

# NAA ASHELEY AFUA ADOWAA ASHITEY

University of California, San Francisco ◊ San Francisco, CA

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Cancer Immunotherapy, Tumor Immunology, Dendritic Cells, B Cells, CD8 T Cells, Myeloid Cells, Breast Cancer, Ovarian Cancer, Race and Racism, Social Determinants of Health

## EDUCATION

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<b>University of Wisconsin, Madison</b> UW-Madison Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) MD-PhD Candidate	2024-2032 (expected end)
<b>University of California, San Francisco</b> PROPEL Post-Baccalaureate Scholars Program ImmunoX ImmunoDiverse URM/SRA Post-Baccalaureate Fellow	2021-2024
<b>University of California, Berkeley</b> UC Berkeley Extension	2021-2023
<b>The University of Chicago</b> BA, Creative Writing, Minor in Biological Sciences Graduated with Departmental Honors Honors Thesis: "Parallels: A Short Story"	2017-2021

## PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES MEMBERSHIP

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American Association of Immunologists

## SKILLS

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<b>Languages</b>	R, Python
<b>Wet Lab</b>	Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), CRISPR-Cas9, ELISA, In Vitro Cell Culture Mass Cytometry (CyTOF), Immunohistochemistry (IHC) Staining, Multiplexed Ion Beam Imaging (MIBI), Flow Cytometry

## APPOINTMENTS

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2021-Present: *PROPEL Scholar and ImmunoX ImmunoDiverse Fellow*, University of California, San Francisco, CA

Advisors(s): Dr. Matthew Spitzer, Dr. Rachel DeBarge, Dr. Lilit Grigoryan, Dr. Jane Lee, Dr. Nam Woo Cho, Dr. Lauren Levine

- Actively leading and supporting projects in the Spitzer Lab that centers around T Cell Metabolism, Dendritic Cells, T Cell Proliferation, and immune checkpoint inhibitor therapy
- Used novel systems immunology techniques for single-cell analysis to analyze the cellular interaction between myeloid cells and immune cells in the tumor microenvironment in both human and mouse models of melanoma and breast cancer via the use of Flow Cytometry and Mass Cytometry (CyTOF) and spatial proteomics through Multiplexed Ion Beam Imaging (MIBI)

2020-2021: *Undergraduate Research Technician*, University of Chicago, Biological Sciences Division, University of Chicago Medicine, Department of Genetic Medicine, Chicago, IL

Advisor(s): Dr. Anindita Basu, Dr. Bingqing Xie, Dr. Susan Olalekan

- Profiled the cellular micro-environment of solid tumors and observed cell-to-cell interactions using a cell's transcriptional and positional information under Dr. Anindita Basu and Dr. Susan Olalekan
- Analyzed single-cell RNA Sequencing and Immunohistochemistry data from de-identified Ovarian Cancer patients by utilizing ImageScope and R to identify unique Cancer Associated Fibroblast (CAFs) markers that may reveal the role of CAFs as an oncogenic driver for Ovarian Cancer

Spring 2020: *Undergraduate Research Intern*, University of Chicago, Research Development Support, Chicago, IL

Advisor(s): Dr. Elena Zinchenko, Ms. Sarah Kirstine Lain

- Researched and published multi-million-dollar grant opportunities from the NIH, NSF and the NIJ to support scientific COVID-19 related research for University of Chicago Principal Investigators in the Biological and Physical Science Divisions
- Managed and updated weekly a COVID-19 research site from talks given by University of Chicago Principal Investigators on current research discoveries and understanding on the development of COVID-19

June 2019-September 2019: *Undergraduate Research Assistant, Katen Scholars Fellow*, University of Chicago, Biological Sciences Division, University of Chicago Medicine, Department of Immunology, Chicago, IL

Advisor(s): Dr. Anita Chong, Dr. Dharmendra Jain

- Learned and used a specialized ELISA assay on a project supported by Dr. Anita Chong and Dr. Dharmendra Jain to track the kinetics and specificity of polyreactive antibodies that formed during kidney transplant rejection
- Analyzed blood samples collected from control and kidney-transplanted mice and engaged in weekly lab meetings in the Chong Lab and other collaborators to discuss ongoing lab projects and developing studies in transplant immunology

2018-2019: *Undergraduate Clinical Research Assistant*, University of Chicago, Biological Sciences Division, University of Chicago Medicine, Department of Neurology, Chicago, IL

