Letter from the Chair 2015 — The year in review

I hope this newsletter finds you well! The Department of Geology has had a busy year.

On a happy note, Dr. Robert Lodge joined our department this fall. Rob is an economic geologist with a specialty in volcanogenic massive sulfide (VMS) deposits. Also, I had a sabbatical this spring, and Dr. Phil Ihinger did a great job as acting chair while I was “away.” On a sad note, Dr. Katherine Grote resigned from her tenured hydrogeology slot while I was “away.” On a happy note, Sammy Castonguay found a tenure-track job with a community college in Oregon. In addition, we were able to hire Dr. Stephen Sellwood (UWEC x99, new UW-Madison hydrogeology Ph.D.) to cover our hydrogeology course sequence during the coming year.

We have been working hard to build the Responsible Mining Initiative [RMI] with continued funding from a $451,000 UW System Economic Development Incentive Grant. A space is currently being modeled for use as a combined economic geology/hydrogeology lab (Phillips 219, the old general access computer lab). Faculty have attended professional conferences to develop paid internship opportunities for our students in industry and fund scholarships for our students. In addition, Lori and Scott developed and taught a workshop for high school teachers.

Our efforts to enhance internship and scholarship opportunities have been a resounding success. This summer ten students will have paid internships with mining companies, environmental consulting firms, and regulatory agencies. This is more than twice the number of internships our students had two years ago! In addition, $41,000 in scholarships and grants were awarded at the spring banquet thanks to generous alumni and corporations. These opportunities are helping to differentiate our program from others in the Midwest (see included stories).

Students and faculty continue to conduct research expanding the knowledge of our natural world. Students (with faculty mentors) have been researching topics such as quartz crystal geochemistry and the metamorphic history of the Swiss Alps (Ihinger), soil moisture/hydraulic conductivity measurements using geophysics (Grote), salt in snow melt runoff (Grote), nanoparticle growth using TEM (Hooper), geologic conceptions and communications (Clark), Flambeau VMS geochemistry (Lodge), Neogene basin analysis in Argentina (supported by Mahoney's three-year NSF grant), Cambrian stratigraphy in Montana (Mahoney and Pignotta), origin of greenstone belts in Minnesota (Pignotta), petrography of frac sand cements in Wisconsin (Mahoney and Syverson), Precambrian dikes in Wisconsin (Castonguay), and lava flow geochemistry in Oregon (Castonguay). Not only this, but two students presented research results at regional and national conferences, the flexibility to send students to present research results at regional and national conferences, and several upper-division hydrogeology students who have been working hard to build the Responsible Mining Initiative [RMI] with continued funding from a $451,000 UW System Economic Development Incentive Grant.

Proposed budget cuts to the UW System have dominated the campus since February. The proposed budget cuts ($250 million over two years) will have negative consequences, and I encourage alumni to urge support for the UW System.

Donations of alumni and friends continue to be extremely important to our program. Even as we have received several large corporate gifts this year, the smaller, undesignated gifts from alumni and friends commonly provide the department with the flexibility to send students to present research results at regional and national conferences, fix equipment, support our field program for undergraduates, and fund valuable scholarships to defray rising tuition expenses. Alumni who send job announcements and speak for our Earth Science Seminar Series help our students see the world beyond the campus walls. Thanks for your support! If you are ever in the Eau Claire area, please stop by and visit us!
FIELD CAMP I – NEW MEXICO

The 2015 edition of Field Camp I once again returned to Kingston, New Mexico, and the Black Range Lodge. Geoff Pignotta, Brian Mahoney, Scott Clark, and Sammy Castonguay taught the field experience. The weather, as normal for January in New Mexico, was a bit fickle – warm and sunny one day, and blustery and cold the next. This year we had to cut the Trujillo Canyon exercise short due to blizzard conditions with high winds and horizontal snow! We had our annual visit to the Chino Mine, which was as impressive as ever, although we missed the guidance of Olivia Iverson (x12), who shifted positions within Freeport McMoran and moved to sunny Tucson and could no longer lead our tours. As always, Field Camp I allowed students to develop important field skills preparing them for future endeavors!

One of the highlights of the trip was having Paul and Welthy Myers with the crew for the entire New Mexico field camp. It was excellent to have Paul in the field and to watch him interact with the students. The students couldn’t really complain about the rigors of fieldwork when “Doc Myers,” in his 80’s, was climbing the mountains in Apache Gap right alongside them! This also allowed the 2015 Myers/Willis scholarship recipients to meet a legendary (but real!) figure in our department’s history!

FIELD CAMP II – MONTANA

By Geoffrey Pignotta

The 2015 edition of Field Camp II was once again held in southwestern Montana, home to beautiful scenery, wonderful people and some of the most spectacular geology on the continent. New faculty member Robert Lodge was on hand to experience Montana and our field camp program for the first time. We were joined by two wonderful alumni, Jessica Meyers and Ellen Buelow, as TA’s for the class. This year 14 students participated in field camp. As always, our hosts at the Iron Wheel Guest Ranch, John and Sherry Cargill, provided us with fantastic accommodations and heartwarming hospitality. Everyone was in great spirits despite some early wet weather, but we fared well and did not lose much time. The end of our experience was a much different story with temperatures breaking the 90°F barrier for most of the last exercise! Phenomenal weather to finish up an excellent field camp.

The group did a great job handling the challenging geology and the oppressive heat. Great strides with mapping skills were made by all students and all are on their way toward becoming geology professionals. The annual tour of the Golden Sunlight was fantastic. We had fine weather for the tour and were fortunate to view a great production blast. Golden Sunlight is also generously donating portions of drill core to the department to further develop our economic geology collection and course. Rob Lodge also gathered some fine samples while digging through the stockpiles. As always, if you ever find yourself in southwestern Montana in late May-early June feel free to join us!
Death Valley Spring Break Trip 2015

By Sammy Castonguay and Geoff Pignotta

This year’s UWEC spring break geologic excursion was led by Sammy Castonguay and Geoff Pignotta into the Death Valley-Owens Valley region. Eleven tough geology students spent spring break in the eastern California desert examining Neoproterozoic-Cambrian age sedimentary rocks, Basin and Range tectonics, the Sierra Nevada Batholith, and the Long Valley Caldera! What a line-up!

The trip began with a tour of the Blue Diamond Gypsum mine west of Las Vegas to examine the complex deposits of the Permian gypsiferous Kaibab Formation, and later students laid out sleeping bags under the stars on beds of the Pleistocene paleolake Tecopa. These lake beds contain a layer of ash from the last major Yellowstone eruption, which have undergone seismically induced soft-sediment deformation (seismites). The group spent the next two days looking at the classically named Amargosa Chaos in southern Death Valley. To understand the deformation, we first had to look at some of the stratigraphy: from Snowball Earth-induced glacial diamictites and dropstones of the Kingston Peak Fm. to trilobite impressions of the Cambrian Carrara Fm. The Amargosa Chaos displays multi-phase deformation and includes several fault blocks and landslide deposits recording the opening of a proto-Death Valley basin during the Miocene. Some pretty heavy structural geology to start the trip! Says Geoff, “The Amargosa Chaos is where Sammy Castonguay recently completed his master’s thesis, and we were so very fortunate to have him lead us through some amazing geology.” We spent three days accompanied by Drs. Paul Wetmore and Tim Dixon and grad students from the University of South Florida, looking at classic structures on the east side of Death Valley. Blugolds at 86 m below sea level! From box folds and pencil cleavage to klippen and boudinage, the structural geology students were able to see many structures they had just learned about in class.

Although there is much to see in Death Valley, the group was craving some volcanic rocks! As we entered Owens Valley, the picturesque Sierra Nevada stood majestically in the west. “Real mountains!” called one of the students over the radio. We spent a day traversing the chain of Mono-Inyo craters, which are young (40,000 – 600 yrs) silicic vents stretching north–south in the middle of the 32 x 18 km Long Valley Caldera. This caldera ejected the 600 km³ Bishop Tuff. The group basked in the twilight alpenglow of the Sierra after hiking the obsidian dome of Panum Crater. In southern Owens Valley, we stayed near the famous Alabama Hills, which are a very common feature in Hollywood films, traveled into Whitney Portal to examine the beautiful granodiorites of the batholith proper, and saw the highest peak in the Lower 48 (Mt. Whitney at 14,505 ft). The next day we got up-close and personal with the oldest living known organisms on Earth: 5000-yr-old bristlecone pines.

The trip was full of spectacular geology, fun characters, and plenty of memory-sculpting moments!

