

Melvin Bonilla-Felix



Short Bio/CV

Melvin Bonilla-Felix is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at University of Puerto Rico – School of Medicine. He completed his medical school and pediatric residency training at University of Puerto Rico-School of Medicine and his pediatric nephrology fellowship at Washington University-Saint Louis Children’s Hospital. During his fellowship training he learned the technique of *in vitro microperfusion* of isolated tubules to study water transport in the distal nephron. After completing his training, he joined the pediatric nephrology division at University of Texas-Houston Medical School for his first faculty appointment. There, he developed his laboratory focused on the development of water transport in the immature collecting duct. His research projects were supported by the National Kidney Foundation and the American Heart Association. At University of Texas-Houston he was the director of the pediatric nephrology fellowship and the pediatric peritoneal dialysis program. After ten years in USA, he returned to his beloved Puerto Rico, where he began to establish connections with the rest of the Caribbean and Latin American countries, while maintaining an active participation in the North American regional societies.

He has received numerous recognitions for his teaching abilities and has mentored many students, residents, and young nephrologists in Puerto Rico, North America, and internationally. He is currently participating as mentor in the ISN and the International Pediatric Nephrology Association (IPNA) mentoring programs. Dr. Bonilla-Felix has developed and participated as speaker in many teaching courses worldwide. In the Caribbean he has organized courses to improve the knowledge of practitioners in the region and steered efforts to improve the services for children with kidney diseases in Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, and Jamaica. Together with Dr. Randall Lou-Meda in Guatemala, he led the first IPNA Sister Center, serving as leader of the supporting center in Puerto Rico for Hospital Roosevelt – Fundación para el Niño Enfermo Renal (FUNDANIER) in Guatemala. He has been Center-Principal Investigator for many multicenter trials, served in the expert panel for the IPNA Guidelines for Steroid-Sensitive Nephrotic Syndrome, IgA Nephropathy/IgA Vasculitis, and COVID-19. His scientific production includes more than 80 publications, including original articles, reviews, abstracts, and book chapters. He has served in the editorial board of the American Journal of Physiology – Renal and the regional pediatric nephrology journal in Latin America (Archivos Latinoamericanos de Nefrología Pediátrica).

Dr. Bonilla-Felix interests include developmental renal physiology, hypertension, tubulopathies, disasters management, and the development of nephrology in under-resourced regions.

He is currently member of the Scientific Committee for the ISN World Congress of Nephrology-2023. He has served as councilor for IPNA, is currently member of the IPNA Executive Council, and chair of the Special Projects and Priorities in Low-resource Countries Committees. He is a member of the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology Global Health Committee, Secretary-Treasurer of the Puerto Rican Society of Nephrology and Hypertension, coordinator of the Pediatric Committee for the Latin American Society of Nephrology and Hypertension (SLANH) and the president of the Latin American Association of Pediatric Nephrology (ALANEPE).

Candidate's Statement

I believe that ISN's mission of advancing kidney health worldwide through education, grants, research, and advocacy, has always been part of my personal career mission. My experiences occupying leadership positions in regional and international pediatric nephrology organizations opened my eyes to the world of global nephrology and the shocking disparities in healthcare services. As a pediatric nephrologist, I will focus in increasing the participation of pediatricians in ISN and strengthen the collaboration between the pediatric organizations (ALANEPE, ASPN, IPNA) and ISN. This past year, I was part of the steering group that developed the first Saving Young Lives course in Latin America, celebrated in Colombia. This is an ideal collaborative initiative that benefits our clinicians and patients, especially those going through the difficult transition from pediatric to adult care.

To succeed, in these efforts, we need to attract young physicians and provide them the support they need, especially in low-middle income countries where resources are often scarce.

After been an ISN member for 30 years, it would be an honor to serve as an ISN North America-Caribbean Regional Board Deputy Chair/Councillor. I am confident that I have developed the skills to further ISN's impact in my region and worldwide.