

UPRM on its way to Singapore

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Translated by Tia Gilson

Five students from the fields of Business Administration (ADEM, by its Spanish acronym), and Agricultural Science and Engineering, from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (UPRM), will represent Puerto Rico at a worldwide competition for Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), that will take place October 1-3, 2008, in Singapore.

These delegates will compete for the SIFE World Cup with countries such as, Mexico, Nicaragua, Australia, France, and Morocco among others. A ceremony was held to pay tribute to these students, where they received a trophy distinguishing them as the National SIFE Team.

Through their project “*Sembrando para el futuro*” (Planting for the future) they offered business workshops for children of the Añasco Beach Community, where they developed an agricultural nursery at the school. The results were only positive, it made them representatives of Puerto Rico in the worldwide competition that will take place in Singapore.

As Dr. José Romaguera, professor of ADEM and advisor of UPRM’s SIFE, explained it, the project has numerous benefits. It benefits the community as much as it does the students who were involved. “By showing them the advantages of free-enterprise, they learn to live better. That is why we are proud to send UPRM’s SIFE team as representatives Puerto Rico.”

Professor Eva Zoe Quiñones, the Dean of ADEM, assured that these young adults would do an excellent job in Singapore. She added that the goal of the program is to train capable professionals that make significant contributions to already existing business,

who establish their own businesses, and at the end of it all, have an impact on benefits for the community, as well as contribute to the development of the Island's economy.

“UPRM and SIFE share the same vision. That is why to see the fruits of their labor, is reason enough to celebrate and be happy,” said Quiñones.

In accordance with Javier Zapata, President of UPRM's SIFE, the project's goal consists of reducing the number of school dropouts by increasing the retention rate of children from the community. Through “*Sembrando para el futuro*” the students offered workshops based on SIFE criteria. Among these criteria were: marketing economy, leadership skills, financial training, business ethics and entrepreneurship.

The project, who's duration lasted one year, allowed the children to plant a nursery within the school, and later to sell what was produced at a final competition. The children kept the money earned from these sales, due to the fact that they had already been taught how to manage personal finances.

At the activity the students received their trophy from professor Lola Iglesias, Executive Director of SIFE in Puerto Rico. “UPRM has given us its best students, why shouldn't it be said that we will be one of the best in Singapore,” said Iglesias. She also expressed her anticipation that Puerto Rico would be the winner of the worldwide competition in 2010.

UPRM's SIFE 2009

UPRM's SIFE Team of 2009 has been selected. One of its members, Franshesca Torres, who is in her first year of Business Administration, indicated that what drew her to the project was the opportunity to grow as a leader, to acquire the skills necessary for working in a group, and the chance to apply the skills she had acquired from class.

Nayda Pichardo, a third year business student, expressed that the most attractive aspect for her was the organization's community focus.

Good luck and best wishes to UPRM's delegates!