



AIPG GEORGIA SECTION

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Caitline Flake – University of North Georgia student chapter
Justyn Patterson – Berry College student chapter

January 2019

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This will be a short newsletter this month. We had planned to have a USGS speaker at the USGS office this month but because of the government shutdown the talk is on hold. We hope to reschedule it soon. Also Jim Fineis with Atlas Geo-Sampling Company recently sold his drilling company to focus on his other company, Total Vapor Solutions. The drilling assets were sold to Premier Drilling, which now offers direct push sampling, geotechnical drilling, auger drilling, air hammer, and rock coring drilling. We will be contacting Premier to see if they will do geoprobe demonstrations for our student members. I can't thank Jim Fineis enough for all he has done over the years for our Georgia Section and all our student members. He has offered all his drilling demonstrations for free. I went back to look in old newsletters and the first time we did a demonstration was in October 2009 at Georgia Southwestern State, where Jim graduated. Since then his company demonstrated drilling 14 times across the state. Each time we showed how a well was drilled and installed, how to screen soil samples for contamination, proper soil description, and soil and groundwater sampling.

We plan to purchase from University of West Georgia approximately 25 rock and mineral sets that we will give away to different schools. Each set has 24 minerals and 24 rock samples. If any member has a contact at a school that teaches about rocks and minerals, please contact me.

We have the names of five students that will receive our Georgia Section scholarship for 2019. I'm still waiting to hear from three universities. I have written congratulatory letters to each of the five. Once we have all their names we will announce the winners.

Below is the announcement of the National scholarships. The deadline for applications is February 1, 2019. I have contacted each of our chapter presidents to encourage them to apply and to contact their fellow students.

Last we have an announcement for an invitation to celebrate the Life of Dr. Jojok (Yo) Sumartojo. He was a big part of the success of our section and he never wanted any recognition. I hope some of you can attend.

AIPG National Undergraduate Scholarship

Purpose

To assist students with college education costs and to promote student participation in the American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG). Up to ten scholarships will be awarded to declared undergraduate geological sciences majors who are at least sophomores. Details for applying for these scholarships are provided below.

Scholarship Awards

Scholarship awards in the amount of \$1,000.00 - \$3,000 each will be made to eligible students attending a college or university in the U.S. Scholarships are intended to be used to support tuition and/or room and board.

Eligibility Requirements

Any student who is majoring in geology (or earth science), is at least a sophomore, and is attending a two-year or four-year accredited college or university in the U.S. can apply. Also, the student must be either a student member of AIPG or must have applied for student membership at the time the application for the scholarship is submitted.

Each student who is awarded a scholarship agrees, by accepting the scholarship, to prepare a 600 to 800 word article for publication in *The Professional Geologist*. The subject of the article must be related to a timely professional issue.

Application Process

1. Submit a cover letter introducing yourself and tell us what you have done outside of the classroom such as research projects, officer in club, or outside activities within the community. Address your career goals in near term and longer term. Provide your academic objectives: If you are attending a two-year institute do you plan to continue to a four-year institute and complete a degree? If you attend a four-year institute do you plan to attend graduate school?
2. Submit a one page (800 words strictly enforced, 12 pt, times new roman, 1 inch margins, left justify) essay on "Why I Want to be a Geologist."
3. Submit a copy of your transcript (unofficial) and documentation that you are a current student. Requisite standards to apply are a minimum GPA of 2.8 (on a 4 point scale) and a minimum of 12 semester credits of geology/geoscience courses with a 3.0 GPA in these courses completed at time of application.
4. Submit a letter of recommendation from a geology/geoscience professor that provides an emphasis on your performance and activities in the classroom, in the department, and your character in how you work and help other students.

The application packet should be submitted to:

American Institute of Professional Geologists
Attn: Education Committee Chr.
1333 W. 120th Avenue, Suite 211
Westminster, Colorado 80234-2710
(303) 412-6205 or e-mail: aipg@aipg.org.

If you are submitting your application materials by email, please format the subject line as follows: AIPG Scholarship - Type of Scholarship (Undergrad or Grad) - Last Name - Submission. For example, AIPG Scholarship - Undergraduate - Doe - Essay. You may submit all application materials in one email, and, if necessary, one file.

Foundation of AIPG William J. Siok Graduate Scholarship Program

Purpose

To assist graduate students with college education costs and to promote student participation in the American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG). One scholarship will be awarded to a declared graduate student in an accredited geoscience program with an emphasis in environmental geoscience and/or hydrogeology. Details for applying for this scholarship are provided below.

Scholarship Awards

Scholarship award is in the amount of \$1,000.00 to an eligible graduate student attending a college or university in the U.S. Scholarships are intended to be used to support tuition, room and board, and/or research.

