

# SOPHIA MARIANELE ACOSTA AVILÉS

## EDUCATION

---

Ponce Health Sciences University  
Dental Medicine Doctorate

August 2024 - present

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico  
Biomedical Sciences bachelor's degree  
Minor in Biology  
Magna Cum Laude (██████████)

August 2019- May 2023

## HONORS AND AWARDS

---

### **Magna Cum Laude Medal**

June 2023

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico  
Awarded to students who graduated with a grade point average of 3.80 to 3.949.

### **Award of Leadership**

May 2023

National Biological Honor Society TriBeta Zeta Delta chapter  
Awarded for recipients' excellence, diligence, and commitment to the National Biological Honor Society TriBeta Zeta Delta chapter.

### **College of Science Dean's Honor List**

December 2019- May 2023

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico  
For maintaining a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or more.

### **Certificate of Recognition- Master of Ceremony**

November 2021

National Biological Honor Society BBB Zeta Delta chapter  
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico  
For distinguished contribution as master of ceremonies during the chapter initiation in November 2021.

### **President's Award**

March 2021

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico  
In recognition of academic excellence  
demonstrated to be part of the top 100 academic indices.

### **Academic Excellence Certificate**

March 2021

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico  
Recognition for academic excellence  
demonstrated during the 2019-2020 academic year.

## LANGUAGES

---

**Spanish:** Native

**English:** Functionally native

**Italian:** Basic

## CERTIFICATIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

---

**Infection Control Workshop**, School of Dental Medicine, Medical Sciences Campus of the University of Puerto Rico, November 10, 2022

Description: Workshop offered by Jonathan E. Sotomayor, where the different methods of avoiding cross-contamination and infections, and the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE) were explained and demonstrated.

**Cardiopulmonary Reanimation Certification**, Learning & Education Medical Response System, October 21, 2022 ( [REDACTED] ) & April 30, 2021 ( [REDACTED] )

Description: The practice of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the importance of the step-by-step execution were taught in accordance with the American Heart Society.

**III Certification in Public Responsibility and Governance, The culture of solidarity and compassion: response to the vulnerability and discarding**, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico- Institute of Continuing Education, December 14, 2021

Description: Achieve compassion and solidarity, both in the public and private spheres, and in communities, in a 24-contact hour course.

**Combating Invisibility Before the Use of Opioids, Understanding Overdoses and the Use of Narcan (Naloxone) Certification**, Addiction and Mental Health Services Administration (ASSMCA), September 3, 2021

Description: It was a two-hour course where the use of opioids and the identification of an overdose were discussed. Also, the instructor indicated how to properly administer Naloxone should the situation warrant it.

**Colgate Training: Bright Smiles, Bright Futures**, Colgate- Palmolive, Zoom, August 27, 2021

Description: Information about oral health and its care was provided. Instructions on how to properly inform other people on the subject were provided, including a workshop on how to speak to adults vs. children.

**Navigation Skills and Safety Certification**, Mar Navigation Academy, July 2, 2021.

Description: It was a 20-hour online contact course that prepared the individual in maritime laws and regulations, as well as navigation maneuvers. It certifies the recipient to obtain the navigation license.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

---

### **Impact of Psychological Distress in Breast Cancer Survivors' Periodontal Health**

Ponce Research Institute, Ponce Health Sciences University, Dr. Margarita Bonilla

June 2025 – July 2025

- As a volunteer student, I assisted Dr. Bonilla by performing ELISA tests, analyzing the resulting data, and organizing all calculations in a structured Excel document to support her research progress.

### **Degradation of benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene using fungi from the Punta Cucharas Natural Reserve in Ponce, Puerto Rico**

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus, Department of Natural Sciences, Prof. Juan Acevedo Alfaro

January 2023- March 2023

- Volunteer student in charge of creating the growth mediums for the fungus recovered from the “Reserva Natural Punta Cucharas” and inoculating the growth.

