



SAPROLITE

NEWSLETTER of the SOUTHEASTERN SECTION
GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Spring 2023

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Fellow Members of the Southeastern Section,

Leafing through prior editions of Sapolite (available [online](#) and worth checking out, there is plenty of sage wisdom in all of them!) I found that annual Letters from the Chair are written by esteemed members of our Society with solid academic careers in geoscience - someone whose presence at your talk or poster at a SEGSA meeting might be a ‘pretty big deal.’ It prompted me to ask myself, to echo that song ‘Once in a Lifetime’ – well how did I get here? Since I was asked to serve as SE Chair for this year (and ever since Co-Chairing the 2019 Section meeting in Charleston with Scott Harris), I have experienced a recurring feeling of imposter syndrome. I think many of us have likely been there before.

But that’s the great thing about being a member of GSA: imposter syndrome can’t really exist in the long run because it’s clear that everyone has a part to play, and everyone’s input is valuable. The questions we all tackle in our careers as geoscientists are incredibly complex and of societal importance. They require collaboration with colleagues. Here in coastal South Carolina, questions of resilience and transitional boundaries and thresholds abound, requiring insight into the disciplines of paleoclimatology, hydrogeology, geomorphology, and geoscience education and outreach, to name just a few.

GSA provides a network of fellow geoscientists that can expand as far as other continents but also contract to your colleagues working just down the hall. I hope we can all help GSA continue to be an organization that is approachable, inclusive, and supportive of everyone at all points in their career, especially students. GSA is sub-divided in ways that makes it possible to attend meetings based on your geographic location (there are six [Sections](#): Southeastern, Northeastern, North-Central, Rocky Mountain, Cordilleran, and South Central, all of which host annual Section meetings). And did you know that GSA sections extend into Canada and Mexico? The Society also has 22 [Scientific Divisions](#) that any member may join based on their research interests (a special shoutout to the Marine and Coastal Geoscience Division!) all of which have Management Boards and officer roles, as well as Student Representatives. There are so many ways to get involved, and you never know; if you keep volunteering for things, you may find yourself writing a letter like this one day.

As you will read in this edition of Saproliite, the state of our Section’s membership, finances, and student research and travel grant opportunities is strong. Thanks to your involvement and participation over the past several years, we’ve had successful meetings in Auburn (2021) and Cincinnati (2022 - joint with North-Central) in spite of the challenges that we and the rest of the world have faced. This year, the hard work that has been done by the Reston, VA committee will come to fruition at our 2023 Joint Meeting with the Northeastern Section (the 72nd Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section) March 17th-19th. Please join us for what is going to be an excellent meeting and consider attending a field trip to take advantage of some of the expert knowledge, rich geology, and history of the Appalachians and D.C. area.

A special thanks to Blair Tormey, our Secretary-Treasurer for all the work he does keeping the Section running smoothly, and to Miguel Valencia, our Student Representative, and Edward Lo, our Geosciences Congressional Visits Day (GEO-CVD) Representative, for their engagement with the Section on behalf of our students, and for their contributions to this issue of Saproliite. Thanks to all who have served on the Management Board this past year. And to the organizing committee for the Reston 2023 meeting – Arthur Merschat and Patrick Burkhart (General Co-Chairs); Chuck Bailey and Wendell Barner (Technical Program Co-Chairs); Jean Self-Trail and Laurel Bybell (Field Trip Co-Chairs); Daniel Doctor and Patrick Burkhart (Short Course Co-Chairs, with Patrick Burkhart also serving as Sponsorships Chair); Daniel Harris (Exhibits Chair); and Michael Trippi (Student Volunteer Chair); as well as prior members of the Committee, Mark Carter, Chris Swezey, Katie Tamulonis, and Wilma Aleman Gonzalez – thank you for your hard work and dedication to the upcoming meeting – your perseverance through the past several years is amazing and unprecedented. I’m sure the meeting will show it!

Wishing you all the best in the coming year, I hope to see you in Reston!

