

Leslie M. Martínez Román
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Education

Texas A&M University, College Station Campus

PhD in Urban & Regional Sciences with an emphasis on Environmental Hazards and Housing/Community Development Rico | Expected degree in December 2027

Accepted at the NSF-Full Steam Mentoring Program coordinated by NOAA, NSF & Howard University, 2023-2024.

University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

Master's degree in planning with an emphasis in Urban Planning and Territorial Planning | San Juan, Puerto Rico | June 2022

Accepted at the *2021 Pre-Doctoral Workshop for Underrepresented Students of Color and LGBTQIA+ Students*.

Relevant Coursework taken at the Social Work Graduate School: Analysis of Social Context; Introduction to Program Evaluation & Proposal Development; Social Program Management; and Analysis of Social Welfare Policy and Social Programs (18 graduate credits).

Relevant Coursework taken at the Graduate School of Public Health: Introduction to Public Health, Environmental Health, and Social Determinants of Health (13 graduate credits).

University of Puerto Rico, Carolina Campus

Bachelor of Arts Social Sciences - Criminal Justice: Law and Society | June 2016

Relevant Coursework: *Certificate in Community Development: Prevention, Intervention and Mediation* (15 undergraduate credits).

Study abroad

Pontifical Catholic University of Peru | Lima, Peru | Summer 2015

Study abroad coursework in: Indigenous Rights and Legal Pluralism.

Relevant Certificates

Centre for Advanced Studies of Puerto Rico | San Juan, Puerto Rico | April – May 2015

Certificate in: Diplomacy and International Relations.

Grants and Awards

Lechner Scholarship, 2023-2025

Natural Hazards Center's Quick Response Research Award Program, 2020-2021

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, 2017

Professional Experience

Graduate Research Assistant | Hazard Reduction & Recovery Center at Texas A&M University | August 2024 –Present | 20 hours weekly, 9 months contract (summer without contract)

➤ I work as part of multiple research teams. Currently, I am involved fully in two research

projects: 1) Studying Buyout Program in Harris County, Texas; and 2) Housing Elevation & Mitigation. As part of my tasks, I conduct literature review, transcription cleaning, interviews, prepared IRB materials, and write/create research instruments as well.

Planner (Remote) | Municipal Recovery Planning Project (MRPP) | Estudios Técnicos, Inc. | July 2022 – January 2023 | 25-30 Hours/Week

- Assisted and provided technical assistance successfully in the elaboration of 10+ Municipal Recovery Plans.
- Researched planning tools such as law and regulations to support the development of hazard mitigation/recovery planning strategies.
- Supports the planning, logistical coordination of public and community meetings (e.g., calling prospects participants, printing, organizing, etc.).
- Researched, identified, compiled, validated, and transformed data to demonstrate patterns and findings.
- Enthusiastically participated in qualitative data collection and analysis of 2 Municipalities.
- Co-developed and conducted community assessments, demographic studies, estimates for programs and program goals, to conceptualize plans, and to establish required milestones to complete projects.
- Collaborated on the definition of a set of recommendations on opportunities that apply to the municipalities and communities, including community engagement and housing recovery strategies, public order codes (e.g., to regulate short term rentals) and municipal ordinances, property titles and zoning, and environmental laws, among others.
- Prepared meetings minutes as requires.

Graduate Research Assistant | Graduate School of Public Health at University of Puerto Rico | August 2022 – November 2022 | 10 Hours/Week

- Collaborated as a research assistant in a Public Health Disaster Research that focuses on *mortality and injuries associated with Hurricane Maria*.

Graduate Research Assistant & Social Scientist | Coastal Research and Planning Institute of Puerto Rico at the University of Puerto Rico | San Juan, Puerto Rico | August 2021 – June 2022 | 18 Hours/Week

- Disseminated information to a wide range of relevant stakeholders and coordinated the community engagement activities to ensure the effective transfer of FEMA Post-María Beach Assessment's knowledge outputs and results.
- Created thoughtful communication products (e.g., infographics; workshops; posters; and technical reports).
- Traveled to field sites to collect and record data using Survey123 as appropriate to the specific objectives of the project.

Graduate Research Assistant | Center for Social Research at University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras | San Juan, Puerto Rico | August 2020 – June 2021 | 30-40 Hours/Week

- Participated in Public Health Disaster Research in U.S territories that focuses on understanding how people affected by sequential and concurrent disasters make decisions to

protect themselves and others within their communities (As awardee of the Natural Hazards Center's Quick Response Research Award Program).

- Verified data in accordance with specified research protocol and coding procedures and enter data into a computer database and/or spreadsheet application for subsequent analysis.
- Traveled to field sites to collect and record data and/or samples as appropriate to the specific objectives of the project.
- Assisted in the development of interview schedules; contact potential subjects to introduce and explain study objectives and protocol and to arrange interviews, either in person or by telephone.
- Identified and compiled lists of potential research subjects in accordance with study objectives and parameters, as appropriate to the individual position.

Title Clearance Specialist | Title Clearance Program at Puerto Rico Department of Housing (CDBG-DR) | Bayamón, Puerto Rico | October 2019 – August 2020 | 40+ Hours/Week

- Admitted more than 1,000+ homeowners that lack a clear title to their properties.
- Oriented more than 1,000+ prospective applicants/homeowners that lack of a clear title.
- Adopted a strategic workflow to conduct an extensive title search of 100+ cases.
- Maintained applicants' digital and physical records by reviewing case notes, logging events and progress.
- Communicated applicant' progress by conducting bi-weekly calls and e-mails.
- Determined applicants' requirements by completing intake interviews to review the information provided and to gather any additional information that may help to determine how a clear title for the property can be obtained.
- Traveled to field sites to collect and record data related to homeowners' properties.

