

Science communication through social media ^[1]

Submitted by [Elvin Joel Estrada Garcia](#) ^[2] on 7 October 2016 - 8:24am



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Elvin participating of a workshop with students from the Antolina Velez school in Aguadilla.

As part of the 10th-anniversary celebration of Ciencia Puerto Rico, we have been collecting stories from our volunteers to celebrate them and the work they do while also sharing with you the team's vision for CienciaPR's future. We want to remind you that the crowdfunding campaign [#ConCienciaPR](#) is still active! If you haven't had the chance yet, please help us continue with our science education and promotion initiatives. Please visit bit.ly/ConCienciaPR ^[3] to make your donation. Thanks!

Today, we share the story of [Elvin Estrada](#) ^[4] of Peñuelas, who has been a volunteer for CienciaPR for almost 3 years.

- How did you hear about CienciaPR?

In 2013, I attended a post-baccalaureate program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. While in Alabama, I started using social media more often and it was through twitter that I learned about CienciaPR and made contact with the leaders of the organization.

- What initially motivated you to volunteer for CienciaPR?

Since I started my bachelor of science I've been interested in the education system in Puerto Rico, especially science education. One of CienciaPR initiatives is to increase the scientific content made available to the general public through publishing articles and educational podcasts [5]. CienciaPR also addresses this need through workshops and lectures for teachers, students, and the general public. These were the initiatives that motivated me to become a volunteer for CienciaPR.

- What projects or initiatives have you been involved with? Which was your favorite?

Mainly, I have been involved in coordinating and managing the social media accounts for the organization. As part of the initiatives CienciaPR, I participated with a group of volunteers who gave an educational talk at the Antolina Vélez school in the town of Aguadilla. Being part of this event has been my favorite experiences during my time with CienciaPR.



- What motivates your continued involvement?

The potential of CienciaPR as a digital tool for the dissemination of Puerto Rican science is incredible. Education has changed dramatically in the last decade and the digital tools that are part of the CienciaPR platform offer an educational alternative outside the classroom. Additionally, we share reliable information with our members about scientific issues for the benefit of the whole community.

- Briefly, tell us a story that you treasure or particularly remember as a volunteer.

In CienciaPR I discovered my passion for science communication. Being part of the group of volunteers who participated in the educational talk at the Antolina Velez school in Aguadilla left a lifelong impression. The enthusiasm conveyed to us by the students who participated, the questions they asked, and the interest shown was spectacular. I believe we encouraged the students to continue a career in science and sew the seed of curiosity.

- How has volunteering with CienciaPR helped you at a personal or professional level?

At a personal and professional level, CienciaPR has opened the doors to a world that was unknown to me until then. Interacting with people from different disciplines of study, sharing ideas, developing proposals for community impact and being a participant and protagonist of science communication shifted my scientific career. On the other hand, working for more than two years as coordinator of social media has aroused my curiosity to explore other areas of study such as digital marketing.

- What does CienciaPR mean to you?

At first, CienciaPR was a new adventure, a new place of learning. With the passage of time, it became my professional work as I undertook new tasks within the team. Now, CienciaPR is my new family. Over time, you begin to admire and cherish each of the members of this excellent team.

- If you could focus on a subject to improve for the benefit of the Puerto Rican scientific community, what would it be? How could CienciaPR help achieve that goal?

I would like to focus on science communication at all educational levels. Considering the challenges Puerto Rico currently faces, I think the area of education is going through a crisis which we can turn into an opportunity to improve and reinvent the educational system of the island.

- What initiative would you like to implement to improve Science Education in Puerto Rico? How can CienciaPR help implement this initiative?

The work that CienciaPR has done for the past 10 years has been very effective, but we can do much more. One of the initiatives that can be implemented by CienciaPR is to further impact K-12 students in STEM as part of the public educational system. This could be achieved by recruiting a team of professionals that periodically impact an entire community of students and teachers, providing them with professional development tools in science. In this way, CienciaPR can begin to address the educational crisis and turn it into opportunity.

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