Katie Luciano
 Section Chair
 Southeastern Section, Geological Society of America

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Management Board	2022-2023	Institution
Chair:	Katie Luciano	South Carolina Geological Survey
Past Chair:	Scott Harris	College of Charleston
Vice Chair:	Arthur Merschat	United States Geological Survey
Past Vice-Chair:	Rebecca Freeman	University of Kentucky
Chair-Elect:	Bill Hames	Auburn University
Secretary-Treasurer:	Blair Tormey	Western Carolina University
GPPC Rep:	Ken Taylor	North Carolina Geological Survey
Education Rep:	Lynsey LeMay	Thomas Nelson Community College
Student Rep:	Miguel Valencia	Florida International University
Councilor:	Madeline Schreiber	Virginia Tech
GSA President	Mark Little	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
GSA President-Elect	Chuck Bailey	College of William & Mary

Membership

At the end of December 2022, Southeastern Section membership stood at 2,446 total members, including 801 Professionals, 596 Seniors, 2 Honorary Fellows, 266 Early Careers, 687 Students, 47 K-12 Teachers, and 47 Affiliates.

Financial Status of the Section

At the end of the fiscal year, 30 June 2022, the SE Section Endowment had a balance of \$286,766, and the SE Section Operating Account had a balance of \$103,722, down from \$113,360 at the beginning of FY22. The total interest realized was \$811 during FY22, and income from members' dues was \$2,577. This combined income is used to fund the Section's Student Research Grants, Student Travel Grants, and general operations of the section.

Future Section Meetings

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Local Chair(s)</u>
Reston, VA	March 16-18, 2023	Arthur Merschat (SE) Patrick Burkhardt (NE)
Asheville, NC	April 15-16, 2024	Blair Tormey
Harrisonburg, VA	2025	Steve Leslie and Steve Whitmeyer

Student Research Grants

The Section has two research grant programs, one for undergraduates and another for graduate students. The graduate grant competition in February 2022 resulted in the expenditure of \$11,500 from remaining FY22 funds to support the research of 8 graduate students from a pool of 15 applicants. Those graduates not awarded grants from the Section each received national-level grants. In the late spring of 2022, the section awarded 3 undergraduate research grants, from a pool of 3 applicants, resulting in an expenditure of \$2,552 from the \$15,000 allocated for FY23.

Student Travel Grants

With the return to in-person meetings, the Student Travel Grant program continues to be very popular. In the fall of 2021, the Section expended \$8712 to support the travel of 44 students presenting papers at the annual meeting in Portland, Oregon. In the spring of 2021, the section expended \$5100 in support of 17 students presenting papers at the joint SE-NC section meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Section appreciates the matching funds provided by the GSA Foundation and contributions from GSA members. Total student travel expenditures for 2021-2022 was \$13,812.

71st Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section

The 71st annual meeting of the section was held in April 2022 in Cincinnati, OH, as a joint meeting with the North-Central Section. Rebecca Freeman, at the University of Kentucky, was the Southeastern Chair. There were 39 theme sessions and 4 short courses. 11 field trips ran successfully, and a field trip guidebook was produced. The event was well planned, financially successful, and well attended (844 attendees).

72nd Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section

The 72nd annual meeting of the section will be held in March 2023 in Reston, VA as a joint meeting with the Northeastern Section. Arthur Merschat, at the United States Geological Survey, will be the Southeastern Chair. This meeting is a reboot of the Reston 2020 meeting that was

cancelled due to the global pandemic. This second time around, the meeting should be successful both scientifically and financially.

Respectfully submitted,

Blair Tormey
Secretary-Treasurer
Southeastern Section, Geological Society of America

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION ENDOWMENT DONATIONS

The following people are donors who made a gift to the Southeastern Section Endowment in fiscal year 2022. At the end of the fiscal year, 30 June 2022, the Endowment had a balance of \$286,766. We thank each of you for your generous support!

C. Scott Allen
John E. Anderson
Scott Brande
Rebecca Freeman

Ronald L. Hart
Robert D. Hatcher
Donald F. Heinrichs
Daniel J. Holder

Alaska N. Schubert
Jonathan D. Stevenson
Kenneth B. Taylor

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SECTION

Do you have news to share with the Southeastern Section?

Email the Section Secretary-Treasurer (Blair Tormey, btormey@wcu.edu) to include it in the next issue of Saproлите!

Follow us on Twitter!

