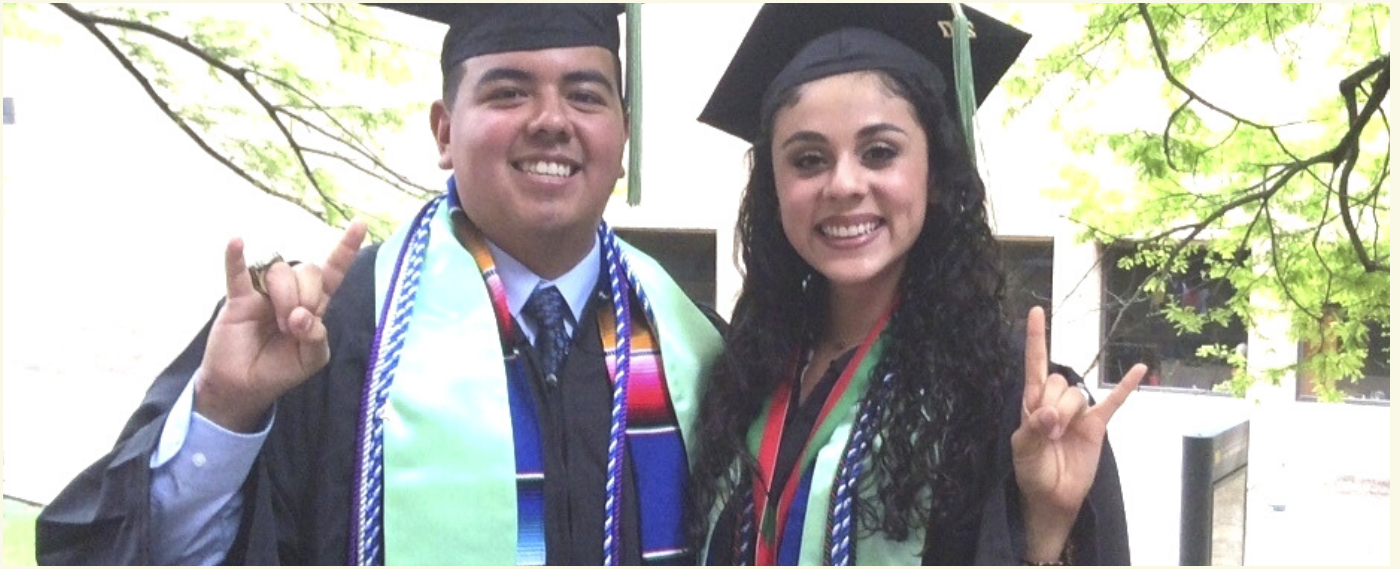


GEOFORCE MONTHLY

Changing lives since 2005



GeoFORCE alumni Izaak Ruiz (L) and April Trevino (R) in their graduation robes at The University of Texas at Austin.

DONATION SPOTLIGHT: \$1 MILLION MATCH GIFT

GeoFORCE Texas is thrilled to receive a generous \$1 million match gift from an anonymous donor to support the program and alumni of GeoFORCE at The University of Texas at Austin.

The first \$250,000 of this gift has already been matched dollar for dollar by the Texas Challenge scholarship fund to create the Advance GeoFORCE Texas Endowed Scholarship. It will generate approximately \$22,500 per year in scholarship support to be awarded to GeoFORCE alumni who enroll at The University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences, Cockrell School of Engineering, or College of Natural Sciences.

"As GeoFORCE graduates move on to university studies—as almost all of them do—there remains a need to assure they have the financial support they need to be successful," said the Jackson School's Dean Claudia Mora. "This wonderful scholarship may be the difference that lets a student focus on their studies without simultaneously holding down a job, or to graduate without a crushing student debt. It will have great impact on the lives of our GeoFORCE graduates."

GeoFORCE has the next five years to find donors to match the remaining \$750,000 of this gift. This money is earmarked to support programmatic expenses for the GeoFORCE Texas summer academies. The generous donation was gifted to GeoFORCE in an effort to diversify funding, therefore donations are only eligible to be matched by new corporate donors outside of the oil and gas industry, individual donor gifts, or by "in kind" donations that offset programmatic costs (such as airplane miles or hotel points).

The GeoFORCE Team is overwhelmingly thankful for this gift and to all those who support the program. Your contribution continues to change the lives of our students and alumni and aids the fight for equality in STEM and the geosciences.

If you would like to help GeoFORCE reach this match amount, you may donate any amount of money using [UT's gift page](#). Under Jackson School of Geosciences, select GeoFORCE. In the notes, include that this donation is for the 1:1 match.

GeoFORCE Texas is an outreach program through The University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences that introduces high school students from underserved communities to STEM and geoscience careers through summer field experiences, corporate mentoring, and college guidance. In 2015, our program was honored with the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring—the highest such honor from the United States government. More information can be found on our website at <https://www.jsg.utexas.edu/geoforce/>.



Jada Siverand (L) with fellow GeoFORCE counselors in summer 2019.

REGISTRATION OPENS JAN 1ST

Registration for the coming Summer 2021 academies will open on Friday, January 1st. Look for an email to current students and parents in your inboxes on that day. This year, all registration will take place on a new system called CircuiTree. You will have until Sunday, January 31st to complete the registration. Be sure to email the GeoFORCE Team with any questions.

INTERNSHIP & SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

- Geoscience Research Programs & Internship Opportunities for Undergrads & Recent Grads
- Scholarships for Undergraduate & Graduate Students
- Scholarships for High School Students

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Questions or comments? Email us at geoforce@jsg.utexas.edu

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JADA SIVERAND

At the beginning of the month, as Jada Siverand finished her graduate school application to The University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences, she began to compose an email about GeoFORCE and what this program meant to her.

"Prior to high school, I was highly interested in natural sciences; this led to being signed up for a handful of camps. GeoFORCE was absolutely different from any other experience that I had had prior, or have had since," Siverand wrote. "Not only was I given a more concrete idea of what a geologist was, but I was also allowed into this highly supportive and diverse community."

Siverand joined GeoFORCE as a student for the summers of 2012 - 2015 and returned as a counselor from 2017 - 2019. She is currently a chemistry major at Texas Woman's University where she was thrilled to receive a full-ride scholarship from the National Science Foundation. To prepare for her transition to geology in graduate school, she participated in the Jackson School's Enchanting Diversity in Geoscience Graduate Education (EDGE) program for two years in 2019 and 2020 and completed a research project under the direction of Jackson School Associate Professor Daniel Brecker and Ph.D. student Evan Ramos through Geo-VISION, a research traineeship program. She presented on this project at the October Geologic Society of America conference.

Siverand explained that she was grateful for the opportunity to experience this eight-week geoscience research project before making the shift from chemistry to geology, and that it helped her build confidence. She continues to communicate with her project advisors and other Jackson School faculty and staff for advice and mentoring.

"Being a chemistry undergraduate student, I have felt a great deal of anxiety and felt inadequate in switching fields," Siverand said. "I knew that I wanted to go from chemistry to geology, but the task was definitely intimidating. Through Geo-VISION, I was able to understand how much geology I understood prior due to GeoFORCE, how well I was able to learn and apply new teachings, and how deep rooted my love for geology really was!"

Siverand plans to pursue a Master's degree and eventually a doctoral degree in either geology, geochemistry, or environmental studies. She is most interested in environment-centered topics and would love to work either as a research scientist or find a career in consulting or conservation. Above all, Siverand plans to continue to work for outreach programs and encourage more women of color to join STEM fields—just as she did.