Advisor(s): Dr. Anthony Reder, Ms. Mildred Valentine

- Analyzed urine samples, completed data entry, and monitored Clinical Trial patients undergoing treatment for Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Neuromyelitis Optica (NMO) under Clinical studies lead by Dr. Anthony Reder and Ms. Mildred Valentine

2018-2021: *Undergraduate Research Assistant*, University of Chicago, Center for College Student Success and Chicago Center for Teaching, Chicago, IL

Advisor(s): Dr. Cheryl Richardson, Ms. Devon Moore

- Founded an independent educational research advocacy project aimed at promoting inclusive pedagogical methods for undergraduate and graduate teaching assistants at The University of Chicago
- Self-conducted over 40 hours of student interviews that collected qualitative information resulting in the creation/establishment of a mandatory cultural competency training program for teaching assistants at The University of Chicago
- Presented research to the University of Chicago Vice Provost Office and the Biological Sciences Collegiate Division (BSCD) and Physical Sciences Collegiate Division (PSCD) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee that used recommendations from the project that is actively be used to create new classes and resource books aimed to support Underrepresented Minority (URM) and First Generation, Low-Income (FGLI) students interested in STEM

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND FUNDING AWARDS**

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Foundry Innovations Fellowship, **2023**  
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) Diversity Supplement Awardee, **2023**  
University of California San Francisco ImmunoDiverse Community and Research Fellowship Award, **2022**  
University of California San Francisco ImmunoX ImmunoDiverse URM SRA Fellowship Award, **2021**  
University of Chicago Jeff Metcalf Research Fellowship Award, **2020-2021**  
University of Chicago Katen Scholar Fellow, **2019**

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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UCSF Bakar ImmunoX Community Award, **2023**  
Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists Student Travel Award, **2022**  
Innovative Genomics Institute 2nd Place Poster, Health and Medicine, **2022**  
University of California, San Francisco PROPEL Post Baccalaureate Research Scholar, **2021**  
University of Chicago Student Government Naa Asheley Ashitey Community Award for Extraordinary Service, **2021**  
University of Chicago Howell Murray Alumni Award, **2021**  
Euphony Journal Short Story Contest: The Bechdel Test Honorable Mention, **2021**  
University of Chicago Clinical Excellence Scholar, **2021**  
University of Chicago Organization of Black Students Ujima Award, **2021**  
University of Chicago Chi Chapter International Women's Day Award, **2021**  
University of Chicago Jeff Metcalf Research Fellowship Award, **2021**  
University of Chicago Student Government Student Leadership Recognition Award, **2020**  
University of Chicago Dean's List Recipient, **2019**  
University of Chicago Odyssey Scholar, **2016**  
QuestBridge Scholar, **2016**  
Greenhouse Scholar, **2016**

## CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

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### *Physician Shadowing*

- Nishant Agrawal, MD, University of Chicago Medicine, **2020-2021**, **Part of UChicago Clinical Excellence Scholars Program**
- Dr. Rachel Rutishauser, MD, PhD, University of California, San Francisco, **2022-Present**

## RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

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- Bingqing Xie, Susan Olalekan, Rebecca Back, **Naa Asheley Ashitey**, Heather Eckart, Anindita Basu. Exploring the tumor micro-environment in primary and metastatic tumors of different ovarian cancer histotypes. [Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology](#), 2023

## RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS- PREPRINTS

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- Nam Woo Cho, Sophia M. Guldberg, Eun Ji Kim, Kamir J. Hiam-Galvez, Katherine Wai, Lauren S. Levine, Barzin Y. Nabet, Rachel DeBarge, Jacqueline L. Yee, **Naa Asheley Ashitey**, Iliana Tenvooren, Matthew H. Spitzer. T cell-instructed inflammation drives immune checkpoint inhibitor therapy resistance. [bioRxiv](#), 2022. *submitted and in revision*

## CREATIVE WRITING PUBLICATIONS

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- **1 Human Journal-** ["Just Look For Blue Skin"](#) - [How Medicine Left My Blackness Behind](#) (poetry, 2020)
- **Babi Punk Magazine-**[Stained](#) (poetry, 2020)

