

Dr. Luz Claudio – Biography

Luz Claudio grew up in the interior countryside of Puerto Rico. The one-way dirt road up the mountain to her childhood home was dotted with the homes of her aunts and uncles, culminating at the top with her grandparents' home and small farm.

Luz's first job was to help her grandmother concoct medicines from plants and herbs from her garden. Thinking that one small orchid-type flower could lower blood sugar, she and her uncle submitted a "research" paper to *Scientific American*. Although swiftly rejected for "lack of experimental evidence," Luz understood at 11 years old that science and writing went hand-in-hand.

Although Luz grew up speaking Spanish, she read most of her science textbooks in English. At 22, she moved to New York City after being accepted on a scholarship to the doctoral program at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Under the generous mentoring of Dr. Celia Brosnan, Luz completed her PhD in neuropathology. Before graduating, she had already published 11 papers and two book chapters in some of the most highly rated journals in neurobiology and pathology.

After graduation, Luz was awarded a prestigious Environmental Science and Engineering Fellowship from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. During that time, she worked at the US Environmental Protection Agency to conduct an assessment of the regulatory process for neurotoxic chemicals. This work resulted in two peer-reviewed research papers that were awarded the Robert C. Barnard Environmental Science Award.

In 1991, Dr. Claudio joined the faculty of Mount Sinai School of Medicine, ranked among the top 20 medical schools in the nation. Luz has climbed up the academic ladder at Mount Sinai and is now serving as a tenured professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Chief of the Division of International Health.

She serves in numerous national and international committees and is a well-recognized expert in environmental health research. She has published over 100 papers in peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters and currently sits on the editorial board for two medical journals.

Luz is especially well regarded as a mentor and educator. She directs several training programs, including programs targeting disadvantaged or minority students. Luz has directly mentored 44 graduate students, 57 US and international postdoctoral fellows (many from non-English speaking countries) and overseen the instruction of 130 students on global health research placements.

Luz is married to an acclaimed musician and has a young daughter who plays trumpet and is very good at math.