

Student Newsletter

Inside this
issue:

Aggieland Saturday

Aggieland Saturday is one of A&M's largest recruitment and open house events; last year alone, more than 14,000 students and parents registered to attend. Aggieland Saturday will take place February 18, 2012 from 9-3 pm. Some events will take place at the O&M building and this will be the destination for admitted and prospective students interested in pursuing an education in Geosciences.

The Environmental Programs will have a resource table set up in the lobby of O&M from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. along with all the other departments in the College of Geosciences.



We are looking for student volunteers to staff the resource table. You can work in shifts, or all day. Just let Emily now if you are interested!

For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit the website at <http://admissions.tamu.edu/aggielandsaturday/schedule.aspx>.

EPIC

Are you looking for a student organization to join? Check out EPIC (Environmental Programs Involvement Committee). For a list of upcoming meetings and events, to go epic.tamu.edu, find them on Facebook, or email the officers at epic.officers@gmail.com.

Office Closed

Emily will be out of the office February 16th for the annual Texas A&M UAC Symposium. She will have limited email. If you have an emergency, see Dr. Collins in O&M 204.

Facebook

If you have not already done so, join the Environmental Programs group. From the group, you can add Emily as your friend so you can receive updates and event invites! Become a fan of the College of Geosciences page too!

Environment Cafe

For February, the Cafés will be in O&M 109 on Wednesday, February 8th from 10:00-11:00am and Tuesday, February 21st from 9:00-10:00am. Come get free food, mingle with your peers and faculty, do homework, etc.

Aggieland Saturday	1
EPIC	1
Office Closed	1
Facebook	1
Environment Cafe	1
Declaring Minors	2
Tuition Rebate	2
Aggie Green Fund	2
Koldus Award	2
Student Counseling Center	2
Housing Fair	2
Faculty Spotlight	3
Internships and Research	4-5
Study Abroad Opportunities	6
Scholarships and Funding	6
Money Wise Aggie	7
EPAC Student Rep. Corner	8
Upcoming Events	8



Declaring Minors

Want to declare a minor? You need to talk to the advisor for the department in which you want to declare the minor. For example, if you want a Geography minor, you must get the paperwork from the Geography advisor. Keep in mind when researching the different minors that you can only use a course twice. So if a course applies to your degree plan, it can only be applied to one minor (if you are looking into two minors). Don't worry, you do not have to declare a minor, but if you have any questions, please ask Emily.

Tuition Rebate

May grads: If you are graduating with less than 3 hours attempted over what is required for your degree plan, you may qualify for the \$1000 tuition rebate. To find out more, visit:
<http://admissions.tamu.edu/Registrar/Current/Rebate.aspx>

Aggie Green Fund

The Aggie Green Fund Advisory Board encourages all students, faculty, and staff with a great sustainability idea to apply and get their idea funded. An example of a funded proposal from last year are the water bottle filling stations located around campus. The abstract deadline is February 10, 2012 at 11 p.m., and the proposal application deadline is March 18, 2012 at 11 p.m. **Please submit all documents through their respective web-based forms** at greenfund.tamu.edu.

Nominate Faculty or Staff for the Koldus Award

The **John J. Koldus III Faculty and Staff Achievement Award** is given to an outstanding faculty or staff member for strong interest in student growth, education, and unity. The nominee should be an A&M faculty or staff member who through guidance, leadership, and personal interest, has gone beyond occupational requirements to enhance students' experiences at A&M and, subsequently, the rest of their lives.

Students, student organizations, faculty, and staff may nominate an individual for this award. The online nomination forms and process, available at <https://dsaawards.tamu.edu/>, **must be submitted by March 6, 2012**. One nomination letter and two letters of support may be submitted with the nomination form. The award recipient will receive a plaque and the opportunity to designate a \$2,000 honorarium to a Texas A&M student organization or student activity.

Student Counseling Service

Stop by the Student Counseling Center in Cain Hall, B103 to get a Spring 2012 brochure. There are various workshops and groups for academic and career counseling, such as:

- Time Management & Procrastination
- Study Success Strategies
- Conquering Finals

Also, check out their website at scs.tamu.edu.

2012 Housing Fair

Start planning now for summer and fall off-campus housing! The 27th annual Off Campus Housing Fair is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 15th from 4-8p.m.** at the Rec Center. Come check out the 50+ leasing agencies and apartment complexes as well as local community and campus services for off campus Aggies.

