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## Letter to the members of SGE from your new editor

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LETTER

# Letter to the members of SGE from your new editor

Scott R. Beason\* 

National Editor, *The Compass*, National Council of The Society of Sigma Gamma Epsilon  
Park Geologist, Mount Rainier National Park, 55210 238th Avenue East, Ashford, WA 98304, USA

## Members of SGE:

Hello! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you and provide the society with an update of some big changes coming to *The Compass*. As the newest National Editor, I am looking forward to providing the members of Sigma Gamma Epsilon with an update on what I would like to achieve for *The Compass*. One of my first publications was in *The Compass* ("The Lithostratigraphy and Depositional Environments of the Pella Formation (Mississippian) in Keokuk and Wapello Counties, Southeastern Iowa" - Vol. 80, No. 2, 2007), so it makes me happy to come back and serve the society in this role!

I am a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) in Cedar Falls Iowa, with a bachelor's degree in 2005 and master's degree in 2007. I joined Sigma Gamma Epsilon in the Fall of 2002 at UNI's Gamma Sigma chapter. I served as Gamma Sigma Chapter Treasurer in Fall 2003-Spring 2004, and Chapter President in Fall 2004-Spring 2005. I recall with fondness the various initiation ceremonies and events that the Gamma Sigma chapter offered. I also try to keep in touch with the students and faculty from UNI and make it a point to stop by the SGE booth at Geological Society of America (GSA) annual meetings.

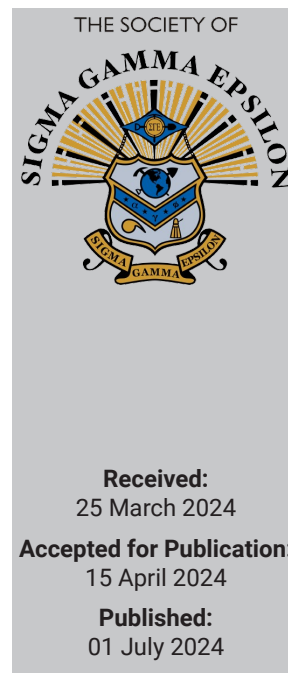
My day-to-day job is the Park Geologist at Mount Rainier National Park, a role that I have served in since March 2010. I lead the park's Geology and Imminent Threats programs and am the first NPS geologist at Mount Rainier since the park's establishment in 1899. My research is focused on studying the geologic landscape in the park to help inform sustainable management of the natural and cultural resources at Mount Rainier in an increasingly warming climate. I am very interested in glaciers and glacial recession, debris flows, flooding, seismic and non-contact methods of streamflow measurement, and the downstream impacts of newly

introduced sediment provided to rivers as a result of climate change. I am also interested in the hazards posed by the active geologic processes in the park, especially with respect to ensuring the safety of the park's employees and visiting public. My job affords me the opportunity to work with some amazing scientists at the park, as well as the United States Geological Survey, and many academic institutions in the region.

This spring, I received an email from Lee Potter, the associate director of SGE and faculty member at UNI, about peer reviewing an article for *The Compass*. In his email, Lee mentioned that the National Editor role was newly vacant. I jumped at the opportunity to serve in this role, and I accepted the position of National Editor in March 2024. I looked at the past issues of *The Compass* and have several ideas about how we can improve the look and feel of the journal.

I have many short-term goals as the National Editor, including, but not limited to:

- **Update the look and feel of *The Compass*.** I have worked hard to improve the publication format, including a complete redesign of the journal with a common format in Adobe InDesign, fonts, colors, etc., and a styling that better matches other scientific journals.
- **A new manuscript template.** I have introduced a new manuscript template as a Microsoft Word document that should help authors write articles for the journal



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and improve the process of peer review. This is like formats that we use in the National Park Service to facilitate the publication process. The new manuscript template can be found at the following page: <https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/instructions.html>.

- **Digital Object Identifier (DOI).** Starting with Volume 93, we will be instituting a digital object identifier (DOI) for our journal. This will allow for better referencing and accounting of our material in perpetuity.
- **Improved peer review flow.** I want to improve the process and flow of submitting articles and initiating the peer review process. This should help facilitate the publication of articles in a timely manner.
- **Updates to the DigitalCommons site.** I want to update the look and feel of the DigitalCommons site at The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University (CSB/SJU), where the digital version of *The Compass* lives. A big "thank you" is in order to David Wuolu and CSB/SJU for hosting our journal!

The long-term goals that I have as National Editor include, but are not limited to:

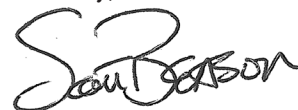
- **Improve the "On The Outcrop" series.** The "On The Outcrop" series highlights outcrops of geologic significance with photos and a brief article. I would like to see more submissions in this category and will work to improve the series.
- **Redistribute issues of *The Compass*.** I would like to create a version of *The Compass* that is distributed (as a PDF) to all SGE members during each publication cycle. Each issue would have front matter, news/updates, and all research articles.

- **A more stable publication cycle.** *The Compass* used to be published quarterly and has recently seen a stagnation of that publication cycle. I hope to see a return to the quarterly publication cycle while I serve as the National Editor.

Tied into that last bullet point is a solicitation I have for all SGE members: *Please submit manuscripts to The Compass!* I know that there is a significant amount of undergraduate and graduate level research that is being undertaken – I see the results of that at our well-attended and excellent poster sessions at GSA! Let's move forward from the posters and publish the work that you and your coauthors are undertaking. As I mentioned previously, *The Compass* was one of my first journal articles and many scientists have *The Compass* listed on their publication lists. *The Compass* is a great way to learn about the process of submitting your work to the peer-reviewed publication world and I hope to see an increase in manuscripts in the coming years!

I hope you can tell that I am excited about this opportunity to serve the society and improve *The Compass*. I look forward to working with all of you and can't wait to see where we go! If you are in Anaheim at GSA this fall, stop by and say "hi" to all of us at the SGE Booth (#511). Feel free to contact me at [scott.beason@nps.gov](mailto:scott.beason@nps.gov), or [editor@sgeearth.org](mailto:editor@sgeearth.org). Let's get some manuscripts submitted and published!

Sincerely,



Scott R. Beason, MS, LG  
National Editor, *THE COMPASS*

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