

# Leslie Maas Cortés

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## Education and Training

### Ph.D. Candidate

Admitted into Doctor of Public Health program in Health, Behavior and Society Track at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in 1998 but did not finish due to family issues.

### M.H.S. **Master of Health Sciences – Health, Behavior and Society, Applied Nutrition and International Health**

Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health

M.H.S. essay title: “Community Based Diabetes/Obesity Prevention in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.” (Degree granted 1998).

### B.A. **University of Wisconsin - Madison**

**International Relations** emphasis in South Asian studies and Tamil Studies

Senior thesis (Degree granted May 1994).

## Honors and Awards

Publication of the year award, Journal of Health Education and Behavior, 2000. Cash prize \$1,000.

Honorary Health Educator, Ministry of Health and Environment, Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1998.

Tamil Language Certificate - Komraj University Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India, 1993. Multiple private and federal grants awarded for public health research and community-based interventions.

## Skills

Public Health Research, Design and evaluation of public health interventions, Scientific Writing, Federal and Private Foundation Grant Writing Experience, Survey design, Focus Groups, In-depth Interviews and Other Qualitative research methods, Basic epidemiology and statistical analysis, Anthropometry, Nutritional Status Assessment, Food Frequency Interviewing and Nutritional Analysis, Scientific Meeting Planning, Triathlon, Hatha Yoga

## Professional Experience

Jan 2019- **Director of Programs** – Puerto Rico Public Health Trust  
Present

Jan 2019- **Director of Puerto Rico Hurricane Response Hub Technical Assistance Center**  
Present

Feb 2018- **Representative – Water Sector Group, Non-PRASA and PRASA Sub Groups**  
Present  
Federal Emergency Management Administration and Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

Oct 2017- **Director – Proyecto Agua Limpia**  
Present  
Puerto Rico, Science, Technology and Research Trust

Feb 2016- **Program Director- Brain Trust for Tropical Disease Research and Prevention**

- Present Puerto Rico, Science, Technology and Research Trust
- Feb 2015- Feb 2016 **Coordinator - Brain Trust for Tropical Disease Research and Prevention**  
Puerto Rico Trust for Science, Research and Technology
- May 2002- April 2005 **Consultant – Puerto Rico Governor’s Commission for Violence Prevention and University of Puerto Rico Center for Youth Violence Prevention**  
Proposed and designed a violent death reporting system based on national violent death reporting system at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Assisted the director and coordinator with center management, evaluation and grant preparation.
- Oct 2001- Sep 2003 **Assistant Director – Injury Control Research Center**  
Managed the Injury Research Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin, a federally funded regional center focused on the prevention and control of unintentional injury and trauma. Coordinated site visits from funding agencies.
- Oct 2001- Sep 2005 **Co-Investigator – CDC Funded Research Project, Injury-related Mortality to U.S. International Travelers**
- Mar 1999- Sept 2011 **Project Coordinator - Wisconsin Injury Research Center Medical College of Wisconsin**  
piloted an interdepartmental injury research center with faculty and staff at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Coordinated the grant proposal to create the Injury Research Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin for region V (Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota and Michigan). The Center became one of eleven federally funded Injury Control Research Centers in the United States.
- Mar 1997- 1999 **Project Manager for Obesity and Diabetes Prevention Project in the Marshall Islands**  
Employer: The Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health  
Sociocultural, Economic, and Intrahousehold Behavioral Determinants of Under-and over Nutrition in the Republic of the Marshall Islands Funded by NSF (National Science Foundation).
- Jan 1998- Mar 1998 **Teaching Assistant** Methods in Qualitative Research  
Employer: Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health  
Teaching assistant of a five credit course with 40+ students. The goal was to create one final ethnographic project. Responsibilities: grading assignments, facilitating group interaction, and obtaining approval for projects by the Committee on Human Research.

