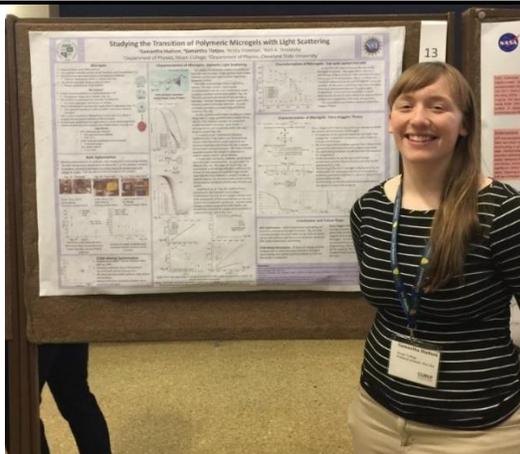


Soft Matter REU Alumni (2017-2019)

Samantha Hudson (Hiram College, Hiram OH)

Dr. Kiril A Strelitzky – 2017 – “Studying the Volume Phase Transition of Polymeric Microgels with Light Scattering”



The Cleveland State REU introduced me to the world of research. The experience of hands-on learning early in my studies helped me to ask better questions about the world around me as I navigated my studies in Physics at Hiram College and two more REUs in Astronomy and Astronomical Instrumentation at **BYU** and **Texas A&M**. I now *study Mechanical (BS) and Aerospace (MS) engineering at Washington University in Saint Louis* and am currently completing a *co-op at Johnson Space Center*. I will always remember this REU for challenging me to grow as a scientist and a student through lab work, presenting at conferences, and networking. I also loved the opportunity to explore Cleveland and North East Ohio with some of my fellow REU students!

John Weicherding (University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison WI)

Dr. Geyou Ao – 2017 – “Purification and Assembly of DNA-Stabilized Boron Nitride Nanotubes”



I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a BS degree in nuclear engineering. Not long after my REU with Cleveland State University, I got an **internship** with *Cardinal Glass* using many of the skills I had just learned. Impressed with my background and ability to apply it, I was offered a *full-time position* designing new glass coatings and production line diagnostics. One of my favorite experiences while in the REU was touring the Liquid Crystal Institute. They had many interesting labs and displays; one of the displays they gave out was a liquid crystal magnet thermometer which is still in my car from the day I got it!

Tony Dobrila (Cleveland State University, Cleveland OH)

Drs. Kiril A. Strelitzky and Petru Fodor – 2019 – “Optimizing the Direct Visualization of HPC Microgels Via Scanning Electron Microscopy”



I graduated from Cleveland State University with a Bachelor's degree in Physics (BS Honors) in 2018. I currently [work for RoviSys](#), an automation integrator spanning various verticals in industry, [as a software engineer](#). The REU at Cleveland State taught me a great work ethic, and to pursue creative and sometimes unconventional solutions to problems, which ultimately led me to pursuing a career in software, where I regularly work with clients to solve unique and interesting engineering problems. If I had to choose my favorite thing about my REU experience, it would undoubtedly have to be seeing the results of my experiments yielding good, reproducible, and promising results after countless hours of failed attempts. That sense of accomplishment is what keeps us coming back for more every time.

Ty Naquin (Troy University, Troy AL)

Drs. Nolan Holland and Kiril A. Strelitzky – 2018 – “Drug delivery Nanoparticles”



I graduated from Troy University with BS Physics degree and currently attend a [PhD program](#) at [Duke University](#). This REU had a tremendous impact on my decision to attend grad school and inspired me to pursue research with strong biomedical applications. After REU at CSU, I have also participated in the “**Optics in the City of Lights**” REU program in **Paris**. My favorite thing about the REU program at CSU is definitely the friends I made. I still keep in touch with other REU participants and my advisors. It was a great experience overall.

Troy Nemeth (John Carroll University, Cleveland OH)

Dr. Jessica Bickel – 2018 – “Self-Assembly of Pentacene on Highly Oriented Pyrolytic Graphite”



John Carroll University (JCU) alum. Applied to [Case Western Reserve University \(CWRU\)](#) for [Masters in Physics](#). Still waiting to hear back. Probably will have to job search for engineering-esque jobs (electrical, mechanical, idk). CSU REU was a great opportunity to develop a unique skillset. I learned a lot and had a lot of fun. I think it pushed me against pursuing research as a career, but it was a very awesome summer for growth. My favorite part was providing an oral presentation at the research symposium. I have never done anything like that and I will likely never forget public speaking to 80+ people. I really enjoyed the interdisciplinary aspect: getting some knowledge about ALL projects and all equipment used in high level research (STM, SEM, etc).

