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44TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION of SIGMA GAMMA EPSILON EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY: CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS September 22 – 24, 2017

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ABSTRACT

The 44th Biennial Convention of Sigma Gamma Epsilon, the national honor society in the Earth Sciences, was held September 22 through 24, 2017 on the campus of Eastern Illinois University (EIU). The meeting was hosted by Gamma Chi Chapter of SGE in the Department of Geology/Geography. As part of the meeting, a local field trip to investigate the area's geology was led by Dr. Diane Burns, Chair of the Geology/Geography Department at EIU. This report summarizes the Convention and includes information on the deliberations and actions of the attendees.

KEY WORDS: Sigma Gamma Epsilon, Biennial Convention, Eastern Illinois University

INTRODUCTION

Sigma Gamma Epsilon, the national honor society in the Earth Sciences, held its 44th Biennial Convention at Eastern Illinois University on September 22 – 24, 2017. Gamma Chi Chapter in the Department of Geology/Geography hosted this event. The meeting took place in the Physical Sciences Building, with the Saturday banquet held at 7th

Street Underground in the Martin Luther King, Jr. University Union. Student attendees were provided rooms in the dorms, and the national officers stayed at the nearby Unique Suites Hotel.

Eight chapters were represented at this event. Delegates and alternates are listed in Table 1.

Name	Chapter	University	Position
Kortney Cole	Gamma Zeta	Kent State University	Delegate
Neil Rhoades	Gamma Chi	Eastern Illinois University	Delegate
Geno Persico	Gamma Chi	Eastern Illinois University	Alternate
Shirley Tsotsuv Mensah	Gamma Chi	Eastern Illinois University	Alternate
Allison Savoie	Delta Epsilon	Wright State University	Delegate
Paige K. Elsea	Delta Psi	Western Illinois University	Delegate
Sara Bennett	Delta Psi	Western Illinois University	Alternate
Amy McLemore	Eta Alpha	Univ. of Tennessee @ Martin	Delegate
William Bratton	Eta Alpha	Univ. of Tennessee @ Martin	Alternate
Clayton Ervin	Eta Alpha	Univ. of Tennessee @ Martin	Alternate
Greyson Lambert	Eta Alpha	Univ. of Tennessee @ Martin	Alternate
Sam Toney	Eta Alpha	Univ. of Tennessee @ Martin	Alternate
Aaron Phipps	Eta Gamma	Weber State University	Delegate
Orana Paullus	Eta Gamma	Weber State University	Alternate
Katie Denver Gurnicz	Theta Omicron	Indiana Univ. Northwest	Delegate
Cesar Garcia	Theta Omicron	Indiana Univ. Northwest	Alternate
Tyler Kee	Theta Sigma	Uni. of Arkansas @ Little Rock	Delegate

Table 1. SGE 2017 Biennial Convention delegates and alternates.

National officers in attendance were Central Province Vice President Diane Burns, Southeastern Province Vice President Michael Gibson, Northeastern Province Vice President Mark Noll, Secretary-Treasurer James Walters, Associate Director, Paula Even, and Past President Rick Ford. Registration for the meeting began at approximately 3 pm on Friday the 22nd, and shortly after 4 pm the meeting was called to order. National Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. James Walters, gave opening remarks and introduced the national officers in attendance. Following his opening

remarks and introductions, officer reports were read. The complete officers' reports follow the Convention minutes published in this issue. Since SGE President Aaron Johnson was unable to be at the meeting, Dr. Walters read the President's report he had previously provided. Dr. Johnson explained that as the Executive Director of the American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG) it was necessary that he attend the national meeting of that group, which unfortunately happened to be the same dates as the SGE Convention. He apologized for his absence and

proceeded to outline some of the aspects of the current state of SGE. In particular he noted two very successful endeavors: the migration of the SGE journal *The Compass* to a fully digital platform, and the SGE poster session at the GSA annual meetings. He also mentioned that SGE has been quite active and has added 5 new chapters since our last Biennial Convention in 2015. He continues to work on establishing a Sigma Gamma Epsilon Foundation and anticipates that it will be in place prior to the next convention. Finally, President Johnson expressed his thanks to the other National Officers and staff and all the delegates and alternates at this Convention for their dedication to SGE and their efforts in making the Society the success it is.

After reading President Johnson's report to the attendees, Dr. Walters then proceeded, as Secretary-Treasurer of SGE, to report on the financial status of the Society. He indicated that since our last convention in 2015, SGE has shown a slight decline in total number of members but an increase in total number of chapters. We currently have a total of almost 1,200 active members. Our largest source of income continues to be

initiation fees and dues paid by new members.



Figure 1. SGE National Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Walters updates the attendees on the financial status of Sigma Gamma Epsilon.

Our second largest source of income is provided by dividends from our stock holdings, now managed by Edward Jones. The 2014-2015 fiscal year showed a significant loss in income, and that is attributable to the 2015 SGE Convention at the University of Kansas. Convention years always bring additional expenses, but the 2015 Convention was especially expensive because it was also our Centennial Celebration, which resulted

in additional activities and therefore expenses. Fortunately, during the 2015-2016 fiscal year we bounced back a bit and showed a gain in income. By way of a PowerPoint, Dr. Walters then showed a summary of expenses and income since the 43rd Biennial Convention in 2015 (figure 1). He also provided some information on number of awards presented during that period of time, since this is also an indication of degree of activity of the Society.

The podium was then turned over to Dr. Michael Gibson, Vice President of the Southeastern Province. Dr. Gibson noted that there are 11 states that make up the Southeastern Province of SGE, and since our last convention in 2015 this Province has increased by three chapters to a total of 50. He also reported that just prior to this convention he visited the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, and assuming a positive vote of the National Council, they will become the 51st chapter in the SE Province. He expressed delight that the SE Province remains strong, with continued expansion over the past two cycles of conventions. Chapters in the Province were well represented at the last two annual Geological Society of America

meetings with numerous student-authored research posters. The Southeastern Province chapters of SGE join with all other chapters in congratulating the Gamma Chi Chapter at Eastern Illinois University for hosting the 44th Biennial SGE Convention.

Dr. Diane Burns, Vice President of the Central Province, then summarized activities in that province since the last convention in 2015. She noted that the Central Province includes 27 active chapters in nine states. She conducted a site visit to the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and was impressed with the students and faculty with whom she met. That is the newest chapter, Theta Nu, in the Central Province. Dr. Burns explained that she also assisted the Northeast Province by scheduling a site visit to Indiana University Northwest in Gary, which is in the NE Province, since that campus is much closer to her home institution than for the Northeastern Province Vice President, Mark Noll, to make the visit. Dr. Burns indicated that she has on her agenda for the coming year to make it a point to increase efforts to establish new chapters, reactivate inactive ones, and get currently active chapters to be

more involved in the Society. She also looks forward to establishing better ties with area chapters as well.

Vice President of the Northeastern Province, Dr. Mark Noll, next gave his report on activities in his province. He stated that during the last two years, four new chapters have been installed in the NE Province.

The site visit for one of these, the Theta Omicron Chapter at Indiana University Northwest in Gary, Indiana was actually done by Dr. Burns, VP of the Central Province, and he was grateful for her assistance in this regard.

Although unable to attend the meeting, Dr. Larry Davis, Editor of *The Compass*, the earth science journal of SGE, had previously provided his report for the meeting. His report was summarized by Dr. Walters. Dr. Davis apologized for his absence and explained that he is currently not permitted to undertake any significant travel due to his recent aortic valve replacement surgery. Dr. Walters noted that we certainly understand and wish him a most speedy recovery. Continuing with his report, Dr. Davis stated that *The Compass* transitioned from a paper journal to an electronic journal on the Digital Commons

platform in 2012. To date, the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University in Minnesota has supported *The Compass'* place on the Digital Commons platform. Our first electronic issue was v. 84, no. 1, 2012, and included 11 articles. To date, 5 volumes (2012-2016) have been published as an open access online journal. Over this period of time, there have been a total of 76 articles. Most were research articles, but about 15 dealt more with SGE business, and this is perfectly fine. In fact, Editor Davis says he encourages more SGE national and chapter news, including photos. However, as one looks at the numbers there is an alarming downward spiral in the number of research articles submitted to *The Compass*. Beginning with v. 84, no. 1, chapters were encouraged to submit articles under the heading of *On the Outcrop*. These would be relatively easy to submit because they can be based on a visit to a local outcrop or field trip, but only a few have been submitted, mostly by Editor Davis. The interesting thing is that the first two of the *On the Outcrop* articles had a total of over 2,250 full-text downloads since 2012. The point is, people have definitely been looking at the *On the*

Outcrop articles! An addition to the Digital Commons platform is the ability to monitor where full-text downloads are being made on a global scale. As a paper journal, the distribution was pretty much restricted to the U.S. Now that it is digital you would be surprised to see the number of articles being downloaded on a global scale. It is clear that a lot of people are looking at Compass articles, but the number of articles being submitted continues to decrease and as a consequence so does the number of readers. We are now three quarters through 2017, and we should have had at least two issues out (v. 89). However, there have been no issues for 2017, and there is only one research manuscript in the "pipeline". We will, of course, publish this biennial convention report, as well as the Geological Society of America SGE Best Posters Awards information. The bottom line is that if SGE wants The Compass to continue, then SGE chapters/members have to submit articles and news/information as well as research articles.

