

EDUCATION: BS in environmental science from the University of California at Los Angeles; currently pursuing a PharmD at the Howard University College of Pharmacy

WORK: Oluwateti works summers at Fireside Pharmacy in Palm Desert, Calif., one of three pharmacies owned by her father.

WHY PHARMACY?: “Before the pandemic, I was working as a technician at my father’s pharmacy but was still undecided about pursuing a pharmacy degree. When COVID-19 vaccines became available, I obtained my immunization license and found immense fulfillment in providing vital care and educating patients about vaccines during a crucial time. Hearing patients share how their vaccinations would change their lives deepened my appreciation for the profession.”

A PEOPLE-CENTERED CALLING: “An effective community pharmacist is a health care provider who prioritizes trust, relationships, and individualized patient care beyond simply dispensing medications. They also actively bridge gaps in health care access, particularly in underserved communities.

“Representation matters in health care, and pharmacists who reflect and understand the communities they serve can improve trust, adherence, and overall outcomes. As part of the future 4.9 percent of Black pharmacists, I aspire to be a provider that all patients, especially patients of color, can trust, relate to, and feel genuinely heard by.”

STUDENT LEADERSHIP: “As president of my school’s NCPA chapter, I have worked to engage students in events that emphasize the importance of community pharmacy. Being in the nation’s capital has allowed me to further engage students in advocacy efforts, particularly through encouraging participation in the NCPA Congressional Pharmacy Fly-In – our chapter achieved the highest fly-in attendance of any NCPA student chapter in the nation last year.

“Beyond my local chapter, I connect with the broader pharmacy community through my role on the NCPA Student Leadership Council as a Region 2 Junior Member and Compounding Chair. At the NCPA Annual Convention in New Orleans last year, I had the opportunity to lead a hands-on compounding session with my dad as our guest pharmacist – a special moment that tied together our shared passion for independent pharmacy.”

FUTURE OF PHARMACY: “Looking ahead, I see pharmacists playing an increasingly central role in personalized, technology-enabled patient care. My perspective has been shaped by attending national conferences and engaging directly with pharmacy owners, including the 2025 NCPA Committee Forum, where serving on the Developing Opportunities Committee reinforced my commitment to pharmacy. These conversations highlighted a shift toward customized treatments that move beyond one-size-fits-all models, such as expanding the pharmacist’s role through point-of-care testing, telepharmacy, and comprehensive medication therapy management.

“Another emerging trend is the integration of technology, including artificial intelligence, to enhance patient education and adherence. I envision tools such as AI-driven ‘digital twin’ pharmacists that allow patients to access education and ask follow-up questions while still maintaining a strong pharmacist-patient relationship. Ultimately, the future of pharmacy lies in balancing technological advancement with the personalized, relationship-based care that defines community and independent pharmacy practice.”

VALUE OF NCPA: “When I first started pharmacy school, I never imagined how much joining NCPA would shape my professional growth, leadership development, and sense of purpose within community pharmacy. At Howard University, our NCPA chapter had been inactive for six years; with NCPA’s help, we rebuilt a community centered on advocacy, ownership, and service.

“Through serving on the NCPA Student Leadership Council, I have connected with chapters across the country, supported those with limited resources, and helped empower students to pursue leadership and ownership opportunities. NCPA has affirmed my passion for community pharmacy and equipped me with the tools to advance it. NCPA is more than a professional organization; it is a network, a support system, and a platform that empowers student pharmacists to lead with purpose and impact.”



Photo by Khamaree D. Owens

Oluwateti Omilana, Student Pharmacist

an interview with Sam Manas