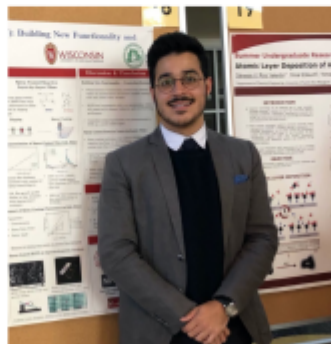
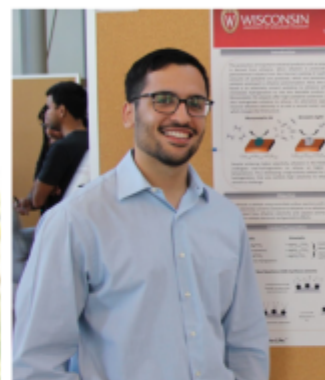


# UPR Mayagüez is again the Puerto Rican university with the most NSF scholarship recipients <sup>[1]</sup>

Submitted by [Kimberly Ann Massa Núñez](#) <sup>[2]</sup> on 30 May 2021 - 4:58pm



<sup>[2]</sup>



The Mayagüez Campus (RUM) of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) became, once again, the Puerto Rican higher education institution with the largest number of scholarship recipients of the prestigious Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) that grants the National Science Foundation (NSF).

This year, the honor went to 11 schoolboys: Lee Roger Chevres Fernández, Ian González Amador, Christian José Lagares, José A. Lasalde Ramírez, Edgard Alvin Lebrón Rodríguez, Cristina Lorenzo Velázquez, Diego Rafael Ramos Ortiz, Daniela Marina Rivera Mirabal, Gabriel Sánchez Velázquez, Hosea Amos Santiago Cruz and Elizabeth Torres De Jesús, all students and graduates of the RUM.

Precisely, this achievement was shared by four students and five former students from the Río Piedras Campus. Similarly, two students and two graduates of the UPR in Humacao; as well as a former student of the UPR in Cayey. In fact, of the 26 scholarship recipients from Puerto Rican universities, 25 are from the UPR, 11 of them from the RUM.

The NSF-GRFP awarded a \$ 34,000 grant this year to support college students in their graduate studies and research in the areas of science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM).

Likewise, seven RUM graduates received honorable mention, among them: Zoila Isabel Álvarez Aponte, Janet Marielis Crespo Cajigas, Hansel Anel Montalvo Castro, Ricen Marie Díaz Arroyo, Natasha Ivelisse Román Ortiz, Roberto Gabriel Sotomayor Mena and Jesús Antonio Sánchez Pérez.

“We congratulate each of the students who have worked and worked to achieve one of the competitive scholarships from the National Science Foundation. The recognition and gratitude also for its teachers and mentors who with passion and perseverance encourage them to give their best and to represent the best talent and excellence of the institution. The fact that the students of the University of Puerto Rico can compete for these scholarships and grants are also a recognition of trust and good administrative work. Congratulations! ”, Highlighted Dr. Jorge Haddock, president of the UPR.

“It fills us with great satisfaction that our students and graduates lead the list of scholarship recipients from Puerto Rico universities, especially with this highly competitive gift. When looking at the achievements of the RUM 2021-NSF-GRFP cohort, we see that they have been focused, committed students; and that they have guided their steps towards research opportunities and internships, which opened the doors for this great distinction. They and they are collegiate pride! Their achievements and their testimonies show us the value of the education received at the UPR, as an instrument to reap new successes. We celebrate them! Congratulations! ”, Said Dr. Agustín Rullán Toro, rector of the RUM.

The RUM winners were excited with the recognition.

“It is one of the greatest academic awards that I have received throughout my academic career. It is also a dream come true. I still remember that, from high school, I saw these kinds of scholarships and dreamed of being there at some point. Throughout my high school I learned

more about options and the GRFP was always my aspiration. I must confess that I saw it a bit distant because I knew the probabilities. NSF rejects between 85 to 90 percent of the applications, and receiving the scholarship represents a goal achieved and financial security throughout the second half of my doctorate ", indicated Christian José Lagares, graduate of the 2019 class of Mechanical Engineering ( INME) of the RUM and doctoral student of the same Department.

"Receiving the GRFP validates many years of preparation for my graduate studies and indicates the excellent education received at the UPR. My area of ??research is in the development of medical technologies for the diagnosis and monitoring of different diseases. I am an articulated transfer student from the Río Piedras Campus and I had the opportunity to work in multiple areas of research, both at the College and at the IUPI during my undergraduate career. Being able to extract knowledge of the specialties and cultures of different campuses of the UPR system is an invaluable tool that helped me obtain this scholarship ", revealed, for his part, José A. Lasalde Ramírez, a high school student at INME.

"This scholarship means that all the efforts, interactions with my friends and colleagues, as well as the unconditional support of my parents, paid off. Although it is given to one person, this is achieved with a good team of people who support you. Also, receiving it means that I will have the space to do research on the project that I proposed in my application and on topics that I am passionate about ", highlighted Edgard Alvin Lebrón Rodríguez, graduate of the 2019 class of the Department of Chemical Engineering (INQU) RUM and doctoral student in the same concentration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"The scholarship means a lot to me, from an academic point of view, because it reiterates that what I am doing will contribute to society and that all the effort, since my first year at university, has been key to what I have obtained. This achievement is one more step towards my goal of becoming a teacher and contributing to the next generations and to Puerto Rico, which needs it so much. Today I thank all the people who have always supported me, not only my family and friends, but also my colleagues and mentors from the College and NCSU ", stated Cristina Lorenzo Velázquez, graduate of the 2019 class of Civil Engineering (INCI) of the RUM and doctoral student at North Carolina State University (NSCU).

"This scholarship allows me greater freedom during my doctoral studies by receiving financial support from the NSF. In addition, knowing the positive thoughts of the Evaluation Committee about my career, my future plans and the research that I propose to carry out during my doctorate, makes me feel more confident about my personal and professional goals in the short and long term, "said Diego Rafael Ramos Ortiz, graduated from the 2018 class of the Department of Chemistry of the RUM and Biophysics doctoral student at the University of California Berkeley.

"It is a great honor to receive this scholarship, since it represents all the effort, both on my part and all my mentors who have helped me in this process," said Daniela Marina Rivera Mirabal, who completed her studies in December 2020 at INQU and will begin doctoral studies in September 2021 at the University of California Santa Barbara.

"Receiving the GRFP is the result of three years rich in experience and work, and represents a step forward to continue increasing diversity and inclusion in scientific communities," said Gabriel

Sánchez Velázquez, who recently completed his bachelor's degree at INQU and started in September 2021 doctoral studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

“Receiving the GRFP is evidence that young people from Puerto Rico may receive prestigious academic offerings and that diverse representation of our communities is sorely lacking in graduate STEM programs. That is why this scholarship exists! Applying during that year 2020 was extremely challenging considering the uncertainty of the situation and the lack of support that used to exist during a “normal” semester. So receiving the GRFP felt like a sublime and inexplicable achievement”, indicated Hosea Amos Santiago Cruz, who completed his studies in December 2020 from INQU at the RUM and will begin this summer with his doctorate at Carnegie Mellon University.

## Tags:

- [#RUM](#) <sup>[3]</sup>
- [#UPR](#) <sup>[4]</sup>
- [#NSF](#) <sup>[5]</sup>
- [#CerebrosBoricuas](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

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