

Ashleigh Hope

Born and raised in the Illawarra region, Ashleigh attended St Mary Star of the Sea College and was fortunate to be surrounded by inspiring teachers in STEM from a young and impressionable age.

Ashleigh graduated in 2020 from the University of Wollongong with a Bachelor of Medical Biotechnology (Hons) (Dean's Scholar) with first class Honours.



Her propensity toward cancer research began in her second year of undergraduate study, where she completed two internships with Dr Kara Vine-Perrow at the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI) focused on overcoming treatment resistance in Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia.

In 2020 she completed an Honours project aimed at preparing a drug-loaded implantable device designed for the treatment of triple-negative breast cancer. The focus of her current research assistant role with Dr Vine-Perrow is the evaluation of these implants in preclinical models of breast cancer and understanding the role of the immune cells in pancreatic cancer.

She was the inaugural recipient of the Illawarra IWD Dr Margaret Gardiner scholarship in 2021.

Alongside research, she has cheered for the St George Illawarra Dragons and the Illawarra Hawks, and tutored from primary to tertiary level. Her interest in raising awareness on women's health issues is evidenced by her roles as a panellist for the IHMRI-led Breast Cancer webinar, guest on the podcast "The scientist and the...", and a performer at Stars of Wollongong – Dance for Cancer in June 2021.

Empowered by the strong female leadership she has experienced, Ashleigh is enthusiastic about sharing her passion and knowledge with the community.