

SWOSU's Erica Benda Wins Second Place at Oklahoma Research Day

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SWOSU student Erica Benda (right) of Union City was selected as the second place winner and a \$250 cash award at the recent Research Day held at the Oklahoma State Capitol in Oklahoma City.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University student Erica Benda of Union City was selected as the second place winner at the recent Research Day held at the Oklahoma State Capitol in Oklahoma City.

Benda, who represented the SWOSU Biological Sciences and Chemistry/Physics Departments in Weatherford, won a \$250 cash award for her involvement in undergraduate research and her skilled presentation in the regional university competition.

Twenty four undergraduate student researchers from 16 Oklahoma colleges and universities gathered for the event sponsored by the Oklahoma Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the National Science Foundation.

Benda's research presentation was on "An emerging target of new drugs for Alzheimer's and other brain diseases". Benda's research was performed at the SWOSU Neuroscience laboratory under the supervision of SWOSU Assistant Professor Dr. Andrea Holgado and in collaboration with Dr. Kenneth Hensley of the University of Toledo Department of Pathology. Funding for the research was provided by the NSF and OK INBRE

At the Research Day, student participants were hand-selected by their institutions to present scientific research posters during the prestigious event, which is designed to showcase the outstanding research being conducted on Oklahoma college campuses and to make legislators and the public aware of how the research can positively impact the state.

Students' posters were competitively judged by an independent panel that selected the top seven research presentations in three categories—overall winner, regional universities and research-intensive institutions. An awards ceremony, hosted by Glen D. Johnson, chancellor of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, was held at the end of the day.