

Duaa Raza Awarded Aspire2STEAM Scholarship

Aspiring Physician Scientist Lights the Way in Biomedical Research through Leadership and Volunteerism in her Community

ANKENY, IA, UNITED STATES, March 10, 2023. [Aspire2STEAM.org](https://www.aspire2steam.org), which provides educational scholarships and mentoring to young women and girls who are working toward careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math (STEAM), has awarded Duaa Raza an ASPIRER scholarship.

Duaa is currently in her first year at Rutgers University- New Brunswick majoring in Cell Biology and Neuroscience with plans to minor in Public Health and Business Administration.

“Throughout her life, Duaa has always been a high achiever,” said Cheryl O’Donoghue, CEO at Aspire2STEAM. “She adroitly completes tasks that showcase her unique talents, while advocating for those who have been neglected by our current healthcare system. We are so inspired by her accomplishments and aspirations.”

“When volunteering, I’m constantly reminded of the value of emerging biomedical technologies in dismantling health disparities experienced by disadvantaged patients.”

Duaa Raza

Duaa has always been focused on biomedical research and how genetics and lifestyle choices can influence onset of disease.

While many may shy away from such complex scientific challenges, Duaa welcomes the opportunity to learn more and help others in need. In high school, she successfully led and participated in numerous activities that helped her further these goals centered around the biomedical field. Duaa was the President for the

nation’s largest high school chapter of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) and volunteered over two hundred hours at a local medical center. On one occasion, her HOSA chapter raised almost three thousand dollars during the *Walk to End Alzheimer’s* event, while concurrently spreading awareness about the disease. She also took part in fundraising for Chilton Medical Center on a handful of occasions during 2020, including spearheading the *Cards for Caregivers* campaign. In this capacity, Duaa worked with her high school to donate to Chilton Medical Center and several local hospitals to distribute more than three hundred cards.



Duaa Raza, Aspire2STEAM Scholarship Recipient

Later that year, she participated in a separate fundraising initiative that directly impacted frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic.

Duaa's achievements didn't stop there as she won 1st place in the 2020 International Microsoft Reno DigiGirlz Hackathon for her project on using artificial intelligence to identify and prevent coronary artery disease. The following year, she won 3rd place at the North Jersey Regional Nokia Bell Labs Science Fair in the category of Biostatistics for the biomedical project titled "CRISPRi-dCas9 Inhibition of IL-6 Inflammatory Pathway." Duaa was awarded this honor after going through a lengthy process filled with interviews by esteemed judges in the local science and engineering community.

Upon graduation, Duaa desires to continue her education to become a physician and make advancements in scientific research so she can help develop gene therapies to treat illnesses like coronary artery disease. "By targeting genetic and lifestyle risk factors of disease through emerging healthcare technologies, I hope to use the tools of modern technology to improve the fate of debilitating medical conditions," said Duaa. She has already learned important insights to help solve scientific problems



through research but also through volunteering at her local hospital. Understanding the impact of her actions and how they materialize in real-world scenarios frames the right perspective for her goals. "When volunteering, I'm constantly reminded of the value of emerging biomedical technologies in dismantling health disparities experienced by disadvantaged patients," said Duaa.



Duaa wishes to change the way healthcare functions at its core, making it more accessible to those who may have been unable to afford or physically reach a healthcare facility previously. She explains that even if she culminates all her skills and knowledge into making a difference in only one person's life, she is moving towards positive change.

In her free time, Duaa enjoys kickboxing and working towards becoming a certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) with the intention of becoming a paramedic on her way to becoming a physician.

About Aspire2STEAM

Established in 2018, Aspire2STEAM.org is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which has earned Guidestar's Gold Seal for integrity, transparency, and accountability. Aspire2STEAM provides educational scholarships and mentoring to young women and girls who are working hard— aspiring—to achieve careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math. Aspire2STEAM is committed to helping women and girls with a hand up over the incredible barriers of student debt and rising education costs, and the real, ever-present opportunity barriers that keep them out of most male-dominated industries.



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