

Arizona State University

Department of Physics Newsletter

May 2026



It has been a wonderfully busy year! And now summer is upon us, giving us time to recoup and reflect and gear up for 2026-27.

In the past year, our faculty have been recognized for their research, published in top journals with highlighted results, garnered promotions and awards. Most recently, **Mike Treacy**

has been awarded the title of President's Professor, a top ASU recognition, and **Arunima Singh** has been selected as a Fulbright Scholar. **Antia Botana** has been promoted to Full Professor, while **Samuel Teitelbaum** has been awarded tenure and promoted to Associate Professor. **Arlinda Hill** is now a Full Teaching Professor. The department thanks **Tuna Yildirim** and **Antia Botana** for their exceptional contributions to the department with Outstanding Faculty awards. **Steve Presse** is now Director of the Center for Single Molecule Biophysics in the BioDesign Center.

Our students, **Sarah Saavedra**, **Sandra Loerdal**, **John Anawalt** and **Connor Oullette** have won awards at the Undergraduate Symposium – an inspiring and lively demonstration of our student academics. **Nathan Andrews** and **Brennen Wise** are our Dean's Medalists in Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 respectively. **Brennen** is also recognized with the Outstanding Undergraduate award. Allison Rojewski is awarded our **Outstanding Graduate Student**. The Student Organizations have recognized outstanding citizens of the department and their dedication.

Our staff has really worked hard in these times of transition. **Ashley Meyers** received our Outstanding Staff Award for all that she does for the undergraduate program, while **Mike Kelley** received the Denise Jackson staff award for his keen eye and heavy lifting on the facilities front, all with good cheer. **Jaya Krishnamurthy** has diligently kept the graduate program on track and is recognized by the "Going the Extra Mile" award.

With the end of the academic year, we also have upcoming transitions. **Miriam Carpenter-Cosand** has joined us as Undergraduate Advisor. **Samantha Munguia**, our Assistant Director of Operations, is moving to ASU Health as Associate Director. We will miss Sam's financial wizardry and wish her luck in her new position.

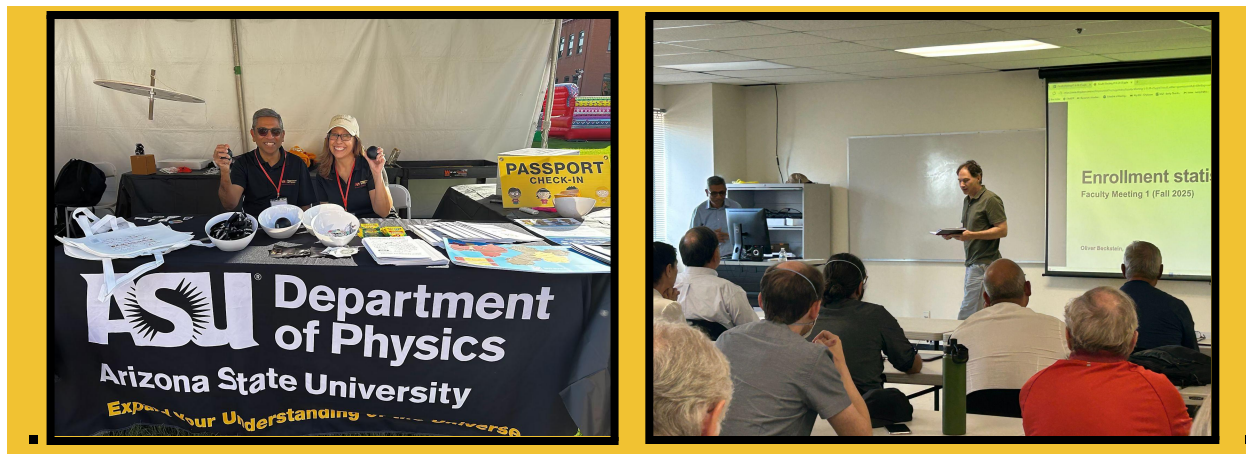
The Chair search is still in progress and I expect new, more permanent, leadership will step in in the coming months. You can still find me in my research office and are welcome to stop by for a chat and a cup of coffee. Before I leave, I would like to say thank you to all the wonderful faculty, staff, and students who have made this past year so interactive and engaging. A special shout out to **Becky Thornton** who has made all the seemingly onerous tasks so easy and even pleasant. I would also like to thank the leadership team, especially **Oliver Beckstein**, for selflessly shouldering all that keeps the department up and running.

