

Advancing Excellence

Update from the Development & Alumni Office at The University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences - No. 3, March 2010

INSIDE

Dean's Welcome ... 2

Boyles Establish Graduate Fellowship ... 3

How Scholarships Make the Difference ... 4

Post-Doc Fellowships Lure Top Scientists ... 6

Why Do People Give? ... 7

Alumni Events ... 8

Denison Receives Honor ... 10



Paleontologist Sterling Nesbit is one of several top post-doctoral scientists the JSG is attracting with help from donors. See p. 6.



Major support helped attract Lindsey Gulden, Ph.D. '09, to the JSG. The climate researcher is currently working at ExxonMobil.

Prestigious Graduate Fellowships Help School Attract Best Students

Geoscience programs are largely measured by the quality of their graduate students, in part because they do a significant amount of the program's research. When they succeed in their research, they push their fellow students and professors to achieve more. And then after graduation, as they make their way through their careers, their successes enhance the reputation of the school.

"To be the best, we need graduate students operating at a professional level, publishing, going to scientific meetings, winning awards, and getting the highest level jobs at top institutions," said Steve Grand, chair of the Department of Geological Sciences and former graduate advisor.

For many students, the availability of secure financial support can be the critical difference between accepting or rejecting a university admission.

While most graduate students in the Jackson School do receive some financial support, many find it to be a patchwork affair that falls short of offerings at other top geoscience institutions. Currently, support for about 10 graduate fellowships comes primarily from corporate funders who offer their support on an annually revolving basis. In addition to this being an unstable source of support, many companies provide only enough funding to cover a portion of a graduate student's true expenses. Many of the other 200 or so graduate students receive research assistantships or teaching assistantships. Many have to find other work during the summer to make ends meet and often can't devote as much time to research as they would like.

Continued page 3

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

JACKSON
SCHOOL OF GEOSCIENCES

Dean's Update

Dear Alumni and Friends of the Jackson School,

It is my pleasure to send you this edition of *Advancing Excellence*, the supplement to our annual newsletter highlighting the many ways your support is helping us become the best geoscience program in the country.

This edition focuses on one of the areas where we most need your help—scholarships and fellowships. Enrollment has skyrocketed at the school since 2006 when we began our ambitious plan to increase the size and quality of our program. The growth has been exciting but brings its own challenges. We have increased both the size of our student body and its quality, as measured in test scores and grade point averages. Attracting these great students comes with a price. We are now competing regularly with the top five graduate programs for the country's best graduate students in the geosciences. We are keeping pace with our peers in terms of financial packages but we hope to become even more successful through the creation of more prestigious graduate fellowships, as outlined in our cover story. At the undergraduate level, we've instituted a unique scholarship-retention program to reward academic performance, as outlined on page 5. This program uses financial incentives to encourage high-performing students. It's a fantastic opportunity for undergraduates and I encourage you to share it with potential students (and parents). Finally, we are now more aggressively pursuing post-doctoral scientists. Post-docs help the school in many ways: energizing the research of colleagues and graduate students, strengthening ties between the Jackson School and other institutions, and raising our profile among the country's top geoscientists. Several of our best scientists also started out at as Jackson School post-docs. Your support can make a major contribution here. In these and all areas, I look forward to working with you to make the Jackson School the best in the country.

Warmly,
Sharon Mosher



Sharon Mosher, dean of the Jackson School, where she holds the William Stamps Farish Chair.



Capital Campaign Progress Report

The University's Capital Campaign began officially on Sept. 1, 2006 with a quiet phase and then entered a public phase in October 2008. As of Dec. 31, 2009, the University as a whole had raised \$1,001,787,087 (or 33%) towards its goal of \$3 billion, and the Jackson School had raised \$53,516,622 (or 67%) towards its goal of \$80 million. (These totals contain monetary and non-monetary contributions.)

