

Newsletter

Spring 2020



VOLUME 8
ISSUE 2

**COMING
SOON!**



Engaging Our Community

¡Salud! Serie de charlas:
• To be announced (MCC)

The Bridge/El Puente:

- August 2020 (PHSU)
- August 15, 2020 (MCC)

2020 Meeting of the Advisory Committee

- May 2020 in Puerto Rico



Next event: October 3, 2020
Partnership webpage: www.psm-moffitt.org
E-mail: psm-mcc.partnership@psm.edu

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Event News

“Luchalinda te regala: Educación contra el Cáncer”

On Saturday, December 7th we held an outreach event in collaboration with *Luchalinda Foundation*, which focuses on providing knowledge to the community about cancer prevention. The event "Luchalinda te regala: Educación contra el Cáncer" was held on at the *Pontificia Universidad Católica* in Ponce, PR.

The goal of this event was to educate community members on colon cancer and the role genetics play. Topics presented to community members include: risk factors, prevention, early detection, and the importance of family health history.

More than 40 community members attended the event. During the activity, participants were recruited for the CONTINUAR protocol, whose objective is to record the long-term impact of educational activities on the knowledge and healthy behaviors necessary for cancer prevention.

Dr. Ana DiMarco, an Oncologist from *Hospital de la Mujeres*, spoke about colon cancer, risk factors associated and how to decrease them, and the importance of performing early detection tests. Likewise, we were accompanied by Dr. Julie Dutil, U54 Investigator, who explained how genetics is one of the risk factors that increases the possibility of developing cancer. Dr. Julio Jiménez, coordinator of the activity, participated as a moderator, facilitating questions between the community and guest speakers.



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¡Salud! Serie de charlas is a quarterly educational series for the Hispanic/Latino community in the southern region of Puerto Rico and the Tampa Bay area organized by the Outreach Core.

¡Salud! Serie de charlas en Puerto Rico

At the event held on **November 15, 2019** in Patillas, PR (high-priority rural area), two panelists discussed cancer and mental health. Dr. Axel Ramos, Clinical Psychologist, spoke about mental health and Mr. Jomar López, Community Health Educator (CHE), presented on early detection exams available for the most common types of cancers. The event was carried out in collaboration with a new community partner in Patillas, Ruth Reyes, PhD and the Ruth Reyes Ramos Foundation. We also had the participation of the American Cancer Society (ACS). A total of 21 community members attended the *charla*. The evaluations were highly positive. Further, 12 community members were recruited to participate in the CONTINUAR program.

In response to natural events that occurred since **January 7, 2020** in the southern area of Puerto Rico, an event was held on **January 31, 2020** in Guánica, PR (high priority rural area) to guide the community on efficient ways of working through stress. The CHE, Mr. Jomar López presented information on nutrition and early detection. Additionally, Dr. Julio Jiménez presented on "Maintaining health and self-care during stressful situations". 153 community members attended the event. We had the collaboration of new community partners, Mrs. María de los A. Ortiz and the Ponce Research Institute (PRI) Mobile Unit to provide services to those present. Most of the participants who completed evaluations agreed that they learned something new at the event and were motivated to talk to someone else about what they learned.

¡Salud! Serie de charlas en Tampa, FL

The event held on **October 10, 2019** was in collaboration with the United Food Bank of Plant City and local soccer team Tampa Bay Rowdies. The event focused on cancer prevention. The CHE Mr. Jomar López provided early detection guidelines and soccer players from the Rowdies present spoke on how they have been personally affected by cancer, how they stay motivated to workout and why being healthy is important to them. Moffitt's Clinical Trials Navigator, Viviam Sifontes, was also present and provided educational information on the importance of Hispanic/Latino participation in clinical trials. One Spanish-speaking participant was recruited to participate in the CONTINUAR protocol and receive follow-up.

The event held on **December 9, 2019** focused on lung cancer at Blessed Sacrament Manor, FL. We had the participation of 2 panelists, CHE, Mr. Jomar López and Dr. Jaileene Pérez Morales, PhD. During the *charla*, the CHE focused on early detection and Dr. Perez Morales focused on lung cancer treatments and precision medicine. In addition two Community Advisory Panel members from Tampa were present and volunteered during the event. We had 41 participants from the Latino community attend. During the *charla* 21 participants were recruited to participate in the CONTINUAR protocol.

Medicina de Precisión/Precision Medicine

Precision medicine or personalized medicine is a method that allows doctors to select treatments that are more likely to help patients according to their genetic concept of the disease. The idea of precision medicine is not new, but recent advances in science and technology have helped accelerate the pace in the research field.

When a person is diagnosed with cancer, they usually receive standard treatment given for that type and stage of cancer. However, individuals may respond differently, and until recently, doctors did not understand why. After decades of research, scientists now understand that a patient's tumor has genetic changes that causes cancer to grow and spread in different ways depending of the patient. They have also learned that the changes that occur in a person's cancer may not occur in others who have the same type of cancer, and the same changes that cause cancer can be found in different types of cancer.