## SHADOWING EXPERIENCE

---

### *In-person*

#### **Dr. Manuel Rodríguez Rivera**, General Dentist, Dental Gerona Studio

January 2024 – April 2024

- Dr. Rodríguez allowed me to observe procedures in his office, such as Invisalign treatment. By shadowing dental assistants, I also learned about prophylaxis techniques and the steps involved in performing dental cleanings.

## WORK HISTORY

---

### **O.K. Tutors**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade Biology Tutor | Ponce, Puerto Rico | January 2024 – May 2024

I provided two weekly virtual tutoring sessions (1.5 hours each) to a 9th-grade student from the Caribbean School in Ponce, Puerto Rico, helping review class material and reinforcing topics through presentations.

### **Professor Assistant, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico**

Work-study student | Ponce, Puerto Rico | August 2022- May 2023

I assisted Professor Marla Méndez with grading, updating lecture materials, and providing support during laboratory sessions.

### **Biology Department Director's Assistant, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico**

Work-study student | Ponce Puerto Rico | January 2022- May 2022

I assisted Professor Carmen Reyes with organizing academic paperwork and providing support in the Biology Warehouse as needed.

**Biology Warehouse, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico**

Work-study student | Ponce, Puerto Rico | October 2019- March 2020

I prepared and maintained laboratory materials, including mixtures, setups, and Petri dishes, ensuring proper cleanup after use.

---

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

---

**COSSAO Mission Trip Volunteer**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

December 15-17, 2025

I volunteered at COSSAO, a community-led health center in Utuado, Puerto Rico, where I assisted upper-year dental students during clinical procedures while serving underserved communities in central Puerto Rico.

**Operation Christmas Child**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

November 19, 2025

Built a box with toys and hygiene products for children in need around the world. I chose to provide for a girl who could be between the ages of 6 and 9.

**Dental Anatomy Webinar – The Dental Divers**

University of Puerto Rico – Arecibo Campus

November 12, 2025

Offered a conference to the pre-dental students at the university mentioned above, where concepts of dental anatomy were discussed to introduce them to the terminology they will encounter in dental school.

**Pirates' vs Cavities Outreach Event**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

October 31, 2025

I helped coordinate and volunteered at the event, which consisted of providing oral health information to people trick-or-treating at the Plaza del Caribe mall.

**Dentistry Merit Badge Activity**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

September 13, 2025

I volunteered for the event as a lecturer on the topic of dental traumas and carious lesions. I was excited to be part of the initiative to certify kids in the Boy Scouts of America with the Dentistry Merit Badge.

**ASDA's Board Sets the Example: Community Outreach at Utuado, Puerto Rico**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

August 2, 2025

I visited COSSAO, a community-led free health clinic in the heart of the mountains in Puerto Rico. We had the opportunity to shadow the dentist's services and provide oral health information to patients of all ages, present at the clinic.

**ASDA's Pre-Dental Bootcamp**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

June 16, 2025, to June 17, 2025

Served on the coordinating team for a two-day pre-dental student program, featuring hands-on activities, conferences, and graduate school interview preparation.

**The Dental Divers Summer Camp: Operation Smiles**

Hogar San Miguel in Ponce, Puerto Rico

May 3, 2025

Coordinated and led a conference for children at a children's home, teaching the importance of oral health, proper nutrition, and communicable conditions. A bounce house was also included to create a fun, summer camp-like experience.

**Community Outreach at Ponce, Puerto Rico**

Urban Strategies Early Head Start Ponce

May 1, 2025

Volunteered with Dr. Capó, Assistant Dean for Community Outreach at Ponce Health Sciences University School of Dental Medicine, to provide support during his oral health screenings of the children at the Head Start facility. Also assisted with filling out the medical forms.

**Outreach at Fernando L. Malavé School**

Ponce Health Sciences University School of Dental Medicine, Class 2028

April 10, 2025

Participated in the service event with my DMD class, providing oral health education to first- and third-grade students tailored to their level of understanding.