UT Austin Overall

Goal: \$3 Billion

To Date: \$1 Billion

Jackson School

Goal: \$80 Million

To Date: \$53.5 Million

Fellowships — Cont'd

"If we're going to be preeminent, we have to look at what our peers are doing," said Terry Quinn, director of the Institute for Geophysics. "We need to be sure we have superior fellowships. We've lost some outstanding students because they're getting better offers."

In an effort to remain competitive, the school is seeking donors to help establish a series of Prestigious Graduate Fellowships at the one million dollar level. These would fully cover a student's tuition, room and board, and living expenses—in effect a free ride for their entire academic career. Students will be selectively awarded, demonstrate an aptitude for stellar performance, and showcase extraordinary potential for becoming true leaders within the geosciences.

"It would be nice to provide 'knock over fellowships,'" said Quinn. "They would be a full ride for two years. They would include summer salary, health insurance, and a stipend for travel. Now you're competitive at the highest level."

"If you're a student, you want to be wanted and you want to be wanted early," he added. "I want to be able to call up the best students and make them an offer, tick off the things they're going to get before they even hear back from anyone else."

This past fall, friends of the Jackson School established funds that will enable the creation of the first two Prestigious Graduate Fellowships: the Vada A. and Walter V. Boyle Graduate Fellowship in Petroleum Geology and a fellowship in Sedimentary Geology from an anonymous donor.

"I'm only as good as my best grad students," said Quinn. "The better and brighter your students, the better your research will be. If we recruit the highest level students, this place will explode."

The investment in graduate students can yield even bigger returns in the long run. They begin to publish and have an impact in their field. In effect, they become the public face of the Jackson School.

"They'll get positions of power at top institutions," said Grand. "They'll send their students here. They'll become members of the National Academy of Sciences. They'll decide where



Nate Lapierre (above) and Brian Kiel (left) are two of many outstanding students receiving prestigious support at the Jackson School. Kiel received a fellowship from the National Science Foundation for his 3D seismic research. Lapierre received support from the Jackson Fund for Energy and Mineral Resources for his research in the Energy and Earth Resources Graduate Program.

research dollars are spent."

There's also the prestige factor associated with a small number of highly competitive fellowships.

"Ten years from now, you'll see that someone has a Jackson School Prestigious Graduate fellowship on their CV and you'll know that they're the best of the best," said Quinn.

Boyles Establish Graduate Fellowship

Walt Boyle (B.S. '54, M.A. '55) and wife Vada have established a new graduate fellowship in petroleum geology. Along with a fellowship in sedimentary geology, it is one of the first two Prestigious Graduate Fellowships at the Jackson School. Both were made possible by legacy gifts, contributions to be taken out of their estates at a later time.

"I think one of the greatest rewards in life is to be able to offer students the chance to obtain an outstanding education which will enhance and enrich their lives forever," said Walt Boyle.

Boyle, who retired in 1992 after many years at Shell Oil, was an exploration geologist who helped supervise exploration efforts in the Permian Basin.

"It was a distinct privilege and honor to be able to attend one of the most prestigious and outstanding geology departments in the United States," said Boyle. He recalled the great esprit de corps among the students in the Department of Geological Sciences in the 1950s. While in graduate school, Boyle was awarded a fellowship to teach Dr. Keith Young's freshman geology labs, which he considered a rewarding challenge that prepared him for speaking and lecturing to his peers later in his career. He also praised professors such as Sam Ellison, head of the department, and Ed Owen, past President of the AAPG, who brought in the top leaders from the petroleum industry to talk to the graduate students about their experiences in the industry.

Thank you Boyles!





Prof William Fisher, the Leonidas T. Barrow Centennial Chair in Mineral Resources and former dean of the Jackson School, is one of many top professors at the school who work closely with undergraduates.

Undergraduate Scholarships Encourage Academic Excellence

With undergraduate enrollment rising 75 percent from 2005-2009, school looks to expand innovative program

In fall 2007, the Jackson School began offering automatic scholarships to undergraduate students based on academic achievement. The school instituted the Undergraduate Merit-Based Scholarships as a way to boost academic achievement in the school and to encourage students to complete a geosciences major. Each semester, about 100 to 150 students receive the scholarships which range from \$750 to \$3,450 depending on the student's class and grade point average (see matrix). Students can use the scholarship awards to pay for tuition, books, housing, food, or any other academic expenses they choose. It fills gaps.

