

## **Tanya Dinesh**

University of Southampton

### **Winner of the Undergraduate Award**

I have recently graduated as a Master of Biomedical Sciences from the University of Southampton. My interest in neuroscience first sparked in sixth form, when I attended a seminar in London called 'Power of Mind'. Psychologist Dany Nobus and cognitive neuroscientist Nilli Lavie delved into the processes of how attention works in the brain and current issues with diagnosing mental illnesses which spurred my curiosity. This motivated me to study Biomedical Sciences at the University of Southampton due to the range of neuroscience modules on offer.

Here, I had the opportunity to conduct many interesting laboratory experiments, learn about various psychiatric diseases and current research into development of treatments and therapeutics. This made me realise how neuroscience is a rapidly evolving field of science which has the capacity to transform people's lives. I also worked as an activity support worker at Rose Road Association, where I spent most of my time supervising a child with autism. Together, these experiences motivated me to choose a masters research project which had the potential to help people suffering from psychiatric diseases.

During my research project, I investigated possible neurobiological mechanisms of Generalised Anxiety Disorder. We hope the discovery of new mechanisms could reveal novel pharmacological targets to encourage the development of new, more effective treatments. I thoroughly enjoyed my project as it gave me the opportunity to use my passion for neuroscience, to conduct research which has the prospect of helping millions worldwide.

My Master's year was the most challenging but rewarding year of my academic career. I reaped the benefits of all my hard work by presenting my novel findings at the BAP summer meeting 2019! It was a huge accomplishment to conduct such a novel study and I look forward to seeing how my findings will progress the investigation into pathological anxiety mechanisms in next stages of the project.

I am honoured to have received the BAP undergraduate award for my work! As for my next steps, this experience has further motivated me to apply to graduate-entry medicine and pursue further research at a later stage in my career.