The PRCTRC celebrated the "Scientific Day" which took place at the UPR University Plaza. During this activity some of our researchers presented their findings so far with a 20-minute presentation.

Dr. Michelle Martinez from Universidad Central del Caribe was one of the presenters with her project “Detection of Equol as a Risk Factor for Metastatic Breast Cancer in Puerto Rican Women”. From the UPR- Medical Sciences Campus was Dr. Kaumudi Joshipura with her presentation on her project titled “Inflammation and Glucose Abnormalities: The SOALS Study”. Dr. Richard Noel from the Ponce School of Medicine & Health Sciences presented on his project “Focal Nef Production in Brain Produces Wide- Ranging Inflammation and Pathology”.

Dr. Carlos Luciano and Dr. José Torres served as moderators in this activity.
Multidisciplinary Training and Career Development

The Multidisciplinary Training and Career Development Key Function (MTCD) organized seminars, workshops, activities and poster presentations during the months of March to May 2013.

For the Mentoring Development Program, MTCD offered a “Research Career Development Workshop” at the Faculty Club in the University of Puerto Rico-Medical Sciences Campus on April 11, 2013. The purpose of this workshop was to provide attendees new tools to enhance their research career development, personal goal development, and ability to identify NIH funding sources for their research. The speakers of this workshop were: Dr. Caroline Appleyard and Wendy I. Pacheco from the Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences (PSM&HS), Dr. Adriana Baez and Dr. Estela Estapé from the UPR Medical Sciences Campus (UPR-MSC), and our special guest, Dr. Hinda Zlotnik from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This activity was co-sponsored by Hispanics-In-Research Capability: SoHP & SoM Partnership (HiREC) and the Post-doctoral Master in Clinical Research of the Medical Sciences Campus. A total of twenty-two participants from the three Consortium partners attended the workshop. Information presented included: Funding/Grants Opportunities, FOAs review, Portfolio preparation, Grant writing tips, Grant review process and Individual Development Plan.

For the Training and Career Development, MTCD sponsored two conferences in translational research in women’s health: Translational Research in Women’s Health: Clinical Sciences Impact held on March 8, 2013 at the UPR-Medical Sciences Campus. The speakers were Dr. Delia Camacho, Dr. Josefina Romaguera, Dr. Edna Mora and Dr. Carmen Zorrilla. Translational Research in Women’s Health: Public Health Impact (Concurrent session) was organized for the “IV Congreso Internacional de Universidades

Promotoras de la Salud y la IV Conferencia Puertorriqueña de Salud Pública” (March 19-21, 2013). The speakers were Dr. Delia Camacho, Dr. Cruz Maria Nazario and Dr. Ana Patricia Ortiz from UPR-MSC, Dr. Diana Fernández from UCC and Dr. Julio Jimenez from PSM&HS. This multidisciplinary session had faculty participation from the three Consortium partners.

Under the Education and Career Development, a multi-institutional evaluation rubric for the online course “Health Disparities: A Translational Research Approach” was developed by the Distance Learning and Networking Group (DLNG). The course was offered during October to December 2012 and the rubric was used to evaluate course implementation and results. The purpose of the rubric was to explore the accomplishment of course objectives of the online platforms and information technologies implemented among institutions. The rubric survey was administered to DLNG members through an online self-administered questionnaire using the Survey Monkey website.
Multidisciplinary Training and Career Development

The Tracking and Evaluation Key Function (TEK) collaborated with DLNG to conduct the rubric survey. From these two initiatives, the authors presented their work in two scientific meetings: Research and Education Forum in March (UPR-MSC) and in the Translational Science 2013 Meeting (17-19, April 2013/Washington, DC):

1. Pilot Project: Implementation of the Course in Health Disparities: A Research Approach; LE. Soto; M. Mayor; E. Acosta; L. De Jesús-Ojeda; C. Ortiz; ES Estape.; University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus (LES, EA, LDO, CO, ESE), Universidad Central del Caribe (MM).

2. A Framework to Develop a Multi-institutional Network Collaboration to Address Health Disparities through Distance Education - C. Ortiz., B. Segarra., M. Saheen., J. Zheng., J. Adigun., H. Vélez., L. De Jesús-Ojeda., A. Tse., M. Torres., E.S. Estapé.; UPR-Medical Sciences Campus (CO, BS, LDO, ESE), Universidad Central del Caribe (MT), Ponce School of Medicine & Health Sciences HV), University of Hawaii, Charles Drew School of Medicine (MS), Morehouse School of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, and RCMI Translational Research Network.

We had an invited speaker Dr. Juan L. Negrón, expert on the community area. He made a presentation titled: “Encontrando gente: La aplicación de estrategias metodológicas para localizar y reclutar sujetos de investigación en la comunidad” regarding the strategies for finding research subjects in the community.

Approximately sixty persons attended the Scientific Day including, faculty, institutional leaders, personnel and other guests.

More over Rodrigo Valderrabano, MD, Scholar from UCC of the postdoctoral Master of Science in Clinical Research and recipient of a HiREC/PRCTRC Scholar Award completed successfully all the didactic courses and presented his final research findings from the project “Thyroid Cancer: Surgical Correlations and Staging by Clinical and Histological Characteristics” on May 31, 2013.
Collaborative Research Capacity Building: Community

The process is a learning experience for both academic and community partners. On June 2013, OCRE team completed the first phase of implementation of training activities.

Topics included: Health Disparities; Academic-Community Partnerships; Need and Resources Assessments; Community Forum; Strategic Planning; Community Engagement Research; Evaluation; Evidence-Based Practices and it’s Implementation; and Interpretation of Scientific Studies and Databases.

Program participants were 10-8 agencies, community-based organizations, a government project and a foundation--which after six months of relationship and mutual understanding have maintained interest in community academic partnerships, evidence bases practices and research oriented services. Several participants have delineated their health disparity topic and research oriented service ideas. Some of those include: HIV high impact prevention strategies; social media impact of HIV treatment; timeframe on cancer related services and; evaluate strategies to increase access to cancer screening services.

The following steps include a) provide technical assistance to materialize collaborations in health disparities projects with emphasis on Evidence-Based Approaches, and b) identify additional sources of funding and disseminating findings. OCRE will also provide support (technical assistance and money) to sustain these efforts to one or two new CAP (Community-Academic Partnerships) among graduated organizations and junior researchers from partners universities.

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Community Based Organizations

- Asociación Puertorriqueña del Pulmón
- ASPIRA de Puerto Rico
- Casa Protegida Julia de Burgos
- Centro Nuevos Horizontes, Inc.
- Centros Sor Isolina Ferré
- Coaí, Inc.
- Taller Salud, Inc.
- Fundación Puertorriqueña Síndrome Down
- Fondos Unidos de PR
- Proyecto de Asma, Departamento de Salud

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One way in which OCRE accomplishes its mission of building capacity for sustainable translational research through the establishment of community-academic partnerships, is working in collaboratively with the Puerto Rico Evidence Based Board (PREBB). The PREBB is a diverse group of stakeholders that are responsible for developing and implementing an agenda to identify, establish, promote, and disseminate evidence-based practices/programs in areas of health promotion and disease prevention for Puerto Rico. This body is being subsidized by the Puerto Rico Strategic Framework State Prevention Enhancement Grant (PRSPF SPE) (SAMHSA Grant No. 1U79SP018656-01).

A major goal of PREBB is to build and maintain an easily accessible, user-friendly centralized listing of EBPs in various areas of health concern, with detailed information about each program presented in Spanish. OCRE’s contribution to this broader effort has been to produce comprehensive lists of EBPs in the four health priority areas of PRCTRC: HIV, cancer, neurological disorders, and cardiovascular health.

Here you will find a thorough listing of EBPs in the areas of HIV and Cancer Prevention with helpful information to make informed decisions when selecting which program/practice to implement in your project. (Comparable listings will be posted for neurological disorders and cardiovascular health in late 2013.) This dissemination tool will serve as a resource for academic researchers, community-based organizations, and other community stakeholders to evaluate and choose the most appropriate evidence-based program for implementation in their service area or community in Puerto Rico, resulting in more culturally appropriate, effective and cost-effective interventions.

On June 21, 2013 the PRCTRC inaugurated the Genomic Translational Research Unit. The facility has new advanced instrumentation that can determine the DNA RNA human genome sequencing. It allows researchers to identify gene mutations associated to genetic diseases, as well as identify possible genetic variations associated with the predisposition to suffer from a disease.

The Ion PGM System, a third generation, high throughput genetic sequencing technology will provide investigators, supported by the Puerto Rico Clinical and Translational Research Consortium, access to this robust, next generation sequencing technology. This unit was purchased with supplement awarded for the Ion Proton System with grant 3U54MD007587-0351.

The laboratory is located on the 2nd floor of the Medical Sciences Campus main building, Guillermo Arbona, Room A231 A.
5K Corre, Camínalo y Chequéate eso...

Coalición de Cancer Colorectal

On May 19, 2013 our personnel with friends and family participated on the annual 5K marathon for the “Coalición de Cancer Colorectal”. The marathon finish line was on Parque Luis Muñoz Rivera were the activity continued with refreshments, entertainment and educational speakers.

Our Personnel

We are happy to announce some changes in our personnel roster

Dr. Marizaida Sanchez is the new PRCTRC Program Director and she will oversee the Biomedical Informatics Key Function and the Community Research and Engagement Key Function.

Carlamarie Noboa has been working as the coordinator for the Key Function, she will now lead the Tracking and Evaluation Key Function for the PRCTRC.