From the left: Matt Williamson (CS), Cody Worth (MATH), Mercedes Coleman (MATH).

Mercedes Coleman, Matt Williamson, Cody Worth, and I were in charge of the STST booth at New Student Orientation at Lamar University. Seven students and four parents stopped by our STST booth to ask questions about the program.

Mercedes and Cody talked with 2 math majors about their experience with the program and the professor they were working alongside, whom they enjoy. I talked with 2 biology majors, 1 psychology major, 1 chemistry major and 1 chemical engineering major about the program. I encouraged all that I talked with to join Chemistry STST as I saw it was the closest relevant discipline to their majors. I gave my own personal testimonial and a quick spiel about the astronomy project PHYS STST we are working on. I talked with a couple of parents whose kids were not present and gave them information about the program and a way to contact us.

STAIRSTEP students (1 PHYS, 2 MATH, 1 CS) hosted a booth at the New Student Orientation event at Lamar University from 9:45 to 11am for incoming freshmen and transfer students. STST members talked to potential students and parents about the benefits of the STST program, gave personal testimonials, and discussed about the current research projects they were involved with. Pamphlets, flyers, and brochures were handed out to interested students.
Overall, the orientation was beneficial to the students and parents who stopped by. All STST participants found the experience beneficial as well. Matt enjoyed “meeting incoming freshmen and welcoming them to school.” I enjoyed it because I love trying to talk people into being scientists. We did have trouble getting students to stop by because of our location as more traffic was on the other side of the hallway. Also, most students walking through were nursing and biology majors and Cody felt there was “not as much interest from many students.” Matt believes we could improve the event by “bringing more stuff to these events to attract attention.” Cody pointed out that the incoming students also didn’t seem to know “who we were or where we were,” and I have to agree most students, even locals, who talked to us, had never heard of STST beforehand. To solve this, I think we should go to all the local college fairs and visit as much high schools as possible during the academic year.

Event coordinator: Keeley Townley-Smith (Phys STST student)