Dr. Walters reported that Dr. Richard Langford, Vice President of the Western Province, was unable to attend the Convention, and at this time we

have not yet received his VP report to be read in his absence. It will be included in the complete reports that follow these minutes.

Following the officers' reports, Convention delegates started their chapter reports. These reports summarize local chapter activities since the last Convention in 2015 and are published in this issue. At approximately 6 pm we took a break from Chapter reports and moved to another room for an informal reception with pizza and soft drinks. Dr. Diane Burns, Chair of the Department of Geology/Geography and Chapter Advisor of the hosting Chapter at Eastern Illinois University, in addition to being Vice President of the SGE Central Province, welcomed the group and introduced Dr. David M. Glassman, President of Eastern Illinois University. President Glassman welcomed all the Convention attendees to Eastern Illinois University and expressed his delight that Sigma Gamma Epsilon was meeting at their campus for its 44th Biennial Convention (figure 2). He went on to stress the importance of the Earth Sciences in today's world and how SGE, since it represents some of the best students in the Earth Sciences,

can be a vehicle for recognizing that importance.

At about 7 pm, after the informal reception and pizza party, delegates and alternates returned to our original meeting room where they were assigned to committees (table 2). Dr. Walters and Associate Director Paula Even explained the committee assignments and gave instructions as to what each of the six different committees would be discussing and deliberating. Committees were then

given one hour (until 8 pm) to meet in their groups and begin their work (figures 3-8). At 8 pm, we took a break from the committee work and reconvened to continue Chapter reports, which we had started earlier in the afternoon. These were completed by about 8:45 pm, at which time Dr. Walters briefly provided information on tomorrow's field trip and other aspects of the schedule and dismissed the participants, thus concluding the first day of the Convention



Figure 2. Dr. David M. Glassman, President of Eastern Illinois University welcomed all the attendees to Eastern Illinois University.

Table 2. Committee Assignments.

Name	Chapter	Committee
James Walters	Gamma Sigma	<i>The Compass</i> & Finance, Facilitator
Kortney Cole	Gamma Zeta	<i>The Compass</i> & Finance, Chair
William Bratton	Eta Alpha	<i>The Compass</i> & Finance
Geno Persico	Gamma Chi	<i>The Compass</i> & Finance
Paula Even	Gamma Sigma	Resolutions, Facilitator
Allison Savoie	Delta Epsilon	Resolutions, Chair
Briana Johnson	Gamma Zeta	Resolutions
Rick Ford	Eta Gamma	Nominations, Facilitator
Aaron Phipps	Eta Gamma	Nominations, Chair
Daniel Curtis	Gamma Chi	Nominations
Cesar Garcia	Theta Omicron	Nominations
Michael Gibson	Eta Alpha	Chapter Affairs, Facilitator
Amy McLemore	Eta Alpha	Chapter Affairs
Sam Toney	Eta Alpha	Chapter Affairs
Katie Denver Gurnicz	Theta Omicron	Chapter Affairs
Tyler Kee	Theta Sigma	Chapter Affairs
Sara Bennett	Delta Psi	Chapter Affairs
Diane Burns	Gamma Chi	Constitution & Bylaws, Facilitator
Neil Rhoades	Gamma Chi	Constitution & Bylaws, Chair
Steve Bennett	Delta Psi	Constitution & Bylaws
Greyson Lambert	Eta Alpha	Constitution & Bylaws
Orana Paullus	Eta Gamma	Constitution & Bylaws
Mark Noll	Eta Chi	Membership & Scholarship, Facilitator
Paige K. Elsea	Delta Psi	Membership & Scholarship, Chair
Clayton Ervin	Eta Alpha	Membership & Scholarship
Shirley Tsotsuv Mensah	Gamma Chi	Membership & Scholarship



Figure 3. *The Compass & Finance Committee.*



Figure 4. *Resolution Committee.*



Figure 5. Nominations Committee.



Figure 6. Chapter Affairs Committee.



Figure 7. Constitution & Bylaws Committee.



Figure 8. Membership & Scholarship Committee.

Saturday morning, September 23, the Convention resumed at 8:00 am with breakfast catered in the Physical Sciences building. At 9 am we continued with the Committee meetings that had started yesterday evening. At 10 am a panel discussion

was held on the topic "What makes a Quality Chapter?" The panelists included Past President Dr. Rick Ford, along with three students from Eta Gamma Chapter at Weber State University, which has been recognized five times as a Quality Chapter; Dr.

Diane Burns, Vice President of the Central Province, along with four students from Gamma Chi Chapter at Eastern Illinois University, which has been recognized seven times as a Quality Chapter; and Dan Curtis, an Eastern Illinois University alumnus and 2016 Tarr award recipient. Panelists mentioned and discussed several different activities their chapters had been involved with. All recognized that it can be difficult to encourage students to become active in SGE activities, but they noted that once you start doing these things, they build on each other

and members begin to expect and enjoy being a part of a group effort service activity. Comments from the audience supported these thoughts. At 11 am, the panel discussion wrapped up and we took a break to get ready for the field trip. By 11:30 am, the bus was loaded and ready to go. Dr. Diane Burns led the group on *A Geological Introduction to the Charleston, Illinois Area*. Our first stop was at Lake Charleston for lunch (figure 9) and discussion of an overview of the geologic and tectonic history of the region (figure 10).



Figure 9. Field Trip Stop 1 was at Lake Charleston for lunch.



Figure 10. After lunch, Dr. Burns shared overview of the geologic and tectonic history of the region.

Lake Charleston is a large reservoir that serves as the sole source of the water supply for the city of Charleston. The second stop on the field trip was the Rocky Branch Conservation Area, where we observed Wisconsin-age glacial sediments (figure 11). Wisconsin ice moved south out of Lake Michigan, and at its farthest extent the glacier reached eight miles south of Charleston.

The third stop provided an overview of the Westfield Oil Field

(figure 12). This area is part of the La Salle Anticlinal Belt of the Illinois Basin. The La Salle anticlinal belt is the location of one of the major oil accumulations in the US, the Southeastern Illinois oil field. To date, over 458,000,000 barrels of oil have been produced from this field. The present production rate, after 42 years of production, is about 4 ½ million barrels a year.



Figure 11. Field Trip Stop 2 was at the Rocky Branch Conservation Area, where participants observed Wisconsin-age glacial sediments.



Figure 12. At Field Trip Stop 3, the group posed for a photo at the La Salle Anticlinal Belt of the Illinois Basin which is the location of one of the major oil accumulations in the US, the Southeastern Illinois oil field.

Our final stop for the day was the Charleston Stone Quarry, where

Pennsylvanian-age rocks are exposed. The group successfully collected many

crinoids, brachiopods, and horn corals (figure 13). Overlying the bedrock are Quaternary sediments that showed the sediment succession of the Wisconsin Episode at a site near the last glacial maximum.

By approximately 4:30 – 5:00 pm the group returned to the EIU campus. Starting at 6 pm, Gamma Chi Chapter hosted the evening events, which consisted of a mixer followed by dinner and presentation at

7th Street Underground in the Martin Luther King, Jr. University Union.

After the banquet, Dr. Diane Burns gave a few remarks and introduced the speaker, Lois Youksolian, of the University of Illinois News Bureau.

Ms. Youksolian spoke on “Becoming an Ambassador for Science” in which she related many of her experiences as a news writer dealing with the sciences (figure 14).



Figure 13. Field Trip Stop 4 was at the Charleston Stone Quarry where participants had the opportunity to collect crinoids, brachiopods, and horn corals.



