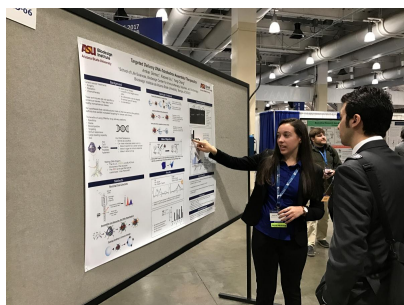


AAAS and Center for Biology and Society

2017 Meeting

Each year, the **Center for Biology and Society** and Barrett the Honors College at Arizona State University send undergraduate researchers as representatives to the American Association for the Advancement of Science conference. This year, a group of 11 undergraduate researchers traveled to Boston, Massachusetts from February 16th–19th. The conference focused on advancing science through policy and public engagement.

Recent political events rippled throughout the conference this year, as attendants vocalized their support for the value of science in society and evidence based facts. This buzz rose to a roar at the conclusion of Naomi Oreskes' plenary talk titled, "Should Scientists Serve as Sentinels?", when she implored the hundreds in attendance that, "Facts do not speak for themselves, YOU have to speak for them."



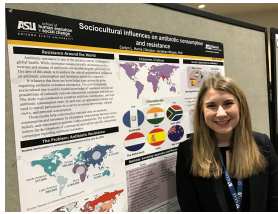
And so, our students did. Eleven undergraduate students—from microbiologists to public health to science education researchers—each traveled from Tempe to Boston to present posters with the results of their arduous research efforts. Jeremy Adams, Amber Gomez, Carlyn Harris, Lakshme Malladi, Freya Mehta, Tristan Neal, Hoang Nguyen, Monet Niesluchowski, Raul Razzaghi, Shiv Shah, and Casey Weinstein reflected on their research and conference

experience. For most, it was their first time presenting at a major national scientific conference. The students were grateful, stating that the conference was a tremendous opportunity both to present their own findings and to hear about and engage with cutting edge science from other fields. All students agreed about the value of presenting their work to a broad audience and receiving feedback during the poster session.

Amber Gomez presented the winning poster in the Medicine and Public Health category. Carlyn Harris and Shiv Shah each received honorable mentions for their posters.

On Saturday evening, after the student poster session had concluded, faculty and students joined together for dinner in what has become a wonderful ASU community tradition at AAAS. With the stress and pressure of the poster competition behind them, students engaged faculty in lively dinnertime conversation about everything from science policy to the virtues of a delicious dessert.

2017 AAAS Students



"I received some incredible feedback on my work and felt like I was finally becoming an expert in my field after presenting my poster."

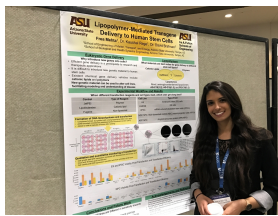
Carlyn's poster received an Honorable Mention.

Calyn Harris



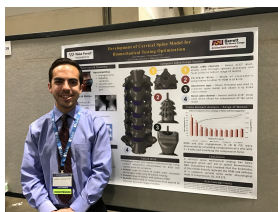
"When I first walked into the convention center, I was in awe - it was so beautiful! I felt so proud wearing the conference name badge and couldn't believe I was actually at AAAS... Although I was nervous during the poster presentation, my interaction with the judges and some of the general public who stopped by my poster showed me how invaluable my AAAS experience was."

Lakshmee Malladi



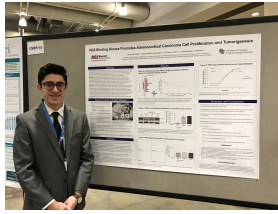
"AAAS was a great experience for all of us. The knowledge transaction went both ways as I was also able to learn a lot from the presentations of others and provide some insight."

Freya Mehta



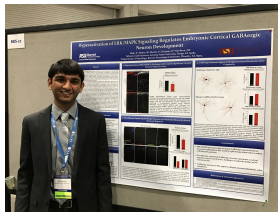
"The conference helped me gain familiarity on subjects that I previously had little knowledge about, and increased my ability to apply a wide range of perspectives to Biomedical Engineering."

Casey Weinstein



Raud Razzaghi

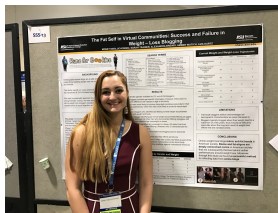
“The AAAS meeting was the first scientific conference I've been to, and it was a great experience. I found myself interested in topics I was completely unaware of, and expanded my fascination in others.”



Shiv Shah

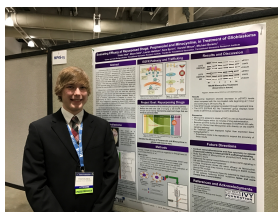
“I attended many seminars on topics ranging from gene editing to science policy and these allowed me to gain a unique perspective on the scientific enterprise. I had the opportunity to meet many colleagues and peers through the poster session.”

Shiv's poster received an Honorable Mention.



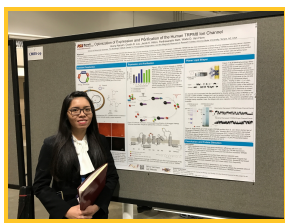
**Monet
Niesluchowski**

“As an anthropology and political science student, I really enjoyed the AAAS meeting this year which focused largely on where science meets policy. The conference was also an incredible way to practice talking about my research and how it relates to policy decisions on a broader scale.”



Tristan Neal

“AAAS was honestly an amazing opportunity. It was my first scientific conference and I already feel like it is benefiting me in many ways. I made some fantastic professional connections that I am now in contact with. I can't wait to attend another conference!”



Hoang Nguyen

“AAAS treated me well. Besides many interesting talks and sessions, the poster sections gave me the opportunity to present my work and learn from other's projects. Another graduate student shared her experience, a judge gave me suggestions to improve my study and another visitor asked for my PI contact information. I am thankful for having such a great learning experience.”