1. Faulted volcanic rocks.
2. Beauty in the desert.
3. Welcome to my home!
4. Welcome to my home as well!
5. Mighty Man (holding pumice….)!
7. Instructor Sammy Castonguay cooking up a storm.
8. It’s a long way to Eau Claire….
9. Overturned syncline, Grapevine Mtns.
11. Dune-running in Death Valley.
1. Haillie Passow uses a soil auger as part of her hydrogeology/geophysics research project in Washburn County, WI.
2. Dan Brennan with a quartz vein in the high Alps of Switzerland.
3. Joey Vidmar explains the joys of muscovite to a young girl at the UWEC Geology booth, Eau Claire County Fair, July 2014.
5. Alyssa Leidel and Alex Hutter in Argentina.
6. Geology researcher (or perhaps cowboy?) Chaz McCann in Argentina.
7. Rachel Fillet and Justin Poirier study the mineralogy of frac sand cements, Eau Claire.
8. Forest Friedrichs and Chase Friedemann present their research poster at the North-Central GSA meeting, Monona Terrace, Madison. Eleven students were first authors on posters and one student gave a talk — a great showing!
9. Mitch Lassa works on his frac sand survey research, Eau Claire.
Responsible Mining Initiative Update

By Kent Syverson

“The Responsible Mining Initiative is providing amazing new opportunities for our students.”

In November 2013, the University of Wisconsin System awarded UW-Eau Claire Geology a $451,000 Economic Development Incentive Grant to create a Responsible Mining program (see brochure at http://www.uwec.edu/Geology/upload/RMI-at-UW-Eau-Claire_final.pdf). This grant was awarded to prepare highly qualified graduates for work in the mining industry, the environmental consulting industry, and in regulatory agencies such as the DNR.

Has it had a positive impact on students? Absolutely! Here are two telling statistics: Geology scholarships and grants in 2013 ($2500) vs. 2015 ($41,000), and the number of paid internships in 2013 (4) vs. 2015 (10). Four internships give UWEC Geology majors preference in the hiring process—a huge advantage for our students. These things have raised the profile of the Dept. of Geology. In July 2014, UWEC’s Chancellor, the UW System President, and a UW Regent visited Smart Sand Inc.’s facility in Oakdale, WI (see photo). They saw two Blugold geologists (Todd Lindblad, x13; Tony Linhart, x14) working salaried jobs at the Smart Sand facility, in addition to the first Responsible Mining Initiative intern, Nick Matula.

These successes have required much work to build relationships with industry. Faculty have attended professional meetings in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Toronto, and Houston. Mahoney and Syverson helped organize an Eau Claire SME meeting and field trip with a strong frac sand focus (attended by many Blugold geology alumni!). Faculty have visited industrial facilities to build relationships and arrange internships. Clark and Snyder have taught two mining workshops for pre-college-level teachers. A new economic geology/hydrogeology lab space is currently being remodeled and should be ready this fall. Lots of work, but it has been exciting to see students benefit from

INTERNSHIP CORNER

One goal of the Responsible Mining Initiative is to provide practical work experiences for our undergraduate students through paid internships. We now have four Responsible Mining Initiative internships with Fairmount Santrol, Smart Sand Inc., and Unimin Corp. where Blugold geology majors are given preference over students from other universities.

Our efforts to enhance internship opportunities have been a resounding success. This summer seven students will have paid RMI internships with Fairmount Santrol (Menomonie/Maiden Rock), Smart Sand Inc. (n=2, Tomah), SEH Inc. (Chippewa Falls), Teck Resources (western Canada), and Unimin Corp. (n=3, Mankato, MN, and Tunnel City, WI). Two other students have paid internships with Barr Engineering (Minneapolis) and the North Dakota Dept. of Health-Groundwater Division. This is more than double the number of internships our students had two years ago! These opportunities are helping to differentiate our program from others in the Midwest.

RACHEL FLIFLET
Geology Intern (non-metallic mining)
Fairmount Santrol
Menomonie and Maiden Rock, WI

JACOB DURAND and NICHOLAS MATULA (2014, 2015)
Geology Interns (non-metallic mining)
Smart Sand Inc.
Oakdale, WI

DANIEL BRENNAN (Environmental Affairs, Mankato, MN)

BRYCE KUJAWA (Geology, non-metallic mining, Tunnel City, WI)

JUSTIN POIRIER (2014, 2015, Geology, non-metallic mining, Tunnel City, WI, not pictured)
Unimin Corporation

SARAH KINTNER
Hydrogeology Intern
Barr Engineering, Minneapolis, MN

ANNA BRICKHEIMER
Environmental Geology Intern
SEH Inc., Chippewa Falls, WI

BEN DEGNER
Hydrogeology intern
North Dakota Dept. of Health-Groundwater Division

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ALEX HUTTER
Geology intern (metallic mining)
Teck Resources
Western Canada

(Continued on page 7)
Unable to resist the lure of tropical Wisconsin winters, Audrey relocated back to Eau Claire.
Audrey (Mohr) Boerner (2011)

Audrey (Mohr) Boerner (2011). Unable to resist the lure of tropical Wisconsin winters, Audrey relocated back to Eau Claire from Nebraska this past year as Zach accepted an admissions position at UWEC. She completed a two-county community health assessment while working in a nine-month temporary position with the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. Audrey now works for the Institute for Wisconsin’s Health, Inc. as a Health Impact Assessment Specialist. She is guiding the Health Impact Assessment Program of Industrial Sand Mining in Western Wisconsin.

Andy Eddy (2004). Andy is currently a project leader in the Petroleum Remediation Program for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. This program provides oversight for investigations of petroleum leak sites in Minnesota.

William Gaunitz (2014). Will is a working in Montana as a Geo-steerer with Sudbrink Geological Consulting.

Alan Gustafson (2013). Alan writes, “Things changed in for me in August as I made a switch in jobs from my position of Hydrogeologist at the Wisconsin DNR to an Environmental Scientist at REI Engineering, Inc. I recently studied for, took, and passed the Fundamentals of Geology Exam after 3+ years out of the Geology game. But it proved that you CAN teach and old dog new tricks! I hope to take the Principles of Geology Exam in five years and become a licensed P.G. REI is keeping me busy, and I am learning many new things about hydrogeology as it relates to industry, as well as doing some safety/environmental compliance work.”

Doug Hallum (1996). Doug writes, “2014 was my 2nd year with UNL, and domestic chores were the focus for me and Paula. Spending a year renting was plenty for both of us, so we purchased a turn-of-the-(20th)-century home and have begun making it our own with new landscape, floors, doors and fences. We also had our required recreation: summer camping/fishing and winter trips to WI to visit the grandchildren, and my annual muleloader hunting retreat to the Pine Ridge of Nebraska, where I was joined by fellow UWEC alum Greg Michael (x96) last December. Perhaps Greg will share with you the press that our friend John got for his efforts during that outing.”

Frank Heaton (2014). Frank is an Inside Sales Representative with Detection & Measurement Systems, Inc., an oil and gas support company in Houston, TX. The company supplies detection, monitoring and alarm notification products for use in hazardous/explosive environments.

Jacob Heimdal (2011). Jacob is a staff engineer at GSI Engineering LLC, Des Moines, Iowa.

Breck Johnson (2004). Breck writes, “Greetings to all my fellow UWEC alums and families. I hope this note finds you all happy and healthy. After leaving UWEC, I went to grad school at UNC-Chapel Hill and received an MS degree working with Drs. Allen Glazner and Drew Coleman. I had the misfortune of working on a project that required me to spend two summers mapping and collecting samples in Yosemite National Park… During my last semester, I decided to try an internship in the oil industry and now this year marks eight years working for Anadarko Petroleum Corporation. My wife, Erin, and I have two kids, Adelie (6) and Quinn (4), along with our two dogs. We get through the Houston summers by enjoying time on the boat and in the pool. We really miss our Midwestern roots and try to get back as often as possible. If you’re ever in the Houston area, please don’t hesitate to get in touch. “Outcrops in the Rain…!”

“...it proved that you CAN teach an old dog new tricks!”
Alan Gustafson (2013)

Tony Jones (1992). Tony reports, “I am still a Professional Land Surveyor and was recently awarded my GIS Professional Certification. I have spent the last three years using ESRI software to keep Vilas County maps up to date. Last fall, Vilas County purchased a Trimble RTK network rover, so I’m also in the field on a weekly basis, recovering and restoring USPLSS monuments. I’ve become somewhat of a fair-weather surveyor now, and only seem to find time to get out in the field when it’s between 60° and 75° and sunny. Oh, the humanity! My wife, Nancy, still oversees our local Payless Shoes store. Our oldest daughter will graduate from the Kinesiology program at UWEC in December, so we are a proud alumni family. The three remaining at home keep us busy with the high school drama and sporting events. Apparently, a hundred sporting events were not enough for us, so we brought a chocolate lab puppy into our house last June, with promises of ‘Oh, we’ll pick up after him’ and ‘Yes, we’ll feed him.’ Played me like a two-bit fiddle. I should have seen it coming. In May 2015 I performed on stage for the Nicolet Players production of The Mystery of Edwin Drood at Nicolet College in Rhinelander.

It’s quite a spectacle, to say the least, when an uncoordinated, unmusical child of the 70’s gets up to sing and dance!”

Patrick Keicher (2015). Patrick writes, “I started a job as a driller/field geologist with Terracon, an engineering consulting firm. I will be learning how to do geotechnical work as well as training into an environmental role as the year goes on.”

Ric Kopp (1975). Ric writes, “The last year has been exciting for the Kopp Clan. Jacqueline and I had our third granddaughter, Skyla Marie, arrive in December, so now we have a grandson and two granddaughters. I went from consulting to creating my own company, Pinion Hill Resources. I put together a prospect idea in the Uinta Basin, partnered with an independent land man, and found investors to buy acreage. I put the prospect together, sold it to an operating company, drilled and completed the first oil well in January, and it is excellent producer. Now we are working on a ten-well development project. With low oil prices, other costs also are down and thus make the project economic. Hope to get back and visit the department this fall.”

Mitch Korth (2010). Mitch is a mud logger with Lewis Energy Group in Austin, TX.

Josh Leable (2012). Josh is a staff geologist at Cedar Corporation in Menomonie, WI.

April Leistikow (2014). April works for Halliburton in Lafayette, LA. She works on offshore drilling platforms in the Gulf of Mexico.

Jessica Meyers (2011). Jessica received her M.S. in Geology in 2014 from Idaho State University.

Bridget (Wolff) Osborn (2009). Bridget is a water resource engineer at HR Green, Inc.

Kali Pace (2005). Kali and Christopher welcomed a baby boy to their family in October 2014.

Haillie Passow (2015). Haillie recently accepted a hydrogeology LTE position with Eau Claire’s WDNR office working with the PECFA program.

Shane Peterson (2008). Shane reports, “I’ve been a geologist for Chevron in the San Joaquin Valley for about three years now, and am loving it. I am currently working the in the Coalinga field developing and executing horizontal wells, along with a long list of other things. Even though the price environment for the oil industry is at an ebb, I would strongly suggest current students & alumni who are interested to seek a master’s degree and pursue a career in petroleum. I have found it very fulfilling. Outside of work, things have been good. I have been traveling and enjoying the sunny Southern California lifestyle.”

ALUMNI NEWS (continued on page 7)

“...instead of studying plagioclase, water tables or fault lines, I study toddler nutritional eating habits, play dates, and carpet vacuum lines. But I wouldn’t have it any other way!”

Tony Jones (1992)

Melissa (Weisheipl) Shine (2002). Melissa writes, ”After having our daughter, Avery, in May 2013, I decided to stay home full time. So, instead of studying plagioclase, water tables or fault lines, I study toddler nutritional eating habits, play dates, and carpet vacuum lines. But I wouldn’t have it any other way!”

Chris Stovern (2014). Chris is employed as a mud logger with Zia Geological in Artesia, NM.

Paula Sumpter (1983). Paula is a project manager with the UW System Library Services Platform at UW-Madison.

Alex Thompson (2010). Alex writes, “I’ve been living in Juneau, AK, and working at the Kensington Gold Mine for four years. I spend my working days doing ore control, underground mapping, core drill planning, and geological modelling. My time off is spent hiking, fishing, and travelling. Life is good in Alaska, but you can’t beat the beer prices at the Joyn’t.”

Matt Thompson (2011). Matt recently accepted a position with Eau Claire’s WDNR office interacting with the DOT.

Sarah Ulrich (2011). Sarah reports, “I’m working on a Ph.D. in geochemistry at Virginia Tech. This summer, I will be at Kyushu University in Fukuoka, Japan, as one of the NSF’s East Asia Pacific Studies Institute (EAPS) fellows. There I will be looking at how Mn-oxides recover various metals, in order to do everything from cleaning up contaminated sites, to pulling lithium out of seawater.”

Chad Underwood (1996). Chad writes, “2014 was another busy and successful year on the business side of things, as construction activity in the Twin Cities area has been increasing at a very high rate. I’ve been fortunate to work on some high-profile projects in the area, including the new Vikings Stadium in Minneapolis and the new St. Croix River Bridge in Stillwater, MN. Our kids are in second grade this year in the Hudson (WI) school district. Alison continues to do some substitute teaching, so she has been busy too. A highlight of my year was the honor of presenting a talk to UWEC students in December. I spoke about the role of geology in engineering and construction, and it was great to get back on campus!”

Kris Weaver Bowman (1996). Kris writes, “I continue to teach science education and general education classes at CSUF. Recently, I was part of a STEM team that obtained a grant to integrate multidisciplinary components of the Next Generation Science Standards into our science education curriculum. We developed a cross-course project for our pre-teacher and pre-engineer classes. In it they were asked to evaluate the data and decide on a location for a landfill. The students were very enthusiastic and had thoughtful ideas about the problem. On the home front, my boys (ages 6, 10 and 40-something) keep me busy, too. I am first-grader Zach’s Tiger Den leader and the Cub Scout Day Camp Program Director again this summer. Xander, my 4th grader and a Webelos scout, is starting to play golf (I hope to go out on the links with him soon), and Zach is playing hockey! Dave, the oldest of my “boys”, was just offered - and he accepted - the position of Interim Dean of our College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics! Never a dull moment!”

David Winter (1992). David is the President at Lord & Winter, an environmental consulting firm in the Nashville area.

Kris Weaver Bowman (1996). Kris writes, “I continue to teach science education and general education classes at CSUF. Recently, I was part of a STEM team that obtained a grant to integrate multidisciplinary components of the Next Generation Science Standards into our science education curriculum. We developed a cross-course project for our pre-teacher and pre-engineer classes. In it they were asked to evaluate the data and decide on a location for a landfill. The students were very enthusiastic and had thoughtful ideas about the problem. On the home front, my boys (ages 6, 10 and 40-something) keep me busy, too. I am first-grader Zach’s Tiger Den leader and the Cub Scout Day Camp Program Director again this summer. Xander, my 4th grader and a Webelos scout, is starting to play golf (I hope to go out on the links with him soon), and Zach is playing hockey! Dave, the oldest of my “boys”, was just offered - and he accepted - the position of Interim Dean of our College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics! Never a dull moment!”

David Winter (1992). David is the President at Lord & Winter, an environmental consulting firm in the Nashville area.
the spring. This was my 10th semester of teaching Earth Science and I have now taught over 600 Elementary and Special Education majors. January marked the fourth time that I helped out at our New Mexico field camp – a place where I always enjoy spending a few weeks in January with fellow faculty members and students.

In regards to active research projects, Mitch Lassa, who has been working in my lab for just over a year, has been very busy as he split his research time between two projects. At the start of last summer, we sent out a questionnaire to County Board Supervisors to learn what they know about frac sand and how they perceive the frac sand mining industry. This is an important topic because in most cases, these board members are the people who determine whether or not a mine obtains a permit. We analyzed data from nearly 100 board members and learned that many of them have made the effort to educate themselves about the topic. We were happy to see that their most trusted source of information is university scientists.

Mitch presented our findings at this year’s UWEC Celebration of Excellence in Research and Creative Activity, and at the North-Central GSA meeting in Madison, WI. Future research efforts will focus on learning what the general population in western Wisconsin knows, and what misconceptions are held, with regard to frac sand mining.

The other research project has Mitch sifting through a database of newsprint articles on climate change. We decided to take a novel approach to analyze how print media frames their articles on the topic of climate change – we looked at long-term temporal trends in the quotes of the most frequently cited climate experts. Looking at 33 years of data can be daunting, but Mitch has been doing a great job and we will be presenting the results at the 2015 GSA meeting in Baltimore. Over the coming years, the lab group will continue our work into experts’ evolving stances on the topic of climate change.

In addition, a manuscript from a previous research project has been tentatively accepted by the journal *Geosphere*. The manuscript, co-authored by Xai Her (x14), Ellen Buelow (x13), is entitled “Factors influencing non-expert term usage during a disaster: An analysis of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.” We are working on the revisions and expect to have the article published this year.

Last summer involved a few outreach projects, including a week-long Responsible Mining workshop for area high school teachers that Lori Snyder and I co-facilitated. We visited a number of mines from a sand and gravel pit to a frac sand mine and two active taconite mines in Minnesota, including Hibtac where we met up with UWEC alumnus Kris Benusa (x12) and saw some reclamation work that takes place in an active mine. Lori and I are looking forward to leading the workshop again this summer. Last July marked the second year in a row that the department participated in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) outreach at the Eau Claire County Fair. A number of our students volunteered to help share the joys of geology with the public. Of special note, Joey Vidmar’s (x15) efforts point to a possible future for him as a science teacher!

On the home front, Francine has been working as an aide at Meadowview Elementary for the past few years. Next year, she will become the school’s secretary. Our daughter Patricia just turned ten and is living the high life of a fourth grader, which includes lots of skating practice and lots of time with horses through a wonderful 4-H program. That’s about it from me. Here’s wishing all of you the best.

KATHERINE GROTE, Associate Professor
grote@uwec.edu

Greetings to UWEC alumni and geology friends! As always, the year has flown by, and the annual update underscores that for me. It has been another eventful year, filled with teaching and research with many great students, all of whom presented at NC GSA and/or WGWA this year. Sarah (Knuston) Kintner and Hailie Passow worked on a project to estimate field-scale hydraulic conductivity using GPR and double-ring infiltrometer data; they presented both at NC GSA and at WGWA, where they won best poster award, even though competing against graduate students. Ben Degner and Kinsey Stoll performed a vadose zone modeling project that supported Sarah and Hailie’s work by quantifying the infiltration rates and durations needed for GPR analysis of hydraulic conductivity to be valid. Tanner Bakke, Greg Burgess, and Justin Dowling continued and expanded the “stream team” project to investigate chlorides from road salting in groundwater and surface water in Eau Claire County, and they won the third place poster award at WGWA. Matt Michalski, Justin Dowling, and Mitch Enderson have been updating and modernizing our groundwater maps of Eau Claire County; they are using DNR data from the last ten years to create an interactive GIS map of groundwater elevation, as well as developing a similar map of groundwater susceptibility to contamination. I have been extremely fortunate to have such a talented and motivated research team, and I will miss each
of them as they graduate and move on to other pursuits. About moving on... This year at UWEC has been bittersweet for me, as I decided this spring to accept a faculty position in the Geological Engineering department at my undergraduate alma mater, the Missouri University of Science and Technology (MST), located in Rolla, MO. I am excited to be returning to Missouri and being closer to my family, but am already missing the wonderful students and colleagues I have known at Eau Claire. It has truly been a privilege to work with you, and I have to thank all the great students who both put up with me while I was learning to teach and taught me to love teaching. I am so fortunate to have had you as partners in research and in the classroom, and I wish you all the best in your future. I would still love to hear from you – my official email is katherine.r.grote@gmail.com, and although I don’t have my MST email yet, I’m sure it will be easy to find in another couple of months. If you are ever “down south” in my vicinity, please stop by – there is a wonderful exposure with exciting geology at Taum Sauk, only ~1 hour away, and there is a great swimming hole there besides. In the meantime, take care and God bless!

KAREN HAVHOLM, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Research havholkm@uwec.edu

This academic year ended on a high note in spite of the dismal news about the university budget. We had the largest CERCA (Celebration of Excellence in Research and Creative Activity - 23rd annual Student Research Days plus the Provost’s Honors Symposium) event yet with 266 posters, 90 oral sessions, 2 films, and 6 lecture/performances involving 585 students and 196 faculty (that is about half the faculty). We also had a pilot event called “Quick Pitch” — a competition among students to give the best 3-minute elevator speech. Next year CERCA is April 27-29 — plan to come see if you can. I promise you will be impressed.

The other nice thing (and some of you may have seen on the Geology Department Facebook page) — the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs won the UW System Regents award for the top non-academic unit in the UW System this year. We attended a Regents meeting to receive it and bask in congratulations.

I guess after you live in Wisconsin for more than 20 years you become sufficiently native to invest in a “cabin up north.” We bought a place right on the Chippewa River a little over an hour north of Eau Claire. It is a project — currently in the middle of redoing the roof and adding insulation. I foresee many years of tinkering with it, and hope to have many guests there to enjoy the river. Word is there is a great fishing hole right by our place — guess I will have to learn to fish. Although these days he is a fairly full-time roofer, my husband still works part-time for a nonprofit in Menomonie that provides services to troubled youth. My daughter and her husband are both still in graduate school, and will be visiting from Edmonton soon.

A colleague at the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey is picking up the Devils Island Sandstone project that Lynn Galston (x08) and I worked on a decade ago, and I got to do some field work this summer to orient her to the rocks. The Apostle Islands are still beautiful (and still have lots of mosquitoes). Some of the work was presented at NC GSA and it was fun to connect with several of you in Madison.

Back to the budget: there will be severe cuts in all sorts of things next year. The university is doing its best to protect the student experience, but this cut, coming on top of a decade of cuts, is so severe that will not be entirely possible. Fortunately the differential tuition that students pay somewhat buffers the funding for undergraduate research, but the budget cuts will still have some effect. Please think about donating what you can to be sure students can continue to have great research and conference presentation experiences, as well as field camp and course-based field trips. I don’t usually like to ask people for money, but if the government will no longer support education, someone needs to.

ROBERT HOOPER, Professor hooperl@uwec.edu

Greetings alumni and friends. Wow – I successfully finished my thirty-second year at UW Eau Claire and I can certainly say it has been exciting to see the changes we’ve made at the university in those 32 years. Our geology students continue to excel on a national level and I think in part this is because of the wonderful balance in the program between the real field and laboratory experiences that the department has built into the undergraduate curriculum. I hope we can maintain the quality we’ve established in the program in the face of increasing budgetary constraints and the continuous frontal assaults on public education in Wisconsin.

My teaching duties remain centered on Mineralogy and Petrology I in the fall semester and Geochemistry in the spring, as well as a couple of sections of physical geology which I am teaching in a very exciting field-mode. This spring my physical geology course was able to go the Lake Wissota Dam on March 19th, which is by far the earliest I’ve ever made it into the field, and the weather was an almost perfect 50°F, sunny with calm winds. For Physical Geology we fit in a total of seven lab days in the field over the course of the semester, and I know students learned a lot from the experience. Min-Pet I field trips this past year were a learning experience as well. The Mid-Continent Rift (Mellen, WI) field trip in the beginning of October was cold and wet with high water along most of the streams in northern WI and the UP. It snowed one night and never got out of the 30’s for the whole weekend. Students learned a great deal on the Mellen field trip, but mostly about the importance of being prepared and how to survive inclement weather! Two weeks later the field trip to the Black Hills was just the opposite. It may have been mid-October, but the weather was in the 70’s and dry all weekend. Most of the students even went swimming in Sheridan Lake, and while I won’t claim the water was warm, it was refreshing!

I have a couple of students doing research on nano-particles in natural environments. Ellyn Swenson (x15) just finished a project looking at metal sequestration as natural nano-particles grow into larger more crystalline minerals. Nano-particle growth mechanisms have important implications for metal transport in low-temperature environmental systems. Sarah Kintner (x16), the department’s Goldwater Scholarship recipient, is starting a new project this summer on natural nano-particles in public water supplies. In addition to work, I continue to enjoy winter trips to scuba dive in tropical climates, downhill skiing in the Rockies, and biking the great country roads of west-central Wisconsin.

PHILLIP HINGER, Professor hinger@uwec.edu

Greetings, Blugold Geologists and Friends! I’ve just finished my one-semester stint as Acting Chair, and what a wild semester it has been! We have seen a lot of changes to our Department, our University, and our State, and there is just no way to hide that we’ve all been on quite a rollercoaster ride. Needless to say, not all of it has been fun. The front line in the War on Public Education is now in our backyard, and we find ourselves battling for the future of our Wisconsin (and neighboring Minnesota) students. Tenure (i.e., academic freedom) and Shared Governance (i.e., faculty participation in curricular and administrative policy) have been stripped from state law. There seems to be a contingent of taxpayers and politicians here who believe that the University should be run the same way that a business is run. That is, a strong, top-down management (appointed by state officials) is the only way to get things done efficiently. That might even be true, if all teachers had to do was treat their students as if they (i.e., you!) were McDonald’s hamburgers. The problem is, we are NOT trying to ‘make’ tens of thousands of hamburgers that all look identical to one another. Even if we wanted to do that, it just wouldn’t work. Each of our students has a unique set of traits and motivations distinguishing them from every other student, and each responds differently to a given teaching style. Effective education requires individual attention using an array of high-impact practices, including experiential learning in the field and in the laboratory, as we practice in our Department. Having been through our geology program, I know all of you recognize the value of what we do here. That said, the cuts from the Legislature this year will take away over 50 faculty positions in the College of Arts and Sciences alone, and the morale in those of us that remain has taken a serious hit. This past year, the Geology Department lost our long-term colleague, Katherine Grote, who is departing for greener pastures in Missouri. She made coming to work each day a lot more pleasant, and I will miss her, as well as Sammy Castonguay who left for non-budgetary reasons to take a new job.

Meanwhile, I stay optimistic by watching my family continue to grow in positive ways. Tricia is
Each trip netted literally tons of rock, as we slowly climbed the high spine of the Andes – absolutely spectacular! Chaz McCann on a 30-km horse pack trip into the research center in Argentina, and UWEC student Ben Robsion in December with colleagues from CONICET, the Argentine National Research Council. We spent another couple of weeks with students from Eau Claire, a colleague from SDSU, and the Mountain Research Station in central Andes. We spent about a month last July in the Andes, working with a professor from Kansas State University. We plan to hold an upcoming GSA meetings in the near future!

Greetings UWEC alumni and friends! It was quite a first year at UWEC! It has been a very challenging, but rewarding, experience and I am very impressed by the dedication of the faculty and staff, and our highly successful and deeply loyal alumni, and you realize that we have built one hell of a good Department of Geology at the UWEC. Maybe it is worth the effort……


Robert Lodge at field camp II in Montana.

Robert Lodge, Assistant Professor
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GEOFFREY PIGNOTTA, Field Geology Coordinator
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Another great year here in Eau Claire. How the time flies! It was a long and challenging year, especially this past spring with the mood on campus quite dour. But despite the situation in higher education in Wisconsin, it was a good year. Field camp I in New Mexico this year was a challenge due to weather, but otherwise went pretty well. It was an absolute pleasure to have Paul and Welthy Myers with us for the entire field camp in New Mexico. It was excellent to interact with Paul and watch him interact with the students. Field camp II in Montana also went well. I was happy to have Rob Lodge, Jess Meyers (x11) and Ellen Buelow (x13) out there with me. It was a lot of fun having them as part of the ‘stash crew. This spring Sammy Castonguay and I led a field trip to Death Valley and Owens Valley in California, and it was fantastic to say the least. We had a great group of students with us and really enjoyed the geology, scenery and the absolutely phenomenal weather.

Last year was a fun research year. The summer
was spending south of Dillon, MT, with Brian, Lori, and a crew of students. Great progress is being made in Montana with regards to our mapping efforts. Chaz McCann and I also spent time sampling the Boulder Batholith for (U-Th)/He thermochronology, and this work was presented at CEGA in the fall. Another new research direction began with freshman geology major Kaelyn Blatz. Kaelyn and I have been investigating frac sand using digital image analysis. We are attempting to fully quantify grain shape parameters that are normally estimated visually using a variety of techniques. Kaelyn has been doing a wonderful job with this research project, and she presented her results at CERCA.

Overall life is speeding by in Eau Claire. It is hard to believe that my daughter Sophia will be starting kindergarden in the fall. Time has definitely flown by the past couple of years. Tania is also doing very well at Lakeshore Elementary and she just finished her Master’s degree in Education at Eau Claire. My upcoming summer is going to be mainly spent in Eau Claire as I’m teaching a summer Geol 115 class. This will be a nice change and allow me to spend some time with family at the house getting all the projects completed that usually take a back seat to field work. It is always fantastic to see you all either in the department or just rolling through Eau Claire. Make sure you are fantastic to see you all either in the department or usually take a back seat to field work. It is always the house getting all the projects completed that allow me to spend some time with family at

LORI SNYDER, Senior Lecturer and Undergraduate Program Coordinator
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Hello to everyone! I hope your year has been full and rich. Despite the state budget difficulties (which have greatly impacted morale around the University System and beyond), the Geology Department in Eau Claire has been an active and productive place. My activities have centered on teaching and advising, and also participating in some of the high-impact practices that continue to be the best part of the UW–Eau Claire experience.

Environmental Geology (Geol 115) has become my primary first-year lab course and it has been easy to incorporate current events with flash floods, extreme drought, major earthquakes and more. I was thrilled to be able to teach Earth Resources (Geol 301) in the fall, and Geology 201, as always, was fun and interesting to teach. I am working on a bundle this fall where Geol 115 will be paired with Econ 104 (Macroeconomics). I think this will be a great bundle to help our students understand that 1) the Earth is both our source of raw materials and the receptacle of the waste from the manufacture and consumption of these resources (AKA “pollutants”), and 2) all of these “costs” and “benefits” should be considered in their lives. This summer also marks the second offering of the RMI Workshops for science teachers by Dr. Scott Clark and myself. Education is the key!

I wish all of you joy in the coming year. Once again, please keep in touch and drop by if you are in town!

LORILIE STEINKE, Academic Department Associate
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This year marked the start of my 25th anniversary working at UWEC. It is impossible to believe that I have been on campus that long, but it is true. I am very fortunate to have a position that allows me to work with so many wonderful students, and of course with our fine faculty! This department truly has become a second “family” to me.

My children are now both young adults and doing well. Morgan will start her senior year here at UWEC this fall and Margo is planning to start a new program at CVTC. It is nice to have both kids in Eau Claire again.

As always, keep in touch with me via email, Facebook, or just stop by the office. I enjoy hearing from all of our students and catching up on what you have been doing after your time here at UWEC. Take care!

KENT SYVÉRSON, Professor
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Greetings from Eau Claire! I have now completed my 23rd year in the department, so I guess I am one of the veterans now.

Last fall I taught Glacial Geology and Oceanography, and I had a one-semester sabbatical in the spring. I took instructor-guided online ArcGIS I and II courses with ESRI to enhance my GIS skills. I also continued to seek internships/donations in support of the RMI. Thankfully I was able to avoid many budget meetings, but I did go to Madison with a group of UWEC faculty and students to speak with legislators about proposed budget cuts. The entire budgetary situation has been discouraging.

My fall semester was a whirlwind, as usual. In September Brian Mahoney and I were co-planners of a large SME conference in Eau Claire (including a 90-person frac sand field trip with many Blugold Geology alumni onboard). I also attended a frac sand conference in Houston to build Responsible Mining Initiative [RMI] internship connections. With grading and meetings also occupying “some” time, I was very relieved once the semester was over.

The increasing number of internships and scholarships for our students has been rewarding to see. The response of industry to the RMI has been very favorable, and this continues to be an encouragement. I visited many sand facilities last summer to establish connections, and that will continue this summer as well.

Brian Mahoney and I supervised students Justin Poirier (x16) and Rachel Fliflet (x16) in studying the mineralogy of frac sand cements (Brian was the major supervisor). Justin and Rachel presented their research at the Provost’s Honors Symposium and at NC GSA in Madison. The sand cement project will continue into the next academic year.

My family and I had a good year. We stayed rather close to Eau Claire during the summer. We attended the Syverson family reunion in northwestern MN and somehow found a time for all of us to camp on the North Shore of Lake Superior. This spring my daughter studied abroad in Valladolid, Spain. My wife and I spent eleven days with her in Spain visiting Valladolid, Granada (Alhambra, place where Columbus received permission for his first voyage), Barcelona, and Tarragona (Roman ruins, aqueduct, Mediterranean beach, etc.). It was a wonderful trip, and my daughter returned home safely in mid-May.

I will be around Eau Claire much of the summer. If you are around, please stop by to visit the department!

Emeritus Faculty News

Paul E. Myers, Professor Emeritus
paul.myers600@gmail.com

I can tell you from long experience that the older you get, the faster the years roll by. Trust me.

The goading question is “Which way are we going?” If you’re not careful retirement takes you “away” So, my “return to geology” came this January with a fabulous adventure at Kingston, New Mexico, where my wife, Welthy, and I became part of the class. The UWEC caravan’s arrival was like a circus. Within minutes, everyone was rigging wires, setting up computers, unloading food and supplies, and within hours the instruction began. Amazing! Not a single wasted moment. Team effort, and it stayed that way for the entire 3-week session. Maps, radios, vehicles, students were all there and ready. To a very great degree, this is a result of the supreme efforts of the faculty and support staff. Having been so long away from teaching field camp, I found I was always being “left behind” — especially out there in the field. Wow! I also realized how fast the students were learning, especially all those for whom this was their “solo flight” in the field. This didn’t “just happen” Brian Mahoney. Geoff Pignotta, and Scott Clark pushed each student to his/her limit — in camp and in the field. Projects were
Scholarship Corner

Kinzey Stoll wins Beckstrom Geology Major Scholarship

This year’s recipient of the Beckstrom Geology Major Scholarship is Kinzey Stoll (Springfield, IL). This $1000 scholarship, established in the fall of 2005 by alumnus Greg Beckstrom (x84), is awarded annually to a comprehensive geology major who has completed Mineralogy-Petrology I. The awardee must have an excellent academic record and a demonstrated financial need.

Kinzey, a rising junior in our program, has conducted research with Dr. Katherine Grote to numerically model unsaturated water flow in soils. This has important implications for using GPR techniques to estimate hydraulic conductivity.

Durand, Lassa, and Pickett win Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships

Field camp experiences have become increasingly expensive for students. This scholarship, established by the department in 2006, is intended to lessen the financial burden of field camp for excellent students who also have financial need. The scholarship also honors the contributions of Dr. Paul Myers and Dr. Ronald Willis, geology professors at UWEC who worked very hard to establish a strong field component in our young geology program.

Jacob Durand (Eagan, MN), Mitchell Lassa (Wausau, WI), and Courtney Pickett (Neillsville, WI) are recipients of this year’s Myers/Willis scholarships. Recipients were selected based on performance excellence at Field Camp I in New Mexico. Each student will receive $700 to defray expenses for Field Camp II in Montana. Congratulations!

The Geology Dept. hopes to offer Myers/Willis scholarships to more students each year as the scholarship fund balance rises. We encourage all alumni who have benefited from our field experiences over the years to contribute to this fund. In addition, this is a great way to honor Paul and Ron for their dedication to our field program! See page 19 for information about contributing to this important scholarship fund.

Kintner wins Goldwater Scholarship

(modified from UWEC press release dated 4/21/15)

Only the top 1% of science, math and engineering students in the country are considered for prestigious Goldwater Scholarships, making it all the more impressive to find two UW-Eau Claire students listed among the 2015 winners.

Blugolds Elizabeth Stubbs and Sarah Kintner are among the 260 students awarded Goldwater Scholarships for the 2015-16 academic year. Stubbs, a junior from Maple Plain, Minnesota, is majoring in materials science. Kintner, a junior from Suamico (near Green Bay), is majoring in geology with a hydrogeology emphasis.

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire is one of just three public higher education institutions in Wisconsin and Minnesota to have students earn 2015 Goldwater scholarships. UW-Madison and the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities are the only other public schools in the two states to have students win the highly competitive scholarships this year.

With Stubbs and Kintner, a total of eight Blugolds have earned Goldwater scholarships. Sarah is a University Honors student who has worked on a research project that uses geophysical techniques to do field-scale characterization of agricultural soils. Next year, she will research nanoparticles in the city of Eau Claire’s municipal water system.

Working in the environmental sector was not something she’d considered until she took an introductory geology course, Kintner said. However, now she is very interested in working on groundwater protection, management, and remediation, as well as brownfield remediation.

UNIMIN CORP. AWARDS MERIT-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS TO FRESHMAN AND SOPHOMORE STUDENTS THIS SPRING

2015 Unimin Freshman Geology Scholarships Announced

For the second year, Unimin Corp. has funded a merit-based, annual scholarship for high-potential incoming freshman who are majoring in Geology. This year seven recipients were selected, and each will receive $1000. This year’s winners are Maria Delgado Gomez (Stevens Point), Melissa Hackenmueller (Albertville, MN), Derek Lindquist (Ramsey, MN), Zachary Lydon (Sparta), Tyson Noffke (Holmen), Grace Nuck (Oak Creek), and Betty Walter (Rochester, MN). Recipients’ average ACT composite scores are in the top 15% nationally. Congratulations to these recipients, and we look forward to their arrival on campus this fall!

2015 Unimin Sophomore Geology Scholarships Announced

For the second year, Unimin Corp. has funded a merit-based scholarship for geology majors who will be taking Mineralogy-Petrology in the following fall semester. Four $2500 scholarships will be awarded each year, and the pool for this scholarship competition was extremely strong. The recipients (shown below, left to right), include Sarah Sortedahl (Spring Valley), Olivia Spiegel (Chippewa Falls), Maile Olson (Max, MN), and Adam Wiest (Green Bay, not pictured) with Unimin’s Mark Massicotte (L) and TK Kramasz (R).
Haillie Passow and Ellyn Swenson presented the “Excellence in Geology” Award in 2014-2015

The “Excellence in Geology” Award recognizes the academic achievements of the outstanding graduating geology major, both in coursework and in faculty/student collaborative research. The winners of the Geology Excellence Award for 2014-2015 are Haillie Passow and Ellyn Swenson.

Haillie is a native of Weston, WI. She has completed the University Honors program and will graduate summa cum laude with a comprehensive major in geology and a minor in mathematics. Haillie has conducted research on the estimation of field-scale hydraulic conductivity using geophysical techniques with Dr. Katherine Grote, and she won the first-place poster award at the 2015 Wisconsin Ground Water Association annual meeting, while competing against both graduate and undergraduate students. She also presented her research at NC GSA in Madison this spring. Additionally, Haillie served as an intern last summer for Ensign Drilling in Denver, CO. She will complete hydrogeology field camp this summer, and recently accepted a hydrogeology LTE job with Eau Claire’s WDNR office working with the PECFA program.

Ellyn is from Osceola, WI, and came to UWEC as a freshman in the geology program. Ellyn started doing research with Robert Hooper on the Transmission Electron Microscope during her sophomore year and spent two summers as a research student. Her research involved examination of metal sequestration in nanoparticles from metal-contaminated sites in the western states. Ellyn gave an oral talk about the geochemistry of ferrihydrite as a common metal-sequestering nano-particle at the national GSA meeting in Denver, CO, during her junior year. After spending the spring semester in Scotland in the study-abroad program, she returned the next summer to study other metal-rich nano-particles and started a project to explore how various nanoparticles mature over time into more crystalline phases through the process of aggregation-based crystal growth. Ellyn was invited to present her research at the Posters in the Rotunda event at the Capitol in Madison. Ellyn served as the geology club president during her senior year and is moving to Golden, CO, where she plans to attend graduate school after a short recess.

Katherine Grote leaves for tenured job at Rolla (continued from page one)

Katherine Grote is officially sent off to Rolla with a new engraved hammer and a Blugold blanket. With Acting Chair Phil Ihinger.

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Donation Corner

Unimin, UW-Eau Claire continue partnership on Responsible Mining Initiative

*Modified from 5/21/15 press release*

Unimin Corporation is continuing to invest approximately $50,000 annually in UW-Eau Claire’s Responsible Mining Initiative. For the second year Unimin has committed resources to fund two paid summer internships, seven $1,000 scholarships for first-year geology students, four $2,500 scholarships for sophomore geology students and $10,000 in additional grants to be distributed to UW-Eau Claire geology field camp students.

Two interns have been placed in the Geology Department at Unimin’s Tunnel City, WI, mining operation, and a third is working in the Environmental Affairs Department at Unimin’s North American operations headquarters, in Mankato, MN.

Interns gain valuable work experience and apply knowledge from the classroom. Such experiences can give students an advantage when searching for jobs after they graduate.

“Unimin’s commitment to funding scholarships and internships specifically for UW-Eau Claire students reflects the university’s reputation as an institution that prepares its students for successful careers, and on our commitment to environmental and responsible mining initiatives,” said Dr. Michael Carney, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

The freshman scholarship recipients’ average ACT score was in the top 15 percent nationally, and the pool includes several first-generation college students.

“The freshman scholarships clearly had a positive impact on our recruiting this year,” said Dr. Kent Sverson, chair of the UWEC Geology Department. “Many top-notch prospective students returned to campus for a second visit, and all students who returned for a visit accepted our offers. This strengthens our program.”

The sophomore scholarship recipients’ composite grade point average is 3.74, and the group includes a transfer student from a small Wisconsin technical college.

“Working with the students and the university’s leadership provides us with a prime opportunity to gain a valuable perspective on what it means to be a company dedicated to sustainability,” said Drew Bradley, Unimin’s Senior Vice President of Operations.

The RMI covers a wide range of industry topics, including the economics of mineral recovery, geological field methods, environmental stewardship, and scientific communication.

“These students are making important contributions to Unimin and our Responsible Mining Initiative. In the future, perhaps some of them will break new ground in the mining, environmental consulting and regulatory industries as their careers unfold,” Syverson added.

Unimin Corporation is one of North America’s leading producers and distributors of non-metallic industrial minerals, including quartz, feldspar, nepheline, calcium carbonate, clay, kaolin, lime and limestone. Many of its products are the essential raw materials of nearly every manufacturing process. For more information visit www.unimin sustain ability.com

Badger Mining Corp. donates $5000 to Dept. of Geology

Badger Mining Corporation recently donated $5000 to Geology to help buy new, speedy computer CPUs in Phillips 280. The Department received a LabMod grant to buy the computers, but the grant did not cover the entire cost of the instruments. These computers are critical for Hydrogeology (MODFLOW), Geochemistry (Geochemist’s Workbench), and Economic Minerals (Vulcan) classes, as well as for student research projects.

Badger Mining Corp. operates two sand mines in Wisconsin – Taylor (Jackson County) and Fairwater (Fond du Lac County). These mines primarily supply sand for the foundry and the oil and gas industries, but also provide material for filter media, industrial filler, recreational products, field turf, and multiple specialty applications.

“The goals of the Responsible Mining Initiative are in alignment with one of our corporate values, our Commitment to Environmental Responsibility,” said Marty Lehman, Associate at Badger. “We are pleased to have an opportunity to partner with the University in support of our mutual goals.”

Thanks to Badger Mining Corp. for supporting us as we us train the next generation of geologists (and non-geologists as well)!

Wisconsin Industrial Sand Association donates $5000 for scholarships

For the second year, the Wisconsin Industrial Sand Association [WISA] donated $5000 to the Department of Geology to fund three scholarships for incoming Mineralogy-Petrology students. The three WISA Geology Scholarship recipients each receive $1650. Recipients for 2015 include Kaelyn Blotz (Mukwonago), William Fitzpatrick (Madison), and Alex Lutze (Menomonee Falls).