**Community Outreach: Ponce Down Syndrome Institute**

American Student Dental Association – Ponce Health Sciences University Chapter

February 15, 2025

I coordinated the visit and volunteered to offer an oral health conference to the children and adults at the institute. Also, to spread Valentine's Day friendship, cookies were decorated.

**The Importance of Taking Care of Our Oral Health – The Dental Divers**

Miglen Learning School in Sabana Grande, Puerto Rico

February 13, 2025

Provided a conference for students from the fourth grade up to the seventh grade. I provided oral health information adapted to their varying levels of understanding.

**Diving Into Grad School: Tips and Tricks to Maximize Your Admission**

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico and Florida International University

October 1, 2024 & October 22, 2024

Coordinated and provided a conference for the universities listed above, sharing my journey and strategies that strengthened my admissions portfolio. My goal was to guide and mentor future graduate students, most of whom were pre-dental.

### **Oral Health Promotion**

Cub Scouting Pack 163 of Caribbean School | Ponce, Puerto Rico

February 2, 2024

Pack 163 of Caribbean School held an oral promotion activity coordinated by the pack's den leader. I taught the children, ranging from first to third grade, about the importance of balancing their diets to support their oral health.

### **Health Clinic – Guánica, Puerto Rico**

Ponce Health Sciences University

January 20, 2024

I participated by assisting at the registration table and by offering a conference to the children present about the importance of taking care of their oral health.

### **“Clínica de la Mujer – Oeste”**

Enlace Volunteering Group

December 2, 2023

I participated in this clinic organized by Enlace Volunteering Group, assisting at the cardiovascular station and registration. I shadowed medical students, learning how to accurately complete medical history chats, and observed and performed an EKG under guidance.

### **Mission Trip – Visiting Three Geriatric Centers**

“Dentistas Misioneros de Puerto Rico”

September 9, 2023

I participated in a one-day mission trip alongside the “Dentistas Misioneros de Puerto Rico”. I was tasked with informing the residents and staff of the geriatric centers about the proper technique for brushing their teeth. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to shadow the dentists who attended the mission.

### **2nd Meeting for Men’s Health**

Ponce Health Sciences University

August 29, 2023

The activity consisted of conferences and a free clinic revolving around men’s health. A total of 137 people were helped by the clinic; furthermore, over 60 TSH tests, 38 PSA tests, and 28 mammograms were carried out. My role consisted of registering the patients as soon as they entered the clinic.

### **Mission Trip- Culebra, Puerto Rico**

“Dentistas Misioneros de Puerto Rico”

August 17, 2023

A one-day mission trip to the “Escuela Ecológica” in Culebra, Puerto Rico, was conducted to provide information about the importance of taking care of our oral health.

My role was to give a conference to the eleventh grade regarding the proper technique of brushing teeth, and to fill out the dental evaluation paperwork.

**Back to School at Clausells**

Ponce Health Sciences University

July 19, 2023

The activity consisted of a free clinic, involving dental and family medicine evaluations, for the residents of Clausells in Ponce, Puerto Rico. I worked alongside the dentist in the clinic by filling out the dental evaluation paperwork with the patient's personal information and by teaching the kids how to brush their teeth.

**Visit to the Ponce Down Syndrome Institute**

National Biological Honor Society TriBeta Zeta Delta chapter

March 18, 2023

Painted crafts and decorated cupcakes, which had a Valentine's Day theme, were made with the children of the institute.

**Visit to the San Francisco de Asís Animal Shelter**

National Biological Honor Society TriBeta Zeta Delta chapter

March 4, 2023

Volunteered for four hours with the team of the San Francisco de Asís Animal Shelter; I cleaned dog kennels, scrubbed the food bowls, and bathed puppies.

**Visit to the Ponce Down Syndrome Institute**

National Biological Honor Society TriBeta Zeta Delta chapter

November 19, 2022

Created arts and crafts that were Thanksgiving-themed with the children of the institute and helped coordinate a pizza party for them.

