

Faith Simmons

PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY

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East Tennessee State University
Department of Physics & Astronomy
Johnson City, TN 37614 USA

Education

2021- Current

East Tennessee State University
Bachelor of Science in Physics

Minor in Educational Foundations
Graduation: Winter 2025

Publications

2025

Empowered by Advocacy: My Experience at the 2025 AAAS CASE Workshop

Outlines my experience learning about Science Policy and Advocacy at the CASE Workshop
Featured on the American Astronomical Society's homepage April 15th, 2025

Variable Polarization of WR~31a: Binary Companion or Co-Rotating Interaction Region?

Erba, Christiana; Ignace, Richard; **Simmons, Faith**; Davies, Ben
Accepted April 2025 in *The Astronomical Journal*

Picture a Physicist

Authored an article exploring the evolving image of a physicist, incorporating personal experience, conference reporting, and interviews with established researchers.
Published on the Society of Physics Students webpage February 14th, 2025

Leadership & Advocacy

Fall 2023- Current

Society of Physics Students (SPS)

Associate Zone Counselor Representative on the Executive Committee (2025-26), Associate Zone Counselor (2025-26), ETSU Chapter President (2024-2025), Member (2023-2024)
Serve as the only student voice on the Executive Committee of SPS
Communicate across universities to promote student engagement
Coordinate outreach and service activities to promote public interest in physics and astronomy
Organized and executed the Zone 8 Meeting
Coordinated funding and travel arrangements to conferences the chapter had not previously been able to attend

	Spring 2024-Current	Sigma Pi Sigma, National Physics Honor Society Established a chapter at ETSU in Spring 2023 Inducted Fall 2024 Elected President 2024-25 Organized our inaugural Induction Ceremony Recipient of Sigma Pi Sigma Leadership Scholarship
	2025	Catalyzing Advocacy for Science & Engineering (CASE) Workshop Attended seminars on federal government processes and science policy Visited Capitol Hill to advocate for my work and NSF research funding
Research Experience		
	Summer 2025	Independent Study: Studies of Exoplanet Transit Lightcurves HOlomon Photometric Software (HOPS)
	Fall 2024-Spring 2025	Advanced Research Internship Completed a project on polarization trends in massive stars Python: early intermediate level LaTeX proficiency
	Summer 2024	Ronald E. McNair Pre-Research Internship
Presentations		
	2025	18th Physics & Astronomy Congress , Denver, CO Introduced plenary speaker to an audience of 1,000 students and faculty Led workshops as Associate Zone Counselor Elected to the role of AZC Representative
	2025	Unicoi County High School Invited talk on careers in physics
	2025	Jay W. Boland Undergraduate Research Conference , ETSU Contributed talk
	2025	Blue Ridge Undergraduate Research Conference Contributed talk
	2025	245th Meeting of the American Astronomical Society Contributed talk
	2024	Southeastern Section of the American Physical Society Poster Presentation Coordinated the travel arrangements and funding for our SPS chapter
	2024	SPS Zone 8 Meeting Organized and lead the annual meeting for SPS members in our region Hosted over 40 students from 8 different schools Poster Presentation
	2024	Ledford-McNair Symposium at Lee University Poster presentation

Teaching		
	2025	Peer Tutor , Johnson City, TN Worked as a peer tutor for general physics courses
	2024-2025	Private Tutor , Johnson City, TN Worked as a private tutor for high school math and science courses
	2022-2024	Unicoi County Schools , Erwin, TN Substitute Teacher K-8 Provided physics demonstrations and lessons for middle school students
	2023	Elizabethton Schools , Elizabethton, TN After School Program K-5 Planned and executed STEM activities for the students
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Service		
	Summer 2025	Astronomy Day Summer Camp
	Spring 2025	Career Quest USA Volunteer, ETSU
	Spring 2024	Alternative Break Boys and Girls Club of Slidell, LA, March 11-15 Planned and presented mini physics lessons Acted as a mentor for club members
	Spring 2024	STEAM Day South Side Elementary
	Spring 2024, 2025	Science Olympiad East Tennessee State University
	Spring 2023	Special Olympics Science Hill High School
	Fall 2022- Spring 2024	BucMate – Access ETSU Volunteered as a peer mentor for students with intellectual disabilities Attended classes and campus events, had lunch, or walked around campus with students. CFO of the associated club, Beyond Access
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Awards & Honors		
	Fall 2025	Outstanding Service Award - Society of Physics Students Awarded for exceptional service to the community
	Spring 2025	Outstanding Academic Organization President SUMMIT Award Awarded on the basis of exceptional leadership in the role of Society of Physics Student President for the 2024 calendar year
	Spring 2025, 2024	Physics Ambassador Scholarship Traveled to disadvantaged high schools to present on careers in astronomy and physics

Sigma Pi Sigma Leadership Scholarship

Awarded based on examples of Honor,
Encouragement, Service, and Fellowship

**Southeastern Section of the American Physical Society
Student Travel Award**

Travel Grant awarded for the 2024 SESAPS meeting

SPS Reporter Award

Attended SESAPS conference as a reporter for SPS publications
Interviewed key speakers and organizers

ETSU Honors College Travel Grant

Travel Grant awarded for the AAS 245th annual meeting

Ronald E. McNair Mini Grant

Travel Grant awarded for the AAS 245th annual meeting

References

Dr. Christiana Erba	Post Doctoral Researcher Space Telescope Science Institute Baltimore, MD 21218 phone: (315) 380-7360 email: cerba@stsci.edu
Dr. Richard Ignace	Professor and Research Advisor East Tennessee State University Johnson City, TN 37614 phone: (423) 439 – 6904 email: ignace@etsu.edu
Dr. Mark Giroux	Professor East Tennessee State University Johnson City, TN 37614 phone: (423) 439 – 8684 email: girouxm@etsu.edu
Dr. Gary Henson	Professor and SPS advisor East Tennessee State University Johnson City, TN 37614 phone: (423) 329 – 6906 email: hensong@etsu.edu