Niksa Praljak (Cleveland State University, Cleveland OH)

Dr. Andrew Resnick – 2018 – “Pulsatile flow in idealized renal tubules”



Niksa graduated from CSU with BS Physics Honors and BS Math Honors in Spring 2020 as Summa Cum Laude. He performed research with Dr. Resnick (as part of CSU’s REU), Dr. Ryan, and Dr. Hinczewski ([CWRU](#)). Niksa presented his research at the OSAPS at Kettering, at the APS March Meeting in Boston, and to SPS at CSU. His research was published in 2 peer-reviewed journals. Niksa won the prestigious **2019-2020 NSF’s Graduate Research Fellowship Program** award.

Furthermore, he helped the SPS physics outreach effort at Campus International School and served as the SPS-Math Club liaison, organizing SPS seminars and Physics Olympics. Finally, Niksa was chosen as the Spring 2020 COSHP Valedictorian. He just began [Ph.D. studies in Biophysical Sciences](#) at the [University of Chicago](#).

Jacob Adamczyk (Cleveland State University, Cleveland OH)

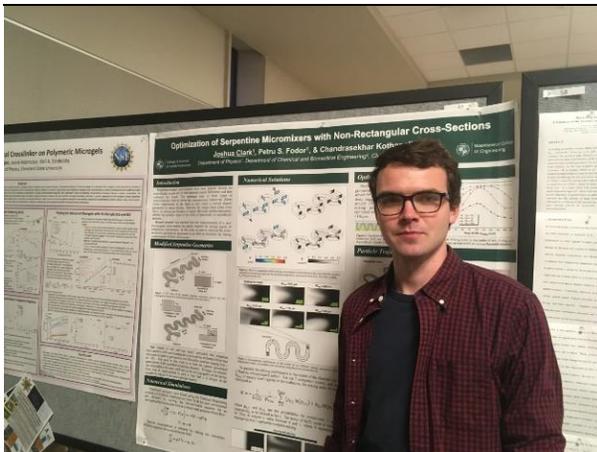
Dr. Miron Kaufman and Kiril A. Strelitzky – 2018 – “Entropy Driven Phase Transitions in Polymer Gels”



Jacob graduated from CSU with a BS Physics Honors and a BS Math and as Summa Cum Laude in the Spring 2020. He did research projects with Dr. Kaufman, Dr. Heus, Dr. Strelitzky (as part of CSU’s REU), and Dr. Winkelmann (**Neel Institute, Grenoble, France**). Jacob presented his research at the OSAPS at Kettering, at the APS March Meeting in Boston, and gave an SPS talk at CSU. He also served as SPS Fabulous Physics question creator, helped with Physics Olympics, and was a sole author of the questions for the Physics Jeopardy in the Spring 2019. Jacob won the 2019 SPS Leadership Fellowship from the American Institute of Physics (AIP). He is in **MS Physics program** at **University of Massachusetts – Boston** where he is working with two groups in Quantum Computing & Biophysics.

Josh Clark (Cleveland State University, Cleveland OH)

Dr. Petru Fodor – 2018 – “Microfluidic Channels and Mixers”



I graduated from Cleveland State University with a BS in Physics Honors degree in 2018. I currently work as an **R&D Scientist** at **GrafTech International** here in Cleveland. I would say the experience I gained from the REU provided me with an important technical foundation within the COMSOL Multiphysics software package, which has been essential to me in starting a career in Finite Elements Analysis.

Jacob Duckworth (Michigan State University, East Lansing MI)

Dr. Andy Resnick – 2019 – “Optical Trapping to Investigate Cilia Mechanics”



I graduated from Michigan State University in December 2019 with degrees in biosystems engineering and physics. Currently, I am a **biophysics PhD student** at **University of California - San Diego** where I am studying neurophysics and researching how sensory information is processed in the mammalian brain. The REU program at CSU helped me set goals for graduate study and provided experience using a variety of experimental methods. My favorite aspect of the REU program was getting to know other passionate biophysics students and exploring the city of Cleveland.

