

# Faith Simmons

## PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY

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### Education

2021- Current

#### **East Tennessee State University** **Bachelor of Science in Physics**

Minor in Educational Foundations  
Graduation: Winter 2025

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### 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 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

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### 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

Research Experience	Spring 2024-Current	<b>Sigma Pi Sigma</b> , <i>National Physics Honor Society</i> 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	<b>Catalyzing Advocacy for Science &amp; Engineering (CASE) Workshop</b> Attended seminars on federal government processes and science policy Visited Capitol Hill to advocate for my work and NSF research funding
	Summer 2025	<b>Independent Study: Studies of Exoplanet Transit Lightcurves</b> HOlonom Photometric Software (HOPS)
	Fall 2024-Spring 2025	<b>Advanced Research Internship</b> Completed a project on polarization trends in massive stars Python: early intermediate level LaTeX proficiency
	Summer 2024	<b>Ronald E. McNair Pre-Research Internship</b>
	2025	<b>18<sup>th</sup> Physics &amp; Astronomy Congress</b> , 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	<b>Unicoi County High School</b> Invited talk on careers in physics
	2025	<b>Jay W. Boland Undergraduate Research Conference</b> , ETSU Contributed talk
	2025	<b>Blue Ridge Undergraduate Research Conference</b> Contributed talk
	2025	<b>245<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the American Astronomical Society</b> Contributed talk
Presentations	2024	<b>Southeastern Section of the American Physical Society</b> Poster Presentation Coordinated the travel arrangements and funding for our SPS chapter
	2024	<b>SPS Zone 8 Meeting</b> Organized and lead the annual meeting for SPS members in our region Hosted over 40 students from 8 different schools Poster Presentation
	2024	<b>Ledford-McNair Symposium at Lee University</b> Poster presentation

## Teaching

2025	<b>Peer Tutor</b> , Johnson City, TN Worked as a peer tutor for general physics courses
2024-2025	<b>Private Tutor</b> , Johnson City, TN Worked as a private tutor for high school math and science courses
2022-2024	<b>Unicoi County Schools</b> , Erwin, TN <b>Substitute Teacher</b> K-8 Provided physics demonstrations and lessons for middle school students
2023	<b>Elizabethton Schools</b> , Elizabethton, TN <b>After School Program</b> K-5 Planned and executed STEM activities for the students

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## Service

Summer 2025	<b>Astronomy Day</b> Summer Camp
Spring 2025	<b>Career Quest USA</b> Volunteer, ETSU
Spring 2024	<b>Alternative Break</b> 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	<b>STEAM Day</b> South Side Elementary
Spring 2024, 2025	<b>Science Olympiad</b> East Tennessee State University
Spring 2023	<b>Special Olympics</b> Science Hill High School
Fall 2022- Spring 2024	<b>BucMate – Access ETSU</b> 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	<b>Outstanding Service Award - Society of Physics Students</b> Awarded for exceptional service to the community
Spring 2025	<b>Outstanding Academic Organization President SUMMIT Award</b> Awarded on the basis of exceptional leadership in the role of Society of Physics Student President for the 2024 calendar year
Spring 2025, 2024	<b>Physics Ambassador Scholarship</b> Traveled to disadvantaged high schools to present on careers in astronomy and physics

Fall 2024

**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 245<sup>th</sup> annual  
meeting

**Ronald E. McNair Mini Grant**

Travel Grant awarded for the AAS 245<sup>th</sup> annual  
meeting

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**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

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