WISA is a statewide organization formed in 2012 to promote safe and environmentally sound sand mining standards, promote evidence-based discussions, and create a positive dialogue among the industry, citizens, and government officials. WISA made this donation to support the Responsible Mining Initiative.

Thanks to WISA for supporting our students and our program!

Fairmount Santrol donates $6000 for Responsible Mining Scholarships and sponsors an internship

Fairmount Santrol has made a major commitment to fund Responsible Mining Initiative scholarships and an internship. Fairmount Santrol donated $6000 to the Department of Geology to fund three scholarships for rising juniors in
Fairmount Santrol donates $6000 for Responsible Mining Scholarships and sponsors an internship

Fairmount Santrol donates $6000 for Responsible Mining Scholarships and sponsors an internship (Continued from page 14)

Fairmount Santrol has developed an internship where Blugold Geology majors are given preference. Thanks to Fairmount Santrol for supporting our students and our program!

Fairmount Santrol is a leading provider of high-performance sand and sand-based products used in the oil and natural gas industry, as well as in the foundry, building products, water filtration, glass, and sports and recreation markets. Fairmount Santrol embraces the principles of sustainable development. Fairmount Santrol hopes its support of the Responsible Mining Initiative will provide young geologists with opportunities for experiential learning that will greatly enhance their undergraduate studies and prepare them for fulfilling careers.

Jenna Borski (x96) recognized in bronze!

J ennifer (Tobias) Borski, known to most of us as Jenna, is a 1996 UWEC hydrogeology alumna. She has been using her hydrogeology degree with the Wisconsin DNR for more than 17 years. In June 2014 she was recognized for her efforts in a way that few living people experience, as documented in the July 2014 WDNR publication “RR Report”.

While at WDNR, Jenna has worked on hundreds of contamination cases and redevelopments of brownfields. Many are challenging and complex – just the way she likes it! The majority take years, even decades, to complete. For most of her tenure at WDNR, she has worked on the cleanup and redevelopment of a 15-acre former industrial site in Appleton – a site with contamination dating back to the 1800s. In June 2014, Jenna celebrated a major milestone with the stakeholders of this project and City of Appleton residents at the grand opening of RiverHeath – a LEED Neighborhood Development (ND)-certified redevelopment. Fairly standard stuff, until a surprise was revealed…..

Says Jenna, “It started out as a regular grand opening ceremony on a perfectly beautiful day where we could all just relax and soak in the happiness of the day. My husband Jerry, a Lieutenant with the Appleton Fire Department, was also in attendance as he was on duty that day. Then, it all changed, and the developer unveiled a plaque in my honor, naming the boardwalk of the redevelopment ‘Borski Boardwalk’. Unprecedented appreciation.”

The UW-Eau Claire Dept. of Geology has a long tradition of excellence in the hydrogeology discipline. This program built by Dr. John Tinker (Jenna’s mentor), and continued by Dr. Katherine Grote, has produced many well trained hydrogeologists who now work in regulatory agencies, environmental consulting firms, and R-1 universities around the country. We congratulate Jenna for a job well done! Blugold geologists make a positive difference in this world!

John Tinker, Professor Emeritus
tinkerjr@triwest.net

I extend warm greetings to all current and past UWEC geology students and faculty. I hope the events of your past year were successful and that you are looking forward to the coming year. Geology is a challenging field of study, but one that provides great beauty to the student. It always amazed me that I could get paid to take students out into the field to do hydrogeology, glacial geology, and geomorphology.

I was waiting for a patient at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester this past summer when I observed a young man standing with his face approximately six inches from the inside wall of the building. After several minutes he sat down. I said to myself there is a geologist. After several minutes, he returned to look and touch the rock in the wall again. I walked over to him and asked “Are you a geologist?” and of course the answer was “Yes.” He was currently working in the petroleum industry. We had a good talk about hydraulic fracturing in North Dakota, Texas, and elsewhere, as well as the building material in the Mayo Clinic. Geologists sure do stand out but, of course, he had his face to the wall. Enjoy geology wherever you find it.

I hope the coming year meets all of your expectations. Work hard and enjoy life and family. The UWEC campus looks beautiful with several new buildings. I am sure the current faculty and students will give you a warm hello if you return to Eau Claire.

FACULTY NEWS (continued on page 16)
The spring Geology banquet is a fun time to eat a fine meal, present awards, recognize graduating seniors, say goodbye to classmates after another year, and reminisce about field trips gone by! This year 135 students, parents, faculty, and donors assembled on May 16th at the American Legion in Eau Claire for the event.

Nick Matula sings an ode to MODFLOW.

Mitch Lassa (C) wins the coveted Geoclub Best Smile award. Runners up Tanner Bakke (L) and Steve Brost (R) are in the background.

Ronald Willis, Professor Emeritus
I called Ron in June at his home in Idaho Falls, ID, to see how he and Thora are doing.
Ron reports that he doesn’t feel like a 25-yr-old anymore (after all, he is 88 years old)! However, in spite of some health issues, Ron is in good spirits. His knee makes it more difficult to travel long distances, so he and Thora have spent much time in Idaho over the past year. Thora continues to garden and take care of their nice house, including the dusting of souvenirs from their past travels overseas.

Ron said his favorite place to live was on the island of Java from 1984-86. The people of Java were very friendly, raised beautiful gardens, and grew excellent rice. He also mentioned his time in Jordan when he was a Fulbright Scholar (1988-89). He and Thora drove into Syria and to Damascus – areas today where major fighting has erupted. To begin their return trip from Jordan to Eau Claire, they took the Trans Siberian Railroad from Moscow to Beijing – a journey of six days and 7800+ km! Certainly they have had many excellent adventures!

Ron and Thora send their greetings to Geology alumni and faculty members!

Ron and Thora send their greetings to Geology alumni and faculty members!

In Memoriam
We are saddened to announce the deaths of Professor Emeritus Ronald P. Willis (88) and his wife Thora (84). They were killed in a tragic single-car accident on Wednesday, July 8, 2015, in Utah. A combined funeral was held July 14, 2015.

Dr. Ronald Willis, a sedimentologist, was hired out of the oil patch in 1967, and he retired from the UWEC Geology Dept. in spring 1992. Both Ron and Paul Myers were early initiators of high-quality field experiences for our majors, and this tradition of field-based instruction continues to this day. I have heard many good field stories from alumni about Ron….! For these reasons, our decade-old field camp II scholarship is named the Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarship in honor of Ron and Paul.

We received this sad news just as the 2015 newsletter was being published. If you have any recollections of field experiences with Ron, feel free to write them down and send them to me (via e-mail would be ideal). In next year’s newsletter I plan to have a piece honoring Ron, and some good stories from alumni would be extremely appropriate.

Ron and Thora send their greetings to Geology alumni and faculty members!
Student Research Day – Spring 2015

The Twenty Third Annual UW-Eau Claire Student Research Day (now called CERCA) was held April 29-30, 2015, in Davies Center on the UWEC campus. This event showcases faculty/student collaborative research occurring on campus. The Geology Department has been very well represented throughout the years, and this year was no exception. All of the students noted below presented posters this year. We are very proud of our students!

Note: Students who presented posters at professional conferences are also indicated. Student travel to conferences was supported with money from the Geology Advancement Fund and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

Mazlam Baftiri with Samuel Castonguay
Subsurface Geology and Mid-Continent Rift Intrusions of Chippewa County, WI. Presented at NC GSA-Madison (May 19-20, 2015).

Tanner Bakke, Justin Dowling, Gregory Burgess with Katherine Grote
Determining the Sources of Chloride Contamination in Surface Water and Groundwater in Eau Claire, WI. Presented at WGWA-Waukesha (March 13, 2015) — winner of Third Place poster award (undergraduate and graduate students combined). Also presented at NC GSA-Madison (May 19-20, 2015).

Kaelyn Blotz with Geoffrey Pignotta and J. Brian Mahoney
Quantifying Grain Shape Characteristics and Fragmentation in Raw and Processed Frac Sand from Western Wisconsin

Steven Brost with Phillip Hinger
Water in Hydrothermal Feldspar

Benjamin Degner, Kinzey Stoll with Katherine Grote

Chase Friedemann, Forest Friedrichs with Samuel Castonguay

Alexander Hutter with J. Brian Mahoney and Ellen Buelow (x13) and David Kimbrough (San Diego State University)
Cuenca Uspallata: an Intermontane Basin Records Episodic Uplift of the Cordillera Frontal and Precordillera in the Late Miocene

Patrick Keicher and Sean Morrison with Walter Loope (USGS) and Harry Jol (Geography)

Mitchell Lassa with Scott Clark

Mitchell Lassa with Scott Clark
Expert Opinions in the Media: Analysis of Climate Scientists’ Evolving Stances on Climate Change

Jonathan Luczak with Claire Edel (Geography), Carl Savage (Drew Univ.), Anthony Wagner (Materials Science) and Harry Jol (Geography)

J. Brian Mahoney with David Kimbrough (SDSU), Gregory Hoke (Syracuse University), Jose Mescua and Laura Giambiagi (Instituto Argentino de Nivología), Ellen Buelow (x14, SDSU), Alex Hutter, and Alyssa Leidel
Cuenca Uspallata: an intermontane basin records episodic uplift of the Cordillera Frontal and Precordillera in the late Miocene. Alex and Alyssa attended GSA-Vancouver (Oct. 19-22, 2014) to co-present this paper.

