

Valentina Pérez García

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EDUCATION

Ana G. Méndez University (UAGM), Gurabo, Puerto Rico

Bachelor's Degree in Science
Concentration in Biology

2022 - Present
Expected May 2026

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Intern

Tracy Lab, Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, Baltimore MD
Research Advisor: Dr. Allison Tracy

June 2024 - August 2024

- Assisted with Oyster Disease Detection and Management in Chesapeake Bay.
- Conducted Several Arrays of Assessments (histology, microscopy, dissections).
- Employed Correlations between Biodiversity Metrics and Bioacoustics to Oyster Reef Health.

Aquaculture System (RAS) Intern

Zohar Lab, Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, Baltimore MD
Mentor: Matthew Stromberg, PhD Candidate

- Assisted with Aquaculture System (RAS) projects within the lab.
- Helped with maintenance and cleaning of equipment within the Aquaculture System.
- Handling of Atlantic Salmon (Sonograms, PIT Tagging, Measurement and Weight).

Lead Researcher

Mercado Lab, Ana G. Méndez University, Gurabo Campus
Research Advisor: Hector Delgado Rodríguez, MS

August 2024 - Present

- Pioneered Lichen Diversity Research in Coastal Wetland.
- Developed Novel Data Collection Methods.
- Quantitative Analysis of Lichen-Ecosystem Relationships.

Research Assistant Intern

Paleoecology Lab, Ana G. Méndez University, Gurabo Campus
Research Advisor: Dr. Jose Rosario

June 2023 - August 2023

- Conducted Soil Analysis in Coastal Mangrove Forest.
- Assessed variety of soil properties (texture, pH, nutrient levels).
- Conducted thorough analysis of soil core samples.

Student Researcher

Mercado Lab, Ana G. Méndez University, Gurabo Campus
Research Advisor: Dr. Alex Mercado

January 2023 - Present

- Conducted Bioacoustic Monitoring using Hydrophones.
- Conducted Statistical Tests and Indices (GLMM, SPL, AIC) using RStudio.
- Quantified and Analyzed Large Data Sets.

GRANTS

Puerto Rico Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Research ROUSS Grant

January 2025

Received an undergraduate stipend (\$800) and research material grant (\$200) for academic and research support.

Undergraduate Student Research Fellowship by The Torrey Botanical Society

May 2025

Won a 1st place research materials grant (\$1,500) to support research expenses.

PUBLICATIONS

Velázquez-Alvarado J, **Pérez-García V**, Backstrom JT, S. Tellechea J, Suleimán-Ramos SE, Mercado-Molina AE. Spatiotemporal consistency of bioacoustics metrics in restored coral reefs. In preparation

PRESENTATIONS

Acoustic Diversity In Coral Reefs Under Restoration In Culebra, Puerto Rico. April 21, 2023
Poster Presentation at Symposium of XX UAGM Research Meeting, Carolina, Puerto Rico

Acoustic Diversity In Coral Reefs Under Restoration In Culebra, Puerto Rico. June 10, 2023
Poster Presentation at Symposium of Coral Reefs Week, Caguas Center for Science and Technology (CSA), Caguas, Puerto Rico.

Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Restored Coral Reefs in Culebra, Puerto Rico. February 20, 2024
Poster Presentation at the Ocean Sciences Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, with a travel award from the ASLO Multicultural Program.

Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. March 9, 2024
Poster Presentation at SACNAS UPRRP Local Conference, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. Awarded 2nd place in Environmental Science Category.

Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. April 19, 2024
Panel conversation at XXI UAGM Research Meeting, Cupey, Puerto Rico.

Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. April 20, 2024
Oral Presentation at 57th ACS Junior Technical Meeting (JTM), Aguadilla, Puerto Rico.

Assessment of Lichen Diversity in a Coastal Wetland in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. May 17, 2024
Oral Presentation at UAGM Undergraduate Symposium, Gurabo, Puerto Rico.

Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. June 4, 2024
Oral Presentation at Symposium of Coral Reefs Week host by Department of Natural Resources of Puerto Rico.

Environmental Variation Impact on Co-Infections in the Eastern Oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*). August 8, 2024
Oral Presentation at 23rd IMET Summer Intern Research Day, Baltimore, Maryland.

Evaluating Lichen Diversity Value in Arecibo, Puerto Rico's Coastal Mangrove Forest. March 8, 2025
Poster Presentation at SACNAS UPRRP 2nd Local Conference, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico.

Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. April 17, 2025
Poster Presentation at Annual Research Symposium at the Institute for Advanced Computational Science (IACS) at Stony Brook University.

Impact of Environmental Variation on Pest and Parasite Patterns in Eastern Oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) in Chesapeake Bay. August 14, 2025
Poster Presentation at the Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, with travel support from the SEEDS ESA Program. **Accepted.**

Evaluating Lichen Diversity Value in Arecibo, Puerto Rico's Coastal Mangrove Forest. October 31, 2025
Poster Presentation at the NDiSTEM Sacnas Annual Meeting in Columbus, Ohio, with travel support from the SACNAS Travel Award. **Accepted.**

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Certification - CITI Program
IRB Training for faculty/ students/ researchers in Biomedical Research - CITI Program
ACUC Training for researchers/ faculty/ students in Research - CITI Program
Animal Care and Use Committees (ACUC) Certification - CITI Program
Wildlife Research - CITI Program
Biosafety Training for Students - CITI Program
Working With Fish in Research Settings - CITI Program
Working with Zebrafish (Danio rerio) in Research Settings - CITI Program
Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED - American Red Cross

AWARDS

ASLO Multicultural Program	February 2024
Awarded full funding to participate in the ASLO Multicultural Program, presenting research and engaging with scientists at the ASLO Ocean Sciences Meeting to promote diversity in marine science.	
Visit NC State Program - The Graduate School	November 2024
Awarded full funding to participate in the 2024 Visit NC State Graduate School Program, meeting with faculty and touring research facilities in marine, earth, and atmospheric sciences.	
Getting You Into IU Indianapolis Institute Program	April 2025
Awarded full funding to participate in the 2024 Getting You Into IU–Indianapolis Program, learning about graduate admissions, funding opportunities, and strategies for building a strong application.	
SEEDS ESA Field Trip - University of Virginia, Coastal Research Center	May 2025
Awarded full funding to participate in an ESA SEEDS Field Trip, gaining hands-on experience in ecological fieldwork, including Rod Surface Elevation Table (RSET) measurements, insect surveys, and canopy cover estimation.	
BEACHES Program - Northeastern University (Boston, USA)	June 2025
Awarded full funding to attend workshop at Northeastern University, and receive mentorship on graduate school applications and exploring careers in marine, environmental, and geosciences.	
SEEDS Undergraduate Student Travel Awards	Accepted
Awarded full funding through the SEEDS Undergraduate Student Travel Award to participate in the ESA Annual Meeting, presenting research, engaging with ecologists, and promoting diversity in the field of ecology.	
SACNAS Student Travel Awards	Accepted
Awarded full funding through the SACNAS Travel Award to attend the 2025 National Diversity in STEM Conference in Columbus, Ohio, presenting research, connecting with STEM professionals, and promoting inclusion in the sciences.	

SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Language: Fluent in Spanish and English.

Technical Skills: Fish Handling, Histology, Microscopy, Spectrophotometers, Water Quality Testing.

Computer Skills: Adept with Microsoft Office Suite; Basic proficiency in MATLAB; Proficient in RStudio.

Extracurriculars: President of the American Chemical Society Student Chapter, Vocal of the Student Council and Member of the Student Association of Environmental Sciences.

Professional Membership: Acoustical Society of America, American Chemical Society, Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography, SACNAS, and Torrey Botanical Society.

Interests: Bioacoustics | Conservation Ecology | Fisheries Science | Habitat Restoration | Science Education