Disaster Case Manager | Disaster Services Corporation SVDP | San Juan, Puerto Rico | November 2018 – October 2019 | 40+ Hours/Week

- Successfully managed a case load of 40 cases while maintaining the highest ROI (Return on Investment) in the team.
- Assessed the client's needs caused by and related to the disaster in a holistic approach.
- Utilized knowledge of government and community-based resources available.
- Advocated on clients' behalf for service and benefit providers.
- Developed a goal-oriented plan outlining the steps necessary for recovery.

Home Inspector FEMA Contractor | WSP USA Inspection Service, San Juan, Puerto Rico | November - December 2017 | 84 Hours/Weekly

- Documented the damages sustained based on knowledge of constructions techniques.
- Assessed damage to dwellings and the overall habitability of homes and addressed each appropriate field using the ACE 4 filed software.
- Reviewed, analyzed, and verified occupancy documentation provided by applicants such as mortgage payments books, deeds, and various insurance documents.
- Provided orientations about disaster assistance program information to applicants.
- Identified possible allegations of fraud or abuse by applicants.
- Handle suspicious and problematic disaster assistance claims while performing the

inspections.

- Conducted quality, timely and compassionate housing inspections services for disaster survivor by exceeding FEMA's performance targets through innovation, preparedness, and operational excellence.

Relevant Compensated Volunteer Experience

Field Technician | Center for Habitat Reconstruction | San Juan, Puerto Rico | 2020 | 20 Hours/Weekly

- Aided with identifying vacant and abandoned properties in the municipalities of San Juan and Toa Baja.
- Traveled to field sites to collect and record data related to vacant and abandoned properties.
- Assisted the Executive Director with editing and reviewing ordinances and memorandum of understanding as requested.

Client Services Coordinator, AmeriCorps Member | Saint Bernard Project (SBT) | San Juan, Puerto Rico | August 2018 – October 2018 | 40+ Hours/Weekly

- Managed a caseload of 30-40 clients, acting as a reliable point of contact through their initial application for assistance through the rebuilding process.
- Interviewed prospective clients and work with them to complete the application process including any paperwork required by SBP or our Partners or funders.
- Assisted clients in navigating and applying for external funding to support specific recovery needs.
- Prepared and present prospective client cases to site leadership for funding and construction.
- Referred clients who are in need of housing, food, or other supports to appropriate service providers.
- Meet weekly with the Client Services Manager to discuss goals, client cases, professional development, and any other issues and be open to feedback and coaching.
- Inputted client data and upload documents into Salesforce and update case notes daily.
- As assigned, assisted clients with their application or appeal to FEMA either in person, via phone, or video platforms.

AmeriCorps Vista | Proyecto Enlace del Caño Martín Peña, San Juan, PR | July, 2016 – November, 2017 | 45-55 Hours/Weekly

- Developed orientation, workshops, and documents that provide community awareness and engagement pertinent to the community and that support the completion of housing tasks included in the Martín Peña Channel Comprehensive Development Plan.
- Supported the Community Reallocation Committee in planning and assessment strategies that strengthen the efficiency of the housing area.
- Supported the housing rights international research to provide capacity building to the community Reallocation Committee.
- Worked towards the disaster relief process in the communities due to Hurricane Irma-Maria.
- Co-facilitated the community newspaper *Raíces del Caño's comitte*.
- Coordinated the Universidad del Barrio initiative (Community university)

- Performed as the Community Organizer and Community Liaison between the Proyecto ENLACE
- Prepared meeting minutes; facilitated key important community-based organizations meetings.

Columns/Blogs

- 2023 Martinez-Roman, L. (2023). *Opportunity Unbound Scholarship Recipient Reflects on First NPC*. American Planning Association.
<https://www.planning.org/blog/9273227/opportunity-unbound-scholarship-recipient-reflects-on-first-npc/>

Guidebook

- 2021 Reviewer. *Municipal Guide for the Recovery of Unused and Abandoned Spaces*. Center for Habitat Reconstruction. Published by Center for Habitat Reconstruction, San Juan, PR: <https://www.crhpr.org/proyectos>

Oral Presentations

- 2022 Presenter and co-author. *Systematization of the dissemination process of FEMA-Post hurricane María beach assessments' findings*. XVII CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE INVESTIGACIÓN CIENTÍFICA (XVII CIC).

Professional Affiliations

- American Planning Association (APA), Member
- Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Inc. (ACSP), Member
- Toa Baja's Community Land Bank, Board Member (Volunteer), 2022-2023

Training and Certifications

- Social Vulnerability and Disasters CONVERGE Training Module (2020)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Procedures and Extreme Events Research CONVERGE Training Module (2020)
- Disaster Mental Health CONVERGE Training Module (2020)
- Cultural Competence in Hazards and Disaster Research CONVERGE Training Module (2020)
- Conducting Emotionally Challenging Research CONVERGE Training Module (2020)
- WB127: What Every Housing Counselor Needs to Know About Reverse Mortgages with NCRC (2019)
- PB118: Disaster Program Management – Designing, Implementing, & Managing with NCRC Training Academy (2019)
- Trauma-informed approach to humanitarian action with Meaningful World (2018)

Skills and Interests

- Technical: Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Power Point, Canva, Google Docs, Slack, Zoom, ArcGIS Survey123.
- Language: Fluent English and Spanish. Studied and travel extensively to United States.
- Other skills: proactive, client advocate, problem solver, planning and organizing (organizational abilities), willingness to learn, community engagement, leadership, time management, working as part of a team, data qualitative collection, interpersonal communication.
- Interests: Enjoy hiking, special interest in housing rights, gender issues and community development, outdoor activities, backpacking, kayak, animals, and nature.