA) 29, Counseling on Substance Abuse 20. 97.5% of the students in graduate/MD programs come from underrepresented groups. The number of undergraduate students does not include students from other institutions on the island that visit UCC to perform research.

#### **UCC has graduated:**

- 2,580 M.D. students  
(Degree established in 1976; 1,577 males, 1,003 females; 99.2% underrepresented)
- 44 M.S./M.A. students from the Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences  
(Degree established in 1989; 13 males, 31 females; 100% underrepresented)
- 18 Ph.D. student from the Cellular and Molecular Biology doctoral program  
(Degree established in 2010; 4 males, 14 females; 100% underrepresented)
- 4 Ph.D. student from the Neuroscience doctoral program  
(Degree established in 2011; 2 males, 2 females; 75% underrepresented)
- 144 M.S. students in Counseling on Substance Abuse  
(Degree established in 1996; 46 males, 98 females; 100% underrepresented)
- 156 B.S. students in Medical Imaging  
(Degree established in 2006; 40 males, 116 females; 100% underrepresented)