

Josean M. Reyes Rivera is a senior undergraduate at the University of Puerto Rico – Río Piedras Campus, majoring in Cellular and Molecular Biology. He is passionate about science, researching, and teaching. Reyes' goals are to pursue a PhD in Developmental Biology with an evolutionary perspective, and to stay in academia researching and teaching. Josean started doing research in high school as part of the Ana G. Mendez University System Research Saturday Academy, which led him to a Pre-college Summer Internship opportunity at NASA Ames, CA. When he came back, he entered to Universidad Metropolitana as an Early-undergraduate Biomathematics Scholar, where he studied his last year of high school and first year of college simultaneously. That summer he worked at Vanderbilt University researching in quality control for proteomics. Back in Puerto Rico he transferred to the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus. The summer after, he worked at University of Chicago at the Institute for Molecular Engineering as part of the Leadership Alliance Program. Since August 2015 he's been working at Dr. José García-Arrarás' Laboratory, first as part of the RISE Program, and currently as a MARC student. Josean studied the role of the Wnt signaling pathway on the intestinal regeneration process of the sea cucumber. Last summer, he participated on the NSF-REU at the University of California – Berkeley, researching about Hox genes' function after fragmentation and rearrangement in the leech. Josean is currently studying the role of apoptosis and proliferation during intestinal regeneration in sea cucumber *Holothuria glaberrima*. Reyes plans to continue growing in the area of research, and to contribute to the knowledge of developmental processes and evolution.