- **Blacklight Magazine-** [Manufactured, "Exoticization" Issue](#) (poetry, 2018))
- **Soul Talk Magazine** - Familiarity (poetry, 2020)
- **Blacklight Magazine** - [Bottled Notes, "Movement" Issue](#) (poetry, 2021)
- **Future Cafe (Chicago Center for Contemporary Theory)** – [A Safe Place; and the clothes touched his red carpet, Post-X Volume II](#) (poetry, 2021)
- **Euphony Journal-** [Parallels](#) (short story, 2021)
- **The Babble-** [I have to wash my pillowcase twice a week because I hate the smell of my tears; It is not our fault, it is the world's fault, but it still feels like our fault; Eldest, Only Daughter](#) (poetry, 2022)
- **The /temz/ Review-** [I haven't thought about what happens if I choose to spit and not swallow](#) (poetry, 2023)
- **Sage Cigarettes Magazine-** [please leave a message after the tone](#) (poetry, 2023)
- **Okay Donkey Magazine-** [stop](#) (poetry, 2023)
- **Olney Magazine-** [everyday, Black Women are assaulted](#) (poetry, 2023)
- **Broken Antler Magazine (BAM) Quarterly-** Dear white women who have worked with me on academic DEI initiatives, you are not the allies you think you are (forthcoming, 2024)

## EDITORIALS, OP-EDS, AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

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- **The Xylom** - ["Two Years of COVID and Counting, Medicine Still Does Not Value Black Lives](#) (op-ed, 2022)

## TALKS AND POSTERS

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### Seminars (\* denotes invited)

University of California, San Francisco Hooper Research Foundation Lunch Seminar Series (July 2022, San Francisco, California)

### Conference Invited Talks and Panels

Questbridge 25 Scholar Summit (July 2019; San Francisco, California)

Stanford First-Generation Low-Income Conference (February 2020, Stanford, California)

University of Chicago Astronomy KICP Outreach Symposium (October 2020, Chicago, Illinois, virtual)

University of California, San Francisco 2nd Annual PROPEL Symposium (August 2022, San Francisco, California)

MiMentor, "Being a First-Generation Pre-Medical Student" (September 2022, San Francisco, California)

### Conference Contributed Posters (\* denotes primary speaker)

University of Chicago Katen/Potters Fellow Research Symposium (August 2019, Chicago, Illinois)\*

International Transplantation Science Meeting (November 2019, Clearwater, Florida)

Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (November 2021, Virtual)\*

University of California, San Francisco 2nd Annual ImmunoDiverse Colloquium (May 2022, San Francisco, California)\*

Innovative Genomics Institute (IGI) Symposium (July 2022, Berkeley, California)\*

University of California, San Francisco 2nd Annual PROPEL Symposium (August 2022, San Francisco, California)\*

Mount Sinai Research Symposium and PhD Application Assistance and Advisory Program for Under-represented Scholars (SINAI4US), (October 2022, New York City, New York, Virtual)\*

Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (November 2022, Anaheim, California)\*

University of California, San Francisco 3rd Annual PROPEL Symposium (August 2023, San Francisco, California)\*

2023 UCSF ImmunoX/UC Berkeley Immunology Retreat (September 2023, Pacific Grove, California)\*

### **Additional Conferences Attended**

Stanford 1st Annual Spatial Biology Workshop, Stanford University (August 2022, Palo Alto, CA )  
IMMUNOLOGY 2023, American Association of Immunologists (May 2023, Washington, DC)  
Stanford 2nd Annual Spatial Biology Workshop, Stanford University(August 2023, Palo Alto, CA)

### **TEACHING**

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ImmunoDiverse Summer Intern Program, University of California, San Francisco

Summer 2022: ImmunoDiverse Immunology Crash Course: The Immune System in Health and Disease  
Summer 2023: ImmunoDiverse Immunology Crash Course: The Innate Immune System

### **OUTREACH**

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#### **University of Chicago**

*University of Chicago Student Government*, College Council Representative, Chair of COVID-19 Committee (October 2020-June 2021)

- Led multiple projects and initiatives as a member of Student Government's COVID-19 Committee and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Committee to support marginalized students through resource events, open letter campaigns and meetings with university administrators and faculty (Dean of The College, The President, The Provost, The Vice Provost, Dean of Student of Life, etc)
- Drafted a resolution that was unanimously confirmed by college council to ask University administrators and Collegiate Masters to return to Spring 2020 opt-in pass/fail policies because of COVID-19, elections, and concerns of student well-being
- Drafted two resolutions that were confirmed by both the undergraduate and graduate student governments to support DACA/Undocumented Students and advocated and created policy changes within student health and within the College that supported the rights, freedoms, and mental health of sexual assault survivors at the University of Chicago