Faculty Spotlight

Name: Charles Lafon

Department: Geography

Birthday: September 22 (the autumnal equinox)

Family: married, three children

Education background: B.A., Geography, Emory & Henry College, Virginia. M.S., Geography, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Ph.D., Geography, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

How long have you taught A&M? 11.5 years

What courses are you teaching this semester and next? This semester: GEOG 203 (Planet Earth), GEOG 635 (graduate course in vegetation dynamics). Next semester: GEOG 203, GEOG 450 (Field Geography)

Why do you think studying the environment is important? First, it is an innate human concern. That's why I majored in Geography after I discovered it as a freshman in college: it's what I enjoy. And I think the same is true of many, if not most, people. Without studying the natural environment, and the interactions of people with their environment, we would neglect a large swath of the academic pursuits that have inspired people for ages. Second, it's important to understand how best to use and conserve natural resources and to manage environmental impacts.

What do you enjoy most about teaching? I seek to inspire students, to motivate their enthusiasm to learn. I enjoy teaching most when I find some success at this endeavor. I also find pleasure in helping students "get it."

What do you find most annoying about college students? I try not to let little things annoy me, so I haven't thought much about ways that students annoy me. Like all professors, of course, I'd like more students to show serious dedication to their academic pursuits, but I'm thankful for those who already do so.

What are your hobbies? I like most outdoors activities – hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, gardening, etc. I find limited opportunities for some of those in this area, unfortunately, but I do have a garden and recently we started raising chickens in our backyard. We should have eggs starting in March. I'd like to have more farm animals but living in town limits that. I also like to paint and draw—landscapes and wildlife, primarily—and to build things.

What was your first job you ever had? The first time I was paid for a job, I think, was when my father paid my brother and me each a dime to remove the eyes from all the potatoes we had grown. We stored them in the basement for the winter, and mid-way through we had to remove the eyes.

What did you want to be when you grew up? When I was really small I wanted to be a construction worker, then an ornithologist, an artist, a farmer, and probably lots of other things.

Any pets? Yes, a golden retriever. Six chickens, as noted above. And my daughter has a parakeet.

If you were stuck on a deserted island, what 3 things would you want to have with you? Fishing gear, a cooler with lunch and snacks, and a vehicle to drive back across the bridge to the mainland when I finished at the end of the day.

If you could have any super hero power, what would you have? To fly.

If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it? Save most of it. I'd have to transfer a sizable chunk of it to the IRS right off, though, and I'd give some to my church and to charitable and environmental organizations (Compassion International, The Nature Conservancy).

If you had a time machine, where would you go? I'd like to go lots of places. The first stop would be the seventeenth century to see how the Appalachian Mountains of southwest Virginia (where I grew up) looked back then. That stop is relevant to my research on fire history and ecology; I'd want to see how open the forests were, and how many prairies resulted from all the burning. I'd want to see the herds of bison and elk, to hear the wolves and cougars. Another important stop would be the late Wisconsinan to view the landscapes of North America, Europe, the Amazon Basin, etc. at the height of glaciation, and see the mastodons, American lions, dire wolves, etc. As for a place to stop and settle for a while, I'd probably want to end up



Internships and Research Opportunities

Remember, if you are offered an internship or research opportunity, see Emily before the semester in which you are to begin. This way it can be determined if you will receive academic credit and where it would fit in your degree plan. For more internship opportunities, also check out the Texas A&M Career Center.

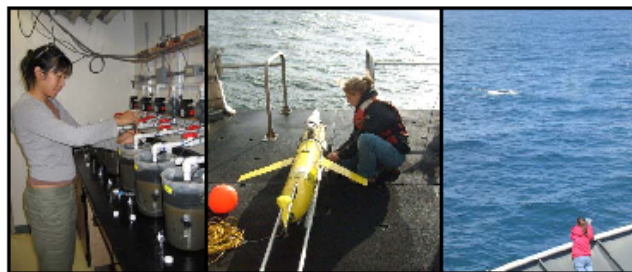
Marine Sciences Internships in Oregon

Oregon State University will offer 20 students from all over the U.S. the opportunity to work with faculty mentors on research projects that advance knowledge and understanding of marine, coastal and estuarine environments. The **Research Experience for Undergraduates** program runs from **June 18th to August 24th, 2012** at the Hatfield Marine Science Center (HMSC) in Newport and at the College of Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences in Corvallis. **Apply by February 15th.**

Come discover Oregon!

