



30 April, 2021

SWOSU Biology Students Earn Awards at South Central Tri Beta Convention



Four SWOSU biology students earned awards for their presentations at the recent Tri Beta South Central Region Convention. Students receiving awards were (from left): Bryler Atchley of Clinton, Denton Parsells of Oklahoma City (Bethany), Shawn Bounkhong of Springdale (AR) and Makayla Hicks of Moore.

Eleven Southwestern Oklahoma State University biology students in Weatherford recently presented their research findings at the virtual 2021 Beta Beta Beta (Tri Beta) National Biological Honor Society South Central Region Convention.

Eighteen universities from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas had students participate in this annual convention.

Bryler Atchley of Clinton and Denton Parsells of Oklahoma City (Bethany) won first and third place, respectively, for the Frank G. Brooks Award for Outstanding Oral Presentation. Both Atchley and Parsells were previously awarded student research grants from the honor society.

Also, Makayla Hicks of Moore and Shawn Bounkhong of Springdale (AR) won first and third place, respectively, for the John C. Johnson Award for Outstanding Poster Presentation.

Atchley's presentation was "Characterization of the Antimicrobial Properties of Syringafactin". His mentor for the work was Dr. Regina McGrane, associate professor in the SWOSU Department of Biological Sciences.

Parsells' presentation was "Sexual Selection in Response to Varying Levels of Eutrophication". His mentor for this work was Dr. Rickey Cothran, chair and associate professor in the Department of Biological Sciences.

Hicks' presentation was "Evaluating pathogenicity of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* by manipulating genes associated with motility and biofilm formation". Her mentor for this work was McGrane.

Bounkhong's presentation was "Characterization of Biosurfactant Chemoreceptors in *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*". His mentor for the work was McGrane.

Other SWOSU students presenting were: Caden Bowles, Hannah Budde, Trey Cossey, Kade Ezell, Raistlin Hiner, Ethan Long and Tommy Nguyen.

First place winners will receive financial support to attend the 2022 Tri Beta National Convention in Oklahoma City, which will also celebrate the 100th anniversary of the honor society.

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