While the number of ASU physics majors has continued to grow over the past few years, the opportunities and experiences they pursue remain a distinguishing feature of the department’s undergraduate degree programs. ASU Physics has a rigorous and stimulating academic program for physics majors which emphasizes the connections between different courses. In addition, the experiences ASU physics majors gain beyond coursework serve to further prepare them for a scientific career. ASU physics majors may find themselves involved in the Society of Physics Students, as teaching assistants, and/or on research projects. One of our talented physics majors details his experience below.

Physics Major Highlight: Aaron Papagalos

Aaron is currently in his junior year in the ASU physics program. Aaron’s interest in physics derives from physics’ “ability to unify our various understandings of nature at a fundamental level.”

As a recipient of the Provost Scholarship and a student who maintains well over a 3.5 GPA, Aaron shows a high level of academic excellence. In addition to his studies, he is an intern for a defense contracting company in North Phoenix and currently holds a position as a teaching assistant for Mathematical Methods in Physics I. Aaron would like to get involved with a research opportunity in physics over the summer and is always looking toward the future. In his free time, Aaron enjoys going to the Phoenix Symphony and has seen nearly every Classic this season.

Aaron is confident in his ability to handle what will come next in his journey beyond ASU thanks to the skills and experiences he’s gained in the ASU physics major program. Aaron feels prepared to think, learn, and problem solve like a physicist.
Undergraduate Problem of the Month

A block of mass 5.00 kg rides on top of a second block of mass 10.0 kg. A person attaches a string to the top block and pulls the system horizontally across a frictionless surface, as shown in the Figure below. If the coefficient of static friction between the two surfaces of the blocks is 0.350, what maximum force can be exerted by the string on the 5.00 kg-block without causing the 10.0 kg-block to slip?

Participant Eligibility Rules & Processes:
- Any ASU undergraduate student may participate.
- Submissions are due March 2 to the Physics Main Office (PSF 470) by 5pm and must include your name and ASU ID number.
- The solution will be posted in the Physics Main Office (PSF 470) until 5pm on March 9.
- For every correct solution turned in, the ASU undergraduate student who turns in the most correct solutions at the end of the academic year will be recognized at the Physics Annual Awards Ceremony.

The Department of Physics is not responsible for lost or incomplete entries.

Special thanks to Dr. Tsen for contributing February’s Undergraduate Problem of the Month.