Doing a research internship abroad offers not only the possibility of spending the summer in a beautiful location and learning a foreign language, but also provides exposure to forensic science in an international setting. For me, the location was Lausanne, Switzerland, which offered lake and mountain views from my office and a dictionary’s worth of new French vocabulary.

I spent the summer working with a professor and trace evidence examiner who has been investigating Raman spectroscopy as a new technique for forensic analysis of fiber colorants and who had already conducted several collaborative studies on the subject with members of the European Fibres Group. While previous Raman research has focused on more intensely colored fibers, the core of my research was using Raman spectroscopy to analyze light colored fibers, specifically light blue cotton fibers, which are commonly encountered in forensic casework but have little probative value.

I also compared the results of Raman analysis to microspectrophotometry (MSP), which is currently the most common method for fiber color analysis but remains limited in its analysis of light colored fibers. My initial results indicate that Raman spectroscopy is the more discriminative technique and therefore may be a suitable alternative to current methods. This project exposed me to Raman spectroscopy, a technique I knew nothing about before starting the project, and also provided me with more experience using MSP, which I had previously learned theoretically, but had only used in my courses.

Doing my internship in Lausanne was extremely rewarding because it provided me with the perfect opportunity to gain valuable hands on experience related to my specialization. I was in the Forensic Science Institute, which is housed in the School of Criminal Science at the University of Lausanne. There forensic examiners are also professors and PhD candidates, which resulted in an atmosphere geared towards teaching and research. This focus proved essential for my project, but at the same time there were real cases being worked, and I was able to shadow an examiner on a trace evidence case and attend lectures on several other cases worked by examiners at the Institute.

There’s no question that an internship in any location takes a lot of hard work and time, but after a tough week of work, what could be better than a tour through picturesque vineyards passing through villages so small two cars can’t pass each other?

While the idea of organizing an internship abroad can seem daunting at first, it’s worth the effort. Starting your search early and asking anyone and everyone, especially professors, can get you very far. All it takes is one contact and you could be off to all sorts of exotic locales. Don’t hesitate to be persistent; it will pay off in the end. Bonne chance! -Gabrielle Jones
Hey Everyone,

Welcome back for another year with the Forensic Science Student Club. We are excited about the upcoming year and eager to start. First of all, I want to announce the new executive board members for 2008-2009. Our secretary is Beth Sandford, treasurer is Lynndsey Simon, graduate board member is Carey Davis and undergraduate board members are Katherine Moore and Candy Thompson. Returning to the board is Sam Hendel as vice president and myself as president. We hope you will feel free to ask any of the board members any questions you may have or come to us with any concerns with the club.

This year we are going to have more general meetings and more group activities where we can just hang out and have fun. We will of course continue the highly anticipated Murder Mystery Dinner Theater in the spring and the occasional guest speakers.

Our first two events of the semester were Science Day and the SOVO fair where we will promoted the club and reached out to get even more members and volunteers.

Also on the schedule for the semester were our first two general meetings, which both had great attendance. We even won the CAA Blood Drive for the most participants.

We are also in need of a new webmaster to keep our website up-to-date. If you are good with web pages and willing to help us out please let me know. Also, early next semester (February) we will be looking for a new club president and vice president. Please keep this is mind and let us know if you are interested. It is a very exciting and rewarding job to hold here at VCU.

We highly encourage any comments and suggestions for the club, so feel free to email me (woosleyac@vcu.edu) at any time to help the board know what events you would like to see us do this year. Also if you are not an active member and would like to be, please send me an email and I will add you to our email list and blackboard account.

I look forward to seeing/meeting all of you this year.

Ally Woosley
2008-2009 FSSC President
Welcome to or back to VCU. I am looking forward to another outstanding year for VCU’s Department of Forensic Science.

As you may have been hearing, seeing and reading in the news over the summer, many changes have occurred at the University since the spring semester, including the recent announcement that Dr. Trani will be stepping down at the end of this year, Dr. Holsworth, our Dean, stepping down to be replaced by Dr. Hawkridge on an interim basis, and Dr. Steingass, Dean of University College, leaving the University to pursue other opportunities.

We have had many changes within the department as well. Dr. Williams has decided not to return to the due to ongoing health challenges in her family, Ms. Seashols has agreed to serve as the Department’s Undergraduate Director, and all faculty and staff except Dr. Dawson Cruz have moved to Oliver Hall North/Oliver Annex/Harris Annex at 1020 West Main. Quite a list, presenting both challenges and opportunities.

Please be sure to come to see our new offices, a big change from Life Sciences and 1000 West Franklin. We expect that most and hopefully all Forensic Science teaching labs will move to Oliver North in the Fall 2009 semester and that our research labs will follow next year or the following year.

It is going to be an action-packed year, off to an excellent start with Science Day on August 20th, which was attended by over 125 current faculty, staff and students, and 175 freshman and transfer students. The faculty and student club have a wide variety of great activities scheduled and I encourage you to participate in as many as possible, without infringing on family, work, or study time.