Currently enrolled undergraduates who have, by June 2012, completed at least two years of coursework may apply, but must still be an undergraduate in Fall 2012. (Eligibility limited to U.S. citizens) REU interns receive a weekly stipend, housing on-site, and round-trip transportation from their home area. Learn more and apply online at:

www.hmsc.oregonstate.edu/REU.



Hudson River Research

The Hudson River Foundation is offering the 2012 Tibor T. Polgar Fellowships to eight students (grad or undergrad) to conduct research on the Hudson River this summer. Managed jointly by the Foundation and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, this program provides a grant (\$3,800 for each fellowship) and limited research funds (maximum of \$1,000) for each student. Students will be trained to conduct estuarine and public policy research. The Polgar Fellowships may be used for research that will take place anywhere within the tidal Hudson estuary from New York Harbor to the Federal Dam at Troy, New York, including the four marshes of National Estuarine Research Reserve (Stockport Flats, the Tivoli Bays, Iona Island Marsh, and Piermont Marsh). Proposal deadline: Monday, February 20, 2012. For more information and application details, visit: <http://www.hudsonriver.org/polgar.htm>.

C2B2 REU Opportunity

The C2B2/NSF REU is a summer research opportunity for those interested in bioenergy research and is open to all majors. Conduct biofuel, biochemical, and biorefining-related research with a principal investigator at one of four locations in Colorado. \$4,300 stipend, \$550 travel allowance, and \$1,900 housing/food allowance. **Deadline February 26th, 2012.** For application instructions and online submission visit <http://www.c2b2web.org>.

List of REUs

There are many more research opportunities out there not featured in this newsletter. For a searchable list of all the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Sites supported by the National Science Foundation, go to http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm. Most programs have deadlines in the February/March timeframe, so begin your search now!

Texas Parks and Wildlife Internship

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Intern program is designed to introduce interested college students, particularly women and minorities, to career opportunities in positions located statewide and job settings in which to gain practical experience and training in natural and cultural resource fields. The internship normally begins in May and ends in August and the intern is paid based on the number of college credit hours he or she has completed prior to the internship. **Application deadline is March 31, 2012.**

For more info visit: http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/jobs/summer_internships/index.phtml

White Mountain Apache Tribe Heritage Program

The White Mountain Apache Tribe Heritage Program and the University of Arizona announce opportunities for eight students to participate in the second season of the Western Apache Ethnography and GIS Research Experience for Undergraduates field school, a National Science Foundation-supported program, June 14-July 27, 2012.

Participants will receive room and board at the Fort Apache/Theodore Roosevelt School campus, and a weekly stipend of \$500 (\$3,000 total for 6 weeks). Non-local students will be responsible for transportation to and from Tucson. 6 hours of course credit from the University of Arizona will be available to participants who successfully complete the program (ANTH 412, *Application of Geographic Information Systems to Cultural Anthropology*, and ANTH 407, *Ethnographic Field Methods*). 2012 U.A. Summer School tuition and fees are anticipated to be approximately \$2,200 for 6 hours of coursework; limited tuition scholarships may be available. Successful applicants will be required to enroll in the University of Arizona summer school in order to receive course credit for the program. **Applications received before March 16, 2012** will be given first consideration. Applications will continue to be accepted until the program is full.

For more information, contact REU Director Dr. Karl Hoerig at khoerig@fortapachearizona.org. This full announcement and application form can be found at: http://anthropology.arizona.edu/content/summer_research_experience_undergraduates_ethnography_and_gis.

Student Conservation Association

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) offers many expense paid internships across the US. Interns have the opportunity to work with agencies such as the National Park Service, National Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers, and other state and local agencies. The internships include round-trip travel expenses, living stipend, and housing and can last anywhere from 3 to 12 months. All majors, ages, and skill sets are eligible to apply. These internships can even be for recent graduates! Some even offer an Americorps education reimbursement at then end which can be applied to student loans. To search for available internships, visit their website at thesca.org.



Research in the College

The College of Geosciences is the proud home of many faculty members participating in cutting edge research. If you are interested in participating in undergraduate research start talking with your assigned faculty mentor or with your course professors. You could not only receive research credit which looks great on your transcript and resume, but some positions pay as well. See Emily to see if it will fit in your degree plan. Also, keep an eye out for a future research search engine website!



Study Abroad Opportunities

Reciprocal Exchange in England

Did you know that the College of Geosciences has an exchange program with the University of Leicester in England? You can go there for a semester or an entire year, and take courses there which are then converted to credits on your TAMU degree plan.



