What do you do as an intern at this organization?
In the REU biology program, each student is placed in the lab of an experienced researcher, and the student takes on an aspect of the lab’s current research. Each day is spent working on the student’s individual project, and since the labs differ in their research, the daily activities vary widely.

How did you find your internship?
The NSF website has a list of all locations with REU (research experience for undergraduates) programs, and I found the program there.

What do you enjoy most about your internship?
I have learned a lot about the way research works, and the people who I work alongside are extremely helpful and motivating. I love understanding the work that goes into creating the scientific papers we read in class, and I love being challenged daily by what I do.

What do you find challenging?
I found that it was difficult to match my ideas about what research was supposed to be like with the reality of the field. Research is tricky and competitive, but it can be incredibly rewarding, both in the skills you gain and the people you meet.

What advice would you offer to someone who wants to make the most of an internship like yours?
Be open with your PI (primary investigator) and use their knowledge and experience to help you figure out the field. When I discovered what I was researching was not the path I wanted to take, I worked with my PI to make the best of it and loved the experience nonetheless.

About the Organization
Research Experience for Undergraduates - UMass Boston Biology Department
Boston, MA

The University of Massachusetts Boston, located on Boston Harbor, offers a 10-week REU program in Integrative and Evolutionary Biology, sponsored by the National Science Foundation. The program provides opportunities to 10 undergraduate participants each summer to become immersed in a positive research experience and other enrichment activities. Each student carries out an independent research project under the close guidance of a faculty advisor. Close mentoring relationships and participation in a community of students engaged in research are key components of the experience.