

Siwaar Abouhala

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EDUCATION

Tufts University (Medford, MA) Aug. 2019- May 2023
Bachelor of Arts in Community Health; Bachelor of Science in Biology; Bachelor of Arts in Arabic Language & Cultural Studies
Honors: *summa cum laude* with highest thesis honors, **Cumulative GPA: 3.92/ 4.00**
Senior Honors Thesis: “Rare Yet Resilient: The Role of Neonatal Genetic Testing & Rare Disease Prognosis on Parental Psychosocial Outcomes, Coping Mechanisms, & Hospital System Recommendations.” Dept of Community Health. Spring 2023.
Relevant Coursework: Healthcare in America, Global Health, Community Health Research Methods, Advanced Arabic, Biochemistry, Genetics, Biostatistics, Developmental Biology.

CLINICAL & COMMUNITY HEALTH RESEARCH

- Appointed Member, Ohio Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review Committee*, Columbus, OH. June 2024- Present
- [Volunteer Role] Selected by the Ohio Department of Health to serve on the state-wide maternal mortality review board for a 1-year term. Review annual cases of maternal deaths alongside an interdisciplinary team to assess preventability and to draft necessary policies to improve obstetric outcomes.
- Clinical Research Coordinator, The Broad Institute of MIT & Harvard*, Cambridge, MA. August 2023- Present
- [Full-time] Support & advocate for patients & families enrolling in the *Rare Genomes Project (RGP)*, an NIH-funded, direct-to-patient genome sequencing study at the Center for Mendelian Genomics that seeks to identify the underlying genetic basis for rare and undiagnosed conditions affecting families nationally.
 - Collect patient medical records & samples; Guide patient families throughout their *diagnostic odyssey*; Conduct clinical & translational health research duties, including informed consent, interviewing, patient communication & education.
 - Organize Project MENA PEDIGREE: Progressing Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion in Genetic Research, Education, & Empowerment — the first-ever national Arab/Middle East North Africa (MENA) American rare disease and genomic medicine awareness campaign in collaboration with the Broad, the Center for Arab Narratives (CAN), and Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) in Dearborn, MI.
- Study Lead & Organizer, Project INSPIRE*, Somerville, MA. May 2023-Present
- Establish & lead a cross-institution community engagement study, Project INSPIRE: Improving New Somerville Parent & Infant Resiliency & Engagement.
 - Collaborate with local Somerville parents and family health leaders from SomerBaby, an early childhood readiness program based at Somerville Public Schools, undergraduate students from MARCH: Maternal Advocacy & Research for Community Health at Tufts, and academic researchers from the CBMHRJ: Center for Black Maternal Health & Reproductive Justice at Tufts University School of Medicine.
 - Manage & engage a multi-lingual Parent Advisory Board; Apply for and obtain a \$12k Tisch College Community Research Center (TCRC) grant.
- Founder & Study Lead, The Arab Maternal Health in Ohio Study*, Toledo, OH. June 2022- May 2024
- Design, launch, and manage a multi-pronged qualitative study with Dr. Ayaz Hyder on Arab American maternal and reproductive health barriers faced by local community champions in Northwest Ohio, USA; Awarded a \$20k research grant based at The Computational Epidemiology Lab in the College of Public Health, Ohio State University.
 - Organize & engage an Ohio-based community advisory board (CAB) to inform study programming, research outputs, and a research forum. Report back findings to the community through an in-person event, the 2023 MAAMA Research Forum: Mobilizing Arab American Maternal Advocacy.
- Research Associate & Project Manager, Boston College Connell School of Nursing*, Boston, MA. June 2023- May 2024
- [Part-time] Oversee a 2-year, \$250k PCORI grant-funded Arab American health study entitled: *Advancing Arab American Health Network Alliance (AAHNA)*. Analyze mixed methods findings on Arab American barriers to healthcare & research participation; Publish scientific papers on clinical & public health findings; Organize community stakeholder meetings & a national conference.
- Inaugural Research Assistant, MOTHER Lab*, Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, MA. July 2020- Present
- Publish papers on maternal health disparities at the MOTHER Lab: Maternal Outcomes for Translational Health Equity Research. Follow and disseminate local and national policy on maternal health. Conduct community-based maternal and child health research as a MIRAH Fellow: MOTHER Lab Innovations in Research, Advocacy, and Health.
- Research Assistant, Division of Newborn Medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital*, Boston, MA. Jan. 2022- 2024
- Conduct a qualitative sequential exploratory study with Dr. Monica Wojcik in contribution to an ongoing mixed methods clinical project assessing the impact of neonatal genetic testing in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) on parental psychosocial outcomes, well-being, and coping mechanisms post-NICU discharge.

