

PUERTO RICAN SELECTED IN MICROBIO-LEAP INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP PROJECT ^[1]

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Jeremy J. Colón Morales, the only student and Puerto Rican selected in the MicroBio-LEAP Inclusive Leadership Project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), with his mentor

Dr. Abel Baerga.

The MicroBio-LEAP Inclusive Leadership Project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), selected 24 new scholars, and only one is a student and Puerto Rican, Jeremy J. Colón Morales. The young man is doing his doctoral research in biochemistry under the mentorship of Dr. Abel Baerga, a scientist at the UPR's Center for Research in Molecular Sciences (CICiM).

"For me it has been a tremendous opportunity to be able to do research at CICiM. The building is well equipped, it fosters a culture of collaboration among the labs and [that is] very helpful among students, and [also] it is a modern building with good facilities," explained the new academic.

Also, Jeremy expressed words of praise towards his mentor and guide in this process. "Dr. Baerga's mentorship has been key to my development as a scientist. Not only does he advise me on my project and what the next steps should be, he also allows me to explore my own ideas in the lab. Whenever I am presented with an opportunity like this, he supports me and helps me with the application process, either by reading my papers or writing me letters of recommendation. A good mentor is fundamental for the development of a scientist in his or her area, but also to be a scientist for the community," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr. Abel Baerga -Jeremy's mentor- assures that "the University of Puerto Rico must prepare professionals who are technically competent, but who are also good citizens attentive to issues of inclusion and representation. In that sense, Jeremy Colón is a worthy example of such a professional, who is rigorous in his field of study, and at the same time committed to the issues of diversity and equity that are so important to our community. If you notice, Jeremy is the only student who has been called to the MicroBio-LEAP, a panel composed mostly of professional scientists. His participation in this program is a source of pride for the Molecular Center and for the Medical Sciences Campus".

Colón Morales now belongs to the new strain of scholars in the newly established American Society for Microbiology (ASM) Microbiology Leaders Project. The focus of MicroBio-LEAP is to train leaders in the microbial sciences to embody and elevate inclusive diversity with equity, access and accountability. The program is a competitive one in which only about twenty scientists are selected internationally, and from different spheres such as academia, the private sector and government.

This is a summary of our Cerebros Boricuas blog entry, to view the full story please visit our website in Spanish or [click here](#). [3]

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