Eligibility Requirements

Any graduate student who is majoring in the geosciences in the U.S. can apply. Also, the student must be either a student member of AIPG or must have applied for student membership at the time the application for the scholarship is submitted.

The student who is awarded the scholarship agrees, by accepting the scholarship, to prepare a 600 to 800 word article for publication in *The Professional Geologist*. The subject of the article must be related to a timely professional issue.

Application Process

1. Submit a cover letter introducing yourself and tell us what you have done outside of the classroom such as research projects, officer in club, or outside activities within the community. Address your career goals in near term and longer term.
2. Submit a one page (approximately 750 words) essay on a topic the AIPG Education Committee will decide on annually. The 2019 scholarship essay topic is: **What do you think will be the most important area of employment for geosciences by 2030 and why.**
3. Submit a copy of your transcript (unofficial) and documentation that you are a current student. Requisite standards to apply are a minimum GPA of 2.8 (on a 4 point scale) and a minimum of 12 semester credits of geology/geoscience courses with a 3.0 GPA in these courses completed at time of application. Those credits can come from previous grad or undergrad studies.
4. Submit a letter of recommendation from a geology/geoscience professor that provides an emphasis on your performance and activities in the classroom, in the department, and your character in how you work and help other students.

The application packet should be submitted to:

American Institute of Professional Geologists
Attn: Education Committee Chr.

1333 W. 120th Avenue, Suite 211
Westminster, Colorado 80234
Questions regarding the application process can be directed to
(303) 412-6205 or e-mail: aipg@aipg.org.

If you are submitting your application materials by email, please format the subject line as follows:
Foundation Scholarship - Type of Scholarship (Undergrad or Grad) - Last Name of Applicant -
Submission. For example, Foundation Scholarship - Graduate - Doe - Letter of Recommendation. You
may submit all application materials in one email, and, if necessary, one file.

Dr. Yo Sumartojo



Invitation to a Celebration of the Life of
Dr. Jojok Sumartojo
(July 5, 1937 to June 6, 2018)

Saturday, January 12, 2019
1:00 in the Afternoon

Emerson Unitarian Universalist Congregation
4010 Canton Road
Marietta, Georgia 30066
770-565-7663 (family)

If you wish to contribute, rather than flowers,
please make a donation in Yo's name to
Doctors Without Borders

FEDERAL DOCUMENTS

Senate hearing addresses the EPA proposed transparency rule

A subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works held a hearing on October 3 to gauge expert opinion on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science" proposed rule. The proposed rule, issued by former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt on April 24, directs the EPA to use "peer-reviewed information, standardized test methods, consistent data evaluation procedures, and good laboratory practices to ensure transparent, understandable, and reproducible scientific

assessments.” The proposed rule has faced controversy since its release, with critics arguing that the requirement for reproducibility and for studies to publish their data and models would prohibit the EPA from using peer-reviewed studies that are non-replicable or contain confidential health information in regulatory decisions.

Senators at the Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight hearing considered testimony from three witnesses: Dr. Edward Calabrese from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences, Dr. Robert Hahn from the Oxford University Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, and Dr. Rush Holt, chief executive officer at the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Dr. Calabrese and Dr. Hahn testified in favor of the proposed rule, while Dr. Holt testified against. In his statement, Dr. Calabrese labeled the rule a timely way of ensuring scientific and administrative accountability. “EPA’s transparency proposal is excellent as far as it goes, but it needs to be expanded,” Dr. Calabrese said.

Dr. Hahn echoed Dr. Calabrese’s sentiments, saying the rule is a common-sense next step for the EPA. Dr. Hahn also asserted that Congress should consider a similar policy for other government agencies, which could be accomplished with something like the Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment (HONEST) Act (H.R.1430/S.1794). The language of the EPA’s proposed rule closely parallels the HONEST Act, which was introduced in both chambers of Congress last year by Representative Lamar Smith (R-TX-21) and Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD). The HONEST Act would prohibit the EPA from “proposing, finalizing, or disseminating a covered action unless all scientific and technical information relied on to support such action is the best available science, specifically identified, and publicly available in a manner sufficient for independent analysis and substantial reproduction of research results.” The House passed H.R. 1430 on March 29, but the bill has not yet been considered in the Senate.

Responding to some criticism of the proposed rule at the hearing, Dr. Hahn argued that the rule would not nullify existing environmental regulations, disregard existing research, violate confidentiality protections, jeopardize privacy, or undermine the peer-review process.