*Center for College Student Success*, Odyssey Scholar Community Fellow (May 2020-June 2021)

- Supported UChicago Odyssey Scholars (First-Generation, Low-Income) through multiple programming events per quarter aimed at addressing educational disparities and adjustment to post-secondary education
- Co-wrote a guidebook that was distributed to 1200+ FGLI-identifying students navigate collegiate and post-collegiate life on topics including research and mentorship opportunities, fellowships and the graduate school application process, and mental health support

*Quest+ (QuestBridge Scholars Network)*, Upperclassman Representative, President and Secretary (September 2017-June 2021)

- Organized and managed weekly events related to mentorship, resource, and community-building to support the First Generation, Low-Income student community at the University of Chicago
- Created a special resource document to support FGLI students in finding internship/research opportunities and organized panels based around applying to graduate school programs, study abroad opportunities, FAFSA, Financial literacy and strategies/events on self-care and mental health.
- Served as primary student contact and head representative with Quest HQ and various campus officials to receive resources to better support UChicago's Odyssey Scholar Cohort (1000+ undergraduates)

*University of Chicago Medicine, Comprehensive Cancer Center, In-Patient and Out-Patient Volunteer* (December 2015-June 2021)

- Stimulated passionate weekly customer service to hospital patients through communication and office support at the Duchossois Center for Advanced Medicine Clinical Oncology Department
- Orchestrated active engagement with patients by listening to their personal stories and adhering to special requests to make their stay comfortable

*University of Chicago Admissions Office, Admissions Ambassador at Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success* (April 2018-September 2018)

- Advised First Generation, low-income high school juniors and seniors on the college application process and career exploration treks
- Created and taught a course on how to apply to post-secondary institutions and scholarships

### **University of California, San Francisco**

*ImmunoDiverse, Chair of Outreach Committee for Undergraduate Student Activities, Colloquia Team Member, General Operations + Logistics Manager* (October 2021-Present)

- Lead coordinator for ImmunoDiverse and academic summer research programs sponsored by UCSF (PUMAS, SRTP, Emerson Collective, PROPEL) for first generation, low-income and underrepresented minority students in STEM at local community colleges and state universities.
- Organized and led general meetings among ImmunoDiverse members and UCSF ImmunoX faculty to push for increased representation of Black, Native and Latinx Immunologists at UCSF, and increased financial resources for research technicians, graduate students and post-doctoral scholars who come from historically excluded racial and socioeconomic groups

*UCSF-Gladstone Genomic Immunology Trainee Committee, Junior Specialist Representative* (August 2022-Present)

- Trainee lead initiative by Junior Specialists, Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Scholars in Gladstone Genomic Immunology Lab to create events and programming aimed at providing mentorship and career development support for Gladstone researchers
- Co-Lead of Community/Environment Sub Committee to address and advocate for inclusive climate training among trainees and faculty, and address disparities in racial and socioeconomic diversity within the Genomic Immunology division.

*UCSF PROPEL Post-Bacc Scholar Advisory Board, 2nd Year Student Representative* (October 2022-Present)

- Provide PROPEL Post-Bacc Program Founders + Program Manager feedback from the PROPEL Scholar Community.
- Co-lead in forming a speaker keynote series and social wellness series to provide PROPEL Scholars networking opportunities and further inter-scholar communication.
- Currently leading efforts on tracking racial and socioeconomic diversity of PROPEL Scholar participants and exploring avenues for providing additional financial support (moving stipends, laptop support, emergency fund, etc) for low-income scholars.

### **ADDITIONAL OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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- Skype A Scientist (2021-Present, 2 Classroom Visits)

### **MEDIA APPEARANCES**

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- Programs Supporting FGLI Students – [UChicago Civic Engagement](#); [UChicago News](#); [UChicago Astronomy and Astrophysics](#); [Weekly Citizen](#)
- Student Government Resolutions – [Supporting Sexual Assault Survivor](#); [Supporting non-US Citizenship Students and Immigration Policies](#)
- UChicago COVID-19 Response and Advocacy – [CBS Chicago](#); [Chicago Maroon](#); [Chicago Maroon](#)
- Experience of FGLI Students in Higher Academia – [Chicago Maroon](#)
- Research News – [Innovative Genomics Institute News](#)
- Commitment to JEDI – [Synapse @ UCSF](#)

Last updated: May 8, 2024