The Wolfe Undergraduate Docent Program at the Harrison Institute / Small Special Collections Library

The Wolfe Undergraduate Docent Program offers University of Virginia undergraduate students the opportunity to learn how to conduct research in the Special Collections Library and develop an outreach project that promotes Special Collections Library materials to the university community and wider public. Examples of projects may include developing a customized tour of a library exhibit, designing resources on Special Collections Library materials for schoolchildren, or creating a multi-media project about Special Collections Library materials to be made available online. Possible project topics include the subjects of current or upcoming library exhibits, such as the Declaration of Independence, Flowerdew Hundred, and Edgar Allan Poe.

The term docent is derived from the Latin verb docere (to teach). In the spirit of the educational mission of the Harrison Institute, the undergraduate docents selected for this program will become teachers for their peers and others in the academic community on topics of their choice relating to the collection of rare and unique materials held in the Special Collections Library. The Harrison Institute invites applications by outstanding University of Virginia undergraduate students who demonstrate a strong commitment to the humanities and/or social sciences, interest in learning about careers in libraries and/or museums, and desire to develop strong research and communication skills. Each student will be assigned a mentor librarian for the period of the award.

Two undergraduate students will be chosen as participants in the program for the spring semester of 2009. The program includes an award of $1,000, which will be disbursed in installments.

The experience of working in the Special Collections Library and Harrison Institute may inspire ideas for a research project that could form the basis of a proposal for a Harrison Undergraduate Research Award administered by the Center for Undergraduate Excellence (http://www.virginia.edu/cue/harrison.html).

To apply, the undergraduate student must have already successfully completed one academic year of study at U.Va. and submit a complete application, which includes a resume, 500-word statement of interest, transcript (official or unofficial), and one letter of recommendation from a U.Va. faculty member. Please make three copies of the application and submit them in person or by postal mail to:

Kelly Miller, Ph.D.
Head of Programs and Public Outreach
Harrison Institute / Rm. 304
P. O. Box 400874
Charlottesville, VA 22904-400874

Applications must be postmarked by Monday, November 3, 2008. Applications delivered by hand are due at 12 p.m. on November 3, 2008.

Questions may be sent to Kelly Miller (kellymiller@virginia.edu).