

Senior Profile

Senior chemistry student takes research to next level

By Allie Haake
STAFF WRITER

Senior chemistry and environmental science student Laura Friederich said while she looks forward to having time to relax after graduation, she truly enjoys spending time working on her research project in the laboratory.

"I've had so many bad jobs where I scooped ice cream, served people, baby-sat kids, or wiped sweat off benches at the gym," Friederich said. "My summer job was doing chemistry research. I feel like I was ripping someone off because I was getting paid for doing research."

Friederich, who came to UNCA as a freshman from Atlanta, started a research project with chemistry professor Bert Holmes. She conducts experiments with a bromine substance similar to CFC's, chemicals that destroy the ozone layer.

"The time just flies by," said Friederich. "As opposed to other jobs, where I count every 15 minutes that pass, in the lab I'll look up at the clock and realize I only have an hour left."

Friederich said she surrounded herself with science all her life.

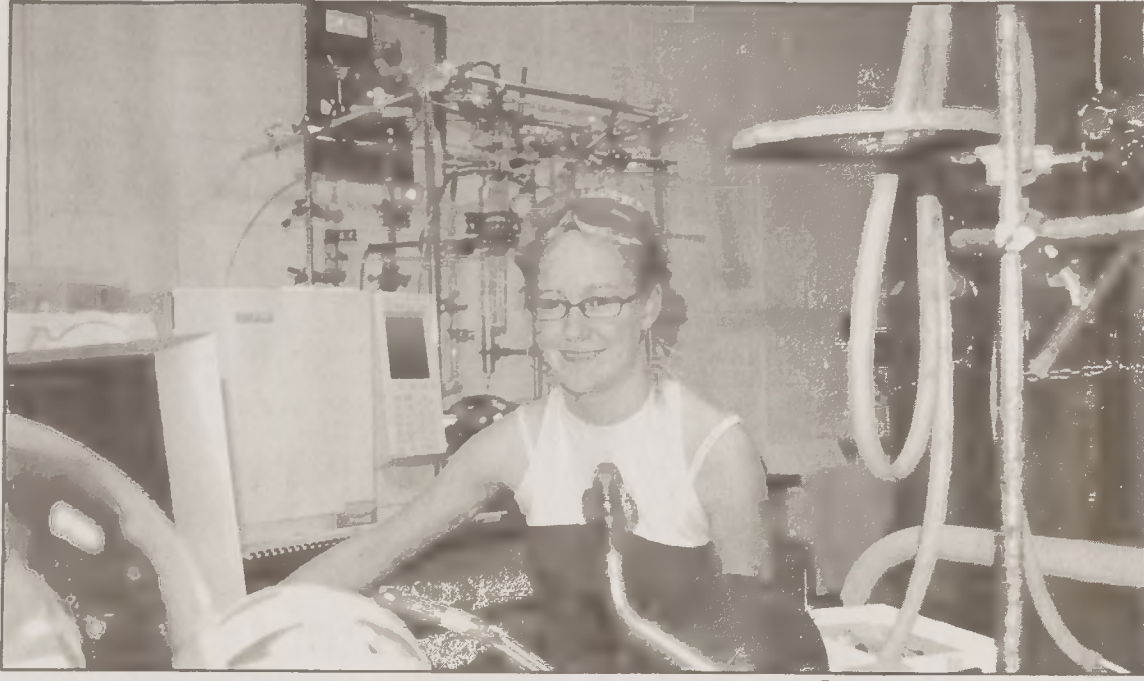
"My dad was an engineer, so I was kind of brought up around it," Friederich said. "I did a bunch of science programs in Atlanta when I was younger."

Friederich said she did not think she wanted to be a chemist when she first came to college.

"I always assumed I was going to be an engineer or a scientist when I grew up, and one day I realized I never actually sat down and thought about what I wanted."

With an original major of music engineering, Friederich said she was glad she tried something different before deciding to become a chemist.

"Now that I've gone everywhere



BLAKE BECKER - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Laura Friederich, senior chemistry and environmental science student spends numerous hours in the lab of Rhodes-Robinson for research in chemistry she hopes to someday publish in a journal.

else and come back to (chemistry), I'm really happy," Friederich said. "I'm here because I want to be, not because it was how I was raised when I was a kid."

Friederich, who also involves herself in Alliance and Habitat for Humanity, said environmental science is a very relevant issue in our world today.

"I think it's one of the biggest problems facing us, because we are so unenvironmental in a lot of the things we do," Friederich said.

With one more year left at UNCA, Friederich said she will miss the people and scenery of Asheville.

"I couldn't have asked for a better place to have ended up, in terms of professors, a major and research opportunities," Friederich

said. "It's not like a larger school, where you can't really talk to the professors and there are tons of kids everywhere. People are very approachable."

