



## AIPG GEORGIA SECTION

Ron Wallace, President  
Eric Lowe, Vice President  
Susan Kite, Treasurer  
Katie Hanson – West Georgia student chapter  
Morgan Garner – Georgia State student chapter  
Austin Caughey – Columbus State student chapter  
Trez Rice and Sydney Shatz – University of Georgia student chapter  
Connor Batchelor – Georgia Southwestern State student chapter  
Caitline Flake – University of North Georgia student chapter  
Tom Kessler – Berry College student chapter

April 2019

## Direct Push Drilling Demonstration

**When:** Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 9:00 AM

**Where:** University of North Georgia  
3820 Mundy Mill Rd., Oakwood, GA 30566

Non UNG students or members call or email by Friday April 12, 2019, if you plan to attend

[Call or Email Ron Wallace at [rw30075@yahoo.com](mailto:rw30075@yahoo.com) or (770) 630-6020]

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last week I attended GSA Southeastern Conference in Charleston. My wife and I went a few days early to tour Fort Sumter and Patriots Point and went aboard the aircraft carrier Yorktown, destroyer Laffey and submarine Clamagore. There is also a Vietnam exhibit. Charleston is known for their gardens so we visited Middleton Gardens on the northwest side of town. The conference was fun to see students and a few professionals that I knew and to meet and sign up students to join AIPG. I was a luncheon mentor on both days of the conference, where you get to field questions from the students. We gave away in a raffle AIPG water bottles, tee shirts, duffle bags, pen and pencil sets, and signed Roadside Geology of Georgia.

We recently purchased rock and mineral sets from University of West Georgia and we have them in plastic cases. Later this month I'm to attend a meeting with Cobb County elementary science teachers.

I have delivered three of our scholarship membership plaques and \$500.00 scholarship checks. I'm making arrangements to visit the rest in the next few weeks.

### Scholarship winners for 2019

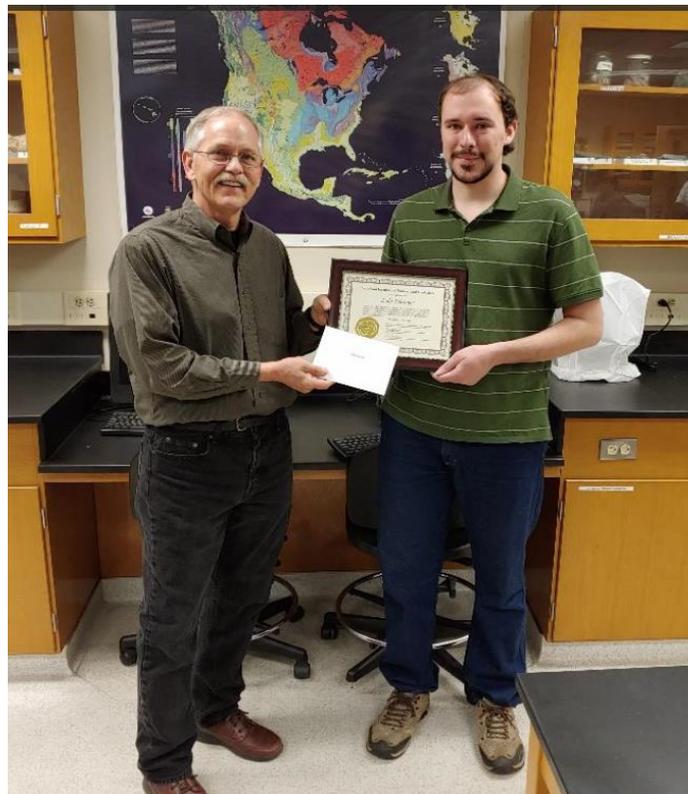
Georgia Southern – Skylar Massey  
Columbus State – Brittany Plyler  
University of Georgia – Sophia Sanders  
Georgia State – Jordan Waltermann  
Georgia Southwestern State – Jacob Sanders  
West Georgia – Kathryn Hanson  
University of North Georgia – Luke Schrader  
Berry College – Emily Summers Silver

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## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Skylar Massey, Georgia Southern



Luke Schrader, University of North Georgia

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## GSA SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

Here are a few pictures from the conference.



Ron Wallace, Morgan Garner president of Georgia State chapter and George Edwards



Berry College students



Here are a few of the winners from our raffle

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### DRILLING LOCATION AT UNG

The map shows the location of the drilling on campus. There is parking across from the nearest building.



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## FEDERAL DOCUMENTS

### House Appropriations Committee holds budget hearings for FY 2020

Beginning on March 26, subcommittees of the House Appropriations Committee held a series of fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget hearings for the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Energy (DOE), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Administrators from each agency gave justifications for their budgets, which are derived from the White House's FY 2020 budget plan, and laid out their agency's priorities to be addressed in FY 2020. The President's budget proposes sweeping budget cuts to many science programs within these agencies.

The week began with NSF's hearing, where Director France Córdova was questioned by Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) Subcommittee Chairman José Serrano (D-NY-15) about how the proposed 12 percent budget decrease from the 2019 enacted level would affect NSF's programs. Chairman Serrano also expressed dismay at the proposed 9.5 percent cut to the Education and Human Resources account at NSF, which he believes would hurt programs that increase STEM participation. Córdova stated that cuts to the overall budget would affect the agency's various programs equally and would lead to the distribution of 1200 to 1400 fewer grants overall and 400 fewer graduate fellowships. Córdova assured the subcommittee, however, that this budget cut would not prevent NSF from focusing heavily on its 10 Big Ideas and advancements in Artificial Intelligence.

