



## MAKING HER OWN PATH

**G**raduation will be here soon. Biology and Environmental Health senior, Ameera Tahir, wants to make the most of the time she has left on campus. She would like to see herself get more involved, go to more sporting events, and join a club. But finding the time to do all these things is difficult. After graduation, Ameera hopes to work for the local or state health department. She would like to work one or two years before pursuing a Master's Degree.

Science has always been an interest of Ameera's. Her dad was the driving force for her to pursue education in human health, in hopes that she would go on to med school and become a doctor. She took part in a summer program at Allen hospital to see if the medical field was a good fit, but could not see herself in a hospital setting. However, her interest in how the body works has kept her on the path to help people have healthier lives. That is why she is seeking a Biology and Environmental Health degree.

Originally from Pakistan, Ameera came to the United States eight years ago. She attended Waterloo West High School and knew she wanted to stay close to home and her family, especially after her father passed away. The University of Northern Iowa has become her second home these past few years. Ameera has loved her time on campus as an undergraduate. She stated that the professors have been great, class sizes are not too big, and that there are so many resources available to students.

Ameera's favorite courses at UNI have been Anatomy and Entomology. The SynDaver Lab has helped her understand the body. Her entomology class project took her to the prairie to see the different insects and understand how the environment, such as the temperature, time of day, etc., affects which bugs were active. She has also enjoyed ethics courses, especially when it comes to environmental health and how we, as a people, can communicate about climate change and make changes in our own lives to minimize our environmental impact. "We need to do our part," she says.

When not in the classroom, Ameera stays busy with her studies. She is an academic coach at the College Reading and Learning Center and works part time at Younkers. She also enjoys volunteering at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. Ameera's advice to students going into STEM is that there are so many more opportunities for your life if you come to college. For students already enrolled, go to class and get involved in the various discussions. Learn about others' perspectives. There are more experiences for students who live on campus too.



**Ameera Tahir, Senior Biology & Environmental Health Major and First Generation College Student.**

*"We need to do our part."  
-Ameera Tahir on improving climate change.*

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*Historically, these students have faced obstacles in the pursuit of higher education. TRIO has been providing support to pre-college and college students at UNI since 1984.*