Dr. Holt clashed with the other witnesses in his testimony, calling the proposed transparency rule an “insidious dodge” that is about reducing regulations, not about promoting transparent or sound science. “Contrary to the stated purpose of the rule, the rule would result in the exclusion of valid and important scientific findings from the regulatory process,” Dr. Holt said.

Subcommittee members at the hearing appeared split along party lines in their statements and lines of questioning. Senator Rounds, chairman of the subcommittee, said that he has been concerned in the past that the broad discretion and lack of transparency at the EPA has led the agency to seek out science that determines a predetermined policy outcome. He expressed confidence in the proposed rule’s ability to steer the EPA toward its intended mission of protecting human health and thanked the EPA for issuing the proposed rule.

Subcommittee Ranking Member Cory Booker (D-NJ) clashed with Chairman Rounds, saying the EPA’s proposed rule mimics the same rhetoric employed by the tobacco industry to discredit studies that would lead to regulation on secondhand smoke, calling it “*déjà vu*, all over again.”

The EPA earlier this year held a twelve-hour public hearing on the proposed rule on July 17. The public comment period on the proposed rule closed on August 16 and it currently awaits further action by Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. The Trump administration's fall 2018 regulatory agenda, released October 16, listed the proposed rule under "long-term actions" with an expected completion date of January 2020, implying that the rule is not a top agency priority at the EPA.

OPM announces direct-hire for federal government STEM positions

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced a new direct hiring authority in various science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) positions in a memorandum issued by acting director Margaret Weichert to all federal agency heads on October 11. The memorandum is part of the larger President's Management Agenda released in March 2018, which establishes a long-term vision for modernizing the federal government's workforce.

According to the OPM website, federal agencies can use a direct-hire authority to fill vacancies when a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates exists. Direct-hire expedites the hiring process by eliminating traditional protocol specifications for rating and ranking applicants, giving preference for veterans, and following the "rule of three" procedure of providing specific reasons why none of the top three applicants are acceptable prior to considering other candidates. The new authorization will open positions to direct-hire in fields including biological science, fishery biology, and physical science, according to a copy of the memorandum obtained by FedSmith, a digital news service.

According to the memo, agencies will still be required to request an applicable pre-employment background investigation to establish whether candidates are suitable for federal employment. The memo states that the authority expires five years from the date of approval.

Senate committee approves Land and Water Conservation Fund reauthorization

On October 2, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing and reported favorably on legislation (S. 569) that would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Created in 1965, the LWCF directs federal royalties from offshore oil and gas drilling to conservation and public recreation efforts. Although Congress was unable to pass a reauthorization bill before funding for the LCWF expired on September 30, the authority to carry out the program does not expire. Oil and gas revenue from offshore drilling will be diverted into the general Treasury instead of the LCWF until lawmakers reinstate it.

This action came three weeks after the House Committee on Natural Resources passed their version of the bill (H.R. 502) on September 13. Both the House and Senate versions have bipartisan support and aim to permanently reauthorize the LWCF. However, the two bills have some key differences, setting up hurdles to their final passage.

The Senate bill, introduced by Energy and Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA), would ensure full funding for the LWCF at its annual authorized level of \$900 million. The program has been appropriated at about half of this authorized amount in recent years. However, Chairman Rob Bishop (R-UT-1) said that mandatory funding for the

LWCF, as featured in the Senate version of the bill, could destroy its chance of passage in the House because of long-term budgetary concerns. The House version, introduced by Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Raul Grijalva (D-AZ-3), does not dedicate annual funding to the LWCF, meaning Congress would have to continue to appropriate funds for the program each year through their annual budgeting process.

Neither chamber took further action on the bill before entering a month-long recess on October 12. Chairman Bishop has said he expects passage before the end of the year. He also hopes to pass it as part of a “broader legislative lands package” that would include the Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act (H.R. 6510) to address the backlog of infrastructure projects in national parks.

FAA reauthorization bill passes with riders for disaster policy reform, Hurricane Florence funding, and geospatial data

President Donald Trump signed a long-sought reauthorization for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) into law on October 5, which included a major set of reforms to address the rising costs of natural disasters in the U.S. and help communities improve their pre-disaster mitigation and recovery practices.

The president’s signature concludes nearly two years of drawn-out consideration and amendment of the bill in both chambers of Congress. “This is something we’ve been trying to do for many years,” said Senator Jim Inhofe (R-OK), noting that a five-year bill had not been passed since the 1980s. “It’s really a big, major deal.”

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R. 302), introduced by Representative Brett Guthrie (R-KY-2), extends funding for the agency for five years and includes provisions intended to improve aircraft safety and benefit passengers, such as creating minimum legroom requirements on commercial flights. The comprehensive legislation also contained several other provisions related to disaster recovery reform, supplemental appropriations for disaster relief, and geospatial data.

