

# **Melody: Future Biochemist Collects the Harvest of her Seeds of Success** <sup>[1]</sup>

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<sup>[2]</sup>



## Melody Rivera-Hernández

We all know about the difficult economic situation that our country is going through, but there are always opportunities for those who give their best. The young lady Melody Rivera Hernández, from Vega Alta, is in her way to complete her university carrier in the biochemistry area with all expenses covered. She is the first puertorrican student, born and raised in the Island to receive the prestigious scholarship “Torch Scholars” to complete her bachelor degree in the Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts.

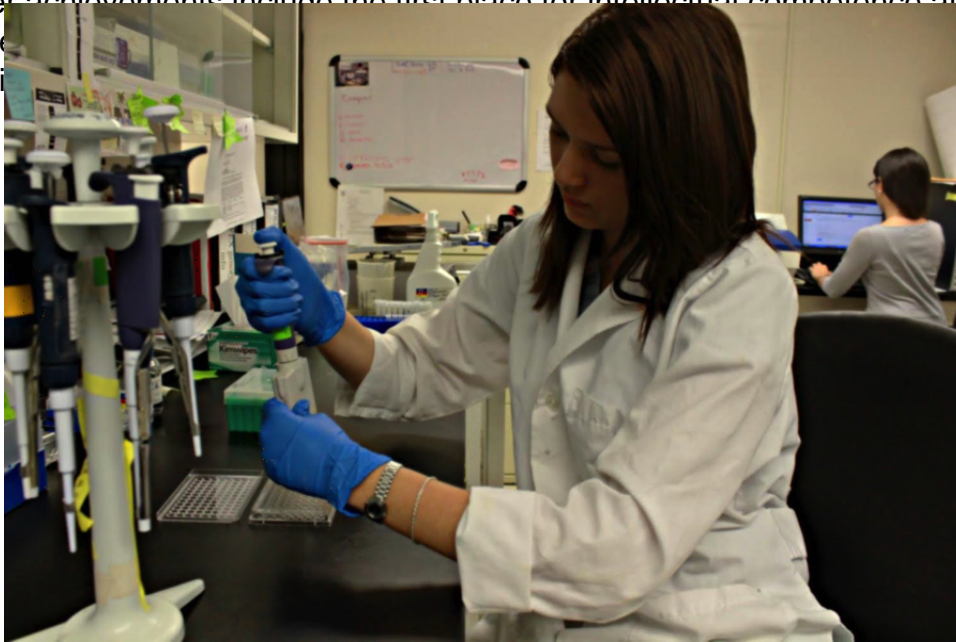
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Since her childhood Melody demonstrated interest for sciences and mathematics. This interest took her to advance intermediate level studies at the specialized school in sciences and mathematics Brigida Álvarez Rodríguez from Vega Baja. Being a very applied student, in eighth grade she had the opportunity to compete and be the winner of the scholarship “Center for Talented Youth” from John Hopkins University. This scholarship provided her the privilege of taking university courses within different institutions in the United States through summer. This experience did not aimed towards scientific development, she also had the opportunity to share and exchange ideas about global social situations with students of different nationalities while at the same time expose her point of view.

Her High School studies took place at Rio Piedras University Gardens. During this period, her scientific research was conducted at Dr. Sylvette Ayala Pena’s laboratory, at University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus. In this lab, both Melody and Dr. Sulay Rivera, had the good fortune to participate in the research of neurodegenerative disorder, known as San Vito’s disease or Huntington’s disease, for which there is no cure or treatment to reduce its progress. The purpose of her research focused on finding the relation between the Base excision repair endonuclease, APE-1, and how it affected the levels of oxidative stress and or mitochondrial dysfunction in rats. This experience led her to present their research findings in various

competitions in the category of biochemistry being worthy of first place inland, and then representing Puerto Rico in the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium held at Dayton, Ohio. Other achievements include the first place for intellectual competence at the International Honor Society of Women in Science, and the nomination of Melódica García, to



Melody performing



ical Sciences Campus,

Melody showing her 1st

place in the biochemistry category with Dr. Sylvette Ayala-Peña (left) y la Dr. Sulay Rivera (right).





Melody at Northeastern

### University.

Definitely, Melody is a “Borinquena” with high success expectations, the young vegaltena, early recognized that “...nothing is achieved without effort and dedication.”

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