

Ailed M Cruz-Collazo

Born: Puerto Rico

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When I was 6 years old, a classmate brought a science kit to school. It was full of things to conduct experiments; I fell in love with it and had to have one of my own. The next Christmas, the science kit was under the tree. I was delighted, but it was so precious to me, I was afraid to empty any of the potions. I could only bring myself to carefully take out all the pieces and look at them before returning them safely to their box.

My mother was a middle school science teacher and my role model. She would take me to her classroom and I watched her teach science, making science fun and understandable. When I decided to study Chemistry in college, I thought I would end my studies after completing my Bachelor's degree. No one in my family has an advanced degree. But after getting my first research position, I realized that the research bench is where I belong. I finally made the connection between science research and its benefit to

society. I am getting my PhD in Environmental Health and am committed to sharing the importance of science with the community.