- In the US (Jan. - May 2023): Somerville Family Practice (Somerville, MA). Perform clinical duties at a leading local clinic serving Somerville & Medford residents; obtain vital signs and medication history; assist with patient examinations and prepare room for procedures; collect specimens & prepare lab orders; perform basic lab tests.
- In southern Syria (June - Aug. 2021 and 2023): Severe Burns Clinic (As-Suwayda Governorate, Syria). Working in Arabic and a low-resource setting, my roles were at the intersection of public health and clinical medicine. Conduct intake forms and collect histories on patients; provide outpatient laser therapies; assist medical team with basic operations; support psychosocial programming.

LEADERSHIP & ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

Founder and Senior Advisor, MARCH: Maternal Advocacy and Research for Community Health July 2020- May 2023

- Founded & mobilized the 1st undergraduate student-run maternal health organization at Tufts University & the largest (100+ members) in the United States that works with local and global maternal health NGOs in an effort to both improve maternal health outcomes as well as educate undergraduate students about maternal health careers.
- Collaborate with: Dr. Amutah-Onukagha, NIH R01 Grant Recipient and Associate Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine; the SomerBaby program through Somerville Public Schools in Somerville, MA; the Center for Black Maternal Health & Reproductive Justice (CBMHRJ); March for Moms; March of Dimes.
- Awarded the 2021 "New Organization of the Year" prize by the Tufts Office for Campus Life (OCL).

Chair, The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Journal Club, Boston, MA. Sept. 2020- 23

- Manage a semester-based reading and discussion group through Tufts University School of Medicine focusing on scientific articles within reproductive, birth, and environmental justice for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities

Teaching Assistant & Grader, Tufts University Departments of Chemistry and Physics, Medford, MA. Jan. 2022-2023

- Support students through serving as a Teaching Assistant in Chemistry I & II Labs through the Department of Chemistry, and as a Grader in Physics I & II through the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Tufts University.

Contributing Editor, Harvard Medical School Primary Care Review, Boston, MA. May 2021-March 2022

- Edit articles and recruit contributors to a high-quality, non-peer reviewed publication reporting on health equity and the determinants of health related to primary care at Harvard Medical School

ADVOCACY & POLICY EXPERIENCE

Graduate Policy Fellow, Center for Black Maternal Health & Reproductive Justice (CBMHRJ) July 2022-Present

- Research local, State, and federal maternal health policy in order to inform Center-wide programming, advocacy campaigns, and public-facing memos to enact equitable change within maternal and reproductive health rights.

Clinical Volunteer, MGH Asylum Clinic at the Center for Global Health, Boston, MA. April 2023-Present

- Support with clinical evaluations and reports to be used in immigration court hearings and other asylum trials.

Tisch Scholar, Trauma & Community Resilience Center (TCRC) at Boston Children's Hospital Sept. 2021-June 2022

- Create a parent mental health workshop series (12, 1-hour monthly sessions) that supports migrant parents and families that have experienced psychological trauma, especially due to war and violence abroad.

Organizing Fellow, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition, Boston, MA. Sept. 2020-June 2021

- Advocate for the Work and Family Mobility Act, 2020 U.S. Census, and Presidential elections through supporting Democracy Schools, phone banking initiatives, policy writing, and grassroots research.

Undergraduate Researcher, Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Trauma on Post- Conflict Sociopolitical Dynamics Apr. 2020-2022

- Code over 200 peer-reviewed research articles on trauma exposure and trauma response within the fields of psychology, economics, political science, and medicine, and analyze findings using R alongside Elizabeth Herman and Justine Davis at UC Berkeley; Plan and facilitate the 2021 *Human Security, Violence, and Trauma (HSVT) Conference*.

