

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



UCSF School of Pharmacy

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A Note From the Editor:

I, the *Therapeutic Window* editor, am happy to present to you the 5th issue of the ASSP feature, *Student Spotlights*. With over 400 students in the School of Pharmacy, it can be difficult to get to know all of our amazing peers. I hope that this quarterly feature will serve as a way for you to get to know your fellow School of Pharmacy classmates. Where are they from? What are their hobbies and interests? Why did they choose pharmacy? What are their interests outside of pharmacy school? Read on to find out!

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— *Stephanie Son*



P1 Student Spotlight: **Anisa Shoghi**



Anisa standing next to the distillation machine at BIHE's pharmacognosy laboratory (2007). This location was closed by the government a few years later and all the equipment were confiscated.

ABOUT *Anisa*

Q: Where did you grow up?

A: I was born in Tehran, the capital city of Iran, and I lived there until May 16, 2012 when I left Iran to come to the United States as a refugee. However, I lived in Vienna, Austria for about four months as part of the asylum process before I came to the U.S.

Q: Where did you complete your undergraduate degree?

A: I got my undergraduate degree from a university called Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) which is an underground

university in Iran. I believe in the Bahá'í faith, a peaceful religion that Iran's government is explicitly against. Therefore, in Iran, Bahá'ís are under different forms of persecution including being denied of their right for higher education or having equal employment opportunities as other citizens of the country. BIHE was founded about ten years after Iran's revolution in response to these persecutions; however, it is still an underground university even up to this day.

Why **PHARMACY?**

Q: Why did you choose pharmacy?

A: I was always interested in science since I was a child. That's why I chose Natural Sciences as my major at high school. My dream job at that time was becoming a physician. However, among all health-care fields, BIHE only had pharmacy. So, it was my best available option. Work of a pharmacist in Iran is quite different from how it is in the US. As a result, although I was interested in the field of pharmacy in general, I didn't like working as a pharmacist. So, when I came to the US, at first, I wanted to continue my education by getting a master's and PhD in a pharmacy-related field. But two things changed my path. One was talking to my friends who were studying at pharmacy schools in the US, and second was working in a pharmacy here. These showed me that pharmacists are very involved in patient care and the outcome of treatment here. That's why I began to like pharmacy as a profession. So, I retook the pre-pharmacy prerequisites of the US PharmD programs at a community college in San Marcos, California and applied for pharmacy schools.

Q: What brought you to UCSF?

A: All the high-ranked pharmacy schools in California, including UCSF, require the international degrees to be evaluated by an institute called World Education Services (WES). Although many evaluating institutes in the US evaluate BIHE's degrees, WES does not. I was very lucky that by the time that I finished my pre-pharmacy prerequisites, UCSF had changed its admission process and required PCAT instead of an

undergraduate degree. So, among all pharmacy schools in California, I only applied to UCSF.

REFLECTIONS

Q: Is pharmacy school like what you imagined?

A: It mostly is as I imagined. I think the parts of pharmacy school that were new to me were mainly the parts that I hadn't experienced because I didn't go to four-year university here, such as class cabinet, different organizations, etc. The other part of the pharmacy school that I hadn't imagined, and I really enjoy, is the practicality of many of our classes and the focus on patient care. This just confirms for me the reason that pharmacists can be so involved in patient care in the US.

IF NOT PHARMACY...

Q: If you were not pursuing pharmacy, what would you be doing?

A: Before I learned how the job of a pharmacist in the United States is, I wanted to do research. After I got my BSc in Pharmacy from BIHE, I decided to continue my education. In the year 2011, I found a sponsor who would help with my expenses to get a master's and possibly a PhD in the

United Kingdom. I was in the final steps of getting admission for MSc in Research in Biomedical Mate-

rials from the University of Manchester when my application for asylum to the United States got approved and I came here. So, when I came to the US, my initial goal was continuing the same path that I had in mind when I was applying for the University of Manchester.



*Nowruz (Persian New Year) celebration with Anisa's sister and a group of friends
Vista, California, March 2016*

HOBBIES / INTERESTS

Q: What do you like to do during the school year to decompress or destress?

A: I think what destresses me the most is talking with my loved ones, mainly my sister who came to the United States about three years ago and my mother, especially because it works mutually both for them and me. I also enjoy

watching TV shows and movies. If I have extra time, which usually only happens during the breaks, one of my favorite activities is hiking.

Q: What do you like most about living in San Francisco?

A: Good public transportation! In San Diego County, using public transportation is very time-consuming, but here it doesn't take much more time than when driving a car and I think it is actually less stressful, especially during rush hours.

Q: What is your favorite book/movie/TV show of the moment?

