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ASU Students Sweep Awards at Texas Science Conference

More than 30 students and faculty represented Angelo State University at the 112th annual meeting of the Texas Academy of Science (TAS) March 5-7 at the Texas Tech University Llano River Field Station in Junction, with eight students winning honors and awards for their research presentations.

First place student awards went to Jason Strickland in biology for his undergraduate oral presentation, "The Western Cottonmouth (*Agkistrodon piscivorus leucostoma*) in West-Central Texas: The Demography and Venom Collection in a Peripheral Population," and to Dana Lee in biology for her graduate oral presentation, "Taxonomic Status of the Davis Mountains Cottontail, *Sylvilagus robustus*, (Lagomorpha: Leporidae) Revealed by Amplified Fragment Length Polymorphism." Strickland also received a check for \$300 while Lee's check was \$250 since she tied for first place. Faculty advisers for the two projects were Dr. Kelly McCoy and Dr. Loren Ammerman, respectively.

ASU mathematics students Henry Schreiner III and Massooma Pirbhai each garnered honorable mention for their undergraduate oral presentations, "Wavelet Matrix Completion Methods and their Effects in Image Compression" and "Application of Matrix Completion Methods to Partial Image Reconstruction." The pair also shared the Dr. Ali Reza Amir-Moez Award and \$500 for best mathematics presentation. Each was advised by Dr. Roger Zarnowski.

Other ASU student winners included Adam Ferguson in biology (second place, graduate research proposal), Wesley Brashear in biology (third place, undergraduate research proposal) and Shane Guthrie and Jared Bird in chemistry and biochemistry (honorable mention, undergraduate poster presentation). Ferguson is currently pursuing his Ph.D. at Texas Tech University. His award is for research done while he was still at ASU.

More than 450 scientists from dozens of universities statewide attended the annual TAS meeting that included 84 undergraduate and 73 graduate research presentations and posters.

The Texas Academy of Science is one of the oldest and most respected science organizations in the state. Its purpose is to promote scientific research among the colleges and universities of Texas, to promote undergraduate research and to enhance the professional development of its members.