Peer Mentor/ Refugee Resettlement Intern, International Rescue Committee (IRC), New York, NY. June 2019-Sept. 2020

- Serve as an Arabic interpreter, English language educator, and classroom facilitator at the Refugee Youth Summer Academy (RYSA), a summer program that prepares recently arrived refugee children to enter the NYC public school system, as well as a social worker liaison in Intensive Case Management (ICM) during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

PUBLICATIONS

- **Abouhala, S.**, Ashford, N., Menta, A., Saintilien, S., Bolarinwa, E., Snape, L., Nieto, A., Villar, F., Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2024). Advancing Parent and Newborn Health Outcomes through Community-Based Collaboration: A Somerville-Tufts Partnership. *Journal of Participatory Research Methods (JPRM)*. <https://doi.org/10.35844/001c.120123>
- **Abouhala, S.**, Amutah-Onukagha, N., Ashford, N. (2024). A Community-Based Policy Approach to Advance Maternal & Reproductive Health Research among Minoritized Birthing Populations in the United States. *Harvard Health Policy Review*. <https://www.huhpr.org/articles/2024/2/21/a-community-based-policy-approach-to-advance-maternal-amp-reproductive-health-research-among-minoritized-birthing-populations-in-the-united-states>

- Zaniel, N., Glass, D., Taye, M., **Abouhala, S.**, Hammood, F., Zeidat, S., Abuelezam, N.N. (2024). If it's my time: A qualitative study of COVID-19 vaccine intention among a sample of Arab Americans. *Qual. Health Res.* (In Review).
- **Abouhala, S.** (2024). For Afraa: and suddenly my womb shook the house. *JSNMA: Journal of the Student National Medical Association*, Winter 2024 Ed. (pp. 12-13). <https://snma.org/page/JSNMA> *Note: A poem in honor of Afraa, a pregnant Syrian mother who gave birth beneath the rubble of the devastating 2023 earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. Afraa lost her life, but her newborn daughter was found alive, still attached to her mother's corpse through her placenta.
- **Abouhala, S.**, Yakubu, R.A., Snape, L., Dhaurali, S., Welch, F., Enge, C., Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2023). The Role of Health Systems in Black Maternal Mental Health Care Delivery: A Socio-Ecological Framework. *Curr. Treat. Options Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40501-023-00306-5>
- Moore, N., **Abouhala, S.**, Maleki, P., Kheyfets, A., Carvalho, K., & Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2023). The Efficacy of Provider-Based Prenatal Interventions to Reduce Maternal Stress: A Systematic Review. *Women's Health Issues*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.whi.2023.02.003>
- Ayash, C., Raad, N., Finik, J., Taoube, J., Gorayeb, S., **Abouhala, S.**, Nourredine, S., Jdid, M., Aragones, A., & Gany, F. M. (2023). Perspectives on Human Papilloma Virus Vaccination Barriers, Knowledge and Beliefs, and Practices: Providers Serving Arab-American Populations. *J. Community Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-023-01248-y>
- Lawrence, B. C., Yakubu, R. A., Kheyfets, A., Stewart, C., Dhaurali, S., Carvalho, K., **Abouhala, S.**, Ajayi, K. V., Kiani, M., & Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2023). 4. Determinants of Chronic Stress and the Impact on Black Women's Maternal and Reproductive Outcomes. In *Black Women's Reproductive Health and Sexuality: A Holistic Public Health Approach*. American Public Health Association. <https://doi.org/10.2105/9780875533414ch04>
- AlKhalidi, M., **Abouhala, S.**, Alhalaia, F., Ibrahim, A., Kashash, R.A., Abusalah, A. (2022). Health Policies of Adolescents in the Middle East and North Africa: Past Experiences, Current Scene, and Future Strategic Directions. In: Barakat, C., Al Anouti, F. (eds) Adolescent Mental Health in The Middle East and North Africa. Global Perspectives on Health Geography. *Springer, Cham*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91790-6_7
- van Daalen, K. R., Chowdhury, M., Dada, S., Khorsand, P., El-Gamal, S., Kaidarova, G., Jung, L., Othman, R., O'Leary, C. A., Ashworth, H. C., Socha, A., Olaniyan, D., Azeezat, F. T., **Abouhala, S.**, Abdulkareem, T., Dhatt, R., & Rajan, D. (2022). Does global health governance walk the talk? Gender representation in World Health Assemblies, 1948–2021. *BMJ Global Health*, 7(8), e009312. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2022-009312>
- **Abouhala, S.**, Hamidaddin, A., Taye, M., Glass, D., Allouch, F., Zaniel, N., Abuelezam, N (2021). A National Survey Assessing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy Among Arab Americans. *J. Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-021-01158-6>
- Carvalho, K., Kheyfets, A., Maleki, P., Miller, B., **Abouhala, S.**, Anwar, E., Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2021). A Systematic Policy Review of Black Maternal Health-Related Policies Proposed Federally and in Massachusetts: 2010–2020. *Front. Public Health* 9:664659. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.664659>
- Carvalho, K., Kheyfets, A., Lawrence, B., Moky, A., Harris, L., **Abouhala, S.**, Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2021). Examining the Role of Psychosocial Influences on Black Mother's During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Matern Child Health J.* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-021-03181-9>
- **Abouhala, S.**, (2020, Feb. 23). "Redefining Our Herd: COVID-19 Vaccine as a Human Right for Non-U.S. Citizens." *The Primary Care Review at Harvard Medical School*. <https://info.primarycare.hms.harvard.edu/blog/redefining-our-herd>
- **Abouhala, S.**, (2021, Apr. 27). "National Arab American Heritage Month as a Public Health Catalyst." *The Primary Care Review at Harvard Medical School*. <https://info.primarycare.hms.harvard.edu/blog/national-arab-american-heritage-month>

