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VERITAS Observations of Gamma-Ray Blazars RESHMI MUKHERJEE, Barnard College, VERITAS COLLABORATION — We report on very high energy (VHE) gamma-ray observations of several active galaxies of the blazar class with VERITAS located at the Fred Laurence Whipple Observatory in Southern Arizona. The VERITAS (Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System) experiment consisting of four Imaging Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescopes (12m diameter each) is the most sensitive instruments in the northern hemisphere for the measurement of VHE gamma-rays in the energy range between 100 GeV to greater than 10 TeV. VERITAS has discovered VHE emission from several blazars and measured their spectral and temporal behavior. Of particular interest are the “intermediate” BL Lac objects, a sub-class of blazars not previously detected in VHE gamma rays by ground-based experiments. One of the main scientific goals of VERITAS is understanding VHE phenomena in the vicinity of accreting black holes, and studying particle acceleration in extragalactic astrophysical sources such as blazars. Here we present results on the time variability and spectral properties of the blazars, and discuss implications of the data.

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