Naiomy Deliz Rios Arce  
Michigan State University  
2018 Porter Fellow

Where were you born?  
I was born and raised in Puerto Rico.

What childhood experiences led to your interest in science?  
As a kid, I was very curious. I loved expending time outside with my cousins looking for different and unique small animals. However, my love for science began when my science teacher showed me for the first-time how to use a microscope. I was able to see some bacteria. I couldn’t believe what I was seeing. I was fascinated with the ability to see something that you can’t usually see. After that experience, I knew science was something I will like to pursue.

Where did you attend school/university?  
I wanted to keep learning more about microorganisms, so I decided to do a bachelor degree in microbiology at the University of Puerto Rico, Arecibo campus.

How did you become interested in physiology specifically?  
I also wanted to know how the human body and organs work. I took several classes that introduced me to physiology. However, there was not a physiology program in my school, so the classes were limited. Therefore, for my Ph.D. studies, I decided to join the Department of Physiology.

What is your current position?  
Currently I am completing my Ph.D. degree in the Department of Physiology at Michigan State University.

How did you decide on your current career path?  
I wanted to do research in an area that I could implement both my passion for microorganism and my affection for the human systems.

Describe your work in lay terms  
I am a scientist in training working in understanding the role of gut microbiota in bone density.

What are your outside interests? What do you do for fun?  
Outside the lab, I love expending time with my dogs, family, and friends. I enjoy traveling and learning about different cultures. I also enjoy doing outreach activities in which I can teach kids about physiology.

What advice would you give…  
A student considering a career in physiology? My best advice is that if you feel passionate about investigating and learning the function of the human body at the level of cells, tissues, and organ system a career in Physiology is for you!