



PAOLA RIVERA GONZALEZ

Upper Peninsula clean energy organizer

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Paola Rivera Gonzalez serves as a MI Healthy Climate Corps member in Marquette for the Michigan Environmental Council. Her role as the Upper Peninsula clean energy organizer is two fold: to assist in local renewable energy initiatives and to be a liaison for existing and new organizations committed to achieving carbon neutrality and implementing sustainable practices across the UP. She increases participation and awareness to empower rural communities looking to adopt community initiatives and programs for a clean energy future.

Paola's first years in the UP began when she moved there in 2020 from Puerto Rico to pursue a graduate program at Michigan Technological University. She earned her master's in geology with a graduate certificate on natural hazards and disaster risk reduction while building a strong social science background from her research project. Her involvement with rural agricultural communities impacted by and adapted to a changing climate taught her essential interpersonal and community engagement skills.

Prior to joining as a MI Healthy Climate Corps member, Paola was a social scientist contractor for two years at the United States Geological Survey. There, she worked on nationwide projects focused on understanding the use and gaps of water data in emergency management. She also identified most at-risk groups of flooding and drought events.

In her personal time, Paola loves building her book collection (and occasionally reading them), cooking/baking (and refusing to follow step-by-step instructions), doing outdoors activities, and visiting local social districts while enjoying live music.