

Stargazing

Weekly Report 9/4/17 to 9/10/17

This week, I did a many tasks to further learn about my field. In the beginning of the week, I wrote my very first Research Assessment. Since this was my first assessment, this research assessment was primarily focused around the steps to becoming an astrophysicist and what they do on a daily basis. Researching both of these topics opened my eyes to see how many different paths there are in this single field, but also to how much dedication and hard work is required to become an astrophysicist. This assessment taught me many aspects about astrophysics, but the most important thing that it taught me was how much I do not know, reminding me of why I wanted to become an astrophysicist in the first place: to explore the unknown.

Along with the assessment, ISM students had to look for people that consult with to learn more about our field. For astrophysics, it was rather difficult to find contacts because of the low number of people in the field work in the area of my campus, but I tried my best. After many hours of looking on various outlets, I came up with a sizable list of contacts. Interestingly, I stumbled upon the TAS, or the [Texas Astronomical Society](#), in my research. After looking around on their website for a few minutes, I came across their event on Saturday for a stargazing event. Being the space enthusiast that I am, I gathered a few of my friends and headed down to to see what the event had to offer. Since this was my first public outing for a stargazing event, I had no idea what to expect. When I got to the event, I first noticed the sheer amount of people interested in coming on a Saturday evening to glance up at the sky. Furthermore, the entire aura of the event was extremely enjoyable, from friendly astronomers to a fun atmosphere. Everyone

was as passionate about space and looking at binary star systems, planets like Saturn, and nebulae as I was.

However, I was still terrified to approach people and talk to them. Small talking, maintaining eye contact, and other forms of professional interaction had never been my strong suits. Nevertheless, I went past my fear and did my best to connect with the professionals present there and as a result, I managed to get the contact information of few people who were willing to assist me on this journey. This week really showed me my potential in presenting myself as a professional and inspired me to continue to put myself in situations so that I may be proficient in the art of professionalism. All in all, this was an incredible week as I got out of my shell and explored not only the sky but also the future.

Until next week,

Sahil Jain