Figure 14. Guest speaker Ms. Youksolian spoke on “Becoming an Ambassador for Science” at the banquet.

Following the guest speaker’s presentation, Dr. Walters provided some closing comments for the day. He recognized Dr. Burns for her part in leading the day’s field trip and for her efforts in having her Chapter host this Convention. He then presented her with an engraved token of appreciation (figure 15). Finally, he instructed committees to meet as needed that evening and finalize their reports, since they would be presented to the Convention participants in the morning.



Figure 15. Dr. Walters recognizes Dr. Burns for leading the field trip and for her efforts in having her Chapter host the Convention.

Sunday morning, September 24, at 8:30 am the Convention got underway with a breakfast catered in the Physical Sciences Building. At 9:30 am Convention business began with Committee reports. The first committee to report was The Compass & Finance Committee, chaired by Kortney Cole. She reported that the committee brainstormed various ideas for promoting The Compass and ways to increase the number of manuscript submissions. They also suggested that the National Council consider resurrecting the Best Paper Award for The Compass. In addition, they recommended that chapters reach out to schools with currently inactive chapters or without chapters in the hope that this will generate interest in the Society, possible manuscript submissions, and the establishment of new chapters. In terms of finances, the committee recommended no increase in initiation fees or dues. They did, however, recommend an increase in the price of honor cords from \$12 to \$14.

Next the Chapter Affairs Committee, chaired by Michael Tyler Kee, reported on their deliberations, which included renaming the SGE

National Council Best Poster Award the Charles J. Mankin Best Poster Award, and resurrecting The Compass Best Paper Award and naming it the Daniel Merriam Best Paper Award. It was agreed that the National Council would take these suggestions under advisement. The committee also made several suggestions for improvement of the SGE Webpage.

Paige Elsea, chair of the Membership and Scholarship Committee, then presented their report. They suggested that if a student identified as a member of the original petitioning group for an SGE Chapter, graduates before the Chapter is officially installed, said student will be permitted to join SGE as a charter member within one year of their graduation. After much discussion from the Convention attendees, it was decided to amend the time period to six months. The committee also presented several ideas for encouraging more submissions of manuscripts to The Compass.

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee next presented their report. Chair Neil Rhoades said their committee had three major recommendations. First was that the

Lifetime membership fee be reduced from \$175 to \$100. Second was that the National Council consider changing the Associate Director position to the position of Executive Director. Discussion followed this recommendation, and it was decided that the National Council would discuss this further. The third recommendation was that the first two recommendations will require examination and modification of the Constitution and By-Laws and that the National Council should convene a meeting of the Council in a non-convention year to address these issues.

Aaron Phipps, Chair of the Nominations Committee, then presented the following slate of officers.

President: Dr. Diane Burns, Gamma Chi advisor at Eastern Illinois University, and Central Province Vice President (2015-present).

Central Province VP: Dr. Steve Bennett, Delta Psi advisor at Western Illinois University.

Western Province VP: Dr. Richard ("Rip") Langford (incumbent), Alpha Lambda advisor at University of Texas at El Paso.

Northeastern Province VP: Dr. Mark Noll (incumbent), Eta Chi advisor at SUNY Brockport.

Southeastern Province VP: Dr. Michael Gibson (incumbent), Eta Alpha advisor at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

National Editor: Dr. Larry Davis (incumbent), Geologist-in-Residence at Bryce Canyon National Park.

Chair Phipps then asked if there were any other nominees to be considered. None were presented. Nominees in the audience were each given an opportunity to speak to the Convention, after which the floor was again opened for the nomination of any further candidates. Hearing none, a motion was made and approved to accept the above slate of officers as our new national officers.

The final committee to report was the Resolutions Committee, chaired by Allison Savoie. Allison informed the Convention participants that the Committee had prepared Thank You notes for numerous individuals for their parts in making the 44th Biennial Convention of SGE a great success. They especially recognized the Gamma Chi Chapter at Eastern Illinois University for their hosting of

the Convention. They also extended their thanks to all the Convention participants for being so articulate and productive.

Dr. Walters thanked the committees for their reports and then indicated there was one further item of business. This concerns the location for the next SGE Biennial Convention (45th), which is scheduled to be held in spring of 2020. He asked if there were any proposals from attending chapters to host the next SGE Convention. Dr. Michael Gibson, VP of the Southeastern Province and Advisor of Eta Alpha Chapter, indicated that the University of Tennessee at Martin would tentatively consider hosting the 2020 Convention. Past President Rick Ford suggested that Eta Gamma Chapter at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah might be able to host the fall 2022 Convention. Dr. Walters then thanked all in attendance for their participation in the Convention and he turned the meeting over to Dr. Diane Burns, incoming President of SGE, who then declared the 44th Biennial Convention of SGE to be adjourned at 11:15 am on Sunday, September 24th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chapter Affairs Committee

Michael Tyler Kee, Theta Sigma Chapter, served as Chair of the Chapter Affairs Committee with Dr. Michael Gibson, Eta Alpha Chapter, as Facilitator. Members included Katie Denver Gurnicz, Theta Omicron Chapter (Scribe), Amy McLemore, Eta Alpha Chapter (Delegate), Sara Bennett, Delta Psi Chapter (Alternate).

We recommend that the SGE Best Poster Award be renamed the Charles J Mankin Best Poster Award. This will commemorate someone who dedicated a significant portion of his life to SGE and the advancement the society and its members.

We recommend that the Best Paper Award for The Compass be resurrected, and renamed the Dan Merriam Best Paper Award. We believe that a monetary award for exemplary papers would resolve the decrease in student submissions to The Compass. We suggest that the award be judged by specific criterion similar to that of the poster rubric in order to avoid biased nominations of applicants, and that students be given preference. We also suggest that the award be given

out by volume. However, if no submissions are deemed worthy of the award according to the rubric, it does not have to be issued. Should a graduating student submit a paper prior to his or her graduation date, he or she is still eligible to receive the award for the current volume. Finally, we suggest that the amount of the award be increased to garner more submissions from interested students.

The Chapter Affairs Committee concluded that the following changes to the SGE website be considered:

- Running banner/ slideshow of monthly updated pictures of Chapters in action, i.e. service projects, community outreach, initiation of new members, etc. be added
- Streamline organization of tabs and readily available resources
- Revamp aesthetic of webpage
- Mobile friendly webpage
- Updating Awards recognition tab
- COMPASS browser/ archive
- Rename News section as Archive, reorganize to find past announcements and reports more easily.
- W.A. Tarr award monetary value increase – to be discussed at the 45th SGE Convention.

After much deliberation and thoughtful consideration, the Chapter Affairs Committee recommend the aforementioned suggestions with the best interest of Sigma Gamma Epsilon in mind.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee was chaired by Neil Rhoades and Diane Burns served as Facilitator. The committee included Orana Paullus and Steve Bennett.

Discussion and actions:

1) Change lifetime membership from \$175 to \$100; first year graduates have reduced rate of \$75: Passed.

Points: Include new lifetime members in The Compass; advertise as 25% off for first year graduates; investigate discounts for SGE members (analogous to AAA discounts for hotels); awareness of lifetime members currently cannot vote (address issue in other venue).

2) Name change for Associate Director to Executive Director: agreed to additional discussion.

Points: Provides a safety net to move society forward, agreed to send to referendum.

3) Consideration of Constitution and Bylaws amendments. Agreed further consideration and committee work is needed. The below topics were brought up by this committee as areas of concern.

-Where office is located, addresses that where the officer is the university has to be in agreement.

-Duties of officers and workings of the National Office.

-Lifetime membership does not have voting rights - Address possible change to allow lifetime members to vote.

-Constitution and Bylaws needs major overhaul

-Legal paper trail needs to be set in place of the name change.

The Compass and Finance Committee

Kortney Cole, chair, Dr. James Walters, facilitator, and Will Bratton brainstormed ideas for promoting The Compass and ways to increase the number of manuscript submissions. Manuscript submissions are not limited to academic reports, but can include less formal submissions such as On the Outcrop, chapter news, and photos. The editor tries to include as many

submissions as possible in order to encourage student involvement.

Members are encouraged to submit a short summary of their GSA research for The Compass. Authors would receive recognition on the national website. The best submission would receive a certificate and monetary award. Regional vice presidents are recommended to email chapter faculty advisors once a semester to prompt students to submit manuscripts and posters for The Compass and GSA.

Consider resurrecting the Best Paper Award for this year's volume of The Compass. The details of the award are left up to the National Council, but applicants must be active members of Sigma Gamma Epsilon. National Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Jim Walters, suggested naming the award after a past president, to be determined by the National Council. This provides an opportunity for a Compass article chronicling the inception of the award and its history. Winners' names should be displayed on the national website, linking to their original submission. Previously, there was a monetary award for best paper, but we suggest

considering alternative prize options at the discretion of the National Council.

In an effort to expand readership, we recommend that chapters reach out to schools where there is no active chapter. We suggest that chapter officers reach out to these schools by emailing department heads, faculty advisors, and earth science clubs. We hope that this will generate interest, possible manuscript submissions, and new charters of local chapters.

Presently, the national chapter is in good financial health and an increase in initiation fees and dues is not recommended. In the next several years, however, an increase is expected to be necessary. This committee does recommend an increase in price for honor cords from \$12 to \$14. Should this price increase cause financial hardship for students, local chapters may consider a fundraiser to offset the costs. We invite feedback from members about this increase.

Scholarship and Membership Committee

The membership and scholarship committee consisted of the

facilitator; Mark Noll, the chair; Paige Elsea, and Shirley Mensah. The following topics were discussed.

Often a group of students starts the process of establishing a chapter on their campus only to graduate before the chapter is installed. How can these students be included in the first initiation retroactively and if so, how long after graduation? The following proposals were developed. Whereas it takes considerable time and effort to develop a petition, and whereas the timing of the petition process may not coincide with an academic year, and whereas individuals involved in petition development may graduate before the petition is accepted, therefore be it resolved that any student identified as a petitioner by their name and credentials being part of the petition have the opportunity of becoming a founding member with all rights and privileges upon payment of required dues and fees at the same rate as a student for one year.

Next, we considered ways to increase contributions to The Compass. Whereas members of SGE are generally aware of the scholarship associated with publishing their articles in The Compass. However, there aren't

many articles published in The Compass on a regular basis. Whereas, there are some incentives that will motivate the publication of articles in The Compass.

Be it resolved that it is recommended that the Society of Sigma Gamma Epsilon establish;

1. An 'annual best paper award' to recognize the best article published in a year.
2. A page on the SGE website that lists and recognizes all annual best papers, and saves as an archive for future readings and references.
3. The possibility of adding another award in a form of a paid expense trip or discounts; etc.

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee for the 2017 biennial Sigma Gamma Epsilon Convention included as Facilitator, Dr. Richard Ford, advisor for Eta Gamma Chapter at Weber State University, Aaron Phipps (Chair) of Eta Gamma Chapter at Weber State University, Cesar Garcia of Theta Omicron at Indiana University Northwest, and Daniel Curtis of Gamma Chi at Eastern Illinois University.

The attending delegates of the convention are responsible for electing the national officers including President, Vice Presidents of Central, Western, Northeastern, and Southeastern Provinces, and National Editor of The Compass. Each officer will serve from convention to convention, a duration of two and a half years, which constitutes one term. There are no term limits on a Vice President of a Province or the National Editor, however there is a two-term limit for the office of President.

The following were nominated for service:

President: Diane Burns, Gamma Chi advisor at Eastern Illinois University
Central Province Vice President (2015-present)

Central Province: Steve Bennet, Delta Psi advisor at Western Illinois University

Western Province: Dr. Richard "Rip" Langford (Incumbent): Alpha Lambda at University of Texas at El Paso

Northeastern Province: Dr. Mark R. Noll (Incumbent): Eta Chi advisor at SUNY Brockport

Southeastern Province: Dr. Michael A. Gibson (Incumbent): Eta Alpha advisor at University of Tennessee at Martin
National Editor: Dr. Larry Davis (Incumbent): Geologist-in-Residence at Bryce Canyon National Park
Each delegate representing their chapter was approached by the committee with the chance to nominate a person for service from their respective universities. However, as there were no further nominations, all nominees are to run unopposed. The slate of candidates will be presented to the delegates for vote on Sunday, September 24, 2017. A unanimous vote is required to proceed.

Resolutions Committee

Chair Allison Savoie, Delta Epsilon, and Briana Johnson, Gamma Zeta, prepared thank you cards and had all the members present sign the cards. They then sent them to the following supporters and contributors of SGE: Dr. James Walters, Dr. Diane Burns, Lois Yoksoulian, Dr. Siobhan Morgan, President David Glassman, and Dr. Aaron Johnson.

NATIONAL OFFICER REPORTS

Report of the National President

Let me begin with an apology for my absence from the Biennial Convention. I serve as Executive Director of the American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG) and as Adjunct Professor of Geology at Northwest Missouri State University. This convention happens to coincide with the National Meeting of AIPG and physics dictates that I cannot be in two places at once. As the annual business meeting of AIPG is scheduled for the full day on Saturday, September 23, I must be in attendance there. I extend my sincerest apologies to delegates and alternates, to the National Vice-Presidents, and to James Walters and Paula Even. I will be there in spirit, and I know that the Convention will be a rousing success.

In 1915, students at the University of Kansas founded Sigma Gamma Epsilon (SGE) as a professional fraternity dedicated to serving those who study Earth Sciences. At that time, SGE was open only to men, and quickly grew into a national organization with chapters across the United States. Over time, SGE evolved

from a fraternal organization into an honor society that welcomes all who study in the field of Earth Sciences broadly writ. As the Society has grown, it has been student-focused, and it is students who provide the larger vision for the future of SGE. You are the next group of leaders in that long, storied tradition. Your actions in the coming days will help to chart the path that SGE will follow in the coming years. For the past two years it has been my privilege and honor to serve as your National President. I was elected by student delegates at the 43rd Convention at the University of Kansas in 2015. My first term is complete, and I have duty to outline to you the current state of SGE. Overall, I believe that SGE is in good health, both at the local chapter level, and at the National level. Currently, more than 150 active chapters are listed on the SGE website, more than double the number of active chapters a decade ago. Each of these chapters highlights the academic and professional accomplishments of its members in some way, and serves as a platform from which students can reach out to geoscientists and the broader academic and civic communities to add value to the world.

At the national level, SGE continues to see increased success, such as the annual Sigma Gamma Epsilon Undergraduate Research Poster Session at the Annual Meeting of the Geological Society of America and the migration of *The Compass*, to a fully digital platform.

These successes would not be possible without the dedication and energy of Assistant Director Paula Even, and National Secretary-Treasurer, James Walters. Their tireless dedication to SGE is a primary reason that the Society continues to be healthy and active. In addition, the National Vice-Presidents serve an important role in assisting in the formation of new chapters and the reactivation of chapters that have become dormant. Dr. Richard Langford, Dr. Diane Burns, Dr. Michael Gibson, and Dr. Mark Noll deserve a special recognition for their efforts to support student chapters in the four national provinces of SGE. Finally, Dr. Larry Davis continues to do a phenomenal job as Editor of *The Compass*. To all of the National Officers, I send my most sincere personal thanks. Your work does not

go unnoticed and is deeply appreciated.

Chapter Growth

During the past two years, the national officers have been actively engaged in raising the profile of SGE, by reaching out to inactive chapters and seeking to add new chapters to SGE. Since our last convention at the University of Kansas, SGE has added 11 new chapters and seen the reactivation of 9 inactive chapters. This explosive growth reflects the health of the larger geoscience community and the tireless work of your Regional Vice-Presidents.

New Chapters

1. Theta Eta Chapter, University of Puget Sound
2. Theta Theta, Concord University
3. Theta Iota, SUNY Oswego
4. Theta Kappa, University of North Carolina-Wilmington
5. Theta Lambda, Hofstra University
6. Theta Mu, University of West Georgia
7. Theta Nu, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
8. Theta Xi, Allegheny College

9. Theta Omicron, Indiana University Northwest
10. Theta Rho, Temple University
11. Theta Pi, Florida State University

Reactivated Chapters

1. Xi, Washington State University
2. Beta Iota, University of Houston
3. Upsilon, West Virginia University
4. Zeta Omicron, Millsaps College
5. Zeta Pi, Baylor
6. Eta Theta, Florida Atlantic University
7. Eta Omega, The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
8. Theta Gamma, Angelo State University

Over the last two years, the National Council has worked to implement the new initiatives outlined during the 2015 convention. Most of those were implemented quickly and completely. However, we have been unable to complete the founding of the Sigma Gamma Epsilon Foundation. The process of forming the foundation is complex, and requires significant input from SGE as well as the support of attorneys and the completion of the necessary documentation with the US Internal Revenue Service. We continue to work to complete this project and

anticipate that the Foundation will be in place by prior to the next biennial convention in 2020.

The SGE poster session at the GSA Annual Meeting continues to be a highlight of our success. Each year, SGE provides awards to the best posters submitted by SGE members, as adjudicated by members of the National Council.

Award winners include:

Austin A. Sartin Award:

2015 – Kayleigh M. Harvey and Carrie A. Menold, Gamma Kappa Chapter, Albion College

2016 – Alexa Harrison and Nicholas Schrecongost, Epsilon Eta Chapter, Radford University

National Council Awards:

2015 – Kate C. Grisi and Michael C. Rygel, Eta Beta Chapter, SUNY Potsdam

2016 – Jessica Robinson and Allison Jones, Eta Upsilon Chapter, University of the Pacific

Issues to Be Addressed by the 44th Biennial Convention

I believe that SGE is in very good health overall. However, as with any organization, there always are some issues that could be addressed in a

proactive fashion. I will summarize a few of those here.

1. Do we need to increase initiation fees and/or annual dues at this time?
2. Can we speed up the process for establishing new chapters?
3. Should the Society add another regional vice president to help with establishing new chapters and judging posters at GSA?
4. Which chapter will host our next convention in 2020?
5. How can we encourage a greater degree of participation in the Biennial Convention?
6. How can we encourage alumni to remain engaged with SGE after graduation?

Finally, I often joke with other geoscientists that Sigma Gamma Epsilon is the largest organization for geoscientists in the United States. While I say this with tongue firmly in cheek, it is a true statement. Once you are a member of SGE, you are a member, for life. On behalf of all of the active members and the alumni, I give my thanks to the delegates and alternates attending this convention. Your participation and dedication, your willingness to travel to Charleston, and your effort to conduct the business of

the Society is the lifeblood of SGE. We appreciate your work and dedication to the Society.

Dr. Aaron W. Johnson
SGE National President

Report of the National Secretary-Treasurer

Since our last convention at the University of Kansas in 2015 Sigma Gamma Epsilon has shown a slight decline in total number of members but an increase in total number of chapters. We currently have a total of almost 1,200 active members. Our largest source of income continues to be initiation fees and dues paid by new members. Our second largest source of income is provided by dividends from our stock portfolio. As I have reported previously, in 2010 we consolidated and moved all of our investments into a portfolio managed by Edward Jones. We receive monthly statements of our holdings and meet regularly with our agent to discuss our portfolio and review any appropriate transactions. Since 2012 *The Compass*, the SGE Journal of Earth Science, has been an open-access online publication. Going to this format means we no longer incur the cost of printing and mailing

the journal. This has saved us a considerable expense and, under the capable editorship of Dr. Larry Davis, it looks very professional, is easily accessible, and receives a much wider readership than when it was a print journal. The 2014-2015 fiscal year shows a significant loss in income, and that is attributable to the 2015 SGE Convention at the University of Kansas. Convention years are expensive for us, but this one was doubly expensive since it was also our Centennial Celebration. Fortunately for the 2015-2016 fiscal year we bounced back a bit and showed a gain in income. Major expenses continue to be funding the biennial conventions, the annual W.A. Tarr Awards, Quality Chapter Awards, and Chapter Service Awards, the SGE best poster awards at the GSA annual meetings, expenses associated with the SGE booth at GSA annual meetings, expenses associated with site visits to schools petitioning for the establishment of SGE chapters, and our Associate Director's part-time salary.

The following is a summary of our expenses and income since the 43rd Biennial Convention in 2015. I also provide some information on number of awards presented during

that period of time, since this is also some indication of degree of activity of the Society.

31 W.A. Tarr Awards
 3 Quality Chapter Awards
 2 Chapter Service Awards

2014-2015 Income and Expenses

797 Initiates	\$26,178
625 Returning members	\$9,368
0 New Life members	\$0
29 SGE pins	\$89
431 SGE honor cords	\$5,172
Stock portfolio dividends	\$23,449
Total Income	\$64,256
2014-2015 Expenses (-)	-\$87,416
Net Income (loss)	-\$23,160

2014-2015 Awards presented

28 W.A. Tarr Awards
 4 Quality Chapter Awards
 4 Chapter Service Awards

2015-2016 Income and Expenses

711 Initiates	\$28,440
566 Returning members	\$8,445
1 New Life member	\$175
25 SGE pins	\$81
424 SGE honor cords	\$5,088
Stock portfolio dividends	\$23,882
Total Income	\$66,111
2015-2016 Expenses (-)	-\$58,696
Net Income	\$7,415

2015-2016 Awards presented

Dr. James C. Walters

SGE National Secretary-Treasurer

Report of the National Editor

I apologize to Sigma Gamma Epsilon’s national officers and delegates to this year’s National Convention for my non-attendance, but I am recovering from aortic valve replacement surgery and not allowed any significant travel until October.

In 2012, The Compass transitioned from a paper journal to an electronic journal on the Digital Commons platform. To date, the College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University in Minnesota has supported The Compass’ place on the Digital Commons platform. Our first electronic issue was v. 84, no. 1, 2012, and, this issue, include 11 articles in the first issue. Each issue of the first volume began with page 1, but it was recommended by The Compass committee of the 42nd biennial convention requested page numbering be continuous from no. 1 to no. 4 of the volume. This change was made for v.

85, 2013. To date, 5 volumes (2012-2016) have been published. Note, there has not been a 2017 volume. The list below contains the volume, number, and total articles within that particular issue.

v. 84, no. 1 - 11

v. 84, no. 2 - 5 (1 of which was SGE news and info)

v. 84, no. 3 - 6 (2 of which was SGE news and info)

v. 84, no. 4 - 6

v. 85, no.1 -3

v. 85, no. 2 - 5 (this was a 42nd biennial convention issue)

v. 85, no. 3 - 3

v. 85, no. 4 - 4 (2 of which were abstracts of 2013 GSA and W.A. Tarr Awards)

v. 86, no. 1 - 2

v. 86, no. 2 - 4 (2 of which were letters from the SGE national secretary and national president).

v. 86, no. 3 - 3 (2 of which were about SGE quality awards and Service Awards)

v. 86, no. 4 - 5 (3 of which were Tarr Awards, and abstracts of the SGE/GSA poster session)

v. 87, no. 1 - 3 (1 of which was announce of an award)

v. 87, no. 2 - 6 (volume dealt with 43rd biennial Convention at the University of Kansas)

v. 87, no. 3 - 1 (abstracts of the SGE/GSA poster session)

v. 87, no. 4 - 2

v. 88, no. 1 - 3 (1 of which was about Eta Epsilon's initiation)

v. 88, no. 2 - 2 (Tarr awards and chapter awards)

v. 88, no. 3 - 1 (abstracts of the SGE/GSA poster session)

v. 88, no. 4 - 1

The total number of 'articles' in The Compass has been 76, however ~15 dealt more with SGE business and this is perfectly fine. I would encourage more SGE national and chapter news, including photos. But, as you look at the above numbers, there is an alarming downward spiral in the number of 'research articles' submitted to The Compass. Beginning with v. 84, no. 1, I had encouraged chapters to submit articles under the heading of On the Outcrop (see <http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/ontheoutcrop.html>). These would be easy to submit because they can be based on a visit to a local outcrop or field trip, but only a few have been submitted, mostly by

myself. The first On the Outcrop article, v. 84, no. 1., Algal Stromatolites in the Willow River Member of the Lower Ordovician Shakopee Formation near Chatfield, Minnesota, USA has had 669 full-text downloads since 2012. The second On the Outcrop in v. 84, no. 3, has had 1,600 full-text downloads since 2012. The point being, people have been looking at the On the Outcrop articles!!

An interesting addition to the Digital Commons platform is the ability to monitor where full-text downloads are being made on a global scale. When The Compass was a paper copy the distribution was pretty much restricted to the US. Now that The Compass is digital, I think you would be surprised to see the number of Compass articles being download on a global scale.

At the time of this report, the following were the five most popular Compass papers. As you can see, they all represent articles published in the first two years as an e-journal. Not sure what all this means, other than a lot of people are looking at Compass articles, but the number of articles being submitted continues to decrease

and as a consequence so does the number of readers!

