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Soft Matter Research at University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez [1]

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[2]

Cancer has been and still remains a mystery for even the world's most renowned doctors. Although we understand the concept of cancer, we have failed to develop an effective and efficient method of treating it. Chemotherapy is one of the most common ways to treat cancer. However, it is not 100% efficient because it targets both healthy and cancerous cells. In addition, chemotherapy is not always 100% effective. In order to provide a more useful treatment to cancer patients, nano technology can be utilized. In Dr. Jaime Ramirez's lab, we have created nanoparticles (essentially very tiny molecules). These nanoparticles, when loaded with cancer-fighting drugs, will attach solely to the cancerous cells, release the drugs within the cells, and kill them. The nanoparticles leave the healthy cells untouched and thus are a more efficient form of cancer treatment as opposed to chemotherapy.

During these past 3 weeks at the University of Puerto Rico, I have learned so much both scientifically and culturally. Without a doubt, Puerto Rico is a beautiful island with its native trees and flowers, magnificent beaches, rich foods, and genuinely kind people. My peers and I have spent every weekend traveling to new locations (on weekdays we work hard in our labs). We have visited several beaches, watched movies, spent a weekend in a villa (by the beach of course), and ate at some delicious restaurants. Overall, our social experience here has been fantastic. We are looking forward to visiting San Sebastian, Utuado, and Old San Juan in the upcoming weeks.

In conclusion, the Research Experience for Undergraduates program has been richly rewarding. Not only do we get to participate in groundbreaking research on the weekdays, but we also get to travel to exciting places on the weekends.

Tags:

- UPR-Mayagüez REU RMSM Blog [3]
- NSF [4]

- young scientists [5]
- Jaime Ramírez [6]
- cáncer [7]
- nanotecnología [8]

Source URL:https://www.cienciapr.org/es/blogs/soft-matter/soft-matter-research-university-puerto-rico-mayaguez

Links
[1] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/blogs/soft-matter/soft-matter-research-university-puerto-rico-mayaguez [2] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/user/hyeonjus [3] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/tags/upr-mayaguez-reu-rmsm-blog [4] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/tags/nsf-0 [5] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/tags/young-scientists [6] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/tags/jaime-ramirez [7] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/tags/cancer [8] https://www.cienciapr.org/es/tags/nanotechnology