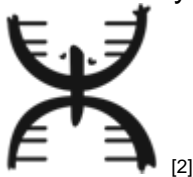# Estefanía Ortiz: Coding her future and planting seeds of success [1]

Submitted by Marvi Ann Matos [2] on 31 July 2014 - 9:01am

[2]

Estefanía Ortiz [3], a Hackathon [4] fan and young entrepreneur, grew up in the town of Guaynabo Puerto Rico and went to the Marista private school for most of her schooling. Estefanía finished her last high school year doing home schooling, and today she is a sophomore majoring Computer Science at Stanford University. Estefanía told me that a transformational moment in her life was a conversation she had with her math teacher. The message of her teacher was clear; she encouraged Estefanía to focus on developing and taking advantage of her skills in math and science. Estefania later discovered the world of computer programming while she was working on her science fair project and after she participated in pre-college programs at the "Universidad Metropolitana", the Universidad Interamericana" and the Carnegie Mellon University.
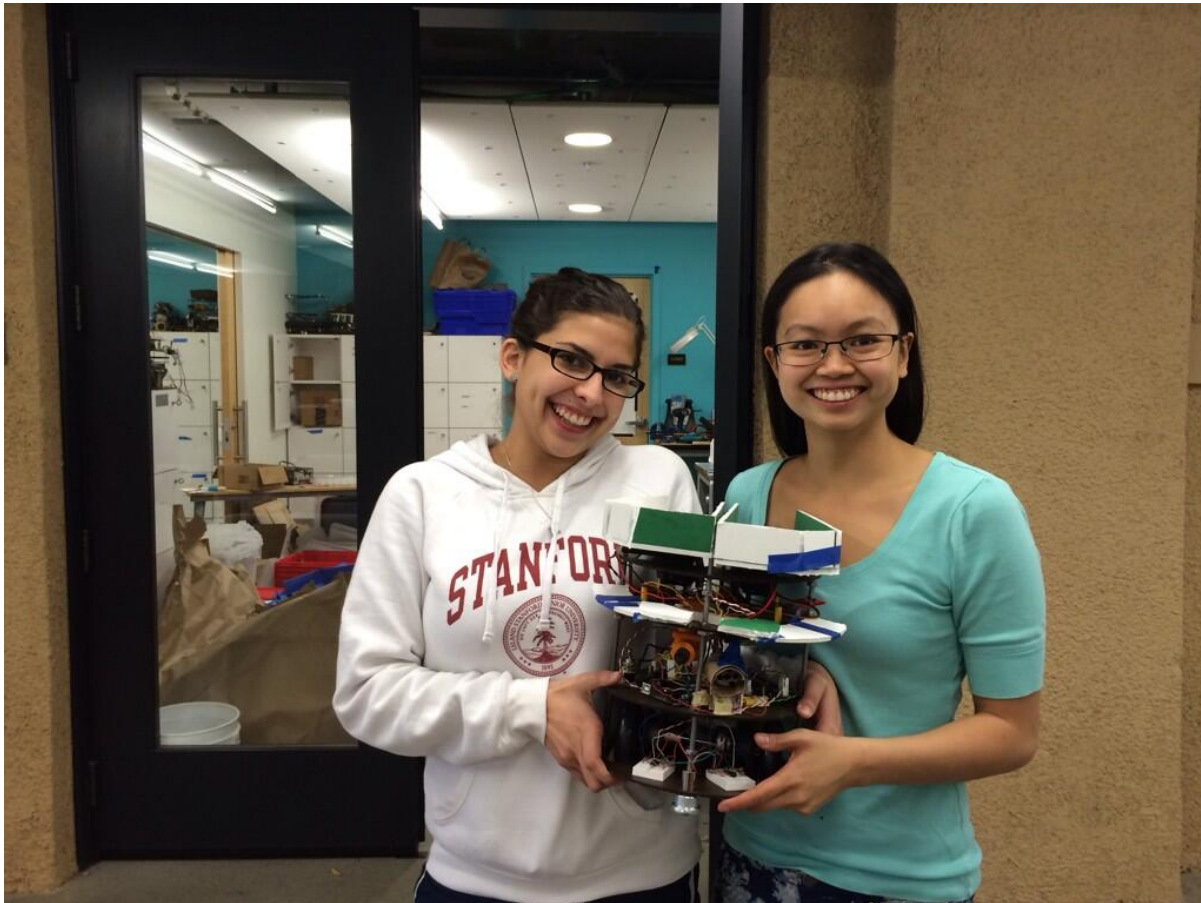
Estefanía shines in computer programming as an apps coder, by participanting in Hackathons, and as a programming teacher for girls. The world of computer science is abstract to most people outside the field, so we asked her how she would describe what a Hackathon is, and she said: "Individuals and teams show up to the event with an idea, a concept, product or system that they want to develop. Participants have 24 hours to complete their product and the organization or company that hosts the event provides the place, food and internet connections. The final products are presented and winners are selected. In many cases the winners of the challenge are offered funds to fully develop and implement their idea in the market." One of Estefania's projects at the moment is an app called the DiasPRa, a platform that connects Puerto Rican organizations with volunteers outside the island.

Estefanía offers her free time to outreach activities in STEM as a member of the <u>Society for Women Engineers</u> [5] (SWE). She balances her life maintaining an active social network, combining technical courses with other disciplines, and dancing.

Her dream is to work in education apps. Her idol is her mother, an entrepreneurial spirited woman who manages her life and her home in an admirable way. Estefanía is a Borinqueña who is developing in Computer Science, a not very diverse field based on ethnicity or gender. Estefanía today seeds and cultivates the fruits of tomorrow, and she is a Seed of Success.

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.

Use #Borinqueña to share this story. Also, visit our <u>Borinqueña Store</u>
[6]

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