Included as part of the five-year FAA reauthorization, the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) changes the nation’s approach to disaster spending by investing in infrastructure and increasing federal emphasis on proactive pre-disaster planning and mitigation. This legislation was originally introduced as a standalone bill in the House by Representative Lou Barletta (R-PA-11), who is chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s subcommittee overseeing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Language from the DRRA was added to the FAA reauthorization bill by the Senate last month, along with other amendments.

According to a joint op-ed by Representative Barletta and former FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison published in *The Hill* last month, the DRRA will help accomplish the goal of building a more resilient America and increase the amount of money available to arm communities “with the necessary resources to strengthen their infrastructure against hurricanes and other disasters.” The DRRA, in part, increases federal investment in pre-disaster mitigation, increases reimbursement caps for state and local governments on a range of disaster costs, and allows state and local governments to administer housing assistance grants.

The FAA reauthorization bill also includes supplemental funding to support recovery efforts for victims of Hurricane Florence. Specifically, it provides \$1.68 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Fund for long-term disaster recovery.

In addition to federal disaster policy reforms and disaster aid funding, the FAA Reauthorization Act contains the Geospatial Data Act, a bill to improve coordination, reduce duplication, and increase data transparency in the acquisition of geospatial data. Geospatial data—information that has a geographic component to it—can be used for a variety of applications such as plotting a path for a new interstate highway or coordinating recovery efforts after a major disaster.

The Geospatial Data Act was originally introduced in both chambers of Congress in November 2017—sponsored by Representative Bruce Westerman (R-AR-4) in the House as H.R. 4395 and by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) in the Senate as S. 2128. According to a press release from Representative Westerman's office, the Geospatial Data Act is supported by several national geoscience associations and private companies such as the American Association of Geographers, Cartography and Geographic Information Society, Google, and Tesla. Language from the Geospatial Data Act was incorporated into the FAA Reauthorization Act in September before the bill's final passage.

USGS briefing and report highlight expanded rollout of earthquake early warning system

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) held a briefing on October 2 to discuss the ongoing rollout of the ShakeAlert Earthquake Early Warning System. The briefing was held in conjunction with the release of a new USGS report titled, "Revised technical implementation plan for the ShakeAlert System—An earthquake early warning system for the West Coast of the United States."

ShakeAlert uses networks of ground-motion sensors and sophisticated computer algorithms to detect earthquakes moments after they begin, calculate their locations and magnitudes, and estimate the resulting intensity of shaking. Alerts can then be sent to people and systems that may experience damaging shaking, allowing them to prepare appropriately before the shaking begins. Effective implementation of such a system can reduce the impact of earthquakes, save lives, and protect property in earthquake-prone areas.

The briefing was led by Dr. Bill Leith, the Senior Advisor for Earthquake and Geologic Hazards at the USGS. It also featured professors and researchers from four different West Coast universities: Dr. Thomas Heaton from the California Institute of Technology, Dr. Richard Allen from the University of California, Berkeley, Dr. Leland O'Driscoll from the University of Oregon, and Dr. Harold Tobin from the University of Washington.

The ShakeAlert system has been in testing since the early 2010s and, as of October 2018, is being rolled out more widely to public and private organizations in California, Oregon, and Washington. Broader public alerting has not yet begun because existing mass-alert technologies are not currently able to deliver earthquake alerts sufficiently rapidly and widely to be effective.

This long-term implementation plan calls for a total of 1,675 seismic monitoring stations. About 865 seismic stations are currently contributing data to ShakeAlert and 250 more have funding

and are currently being built, according to the revised USGS report. The planned U.S. system has similarities to existing systems in Mexico and Japan. However, the U.S. faces a particular geological challenge in implementing earthquake early warning. In Mexico and Japan, the biggest earthquake-generating faults are largely located offshore, far from major population centers, allowing for more warning time before the arrival of an earthquake. In California, major cities sit directly on or near major faults, requiring much more rapid detection of earthquakes and distribution of alerts to provide any warning at all.

On October 10, Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke tweeted that he directed the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Fish and Wildlife Service to streamline regulatory processes and prioritize the deployment of USGS earthquake sensors. The tweet linked to a Wall Street Journal article published online earlier that same day, which indicated that the Journal had obtained a memo from Secretary Zinke ordering federal agencies to identify and help remove regulatory impediments to deploying the equipment in national parks and Bureau of Land Management properties near major population centers from San Diego, California, to Anchorage, Alaska. According to the article, the secretarial order also applies to volcanic-activity monitoring equipment in Hawaii.

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