

Setareh Zandihaghighi

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EDUCATION

Master of Science, Genetic Counseling

August 2022-May 2024

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

-Precision Health Graduate Certificate

-Thesis: "Development of a Culturally Targeted Educational Intervention to Increase Cancer Genetic Counseling Utilization among Iranian and Arab Populations in the United States"

Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences

September 2019 – June 2021

University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA

-Thesis: "Effect of pH During Cardiac Arrest on Neurological Outcome in an Animal Model"

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Providence Genetics Program – Cancer Genetic Counselor

May 2024 – Present

- Provides comprehensive genetic counseling before and after testing for patients with various cancer-related concerns, including complex genetic results and rare tumor types.
- Collaborates on the development of accessible digital educational materials, along with marketing content and consultation note templates, to improve the understanding of hereditary cancer genetics at Providence Orange County hospitals.
- Routinely participates in multidisciplinary oncology case conferences, translating complex genetic information into practical insights for healthcare teams to enhance decision-making and patient care.
- Led the strategic design and implementation of an innovative delivery model within a women's wellness center, greatly improving access to hereditary cancer genetic services.
- Leads and supervises site-specific same-day service delivery model programs, providing accessible genetic testing to patients and improving efficiency in diagnostics and care pathways.
- Supervises genetic counseling graduate students during clinical rotations, manages the Orange County genetics volunteer program, and offers mentorship and shadowing opportunities for aspiring genetic counseling students.

University of Michigan – CLINICAL ROTATIONS

August 2022-May 2024

- *Jackson Laboratory's Clinical Education Rotation, Remote, Jan 2024 – May 2024:* Conduct actionable needs assessments for clinical genetics education projects using literature and expert opinions; create tailored educational interventions employing instructional design and adult learning theory; collaborate with a dynamic education team including genetic counselors and genomic educators; innovate and improve educational strategies in clinical genetics.
- *University of Michigan Inherited Retinal Dystrophy Clinic, Ann Arbor, MI, Jul 2023 – Dec 2023:* Managed patient appointments for diverse ophthalmology indications like retinoblastoma and Stargardt disorder; contributed to a multi-disciplinary clinic team including genetic counselors and retinal dystrophy specialists; documented patient care meticulously in electronic medical records; utilized tele-genetic services for patient care.
- *University of Michigan Pediatric Genetics Clinic, Ann Arbor, MI, Jul 2023 – Aug 2023:* Led genetic counseling sessions for pediatric conditions like fragile X syndrome and cardiomyopathy; collaborated with a multi-disciplinary team including pediatric geneticists; coordinated inpatient and outpatient care in NICU, Cystic Fibrosis clinic, and other specialized units.
- *Genetic Medicine at Providence St. Joseph Health, Orange, CA, May 2023 – Jun 2023:* Conducted risk assessments and tailored counseling for hereditary cancer syndromes like Lynch Syndrome and Cowden syndrome; provided counseling for adult conditions including cardiomyopathy and hemochromatosis; delivered high-quality care to patients from rural areas; presented case discussions at conferences with a multidisciplinary cancer genetics team.

- *Corewell Health Clinical Cytogenetics Department, Dearborn, MI, Feb 2023 – Mar 2023*: Advised prenatal patients on indications including discrepant first-trimester screen results and abnormal ultrasounds; provided counseling for adult conditions like Myotonic dystrophy and Neurofibromatosis; educated patients from diverse backgrounds on risks and testing options with culturally-sensitive genetic guidance. Assisted in creating content for social media platforms, email newsletters, and promotional materials.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Michigan School of Public Health – Genetic Health Coach July 2023 – May 2024

- Recruit individuals to the Genetic Hereditary Testing Study based on their personal and family history of cancer.
- Strengthening interviewing skills by completing training and debriefing with the research coordinator.

