

**Name:** Elizabeth Apala

**Code:** 660

**Home institution:** SURA

**Name of task:** Senior Research Assistant

**Role in Task/What do you do for CRESST:** My role comprises of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Outreach/Recruitment Duties. I help underrepresented minorities get assistance they need as they go throughout their career and make them aware of opportunities at NASA. I also assist with setting up and staffing conferences and other outreach opportunities.

**What is your background:** My name is Elizabeth Apala and I am the Senior Research Assistant for the Astrophysics Science Division. Being that I am a Native American, belonging to the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Cherokee tribes, my work in the division is very personal and important to me. I started my position November 2, 2020, after receiving my master's in applied physics with a focus in astrophysics in December of 2019 from Towson University. Astronomy and physics have been a lifelong passion and interest of mine and I find a lot of enjoyment in sharing that love with students at different events and through different schools and outreach focused efforts. Being that I started during the pandemic I have not been on site as an employee yet, but I am happily working from home in southeastern Oklahoma at my quail and goat farm. I started my farm early last year which consist of twelve Nigerian Dwarfs and about a hundred coturnix and celadon quails. Outside of my farm animals I also have two Chihuahuas named Annie (named after Annie Jump Cannon) and Little Man. For fun I like to crochet, read, and travel. I am currently trying to plan my wedding.



**Favorite part of being a CRESST Scientist:** I love helping students and seeing the passion in them. Feeding that passion is very gratifying.

**Highlight of research as a CRESST Scientist:** The biggest highlight is making lasting connections with students and watching them succeed. I have a few students now that have graduated from undergraduate universities and are in a graduated program now, and I love being able to be there for them.

**Fun facts:** I'm newly engaged, I know American Sign Language, and I started learning how to do astrophotography when I was 14.

**Thesis:**

*"Studying the Circumgalactic Medium by Calculating Photometric Redshifts and Finding QSO Absorber Galaxy Pairs"* (Towson University)

**Interviews:**

*"International Women's Day: In Conversation with Elizabeth Apala"*

<https://www.azoquantum.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=299>

*“Elizabeth Apala: Astrophysicist and Advocate for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”*

<https://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/2021/elizabeth-apala-astrophysicist-and-advocate-for-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>