

Lauren Simitz is a second-year PhD candidate at Stanford University in the Aeronautics & Astronautics department. Working under Professor Matthias Ihme in the Fluids in Complex Environment Laboratory, her principal research focus has been hot surface ignition and associated phenomena (spray-wall interactions, ignition kernel formation, etc.) as catalysts of accidental fires. Prior to graduate school, Lauren earned her B.S. in chemical engineering and planetary science at Northwestern University and worked at SpaceX on the launch fluids engineering and propulsion turbomachinery teams, contributing primarily to Starship and Raptor engine development.