University of California Irvine Department of Pediatric Genetics – Senior Specialist June 2023 – July 2023

- Managed administrative tasks and research protocols for Lysosomal Storage Disorder research program.
- Engaged with patients prior to their appointments to gauge assistance needs and compile histories.
- Led weekly meetings for Inclusion body myopathy with early-onset Paget disease and frontotemporal dementia (IBMPFD) patients.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Michigan, Thesis 2022-2024

Research committee: *Monica Marvin, MS, CGC; Beverly Yashar, MS, PhD; Julie Culver, MS, LCGC, CCRP; Rawan Awwad, MS, CGC; Hiam Abdel-Salam, MS, CGC*

- Serve as the principal investigator and engage stakeholders, including community members and healthcare professionals, to produce culturally tailored educational videos.
- Develop and implement a survey to measure the impact and utilization of educational resources from genetic counselors' perspectives.

University of California Irvine Neurocritical Care Lab 2019- 2022

Principal Investigator: *Yama Akbari, MD, Ph.D*

- Supervised student-run projects and timelines to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.
- Created educational and guidance materials for lab members to facilitate experimental processes.
- Performed immunohistochemistry staining and operated on Keyence and Nikon microscopes.
- Trained and provided mentorship to 15+ new students for research assistant positions.

University of California Irvine Prenatal Genetics Lab 2020- 2021

Principal Investigator: *Kathryn Steinhaus French M.S., L.C.G.*

- Assisted in data entry via EPIC and FileMaker related to pregnancy outcomes information.

FELLOWSHIP AND INTERNSHIP

The Inter-Society Coordinating Committee for Practitioner Education in Genomics Scholars Program 2025

- 2 years Internship awarded to a student showing deep interest in genetics and healthcare professional education, contributing to a two-year term in a prestigious genomics education opportunity supported by the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) and National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Rackham Merit Fellowship, University of Michigan 2022-2024

- Fellowship awarded to students in a graduate degree program who have a record of academic achievement and have demonstrated commitment to diversity in the academic, professional, or civic realm.

ADVOCACY AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

DEIJ Advisory Group Member, Providence 2024-Present

- Collaborates on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) committee by implementing and designing various projects, and presenting on relevant topics at various regional and organization-wide meetings.

Anti-Racism Subcommittee Member, National Society of Genetic Counselors 2024-Present

- Contributed to creating resources for advancing antiracism within the cancer genetics community through various working groups, and collaborating with NSGC to update the Genetic Counseling Literature Repository with Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (J.E.D.I.) topics.

Scholarship subcommittee Member, Michigan Association of Genetic Counselors 2024-Present

- Serves as a member of the scholarship committee for the SCGC Prospective Genetic Counseling Student Scholarship, aimed at promoting diversity in genetic counseling by alleviating financial barriers for Southern California residents applying to graduate programs.

DEI Task Force Member, Genetic Counseling Program, University of Michigan 2023-2024

- Contribute to discussions around diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies through quarterly meetings with board members to ensure alignment and impactful organizational change.

Social Media Coordinator, Michigan Association of Genetic Counselors 2023-2024

- Manage and curate content for MAGC's social media platforms, enhancing online engagement and community outreach.

Volunteer, Cancer Genetic Department, St. Joseph Hospital 2020-2022

- Assisted genetic counselors with clinical and research database data entry, including pedigree entry using the Progeny platform, and supported various clerical tasks and projects.

Volunteer, Pediatric Genetics, UCI Hospital 2021-2022

- Assisted genetic counselors with clinical and research database data entry, including pedigree entry using the Progeny platform, and supported various clerical tasks and projects.

COMMUNITY AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Alumni Representative, Genetic Counseling Prospective Student Network 2022-Present

- Established an alumni network to facilitate mentorship for prospective genetic counseling students, with an emphasis on supporting students from underserved communities.
- Annually mentored over 20 students, providing guidance and prioritizing outreach to those from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Developed a comprehensive series of lectures on key topics within the genetic community and delivered these lectures to enhance educational resources for prospective students.
- Collaborated with network leadership as a guest speaker, facilitator, and moderator for various workshops, contributing to the enrichment of the genetic counseling field.