Before working on her current research project, Friederich completed research involving mercury levels in fish.

"I was trying to relate how much mercury was being deposited out of the air and how much was appearing in fish," Friederich said. "It ended up being pretty inconclusive. There's no simple correlation between the two because there are so many factors that influence the results."

Friederich said her current project will help determine how HCFC's, a new substance replacing CFC's, are reacting in the

atmosphere.

"HCFC's are not causing as much damage to the ozone layer, but there are some issues along with them," Friederich said. "I'm looking at one particular interchange of atoms within this molecule."

Friederich said that although she does not possess the resources to focus on the entire issue concerning ozone depletion, she hopes her conclusions will be useful to other scientists.

"I'm working on a tiny piece of the experiment that Dr. Holmes has been doing aspects of for 10 or 15 years," Friederich said. "I'm trying to figure out if these two atoms are switching places by combining gases and photolyzing them."

Friederich said she hopes to get her work published in a journal.

"I'm going to try to get enough information to present a poster at the American Chemical Society meeting in Atlanta this spring, and will continue the research next summer," Friederich said.

"I will have done two summers of research and hopefully will be able to get it published in a journal during my fifth year here at UNCA."

During the school year, Friederich said she does not spend as much time on her research project.

"I'm doing the project in my free time, so I don't work on it as much as I did this summer," Friederich said. "I was working from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., five days a week. I'll do some more work over Christmas break and next summer."

Friederich said although she likes school and research, she looks forward to taking a break after graduation.

"I went into college right after high school, and I would like to take some time off to travel," Friederich said. "I'm kind of burned out on the constant stress level."

Friederich said she wants to do things she has missed out on before attending graduate school.

"I'm definitely going to grad school, but I need a break," Friederich said. "I'm ready to take the time to go to movies, take road trips, and see music shows."

Friederich said although she is passionate about chemistry, it is not her entire life.

"I want a job that I enjoy and that doesn't take up my life," Friederich said. "I don't have any aspirations to take over the world or anything."

Students can embrace investments

funds may help pay off loans

By Shannon Roberts
STAFF WRITER

For student low-on-cash who college loans to pay off, investment might seem like a waste of time. However, according to magazines like Young Money, investment is full of diversification and might not be as costly as students believe.

"I'm probably not going to have any more money after graduate than I do right now," said Mary McCoy, sophomore. "I won't have a lot to spend on anything other than my essentials."

Students on a budget can still invest. An Internet search will reveal a number of funds with starting investments as low as \$250.

However, the history of a fund should always be thoroughly investigated before potential investment.

Employers sometimes offer investment options, so students should investigate what their place of work has to offer. Starbucks, for example, allows its employees to invest up to five percent of their paycheck into stock options, with the company matching the investment amount.

Students paying off college loans can still net a profit by investing, according to Young Money.

If students select investments that provide higher returns than the interest on their student loans, they net a profit. The profit can be used to help pay off loans, or reinvested for greater returns.

According to Young Money, the type of investment a student makes depends on how much financial risk a student is willing to take. Higher-risk options, such as stocks, generally provide higher returns. Mutual funds are generally less risky but tend towards lower potential returns.

A way of reducing the risk of investment, according to Young Money, is diversification. Students interested in stocks should invest in several different types of stocks. Mutual funds are inherently less risky because the investment is divided between a variety of stocks or bonds.

Stocks can generally be divided up and classified according to size, style and sector. The size of a company is how much investors think the entire company is worth, based on the current share price.

Stock sizes range from micro-cap (less than \$500 million) to mega-cap (greater than \$100 billion).

Bonds are certificates of debt issued by a government or corporation.

The issuer is required to annually pay a fixed sum until maturity, and then a fixed sum to repay the principal. If the price of a bond rises, its interest rate falls, which is good for bond investors.

If the price of a bond falls, however, its interest rate rises, which is generally bad for investors.

Savings accounts and money market accounts can also turn a profit in the long term. Money markets require a higher balance than savings accounts but return a higher interest rate. The minimum balance for a money market can run anywhere between \$1500 and \$5000, according to Young Money.

For some students, investing just doesn't seem worth it. "I don't think it's anything I would consider in the immediate future," said McCoy, sophomore. "Just because number one, I don't really know much about it, and number two, I think that it's a little bit risky."

Out and About: On Campus



ALANA RADE - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Students, faculty, staff and friends of UNCA attended a free lunch on the quad to welcome our new Chancellor Anne Ponder. A buffet was provided, where those attending piled up their plates, above, and congregated on the quad.

Nathan Watkins, junior student, right, enjoyed his free lunch on the quad where he interacted with other friends of the university.



ALANA RADE - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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