Jonathan Timcheck Named Churchill Scholar

(Columbus, OH) - The Undergraduate Fellowship Office is pleased to announce that Jonathan Timcheck has been named a 2015 Churchill Scholar. The Winston Churchill Foundation awards fourteen scholarships annually to graduating seniors and recent graduates demonstrating exceptional academic talent, outstanding personal qualities, and a capacity to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the sciences, engineering, or mathematics. The scholarship supports one year of graduate study in a relevant field at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom.

Jonathan Timcheck is a graduating senior from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, majoring in engineering physics. An Honors student and member of the Honors Collegium, he began conducting high energy physics research as a freshman under the guidance of Dr. Richard Hughes and Dr. Brian Winer, analyzing proton-proton collisions. Jonathan’s contribution to the search for the Higgs boson (as a member of the CMS experiment at CERN’s Large Hadron Collider) was published in the Journal of High Energy Physics, making him one of the very few undergraduate authors on any CMS publication. As a result, he was named a Goldwater Scholar in 2013 as a sophomore. Jonathan also spent a summer conducting research on graphic processing units in Jülich, Germany, as part of the DAAD’s Research Internships in Science and Engineering program. Back in the Hughes/Winer lab, his senior thesis uses Deep Convolutional Neural Networks for signal discrimination in data from the challenging environment of the 2015 Large Hadron Collider. “Jon's recent work on applying modern image processing techniques to high energy physics studies is truly groundbreaking,” states Hughes, his research advisor, “with the potential for dramatic improvements to both data analysis as well as data collection.”

Jonathan has garnered an impressive list of recognitions from the College of Engineering and the College of Arts and Sciences, including the Smith Sophomore and Junior Awards from the Department of Physics, the Valentino Academic Achievement Scholarship, the Walter E. Kidd Scholarship, the Robert Schwartz Award, and the Engineering Experiment Station Honors Undergraduate Summer Research Internship. Outside the laboratory, one of Jonathan’s goals is to share his passion for physics and computer science with others, and he has done so as part of the College of Engineering’s Translating Engineering Research to K-8 (TEK8) program. He also serves as a Peer Contact for the Undergraduate Research Office and as a tutor for the Department of Physics. In addition, Jonathan is President of Ohio State’s chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma, the Physics Honor Society.

Jonathan will pursue a master’s degree in applied math at Cambridge, with the goal of enhancing his quantitative analysis skills as a physicist. Upon completion of his degree, he plans to return to the United States to begin a PhD program in physics, hopefully at Stanford. Jonathan’s ultimate goal is to become a professor at a major university, teaching students and developing data analysis techniques to study fundamental particle interactions in particle accelerator experiments. His advisor, Brian Winer, was thrilled with the news. “It is an excellent opportunity for Jon to further hone his mathematical skills. The year at Cambridge, as a Churchill Scholar, is a significant stepping stone toward his future intellectual pursuits, including earning a PhD in physics.”

Mr. Timcheck is the fourth Ohio State student to ever be named a Churchill Scholar; previous scholars include computer science student Marc Khoury in 2012; engineering physics student Tyler Merz in 2011; and physics student Lawrence Bigler, Jr., in 1967. In addition, OSU has a 1978 Churchill Scholar on the faculty, Dr. Robin Wharton in the Department of Molecular Genetics.

Students interested in learning more about the Churchill Scholarship should contact the Undergraduate Fellowship Office (fellowships@osu.edu) or visit the Churchill Foundation’s website, http://www.winstonchurchillfoundation.org.

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