**Operation Christmas Child**

Samaritan's Purse International Relief

November 15, 2022

Sent a Christmas-wrapped shoe box with toys and hygiene products to children in need around the world.

**Free Vaccination Clinic for Dogs**

The Sato Project

November 12, 2022

Spent 5 hours volunteering at the Municipal Animal Shelter of Ponce, Puerto Rico, to help fill out the owner's information forms and sort vaccines for the veterinary staff.

**Donation Center for People Affected by Hurricane Fiona**

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico

October 5, 2022

I spent 4 hours volunteering in the donation center set up by my institution for victims of Hurricane Fiona; I sorted and accepted donations.

**Beach Cleanup at Bahía Ballenas**

“Tortugeros del Sur”

February 27, 2022

I participated in cleaning and removing obstacles from Ballenas Beach in Guánica, Puerto Rico, to prepare it for Leatherback turtle nesting.

**“Mesón de Amor”**

Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico

February 26, 2022 & November 27, 2021

Impacted a homeless community in Ponce, Puerto Rico, through care packages filled with dental supplies and necessities.

**Operation Christmas Child**

Samaritan’s Purse International Relief

November 10, 2021

Sent a Christmas-wrapped shoe box with toys and hygiene products to children in need around the world.

**International Coastal Cleanup**

Scuba Dogs Society

September 18, 2021

Beach cleanup that took place in Parque del Litoral y Guanajibo, Mayagüez.

**Junior Chamber International (JCI)- Clean and Save Marine Life**

Junior Chamber International (JCI)

July 24, 2021

Beach cleanup at La Guancha in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

---

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES****ASDA’s National Leadership Conference 2025**

American Student Dental Association

November 21, 2025, to November 23, 2025

I represented ASDA PHSU and had the opportunity to attend informative sessions that will contribute effectively toward my future.

**ASDA’s District 5 Leadership Retreat**

American Student Dental Association – District 5

August 15, 2025, to August 17, 2025

Traveled to Kissimmee, Florida, to strengthen collaboration with my District 5 cabinet members through team-building activities and leadership sessions, and to meet many of them in person for the first time.

**PDS Health’s Dental Students – National Boot Camp**

PDS Health at Irvine, California



June 5, 2025 to June 8, 2025

Sponsored trip to PDS Health's facilities to learn more about the connection our oral cavity has with systemic conditions, and the facilities they offer.

**PHSU-PRI Annual Scientific Conference: RCMI Symposium on Health Disparities**

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU)

May 17, 2025

Volunteered as an usher during the event, which hosted student research projects from across all programs in PHSU.

**ASDA's Annual Session 2024: Where Your Voice is Instrumental**

American Student Dental Association

February 28, 2025, to March 2, 2025

Represented ASDA PHSU as the first delegate in all the sessions and had the opportunity to vote on resolutions presented by ASDA student leaders.

**Puerto Rico Oral Health Congress 2025: Smiles of the Future**

Colegio de Cirujanos Dentistas de Puerto Rico

February 14, 2025

I attended as a first-year dental student and had the opportunity to network with companies and dentists committed to the oral health of Puerto Rico.

**49<sup>th</sup> American Student Dental Association Convention**

American Student Dental Association- University of Puerto Rico chapter

April 28, 2022

I participated in a tooth waxing workshop where dental anatomy was implemented and taught. I also attended multiple conferences in correlation to dental health.

**Ponce Research Institute of Ponce Health and Sciences University- Tumor Board**

U54 PHSU-MCC Partnership Research Education Core

January 17, 2023

Participated as an usher during the activity, which was a meeting of medical students and faculty where tumor progress related to research was presented. My job was to serve food to the attendees of the tumor board.

**23<sup>rd</sup> Down Syndrome Walk**

Ponce Down Syndrome Institute

November 15, 2022

Participated in a walk whose purpose was to demonstrate solidarity with people with Down syndrome and their families in the southern part of Puerto Rico.

