

# **Summer of Innovation** [1]

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# DEPARTAMENTO DE FARMACOLOGIA Y TOXICOLOGIA



For the seventh consecutive year, the Center for Biomedical Innovation (BIC) at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine held a summer internship to introduce new technologies and stimulate biomedical innovation among high school students, university students, and professionals.

This experience allowed participants to work individually and as a team on innovative projects whose intellectual property is protected by patents. The Center operates under the *Occum Principle*, "simplicity is often the best solution." Encouraging students to be innovative while keeping solutions simple fosters efficiency in time and expense.

"We are proud of the Biomedical Innovation Center's commitment to sponsoring activities that help foster the next generation of Puerto Rican inventors by using the excitement of innovation and its novel integration into biomedical practice," said BIC Executive Director and Principal Investigator Dr. Emma Fernández-Repollet.

During the summer internship, participants actively worked on improving the prototypes of the different inventions under development at the Center, learning first-hand the challenges and rewards of being an inventor. The different levels of activities in which students participated included diverse scientific discussions, scientific presentations and talks focused on the protection of intellectual property and the importance of technology transfer. Seventy-five students have

been impacted by this initiative since its inception in 2016.

At the end of the internship, high school student Ariana Ortega said: "The internship at BIC not only provided me with tools for my professional development, but also contributed to my personal growth and taught me how to interact in an academic environment."

For Camelia Zamora, an undergraduate student at Georgia Institute of Technology, "the internship gave me the opportunity to apply innovative research methodologies in scientific projects, which improved not only my technical skills, but also sparked my interest in the possibilities that exist in the field of biomedical engineering."

According to Adriana Pagán, an undergraduate student at the University of Rochester, "the internship at the Biomedical Innovation Center was an incredible learning experience where I managed to develop valuable skills through my participation and practice in various research projects within the biomedical field."

In his final report at the end of the internship, Jorge Ruiz, a high school student, shared: "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be part of the Summer Internship Program. I learned a lot and enjoyed being able to actively collaborate in the research activities in the laboratory."

The Center has a team with impressive practical skills in the fields of science, innovation, programming, and intellectual property protection. In addition to the principal investigators, Dr. Abraham Schwartz and Dr. Emma Fernández-Rebollet, the Center is assisted by a professional programmer, Ricardo Nieves, and an engineer, Camillo Cangani. A group of collaborators from Puerto Rico and abroad also participates in the development and biomedical applications of the inventions associated with the Center.



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