



Ecological Restoration Institute

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NAU student honored twice as student employee of the year

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz.—Northern Arizona University physics major Brent Tyc is the recipient of the NAU Student Employee of the Year Award and the first NAU student to receive the State of Arizona Student Employee of the Year Award.

The 21-year-old is being acknowledged for his efforts as an undergraduate research assistant with the Ecological Restoration Institute where he played a critical role in the collection of forest research data using electronic equipment in the field.

“Last summer was the first time the ERI began using electronic data collection techniques in our remote field sites,” said ERI research specialist Chris McGlone, who, along with ERI applications systems analyst Scott Curran, nominated Tyc for the awards.

“Brent took the responsibility of maintaining the computers and electronic equipment, managing the data and troubleshooting problems in the field. The isolated nature of these study sites presented a particularly difficult challenge for the ERI,” said McGlone. “Brent often had to find creative methods of problem-solving to make the data collection process flow smoothly.”

Curran said Tyc’s work saved hundreds of hours of data entry time and also increased accuracy. “Brent is a person you can count on to get the job done.”

Tyc helped field crews collect information such as tree sizes, forest fuel loads and vegetation types on more than 100 plots on Mount Trumbull, a remote area in northwestern Arizona. He is planning to take a lead role in the training of ERI field staff this summer.

“The awards mean a lot to me. I’ve never been honored like this in my life,” said Tyc.

Tyc, an honor student, has also served as a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill Industries and the City of Flagstaff Fuels Management Crew. He came to Flagstaff from Montgomery, Ala., where he attended Montgomery Catholic High School.

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