Sara-jeanne Vogler and Keeley Townley-Smith participated to the 117th Annual Texas Academy of Sciences conference with a poster titled “Analysis of Lorentzian peaks in absorption spectra and finding the shape of blackbody sources from the polarization of light emitted”. During the session, we had a wide range of scientists visiting our poster. Most of our audience were not physicists but chemistry and biology students, and professors from various fields. In the picture to your left, you see Sara-jeanne Vogler talking to a chemistry major who was deeply interested in atomic spectroscopy and spent a great deal of time at the poster. Sara said “she loved that the girl was genuinely interested in our research and how she could apply what we were doing to what she was studying in lab back at her home university.” On the picture below, I am telling a fellow Lamar student and geology major Cristine how the study of the polarization of light helps to assess a star’s core shape during a supernova explosion. Sara, recalling our poster presentation, said that “she loved how we got to present to non-physics majors! That’s what makes this conference different than any other ones we had attended.” Sara and I were judged during the poster session and received mixed reviews on our poster: One judge ranked us very high, the other gave us average marks, and the last one ranked us below average. Unfortunately, there were not a whole lot of comments to take into consideration for bettering ourselves at future conferences though we did get more and very useful experience presenting our research. Sara and I both attended plenary sessions in physics, math, computer science, engineering, geology, and environmental sciences.
computer science, physics, and geology during the remainder of the conference. While in Galveston during the conference and the student’s spring break, Sara enjoyed swimming in the early March Gulf waters while I joined a couple of geology students in looking for minerals along the jetties. There was a formal banquet during the conference that the students enjoyed and I later got to try oysters for the first time!

*Keeley Townley-Smith – event coordinator for STAIRSTEP.*