Have a wonderful summer. Stay cool!

Tanmay

This department newsletter is meant to communicate developments, highlights, achievements, awards and events. If you feel you have written an important publication we would like to include a brief description written at a lay level. If you have something you'd like to include, please mail to becky.thornton@asu.edu and we can consider it for inclusion in the next newsletter.

While not in meetings, I will mostly be in the Chair's office or my research office (GWC530). You are welcome to drop in at either location. If you want to be sure you'll find me, please set up an appointment with Becky as she has access to my calendar. Email works best for me for communication.



Awards & Celebrations:

Mike Treacy has been awarded the title of President's Professor.

Arunima Singh selected as a Fulbright scholar

Samuel Teitelbaum is promoted to Associate Professor and **Antia Sanchez Botana** to Professor

Arlinda Hill is promoted to Full Teaching Professor.

Undergraduate Symposium Winners-Sara Saavedra, Sandra Loerdal, John Anawalt, Connor Ouellette (not pictured)



Please see our 2026 Spring Awards Ceremony [Presentation](#)



2026 Dean's Medalists Award

An award to recognize the top graduates in each school and department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.



Nathan Andrews
Fall 2025



Brennen Wise
Spring 2026

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Student Organization Awards

**Society of Physics
Students**

Member Recognition

Apollo Pigon
Claudio Iduarte
Zaraza

Graduate Application

Nadia Kazi

Outstanding Members

Rekha Joshi
Keaten Wood

**Association for
Women in Physics**

Class standing and
Physics community
involvement

Isabella Reese
Molly Staudt

Career Advancement

Isabella Palmieri

**Graduate Physics
Society**

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OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD

Ashley Meyers

Undergraduate Manager



DENISE JACKSON STAFF AWARD

Michael Kelley

Academic Facilities Specialist





**GRADUATE COLLEGE
STAFF
“GOING THE EXTRA MILE”
AWARD**

Jaya Krishnamurthy
Manager, Graduate Programs



**OUTSTANDING
UNDERGRADUATE
AWARD**

Brennen Wise
Undergraduate Student



**OUTSTANDING
GRADUATE AWARD**

Significant Contribution
in Research & Teaching

Allison Rojewski

Graduate Student

Years of Service Awards

5	Shabbir Isak Shaikh Setare Mostajabi Sarhangi Ayush Saurabh Patricia Rankin	25	Richard Lebed
10	Melissa Romero	35	Robert Culbertson
15	Darya Dolenko Damien Easson Maulik Parikh Tanmay Vachaspati		





OUTSTANDING
FACULTY

Tuna Yildirim

Associate Teaching Professor



OUTSTANDING
FACULTY AWARD

Antia Sanchez Botana

Associate Professor

★ *Congratulations to all!* ★

Events:

Spring Picnic-We had a wonderful day in the park. Thank you to all who enjoyed the UNSEASONABLY warm 103 degree day in March and had fun anyway! #SUNDevils



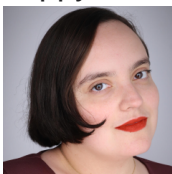
Sun Devil Giving Day-We received 13 gifts totalling \$1560! Thank you for [supporting Physics](#). Our goal is to double that amount next year! We can do it!



