

Geological Society of America Foundation

The mission of the Geological Society of America Foundation is to develop and provide funds to support the goals and programs of the Geological Society of America. These funds are distributed according to the needs of the Society and in a manner consistent with the desire of the donors.

The responsibilities of the Foundation are twofold: (1) to support GSA programs, and (2) to preserve the Foundation's assets for the future.

2021–2022 Highlights

In a second consecutive year of challenging, uncertain circumstances across the globe, donors to GSA through the Foundation continued a robust showing of support: In FY2022, the GSA Foundation received Annual Campaign contributions of more than US\$1.25M from individual GSA members and corporations. There were 7,040 separate gifts at all levels from over 5,700 donors (almost 30% of members), a testament to the dedication of steadfast supporters.

While it has been a fruitful last year, we are looking ahead eagerly: We can make a still greater impact. With graphics like the one below, we aim to build awareness across all of GSA's membership, beyond our current donors, about the value of giving back to the Society. Our loyal base of donors gives year after year. We hope to reach the remaining 70% of GSA's membership with the message that small gifts from many members make a big difference in what GSA can offer. You will see more of these facts and figures in the year ahead, as we encourage every member to find their own fit in service to GSA and support of the Foundation as we work together to ensure the strength and presence of the geosciences.



We are deeply appreciative of those who include the Foundation in their estate plans; Legacy Circle gifts are vital to

unrestricted funding. In Fiscal Year 2022, we received nearly US\$175,000 from bequests. While many annual contributions meet an immediate need, these usually unrestricted legacy gifts can ensure support far beyond current needs and, often, on a larger scale. They allow GSA leadership to plan for important priorities of the Society or new initiatives that would not otherwise be possible. Over the past year, we learned of eight additional donors who are including GSA, through the Foundation, in their planned giving.

The GSA Foundation's student giving circle, Tektonikos – Building the Future, had another strong showing, with 1,350 donors from our student membership. We are eager to engage and encourage this group to remain involved as the future of the Society's membership and leadership.

Our spring mini-campaign supported On To the Future, bringing students from underrepresented groups to their first GSA meeting by covering registration, a year's membership, a travel stipend, and pairing with a one-to-one mentor. A longtime donor once again matched your contributions up to US\$10,000, a challenge this member has offered for a number of years to bolster this important initiative.

The GSA Foundation was able to provide funding for a record 30 J. David Lowell Field Camp Scholarships—10 more than when the program was solely funded by a corporate sponsor. This year-end campaign kicked off on Giving Tuesday, including a donor's US\$10,000 matching challenge to fellow supporters. Helping students obtain vital field experience remains a passion of our GSA members. Organizational partner Brunton upped their contribution to match this increase in scholarships by providing thirty engraved Transit compasses to recipients.

Support by the Numbers

Of GSA members **6,128** donate to GSAF to support programs that benefit **30.5%** 20,075 members and beyond

If every member gave simply the price of a coffee from a cafe, it would fund the cost of our Science Policy Fellow or it could provide...

50 On To the Future grants to serve those from groups under-represented in the geosciences

If the members who have yet to contribute gave just \$5 each, **35** GSA student members could receive scholarships toward a field camp of their choice—a hallmark of many geoscientists' training

Did you know...

Just 313 members gave **\$60,000** as part of GSA CARES during the COVID pandemic, and that all but **8** were regular donors?

836 student members to help provide assistance to

You get the point. Join your peers in helping your organization provide the very best. It doesn't take a lot of \$. **It just takes a lot of us.**

<https://gsa-foundation.org>

Alexandra Banks: My Field Camp Experience (18 Nov. 2021)

As a non-traditional student, receiving the J. David Lowell Field Camp Scholarship allowed Alexandra Banks to participate in field camp, which helped her find her place in geoscience.

Where did you attend field camp?
I attended the Southern Illinois University Geology field camp. We spent a majority of the time learning field mapping in Montana. We also visited various locations throughout Wyoming and Idaho to learn about the geologic processes that formed some of this country's most beloved parks.

What did receiving the J. David Lowell Field Camp Scholarship mean to you?
A field course is commonly required to complete a degree in geology and it is a really important experience for students. Receiving this scholarship alleviated the financial strain due to not only the cost of the course, but taking six weeks away from work. As a non-traditional student, I am primarily responsible for all of my school and living expenses. This scholarship allowed me to focus on all that I had to gain, rather than how I was going to make it through the summer.

What did that experience teach you about the geosciences, yourself, and your future career?
I learned that the field of geoscience is very diverse. There are many different applications, and I found myself interested in facets that I had never thought much about before. I also learned that I really enjoy working outside. Fieldwork is very challenging, and the hard work makes me feel strong and confident. The physical aspect of many geology jobs is not something that intimidates me. Rather, I look forward to it.

What opportunities did attending field camp provide that you wouldn't have had otherwise and in your opinion, how important is field camp for geoscience students?
Attending field camp allowed me to be able to apply fundamental geologic concepts to real landscapes and features. Field camp is integral to the success of a geology student, because reading about something and recognizing it in the field are two different things. Field camp provides the opportunity for students to visit very diverse landscapes and learn in 3D. It also helps students orient themselves in the world of geosciences and really find out what interests them the most.

Why should individuals support field camp opportunities for students?
Support is so important because field camp is such a valuable and important part of our education, and is required for most geology degrees. However, it is quite costly and requires time away from work. The scholarship program that I participate in for fall and spring semesters does not extend financial support for the summer. Students should not have to decline opportunities, or avoid programs that require a field course due to financial strain.

Stories like this and of many other GSA program recipients can be found on the Foundation's News & Events page of our website (<https://gsa-foundation.org/news-events/>).

Each year, we work with donors to create a number of new funds that often support research grants or awards. An example of a less-common fund in the past year is the Christopher I. and Irene N. Chalokwu Travel Grant for Students in Africa. GSA International oversees selection of the grant, which aims to support high-quality research by students on the African continent, bring African geology into focus for U.S. professionals and institutions, shine a light on studies that are underreported, and broaden participation at GSA Connects and beyond. With the introduction of this fund, Dr. Chalokwu and his wife, Dr. Irene N. Chalokwu, provide an outstanding example of how individuals can create opportunity across geopolitical borders and realize impacts far beyond a single place or time. We hope that this vision and generosity inspires others who also support international scientific exchange.

After two years of postponement due to the pandemic, the second *Death Valley Rendezvous* took place in the spring of 2022. Participants included geologists and their guests. Darrel Cowan led us throughout the region, looking at the Kingston Peak Formation, stromatolites as an early record of microbial life on earth at different times in the Proterozoic, Tecopa lake beds, pup fish, and more, including a day with Nature Conservancy naturalist Len Warren talking about birds of the area. Since the trip was once again in high demand, it will also run in Spring of 2023.

The Foundation is pleased to help donors support GSA programs and priorities important to them. Looking forward, we are eager to maintain the increased annual funding level achieved in the last several years and to work with GSA in identifying engaging and effective resource-building strategies. With your help, we will continue to shape a strong future for GSA.

How Members Can Get Involved:

Support students, research, and education through a voluntary contribution to the GSA Foundation when you renew your 2023 membership.

Help others be part of our GSA member community. The Membership Assistance Program and Fund enables those who cannot afford the cost of membership, or who experience difficulty in transferring funds from their country to the USA, to become members. Support and spread the word.

We encourage every member to avail themselves of the opportunity to serve GSA and to support the Foundation in our combined efforts to ensure the dynamism and strength of the geosciences. Please visit the Foundation's website (www.gsa-foundation.org) for information regarding ways you can make a philanthropic impact for GSA and the geosciences.

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