

2016 Undergraduate Award for Excellence in Chemistry

Alexis Clark
U. S. Naval Academy



Alexis Clark distinguishes herself academically and professionally in the Chemistry major while having an outstanding performance record as midshipman. She has a perfect GPA and ranks within the top 10% of all midshipmen in her class that includes both academic and military standing. Alexis also earned the ACS Polymer Chemistry Award during her sophomore year for being the “best organic chemistry student” that year. Alexis is obviously a driven person, is willing to take risks, and is not afraid of responsibility. After graduation, Alexis will join the Navy Submarine Community, which is a highly selective service for females. In 2010, the Navy began allowing women officers to train to serve on submarines, and this year Alexis was one of ten females selected from the Naval Academy to join this community. Her combination of technical and leadership skills made her an excellent choice.

Alexis is also highly successful in her independent research project. After learning the basic operation of the capillary electrophoresis instrument, Alexis collected publishable data after only five months of work during which time she can only devote six hours a week to the effort due to her military and athletic responsibilities. She has intensively searched the literature for new findings and has then altered the reported methods to make them better. She presented her findings at Pittcon 2016 in the Analytical Poster Session, as opposed to the less competitive Undergraduate Poster Session, and she is submitting a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal before graduation.

Alexis has earned one of the highest leadership roles at the U. S. Naval Academy as she is a Company Commander this semester. This means she is in charge of the moral, mental and physical development of over one hundred midshipmen. There are only thirty Company Commanders in the student body and the competition for these spots is intense. Upon graduation, she will attend the Navy's Nuclear Power School and then will serve as one of a very small number of females in Navy's submarine force.