

## THANK YOU

I express gratitude to Dr Sirot, Dr Herzmann, Dr Krause, Dr. Ng and Dr. Haely, my inspirations for continuing this Pathway. Thanks for imparting valuable lessons and embracing us with your love of learning. Special thanks to my family, Nicky, Sarah, Ezabella, and the rest of friends for consistently encouraging me to pursue my passions. Without your reminders about the challenging but achievable road to success, I wouldn't have been as determined to complete this program.



Students explore the effects of land-use decisions on both humans and wildlife during Costa Rica TREK

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# Munesu Kuzanga

– 2024 | Behavioral & Cognitive Neuroscience –

## Public Health Pathway

### Why I Joined the Public Health Pathway

Losing his father to a migraine at seven, my dad, a reserved man, became a family doctor. His motivation stemmed from a belief that no child should grow up without a father. With limited openness about his past, my mother shared his story, offering me insight into his perspective on why caring about how healthcare is understood and distributed between groups of people internationally.

Frustrated by the healthcare system's failure to treat his grandfather, Dad aimed to improve healthcare for those under the poverty line in Zimbabwe. He dedicated himself to making it accessible in rural areas. Despite long expeditions, he greeted me with a smile, and now I realize I was part of his motivation. Medicine gave him purpose, shaping his outlook on life. Inspired by his mission, I aspired to contribute to the healthcare system, unsure where to start or where I will end up.



### My Experiential Learning Opportunities & What I Gained

#### Costa Rica Trek Program: Wildlife & Human Interactions, July 2023

Since I was pushed outside of my comfort zone and placed into very different field of study to what I'm used to, I gained a profound appreciation for questioning assumptions, fostering curiosity, and embracing the beauty of uncertainty in diverse learning environments.

#### Co-President of Minorities in STEM '23-24

Beyond the typical leadership traits, I acquired the ability to take responsibility for my mistakes in guiding the organization. I embraced patience over anger, prioritized resilience, and granted myself grace to persevere and try anew.



### My Pathway Courses & How They've Impacted by Public Health Journey

#### PHIL-21500: Biomedical Ethics

My professor's passion fueled my interest in understanding the complexities of healthcare decisions, recognizing the multitude of factors that make them nuanced and not strictly right or wrong.

