

Zeina Benton

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EDUCATION

High School International Baccalaureate Graduate – Land O Lakes, Florida

- 3.8/4.0 GPA (4.3 GPA Unweighted)

University of Florida

Astrophysics (B.S.) and Women's Studies (B.A.) – Gainesville, Florida

- 3.57/4.0 GPA
- Relevant Coursework: Physics with Calculus 1 & 2, Electromagnetism 1 & 2, Mechanics 1 & 2, Essentials of Astrophysics, Modern Physics, Techniques of Observational Astronomy

LEADERSHIP & EXTRACURRICULARS

Women's Student Association - Gainesville, FL

August 2022 – May 2026

- 2024–2025 President, 2023–2024 Marketing Director, 2022–2023 Marketing Chair
- Skills: Leadership, Public Speaking, Team Management, Public Relations, Strategic Oversight, Decision Making

University-Conducted Research - Gainesville, FL

- Ongoing Research Project Under Dr. Elizabeth Lada 2024 – 2026
Investigating the structure and evolutionary states of NGC 2264; Northern and Southern subregions (2024-2026)

- Research Project under Dr. Jillian Hernandez

Analyzing the Politics of Feminine Aesthetics, Beauty, and Racialized Sexuality (2024-2025)

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant - Gainesville, FL

Spring 2024

- Under Dr. Joanna Neville, facilitated exam review sessions, led group discussions, provided constructive feedback and guidance.

Women in Astronomy and Astrophysics Mentorship - Gainesville, FL

Fall 2025

- 2025-2026 Co-Director • Skills: Mentorship, Communication, Networking, Professional Development

FIELD EXPERIENCE

NASA Europa ICONS (Inspiring Clipper: Opportunities for Next-generation Scientists) Internship - Laurel, MD

June 2025 – August 2025

- Under Dr. Frank Seelos at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, continued research for the Europa Clipper mission
- Instruments: Mapping Imaging Spectrometer for Europa (MISE) and Europa Imaging System (EIS) optical remote sensing instruments
- Inferred compositional and textural information about Europa's regolith and subsurface ocean.
- Utilized MISE spectral data to analyze the variability in photometric effects, considering factors such as viewing geometries and geological implications, to forward model bidirectional reflectance of future MISE observations

NASA L'SPACE Proposal and Research Writing

Jan 2023 – April 2023

- Team 7 Member / Science Researcher and Safety Officer
- Developed QUAD charts, Safety Risk Matrix, and a written proposal for future NASA missions
- Researched potential surface microbial improvement using a cellulose-chitosan and gelatin solution

NASA L'SPACE Mission Concept Academy

August 2023 – December 2023

- Team 7 Member / Astrophysics Researcher
- Developed a team-written proposal for NASA and designed a conceptual travel mission around Enceladus
- Presented a proposal and developed SRRs and MCRs

NASA Technology Transfer Program - Gainesville, FL

October 2024 – November 2024

- Received NASA T2U Certificate of Completion
- Repurposed NASA patent for practical solutions, proposed hurricane damage mitigation concept

PUBLICATIONS

Benton, Z. & Lada, E. (*in prep. Journal of Undergraduate Research*). Investigating the Membership of NGC 2264: An Optical and Near-infrared Survey Of The Subregions of 2264

ACHIEVEMENTS/AWARDS

<i>University Research Scholars Program</i>	<i>Fall 2024 – Spring 2026</i>
<i>Emerging Scholars Research Program</i>	<i>Spring 2024 – Fall 2025</i>
<i>Best Research Poster, PULSAR Symposium</i>	<i>Spring 2025</i>
<i>Society of Women in Physics, Co-Founder</i>	<i>December 2024 – January 2023</i>
<i>Dean's List</i>	<i>Spring 2023</i>
<i>William G. Cross Scholarship Finalist</i>	<i>Spring 2025</i>
<i>William G. Nash Dean's Scholarship</i>	<i>Fall 2025</i>