

CITIZENS FOR NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS

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August 1, 2022
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2022 Robert Maher Memorial Scholarship Winner Announced

Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) and Savannah River Mission Completion (SRMC) has announced University of South Carolina (U of SC) student Robert Demuth as the winner of the 2022 Robert Maher Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship is sponsored by SRMC, the liquid waste contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

Demuth, who is from Gray Court, S.C., is a senior pursuing a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering with a minor in nuclear engineering. He is also pursuing an accelerated Master of Science in nuclear engineering.

CNTA Executive Director Jim Marra said CNTA is proud to award this \$5,000 scholarship to such an ambitious, enthusiastic, and deserving student.

“Robert has a great passion to pursue nuclear research and grow his knowledge and experience in the field,” Marra said. “All these go-getter qualities make him the ideal candidate to award this scholarship. No doubt Robert will be an exemplary addition to the nuclear industry.”

In 2019, Robert was offered a position as an undergraduate research assistant and began training in U of SC's Advanced Nuclear Materials Laboratory.

In 2020, he began his first independent research project in a joint collaboration project between U of SC, Savannah River National Laboratory, and Idaho National Laboratory. This project involved engineering-scale spent nuclear fuel drying tests, which were performed to evaluate the effectiveness of two distinct drying processes on spent nuclear fuel in preparation for long-term dry storage.

In 2021, he assisted in a Westinghouse research study of the cracking behavior of uranium and Advanced Doped Pellet Technology (ADOPT) fuel.

In 2022, he undertook the lead position in a research endeavor between U of SC, DOE, and Westinghouse. This project aims to provide a robust solution to analyzing the safety of long-term spent fuel storage. His portion of the project entailed designing a proprietary nuclear fuel drying system capable of testing Westinghouse equipment under commercial nuclear fuel drying conditions.

He is currently the lab manager for the Used Fuel Storage and Disposition Laboratory at U of SC.

“Ever since I was a child, I have always been fascinated by outer space and witnessing

mankind extend its reach into the universe,” Demuth said. “Now I desire to actively participate in this endeavor while ensuring that safety and public health remain a top priority, along with reducing the environmental impact of our actions. I strive to accomplish this goal with a career at NASA in the nuclear field. My interests are primarily in Nuclear Space Reactors and Nuclear Thermal Propulsion. These two highly advanced technologies present unique challenges that I wish to assist in overcoming.”

He has been involved in many school and community activities, including local chapter of the American Nuclear Society as Communications Officer, Habitat for Humanity, and many church activities, such as the praise band, food pantry, and mission trips.

The Robert Maher Memorial Scholarship is a joint project of CNTA and SRMC. Maher, Vice President and General Manager for Strategic Mission Development at SRS, passed away in 2002 after a 48-year career at the Site. A visionary with a broad view of the Site’s potential, Maher helped shape SRS.

The annual scholarship was established in Maher’s memory to support students pursuing science and engineering degrees in preparation for careers in the nuclear field. Details on the scholarship can be found at: <https://cntaware.org/maher-memorial-scholarship/>.

CNTA is an Aiken-based charitable educational organization dedicated to providing factual information about nuclear topics and educating the public on nuclear issues. For further information, call CNTA at 803-649-3456 or e-mail at cnta@bellsouth.net.



Caption- Robert Demuth, a senior at the University of South Carolina, is the winner of the 2022 Maher Memorial Scholarship.