"We hope that the scholarships free up students so they don't have to work so many hours and have more time to spend meeting with professors, doing research, or studying," says Renee Waters, academic advising coordinator.

In the past, undergraduate students received scholarships through a limited pool of endowments. By implementing the scholarship matrix, the school is committing to making these scholarships available to all academically successful students.

The scholarships are funded through the Geology Foundation's en-

Thank You for Supporting Our Students

Hundreds of Jackson School undergraduate students receive scholarships each year thanks to donations from individuals and corporations. For some, this support means the difference between attending the university or not. For others, it allows them to focus on their studies and research without having to spend as much time working off campus. Here are just a few examples of outstanding students receiving your support.

Right: Andrea Wolfowicz, pictured with Dean Sharon Mosher, received the Langston Endowed Scholarship Fund in Geology & Geophysics and the Mr. and Mrs. L. F. McCollum Scholarship in Geology.



"Your scholarship enables me to focus on my studies."—Ellen Elizabeth Reid

dowed accounts set up by alumni and other contributors. Ellen Elizabeth Reid from Houston, Texas wrote to thank the dean for making her merit-based scholarship possible.

"Your scholarship is so helpful to me because it enables me to focus on my studies. My courses this semester are very demanding and along with preparing for interviewing for full-time positions, I can't imagine having a job at the same time. Not working also allows me to participate in school organizations, like the Undergraduate Geological Society, and partake in class trips to get hands-on experience in the field."

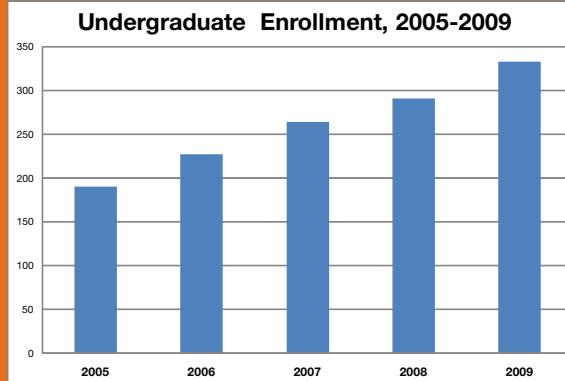
Funding Gap

Currently the school has over 100 scholarships defined by donors to support academic achievement of undergraduate scholars. Unfortunately, these funds aren't sufficient to support all the students who are eligible through the undergraduate scholarship matrix.

Because the school believes so strongly in this opportunity, for the past two fiscal years it has provided a financial supplement to assure all eligible students receive scholarships. To compound the problem, the funding gap is likely to rise in the near term due to an increase in both the number of undergraduates enrolled in the school (up 75% from 2005 to 2009) and their academic quality.

If we are to continue this important effort in building our undergraduate program, we need to expand our endowment base. Our goal is to create a pool of \$3.5 million.

While it is too early to tell the full impact this new award process is having, it is clear that for some students, like Reid, the funds are providing a vital piece of the financial aid puzzle that allows them to reach their full potential. That's why it's so important for the friends of the Jackson School to continue supporting undergraduate excellence through merit-based scholarships.



Undergraduate Merit-Based Scholarship Matrix

Total # of Hours	3.0-3.24	3.25-3.49	3.5-3.74	3.75-4
Freshmen	\$750	\$1,150	\$2,250	\$3,000
Sophomore	\$800	\$1,200	\$2,350	\$3,150
Junior	\$850	\$1,250	\$2,450	\$3,300
Senior	\$900	\$1,300	\$2,550	\$3,450

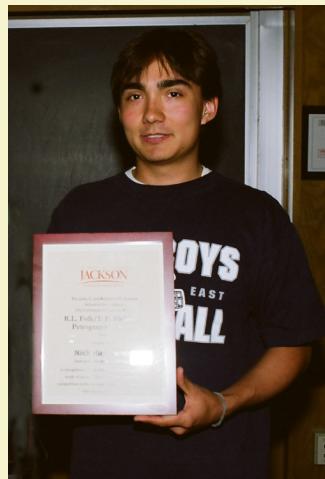
Undergraduates in good standing in the Jackson School of Geosciences are automatically offered scholarships each semester based on their class and total university GPA at levels indicated in the above matrix. ("Good standing" is a full time student making appropriate progress towards a degree in geological sciences.)

