Borinqueña: Jemaris, planting seeds of success in engineering [1]

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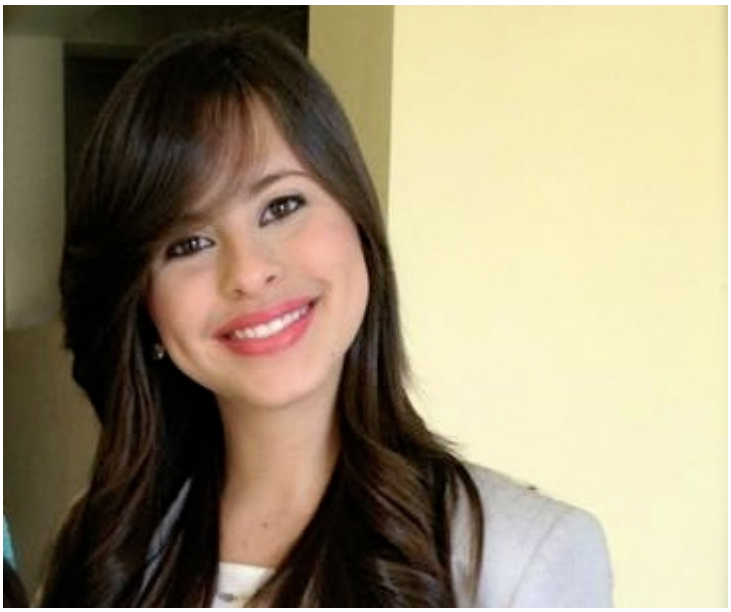

Jemaris Martes Villalobos

Borinqueña emphasizes on the contribution of Puerto Rican and Hispanic women in science and technology and provides a space to discuss topics of interest about the empowerment of women. In 'Seeds of Success' we will share stories about young Borinqueñas that want to pursue a career in STEM, and will describe their achievements and goals to succeed.

In the countryside of Puerto Rico communities are not only cultivating fruits, but also the products of dedicated parents, passionate teachers and hard working students. We are harvesting what

can define our future. **Jemaris Martes-Villalobos**, originally from the Mameyes Barrio in Jayuya, demonstrates every day to have the caliper to reach her dreams on Science and Engineering. Her skills are shaped as a result of her willpower, her initiative and her insatiable hunger to learn. Jemaris took the initiative to search, to apply and to participate in various summer internships and research opportunities in Engineering: Animal Biotechnology at North Carolina University, Engineering Introduction at the University of Maryland and Summer Internship Program at the AMES Research Center of NASA. The most impressing fact is that she completed these three programs while in high school. Jemaris is a freshman at the University of Puerto Rico in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

The challenges of her academic life have been centered on the lack of information exposure that students face in the island. The internal spark of Jemaris has driven her to look beyond what the school offered and has resulted in a great advantage in her development. With energy and enthusiasm, she lead a campaign in the center of the island to inform teachers and students about the number of opportunities available in Science and Engineering.

When I asked Jemaris about her academic dreams she kindly answers: “Mi goals are to continue studying, to complete my Bachelors in Science in Mechanical Engineering, to continue working in research and to later enroll and complete her Doctorate in the field of Bioengineering.” Jemaris looks at the future with the eyes of a visionary, recognizing that every seed that she plants today will be the fruits to harvest. Her natural inclination to learn and her scientific curiosity are her fuel. As she develops, she helps others do the same, basing this focus on her say: “I would like to perform at least one good deed every day”. These are the convictions and the values that defined also her long-term goal, to contribute positively to society by developing new technologies of high impact.

Jemaris balances her life with dance, paint and her active social life. When entering the field of engineering, her concerns were those of other women, to be able to develop in a discipline traditionally represented by men. This concern disappears slowly as time goes by and as women in engineering demonstrate that there are no gender roles in the discipline. Jemaris is proof of the potential of our students in the island, Jemaris a proud Jayuyana and is one of our **Seeds of Success.**

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