

# A Path to a Career in Research

A SALUTE ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF  
WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE



## When Science Became “Fun”

Jericha Mill had a turning point in which she knew she was destined for a career in science. “When I was in high school, initially, I wasn’t that interested in science, until I took Chemistry and everything changed,” Mill said. “Not only did I get it, but I *really* got it and that’s when it became fun. In my undergrad I had a professor suggest research and that’s when I fell in love with it.”

## A Personal Connection

“When I decided to go to grad school, I knew I wanted to get into the field of Alzheimer’s disease research,” Mill said. “My grandfather lost his battle with the disease and there was nothing I could do at the time. Now I can give back to the field of research by developing methods to finding a cure.”



**Jericha Mill, MS**  
Graduate Student, UW-Madison

## Improving Methods of Research

Mill is an analytical chemist in Dr. Lingjun Li’s Lab at the University of Wisconsin Madison. “My research focuses on improving methods for detecting and quantifying molecules. Once a method has been vetted and optimized, then that allows disease researchers – or other researchers – to use that method in their research.” Mill is currently working on two projects:

- **Blood-based study into healthy aging** – Focused on learning more about a molecule we believe plays a role in healthy aging; developing better methods to quantify that molecule in blood so we can begin to understand how it plays into aging.
- **Blood-based biomarker discovery for Alzheimer’s** – Focused on developing a better method to quantify lipids in blood; these lipids are potentially useful for both Alzheimer’s diagnosis and treatment.

“Both projects I am working on have an overarching goal of making it easier to study aging and Alzheimer’s by developing accessible and robust methods,” Mill said.

## Advice for Future Generation of Women Scientists

“My advice for young women interested in science is to look for a mentor within the field you’re interested in,” Mill said. “This doesn’t necessarily have to be a woman in science, but someone who is a fierce supporter and advocate for women in the field. If there is someone you look up to, don’t be afraid to reach out to them!”

## Volunteering for Advocacy

“When I was a first-year graduate student, working on an Alzheimer’s disease-related project, my graduate mentor suggested that I get more involved with Alzheimer’s advocacy to round out my project,” Mill said. “I reached out to the Alzheimer’s Impact Movement (AIM) and immediately got a response back. I serve as an Alzheimer’s Ambassador and I meet and communicate with key state legislators about Alzheimer’s priorities. I love being able to use both my research and my personal history with Alzheimer’s to advocate for patients, caregivers, and researchers.”



Jericha and other Advocates meeting with staff from Senator Ron Johnson’s office.