For information on the merit-based scholarships, contact Renee Waters in the Undergraduate Program Office at 512-471-4300, rwaters@mail.utexas.edu.



Left: Edward Cross, pictured with Professor Mark Cloos, received the Wayne Franklin Bowman Endowed Presidential Scholarship and support from the Albert W. and Alice M. Weeks Fund in Geology.

Right: Nick Perez received support from the Bloomer Fund for Motivated and Late Bloomer Students, the Hal H. Bybee Memorial Fund, the Louis and Elizabeth Scherck Geology Scholarship, and the Undergraduate Scholarship to Support Geosciences Students.



Post-Doctoral Fellowships Attract Outstanding Early Career Scientists

To attract the best early career scientists to the Jackson School, Dean Sharon Mosher is exploring an initiative to create a set of new, more flexible post doctoral research positions, sometimes called institutional post docs. Unlike a traditional post doc brought in to work with a more senior scientist on a specific project—essentially tied to that researcher, that project, and that source of funding—this new post doc would develop their own project and collaborate with whomever they choose across the school. It's a bold and exciting step that puts the school on par with a handful of other leading geoscience institutions.

The Institute for Geophysics, one of the school's two research units, is taking the lead in establishing the first of these with temporary seed funding. The idea came about independently of the dean's initiative, but will likely serve as a proof of concept. Ultimately, Mosher envisions permanently establishing several school-wide post doctoral positions with funding from outside donors. The idea was proposed in the Jackson School's strategic plan but has not been implemented. This initiative is a key part of the school's capital campaign.

Institute Seeks New Kind of Post Doc

This past fall, scientists at the Institute for Geophysics gathered for a science retreat. One idea that kept coming up over and over was to create an institutional post doc position.

"The recommendation was made in early December and a few days later, we were distributing a flyer at the AGU meeting in San Francisco," says Terry Quinn, director of the Institute.

Many of the Institute's most successful peer institutions, such as Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, CalTech and Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, offer institutional post docs.

"They view this as a preview of who they might want to hire down the road," says Quinn. "You get to know their personality. Do they get along with others? Are they team players? You have them there for two years and you know whether or not they're going to work out. You make fewer mistakes in long term hiring."

It also enhances an organization's reputation. When you look

New Kid on the Block: A Post-Doc Success Story

In Dec. 10 2009 edition of *Science*, Sterling Nesbitt, a JSG post-doc, lead-authored an article announcing a new dinosaur species, *Tawa*. An early theropod, *Tawa* helps settle a debate about dinosaur evolution. Analysis of *Tawa* and other early dinosaurs suggests dinosaurs originated in what is now South America and soon after diverged into ornithischians (like Triceratops), sauropodomorphs (like Apatosaurus) and theropods (like T. rex). The theropods evolved into modern-day birds. Nesbitt works in the school's small but highly recognized paleontology group, which includes veteran JSG scientists and recent addition Julia Clarke, receiving international attention for her own research on avian dinosaurs. While Nesbitt's stint at the school may be short, his success shows the benefits of hosting talented young post-docs.

back at the lists of people who have received them at peer institutions, you find that many post docs went on to be leaders in their field. Many are now fellows of the AGU and GSA. Their future career success will point back to the quality of the program at the Jackson School.

Expanding Horizons

The Institute already excels in marine geophysics, seismology, and climate, among other areas of research. But it's a big world out there with lots of problems to solve. Cliff Frohlich, associate director and senior research scientist at the Institute, sees these new post docs as challenging their colleagues to try new things and pushing the Institute's work in new directions.

