

# Zainab Umardeen

**2023 HATTIE HILLIARD ENDOWMENT FUND RECIPIENT**

Meet **Zainab Umardeen**, our 2023 Hattie Hilliard Endowment Fund Scholar. The UIUC graduate earned a B.S. degree in Molecular and Cellular Biology and is now seeking admission to medical school. Her community service features organizing and hands-on efforts to help campus women and African Americans. She was President of the African Cultural Association, an organization that informed students of campus resources



and helped them navigate college. As Financial Secretary and Vice-President of Alpha Nu, she steered the Chapter to continue those goals. She was a charter member of the Women of Nobility Chapter of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs; that historic organization, whose founders included Harriet Tubman and Mary Church Terrell, provided African American women students financial aid and helped them to secure safe housing in the early days of campus integration. Zainab was also President of the Black Greek Council. Her designation as a Molecular and Cellular Biology Leader and Peer Advising Intern was an assignment that allowed her to help other minority students excel in that nontraditional course of study. She credits the desire to help African American students to her Nigerian parents' efforts to help her and her brother succeed in this country, and she is making them proud by achieving academic success while helping others. Hattie Hilliard, who died while on a teaching assignment in Nigeria, would be proud to have her name associated with such a grounded young woman who is committed to the values the Fund was established to foster.