The Department and University have an amazing array of activities to participate in (see the calendar on the back of this newsletter for a glimpse at those activities). Getting and staying involved will help make your time at VCU among the most memorable experiences of your life and help prepare you for reaching your career and personal goals.

I look forward to seeing and meeting you this and future years. If you see me at an event or in the hall, please say “Hello.” If my office door is open, please drop in to say “Hi.”

As I encourage my own son, now a sophomore in Biomedical Engineering and the Honors College, do your best in your classes, it is your current “job,” but be sure to make time for making friends and having fun. Have a great semester and year.

- Dr. Eggleston

“... staying involved will help make your time at VCU among the most memorable experiences of your life…”
I am the 2008-09 recipient of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD) Scholarship. ASCLD is a non-profit organization consisting of crime laboratory and forensic science directors. ASCLD is committed to providing management skills to laboratories, attaining and distributing forensic information, and maintaining integrity in the forensic science field. I found this scholarship through the ASCLD website. The application process entailed sending a copy of undergraduate transcripts, obtaining a letter from my advisor, and writing an essay describing various motivations for applying for the award. The application material was due in the spring. I am honored to receive the ASCLD scholarship and represent the Forensic Science department at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Katherine Moore

The AAFS 61st Annual Scientific Meeting will be held February 16-21, 2009 at the Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th Street, Denver Colorado 80202.

The Academy’s annual scientific meeting sees over 500 scientific papers, breakfast seminars, workshops, and other special events presented. The AAFS consists of ten sections representing a wide range of forensic specialties, and the annual scientific meeting gathers these professionals who present the most current information, research, and updates in this expanding field.

For more information, visit the Academy’s website, http://www.aafs.org/
New Year, New Role

Welcome to a new semester! I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce myself – I’m Sarah Seashols, and I’m the new Undergraduate Director.

I greatly enjoyed teaching many of you in the Forensic Biology track courses during my first year full-time last year, and am so far enjoying my new duties as Undergraduate Director. If you have any questions regarding transfer credit evaluation, Study Abroad, graduation, or Internships & Independent Studies, please feel free to stop by my office in Oliver North, Room 2007, during my office hours, or email me at sseashols@vcu.edu for an appointment.

For Freshman and Transfer students, please keep an eye on your email accounts for news regarding an Information Session about the Forensic Science major, to be held sometime in October. During this session, we plan on covering the curriculum, FAQs, and even have breakout sessions specifically designed for the Forensic Chemistry and Forensic Biology tracks, with advisors for each of the tracks on-hand to answer your questions.

For the Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors, mark your calendars for the Forensic Science Career Seminar, on November 19, from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. During this session, we’ll talk about Study Abroad opportunities, Internships & Independent Studies, Graduation, finding and getting a Forensic Science job, attending Graduate School, and more! Feel free to drop in for specific talks, or stay for the entire seminar.

Have a fantastic semester!

Sincerely,
Sarah Seashols
Undergraduate Director
Oliver North, Room 2007
sseashols@vcu.edu
804.827.8597
Con “grad” ulations!

Please join us in congratulating our December graduates! The Departmental Diploma Ceremony will honor our graduates on December 13, 2008.

Megan Atkins
Andrea Bauer
Tiffany Baxter
Lisa Beckhusen
Kristen Browder
Lynzee Chelland
Janel Conti
Adekami Fakulujo
Michael Gasser
Jennifer Gorsuch
Erica Gresham
Jennifer Hunt
Ashley Kilhefner
Emily Klinedinst
Krystal McKenna
Crystal Meadows
Corenthia Mills Japzon
Sarah Mullins
Katherine O’Hanlon
Cierra Pairett
Amanda Paitsel
Sherri Smith
Nicole Unger
Erika Waller
Cristina Young
## Fall 2008 Departmental Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Labor Day - University Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Deadline for Graduating Students to Submit Graduation Applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Deadline for Notice of Intent to Observe Religious Holidays</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Last Day to submit work for Removal of a &quot;I&quot; for Spring 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>CAA Blood Drive</td>
<td>Commons</td>
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<td><strong>October</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AAFS Membership Application Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Freshman, Sophomore, and Transfer Student Information Session</td>
<td>Life Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Graduate &amp; Professional School Fair</td>
<td>Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fall Career Fair</td>
<td>Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>University Undergraduate Open House</td>
<td>Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>Reading Days</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>Advising Week</td>
<td>Forensic Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>American Heart Association Heart Walk</td>
<td>Innsbrook</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>40 Year Celebration (Theme: Everyday a New Discovery)</td>
<td>Monroe Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Last Day to Withdraw with a Grade of &quot;W&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>November</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>University Undergraduate Open House</td>
<td>Life Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spring Semester Advance Registration begins</td>
<td>Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Departmental Open House (Graduate)</td>
<td>Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Career Information Session</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>27-30</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday - University Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>December</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Last Day of Fall Classes</td>
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<td>8-16</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Diploma Ceremony</td>
<td>Commons Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>22-31</td>
<td>Winter Break - University Closed</td>
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