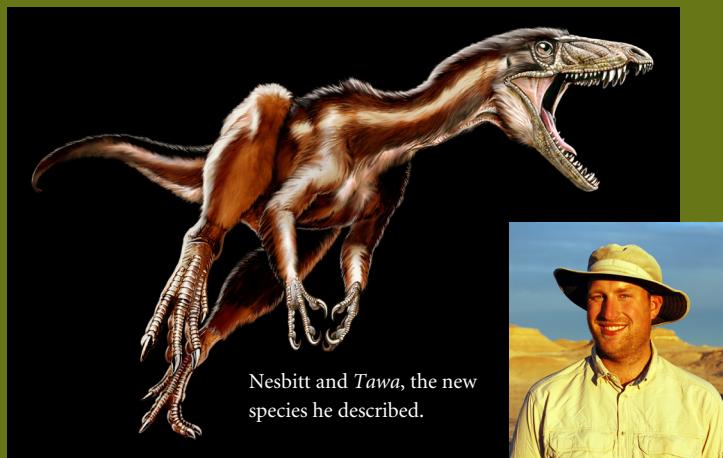
"Some people, when you get them around you, they're so good you wonder how you did without them," he says. "You hire them to do X and they end up doing Y and we say, 'We should have been doing Y all along.'"

As this newsletter goes to press, the Institute is taking applications for its first institutional post doctoral researcher. To get started, Quinn is paying for the position through the use of non-recurring funds at the Institute.

Quinn would like to grow it into several positions and put it on a more stable long term financial footing through the creation of endowments. Donors would have an opportunity to name a Jackson School postdoctoral position for themselves or a loved one. Over time, because the positions will be highly competitive, that name would develop a certain cachet within the scientific community. Comparable programs at other institutions get dozens of applicants for one spot.

Having institutional post docs will drive the Jackson School to a new level of excellence. The influx of young, energetic talent will build our prestige.

Next time the big pads of paper come out at an Institute retreat, there will be a bright new face, or maybe several, to throw a few more great ideas into the mix.



First-Time Donors Explain Why They Gave

In the past two years, there has been a significant increase in first time donors to the Jackson School. In the 2006-2007 fiscal year, there were 28 new donors and in 2008-2009, there were 161. Part of that increase can be attributed to stepped up efforts to reach out to friends and alumni through the FANs network. Yet at the same time, the economy has been in the doldrums.

So we decided to do a little investigating to see what was behind this renewed sense of giving. We conducted an online survey of more than 120 people who gave to the school for the first time during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. At 20 percent, the survey response rate was phenomenal.

There were almost as many reasons to give as there were respondents. Many said it was a way of giving back to a program that had helped them be successful in their careers. Some gave because they believe in the work the school does. Some wished to honor a loved one or a role model. Some wanted to help the school continue to make a positive impact on society. Others felt it was critical for their field that the school educate the next generation of geologists. Still others needed a tax break or were moved by a personal appeal from the development team.

We followed up with some of the new donors to find out more.

"We are big believers in Karma," said Sarah Dunckel. "If you receive something special, we feel like it's important to give back."

Her daughter Anne graduated last December with a bachelor's in geosciences. Ann received scholarships, did field work in Chile, and published her honors thesis in a geological journal. She was especially excited by the opportunities to get out in the field and do real research.

"It was an extraordinary experience for a young person," said her mother.

Jeremy Greene (M.A. '84) is senior vice president for exploration and production at Peregrine Petroleum in Houston. He gave to the Jackson School because of the GeoFORCE Texas program. GeoFORCE takes high school honor students from predominantly minority regions of southwest Texas and the Houston area on geological field trips across the country to educate and excite them about science.

"Hispanic and African American high school students are an untapped resource in the oil and gas workforce in Texas," he said. "GeoFORCE really gets them excited and opens their eyes. It says you can do this—you just have to apply."