POSTERS & PRESENTATIONS

- **Abouhala, S.**, Ashford, N., Nieto, A., Villar, F., Menta, A., Saintilien, S., Bolarinwa, E., Snape, L., Amutah-Onukagha, N. "Community-engaged collaboration as local maternal health innovation: Evidence from Project INSPIRE in Somerville, Massachusetts, US." 2024 American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference. Oral Presentation. Minneapolis, Minnesota. October 30, 2024.
- **Abouhala, S.**, Ibrahim, S., Hyder, A. "Community-engaged research as a maternal health catalyst: Lessons from a novel qualitative study among arab American mothers and providers in northwest Ohio, USA." 2024 American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference. Oral Presentation. Minneapolis, Minnesota. October 28, 2024.
- **Abouhala, S.**, del Rosario, M., Holm, I., Wojcik, M. "The lived experiences of parents whose infants receive diagnostic genetic testing in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: A qualitative interview study." 2024 American Academic of Pediatrics (AAP) Conference. Poster Presentation. Orlando, FL. September 28, 2024.

- **Abouhala, S., Ibrahim, S., Hyder, A. “Arab Maternal and Child Health Barriers in the US Context: A Qualitative, Community-Engaged Pilot Study.”** 2024 Arab Conference at Harvard (ACH24). Oral Presentation. Boston, MA. April 20, 2024.
- **Abouhala, S., Abuelezzam, N. N., Hawa, R. “The Role of Community-Engaged Research Models in Arab Health Advancement & Trust-Building across North America: Examples from Three Studies.”** 2024 AASA Conference: Arab American Studies Association. Panel Presentation. Dearborn, MI. April 12-14, 2024.
- **Abouhala, S., Amutah-Onukagha, N., Nieto, A., Villar, F., Snape, L., Ashford, N. “The Power of Academic and Community Collaborations in Driving Forward Maternal Health Equity through Engaged Research.”** Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH). Oral Presentation. Arlington, VA. March 21-23, 2024.
- **Abouhala, S., Belotte, D., Sharara, L., Amutah-Onukagha, M. “The Impact of Undergraduate-Run Maternal Health Advocacy on Community-level Outcomes: MARCH at Tufts University, Somerville/Medford, MA, USA.”** Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH). Poster Presentation. Arlington, VA. March 21-23, 2024.
- **Abouhala, S., del Rosario, M., Holm, I.A., Wojcik, M. “The Psychosocial and Clinical Utility of a Diagnostic Genetic Evaluation in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU): A Qualitative Analysis.”** 19th Annual Broad Scientific Retreat. Poster Presentation. Boston, MA. December 11-12, 2023.
- **Abouhala, S., del Rosario, M., Holm, I.A., Wojcik, M. “The Impact of a Diagnostic Genetic Evaluation in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: A Qualitative Analysis.”** 2023 American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) Annual Meeting. Oral Presentation. Washington, D.C. November 1-5, 2023.
- **Abouhala, S., Yakubu, R.A., Snape, L., Dhaurali, S., Welch, F., Enge, C., Amutah-Onukagha, N. “The Role of Health Systems in Black Maternal Mental Health Care Delivery: A Socio-Ecological Framework.”** APHA 2023 Annual Meeting & Expo. Maternal and Child Health: Improving Pregnancy Outcomes: Maternal Mental Health. Oral Presentation. Atlanta, GA. November 12-15, 2023.
- **Abouhala, S. & Moore, N. “An Exploration of the Utility and Potential Applications of Provider-Initiated Stress Interventions in the Prenatal Period.”** 2023 National Maternal Health Innovation Symposium (NMHIS). Poster Presentation. Minneapolis, MN. August 9-10, 2023.
- **Dhaurali, S., Abouhala, S., Snape, L. “Addressing the US Black Maternal Health Crisis by Training the Next Generation of Maternal Health Scholars.”** The 6th Annual Black Maternal Health Conference (BMHC). Oral Presentation. Boston, MA. April 7, 2023.
- **Dhaurali, S., Abouhala, S., Kiani, M., Barnes, R., Miller, B., Stewart, C., Carvalho, K., Amutah-Onukagha, N. “MOTHER Lab: Combatting the Black maternal health crisis through doula-centered research, engagement, and advocacy, perspectives from a research lab.”** APHA 2022 Annual Meeting & Expo. Oral Presentation. Boston, MA. November 6-9, 2022.
- **Abouhala, S., Hamidaddin, A., Taye, M., Glass, D., Allouch, F., Zaniel, N., Abuelezzam, N. “A Quantitative Analysis and Exploration of Arab American COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy.”** The 9th Arab Health Summit: Advancing Health Equity For Women. Poster Presentation. October 19-21, 2021.
- **Kheyfets, A., Carvalho, K., Maleki, P., Abouhala, S., Miller, B., Anwar, E., Amutah-Onukagha, N. “Black Maternal Health-Related Policies Proposed Federally and in Massachusetts: 2010-2020.”** AcademyHealth 2021 Annual Research Meeting. Poster Presentation. June 14-17, 2021.
- **Kheyfets, A., Carvalho, K., Maleki, P., Abouhala, S., Miller, B., Anwar, E., Amutah-Onukagha, N. “Black Maternal Health-Related Policies Proposed Federally and in Massachusetts: 2010-2020.”** AMCHP 2021 Annual Conference. Poster Presentation. May 24-27, 2021.

