

## SUMMER RESEARCH EXPERIENCES FOR UNDERGRADUATES

*What are they good for? How does it all work?*

*Finding and Applying to Programs*

### WHAT IS “SUMMER RESEARCH”?

Research experiences for undergraduates give students a chance to work in meaningful ways with faculty and researchers conducting ongoing research programs or projects. These programs offer a *hands-on experience* in the lab or in the field with *professional development* support. It's meant to build your skills, to be *fun* and inspiring, and it's often *paid* – most programs offer a stipend and many cover travel and housing as well. It's often in the summer – but not always! Some programs occur during the academic year as well.

### WHY SHOULD I APPLY?

- ⇒ *Build your academic foundation.*
- ⇒ *Get hands-on experience in the field.*
- ⇒ *Explore fields of interest.*
- ⇒ *Make valuable connections with faculty.*
- ⇒ *Enjoy travel, new friends, and fun!*
- ⇒ *A stepping stone to graduate school.*



RESESS intern Cristina Lugo-Centeno at the Snowmass, CO mastadon site

**FUN!**



REU site in Chemistry

RESESS intern Breanna Skeets working in

**Lab work!**  
**Professional Development**



REU students at the Schoon-Maine

Dr. Rick Wahle with Gulf of Maine and World Ocean REU students on the annual

**Field work!**



REU site in Chemistry

## GREAT! SO HOW DO I APPLY?

It takes time and effort to search for, select and apply to programs you are interested in – and it's time and effort that has to fit in around all your other schoolwork! Here's a suggested timeline that will help you plan for success.

**CONGRATULATIONS!** Have a great summer, and enjoy your undergraduate research experience!

### I. SUMMER / EARLY FALL

- Get organized
- Begin drafting cover letter & personal statement
- Update and revise your resume
- Use your campus career and writing centers!
- Discuss the potential of summer research experience with family

For more details, visit **The Resource Toolbox** at [www.pathwaystoscience.org](http://www.pathwaystoscience.org) and print PDF handouts on:

*The Benefits of an Undergraduate Summer Research Experience*  
*Discussing Summer Research with Your Family*  
*Searching for a Program: Great Online Search Tools*  
*Creating a Winning Application*  
*Writing Strong Essays and Personal Statements*  
*Getting Strong Letters of Recommendation*

### III. EARLY TO MID WINTER

- Make your final selection of programs to apply to
- Request letters of recommendation 2 months in advance
- Polish - and re-polish - your essays & cover letter
- Request transcripts

### IV. MID TO LATE WINTER

- Make use of your winter break to work on your apps.
- Follow up with your recommenders
- Make sure your contact info will be active in spring
- APPLY! Complete and submit applications.
- Call to confirm your application was received in full.

### II. FALL

- Search for programs. Use [www.pathwaystoscience.org](http://www.pathwaystoscience.org)!
- Note application deadlines, requirements and contacts
- Seek input from peers and mentors
- Make use of extra time during Thanksgiving break!
- Identify & talk with potential recommenders
- Research process for requesting transcripts
- Stay organized!

### V. SPRING

- Keep a look out . . . **check your email!**
- Consider offers: stipend? housing? travel?
- Select and respond

### VI. EARLY SUMMER

- Receive and read materials for your program
- Sign and return forms as appropriate
- Join the program's listserv or social media tools
- Touch base with your recommenders - let them know your successful outcome, and say thank you!