

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic School of Tropical Medicine

and/or common Medicina Tropical

2. Location

street & number Ponce de León Avenue, Stop #2 _____ not for publication

city, town Puerta de Tierra _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district N/A

state Puerto Rico code 72 county San Juan code 0930.

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Government of Puerto Rico (Department of Natural Resources)

street & number La Fortaleza

city, town San Juan _____ vicinity of _____ state Puerto Rico

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds, san Juan Section I

street & number San Juan Judicial Center, Second floor

city, town Hato Rey _____ state Puerto Rico

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventario de Monumentos Históricos has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Institute of Puerto Rican Culture

city, town San Juan _____ state Puerto Rico

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The School of Tropical Medicine is composed of three buildings, all three stories in height. Moving from West to East, the first building is square in shape with a central courtyard. The second building is "U"-shaped, and is attached to the first building at the base of the "U". Finally, there is a long rectangular building at the tip of the southern leg of the "U", perpendicular to it. Thus, the layout gives an enclosed courtyard, used for parking today, and an open ended courtyard which is well conserved. Structuralwise, the three buildings are of concrete with concrete columns, walls and beams. The walls are smoothly cement plastered. The roofs are eaved and are covered with glazed clay roof tiles. Most of the windows are wooden with glass insets with some aluminum jalousies windows at different areas.

Along the courtyards, on all three floors, there are open galleries, sometimes arcaded, others linteled. Opening to them are rooms which have been thoroughly partitioned to allow for new office spaces.

The buildings are individually fragmented by dealing with them as wings which are eaved, with glazed clay roof tiles coverings. At the corners, a tower like structure articulates the changes between facades, and it is at this point, as well as the entrances points that decorations are used in profusion. There are filigree parapets at the attic levels, and retablo-type facades or portals are used to frame windows and doorways. As the building faces three streets, the facade treatment extends throughout. The three buildings are connected together by arcades and they are visibly separated structures.

The building is presently used by the Department of Natural Resources of Puerto Rico and is in fair condition.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1920's

Builder/Architect Rafael Carmoega

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

This building was constructed to house the School of Tropical Medicine which was established under the auspice of the University of Puerto Rico and Columbia University of New York. It was the first school on the hemisphere dedicated exclusively to the study and prevention of tropical diseases.

The building was designed by Rafael Carmoega, a Cornell-educated Puerto Rican architect, who, as director of the architectural division of the Department of the Interior of Puerto Rico, is also responsible for the Puerto Rico Capitol Building, The Tower and Quadrangle Complex of the University of Puerto Rico, as well as several other important projects of the time.

Like other architects of his time in Puerto Rico, Carmoega was particularly interested in reinforcing Hispanic traditions; therefore, he borrows widely from the Spanish Baroque and the Mudejar style, sometimes by the way of California. Still, his polychromy in Baroque retable facades presents an interesting handling of this traditional concept.

Eclectic in nature, the building is representative of his eclecticism, which favored the use of arches, and an active facade ornamentation. He was especially interested in integrating the crafts into architecture, as evidenced by his relief appliques and top-pings, and the use of mosaic murals.

Stylistically, the building is an adapted, modified Plateresque, better yet, Neo-Plateresque, which depends heavily upon sometimes dramatic contrasts between simple stark surfaces and elaborated concentrations of ornaments at fenestration elements. Thus in the building arcades there are columns with corinthian capitals, and concentration of ornaments reminiscent of Spanish Baroque style. Heraldic shields, figures, pilasters, volutes, pinnacles, cornices, reliefs and motifs are all brought together to accent the elaboration of ornamentation of the building.

Due to the increase in enrollment and the lack of adequate facilities, the school was moved to the Medical Center of Puerto Rico and the building is presently used by the Department of Natural Resources.

