

# GEOFORCE MONTHLY

Changing lives since 2005

## 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

### January

GeoFORCE Monthly debuts its first issue—spotlighting alumnus Izaak Ruiz and the American Geophysical Union's 2019 Bright STaRS event.

### February - March

Austin, Texas goes on lockdown and The University of Texas at Austin transitions to online learning to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

### April

Dr. Kathy Ellins is hired by the GeoFORCE team to assist in creating virtual summer academy programs.

### May

GeoFORCE corporate mentor Abayomi Olufowoshe speaks at the Jackson School of Geoscience's 2020 commencement.

### June - July

GeoFORCE virtual academies engage students thanks to inventive programming and the hard work of our dedicated educational staff.

### August

Ten GeoFORCE & STEMFORCE alumni enter college as first-year geoscience majors, three of them at the Jackson School of Geosciences.

### September

An anonymous donor pledges a \$1 million match gift for GeoFORCE program expenses and alumni scholarships to The University of Texas at Austin.

### October

GeoFORCE alumni Jada Siverand and Cheyenne Hibbitts Kleiner present research at the Geological Society of America's annual conference.

### November

Four GeoFORCE alumni attend the Jackson School of Geosciences' third Enhancing Diversity in Geoscience Graduate Education (EDGE) program.

### December

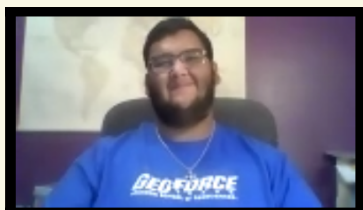
Nine GeoFORCE students, including Enrique Morales (pictured), present their 12th grade academy capstone projects at the American Geophysical Union's virtual Bright STaRS event.



Mentor Abayomi Olufowoshe (L) & counselor Korbin Lawson (R) on Galveston Beach in summer 2018.



GeoFORCE Houston 12th grade students in front of UT Tower in July 2019.



GeoFORCE Southwest 12th grade student Enrique Morales.



STEMFORCE alumni Anyka Morquecho (L) & Hiruni Dissanayake (R) at AGU Bright STaRS In December 2019.



GeoFORCE Houston 12th grade students and staff during the virtual 2020 summer academy experience.



GeoFORCE alumna Jada Siverand's professional headshot for EDGE 2020.

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/>.



Nicole Gonzalez at the Grand Canyon in summer 2019.

**IN MEMORY  
OF GEOFORCE  
ALUMNUS  
J HENRY FURLER  
1998 - 2020**



Henry was in GeoFORCE's Young Geoscientist program from 2012-2014, and attended the Rockies trip with the first Alaska cohort in 2015. He had a strong passion for geology and traveling. He will be sorely missed by his coordinators, his educators, and the other members of his YG cohort.

**Memorial Service: January 30th**

Donations to Henry's family may be given through **UR Our Hope**.

Photos: GeoFORCE

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: NICOLE GONZALEZ

In July of 2015, during her third summer with the GeoFORCE program, Nicole Gonzalez stood overlooking Crater Lake in Oregon and realized she wanted to be a geologist. Now, she's a graduate student at The University of Texas Jackson School of Geosciences researching the continuity and compartmentalization of shallow marine sandstones along the Southwest Oregon coast. In her own words, "It's come full circle!"

Gonzalez graduated with a Bachelor's degree in geology with honors from the University of Colorado at Boulder in December 2019. She presented on her undergraduate research at the Geological Society of America (GSA)'s annual conferences in 2018 and 2019. She also experienced work in the environmental sector at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in Austin, Texas as a Mickey Leland Environmental intern where she reviewed petroleum storage tank/dry cleaner remediation program (PST/DCRP) site files.

In summer 2019, Gonzalez was selected for GSA and ExxonMobil's Bighorn Basin Field Camp, "which gave me the opportunity to hone my field skills and gain better insight into what a career at ExxonMobil has to offer," Gonzalez said.

Additionally, Gonzalez has fond memories of visiting BP's headquarters in Houston as a GeoFORCE student and was honored when BP selected her as their BP LEADERS Fellow to fund her graduate studies.

"Upon graduating, I would like to work for an oil and gas company as a geologist," Gonzalez said. "I'm eager to use my geologic knowledge and problem-solving skills to innovatively yet consciously meet the world's energy needs. In addition, I am extremely passionate about youth development programs and hope to serve on a board of directors for a non-profit organization in the future."

Gonzalez has already sought out opportunities to help with youth development. Besides being a GeoFORCE counselor, she implemented STEM programming for 2nd through 5th graders as a Youth Development Specialist for the Boys and Girls Club in Houston. Her enthusiasm will undoubtedly inspire other youth to pursue geology in school and beyond.

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