

## By Khalilah Catchings-El

Year: **Senior**

Major: **Industrial and Systems Engineering**

Greece is absolutely amazing! For my internship, I had the awesome experience of traveling to Greece to do a research project with Dr. Costas Vassiliadis in electrical engineering.

My project was with a company in Greece that was having trouble managing inventory. I suggested that the company implement a bar-coding system to monitor inventory on a continuous basis and set up reordering schedules. I also suggested they implement a system for one person to do all of the ordering for the company through different department heads who would report needs for that particular department.

The company representatives were very hospitable—they always made sure we were comfortable, and they usually didn't begin a meeting without offering coffee and something to eat. I observed that the Greeks don't get stressed about work like Americans do. Their more laidback attitude taught me not to worry as much about the work of each and every day but rather to try to enjoy each day for what it is.

Once we completed the project, I traveled to Santorini Island, Ios Island, and Athens, Greece. I rode a motor scooter for the first time and saw some of the most beautiful architecture in the world, including the Parthenon and the Acropolis.

But my favorite activity was going wind surfing for the first time. Even though I fell almost every time, I learned a valuable life lesson: Out of all of the times that I fell, the one thing that I mastered was getting back up. With salt water in my eyes and scrapes on my legs, I was determined to sail.

The entire experience was great. I feel privileged to have represented the Russ College. I was not only the first student to represent the department of Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering, but also the first African American to participate in the program.

Khalilah participated in the Ohio University Global Competitiveness Program (GCP), which links Ohio University business and engineering students with students overseas on business consulting projects. Each summer, Vassiliadis takes a group of students to Thessaloniki, Greece, to work in teams with business students from the American College of Thessaloniki. The program is administered by the College of Business' Center for International Business Education and Development. Currently, students in the program are offered experiences in Hungary, Germany, France, China, Italy, Denmark, and Greece.



It's summer vacation, with a twist. During summer 2005, two Russ College students participated in the Glenn-Stokes Summer Research Internship program.

"The program gives minority undergraduates in science, technology, engineering, and math a chance to get research experience," said Laquetta Cortner, coordinator for minority, women, and outreach programs. The students worked one-on-one with faculty mentors, then wrote an abstract and research paper to present at the Ohio Student Research Forum at the University of Akron in August 2005. The internship program is sponsored by the Ohio Science Engineering Alliance, funded by the National Science Foundation.

In a Russ College take on the "What I Did Last Summer" essay, here are their experiences, in their words.

## By Charlotta Fields

Year: **Junior**

Major: **Chemical Engineering**

During my research internship this summer, I worked with Dr. Valerie Young of chemical engineering in her atmospheric chemistry laboratory. My project centered on analyzing different organic molecules to see which ones were responsible for the most smog production.

In order to determine this, I collected air at two different sites in Athens—along the bike path, and at an atmospheric chemistry monitoring site near the Ridges. We then analyzed these air samples in a gas chromatograph to identify the type and amount of molecules present. This data enabled us to calculate the smog-producing potential of each molecule. Through this procedure, I determined that a naturally produced chemical called isoprene was the primary source of smog during the summer months.

The research experience was really amazing. For one thing, it was interesting to learn how to use real scientific instruments like a gas chromatograph after two years of chemistry labs where the most complicated tool I used was a volumetric pipette. (A volumetric pipette is a basic chemistry tool used to deliver a specific amount of liquid to a container.) I also appreciated learning that some of the things I have struggled so hard to learn in class are actually useful in real situations!

However, the most important thing the internship helped me with was the decision to pursue a graduate degree. Before the summer, I wasn't sure I wanted to spend two-to-five more years in school to obtain a higher degree. Now that I've actually tried my hand at a research project, I know that graduate school is the place for me. ☺

Senior Khalilah Catchings-El (L) and junior Charlotta Fields (R) share a laugh in front of Stocker Center at the start of fall quarter.

