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Sthefany Flores

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# A young athlete's road to nationals



Yordan Santiago jumps to block a goal in the 2015 summer CONCACAF championship. Photo courtesy of Patricia Yordan Santiago

By: Sthefany Flores

Gardner-Webb women's soccer goalkeeper, [Patricia Yordan Santiago](#), participated in Puerto Rico's Under 20 2015 National Soccer Team in the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football ([CONCACAF](#)) championship this summer.

Yordan Santiago began playing soccer at age nine in Florida. Not only has she participated in Puerto Rico's National Under 20 team, but also was previously in their Under 17 team. "[It] is something I never thought I would get to do and when I got the opportunity I just dove for it," she said.

The demanding process begins with proof of residence or ancestry to Puerto Rico and proceeds with countless trials all athletes must undergo as the season draws near. Those who have already qualified in past National Teams will be called to try out later than the new recruits.

The next Under 20 season begins in October and with it, a new roster will be issued. This year's season will be held in Haiti and is bound to be a challenge on accounts of climate and capable competitors.

Yordan Santiago does not yet know if she will be joining the national team not only because of the roster decision but also due to time constraints. If she is chosen to compete, she will need to leave for Haiti for at

least two weeks. "I did it in high school but college is different, it's in the middle of the semester," she pointed out, "I don't know how it will work with my classes."

For now, Yordan Santiago wishes to concentrate on her medical career at Gardner-Webb. She wants to specialize in the treatment of children and aiding their development.

Yordan Santiago is adamant about living in the moment rather than think too much about the future. "I will get there when I get there," she said.