

## Seeds of Success: IF/THEN Edition, a program for girls in STEM kicks off <sup>[1]</sup>

Submitted by [Gabriela Alexandra Carrasquillo ...](#) <sup>[2]</sup> on 27 August 2020 - 6:05pm



<sup>[2]</sup>



*Roselin Minerva Gretchen Beatriz*

It is with great enthusiasm that we announce the beginning of the third cycle of the Seeds of Success <sup>[3]</sup> Program, which seeks to expose middle school girls to the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Last Saturday, August 15, 2020, 121 students in grades 7th through 9th, began their journey to become STEM Ambassadors with a virtual orientation seminar and a leadership workshop. Prior to the seminar, the girls received the program guides and STEM educational materials, such as the paper microscope, Foldscope, brochures and opportunities for students. These materials were donated by about 15 organizations and sent through the postal service.

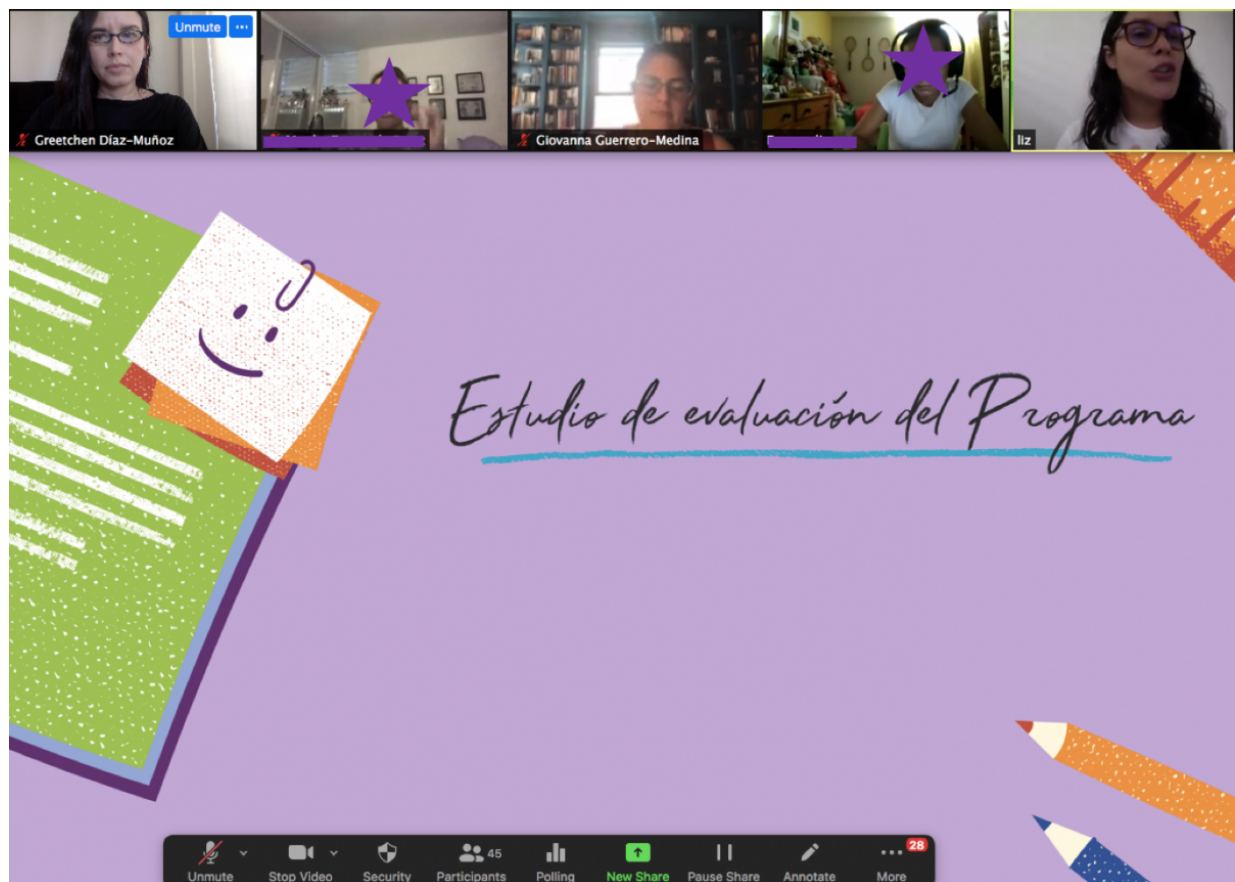
This year we celebrate a special version of the program: the IF/THEN Edition, as we have the leadership of four internationally recognized Latina STEM professionals, who are ambassadors of

the IF/THEN initiative [4] of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). IF/THEN seeks to empower and inspire the next generation of women pioneers in STEM. These four IF/THEN ambassadors, Roselin Rosario Meléndez [5], Beatris Méndez Gandica [6], Minerva Cordero Braña [7] y Greetchen Díaz Muñoz [8] (who is part of the CienciaPR team), participated in the initial seminar to welcome the girls to the program.

***“I am happy to be able to work with the new leaders in STEM in Puerto Rico. Go forward Boricuas! ”- Minerva Cordero Braña***

The 121 Seeds of Success participants were chosen through a competitive process among 480 applicants from all over Puerto Rico. The selected students represent about 52 towns and belong to 28 private schools and 63 public schools throughout Puerto Rico. Additionally, for the first time, Seeds of Success will offer online opportunities and resources to ALL applicants, including those who were not selected for the STEM Ambassadors curriculum. This will allow us to impact almost 500 Puerto Rican girls who want to learn more about these disciplines!

***“When IF / THEN announced that we could request funds for an initiative, I immediately thought of Puerto Rico and decided to join Seeds of Success to be able to impact a greater number of Puerto Rican girls” - Roselin Rosario Meléndez***



## What's Next?

From now until February 2021, the 121 girls will work on the design and implementation of their STEM ambassador projects, with which they seek to impact more people in their respective schools or communities. The projects are designed to help more people learn about the importance of STEM disciplines, while the girls practice their leadership skills. This year, dozens of organizations, which are part of the [Seeds of Success Coalition of collaborators](#) [9], will serve as hosts for the girls to carry out their projects and impact their audiences. Currently, this Coalition brings together more than 45 organizations from the academic, private and non-profit sectors that support us to empower the girls of Puerto Rico.

***“Our girls have nothing to wait for, they are also the present and can create an impact in their communities through STEM disciplines” - Gretchen Díaz Muñoz***

In addition, the participants will benefit from workshops and online activities, and for the first time in Seeds of Success, the girls will have access to a distance mentoring program in which 121 women in STEM mentors will participate. These women mentors will provide personalized support to girls in carrying out their projects and exploring opportunities in STEM disciplines. The mentors are advance college students and STEM professionals from Puerto Rico, Latin America and the United States, and are members of CienciaPR.

***“I love the idea of being able to help girls in Puerto Rico to discover the STEM world. Sometimes only one interaction can make a difference in the future of these girls ”- Beatris Méndez Gandica***

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