SaBRe research and industry opportunities 2026:

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1. Carbonwave Industrial Bioprocess Internship

Institution: Carbonwave
Location: Carolina, Puerto Rico
Project Title: Industrial Bioprocess Operations with Sargassum

Description:
Students will work in an industrial bioprocessing environment on mass balance calculations and performance testing of *Sargassum*-derived products. The internship emphasizes process efficiency evaluation, data analysis, and application of academic concepts in an industrial setting.

Research Environment:
Students will work alongside Carbonwave's R&D, QC, and operations teams. Due to proprietary work, students must sign an NDA.

Program Dates: Winter or Summer 2026 (minimum 9 weeks)
Schedule: Minimum 15 hours/week (flexible)
Compensation: A stipend will be provided
Application Deadline: Rolling
Eligibility: Enrolled undergraduate students only.

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2. Kite-Powell Lab / WHOI Marine Policy Center Internship

Institution: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Location: Woods Hole, MA
Project Title: Economic Tradeoffs in Sargassum Processing

Description:
Students will develop techno-economic models comparing land-based and at-sea Sargassum processing facilities in the Caribbean. The project focuses on economic feasibility, cost structures, and operational tradeoffs, while providing training in spreadsheet-based modeling and marine policy analysis.

Program Dates: June 1 – August 15, 2026
Application Deadline: March 2, 2026
Stipend & Housing: Stipend, housing and travel provided.
Eligibility: U.S. citizen or permanent resident undergraduates.

Apply: https://www.whoi.edu/what-we-do/educate/undergraduate-programs/summer-student-fellowship/ssf-program-overview/

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3. Princeton University Bioengineering Summer Undergraduate Research Experience

Institution: Princeton University Omenn-Darling Bioengineering Institute
Sponsor PI: José L. Avalos
Program: Bioengineering Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (BE-SURE)
Program Location: Princeton, NJ
Project Title: Isolation and characterization of *Sargassum*-degrading microorganisms

Description:
An undergraduate student from Puerto Rico will join efforts to isolate, identify, and characterize Sargassum-degrading microorganisms in the Avalos lab. Microorganisms will be isolated from *Sargassum* biomass or obtained from public strain repositories. They will identify isolate species and characterize strains for their ability to grow in high salinity, assimilate different carbon sources (including sugars derived from Sargassum), and produce fuels and chemicals, such as ethanol, lipids, and organic acids.

Program Dates: June 22 – August 28, 2026 (9 weeks)
Stipend & Housing: Stipend, housing, and travel provided.
Application Timeline: February 15, 2026 (priority) / March 10, 2026 (final).
Eligibility: Undergraduates currently enrolled in a university or college in Puerto Rico.

Apply: Two steps:

1) Apply to BE-SURE https://undergraduateresearch.princeton.edu/programs/summer-programs/bioengineering-summer-undergraduate-research-experience-be-sure
2) Email a brief letter of intent to zc6846@princeton.edu

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4. Roberson Lab Undergraduate Research Internship

Institution: Marine Biological Laboratory
Sponsor PI: Loretta Roberson
Location: Woods Hole, MA and/or La Parguera, PR
Project Title: Sustainable Applications of Sargassum

Description:
Students will conduct research on Sargassum cultivation optimization, bioremediation of metals and rare earth elements, and development of Sargassum-based plant biostimulants. The program integrates fieldwork, laboratory experiments, and applied environmental chemistry.

Program Dates: June 14 – August 14, 2026
Application Deadline: February 15, 2026 (priority) / March 10, 2026 (final)
Stipend & Housing: Stipend, housing and travel provided.
Eligibility: U.S. citizen or permanent resident undergraduates.
Apply: https://etap.nsf.gov/award/7571/opportunity/11729

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5. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Institution: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Sponsor PI: Shishir Chundawat
Program: The Research-Intensive Summer Experience (RISE)
Program Location: New Brunswick, New Jersey

Project Title: Biological Conversion of Sargassum Biomass

Description: Are you an undergraduate student looking to tackle real-world environmental challenges through cutting-edge research at Rutgers University? The SaBRe (Sargassum BioRefinery) project at Rutgers University is looking for motivated students to join our interdisciplinary team, supported by the RiSE program and SaBRe/VIFF. We are seeking undergraduate research assistants to work across four Rutgers labs (see links below for details), focusing on converting invasive seaweed (Sargassum) into high-value chemicals/fuels:

- **Chundawat Lab (Chemical & Biochemical Engineering):** Dive into biomass deconstruction and enzyme engineering to break down complex seaweed polysaccharides.
- **Bhattacharya Lab (Ecology, Evolution, & Natural Resources):** Explore the genomics and metabolic potential of Sargassum and its associated microbiome.
- **Khare Lab (Chemistry & Chemical Biology):** Use computational design and protein engineering to develop novel biocatalysts for sustainable chemistry.
- **Li Lab (Civil & Environmental Engineering):** Focus on anaerobic digestion and/or techno-economic analysis (TEA) to ensure our biorefinery is environmentally and economically viable.

Application Deadline: Students need to apply by Feb 15 2026 directly using this link to join Rutgers SaBRe labs for summer 2026.

Eligibility: Undergraduate students eligible to participate in Rutgers RiSE program.

Apply: Please apply to the Rutgers RiSE program (https://aresty.rutgers.edu/programs-funding/the-research-intensive-summer-experience) and clearly specify which faculty/lab you would like to work in as part of this internship.

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6. UCLA Samueli Engineering SURP Internship

Institution: UCLA Samueli School of Engineering
Sponsor PI: Alissa Park
Program: Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP)
Program Location: Los Angeles, California

Project Title: Thermochemical Conversion of Sargassum Biomass (HTL and ATT Collaboration)

Description:
A Puerto Rico undergraduate student will participate in UCLA's Samueli Engineering Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), working within the thermochemical conversion research program focused on hydrothermal liquefaction (HTL) and autothermal treatment (ATT). The internship will strengthen collaboration between UCLA and PR-based research teams and support rapid integration into ongoing laboratory research.

The program also encourages joint mentoring and potential cost-sharing if a graduate student participates alongside the undergraduate intern.

Program Dates: June 22 – August 28, 2026 (10 weeks)

Stipend & Housing: Stipend and travel provided. Housing must be arranged separately.

Application Timeline: Students apply in late March or early April 2026.

Eligibility: Undergraduate students are eligible to participate in UCLA SURP. One Puerto Rico undergraduate student is supported through this arrangement.

Apply: https://www.seasoasa.ucla.edu/surp/

Please direct questions to Prof. Liz Diaz (liz.diaz2@upr.edu) or Dr. Zeynep Cvetkovic (zc6846@princeton.edu)