



Maria del Pilar Aguinaga, Ph.D., DLM (ASCP)
Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Associate Director and Laboratory Director, Meharry Sickle Cell Center

Dr. Aguinaga received her Bachelor's and Licenciante degrees in Biology and her Master's degree in Biochemistry from Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru. She did post-graduate training at the Biophysics Laboratory of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and received her Ph.D. degree in Biophysics/Molecular Biology from Kanazawa University Medical School in Kanazawa, Japan. She came to Meharry Medical College as a post-doctoral research associate and rose through the ranks to tenured Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and is the Associate Director and Laboratory Director of the Meharry Sickle Cell Center. Dr. Aguinaga holds an Adjunct Faculty appointment in the Department of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Aguinaga's research interests are in sickle cell disease and women's health and her clinical interest lies in the diagnosis of hemoglobin disorders, for which she is consulted nationally and internationally. She directs the State of TN Newborn Screening Hemoglobinopathy Confirmatory and Reference Laboratory housed at the Meharry Sickle Cell Center. She has numerous publications and presentations in the field of hemoglobinopathies. Her research work has been funded by NHLBI, NICHD, HRSA, OMH and the State of Tennessee Department of Health.

Dr. Aguinaga serves in several departmental, institutional and national committees. She is the current president of the EE Just Hematology Society (Society of Minority Hematologists) and has received several honors and awards throughout her academic career. Dr. Aguinaga has served as ad-hoc grant reviewer for the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and is a reviewer for the American Society of Hematology and ad hoc editor for The American Journal of Hematology and the Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved.

Dr. Aguinaga volunteers in the community with various community organizations serving special and underprivileged populations like, The YMCA-Latino Achievers Program (member and former Chair of the Board), The Center for Health Services at Vanderbilt University (member and former Vice-Chair of the Board), and the Nashville Task Force on Refugees and Immigrants (member).

Dr. Aguinaga is certified by the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification as Diplomate in Laboratory Management, Medical Laboratory Scientist and Technologist in Molecular Biology. Dr. Aguinaga is licensed by the State of Tennessee as a Medical Laboratory Director.