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Patrick Smith

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Pharmacology Graduate Student Striving for Excellence

Salahuddin Mohammed seeks to inspire future students through his work

OCTOBER 1, 2021 BY PATRICK SMITH

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Salahuddin Mohammed, a doctoral student in the School of Pharmacy, examines a slide in a laboratory in the Department of BioMolecular Sciences. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – Salahuddin Mohammed, a graduate student in the **University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy**, has always sought to make his mark on the research and science world. As a young student with an interest in neuroscience, that desire led him to pursue a career in pharmacy and has taken him across the globe.

While receiving his undergraduate degree in pharmacy from Osmania University in India, Mohammed developed a passion for research. He followed that passion to the United Kingdom, where he received his Master of Science in Pharmacology from Aston University.

"I was always intrigued by the nature of the human body and wanted to fully understand it, so I chose to pursue pharmacology," Mohammed said. "During my undergraduate studies, it was my interest in pharmacology that helped me get through the coursework and kept my zeal alive."

Mohammed continued his work with pharmacology, moving to Ethiopia, where he served as an instructional assistant professor of pharmacology at Mizan Tepi University for six years. While there, he continued to follow his interest in neuroscience, conducting research into the link between substance abuse and mental health, as well as

research into HIV-positive populations.

When he was ready to pursue his doctorate, Mohammed found his way to Oxford in the lab of Jason Paris, assistant professor of pharmacology within the **Department of BioMolecular Sciences**. He said that Ole Miss' status as an R1 university and the work being conducted in Paris' lab made for an ideal match.

"The state-of-the-art work at Ole Miss was really intriguing," Mohammed said. "Moreover, my prior research in patient populations overlapped with Dr. Paris, where he explored the interactions of opioids and HIV using human cells and animal models."

Paris said that Mohammed has made a positive impact, praising his kindness and tireless work ethic.

"Salahuddin is a pleasure to have in the lab, always courteous to his colleagues and is always looking for more work to do," Paris said. "Recently, he enthusiastically described to me on a Friday how he intended to start collecting data on a new project over a three-day weekend while redrafting a manuscript in the evenings."

"I had no doubt that he would complete both tasks admirably over the holiday, but felt compelled to remind him to take at least one day off. He is just that kind of worker, and his accomplishments reflect his commitment to biomedical science."

Since arriving in 2018, Mohammed has conducted important research into the neurological complications caused by long-term HIV infection, which include deficits in learning and memory. These complications are collectively known as neuroHIV. His work in studying these complications could potentially benefit HIV patients.

"My fellow researchers and myself believe that our continuous efforts will enable us to identify biological markers for neuroHIV," Mohammed said. "This could lead to new treatment options that may contribute to a cure for neuroHIV."

Mohammed has been successful in both securing funding to support his research and in making a name for himself as a prolific writer and presenter. In both 2020 and 2021, he secured a \$1,000 grant from the UM Graduate School to support his dissertation.

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Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

Mohammed has also contributed to 28 peer-reviewed journal articles and has presented at 18 regional and international venues.

He has received numerous prestigious awards during his time at the university. Over the past several years, Mohammed was the recipient of the 2019 Marvin Davis Graduate Student Award from the Department of BioMolecular Sciences, 2020 Young Investigator's Educational Enhancement Award from the American Society for Neurochemistry and 2021 Trainee Professional Development Award from the Society for Neuroscience.

This year alone, Mohammed received the Student Excellence Award from the BioMolecular Sciences Student Advocates, Edith Pritchard Graduate Student Award from the Department of BioMolecular Sciences and Graduate Achievement Award from the university.



Salahuddin Mohammed

Mohammed expects to graduate in spring 2022 with a Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences, with emphasis in pharmacology. He plans to pursue a postdoctoral research training position that will allow him to continue studying neuroscience and teach future pharmacology students.

Mohammed wants his success as a student and researcher to be an inspiration for others like him to follow, and also intends to pass on his love for research and science to a new generation.

"For all the young generations, it's hard to know how to go from high school enthusiast to the person making the discoveries and creating game-changing innovations," Mohammed said. "The key is to always be curious to find answers to questions that seem unanswerable.

"I like to echo Einstein's philosophy, 'I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious.'"

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