

In December we will begin accepting applications for a NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program based at Colby College and in Ethiopia. This REU will provide eight American undergraduate students from diverse academic backgrounds an opportunity to conduct path-breaking interdisciplinary research on the ecological, economic and cultural roles of church forests. Church forests are patches of Afromontane forest surrounding Ethiopian Orthodox churches. Preserved for centuries by church leaders and communities as religious sanctuaries, church forests are, in many parts of Ethiopia, the only indigenous forests left.

Under the eight-week summer REU program students will receive training at Colby College in ecological field methods, spatial analysis using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), social survey research, and written and oral communication. They will then travel to South Gondar, Ethiopia to conduct hands-on fieldwork with mentors from Colby College, the California Academy of Sciences, and local academic and government institutions.

Applications will be accepted beginning in Dec 2014. The application deadline is January 30, 2015.

Details about the project can be found at: <http://www.colby.edu/reu-in-ethiopia/>