

MAX CLARK

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EDUCATION

University of Michigan - Ann Arbor Expcted May 2030
PhD, Astronomy & Astrophysics

University of Wisconsin - Madison May 2025
BS, Astronomy - Physics
GPA: 4.0, Dean's List x6

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assisant, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Astronomy 2025–present
Advisor: Dr. Mary Anne Limbach
Investigating thermal variability in WD 1856 b. WD 1856 b is the first known transiting exoplanet around a white dwarf star. Using JWST MIRI data, I will be measuring the thermal emission of WD 1856 b to look for evidence of thermal variability to better understand the conditions of the planet.

Undergraduate Research Assistant, University of Wisconsin - Madison, Astronomy 2023–present
Advisor: Prof. Melinda Soares-Furtado
Cataloging the Ursa Major Moving Group. Ursa Major is a young, nearby moving group that has been found to host planets. My work has involved identifying potential white dwarf members of this moving group by kinematic analysis and age estimates, based on the white dwarf cooling sequence.

Lamat Institute, NSF REU, University of California - Santa Cruz , Astronomy 2024
Advisor: Dr. Kendall Sullivan
Exploring X-ray luminosity in binary stars in the 1 Myr Taurus star-forming region. My work has involved investigating a relationship between X-ray luminosity, normalized by the bolometric luminosity, and the separation of the stars in the binary system, using X-ray survey data.

PUBLICATIONS

TESS Hunt for Young and Maturing Exoplanets (THYME) XIII: A 90 Myr Moving Group Containing Two Transiting Planetary Systems,
*Distler et al. 2025 (including **Clark, M**) (Submitted)*

Moderate-separation Binary Companions May Influence Young Stellar X-Ray Luminosity,
***Clark** et al. 2024 (Research Notes of the AAS)*

The Ursa Major Moving Group: Revisiting Membership with New Age Constraints
*Sheffler, Soares-Furtado, **Clark**, and Distler (In prep)*

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, & AWARDS

Rackham Science Award	2025-present
Awarded to students with outstanding academic qualifications and show promise for contributing to wider communities (\$17,000)	
L.R. Ingersoll Award	2025
Recognizes outstanding achievement in introductory physics courses (\$2500)	
Lowell Doherty Award for Excellence in Astronomy	2025
Recognizes undergraduate students with exceptional academic and research performance (\$750)	
Lamat Fellowship, UC - Santa Cruz	2024
NSF REU (\$10,000)	
William F. Vilas Scholarship	2024
Awarded based on high academic achievement (\$400)	
Yi-Fu Tuan Scholarship	2023
Awarded to high-achieving first-year students (\$1333)	
Regina Cawley Loughlin Scholar	2022-present
Awarded to high-achieving first-year students (\$32,000)	
Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship	2022-present
Awarded to WI high school valedictorians (\$9000)	
Berlin Community Scholarship Program	2022-2024
Various scholarships to support undergraduate students from Berlin, WI (\$5000)	
Wisconsin Merit Scholarship	2022
Awarded to high-achieving first-year students (\$5000)	

SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATIONS

<i>Redefining the Age of the Ursa Major Moving Group</i>	2025
Astronomy Department Research Symposium, Poster, UW - Madison	
<i>Redefining the Age of the Ursa Major Moving Group</i>	2025
Undergraduate Research Symposium, 10 minute talk, UW - Madison	
<i>Age-Dating the Ursa Major Moving Group</i>	2025
AAS 245 Meeting, Poster, Gaylord Convention Center	
<i>Exploring X-ray Luminosity of Binary Stars in the Taurus Star-Forming Region</i>	2024
Lamat Research Symposium, 5 minute talk, UC - Santa Cruz	
<i>Age-Dating the Ursa Major Moving Group</i>	2024
Undergraduate Research Symposium, 10 minute talk, UW - Madison	

OBSERVATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Observational Astronomy (Astron 465)	2024
Operated UW-Madison's Small Radio Telescope (3 labs) and Sterling Rooftop Telescope (optical, 3 labs).	

TEACHING AND OUTREACH EXPERIENCE

Physics Peer Mentor Tutor, Physics Learning Center, UW - Madison	2023–2025
<i>Physics 103: General Physics</i>	
Algebra-based introductory mechanics	
• Led an 8-person bi-weekly tutoring group	
<i>Physics 104: General Physics</i>	
Algebra-based introductory electricity and magnetism	
• Led two 8-person bi-weekly tutoring groups	
<i>Physics 207: General Physics</i>	
Calculus-based introductory mechanics	
• Led a 6-person bi-weekly tutoring group	
<i>Physics 208: General Physics</i>	
Calculus-based introductory electricity and magnetism	
• Led a 4-person bi-weekly tutoring group	
Academic Mentor, Center For Academic Excellence, UW - Madison	2024
<i>Physics 106: Physics of Sports</i>	
• Provided one-on-one academic support for two students	
• Prepared practice problems based on course concepts	
<i>Pre-Calculus Bootcamp</i>	
• One-on-one support for placement test preparation	
Community Outreach, Astronomy Club, UW - Madison	2024–2025
<i>Hawthorne Elementary Community Science Night, Madison, WI</i>	
<i>Yerkes Observatory, Williams Bay, WI</i>	
<i>Wi Alumni Festival, Madison, WI</i>	
<i>Solar Observing at the Children's Museum, Madison, WI</i>	
Grading	2025
<i>Astronomy 103: The Evolving Universe: Stars, Galaxies, and Cosmology</i>	