

GREETCHEN DÍAZ

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

Hi! I am Greetchen Díaz. scientist, educator, communicator and an advocate for girls and women in STEM careers. How did I start in science?

Well, I never had STEM role models but I had an encyclopedia! I always dreamed of being an astronomer but then my path in science was to study the universe of microorganisms!

So, I learned many things beyond the lab and I developed my career within the world of non-profit organizations.

Creativity is one word that describes me ... What I do every day is to impact students and teachers by creating programs that fosters the participation of scientists in science K-12 education.

I really think that my job is the best STEM job in the world!

[Video Statement](#)

BIOGRAPHY

Greetchen Díaz is a scientist, educator, communicator and advocate for girls and women in STEM. Throughout her studies and professional career, she promotes these disciplines through projects in education, communication, outreach and science policy. Greetchen, who is Director of the Science Education Program at Ciencia Puerto Rico, dreamed of being a scientist and to impact people's lives. She achieved her dream by developing her career within the world of non-profit organizations. She has been able to create and implement programs to support researchers, and to impact teachers and students by fostering the participation of STEM experts in K-12 education. Greetchen completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in biology at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez, and a PhD in Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology at The Ohio State University. She was a postdoc at the Center for Virology, University of Nebraska. Greetchen is the oldest of five siblings, and the first to obtain a doctoral degree in her family. Her greatest motivation is to be a role model for her family.

SEGMENT PITCHES

Transforming STEM through the non-profit world (locations: office, school, science festival, scientific conference such as AAAS conference)

Most students that are interested in STEM don't see non-profit organizations as possible employers or a way for social innovation related to STEM. Greetchen Díaz, a Puerto Rican scientist, developed her career within the non-profit world. She began as Grants Program Director of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust, where she implemented the first local grant mechanism for researchers.

Currently, Greetchen is Director of the Science Education Program and Community Partnerships of Ciencia Puerto Rico (CienciaPR), a non-profit organization with the mission of democratizing and transforming scientific education. There, she leads initiatives that foster the participation of STEM experts in K-12 science education.

Before joining the CienciaPR staff, she volunteered for about 10 years and participated in numerous projects. It's evident that her leadership has also been felt in her volunteer work. Greetchen, who is committed to the advancement of microbial sciences, was president of the Puerto Rico Society of Microbiologists, a local branch of the American Society for Microbiology (ASM), and is currently a member of its Board of Directors.

Seed of Success: How a curious girl created her own path in science and is opening it for others (locations: exteriors, office, school, science fair, science festival, scientific conference such as AAAS conference)

From a very young age, Greetchen Díaz dreamed of being an astronomer even though she grew up in a community with few resources. She was educated in public schools in Puerto Rico and just before entering university, she discovered that her path in science was not astronomy, but biology. Greetchen, the oldest of five siblings, is the first of her family to obtain a doctoral degree.

She began to deepen the issue of girls and women in STEM when she created the Borinqueña blog, for Hispanic and Puerto Rican women in science and technology. Then, she created "Semillas de Triunfo" (Seed of Success), a program of STEM Ambassadors that inspires middle and high school girls to pursue STEM careers. To become ambassadors, girls develop a STEM outreach project in their communities, which encourages leadership development.

Greetchen's work on the issue of women and girls in STEM has been carried out through initiatives of education, communication, community outreach and advocacy. Her career shows a sense of commitment to herself, but above to all to the future generation of pioneers.