

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

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# 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 Colegio de las Madres del Sagrado Corazón

and/or common Asilo de Niñas de Miramar

## 2. Location

street & number Ponce de León Ave. not for publication

city, town Miramar vicinity of Santurce

state Puerto Rico code 72 county Santurce-SAN JUAN code 00970

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name Government of Puerto Rico

street & number

city, town San Juan vicinity of state Puerto Rico

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Property Register of Puerto Rico

street & number Department of Justice

city, town Hato Rey state Puerto Rico

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Mario Buschiazio  
title Monumentos Históricos de Puerto Rico, has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1955 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Puerto Rico Planning Board

city, town Minillas Government Center, Santurce 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 building conserves its original neo-classical style with simple lines typical of 19th century institutional constructions in Puerto Rico. Its proportions and elegant simplicity make it worthy of merit and recognition, as well as its massive character, symmetric axial configuration, and fine exterior elements consisting of plastered walls, windows surrounded by juts, and a main entry portico. The division between the first and second floor is emphasized by a continuous horizontal moulding, while pilasters visually integrate the different levels. A main cornice projects over the second floor crowning the facade. Two strips of windows complete the facade. These have arched lintels and its sills are joined by horizontal trims throughout the facades. The windows were originally in wood with lattices and glass panels on the top portion. (These have been replaced by modern metal windows). The main entrance is highlighted by an encased double portico, which is eleven feet deep and keeps the same height of the building. It has a main central arch with smaller ones to the left and right. The same configuration and treatment is repeated on the upper level. The sides of the protruding portico have arched openings on both levels.

The building shows an "A" type plan. Being characteristic and typical of construction during this era, the building was erected around a rectangular central patio with dimensions of approximately 74 feet x 48.5 feet. This patio, originally laid in flagstones ("canarian tiles") and more recently by hexagonal flagstones, includes four buttresses supporting the arcades. Arched galleries on both levels (measuring 10' to 12' in width) serve as a transition to the rooms located throughout its periphery. The rooms, located on the eastern and western sides, measure approximately 26 feet (8 meters) in width; those located on the northern side measure 18 feet (5.5 meters) in width and those in the southern side measure 21 feet (65 meters) in width. The rooms are usually open/uninterrupted spaces, and the ceiling beams span in the shortest dimension. The ceiling heights are usually 18 feet high in the main floors and 12 feet in the basement. The original or oldest portion of the building consists of thickly constructed walls measuring one meter at its foundation and gradually decreasing in dimension. The construction type and materials resemble that of edifications of Old San Juan. The building is constructed in a method known as "cal y canto" consisting of a mixture of rubblework and stones. A series of systematically placed walls carry wooden beams which support a system of secondary wooden members ("alfajfas"), forming a checkered pattern. The structure supports the brick tiles and flooring of the upper floors. For roofing, several layers of tile/brick with "alfajfas" and wood beams was used. The latter were made of ausubo, a local strong wood. The thickly voluminous walls, the rooms' height and the tall windows are contributing factors to the structure's monumentality.

The total area of the building is 64,180 square feet, including the galleries, but excluding the enclosed interior patios. The first and second levels provide 23,061 square feet each with a basement and sub-basement having 18,056 square feet.

The northern or rear facade is the one which has undergone the greatest changes. These consist in the western and eastern wings and a kitchen, constructed in concrete (three floors additions with arcades).

# 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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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** 1880-1882 **Builder/Architect** Julio Larrinaga/Eduardo Iglesias and Gerónimo Agraít

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The "Asilo de Niñas" (Girls' Asylum) is one of the few Spanish Colonial buildings that still remain in the Santurce area. The design and construction plans were prepared by engineer Julio Larrinaga, Inspector of Provincial Public Works in 1880. The construction was carried out by Eduardo Iglesias and Gerónimo Agraít who finished the structure in 1882. Total cost for the building came to a total of \$83,842.29.

Since built, this structure has served the Island both as an educational and welfare center.

In 1882 the structure was used as a private exclusive girls school under the tutelage of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. By 1898 the building came under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of State who turned it in November 4, 1899 into an asylum for orphan girls.

According to some elderly residents of the area, a singular event took place. During a storm a lightning hit one of the palm trees that surrounded the back part of the structure, towards the lagoon. A hole opened in the shaft of the palm tree, which was always filled with water. According to the legend, a sick girl from the Asylum drank this water and her health was restored. Ever since, and until the palm tree was removed, the people of the area thought that this water had miracle healing powers.

From 1940 to 1958 the building, under the supervision of the Office for Childrens' Welfare, was used as a rehabilitation center for delinquent girls.

From 1970 until recently the Department of Social Services used the building as a Drug Rehabilitation Center.

This building is also representative of the government sponsored urban expansion of San Juan, beyond the Old City Wall, during the XIX Century. As an example of Spanish Colonial architecture, the building maintains its original character, sober and massive as the style of the era. All but the most recent alteration, this one on its rear facade were done with relatively few effects on its architectural integrity. Its architecture still conveys strongly its historical significance. The material used for its construction, its solid and massive character, its thick walls and high ceilings, and its symmetrical and sober neo-classical facade make this building unique within Santurce's urban scenario.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Buschiazio, Mario J., Monumentos Históricos de Puerto Rico, Junta de Planificación de P.R. 1955.

Semidey, Maritere, Asilo de Niñas, Rehabilitación de un Edificio Histórico  
Tesis Escuela de Arquitectura, U.P.R. 1979

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 17,921 M<sup>2</sup>

Quadrangle name San Juan

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

A 

1	9	8	0	8	4	8	8	2	0	4	3	0	6	3
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

North-Baldorioty Ave.  
South-Ponce de León Ave.

East-Canals St.  
West-Hore St.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Germán Soto Mejel  
Gerardo Navas

Felix Julián del Campo  
Joaquin Acevedo

organization CODESA/SHPO

date OCTOBER 1985

street & number Ponce de León 926/Box 82 La Fortaleza telephone 721-3737, 721-2671

city or town Santurce, Puerto Rico 00907/San Juan state Puerto Rico

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 10, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Greg Schlegel  
Keeper of the National Register

date 11/21/85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration