

GEOFORCE MONTHLY

Changing lives since 2005



First Row from Left to Right: Ethan Cavasos, Kaylin Hong, Brandon Garcia; Second Row from L to R: Nikki Dargahi, Enrique Morales, Cecilia Jeffers.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS: FIRST YEAR GEOSCIENCE MAJORS

In the summer of 2020, GeoFORCE's rising 12th graders were challenged to complete group capstone projects under an entirely new virtual academy format. They rose to the occasion and now six of them are enrolled as first year geoscience majors, eager to expand upon the knowledge they gained during their four summers as GeoFORCE students.

The first of these students, Ethan Cavasos, was valedictorian of Sabinal High School and now studies geophysics at Texas A&M University, where he received a scholarship from their Geology & Geophysics department. Next, Kaylin Hong completed high school at Lebanon Trail High School in Frisco and is one of the five who chose to enter The University of Texas Jackson School of Geosciences this fall. She's joined by Hondo High School's Brandon Garcia of Hondo and Uvalde's Enrique Morales.

"Being a part of the GeoFORCE Program changed my perspective on my future," Hong wrote. "I never thought I would study geosciences, but I'm glad I am."

Nikki Dargahi and Cecilia Jeffers both graduated from Westside High School in Houston, Texas and joined Hong, Garcia, and Morales at the Jackson School. Dargahi wrote that being part of the GeoFORCE Program helped her "a great deal" in choosing to both attend college and major in geology.

These six will not be the only alumni of their GeoFORCE class to become geoscientists. William Rosen of Bellaire High School in Houston currently attends Houston Community College, but he plans to transfer to the University of Houston to "finish my degree in geoscience."

Regina Ramirez-Anzures of Eagle Pass High School chose to major in environmental engineering at UT Austin. She thanked the GeoFORCE Program for connecting her with professionals and experts in the field and influencing her choice of major. Ramirez-Anzures is one of five engineering majors. Six other alumni have entered into computer science and one is now studying mathematics—all fields that can and may lead them back to the geosciences in the future.

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/>.

Thank you for attending the Inaugural GeoFORCE Senior Recognition and Awards Event!



GeoFORCE Senior Recognition & Awards Event closing slide, showcasing the GeoFORCE Southwest 11th grade cohort in the summer of 2019.

ATTENTION ALL SENIORS!

Mark your calendars for these three
virtual "college talks"

#1 - College 101 and Alumni Panel
Thursday, Sept 16, 5:30 - 7pm CST

#2 - UT Admissions Talk
Monday, Sept 20, 5 - 6pm CST

#3 - Scholarship and Apps Workshop
Wednesday, Oct 6, 5:30 - 7pm CST

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

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: GEOFORCE SENIOR RECOGNITION AND AWARDS EVENT

On August 19th, 2021, GeoFORCE Texas held its inaugural Senior Recognition and Awards Event. This virtual celebration recognized valedictorians and salutatorians of the most recent GeoFORCE high school graduating class and those who chose to pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees in college this fall. Chris Bel, Associate Dean of the Jackson School, also welcomed the incoming geoscience majors. Certain members of the GeoFORCE community were also recognized with awards for their outstanding support for the program.

GeoFORCE Staff of the Year went to summer instructor [Chelsea Mackaman-Loftland](#).

"Chelsea is an accomplished and exemplary educator who approaches every lesson with the utmost care and insight," one nominator wrote. "She knows how to connect with students and exudes confidence, competence, and positivity that makes for a special experience for GeoFORCE students."

April Duerson and the Schlumberger BOLD team were the GeoFORCE Volunteers of the Year. Duerson was a guest speaker on two different GeoFORCE summer academies, sharing practical tips on preparing for college and choosing a career path. Additionally, Duerson and the BOLD team worked with GeoFORCE staff to intentionally invite program alumni to their BRIDGE conferences, as well as create a special master class to help these alumni learn relevant networking skills.

Finally, three GeoFORCE alumni and one honorary inductee were invited to be the first members of the GeoFORCE Hall of Fame. The honorary member is Doug Ratcliff, first director of the GeoFORCE program, from its founding in 2005 until his retirement in 2012.

Following Ratcliff, [Enrique Reyes](#), [Stephanie Suarez](#), and [Izaak Ruiz](#) were welcomed as Hall of Fame inductees. These GeoFORCE alumni were all recognized because of their passion for the geosciences, success in their education and careers, exemplary work in outreach, and willingness to give back to the program.

The inaugural GeoFORCE Senior Recognition and Awards Event was a complete success, with alumni, current students, family members, friends of the program, corporate sponsors, staff members, and even a few interested guests all in attendance. A recording of this event can be watched [here](#) (beginning at 18:30.)