

# Biomedical informatics and data science graduate humanizes scientific research through poetry

By Eden Miller, ASU News  
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**Editor's note:** This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [fall 2025 graduates](#).

[College of Health Solutions biomedical informatics and data science](#) student Sanyam Paresh Shah spent most of his life fascinated by science, technology and mathematics. When he began preparing for his thesis with [Barrett, The Honors College](#), he challenged himself to go beyond his comfort zone.

"I wanted to bridge science and art, to show that science isn't just about data and figures; it's about creativity, problem-solving and discovery. My goal was to help others see the beauty and human curiosity behind what we do in bioinformatics," Shah said.

To achieve this, he turned to something that had stayed with him for a long time.

"Poetry had always been on my mind, so my Barrett advisor suggested reaching out to Dr. [\(Rosemarie\) Dombrowski](#), who works in medical poetry. I had never heard of scientific poetry before. I emailed her, and to my surprise, she responded and agreed to mentor me," Shah said.

With Dombrowski's guidance, Shah's thesis took shape as a collection of 15 poems called "[Bioinformatics: A Poetry Collection](#)."

"His collection of poems not only makes bioinformatics accessible to the general reader, he humanizes scientific research in ways that allow readers to see and feel the human impact of what scientists like Sanyam do," Dombrowski said.

Here, he reflects on his time at ASU and shares what's next in his journey.

**Question: What was your “aha” moment, when you realized you wanted to study the field you majored in?**

**Answer:** In 12th grade, I was torn because I loved biology, physics, math and was also fascinated by coding and artificial intelligence. I didn't want to choose just one. After a lot of searching, I came across bioinformatics, and it immediately clicked. It combined everything I was passionate about. Back then, I was in India, and discovering this field was one of the main reasons I decided to come to the U.S. for my undergraduate studies.

**Q: What's something you learned while at ASU — in the classroom or otherwise — that surprised you or changed your perspective?**

**A:** I learned that things often seem far more intimidating than they really are. Research, for example, can look impossible from the outside and full of complex ideas and unfamiliar language, but once you start, you realize that progress comes from persistence and curiosity. Even if you fail, you often surprise yourself by how far you've come. I have learned that it's the fear of failing, not failure itself, that holds you back.

**Q: Why did you choose ASU?**

**A:** I chose ASU because it's very research-oriented and offers countless opportunities to get involved, both academically and beyond. For bioinformatics, especially, the faculty are doing cutting-edge work in diverse areas, which really drew me in. It felt like a place where my curiosity could grow into meaningful research.

**Q: Which professor taught you the most important lesson while at ASU?**

**A:** My English 101 professor during my first semester at ASU, [Tasha Telles](#), taught me one of the most valuable lessons which was the importance of communication and confidence. As an international student, that first semester was a big adjustment, and her class helped me find my voice. She encouraged open discussions and engagement, which made me more comfortable expressing myself, both in writing and in public. That confidence has carried over into everything I've done since.

**Q: What's the best piece of advice you'd give to those still in school?**

**A:** I would say don't rush to have everything figured out. It's OK to start without experience or clear direction; what matters is staying curious and open. Be patient, keep looking for opportunities, ask for help when you need it and focus on your effort rather than the outcome. The right things tend to find you when you're ready for them.

**Q: What are your plans after graduation?**

**A:** My goal is to pursue a research career in genomics, combining statistics, AI and genomics to uncover fundamental biological mechanisms and apply that knowledge to improve human health. I'm applying to PhD programs that will prepare me for a research-focused career where I can make meaningful discoveries, no matter how big or small their impact might be.

**Q: If someone gave you \$40 million to solve one problem on our planet, what would you tackle?**

**A:** I would tackle biodiversity loss. Once a species is extinct, it's gone forever. I'd want to use that funding to preserve and study Earth's biodiversity so we can better understand and protect the ecosystems that sustain all life and improve life not just for humans but for all living things. This is not a small problem, and \$40 million might not be enough, but any impact and any lives saved are worth it.

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*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



Sanyam Paresh Shah used poetry to reveal the creativity and curiosity within science. Courtesy photo