

Student Profile



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Class of 2018
Ph.D in Biomedical Sciences Candidate

Whether or not you are an expert in the field of cancer research, it is hard not to be aware of the immense impact cancer has on individuals and families worldwide. While in high school, I had my first personal encounter with this enigmatic disease when my grandfather was diagnosed with prostate cancer. This shattering reality made the issue of cancer tangible to me, and prompted a bevy questions from my curious mind. Despite multiple remissions, my grandfather unfortunately lost his fight with cancer my sophomore year in college, which took a profound toll on my family. Although I could not do much to help my grandfather, that experience inspired me to tackle the problem of cancer from a different vantage point—as a researcher.

After graduating from college, I had the opportunity to expound upon my interest to study the complexities of cancer while working as a research assistant. In my time in this position, I became increasingly aware of the widening disparities in cancer incidence and mortality disproportionately impacting certain ethnic groups within the U.S., particularly African Americans. It quickly became evident to me that the issue of cancer health disparities is multifaceted, and it is an issue that I feel empowered to help eliminate through my life's work.

My personal mission to eliminate cancer health disparities through research eventually lead me to pursue my Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences at Morehouse School of Medicine, which was founded upon the premise promoting health equity in order to improve the well-being and quality of life of underserved urban and rural populations in this country. Joining the Morehouse School of Medicine family has allowed me to build a strong science foundation through rigorous coursework, and has provided me with a greater perspective on the communities that could potentially benefit from the work we do in the lab. In addition, I have the opportunity to immerse myself in a multidisciplinary learning environment, helping me to appreciate the power of collaboration among researchers, health professionals and public health practitioners in achieving health equity. The innovative research I have been able to do at MSM has even yielded national recognition, as I was recently part of a select group of graduate and medical students from around the country awarded as a Minority Scholar in Cancer Research by the American Association for Cancer Research. In my opinion, none of this success would have been possible without the faculty and staff at MSM, who have gone above and beyond to help me achieve my life's mission of eliminating cancer health disparities, by providing personalized support, and resources to develop my potential as future cancer researcher.