#### RELS-26947: Death and Afterlives

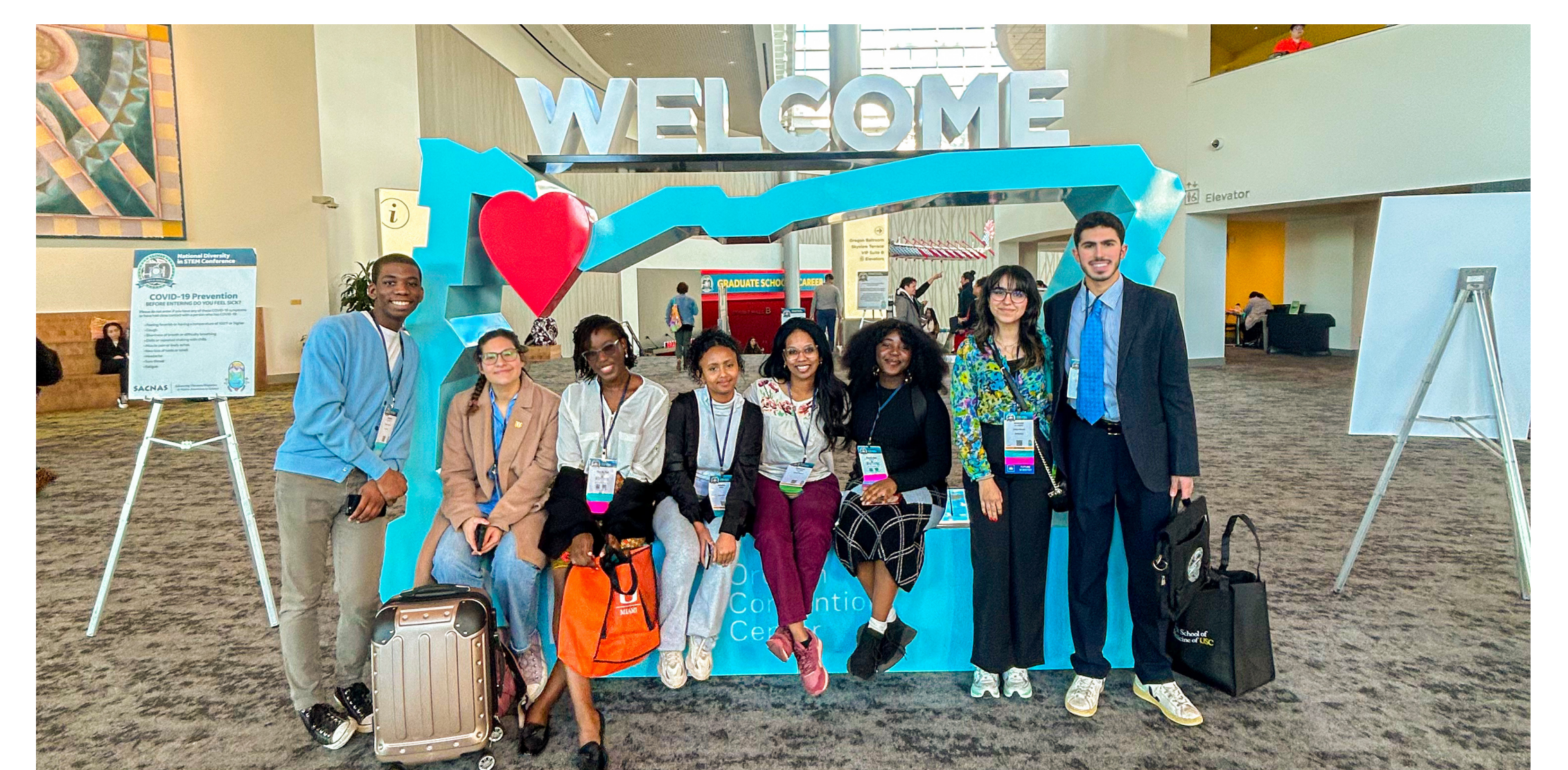
This course taught me the importance of meeting people where they are at in times of grief and solitude, and to not stigmatize death for what is life without it?

#### PSYC-23000: Human Neuropsychology

This was 'THE course', which made me feel more invested in pursuing occupational therapy as a potential career path.

#### HIST-10184 Intro: Chinese Medicine

This course enlightened me about the impact of authoritative decision-making and the significant influence gained by consistently posing essential questions in regards to health and medical politics.



### Final Thoughts:

#### How My Pathway Has Shaped My Career Path

Embarking on this two-year journey, I faced numerous crossroads, grappling with the vast array of opportunities in public health. Uncertainty clouds my next steps, yet my experiences along this path have crystalized a desire to share lessons and curiosity with the world. Participating in the Costa Rica Trek, despite being a neuro major, challenged my preconceptions, teaching me the value of exploring and learning outside of my comfort zone. Through courses like Biomedical Ethics, History of Chinese Medicine, Death & Afterlives, and Human Neuropsychology, I discovered the beauty in understanding decisions shaped by morals, laws, religion, trauma, or fleeting moments.

This transformative journey honed my critical thinking skills and revealed my strength in asking questions, particularly evident in my involvement with Minorities in STEM and other leadership positions on campus. This pathway and it's advisors illuminated my true calling in healthcare, aspiring to be an occupational therapist and a compassionate listener, guiding patients to solutions rather than dictating choices. The ever-evolving nature of my career path excites me, knowing that my mission to uplift people from challenging situations will persist, even as the means to achieve it may change—a testament to the multifaceted nature of this fulfilling journey.