Energy and Water Subcommittee Chairwoman Marcy Kaptur (D-OH-9) was similarly concerned about the Administration's budget proposal, which plans to cut DOE's budget by 11 percent, which Kaptur said would "drastically reduce or eliminate programs critical for our nation's energy needs and security." DOE Secretary Rick Perry defended the budget, stating that it supports cutting-edge research at National Laboratories and universities throughout the U.S., which will help strengthen American competitiveness. He said that government success should not be measured by how much we spend on it and that this budget request allows success to be measured by how effectively and efficiently the government is able to use limited resources to fulfil its mission.

NOAA would receive an 18 percent budget cut, which Chairman Serrano indicated would lead to the termination of 547 civilian positions within the agency. Administrator Neil Jacobs assured the subcommittee that, despite the cuts, the budget would allow NOAA to focus on its highest priorities, which include reducing extreme weather impacts, maximizing the economic contributions of ocean and coastal resources, and advancing space innovation.

During the NASA budget hearing, Congressman Matt Cartwright (D-PA-8) stated that this third consecutive year of proposed deep cuts to Earth and climate science programs within NASA's budget contradicts the subcommittee's priorities. The budget proposes a 9 percent cut to NASA's Science Mission Directorate, with the heaviest cuts in the Astrophysics and Earth Science Divisions. Administrator Jim Bridenstine explained that NASA is currently focused on a return to the moon and long-term sustainability in space travel. The budget consequently allows for strong support of NASA's Exploration Campaign, which Bridenstine states will allow the U.S. to lead efforts in the return of humans to the moon.

Moving forward with their efforts in seeking explanations for the extensive proposed budget cuts within science programs, the House Appropriations Committee will continue holding budget hearings throughout the upcoming weeks.

### **House subcommittee holds hearing on offshore energy policies at BOEM and BSEE**

On March 6, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing to discuss the policies and priorities of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Walter Cruickshank, acting director of BOEM, and Doug Morris, chief at the Office of Offshore Regulatory Programs at BSEE, both spoke on the progress that their agencies are making in collaboration with USGS.

Both agencies have been prioritizing the advancement of offshore energy, with BOEM's National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program serving as the focal point of Cruickshank's testimony. Cruickshank said that BOEM's regular collaboration and coordination with BSEE, as well as other federal and state agencies, is crucial in ensuring the effective management of offshore energy activities and the continued assessment of their environmental impacts.

Cruickshank touted the benefits of offshore drilling in contributing to U.S. energy production, noting that in fiscal year 2017, outer continental shelf (OCS) leases provided about 18 percent of domestic oil production and 4 percent of domestic natural gas production. As of February 2019, BOEM manages over 2,600 active oil and gas leases on about 14 million OCS acres. Offshore energy production reached a 10-year high in 2018, and as BOEM looks to the future, Morris emphasized the potential for offshore wind to revolutionize the U.S. energy portfolio as the technology continues to be advanced and deployed in U.S. waters.

Both organizations have worked towards satisfying Executive Order (E.O.) 13795 "Implementing an America-First Offshore Energy Strategy." Issued on April 28, 2017 with the aim of reducing burdens on the offshore drilling industry, the E.O. requires BSEE to review and revise the Well Control rule, and BOEM and BSEE to review the Arctic rule, both of which were published in 2016 to meet the need for more stringent safety requirements in extreme operating conditions. The Well Control rule includes requirements for offshore well design, equipment, and operation, while the Arctic rule sets specific requirements for offshore drilling in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas off the coast of Alaska. Both measures were introduced to update regulations to reflect the continuing advance of offshore drilling into increasingly extreme conditions, thus helping to prevent large-scale incidents like the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* disaster.

Chairman Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ-3) has long opposed attempts to further open up the OCS to offshore drilling, and has recently praised a group of House Democrats for introducing a collection of bills to prevent offshore drilling in different parts of the OCS, such as the Stop Arctic Ocean Drilling Act of 2019 (H.R. 309). The Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources is likely to hold hearings on these bills in the coming months.

## **Senate introduces bipartisan bill to designate PFAS as hazardous substances**

On March 1, the Environment and Public Works Committee introduced the PFAS Action Act of 2019, a bipartisan bill that would require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to classify per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) as hazardous substances within a year after the bill is passed. This declaration would expedite contaminated superfund remediation efforts by providing funds for cleanup efforts and charging polluters for remediation.

The bill, introduced by Senators Tom Carper (D-DE), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Cory Gardner (R-CO), and others, shows the continuing bipartisan commitment of the Senate to address the emerging issue of PFAS contamination across the country. Carper, articulating the thoughts of his colleagues, said that “this is an issue that must be addressed with urgency—and that’s why this bill is so important.” This Senate bill serves as a companion to an identical bill introduced in the House (H.R.535) in January.

PFAS are synthetic chemicals that are largely unregulated at both state and federal levels, and are commonly found in products like firefighting foam, cleaning products, nonstick products, and paints. PFAS have been found to contribute to a series of health issues, including birth defects, cancer, and thyroid disorders. People are most commonly exposed to PFAS through air, soil, and drinking water.

Congressmen Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) and Dan Kildee (D-MI-05) cofounded the Congressional PFAS Task Force in January with the purpose of creating a House action plan for PFAS cleanup. They recently issued a joint statement affirming that “PFAS chemical contamination is a public health crisis and the EPA must act with an urgency that matches the scale of the problem.” EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler has said that EPA is working to deal with the issue, but legislators in both the House and Senate have insisted on a more concrete timeline.

Continuing the bipartisan effort to mitigate PFAS risks, the House Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing to examine PFAS chemicals and their associated threats to public health on March 6. The hearing sought to determine what efforts the Department of Defense is currently implementing to minimize the exposure of military communities to PFAS substances, as well as the plans EPA has for regulating these chemicals.

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