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Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space

May 3, 2006

DURHAM, N.H. -- Eight undergraduates involved in five original research projects were recognized for their achievements during the awards ceremony of the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Symposium (ISE) held last week at the Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS) at the University of New Hampshire. The students were selected from a field of over 100 undergraduates who presented their research in poster presentations at EOS during the afternoon. The ISE event was part of a weeklong conference showcasing the extensive research efforts undertaken by UNH undergraduates.

Michael Borrelli, a mechanical engineering major from Lynn, Mass., Morgan O'Neill, a physics major from Monson, Mass., and George Clark, a physics major from Wakefield, N.H. were recognized for their work on the star sensor for a UNH-built instrument to be flown on NASA's Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX) mission. IBEX will explore the region of space that marks the boundary between our solar system and the rest of our galaxy.

Anna Keim Weaver, a chemistry major from South Berwick, Maine received an award for her work in electron paramagnetic resonance (EPR) spectroscopy, which may offer forensic labs a fast and relatively inexpensive way to analyze shards of glass for use as evidence.

Jonathan K. Nguyen, a chemical engineering major from Rockland, Mass., worked on the concept of "self-healing" within epoxy coatings to improve anticorrosion on Naval ships. Self-healing is the concept of fixing micro-cracks chemically before a large crack can develop.

Sarah Eisenlord, a chemistry major from Hudson, Mass., studied how soil microbial efficiency under conditions of global warming might affect the rate at which carbon is taken from the soil and released to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide.

For their project, computer engineering majors Scott Crawford (Brentwood, N.H.) and Jonathan Oppelaar (River Vale, N.J.) designed an integrated chip that runs calculations inside a biometric fingerprint authenticator being developed at UNH.

More information about URC and this year's conference can be found at <http://www.unh.edu/urc>.

Editors: A photo of the award winners is available to download here:
http://www.unh.edu/news/img/eos/URC_awardwinners.jpg

Photo caption: From left to right, front row, George Clark, Anna Keim Weaver, Jonathan Oppelaar, Scott Crawford; back row, Sarah Eisenlord, Michael Borrelli, Morgan O'Neill, Jonathan K. Nguyen. Photo by Perry Smith, UNH Photo Services.