Community Outreach-PIRT promotes Physics in such fun and engaging ways for students no matter their age! Here is **Brandon Gaydusek** showing elementary school students in the Creighton Elementary School District how cool physics is. Building the future of physics at ASU starts with curiosity in young minds. Check out everything PIRT has to offer here: [Outreach Events | Physics Instructional Resource Team](#)

News & Developments:

- **The H-wing of the Physical Sciences building** will [undergo major renovations](#) over the next few years. Because this area includes labs, faculty offices, meeting spaces, and biophysics seminar rooms, some relocations will be necessary. We will share timelines and details well in advance to help make the transition as smooth as possible.
- **Steve Presse** is now a director at [BioDesign](#).
- **Sam Munguia** is starting a new position as Associate Director, Finance and Human Resources Operations with [ASU Health](#).
- Welcome **Miriam Carpenter-Cosand** who is now our new Undergraduate Advisor. Happy to have you on the Physics team [Miriam](#)!



- Thank you to all our **student workers** and congratulations to **Reya Maestas** a Spring 2026 Graduate.



- **Allison Boley** was felicitated by physics freshman Sarthak Lambat in Guru Vandana 2026, a formal celebration dedicated to expressing gratitude toward educators who play a pivotal role in shaping the academic, professional, and personal journeys of students. ASU's chapter of Hindu YUVA hosted the ceremony which emphasized the enduring importance of mentorship, lifelong learning, and community engagement.



- **Tushya Kalpada, Allison Boley, and the Physics IDEA team** created a textbook library in the Student Success Center (SSC) to help increase student access to course materials. We are especially grateful to the publishers and faculty who generously donated books to support this effort. Students are welcome to use these resources while studying in the SSC.



As we close out the academic year, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to **Tanmay Vachaspati** for his steady leadership, dedication, and service to the Department of Physics during this year of transition and growth.

Throughout the year, Tanmay provided thoughtful guidance, helped keep the department moving forward, and approached challenges with **professionalism, care, and commitment** to our community. From supporting faculty and students to overseeing important departmental initiatives, his **kind leadership** helped create stability and continuity for the department.

We are **deeply appreciative** of the time, energy, and attention he devoted to Physics this year. **Please join us in thanking Tanmay** for his many contributions and continued commitment to the success of the Department of Physics at ASU.



Thank you Tanmay!

What's coming up?

Summer Classes [Academic Calendar](#) | [University Registrar Services](#) | [ASU](#)

Fall 2026 begins 8/20/26 [Academic Calendar](#) | [University Registrar Services](#) | [ASU](#)

Past Newsletters:

☰ Department of Physics Newsletter March 2026

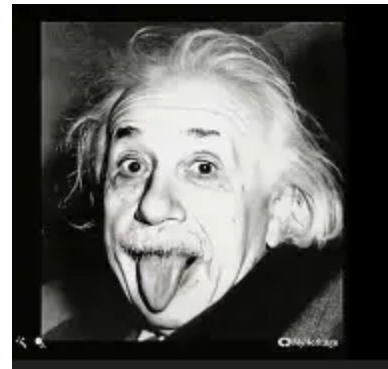
☰ Department of Physics Newsletter December 2025

☰ Department of Physics Newsletter October 2025

☰ Department of Physics Newsletter August 2025

And we bid you adieu to Summer with a laugh:

- What do you call a rude hydrocarbon?
Crude oi.l
- Never talk to Pi. They will go on forever.
- Why did the chemist get fired?
Because they didn't react well under pressure.
- Oxygen and potassium went on a date.
It went OK.
- A neutron walks into a bar and asks the landlord "How much for a beer?" The landlord says "For you, no charge".
- Why don't ants get sick? Because they have anty bodies!
- Did you hear about the physicist who got chilled to absolute zero? They are 0k now.



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- The rotation of the Earth makes my day.
 - Don't trust atoms, they make up everything.
 - Did you hear about the restaurant on Mercury? The lighting was good but it had zero atmosphere.
 - We couldn't catch the chemical thieves. They were too phosphorus!
 - How often should you tell a chemistry joke? Periodically,
 - Albert Einstein developed a theory about space. And it was about time, too.
 - I think I've lost an electron. In fact, I'm positive!

Enjoy your summer everyone! See you in the Fall.

