

UTSI Physics Graduate Student Recognized at the Great Scientific Exchange Conference

October 15, 2015

UTSI Graduate Student David Surmick continues to build his impressive resume, most recently with an award for "Outstanding Spectroscopic Research By a Student Member" from the Society of Applied Spectroscopy (SAS). Surmick was recognized for his poster on "Self-Absorption Measurement of Resonant Aluminum Lines" at The Great Scientific Exchange (SCIX) conference, held September 27 through October 2 in Providence, Rhode Island.

UTSI Graduate Student David Surmick has been recognized with UT Chancellor's Honors for the past two years and has also landed competitive internship spots at Sandia National Lab. Now he adds an SCIX poster award to his list of accomplishments.



Surmick earned a master's in physics at UT in 2014 and is pursuing a Ph.D. at the UT Space Institute in Tullahoma, working with Associate Physics Professor Christian Parigger. Surmick's was one of only four student posters SAS honored at this year's SCIX meeting.

Parigger, who presented an invited paper at the conference, pointed out that "historically, awards have been presented to students engaged in the general area of Raman spectroscopy, however, receiving an award in the general area of laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy is truly remarkable. Furthermore, this award is also a reflection of the outstanding research by our Ph.D. students at the Center for Laser Applications at UTSI."

This type of acknowledgment is not new territory for Surmick, who was recognized at both the 2014 and 2015 UT Chancellor's Honors Banquet for Extraordinary Professional Promise. In 2013 and 2014 he won a competitive internship at Sandia National Laboratory to work in Fire and Aerosol Sciences for data reduction of aluminum combustion, and the work he presented in Providence is an element of his current doctoral research. Surmick has also served on the UT Graduate Student Senate and is a member of the search committee for a new UTSI Executive Director. His conference participation was made possible in part by funding support from the Graduate Student Senate, the physics department, the College of Arts and Sciences, and UTSI.

The annual meeting of the Great Science Exchange is an international meeting that brings together researchers primarily in chemistry and physics, and also includes engagement with a variety of companies and technical applications. The 2015 program covered a wide variety of topics, with bonus sessions devoted to Laser-induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS), Environmental and Oceanographic Monitoring, and Forensic and Security Applications. More information is available at:

<https://www.scixconference.org/> (<https://www.scixconference.org/>).