A: My favorite books of all time are: Man's Search for Meaning by Dr. Viktor Frankl who was a psychiatrist and a Holocaust survivor, and The Alchemist by the Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho. It's very hard for me to choose a movie or TV show because I enjoy many different genres. Hidden

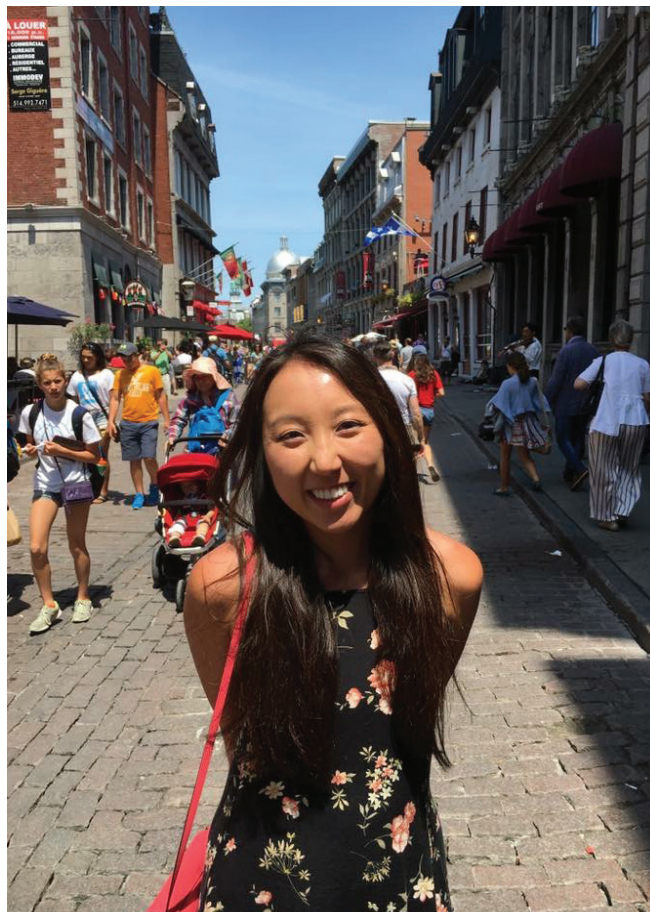
Figures and Gifted are two of the recent movies that I really liked.

LOOKING FORWARD...

Q: What are you looking forward to over the summer?

A: My sister and I are planning to have a short trip during summer. We are still in the discussion of where to go, but wherever it is going to be I'm sure we will have a good time together and I really look forward to that.

P2 Student Spotlight: Jennifer Zhou



Jenny exploring the streets of Montreal!

ABOUT Jennifer

Q: Where did you grow up?

A: I grew up and spent most of my life in sunny SoCal (Thousand Oaks), but I was actually born in Toronto, Canada. I'm a poser Canadian though, so I can't answer any questions that you might have about Canada (you'd be surprised how many I get...)

Q: Where did you complete your undergraduate degree?

A: UCLA-- Go Bruins!

Why PHARMACY?

Q: Why did you choose pharmacy?

A: Both my parents work for Amgen, so I literally grew up hearing them talk about drugs at the dinner table which sparked my initial interest in the field of pharmacy. When I entered college, I knew I wanted a career in healthcare so pharmacy seemed like the perfect fit for me!

Q: What brought you to UCSF?

A: UCSF had always been my dream school, and I was honestly

shocked when I got in. When I got the acceptance letter, it was pretty much a done deal.

REFLECTIONS

Q: Is pharmacy school like what you imagined?

A: Pharmacy school has definitely been more challenging than I expected, especially P2 year. I never imagined myself spending so many hours in the same study room *cry* At the same time, I've met some of the best people here at UCSF, and I never would've imagined the level of support that I would be getting from my fellow classmates. Despite all of its challenges, I've also managed to have a lot of fun and been able to experience so many new things since I've been in SF!

IF NOT PHARMACY...

Q: If you were not pursuing pharmacy, what would you be doing?

A: Probably a veterinarian, because I love all animals!

HOBBIES / INTERESTS

Q: What do you like to do during the school year to decompress or destress?

A: Since I live in the inner sunset, I usually go on runs in Golden Gate Park to blow off steam. My favorite spot to run to is either Ocean Beach or up to Grand View Park!

Q: What do you like most about living in San Francisco?

A: All of the gorgeous city view-points- nothing beats SF on a beautiful day.

Q: What is your favorite book/movie/TV show of the moment?

A: My favorite show at the moment is Terrace House- I never knew Japanese reality TV could be so entertaining.

LOOKING FORWARD...

Q: What are you looking forward to over the summer?

A: NOT having to study and being able to travel and spend time with my family!



"That time I finally left the library to go hiking at Point Bonita Lighthouse" -Jenny