Is Geology a Real Science! (v. 84, no. 2, 2012)– 3,493 full text downloads
Polyphase Laramide Structures and Possible Folded Tertiary (?) Sills at Dagger Mountain, Big Been National Park, Texas (v. 85, no. 3, 2013) – 1,877 full-text downloads

Dinosaur Tracks and Trackways in the Escalante Member of the Entrada Formation (Middle Jurassic), Twentymile Wash, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah (v. 84, no 3, 2012) – 1,647 full-text downloads

Tools of the Geology Trade and Their Origin (v. 84, 2012) – 1,845 full-text downloads

Mary Anning: Princess of Palaeontology and Geological Lioness (v. 84, v. 1, 2012) – 1,719 full-text downloads

We are now three-quarters through 2017, and we should have had at least two issues out (Volume 89). But there have been no issues for 2017, and there is only 1 research manuscript in the 'pipeline'. We will, of course, publish the biennial convention report, as well as the GSA national convention report. If Sigma Gamma Epsilon wants The Compass to

continue, then SGE chapters/members have to submit articles and news/information. I would also encourage chapters/members to submit a cover photo w/caption. Please go to http://www.sigmagammaepsilon.com/index_files/Page757.htm or <http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/instructions.html> for information on how to submit manuscripts. The homepage for The Compass at Digital Commons is at <http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/>, and I would encourage you to watch papers being download worldwide. It is quite interesting!

Dr. Larry Davis
SGE Compass Editor

Report of the Southeastern Province Vice President

Eleven states make up the southeastern province of Sigma Gamma Epsilon and since the last report at the 43rd Biennial Convention at Lawrence Kansas in 2015, the section has increased by three chapters to a total of 59 chapters. As of the beginning of this meeting, I will have also visited the University of Arkansas, Little Rock and anticipate a positive

result of their site visit presented at this meeting. Assuming a positive voting response from the SGE national officers at this meeting, then the southeastern province will actually have added four new chapters for total of 60 chapters. In that regard, I am delighted to report that the southeastern province remains strong with continued expansion over the past two cycles of convention. Southeastern chapters were well represented at the past two annual Geological Society of America with numerous student-authored research posters.

Since the last national convention, the Theta Kappa Chapter at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) was installed (Fall, 2016) under the capable advising of Dr. Sharon Hoffman, along with the Chapter at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton (Spring, 2016) under the watchful eyes of Dr. Bradley Deline. In Fall of 2017 I visited the department at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida. The Theta Pi Chapter was officially installed in spring 2017 (although are not listed on the website as of this report submission), now being advised by Dr. Bill Parker. I

did receive one query from a Texas school wanting to revitalize, but that has not led to any tangible outcome yet. The southeastern province chapters of SGE join with all other chapters of SGE in congratulating the Gamma Chi Chapter at Eastern Illinois University for hosting the 44th Biennial SGE Convention.

Dr. Michael A. Gibson
SGE Southeastern Province Vice
President

Report of the Central Province Vice President

The central region includes 27 active chapters in nine states, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North and South Dakota and Wisconsin. I installed a new chapter in South Dakota during the time since the last convention. This was our new chapter, Theta Nu, at the SD School of Mines and Technology. It was an impressive group of students and faculty, and I look forward to their active involvement in contributing to the science of our society.

I assisted the northeastern section by scheduling a site visit for Northwestern Indiana State as that campus is much closer to my home

institution than for northeast vice president, Dr. Mark Knoll. The faculty and students there were very eager to begin a student chapter and should prove to be an asset to the chapters belonging to the northeastern province.

I have on my agenda for the coming year to make it a point to increase efforts to establish new chapters, reactivate old chapters and get currently active chapters to be more involved in the society. I look forward to establishing better ties with the area chapters as well.

Dr. Diane Burns
SGE Central Providence Vice President

Report of Northeastern Province Vice President

No report submitted.

Report of Western Province Vice President

The western region extends across 14 states and has 24 active chapters. A petition for a new chapter has been received from the University of Oregon and a site visit has been scheduled. This year's goal is to increase the activity of local chapters

across the region and to promote publication in The Compass.

Dr. Richard L. Langford

SGE Western Providence Vice

President

CHAPTER REPORTS

GAMMA ZETA

Kent State University

Since the last convention, the Gamma Zeta Chapter at Kent State University has seen a reduction in undergraduate participation, but graduate participation has remained strong. Former president, Jessica Tashman, has done an excellent job of fundraising and continuing the chapter's traditional role of grain size folder production for sale to GSA and Forestry Suppliers. For the Fall 2017-18 semester, we have 8 new members and 4 returning members. Our new officers for the 2017-18 academic year are as follows:

President- Konstantinos Kasamias (senior undergraduate)

Vice President- Kortney Cole (senior undergraduate)

Secretary- Garrett Blauch (graduate student)

Treasurer- Joe Wislocki (senior undergraduate)

Events Coordinator- Richard Ede (senior undergraduate)

Our Gamma Zeta chapter has been in continuous operation since 1966 and our latest officers are proud to continue the tradition here at Kent State University.

The main goal for this academic year is to increase undergraduate participation in Sigma Gamma Epsilon and continue with grain size folder production as a scholarship fundraising activity. We're off to a great start regarding the recruitment of undergraduates; it has been a very long time in our chapter's history since we've had an undergraduate as President.

To boost interest in Gamma Zeta, we hope to hold an alumni reception in the Spring. The event will be an outdoor reception at McGilvrey Hall with a picnic-style lunch for alumni, faculty, and students. Ideally,

alumni will share their industry experience and job search advice with undergraduates. In years past, this event has been quite successful and we hope to have a good turnout.

Fundraising

Our first meeting of the semester was well attended. We are currently filling a grain size folder order for Forestry Suppliers and hold weekly pizza parties where members and prospective members meet up to put the folders together. In 2015-16, our chapter awarded \$4,900 through research scholarships and the Glenn Frank Field Camp Scholarship and in

2016-17 we awarded \$5900. Much of this money is raised through the sale of our grain size folders, so it is the focus of our chapter (figure 16). Our advisor, Dr. Rodney Feldmann, writes and distributes lab manuals for introductory geology courses in the department. He prints these himself and sells them for slightly above printing cost, then graciously donates the proceeds to Gamma Zeta that amount to an annual contribution between \$300 to \$400. Our chapter is proud to announce that we have had two winners of the W.A. Tarr Award in 2015 and 2017: Owen Jensen and Diana Simone, respectively.

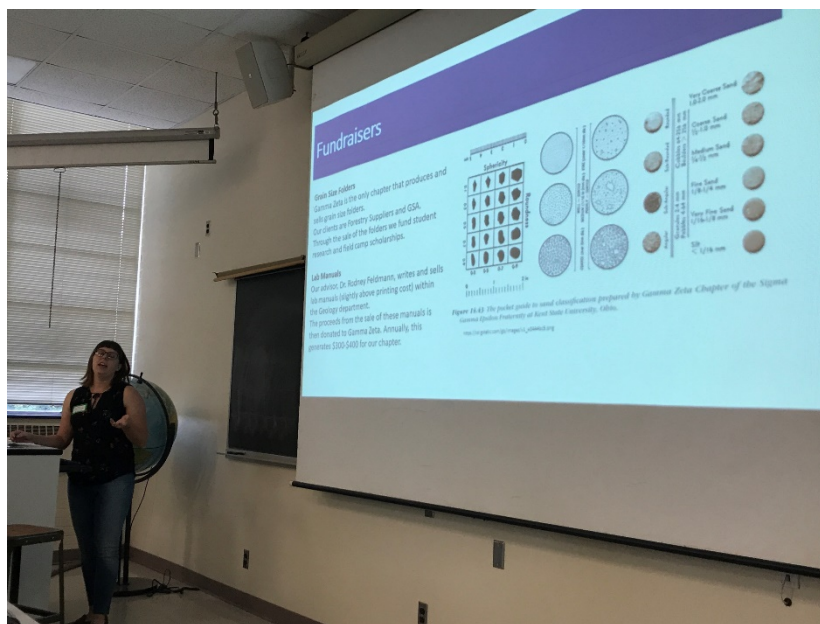


Figure 16. Kortney Cole, Gamma Zeta Chapter, discusses their successful fundraiser constructing grain size folders

Activities

At the beginning of each semester, we host an Icebreaker event at The Venice in Kent for current and prospective SGE members and faculty. We provide beverages and appetizers and it's a great way to get students and faculty together in an informal setting. Last year, nearly all the graduate students and a fair number of undergraduates and faculty attended. We also sponsor a Cross-cultural Thanksgiving party on November 11th. Dr. Daniel Holm has generously hosted this potluck event in his home the last few years. In December, Gamma Zeta holds a holiday party in the Sigma Gamma Epsilon Reading Room in McGilvrey Hall at Kent State University. The 2016 party featured a cookie decorating competition. This year, the department donated four club chairs and a coffee table to update the furniture in the reading room.

