

**Rutgers Youth Enjoy Science Program (RUYES) Trainee Mentored by Dr. Angela Fong**  
**Gabriella Gonzalez**



I conducted research under the mentorship of Dr. Angela Fong in the summer of 2022 at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey as a participant in the Rutgers Youth Enjoy Science (RUYES) program. This Program provides training in cutting-edge cancer research, co-curricular support, and professional development activities for students from underrepresented groups and high school science teachers.

Our main area of focus was to qualitatively study the experiences of breast cancer survivors who participated in a physical activity program. Some breast cancer survivors suffer debilitating effects of cancer and related treatments daily, and since physical activity has been studied to improve the quality of life for these survivors, the implementation of an exercise regime to help improve their functional capacity and self-reported health was examined. The specific study we worked on was a project called B-REP, Breast Cancer and Resistance Exercise Program, which examines the feasibility and acceptability of an online-delivered, supervised, and individualized exercise program in a sample of African American breast cancer survivors.

My role was to analyze a subsample of the transcribed interviews that were conducted with each participant post-intervention. I learned how to qualitatively study data, code data with specialized computer software, and apply the data to main themes and subthemes that I developed through my analyses.

My time in RUYES and in Dr. Fong's research program further emphasized the importance of reaching underrepresented groups to increase the understanding of clinical research among minority populations. Studying cancer survivorship was an extremely rewarding experience, and I will take the knowledge I have gained about this field of cancer to my family, school, and community members.

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