Matthew Michalski, Justin Dowling, Mitchell Enderson with Katherine Grote

Claudia Moore with Samuel Castonguay
Comparative Geochemistry of Unknown Basalts from Paulina, Oregon to Determine Map Units. Presented at NC GSA-Madison (May 19-20, 2015).

Sean Morrison with Harry Jol and Ryan Alger (Geography)
Using radar stratigraphy analysis to identify erosion and deposition in the Duluth Bay Barrier, Lake Superior. Presented at NC GSA-Madison (May 19-20, 2015) — winner of a Best Graduate Student Poster Presentation award.

Hailie Passow, Sarah (Knutson) Kintner with Katherine Grote

Justin Poirier, Rachel Fliflet with J. Brian Mahoney and Kent M. Syverson

Ellyn Swenson with Robert Hooper

Zacharie Zens, Samuel Helmuth with Robert Lodge

The 2014-15 Geology graduates at the annual banquet.

Recent Geology Graduates

FALL 2014, SPRING & SUMMER 2015 (unofficial list)

Bafiri, Mazlam
Bakke, Tanner Reid
Bowe, Julia Ann
Brenner, Steven Kenneth
Brost, Steven Carl
Burgess, Gregory James
Burns, Kally
Chang, Michael James
Ebben, Cody Robert
Ebert, Michael Thomas
Enderson, Mitchell Clark
Folta, Brian Lee
Friedrichs, Forest Ryan
Fuglestad, Marisa Ann

Green Jr, Mark Michael
Gunvalson, Kelsey Jaye
Guy, John Robert
Haas, Jacob Walter
Keicher, Patrick Adam
Leidel, Alyssa Rose
Lewellen, Joshua Thomas Daniel
Luczak, Jonathan Neil
Morrison, Sean Michael
Passow, Hailie Noel
Swenson, Ellyn Marjorie
Vidmar, Joey Edward
Wolf, Alexandra Jane
The Earth Science Seminar Series continues to bring excellent speakers to campus. It provides faculty and students with the opportunity to interact with other scientists working on a broad range of research topics, and it also allows us to "show off" our department and research equipment to the visitors.…! Below are the talks presented during this academic year. Seminars schedules are posted on the Geology website. In addition, if you live in the area and would like to receive e-mail announcements about upcoming seminars, please contact Dr. Scott Clark at clarksco@uwec.edu. If you work for a company that would like to sponsor the seminar series or contribute money to defray speaker costs, please contact us!

Dr. Mickey Kolis, Education Department, UWEC, “Brainball-Teaching as a Team Sport,” 9/12/14.
Dr. Kent Syverson, Geology Department, UWEC, “So, you’re interested in applying to Graduate School?!!,” 9/19/14.

Dr. John Johnston, University of Waterloo, Paleohydrographic Reconstructions from Strandplains of Beach Ridges in the Laurentian Great Lakes," 11/21/14.
Dr. Phillip Ihinger, Geology Department, UWEC, "On the Evolution of Basalt and the Origin of Granite," 2/6/15.
Dr. Theodore Flynn, Research Scientist, University of Chicago, "Geochemical cycling and microbial ecology in the subsurface," 3/6/15.
Dr. Stephen Sellwood (x99), Ph.D. candidate at UW-Madison, "Borehole flow logging for aquifer characterization," 4/10/15.
Dr. Patrick Colgan, Department of Geology, Grand Valley State University, "Dead fish, groundwater contamination, and pre-late Wisconsin glaciations in southwestern Michigan," 4/16/15.
Dr. Timothy G. Fisher, The University of Toledo, "Drainage from Glacial Lake Agassiz: Did it Cause Rapid Climate Change?" 4/24/15.

UW-Eau Claire
Geology reception at NC GSA-Madison
UWEC Geology was well represented at the North-Central Geological Society of America meeting in Madison, WI (May 19-20, 2015). Sixteen undergraduate students presented research results, as did several faculty members. In addition, faculty members co-organized oral sessions on Precambrian geology (Castonguay) and frac sand geology/environmental issues (Syverson).

The Department held a UWEC alumni and industry reception on May 19th at the Great Dane Pub and Brewery Co. near the Capitol Square. The event sponsored by the Responsible Mining Initiative had an excellent turnout – 52 alumni, current students and faculty, and industry partners attended the event. A good time was had by all at the event, and we hope to host these get-togethers more frequently!

1. Doug Cieslak (x93) and Steve Sellwood (x99).
2. Andie Holm (x14), Sean Morrison (x15), and Pat Keicher (x15).
3. The Christina (Piper, x04) and Ian (x04) Anderson family.
4. Industry folks at the reception (L to R): Aaron Scott (Fairmount Santrol), Jamie Swenson (Uminim), John Richards (Air Control Techniques), and Isaac Orr (x10, Heartland Institute).
5. Todd Lindblad (x13), Amy Rasmussen (x13), and Josh Olson (x13).
7. Zach Hilgendorff (x15, Geog), Josh Olson (x13), Ryan Alger (Geog), Carissa Beckworth (friend), and Scott Clark.
Donations to the Department

The Geology funds with UW-Eau Claire Foundation are used to support a wide range of activities in the Department including student travel to professional meetings, faculty/student field trips, faculty recruitment, and student scholarships. The attached slip is intended to make it easy to contribute to the Geology funds. Please be assured that your gift will be greatly appreciated and it will be used effectively within the Department. In addition to financial support, we also welcome and encourage your support by volunteering to speak to our majors/minors about your job experiences, offering possible job opportunities to our students, or by the donation of equipment or field supplies.

During the past year, 29 individuals/companies donated $52,830 to the Geology Foundation accounts. Please understand that all gifts, large or small, are greatly appreciated! Please consider giving something back to your undergraduate department.

Due to state budget cuts and increasing expenses, alumni gifts to the department’s advancement funds are becoming increasingly critical. Therefore, we have been working with the Foundation Office to learn more about establishing a named lecture series, new scholarships, etc. If you would happen to be interested in establishing a scholarship within the Department of Geology, here are a few basic guidelines from the Foundation Office.

- All gifts to the UWEC Foundation are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. You may use cash, checks, credit cards, stocks or other tangible assets to fund a scholarship.
- There are two types of scholarships: the annual scholarship, which is funded each year, and the endowed scholarship, where principal is invested and only the income is used for the annual scholarship award.
- A minimum commitment of $500 is required to establish an annual scholarship fund.
- A minimum investment of $10,000 is required to establish an endowed fund; there is no maximum.
- The name of the scholarship is determined by the donor(s). Most name a scholarship after their family or the name of a loved or honored one. Some have endowed scholarships in the name of a favorite professor.

- The donor(s) may help develop scholarship criteria with the assistance of a development officer. Preferences rather than requirements are most often expressed. Preferences may involve academic major, financial need, international study, academic promise, first-year student or upper-division status.
- IRS regulations prevent donors from designating family members as recipients or from selecting the recipients themselves. Donors may be notified of the finalists and will be notified of the recipients.

If you would like more information about establishing an annual or endowed scholarship, please feel free to contact the Foundation Office at 715/836-5630.

We ask that if the UWEC Foundation Office calls you asking for a donation, please remember the Geology advancement funds!

If you work for a corporation or a geology-related firm, please inquire if your company has a matching program for contributions to academic geology departments.

DONATION SLIP

University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.

_______ Yes, I wish to support the Geology Department through my tax-deductible gift of

$_________ (if check is used and enclosed, make payable to UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.)

Name ___________________________________________________________

Address _________________________________________________________

City_____________________________State_________Zip_________________

Phone ___________________________ Email ___________________________

Please indicate below how you wish your contribution to be recorded:

_____Record jointly with my spouse (Spouse’s name) ______________________

_____Record in my name only

_____In memory of ____________________________

Credit Card Gift  ____ VISA  ___ MasterCard _____ Discover _____ American Express

Number __________________________ Exp Date __________________________

Signature__________________________________________ Date __________________________

_____ My employer (or my spouse’s) will match this gift. Employer: __________

_____I have made plans to benefit the Geology Department through my estate. Please have someone contact me.

_____Please send me information about how I might make provisions in my estate to benefit the Geology Department.

Mailing Address: UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Schofield Hall 214, 105 Garfield Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004. Or give immediately by going to http://www.uwec.edu/fndn/giving.htm