

# Ponce Health Sciences University



## HISTORY OF SITE

Ponce Health Sciences University (“PHSU”) is located on the southern coast of Puerto Rico in a medically underserved area (“MUA”) with a shortage of primary health care professionals, including a 23% shortage of pediatricians, 68% shortage of OB/GYNs, and 64% shortage of psychiatrists, according to Health Resources & Services Administration standards. In 2017, Hurricane Maria destroyed many of the campus’ medical and educational buildings, which exacerbated the region’s healthcare shortage.

## THE PROJECT

Our allocation is funding the development of a state of the art 134,251 sq. ft. Academic Center, replacing and expanding facilities destroyed during Hurricane Maria thus allowing for significant increases in health care student slots and patients served. The four-story building will include a ground floor clinic providing an estimated 80,000 patient visits per year (90% of which will be low-income persons) in primary care, dental services and mental health services. The project is expected to serve 22,400 unduplicated patients per year. Floors 2-4 will support modern facilities for teaching and research, expanding the University’s flagship Doctor of Medicine program from 323 students to 549 students, increasing other programs enrollment by 1,066 students, and adding 1,045 students to new programs in dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, psychology and undergraduate biology.

This project will support the mission of a broader community and economic development strategy outlined in the Puerto Rico Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which identifies development of a health services industry on the south of the island as a key component. The comprehensive master plan also includes a new parking structure and plans to add a 5th floor to the Academic Center, rehabilitation and expansion of the existing clinic building, a 202-bed student housing dormitory and a bridge connecting its local hospital partner, Hospital Damas. This effort will create a model healthcare network for the community.

## NEW MARKETS SOLUTION

MBS Urban Initiatives funded a \$6 million New Markets Tax Credit (“NMTC”) investment, which was combined with investments from VAF, CHHS and PCC for a total of \$26 million in NMTC allocation. Without NMTC financing, the project would not have moved forward because of significantly increased construction costs following Hurricane Maria.

## COMMUNITY IMPACTS

The new PSHU will allow for an increase enrollment by over 150% from 1,262 to 3,163 students. This will enable more training of English-Spanish bilingual medical professionals and expand low-income community access to healthcare and educational opportunity through targeted enrollment of first-generation and economically disadvantaged students.

By 2024, an estimated 22,400 unduplicated patients will be served annually, an increase from 14,405 unduplicated patients in 2019, the majority of whom are Medicare recipients.

It is estimated that 80% of the students enrolled will be from low-income communities and that 30% of MD students, 95% of Public Health students and 90% of Behavioral Health students are expected to stay in Puerto Rico to work after graduation.

## quick facts

### PHSU

Industrial Reparada 2.  
388 Calle Luis F. Sala  
Ponce, PR 00716

**Square Footage:** 134,251 sq. ft.

**Total Project Cost:** \$70,454,617

**Developer/Owner:** Tiber Health,  
Public Benefit Corporation

**Allocatees:** MBS Urban Initiatives  
CDE, the Valued Advisor Fund, Popular  
Community Capital and Community  
Hospitality Healthcare Services.

**NMTC Equity Investor:** USBCDC

**Architect:** CSA Group and HOK

**Projected Construction Jobs:**  
182 FTEs

**Projected Permanent Jobs:** 497 FTEs  
(241 retained, 256 created) within 3  
years and construction 182 FTEs.

**Community Partners:** Banco Popular,  
Baker Tilly Virchow Krause and USBCDC