VOL. 36, NO. 3–4 | March–April 2026

GSA TODAY

THE MEMBERSHIP PUBLICATION OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA™

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The Geography of Geology: The GSA Foundation's Impact on GSA Sections

The Geological Society of America (GSA) exists because of its members—their passion for inquiry, their desire to connect, and their commitment to the future of the geosciences. The GSA Foundation takes pride in securing resources to support the Society and its endeavors.

Regular meetings for networking, sharing, and dynamic partnership-building are crucial to GSA's vitality. Once a year, the entire community can unite at GSA Connects, but this is not the only way GSA brings geoscientists together. GSA's six geographic Sections host annual spring meetings to foster collaborations and discoveries and enable GSA members to address issues particular to their geographic affiliations. Students, professionals, researchers, and educators form bonds and share findings. Above all, Section Meetings strengthen GSA—empowering its members to solve the deepest mysteries of the planet and address the challenges of the present and future.

Funds raised by the GSA Foundation help sustain the vibrant intellectual life of the GSA Sections. Thanks in part to GSA Foundation support of GSA programs and scholarships, 94 Southeastern Section students were able to attend GSA Connects in 2025, a record number. Moreover, the Section made nine undergraduate student research grants, more than twice as many as usual.

Support for GSA Sections amplifies GSA's role as an incubator of innovation. In a note of thanks for their Southeastern Section award, Marina Ashurkoff, a student at the College of William & Mary, wrote, "It is truly an honor to get to do scientific work where I'm both learning the techniques attached to my project and how to be a researcher in general."



Figure 1. Southeastern Section student award recipient Marina Ashurkoff and GSA Immediate Past President Chuck Bailey at an outcrop of the Catoctin Greenstone.

At the GSA Foundation, we love hearing testimonials such as Marina's. They speak to how your donations have transformative impacts on students, often building lifelong bonds with GSA and its community.

Other Sections were similarly able to use GSA Foundation resources to deepen student engagement. In 2025, the Rocky Mountain Section combined internal and GSA Foundation resources to make eight student research awards and four undergraduate presentation awards. Moreover, this funding helped 25 students attend the 2025 Section meeting in Provo, Utah, and provided partial assistance for 50 students to attend GSA Connects in San Antonio.

In 2025, the GSA Foundation provided:

$64,448 to the Sections in total

$34,875 for travel grants

$29,573 for research grants

This was thanks to the generosity of donors, along with the GSA Foundation's careful stewardship of their gifts. But we would love to raise more and contribute more. We will be at meetings this spring to learn more about each Section's vision and priorities. We can't wait to contribute to GSA's goals in 2026 and beyond.



Figure 2. GSA Rocky Mountain Section members at GSA Connects in San Antonio. Left to right: Samantha Malavarca (graduate student rep), John Singleton (chair), Carolyn Tewksbury-Christle (chair-elect), Jim Gutoski (graduate student rep), Steve Harlan (secretary/treasurer), and Ben Laabs (member-at-large).

To support your Section today, please scan the QR code below or contact GSA Foundation Executive Director Sean O'Brien at **sean.obrien@gsa-foundation.org** to discuss different ways to make an impact. Thank you for being part of our community.

All donations make a difference.

Please scan the QR code to make a gift now, or contact GSA Foundation Executive Director Sean O'Brien, PhD, at sean.obrien@gsa-foundation.org to learn about more ways to give.

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