### **Peer Reviewed Publications and White Papers**

Nishant Kishore, M.P.H., Domingo Marqués, Ph.D., Ayesha Mahmud, Ph.D., Mathew V. Kiang, M.P.H., Irmay Rodriguez, B.A., Arlan Fuller, J.D., M.A., Peggy Ebner, B.A., Cecilia Sorensen, M.D., Fabio Racy, M.D., Jay Lemery, M.D., **Leslie Maas, M.H.S.**, Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H., Rafael A. Irizarry, Ph.D., Satchit Balsari, M.D., M.P.H., and Caroline O. Buckee, D.Phil. Mortality in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. **New England Journal of Medicine**. May 29, 2018. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMca1803972.

**Maas L**, Tasado R, Munoz J. The State of Clinical Reference Laboratories in Puerto Rico. Technical Meeting Summary White Paper. Brain Trust for Tropical Disease Research and Prevention. 2017 Jan.

Cordero J, **Maas L**, Newman J. Preliminary Findings from a Technical Workshop to Create a Safe, Effective and Integrated Strategy for the Control and Elimination of *Aedes aegypti* from Puerto Rico. Brain Trust for Tropical Disease Research and Prevention. Technical Meeting Summary White Paper. 2016 Jul.

**Maas L, Cordero J.** Developing a Diagnostic Test for Chikungunya, Dengue, Zika, Influenza and Leptospirosis. Brain Trust for Tropical Disease Research and Prevention. Technical Meeting Summary White Paper. 2016 May.

Hargarten S. and **Cortés LM.** Chapter 49, Injuries and Injury Prevention, Section 10, Health Problems While Traveling. Medical Textbook. Elsevier Publications. April 2008; 485-491.

**Cortés LM.** Feasibility of a Violent Death Surveillance System in Puerto Rico. 2005. A report prepared for the Governor's Commission for Violence Prevention (COPREVI).

Guse CE, **Cortés LM,** Hargarten SW, Hennes HM. Fatal injuries of US citizens abroad. **J Travel Med.** 2007 Sep-Oct; 14(5):279-87.

**Cortés LM,** Hargarten SW, Hennes HM. Recommendations for water safety and drowning prevention for travelers. **J Travel Med.** 2006 Jan-Feb; 13(1):21-34.

Layde PM, **Cortés LM,** Teret SP, Brasel KJ, Kuhn EM, Mercy JA, Hargarten SW. Patient safety efforts should focus on medical injuries. **JAMA.** 2002 Apr 17; 287(15):1993-7.

**Cortés LM,** Gittelsohn J, Alfred J, Palafox NA. Formative research to inform intervention development for diabetes prevention in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. **Health Educ Behav.** 2001 Dec; 28(6):696-715.

Hargarten SW, **Cortés LM.** Landmines: not just another travel risk. **J Travel Med.** 2001 Sep-Oct; 8(5):229-31.

Gittelsohn J, **Maas L,** Berces M. Preventing Obesity and Diabetes in the Republic of the Marshall Islands: Report of a Pilot Study and Future Directions. 1996. Report prepared for the Ministry of Health and Environment, The Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Gittelsohn J, **Maas L,** Gammino V, Palafox N. Preventing Obesity and Diabetes in the Republic of the Marshall Islands: A Final Report and Future Directions. 1998. Report prepared for the Ministry of Health and Environment, The Republic of the Marshall Islands.

## **Examples of Grants and Cooperative Agreements Pending, Awarded and Written**

Sept, 2019 – Pending

Direct Relief Grant for Puerto Rico Public Health Institute \$1,900,000.00

April, 2019: American Red Cross Proyecto Agua Limpia Phase III \$700,000.00

May 2018-Present: Unidos por Puerto Rico, Proyecto Agua Limpia Phase II, \$2,000,000.00  
Continuation and expansion of Proyecto Agua Limpia Pilot Project.

Dec. 2017-June 2018: Unidos por Puerto Rico, Proyecto Agua Limpia Pilot Project, \$99,996.00  
Community based public health Project to deliver potable clean drinking water to homes in rural Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria.

Sep 2016-Present: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Establishing the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit. Five year award. \$64,000,000.00.

Oct 2001-Sep 2006: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Injury Control Research Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Five year award. \$3,200,000.00

**Languages**

English (primary language) Spanish (proficient), Marshallese (elem), Tamil (elem)