

Inspirational Women in Science Series
International Women's Day 8th March 2019
#BalanceforBetter

The RCS asked four female Associate Fellows working in the field of science to answer some questions about their experiences. There is still a great deal of gender bias in the world of science, so we wanted to share the stories of these incredible women to inspire others looking to create better gender balance in the world.

Dr. Sayeda Nazmun Nahar



What do you do?

I am a Young Doctor. I gained a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery in 2017 and finished an Internship in May 2018. I now work as a research physician at the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh.

How did you become interested in science?

Science has always been a fascination of mine since my days at school and I often would participate in science fairs and competitions. Biology lab was my favorite class, whenever I get chance to watch any dissection or anatomy of the human body I feel thrilled. I can still remember the day when I first saw a frog's heartbeat. Science appeared to be the most mysterious thing to me.

Please share your greatest achievement to date.

I have won many prizes in science competitions but my greatest achievement so far, was the day I was selected to study in a Government medical college in Bangladesh. I had to work very hard for this achievement and it is considered to be the toughest exam in our country. When I was selected for the medical college I could not believe myself. Medical education is very expensive but I was able to study at the Government medical college with almost no cost.

What are your career goals and aspirations?

I want to be a health researcher, who will search for easy and possible solutions for health problems and ensure a better future for the world. I dream of a world where people will not die of diseases that are preventable or curable.

What is the biggest challenge you have faced being a woman in science?

While I was a medical student, I was often told that I could not do everything. When I decided to become a researcher, I was constantly being told that it is not a career suitable for women and I was even told I was not allowed to enter some places just because I am a female. However, all the obstacles I have faced in this field have made me stronger day by day.

Do you have any advice for women and girls wanting to become involved in science?

If you work hard and are passionate I believe you can achieve anything and the world is yours to conquer. There is nothing a girl cannot do and please do not allow anyone to label you.

Who is a woman in science that you admire and why?

My inspiration is Elizabeth Blackwell, the very first female medical student and first female doctor of the world. Her struggles and work have inspired me throughout all stages of my life. She is not only a successful doctor but also an activist for women, a teacher and leader. She was a pioneer in promoting and inspiring women to study medicine.

Can you share an interesting fact from your field of expertise?

There are so many occasions when I must face harsh words while working in the hospital, but the most interesting part is that there are so many female patients who do not allow any male doctor to treat them and for these critical patients - us female doctors are always being called.

Why do you think it's important for women and girls to pursue a career in the sciences?

Women and girls should pursue a career in science as I believe it is the most interesting and important field in this world. Creativity and fresh ideas are very important in the field of science and men cannot do this alone, it is vital that women contribute and have their voices heard as together we can achieve better.