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## A Student's Day Inside the R.I. State Crime Lab

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# A Student's Day Inside the R.I. State Crime Lab

Go behind the scenes of working inside the state's crime laboratory with senior Daryn Javer



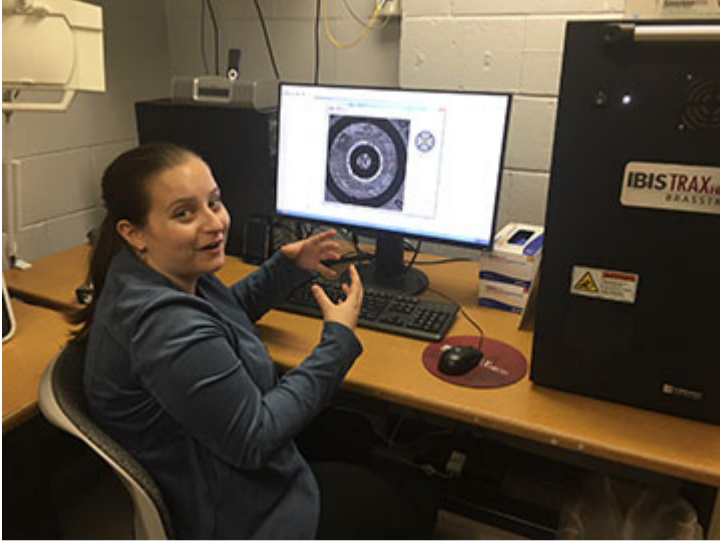
Daryn Javer learns forensic techniques for analyzing discharged cartridge cases at the R.I. State Crime Lab.

August 30, 2018 | By Jill Rodrigues '05 and Justin Wilder

**KINGSTON, R.I.** – Daryn Javer's eyes are glued to the comparison microscope as she focuses closer onto the 9-mm Luger cartridge case. She adds more lighting and turns her attention to the nearby monitor, adjusting a split-screen image of her subjects: a discharged cartridge case and a test-fired cartridge case ejected from a known firearm, until she lines up drag marks and breech face marks. With the markings aligned, she merges the pair of circular cartridge cases until they overlay one another on the screen, and she affirms they were fired from the same gun.

The senior forensic science major, minoring in criminal justice and psychology, was learning firearms-analysis technique on "mock" evidence. But throughout her hands-on internship with the [Rhode Island State Crime Laboratory](#), she's also had the chance to work with expert forensic scientists on examining real evidence and observe skilled technique and analysis. This summer, Javer earned a two-month internship with the state's crime laboratory, where she's applied her classroom knowledge to real-world forensic lab work, from analyzing firearms and fingerprints to navigating sophisticated Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) databases and conducting quality assurance audits of equipment and chemicals.

Heading into her senior year, Javer was ready to dive deeper into exploring career paths and she knew a hands-on internship could help her stand out among graduate school applicants. She worked through the university's [Center for Career & Professional Development](#) to land this highly competitive learning opportunity.



As she shrugs a powder-blue lab coat over her blazer and slacks and pulls on sterile gloves, Javer explained how valuable it was for her to gain this professional exposure in a real crime laboratory. She's learned from top-notch scientists and worked on high-tech equipment like the VisionX comparison microscope she uses in cartridge casing examination; the ATF's [National Integrated Ballistic Information Network](#); and a CrimeScope ultra-violet light source that fluoresces latent fingerprints, making them visible for examination. Through the laboratory, she's also taken workshops on techniques for recording legible fingerprints and palm prints presented by an instructor from the FBI, how to document death investigation scenes presented by the R.I. Medical Examiner's Office, as well as toured the state medical examiner's office, the R.I. Department of Health Forensic Laboratories and the Digital Forensics Center at URI.

"Firearms was something I haven't been exposed to in my courses until I took this internship. One of the reasons I wanted this experience was to start narrowing my focus in forensic science, and I've definitely learned that I want to pursue a forensics career in the firearms field because I find it so interesting," she said. "I've gained the experience I was looking for – it's been very hands-on and very active learning. Forensic science is a niche field and it's growing, and I'm excited to be a part of it."

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