Research

Garrett Blauch - Graduate Student, presenting at GSA this year.

I am examining the relationship between large wood and the geomorphic character of urban streams. There's been work on large

wood and its role in natural streams before, but not so much in those impacted by urbanization and development. A large part of that has to do with wood not being able to fall into urban streams, simply because it's urban and there aren't trees to recruit. So, we have a unique setting where water behaves in a flashy way from urbanization, but also recruits wood from protected riparian zones. Once we see it there, we're looking at relationships between abundance of jams and wood to pool creation and spacing, sediment size and storage, and bank erosion.

Joe Wislocki - Undergraduate, presenting at GSA this year

I work with Dr. Christopher Rowan of the Kent State University Geology Department. We are testing the effects of abnormally strong lower crust on orogeny development using a sandbox analogue model. We are using this to study and test the Pennsylvania salient formation, which is an oroclinal bend in the Central Appalachians. A salient is where the faults and fold axes are rotated almost 90 degrees clockwise from their usual N-S orientation. Based on geophysical

observations from Benoit et al. 2014, they discovered that stress concentrations at the edges of a strong mafic under plate are beneath the salient, which is associated with a Proterozoic rift zone that filled in with magma.

Kortney Cole - Undergraduate research assistant for Dr. David Singer's research group.

The group's research concerns acid mine drainage from abandoned coal mines that effect the Huff Run watershed. I use an SEM to obtain images and EDS data from various soil and shale thin sections from the site to examine distribution and mass percent variation of pyrite throughout the tailing piles and surrounding soil.

Konstantinos Kasamias – Undergraduate

Konstantinos is performing his research in the geomorphologic modelling of the South Western Utah Markagunt gravity slide. Using a sandbox model with medium grained sand, he has performed trials with .5" uniform layers as well as a 1" top layers with .5" base with the intent on studying the nature of the failure angle

as well as the elevations at which they occur. Konstantinos Kasamias is a junior at Kent State University, with the intent of working in the geophysical maritime industry. You can contact him with inquiries at kkasamia@kent.edu.

*Kortney Cole
Vice President-Historian*

GAMMA CHI

Eastern Illinois University

The student chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon at Eastern Illinois University is Gamma Chi. We have an active and thriving chapter which has not only won numerous awards from the national association, but our activities have also earned us notoriety at Eastern Illinois University. In large part due to the high visibility and continued success of our chapter, the Geology Program was chosen to be one of the few 'featured majors' that are promoted by the higher end of EIU's administration. Our chapter and our activities have been reported in several newspaper articles, and we have established an on-going educational relationship with the local public library.

Here is a detailed recap of our activities since the last convention: Recruiting – Gamma Chi has been successful in keeping our numbers fairly good with an active group of members despite the disturbing loss of enrollment campus-wide (figure 17). We are slated to initiate new members in both the Fall and Spring semesters of this academic year.

Service Activities/Projects – Some of these activities are on-going in that we hold them every year. When this is the case, all of the previous years' actions are combined under a singular heading identifying the project.

Lake Charleston Cleanup - Our campus is situated fairly close to a very nice

lake that is a regional playground for fisher people, kayakers, picnickers and the like. It, as most public facilities, accumulates a lot of trash with careless usage. The city has limited resources and cannot clean the areas surrounding the lake continuously. An on-campus group organized a cleanup and educational forum to highlight science and the need for scientific education in honor of Earth Day, 2017. Our group not only helped promote and advertise the event, we had a booth with informational brochures as well as a mineral display and a competition for the participants to correctly identify the "mystery minerals."



Figure 17. Members of Gamma Chi doing some on campus recruiting for the Geology and Geography Department; from right-left, Neil Rhoades, Geno Persico, Shay Oldham and Jasmine Winters (in dinosaur suit).

Adopt-a-Highway - Our chapter found out that there was the possibility of adopting a one-mile section of any state highway in IL (figure 19). For maintaining that stretch of highway's cleanliness in both directions, we were

offered to be recognized by the state by having signs erected to acknowledge our service. There was limited spacing for letters on how we wanted the sign to read. While SGE initiated and did the whole process, we felt advertising our department as a whole and the university would be a better recruiting tool and voted to put "Eastern IL Univ Geology" on the sign (figure 18). As mentioned in a previous part of this report, the university has had its number drop precipitously over the last few years; recruitment and getting the university's name out there is high on the list of priorities.



Figure 18. Gamma Chi Chapter adopted a one-mile section of state highway in Illinois as a service project.

Colloquium Series - Our Geology and Geography Department has an annual colloquium series in which it brings speakers to campus to give Earth-related talks that are of interest to students, faculty and the general public. Gamma Chi applies for on-campus funding to pay for refreshments to host the guests (\$500/year) and then members purchase, set up and break down the food/drink for each event. There were

fewer colloquia this time because of scheduling issues within the department. The talks/presentations we helped host were:

Feb. 25, 2016 – Chad Wetzl, "Opportunities for Employment in the Private Sector,"

Apr. 20, 2016 – John Popp, "My Career in the Mining Industry,"

Sept. 22, 2017 – Guarav Sinah, "Ontological Approaches to Terrain Modeling and Analysis."

Charleston Public Library Presentations

– Gamma Chi has helped create and present numerous demonstrations for the Children's Program at the local public library, mostly geared for 6th graders. Over the last few semesters,

we have had presentations/activities on fossils, mineral and mining and more (figure 20).

For a larger scale project, we decided to create a wooden cut-out skeleton that could be assembled and disassembled by kids in the library to make a dinosaur (figure 21). This was a large skeleton, measuring almost four feet from skull to tail and made of several dozen pieces. The pieces were later sanded more thoroughly and stained to make it as robust as possible given the use it will probably see in the library. The dinosaur skeleton was presented to the library on April 26, 2016 in honor of Earth Day.



Figure 19. Neil Rhoades discusses one of Gamma Chi's many service projects, adopting a highway.

Campus Recruiting: Homecoming Parade – As mentioned previously, enrollment at EIU is critically low. As a service to the campus as well as our department, SGE members entered a float in the Homecoming Parade (figure 22). They transformed my Honda Fit into Mya, the dino car (figure 23). We drove the parade route, giving out candy to the kids and generally

spreading good cheer not only with my dino car but also with one of the students dressed up in our newly acquired inflatable T-Rex suit. Steven Oldham, the SGE member who wore the suit, almost succumbed to dehydration and claustrophobia as a result, but he was a steadfast trooper in making the dinosaur live.



Figures 20 and 21. Dan Curtis giving a presentation on fossils at the Charleston Public Library (left picture), and library kids putting together the wooden dinosaur skeleton (right picture).



Figure 22 & 23. SGE members Shirley Mensah, Shay Oldham, Alex Harper and Neil Harper (left picture). With help from SGE members Pat Manselle, Abbey Warner, Jasmine Winters and Geno Persico constructed Mya, the dino car (right picture).

Activities – Gamma Chi believes that a strong chapter also has a lot of interesting, educational and fun things to do. As such, at least one event per semester is geared towards this goal. In the past two and a half years, we have arranged and taken these trips:

- Camping trips, southern IL
- Diamond hunting, AR
- Geode hunting, western IL
- Museum trips – IL and IN
- Fluorite hunting, IL
- Mineral and gem shows, IL
- Cookouts, potlucks, eclipse event

*Neil Rhoades
Gamma Chi President*

DELTA EPSILON CHAPTER Wright State University

2015:

Our fall induction had seven returning members and ten new inductees, with both undergraduate and graduate students in each group.

Field trip to the Ohio Caverns in West Liberty, Ohio with AIPG. The field trip was for undergraduates, graduates, and professionals to attend.

Participated in Highway Cleanup of North bound I-675 outside of Wright State University with the organization Students for Earth and Environmental Sustainability.

2016:

Our fall induction had seven returning members and five new inductees, with both undergraduate

and graduate students in each category.

Field trip to Clifton Gorge in Yellow Springs, Ohio with AIPG. The field trip was open to undergraduates, graduates, and professionals to attend.

Sponsored a fundraiser that was a fossil/rock silent auction with two other Wright State organizations and raised approximately \$100.