**Ponce Health and Sciences University- CODA visit**

Commission on Dental Accreditation

September 13, 2022

Participated as an usher during the Commission on Dental Accreditation's visit to Ponce Health Sciences University's upcoming dental school. Our job was to guide the CODA members to their respective classrooms when it was time for a meeting.

#### **48<sup>th</sup> American Student Dental Association Convention**

American Student Dental Association- University of Puerto Rico chapter

April 29, 2022

I participated in a tooth waxing workshop where dental anatomy was implemented and taught. I also attended multiple conferences in correlation to dental health.

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

---

##### **Conoce a los estudiantes del Programa Dental de PHSU**

Podcast: El Rugido de PHSU – October 30, 2025

<https://youtu.be/TUYVtyr-4AM?si=U7HKFUISqjdNSzDg>

##### **Puerto Rico's New Chapter: Making Dental History**

Contour Magazine – October 2025 Issue

American Student Dental Association

<https://asda-contour.mydigitalpublication.com/october-2025/page-28>

##### **ASDA's Member Spotlight**

The New Leader E-newsletter – March 2025 Issue

American Student Dental Association

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/New-Leader--March-2025.html?soid=1102168765265&aid=iNWG2YTYZok>

#### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

---

##### ***Professional***

**Academy of General Dentistry**, August 2025 – present

Member

**American Student Dental Association**, October 2024 – present

President, October 2024 – present

**American Dental Association**, October 2024 – present

Student Member

**The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico chapter**, May 2022- May 2024

Member No. 12725028

**National Biological Honor Society TriBeta Zeta Delta chapter**, 2020-2023

President, August 2022- May 2023

Secretary, August 2021- May 2022

### *Academic*

**Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Interest Group,** August 2025 – present  
Secretary, August 2025 – present

## **CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS**

---

### **Conference- How to fill out the ADEA AADSAS? Tips and Experience as a Dental Medicine Student,** May 12, 2023

- Offered by Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, Ponce campus; the speaker was Zuanne Irizarry.

### **Conference- Dental Profession in a Private Practice,** May 9, 2023

- Offered by Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, Ponce campus; the speaker was Dr. Fabiel Lugo.

### **Indirect Vision Workshop,** May 9, 2023

- Offered by Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, Ponce campus; the workshop leader was Jaydiel Casiano.

### **Wax Workshop,** April 21, 2023

- Offered by first-year dental students in the School of Dental Medicine of the Medical Sciences Campus of the University of Puerto Rico.

### **Suture Workshop,** April 4, 2023

- Offered by the American Student Dental Association of the School of Dental Medicine of the Medical Sciences Campus of the University of Puerto Rico.

### **Conference- Dentistry for Patients with Special Needs,** March 16, 2023

- Offered by the Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico; the speaker was Dr. Ivette Rodríguez.

### **Tooth Charting Workshop,** March 7, 2023

- Offered by the Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico; the workshop leaders were Amanda Franco and Ana Vega.

### **Summer Workshop of the School of Dental Medicine,** Medical Sciences Campus of the University of Puerto Rico, June 29-30, 2022

- Suturing Workshop and Waxing Workshop on June 29, 2022
- Restorative Dental Workshop and Mock-up Interview Workshop on June 30, 2022

### **Motor Skills in Dentistry: Tooth Carving Workshop,** March 10, 2022

- Offered by the Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico; the speakers were Amanda Franco and Ana Vega.

**Conference- Do You Want to Be a Dentist? An Overview of Everything, March 7, 2022**

- Offered by the Puerto Rico Pre-Dental Association of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico; the speaker was Dr. Bruni Ortiz Giuliani.

**SKILLS**

---

Computer-literate

Creative, analytical person

Adjust quickly to any situation

Strong Client Relations

Excellent communication skills

Time management, and organization

**INTERESTS**

---

Painting seascapes

Learning new cultures through travel

Writing free verse poetry and travel entries

Reading action, adventure, and romance novels

**REFERENCES**

---

Available upon request.