The Southeastern Section Twitter feed is a great resource to find out the latest news about the section and meetings. Follow us at https://twitter.com/GSA_SESection

Important Dates in 2022:

February 1, 2023: Session and Workshop Submission deadline, GSA Connects 2023 Pittsburgh

February 1, 2023: Graduate Student Research Grant deadline

February 1, 2023: GeoCorps America application deadline

February 13, 2023: NE/SE GSA Reston Early Registration deadline

March 16-18, 2023: Joint Southeastern-Northeastern Section Meeting, Reston, VA

April 1, 2023: Undergraduate Student Research Grant deadline

October 15-18, 2023: GSA Connects, Pittsburgh, PA

NAGT News

The 9th annual [Earth Educators' Rendezvous](#), July 10-14, 2023, will be held in Pasadena, CA, and hosted by the Division of Natural Sciences at Pasadena City College (PCC) and the Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences at California Institute of Technology (Caltech). Register by May 3 for the best rates.

Nominations for NAGT's [Outstanding Earth Science Teacher \(OEST\) Awards](#) are due March 31, 2023. The awards are given for "exceptional contributions to the stimulation of interest in the Earth Sciences at the pre-college level." Any teacher or other K-12 educator who covers a significant amount of earth science content with their students is eligible. Ten national finalists are selected, one from each NAGT regional section. Some sections also recognize state winners. Individuals may apply themselves or nominate a colleague for the award.

Reston Meeting Tips for Students!

Attending a scientific meeting for the first time is certainly a memorable experience; however, it's normal and common to feel slightly intimidated or overwhelmed. The best way to overcome those negative feelings is to inform yourself about what to expect during GSA meetings. For that reason, we created this document with general tips to maximize your experience during the event.

Read the Conference Program Beforehand and Download the Conference App

There are lots of exciting talks and events occurring and it can be hard to keep track of everything. I find it helpful, a week or so before the conference, to look up the schedule of sessions and talks and mark the ones that I want to attend. In the conference app, you can search by discipline or by day. You can even download the app for the conference, which lets you star any presentations you don't want to miss and create your own personal program!

Poster Sessions versus Talks

If this is your first conference, joint SE-NE meetings (and most conferences) are broken down into poster sessions and talks. For every time slot (morning and afternoon) there will be both poster sessions and talks occurring. Talks are 15-20 minutes in length with time for questions at the end. Poster sessions are normally 2 hours long and offer time to interact with the poster presenters during their presentations. If you want to attend some talks in a session, but not all of them, it is okay to quietly leave after a talk is done. If you are trying to enter a session wait until you hear applause (a signal that a talk is over) and then you can quietly enter the room. You don't need to stay in one session for the entire time.

Take Advantage of the Poster Session

Poster sessions are a great opportunity to network. Don't be afraid to walk up to a poster, and say "Hi, I'd like to hear about your poster!" That is all you need to break the ice and hear about some interesting science! Conferences are busy and it can be tough to talk to people right after their talks, so if you want to talk to someone who you heard talk earlier in the day, the poster session is a great chance to do that.

Make Sure to Account for Time

Between talks, poster sessions, and other events, joint SE-NE meetings can be hectic. Make sure you leave enough time to get to the conference center in the mornings, and account for time if you are moving between talks and poster sessions.

Take the Opportunity to Learn Something New

One of the cool things about joint SE-NE meetings is the diversity of geoscience research- from coastal storms to igneous rocks to geoscience education there is something interesting for

everyone! It is always fun to attend a session in an area that you are unfamiliar with- you will definitely learn something new!

Attend A Career Workshop

The joint SE-NE meeting offers an opportunity to explore different careers as a geoscientist! There are several different events ([Link here](#)):

1. Career Development Planning
2. Exploration of Geoscience Job Sectors
3. Best Practices for Crafting a Résumé and Cover Letter
4. Career Mentoring Luncheons

Each of these workshops (spread out over Friday and Saturday) will give different insights on job searches, career options, and what employers are looking for! I highly recommend attending at least one of these. These do not require pre-registration.

Attend A Career Workshop

In addition to poster sessions and talks, this meeting offers some awesome events to connect with your friends and make new ones! One of the great things about attending a Section Meeting is the community that exists between geoscientists, and I encourage everyone to take advantage of the Welcome Reception Thursday night, special lectures, and the mentoring program. The following link will show you all the events ([Link to events](#)).