Hosted a week of events for Earth Day including a campus cleanup

event, hike in the campus, tree planting, and Adopt-A-Highway Clean-up on I-675.

Elected new officers for the Delta Epsilon chapter (figure 24).

Purchased SGE cords for members of our chapter to rent or buy for graduation this upcoming winter and spring.

Allison Savoie

Delta Epsilon Vice President



Figure 24. Allison Savoie shares the current officers of Delta Epsilon.

DELTA PSI CHAPTER

Western Illinois University

Since the last SGE Convention in March 2015, the Delta Psi Chapter at Western Illinois University has had an

average membership of eleven for the past two fall semesters and we are continuing to grow in our small Geology Department (figure 25). Over the past few years, we organized several

successful roadside cleanups. A few other clubs have participated with this ongoing project.

We've been working on maintaining the geologic timescale on the sidewalk outside Tillman Hall, where the Geology Department is housed. We would like to add more to the surrounding sidewalk. There are plans to add dinosaur footprints and other educational imagery to the sidewalk, this would be great for the grade school student groups that tour of our Geology Museum. We eventually plan on making the timescale interact with smartphones.

Many of our members are also members of the WIU Geology Club so we periodically coordinate field trips with them to visit mines, quarries, or to

collect geodes from streams beds at choice locations in the Western Illinois area. Last spring a trip was coordinated to visit a quarry that was being managed by a WIU Alumnus. We collected a great number of geodes from there and had a blast.

Our main fundraiser consists of selling geology-themed t-shirts, of our creation, and old geology books at the Rock, Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show that our university hosts each March. At this show we have the privilege of meeting fellow rock hounds who look forward to learning more about the rocks, minerals, and fossils that are featured at the show.

*Paige Elsea
Delta Psi Vice President*



Figure 25. Paige Elsea discusses Delta Psi's membership numbers.

ETA ALPHA

University of Tennessee at Martin

The Sigma Gamma Epsilon Eta Alpha chapter at the University of Tennessee at Martin has a current roster of 12 active members representing all three geoscience concentrations and a variety of backgrounds and interests within the individual disciplines. The chapter has had an eventful two years.

In the fall of 2015, 6 new members were initiated, followed by 5 in the fall of 2016 and 3 in the spring of 2017, totaling 14 recruits since the last update. In contrast, 5 members have graduated in the same period, signifying a general trend of chapter growth.

In the fall of 2016, Eta Alpha chapter along with the department and other geoscience organizations, began forging a relationship with the Discovery Park of America in Union City, TN. DPA is a museum, recreational park, and botanical garden dedicated to educating the general population of the Mid-South on the interdisciplinary heritage of the region, including geologic history, paleontological heritage, climatic setting, and physical and political

geography. Eta Alpha chapter has become affiliated with the monthly Saturday Morning Science event hosted at the park, which has included features such as a mineral and fossil identification day open to the public, as well as a liquid nitrogen volcano demonstration (figure 26).

Three members attended the Sigma Gamma Epsilon National Convention in Lawrence, Kansas in 2015, and served on Ritual and Insignia, Constitution and Bylaws, and Membership and Scholarship committees. Plans are in place to transport five students to the 2017 National Convention at Eastern Illinois University. Other members of Eta Alpha chapter will be participating in GeoConclave the same weekend as the convention. GeoConclave is an academic competition hosted at Fall Creek Falls State Park by various public and private university geoscience departments in Tennessee.

The chapter has a two-year goal of recruiting a number of prospective and recently enrolled geoscience majors exhibiting academic promise, and retaining a positive and interactive relationship with the Discovery Park of America. The past two years have seen

Eta Alpha chapter through a period of nurturing exhortation by faculty, the university administration, and other geoscience organizations on campus. This environment of growth and

support shows no indication of changing in the biannual term to come.

*Nathaniel Newlin
Eta Alpha Vice President*



Figure 26. Amy McLemore shares details about Eta Alpha’s affiliation with the Saturday Morning Science event at Discovery Park of America.

ETA GAMMA CHAPTER Weber State University

In the past two years since the 2015 convention, the Eta Gamma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah has welcomed 3 members in fall of 2015, 10 in 2016, and 3 in spring of this year, totaling 16 new members of our chapter. Our chapter has been privileged to have 3 of our members

receive the W.A. Tarr award -- Ashly Provow (2015), who is currently in graduate school at Utah State University, Stephanie Mitts (2016), and Raquel Robello earlier this year (2017). In addition, our chapter is excited and honored to have received both the Quality Chapter Award and the Chapter Service Award for 2017. Some of our service has included the construction and assembly of geologic information

signs and posts for the Weber State University Discovery Loop Trail, over one hundred hours of volunteer service with the Utah Geological Survey, participation in community events,

volunteering with the Boy Scouts of America, and assisting in the grand opening of Weber State University's new Tracy Hall Science Center.



Figure 27. Aaron Phipps and Orana Paullus share the many activities Eta Gamma Chapter participates in

In order to maintain a presence in the College of Science, each year our chapter participates in support of the national Science Olympiad, a competition among junior high and high school teams. This is an important activity that we believe serves as a springboard for these students into the world of science. It teaches them teamwork, critical thinking, and it cultivates their interest in science. These students are tested on a variety

of geoscience topics including earthquakes and volcanoes, geologic history, meteorology, and rocks and minerals. Our members are able to help organize and score the rock and mineral identification event. We find value in these types of activities and love to support the upcoming geoscientists that we have the opportunity to interact with. We also manned a checkpoint for Weber Pathways Trail Fest to promote the use

of our local trails and expose the public to minerals and geologic features they may see in our area. This year, we plan on continued outreach through our local Boys and Girls Club and science magnet elementary school. We will also be hosting a network/resume workshop with career services based specifically on our career fields. Finally, we will host a behind the scenes fieldtrip to the Natural History Museum (figure 27). Our chapter is committed to quality service, obtaining education, and sharing that education to our community and our school. We strive to represent Sigma Gamma Epsilon in a professional and supportive way to promote interest, passion, and respect for the geosciences. We enjoy learning and working together, serving together, and having fun in our chapter. Through community involvement, guest speakers, workshops, and field trips, our goal is to render service and to acquire and provide tools to our members that can help them succeed academically and in their future careers.

Aaron Phipps
Eta Gamma President

THETA OMICRON
Indiana University Northwest

The Theta Omicron Chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon at Indiana University Northwest was founded on December 7th of 2016, with 8 new members, including 6 geology students and 2 faculty members. As we have only been established for one semester, we have little experience under our belts as of fall 2017. The Chapter is actively learning how to strengthen its presence within IUN's geology department, as well as participating in community outreach.

President Katie Denver Gurnicz along with Chapter Advisor Dr. Erin Argyilan diligently brain-stormed ventures for Theta Omicron to take on for the 2017 – 2018 academic year. Careers in Geology presentations by professionals from multiple disciplines, including senior geologists from national environmental consulting firms as well as recently graduated students are scheduled to visit IUN's geology department in the coming months in hopes of expanding students' understanding of the geology field. Workshops for resume building and a field camp informational are scheduled to aid geology and non-geology students alike in preparing for post-graduate life.

The Chapter is currently establishing a "Job Board" project which is intended to be maintained by Chapter members posting geology job opportunities, geology-related conferences in the region, and volunteer opportunities for service hours and community involvement. The Chapter's enthusiastic president is also attempting to establish a natural disaster relief effort to support the hurricane-stricken south devastated by Harvey and Irma. Arrangements are still in the works for hopefully organizing a service trip to Texas or Florida, however many students, members and non-members alike, have expressed sincere interest in participating.

The Theta Omicron Chapter is diligently working to overcome a learning curve, nevertheless the Chapter's current officers and faculty advisor have immense and optimistic visions for the future of the organization and the advancement of its members (figure 28).

Cesar A Garcia
Theta Omicron Secretary-Treasurer



Figure 28. Cesar A Garcia shares the challenges of being a new chapter and their visions for the future.

THETA SIGMA

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Dr. Michael Gibson, Southeastern Province Vice President, had visited the University of Arkansas at Little Rock on September 18th and recommended to the national officers to establish a chapter at The University of Arkansas Little Rock campus. They voted unanimously to establish a new chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon, Theta Sigma, at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Tyler Kee represented Theta Sigma at the convention (figure 29).



Figure 29. Tyler Kee shares his enthusiasm at being able to represent the newest chapter of SGE, Theta Sigma, located at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.