President, Genetic Counseling Prospective Student Network 2021-2022

- Led and expanded the network of 120+ participants to raise awareness about genetic counseling and provided crucial resources for aspiring genetic counseling students.
- Created an outreach executive branch of the network to foster collaboration between genetic counselors and high schools and community colleges across various states, aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of genetic counseling.

Vice-President, University of California Irvine Campuswide Honor Alumni Chapter 2021-2022

- Aided in organizational oversight and established a mentoring program to support recent graduates and undergraduates in pursuing higher education and reaching their career goals.

Vice President & Co-founder, UCI t-RNAsfer Student Organization 2024-Present

- Established a student body for pre-health professions and created a mentoring program to offer personalized guidance to transfer students, aiding in their smooth transition into university life.

PRESENTATION AND PUBLICATION

- **CAGCC Inaugural Educational Conference, 2025**

"Taking the Alternative Out of Alternative Service Delivery: Creating Equitable Access to Genetic Services in a Community Hospital System"

Served as a speaker, discussing strategies to enhance equitable access to genetic services.

- **University of Michigan, Thesis Presentation, 2025**

"Development of a Culturally Targeted Educational Intervention to Increase Cancer Genetic Counseling Utilization among Iranian and Arab Populations in the United States"

Presented research findings and educational strategies to improve genetic counseling access for specific cultural groups.

- **University of Michigan, Medical Ground Round Presentation, MI, 2024**

"Limits in Carrier Screening and Related Consequences: A Cautionary Tale"

Presented a case review to explore the boundaries and potential implications of carrier screening.

- **National Society of Genetic Counselors Annual Conference, 2024**

"Development of a Culturally Targeted Educational Intervention to Increase Cancer Genetic Counseling Utilization among Iranian and Arab Populations in the United States"

Presented a poster showcasing strategies to enhance genetic counseling access among specific cultural groups.

- **University of Michigan Pediatric Genetics Clinic, Ann Arbor, MI, 2023**

"Overcoming Healthcare Barriers for Minority-Language Speakers with Neurodevelopmental Disorders"

Presented a thorough review and analysis of current literature on the impact of being a minority-language speaker with neurodevelopmental disorders as an isolated social determinant.

- **Presenter, Genetics Immersion Program, 2023**

Delivered a comprehensive presentation on Adult and Cancer Genetics, educating high school students on the real-world applications of genetics.

- **University of Michigan, Student Seminar – Ann Arbor, MI, 2023**

"Brain Development from Neanderthals to Modern Human"

Presented an hour-long seminar analyzing recent research on the identification of mutations affecting neurulation, based on the study by Mora-Bermúdez et al.

- **Panelist, Genetic Counseling Prospective Student Network, 2022 – 2023**

Engaged in 5 different events, offering vital information to prospective students on application cycles, interview techniques, and ranking schools, thus aiding their pursuit of a career in genetic counseling.

- **University of California Irvine Undergraduate Research Symposium, 2021**

"Investigating the Role of Astrocyte and Microglia Activation in Neurological Outcome after Cardiac Arrest in a Rodent Model"

Presented a thorough review and analysis of the debatable role of astrocytes and microglia in the animal brain's response to hypoxia, showcasing novel findings of their dual function using histological data.

- **Journal of Molecular Genetics and Metabolism Reports, Publication, 2021**

Prevalence of cerebral small vessel disease in a Fabry disease cohort.

Tapia, D., Florioli, D., Han, E., Lee, G., Paganini-Hill, A., Wang, S., Zandihaghighi, S., Kimonis, V., & Fisher, M. (2021).

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Recipient of NSGC Student Research Award (2023)
- Recipient of MAGC Student Research Project Award (2023)
- Recipient of the Regents' Scholarship based on academic excellence, UCI (2019-2021)
- Campuswide Honors Collegium (CHC) Transfer Student Excellence in Leadership Award, UCI (2021)
- Team Research Fellowship Grant (\$1500) - Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, UCI (2021-2022)
- Individual Research Fellowship Grant (\$1500) - Summer Undergraduate Research Program, UCI (2020)