His daughter Lauren Greene (B.S. '07) had two overarching reasons for giving. The first was financial.

"I received scholarships from people who had donated to the school," she said. "That really made a big difference. The least I can do is give back and help students like me."

One scholarship in particular made it possible for her to go on the GEO 660 summer field camp, the cornerstone of a geologist's training at the Jackson School. Many alumni consider it the most rewarding experience in their entire undergraduate careers.

But it's an expensive trip.

"You're not only paying for your six week field course, but you're also losing money you would be getting from other summer jobs or internships you might have," she said. "So when they pay for the field course, it helps a lot of students afford to do it and graduate on time."

Her other big reason for giving is that her experiences at the Jackson School laid the foundation for her current success in graduate school at the University of California, Davis. For example, when she asked other graduate students about their undergraduate field courses, she found that GEO 660 was a richer experience.

"Our field camp was comprehensive," she said. "A lot of other field camps operate out of one base. Ours is a traveling field camp—we traveled from Texas to Montana. Comparing our program to others I've heard about, I'm glad I went to the University of Texas."

She said the Jackson School also exposed her to a broader range of topics than other programs.

"I was exposed to all aspects of geology," she said. "Some students I've talked to may not have had paleontology or geophysics or sedimentology, so they're already limited in what they can apply to grad school for."

Currently, about 8 percent of Jackson School alumni contribute to the school, a dramatic increase from the rate of 2.5 percent in 2007. Still, that rate of participation is far below other top geoscience institutions. We have set a goal of 15 percent participation in our Annual Giving Program. Your contribution to the Jackson School makes a statement to the entire geosciences community that you believe in our programs, mission and vision of the school.

Since 2005, annual giving has jumped from 2.5 percent of alumni to 8 percent. The school's goal is 15 percent participation.



Lauren Greene (B.S. '07) wanted to give back after receiving financial support for her own education. Her father Jeremy Greene (M.A. '84) wanted to support GeoFORCE Texas.

Scenes From Recent Alumni Events



Left to right, top to bottom: Bill Muehlberger and Franz Heibert (M.A. '88, Ph.D. '94) at the 1980s Reunion; Advisory Council Members Ed Duncan (B.S. '79, M.A. '87) and Fred Oliver (B.S. '51) at the JSG Tailgate Party; Sharon Mosher and David Martineau (M.S. '97) at the Fall 2009 Geology Foundation Advisory Council meeting; Undergraduate Kevin Meyers and Tim Denison (Ph.D. '66) at the Jackson School Scholars Luncheon; Doug Brown (B.S. '84), Rowen Brown, Marshall Merritt (B.S. '84), Will Merritt and Bill Gribble at the Dallas Chapter FANs event; Bill Fisher, Cesar Cainelli (Ph.D. '92), Pinar Yilmaz (Ph.D. '81) and Sylvia Anjos celebrate at the AAPG International reception in Rio De Janeiro; Students show their Longhorn pride at the JSG Tailgate Party; Fred (B.S. '51) and Frances Oliver and Frank (MBA '87) and Judy (BBA '82) Lee..





Left to right, top to bottom: Alumni enjoy the sunset cruise during the 1980s alumni reunion; Advisory Council members tour the Experimental Sedimentary Facility at UTIG; Longhorn spirit at the Dallas Cowboys FANS reception—Scott (B.S. '86) and Teresa Kelley, Richard (B.S. '77) and Kathy Leach, Steve (M.A. '81) and Kathy (B.S. '83) Weiner; Students and alumni enjoy the JSG Tailgate Party.

Upcoming Alumni Events

AAPG Alumni Reception

Monday, April 19th
New Orleans, Louisiana
Time and location TBD

JSG All Decades Alumni Reception

Friday – Saturday, August 6-7th
Austin, Texas
Come back to campus to reconnect with faculty and fellow alumni!
AT&T Hotel and Conference Center located directly on campus

Jackson School Career Fair

September 13, 2010
Contact Maurine Riess for more details (mriess@jsg.utexas.edu)

SEG Alumni Reception

October 19th
Denver, CO
Time and location TBD

For further event details, questions or to RSVP, please contact Julie Paul at jpaul@mail.utexas.edu or 512.471.2223.