HONORS & AWARDS

- **The Presidential Award for Civic Life (2023)**, which is Tufts University’s highest honor for outstanding civic leadership and service.
- **The Tufts University Alumni Association (TUAA) Senior Award (2023)** in honor of a senior’s campus and community participation, and outstanding leadership.
- **Phi Beta Kappa (PBK) Honor Society Inducted Member (2023)**, in the Tufts University chapter, the Delta of Massachusetts, in recognition of impressive scholarship and leadership work.
- **The Arabic Language, Culture and Literature Prize (2023)**, which is awarded annually to a graduating senior who has demonstrated excellence in the studies of the Arabic language, literature, and culture.
- **The Seymour S. Bellin Research Award (2023)**, for successful completion of a Senior Thesis in Community Health.
- **The Endowed Janice Spencer Calkin Community Health Award (2022)**, which honors a junior majoring in Community Health who has an exceptional undergraduate record and has contributed in a significant way to improve the health of communities.
- **Truman Scholarship Finalist- New York (2022)**, which is a competitive fellowship awarded to students based on demonstrated leadership potential, academic excellence, and a commitment to public service.

- **Voting Member, Tisch College Community Research Center (TCRC) Steering Committee (2022-3)**, which is a University-wide board that grants funding and support to local partnerships between community organizations and Tufts professors and students.
- **Funding/ Scholarships/ Achievements**: *Honos Civicus* Society Scholar (2023); Tufts Dean's List (2019-Present); Tisch Scholar (2020-23); Tufts Undergraduate Research Fund (URF) Recipient; Tufts Career Center Internship Grant 2020; Tisch Student COVID Response (TSCR) Research Grant; Marsha and Thomas Alperin Endowed Scholarship Fund Scholar; 2019 Gold Circle Award; 2019 Zonta Young Women in Public Affairs Award

SKILLS & LANGUAGES

- ***Research Skills & Certifications***: IRB & Grant Writing; Research Design (Community-Based Participatory Research, Mixed Methods); NVivo; REDCap; STATA; Epic; Memo Review & Writing; Excel; MS Word; PowerPoint; CITI certified at Tufts University/Tufts Medical Center, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC), and Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH)
- ***Languages***: Fluent (Native) in Arabic and English; Highly Proficient in Spanish; Elementary in German