

# Gough Lab Paid Field Positions, 2026

For questions, please contact Chris Gough, Professor and Executive Director of the VCU Rice Rivers Center: [cmgough@vcu.edu](mailto:cmgough@vcu.edu)

## Wetland Ecology Field Technician

The Gough Forest Ecology Lab ([goughlab.com](http://goughlab.com)) at Virginia Commonwealth University seeks paid research technicians for the summer 2026 field season. Technicians will contribute to NASA and Department of Energy supported research at the VCU Rice Rivers Center in the Harris Creek and Kimages Creek tidal wetlands. Research support roles include collecting daily soil respiration measurements from sites within the wetlands; assisting with regular maintenance of an eddy covariance flux tower, hyperspectral and thermal remote sensing equipment; installing a lateral flux measurement system in Kimages Creek; and lab-based water analysis. Our lab team is highly collaborative, with all members expected to enthusiastically participate in group field research activities and lab gatherings. Applicants should submit a cover letter describing how this position is aligned with their interests, a curriculum vita with GPA, and list of 3 references **by March 1** to Douglas Giles, [gilesd3@vcu.edu](mailto:gilesd3@vcu.edu). Required qualifications: Successful completion of coursework in ecology, wetlands ecology, environmental studies or related field. Team-oriented field research experience. The capacity to do physically strenuous work in a hot, humid, muddy setting. Preferred qualifications: Familiarity with Virginia wetland plants. Quantitative and science communication skills. Prior field research experience.

## Research Experience for Undergraduates: Climate change and forest disturbance

The Gough Lab ([goughlab.com](http://goughlab.com)) invites VCU students of sophomore or junior status to apply for a National Science Foundation-supported Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) position. During the 8-week field season, an REU collaborator will join a team of VCU researchers studying how climate change and disturbance affect forest ecosystems, while residing at the University of Michigan Biological Station (<https://lsa.umich.edu/umbs>). REUs will engage in the all aspects of the research process, from data collection to publication, learning from a community of students, postdocs, and faculty in a field station environment. Applicants should have the capacity to work independently and on a collaborative team, and be comfortable working full days outdoors and living in rustic housing. Field research experience is a plus but not required. In addition to a stipend, onsite lodging and meals will be provided. Applications should be sent to Ariel Johnson, [johnsonan10@vcu.edu](mailto:johnsonan10@vcu.edu), **by March 1** and include: 1) a cover letter explaining your interest in the position; 2) resume or curriculum vitae; 3) unofficial transcripts; and 4) one letter of recommendation from a VCU faculty member (sent separately to [cmgough@vcu.edu](mailto:cmgough@vcu.edu)).

## Forest Ecology Field Technician

The Gough Forest Ecology Lab ([goughlab.com](http://goughlab.com)) at Virginia Commonwealth University seeks paid research technicians for the summer 2026 field season. Technicians will contribute to National Science Foundation and Department of Energy supported research at the University of Michigan Biological Station (UMBS) aimed at advancing understanding of disturbance effects on forest growth and carbon cycling. Summer residence at the Field Station in Pellston, Michigan is

required (<https://lsa.umich.edu/umbs>). Onsite housing and meals will be provided. Our lab team and the UMBS community are highly collaborative, with all members expected to enthusiastically participate in group field research activities and lab gatherings. Applicants should submit a cover letter describing how this position is aligned with their interests, a curriculum vita with GPA, and list of 3 references **by March 1** to Ariel Johnson, [johnsonan10@vcu.edu](mailto:johnsonan10@vcu.edu). Required qualifications: Successful completion of coursework in ecology, forestry, environmental studies or related field. Team-oriented field research experience. The capacity to live on site in Michigan. Preferred qualifications: Familiarity with basic forest mensuration. Quantitative and science communication skills. Prior field research experience.

### **NASA Student Airborne Research Program Undergraduate Interns**

VCU's College of Humanities and Sciences will host the NASA Student Airborne Research Program (SARP) during summer 2026. The program is exclusively open to rising seniors. All participants will receive a stipend, travel costs, as well as housing and transportation during the program. [The Student Airborne Research Program \(SARP\)](#) is an eight-week summer internship program for rising-senior undergraduates. With access to one or more NASA Airborne Science Program flying science laboratories, students acquire hands-on research experience in all aspects of a scientific campaign. The NASA Airborne Science Program maintains a fleet of aircraft used for studying Earth system processes, calibration/validation of space-borne observations, and prototyping instruments for possible satellite missions. SARP participants assist in the operation of instruments onboard one of these aircraft to sample atmospheric gases and/or to image land and water surfaces in multiple spectral bands. Research areas include atmospheric chemistry, air quality, forest ecology, and ocean biology. Along with airborne data collection, students will participate in taking measurements at field sites. The program culminates with students presenting results of their research conclusions. For an overview of last year's SARP, see: <https://vcu.exposure.co/from-surf-turf-and-sky-nasa-and-vcus-rice-rivers-center-deliver-an-immersive-summer-experience-for-undergraduates>. For more information and to apply: <https://stemgateway.nasa.gov/s/course-offering/a0BSJ000001CQvp/student-airborne-research-program-sarp>. Please note that the application **deadline is January 31**. If you have any questions please reach out to one of the two faculty coordinators, listed below.