PHSU-MCC Partnership grant numbers:

U54CA163071 and U54CA163068



Partnership webpage: www.psm-moffitt.org

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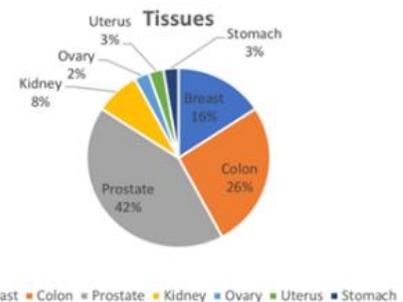
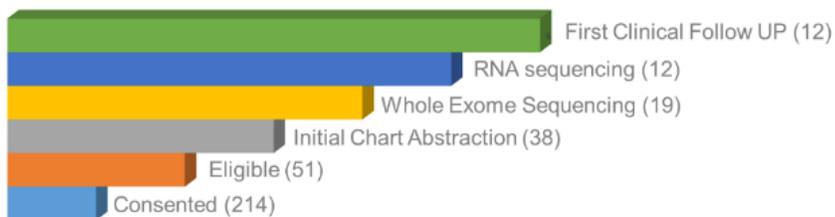




U54 Partnership Highlights

The Puerto Rico Biobank (PRBB) becomes a contributor to The Oncology Research Information Exchange Network (ORIEN)

Personalized medicine is a hallmark of modern and effective cancer therapy. However, this approach to cancer care depends on many types of data (personal, clinical, molecular), and data is woefully lacking for cancer patients of Hispanic/Latino (H/L) backgrounds. ORIEN unites a diverse network of cancer centers in pursuit of a common goal—accomplishing more in the fight against cancer. Powered by M2GEN data and informatics platforms, the Network gives cancer centers, biopharmaceutical companies, researchers, and scientists the ability to work with shared, standardized information, to collaborate seamlessly, and to contribute to each other's scientific goals. During the past year, the PRBB has fully implemented the ORIEN Project collecting tissue and de-identified data from H/Ls from Puerto Rico and Florida. Tissue collected are then processed to obtain molecular information using techniques such as whole exome sequencing and RNA sequencing. We have already collected 359 H/L patient tissues in Tampa Florida and 38 subjects in Ponce, PR. The figure below summarizes progress in the collection of clinical data and molecular results. So far, the most commonly recruited tumors recruited in Ponce are prostate, colon and breast cancer. Plans are to recruit up to 500 patients from Ponce to enter ORIEN. These data will be of great value for clinicians to make treatment decisions for patient of all races and ethnic backgrounds.



Dr. Brian D. González Research Focus



Dr. Brian D. González's research focuses on improving quality of life in minority and underserved cancer survivors. He develops biopsychosocial models to identify which survivors are at greatest risk of quality of life issues and creates mHealth behavioral interventions to improve quality of life in cancer survivors. For example, Dr. González is PI of a K01 award from the NCI Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities in which he is developing a culturally tailored mHealth behavioral intervention to reduce sleep disturbance in African American breast cancer survivors. He was recently awarded a Department of Defense award that will be used to examine disparities in quality of life in an additional cohort of Hispanic prostate cancer survivors. The peer-reviewed award is Dr. González's first R01 equivalent funding. Additionally, Dr. González has a pending NCI R01 application and a State of Florida Department of Health Bankhead-Coley application, which both scored very highly and will focus on aspects of identifying disparities in quality of life issues among African American prostate cancer survivors compared to White survivors. Lastly, Dr. González is PI of another Department of Defense application recently recommended for funding to develop a new patient-reported outcomes measure among prostate cancer patients receiving targeted radionuclide therapy, a new and promising class of cancer therapeutics. Dr. González feels strongly about the value of giving back to the community and the profession. He presents to community groups, such as 100 Black Men of Tampa Bay, and gives interviews to media, such as Univisión. He has served in several roles in professional societies and is currently a Member of the Board of Directors at Society of Behavioral Medicine. We are excited to have Dr. Gonzalez as part of our growing Ponce Health Science University – Moffitt Cancer Center U54 PACHE Partnership and look forward to his many impactful studies in health disparities.



Welcome!



Melissa Marzan, MPH, Dr.PH - Dr. Marzan is an Assistant Professor at PHSU and a U54 Early Stage Investigator (ESI). She holds an MPH from the University of Puerto Rico, and a Dr.PH in Epidemiology and Implementation Science from PHSU. She is also certified in Public Health by the National Board of Health Examiners. Dr. Marzan joined our Partnership in August 1, 2019. She is part of the Planning and Evaluation Core as Co-Investigator and as Evaluation Manager in collaboration with Jessica McIntyre, BA from MCC. She is also active as part of the Outreach Core component and currently (ESI). Dr. Marzan has been trained in implementation science and is focusing her research in developing and testing bio-behavioral preventive interventions to reduce cancers disparities among Young Latino Men who Have Sex with Men (YLMSM).



Carlos J. Diaz, PhD - Dr. Diaz is an Assistant Professor at PHSU and a U54 ESI. He holds a PhD in Biochemistry from Loma Linda University, CA. and a Postdoctoral Scholar in Cancer Therapeutics, Prostate Cancer Metabolism and Health Disparities. Dr. Diaz joined the PHSU-MCC Partnership in August 1, 2019. Actually, he is an Early Stage Investigator (ESI) and his focus is in establishing a prostate cancer research program at PHSU/PRI. His ongoing work is focused on the molecular mechanisms contributing to aberrant cellular metabolism and drug resistance to current treatments, including second-generation anti-androgens and chemotherapy in prostate cancer with the goal of opening novel therapeutic avenues for the effective treatment of patients with advanced prostate cancer. His team aims to address the critical need for translational studies to support the implementation of precision medicine in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.