FANS Board Meeting

March 5th, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
UT campus

108th Meeting of the Geology Foundation Advisory Council

March 25th – 26th
UT campus

Jackson School Celebrating Philanthropy Dinner

Induction of 2009 Hill Society & L.T. Barrow Founders Circle Members
March 24th 6:30 p.m.
Hyatt Regency, Austin, Texas

Geology Foundation Advisory Council

*Denotes new member

The Geology Foundation, established in 1953, is the philanthropic arm of the Jackson School. The Foundation has guided the Jackson School to a level of support unprecedented among peer institutions. Members of the Foundation's Advisory Council meet bi-annually with the school's leadership to support and advise the Jackson School.

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Mr. Russell G. Slayback
Leggette, Brashears & Graham, Inc.

Vice Chairman

Mr. Richard J. Chuchla, M.A. '81
ExxonMobil Exploration Company

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Dr. Robert E. Boyer

Mr. L. Decker Dawson
Dawson Geophysical Co.

Dr. Rodger E. Denison, Ph.D. '66

Dr. William L. Fisher

Dr. Peter T. Flawn

Mr. William E. Gipson, B.A. '48, M.A. '49
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Mr. Jack H. Mayfield, Jr., M.A. '65
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Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc.

Mr. James C. Patterson

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Apache Corporation

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Mr. Ed Duncan, M.A. '87
Ledgerock Energy

Mrs. Constance (Connie) Dyer,* B.A. '58

Mr. Guilherme Estrella
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Paradigm

Mr. Gerald M. Gilbert, B.S. '68

Mr. Willard (Will) R. Green,* M.A. '55
Green Energy Resources

Mr. Jeremy Greene, M.A. '84
Peregrine Petroleum LLC

Ms. Robbie R. Gries, M.A. '70
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Mr. David S. (Scotty) Holland, B.S. '57

Mr. Stephen C. Jumper, B.S. '84
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Mr. David L. Kirchner, B.S. '74
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Total E&P USA

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BP America Inc.

Mr. Brian C. Reinsborough, M.A. '93
Nexen Petroleum U.S.A. Inc.

Mr. Don B. Sheffield, B.S. '58

Mr. Daniel L. Smith, B.S. '58
Sandalwood Oil & Gas, Inc.

Mr. Bryan C. Wagner, B.A. '84
Wagner Oil Company

Mr. Charles G. Weiner, B.A. '48
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The University of Texas at Austin

Denison Honored with Honorary Life Membership in Advisory Council

This past Fall, the Jackson School honored Tim Denison (Ph.D. '66) with honorary life membership in the Geology Foundation's Advisory Council (AC). He has served on the AC for 40 years, not once missing a meeting. As chair of the Foundation from 1989-1991, he worked to bring faculty members together with AC members, to strengthen ties between the two groups, and bring the expertise of the AC members directly to the faculty.

"Perhaps the most enduring legacy of Tim Denison's service to the Jackson School reflects his love of students and learning," said Sharon Mosher, dean of the school, when presenting the award.

Through the Folk McBride Petrography Fund, he created an award process to hone students' understanding of petrography. Every year our petrography contest brings together faculty and students, much in the way that he encouraged the AC membership to engage with the faculty. By recognizing the best student petrographers each year, we are able to enshrine forever (we hope) the art of petrography. This has been a great addition to the culture of the school.

We offer our sincere gratitude for his services and extend hearty congratulations on this wonderful achievement.



Calling All Geologists! Jackson School Reunion

August 6-7, 2010 • Austin, TX

*Reconnect with Faculty
Renew old Friendships
Rediscover the 40 Acres*



All alumni, friends, and staff invited • For info, visit <http://www.jsg.utexas.edu/alumni/reunion.html>

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Take Us to the Top!

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