Need Help Getting There?

Apply for a Travel Grant or Volunteer! The Southeast Section offers some support to GSA Student Members to help defray the cost of travel to the meeting. Funds are limited, but every bit helps! Deadline to apply: February 13. Visit the meeting website to apply ([Link here](#)). As a student, you can also apply to be a volunteer for the opportunity for free meeting registration. See the meeting website for more details.

Last Thoughts:

1. Wear comfortable shoes!
2. Make it a goal to meet one new person each day.
3. Make sure your name badge is facing out.
4. If you have a free hour or two, go out and explore Reston!

This article was modified from the original version written by Allie Nagurney, past Student Representative for the Southeastern Section.

Student Scholarships and Support

Students from the Hydrogeology Division, Student Advisory Council, and Southeastern Section have compiled the following hyperlinked list of scholarships available for geoscience students.

Awarding Institution & Scholarship Name	Degree Level	Special requirements	Deadline
Geological Society of America	varies	varies	varies
Association for Women Geoscientists [10 separate scholarships]	Varies	varies	varies
American Institute of Professional Geologists Undergraduate Scholarship	undergraduate	Sophomore level and up at 2- or 4-year university	February 1st
American Institute of Professional Geologists Graduate Scholarship	graduate	varies	February 1st
Society of Exploration Geophysicists	varies	varies	March
Karst Waters Institute Wilson Scholarship	Masters	Accepted or enrolled in Masters program	February 15th
Groundwater Foundation Farvolden Scholarship	undergraduate & graduate	Present to NGWA Groundwater Summit	TBD
National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering	varies	varies	varies
American Geosciences Institute	varies	varies	Early-mid February
Association of Engineering Geologists	varies	varies	January 15th
Tobacco Root Geological Society	varies	varies	February 15th
ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders Scholarship	varies	varies	Feb 1st

Congressional Visits Day Report

I was pleased to represent the Southeastern section at the first in-person GEO-CVD since the Covid-19 pandemic on September 15-16, 2022. Arguably the most important skill as a geoscientist is to convey the importance of our science and to convince our elected officials to support our work for a better future. Thanks to the passage of the CHIPS Plus Act, the primary goal was to convince our respective state senators to appropriate \$11 billion for the National Science Foundation. I was paired with Joshua Martin, a fellow graduate student in Ohio, as well as staff members Kasey White and Christine Ray. I was pleasantly surprised to meet Josie Hammon, a fellow geologist working for Senator Mitch McConnell. In Senator Rand Paul's office, historian Callum Case expressed that although the senator is a fiscal conservative, he is willing to spend "money that's already on the table" for the benefit of his constituents. This was an encouraging response, because Kentucky needs a long-term framework to maintain the momentum to "do something" after major climate-related disasters.

I gained important skills in liaising with our federal lawmakers, especially to make a personal one-page flyer that is memorable and will prompt them to seek my input when they vote on legislation. All participants also gained rapid insight into other agencies in Washington, D.C. that help keep Congress informed such as the non-partisan Congressional Research Service (CRS). This valuable experience taught me what I could not have learned in my degree program and will help me continue to engage with our senators in the long-term. I highly recommend this opportunity to my fellow students to become the agents of change that they want to become. I have left with more confidence on how to lead a delegation to Capitol Hill and mentor others!

Edward Lo
PhD Candidate
University of Kentucky

Each year, the Southeastern Section provides funding for a graduate student to participate in the Geo-CVD program. If you would like information on how to participate, please visit the [Geo-CVD webpage](#).

IN MEMORIUM

The following are members of the Southeastern Section that we lost between March 2021 and March 2022. If you know of any members that we have lost this year, please notify GSA Membership. Also, if you wish to share any remembrances in the next issue of Saproliite (2024), please contact the Section Secretary-Treasurer, Blair Tormey (btormey@wcu.edu).

Joseph E. Boudreaux	New Orleans, LA	22 May 2021
Alan C. Donaldson	Morgantown, WV	09 June 2021
Edwin S. Robinson	Roanoke, VA	10 September 2020
F. Michael Wahl	Vero Beach, FL	16 December 2021
John W. Winchester	Tallahassee, FL	11 July 2020