Bradley Lockhart (Ohio Northern University, Ada OH)

Dr. Jessica Bickel – 2019 – “Pentacene Thin Film Deposition”



I graduated from the Ohio Northern University with BS degrees in Physics and Applied Math. I am currently pursuing my **PhD at Institute at Brown for Environment and Society at Brown University** where I am working on Arctic climate modeling. I think my participation in the REU was very beneficial in my acceptance to graduate school. I was told several times that having a letter of recommendation from an REU made me stand out among many qualified candidates. Overall, my participation in the CSU REU gave me a valuable head-start on my academic career. One of the best parts of the REU was the community of students that formed over the course of the internship. Whether it was a planned event or simply going out on a lunch break I always looked forward to meeting with everyone

Tyler Leibengood (Youngstown State University, Youngstown OH)

Dr. Christopher Wirth – 2019 – “Direct measurement of deposition of synthetic and biological colloids”



Tyler Leibengood is currently pursuing a **double major at Youngstown State University in Mathematics and Physics**. Microscopy techniques he learned at CSU were key to his success in an internship at **NASA Glenn Research Center** (where he worked on worked on additive manufacturing a special medium entropy alloy) that he completed the following spring semester. Cleveland offers plenty of fun all year round, and Tyler is thankful to the physics department at CSU for offering this amazing educational experience.

Peter Allen Howard (Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge LA)

Dr. Christopher Wirth – 2019 – “Characterizing Anisotropic Particle Dynamics Under Complex Fields”



Currently a **senior at LSU** pursuing **an undergraduate degree in Chemistry** with a focus in Food Science. Working on a research project involving the cloning *E.coli* with vectors from Chlamydia trachomatis bacteria to develop a broader project related to protein structure in Chlamydia. My experience with the REU helped open my eyes to the variety of opportunities that are available beyond undergraduate especially those not directly related to my specific field of interest. I especially learned to recognize the value in relationships with others both in your field and outside of it in order to develop a broader perspective. For that reason I greatly appreciated getting to connect with the faculty at CSU and the other REU participants some of who I still keep in touch with! Having time away from the lab to attend concerts and restaurants around Cleveland through the program was also very nice as it gave much need time to relax and connect with the rest of the cohort.

Benjamin Bosela (University of Toledo, Toledo OH)

Dr. Chandra Kothapalli – 2019 – “Synthesis of Gold Nanoparticles using Microfluidic Mixers”



I plan on graduating from the [University of Toledo](#) with [BS in Physics](#) in the spring of 2021. I participated in the Soft Matter REU during the summer of 2019. Currently I am doing research in an atomic physics lab at my university. The REU was my first research experience and prepared me for more undergraduate research. Further, the poster presentations during the REU helped improve my professional skills. Participating in the REU provided me with an exceptional opportunity to learn from a diverse group of advisors and other REU students.

Samantha Tietjen (Cleveland State University, Cleveland OH)

Drs. Petru Fodor and Kiril A. Strelitzky – 2019 – “Optimization of Hydroxypropyl Cellulose Microgel Imaging and Characterization Using Scanning Electron Microscopy”



Samantha is a student at CSU. She has completed her B.S. in Physics Honors and is currently completing her [M.S. in Physics](#) through [CSU's 4+1 Master's program](#). Her research interest is in imaging techniques using any manner of methodology; including x-ray imaging, single wavelength imaging, and scanning electron microscopy. After completing her degree, she would like to work in art conservation using imaging techniques for the preservation of medieval arms and armor, either through entering the work force directly or first completing her Ph.D. On the side she is a commissioned artist, Historical European Martial Arts student and enthusiast, bizarre literature aficionado, and horse trainer (general, tricks, and mounted archery). Samantha is president of CSU's chapter of Society of Physics Students (SPS) and a recipient of 2019 SPS Leadership Fellowship from American Institute of Physics.

Jacob Martin (Cleveland State University, Cleveland OH)

Dr. Jessica Bickel – 2019 – “Achieving Flat Gold Surfaces for Organization of Organic Molecules”



I am a senior in chemical engineering at Cleveland State University working on my BS degree. I have continued research with Dr. Bickel throughout my undergrad and will continue with research for my master's degree (through [CSU's 4+1 Masters program](#)). The REU helped me realize that I am passionate about research and that is something I would like to continue with into my career. One of my favorite things about the REU was building a cohort with students from different universities.