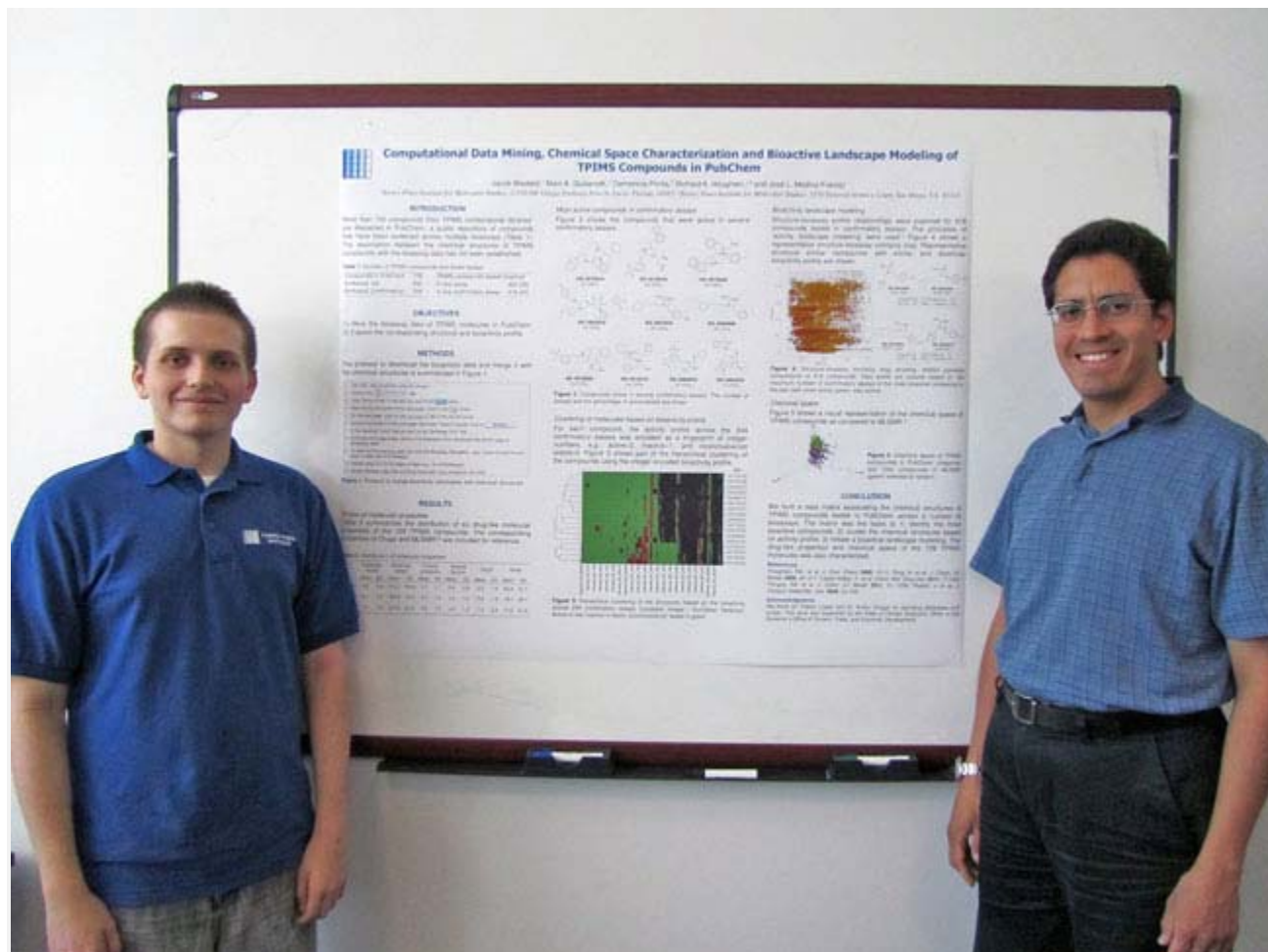


# Sunshine State Scholar Jacob Waddell Expands Skills at Torrey Pines Institute



Jacob Waddell and Dr. Jose Medina with one of the main projects, titled *Computational Data Mining, Chemical Space Characterization and Bioactive Landscape Modeling of TPIMS Compounds in PubChem*.

**PORT ST LUCIE, FL - AUGUST 3, 2011** - In the past, Florida's students were faced with the challenge of being inspired in the academic areas of science, technology, engineering and math, also known as STEM. This challenge was met through a statewide program known as the [Sunshine State Scholar initiative](#), which recognizes Florida's top 11th graders, one for each county, in the areas of STEM. The scholar initiative offers a solution to pursue post-secondary education in STEM areas, but with the help of local institutions like Torrey Pines Institute for

Molecular Studies, students have found practical options for hands-on involvement in STEM-based industries through summer internships.

One such opportunity arose for St. Lucie County Sunshine State Scholar Jacob Waddell when he met Pamela Houghten, Senior Director of Outreach & Education for Torrey Pines Institute. “I met Pamela Houghten at the Sunshine State Scholars Conference in Orlando and she offered me a summer internship at Torrey Pines Institute,” stated Jacob. “I would have never expected such an honor”. This internship was made possible by an agreement between the Florida Education Foundation and Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies to create an internship position for the St. Lucie County Sunshine State Scholar.

With the goal of becoming a Computer Engineer/Scientist, Jacob spent his summer internship within the Computational Chemistry Department at Torrey Pines Institute and was assigned to work directly with Jose Medina-Franco, Torrey Pines Institute’s Assistant Member of Computer Aided Drug Design. Using the Institute’s compound libraries, Jacob played a vital role within the department by using his exceptional skills in computer programming to help the department with 3-D modeling of the compounds.

“I never used my programming skills for any practical purpose before, so having the opportunity to work directly with computer scripts and programs enabled me to see my code become part of a larger picture,” Jacob stated. “It was great to see my work applied to real world challenges.”

“In one of the main projects, Jacob worked on the computational analysis of the bioactivity data of the TPIMS compounds,” stated Jose Medina-Franco. “Jacob did a fantastic job during his internship and I’m really impressed with his intelligence, dedication and accomplishments.” Jacob concluded, “The internship experience at Torrey Pines expanded my knowledge of my career path in Computer Engineering, while deepening my understanding of 3D molecular models and computer-based methods for discovering properties of compounds. I would certainly recommend such an opportunity to any students interested in the STEM areas to further their experience.”

Each year, Torrey Pines Institute hosts several summer internship positions. For more information on Torrey Pines Institute’s Summer Internship Program, [visit Florida Outreach](#).