



OKLAHOMA EPSCoR UPDATE

Promoting Innovative Research



OK NSF Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research | April 2021 | No. 2



The 2021 RESEARCH DAY AT THE CAPITOL Award Winners

Presidents of 16 Oklahoma institutions of higher education nominated the top 21 undergraduate student researchers in the state to participate in the 2021 Research Day at the Capitol. The prestigious 26th annual event has hosted a breadth of diverse and relevant research, including using dandelion extract to treat cervical cancer and the development of a new mesoscopic carbon material that could prove useful in battery electrodes and hydrogen storage. Posters will be available online via the virtual poster site until May 29, 2021, at <https://www.posterpresentations.com/research/groups/epscor/epscor-virtual-poster-session.html>.

"All of the student nominees are to be commended for being selected to represent their institutions at Research Day at the Capitol," said Kevin Wagner, project director and principal investigator, OK NSF EPSCoR. "They represented their colleges and universities exceedingly well!"

As a component of the event, students presented their work to an independent panel of judges on March 30th live via Zoom. The judges have identified the top three students in each of two categories— (1) *Regional, Community, and Tribal Colleges* (1st, 2nd, 3rd place) and (2) *Research-Intensive Institutions* (1st, 2nd, 3rd place). One overall *Grand Prize Winner* was also selected—that winner could be chosen from either category.

These students will receive the following awards:

- Grand Prize is a \$500 award plus \$4,000 summer research internship; \$2,500 award goes to the sponsoring Oklahoma college/university lab to offset expenses of hosting the internship.
- First (\$500), second (\$250), and third (\$250) place will be awarded in each of the following two categories: 1) Research Intensive Institutions and 2) Regional, Community and Tribal Colleges.

Oklahoma NSF EPSCoR, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and the National Science Foundation are proud to sponsor this important event and we are pleased to announce the following 2021 Research Day at the Capitol award winners:

GRAND PRIZE – OVERALL – WINNER

GRAND PRIZE WINNER – EMILY BEDEA

Institution: Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Research Topic: Infectious Disease
Hometown: Clinton
[Poster](#)

REGIONAL, COMMUNITY, AND TRIBAL COLLEGE CATEGORY

FIRST PLACE: KAYLEY McBRIDE

Institution: University of Central Oklahoma
Research Topic: Cancer
Hometown: Edmond
[Poster](#)

SECOND PLACE: AMANDA LISKE

Institution: Northeastern State University
Research Topic: Solvent Synthesis
Hometown: Pauls Valley
[Poster](#)

THIRD PLACE: MELANY OPOLZ

Institution: Cameron University
Research Topic: Photophysical Properties
Hometown: Lawton
[Poster](#)

RESEARCH-INTENSIVE INSTITUTION CATEGORY

FIRST PLACE: AARON J. AUSTIN

Institution: Oklahoma State University
Research Topic: Mesoscopic Structures
Hometown: Edmond
[Poster](#)

SECOND PLACE: SIERRA X. POSEY

Institution: Oklahoma State University
Research Topic: Anti-Fungal Activity
Hometown: Coweta
[Poster](#)

THIRD PLACE: DANIEL A. CHEONG

Institution: University of Oklahoma
Research Topic: Functional Brain Imaging
Hometown: Muskogee
[Poster](#)

Funding for this project was provided by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. OIA-1946093 through OK NSF EPSCoR.