Leicester is exactly 100 miles north of London, has a thriving student population of 19,000 and has exchange schemes, like the one you would be on, with many universities in Europe and North America. It's a great place to be an exchange student because you get to not only meet students from Great Britain, but from many other countries. There are a wide range of courses you can choose from, and you will have an advisor who is dedicated to the Aggie-Leicester exchange in Leicester's Geography Department. What a great way to expand your education horizons, learn in a different environment, meet new people!!!

Volunteer Abroad

Looking to volunteer abroad? Check out GoEco at www.goeco.org. The projects include assisting in the sea turtle conservation effort in Costa Rica, teaching at a multicultural summer camp in Israel, and working on ecological projects in Spain.



Programs includes accommodations in home-stays or with other volunteers, full board in Israel and Costa Rica (half-board option in Spain), orientations and a week of Spanish lessons in Costa Rica, and full pre-departure & in-country assistance, training, and support.

Scholarship/Funding Opportunities

STARS Scholarship Applications Available

To qualify, students must have earned/completed 12 undergraduate hours; have at least a 2.7 Cumulative GPA; be a U.S. citizen or Legal Permanent Resident; and be a permanent resident of South Texas. Apply online or download an application for the STARS Scholarship from their website: <https://www.southtexasstars.org/>. For any questions, call 1-866-939-7827 or send an email to helpdesk@southtexasstars.org. The application **deadline is March 31**.

MSC Overseas Loan Fund

The MSC Overseas Loan Fund provides Texas A&M University students with supplemental, interest-free financial aid up to \$1000 for travel or study abroad. Payment schedules for the Overseas Loan are tailored to individual needs, but must be repaid prior to graduation. Proposals are considered monthly from October to April except during the winter break. For more information about this program, go to: <http://ltjordan.tamu.edu/funds/osl/>

Globetrotter Grant

The Globetrotter Grant provides \$1,500 to enhance a planned trip to any country outside the United States. This can be any time of overseas experience, including "alternative" experiences and do NOT have to be credit-bearing study abroad program. **The application closes February 15, 2012.** For more information, go to: www.globetrottergrant.org

GERMANY

SUMMER
SESSION 1
2012



BONN/BERLIN

SUSTAINABLE



ALL
MAJORS
WELCOME



Program leader: Prof. Bruce Dvorak bdvorak@tamu.edu
Study Abroad Advisor: Mara Iverson miverson@tamu.edu
Program web site: www.studyabroad.tamu.edu

COMMUNITIES

Study Abroad Office

The Texas A&M Study Abroad Office offers valuable resources if you are interested in studying abroad. There is an online search engine, they have numerous brochures in their library in Bizzell Hall, and they have study abroad advisors to help answer questions. If you are interested in studying abroad, start looking into the different types of programs and locations, then meet with Emily to see if and how the credit can fit into your degree plan. Applications for summer 2012 study abroad opportunities have passed or are coming up quickly, so now is the time to look! If you are waiting until a later semester, you should start looking early enough to plan out where it will fit in your degree plan and start saving up money. Don't wait until the last minute!

The Money Wise Aggie

The Money Wise Aggie's mission is to help students make smart personal finance decisions while pursuing their academic degrees and to lay a foundation for financial success throughout life. The various topics for their presentations are as follows:

- Understanding Credit Cards and Credit Scores
- Love and Money: What You Need to Know Before Getting Married
- I'm Graduating: Now What?
- Creating a Budget that Works for You
- Saving and Investing

For a calendar of their upcoming workshops, go to moneywise.tamu.edu



EPAC Student Representative Corner

Make an appointment
with Emily by going to:
envp.clickbook.net

Texas A&M University
O&M 105

Emily Dykes
Academic Advisor II
Phone: 979-845-2559
E-mail: edykes@geos.tamu.edu

Visit the
website:
envp.tamu.edu



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS
IN GEOSCIENCES**
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

The first EPAC meeting for Spring 2012 took place on February 1st. Topics discussed included course restrictions, new minors and degree plans, recruitment update, and use of funds. The next meeting will take place in mid-March. Please let your EPAC Student Representative listed below know of any issues you wish for the committee to discuss.

Reminder: There is a Student Rep position open for Environmental Geosciences. If you are interested, please send Emily an email with EPAC Rep in the subject line. The deadline has been extended to February 10th.
Have a Happy Valentine's Day!

ENST: Matt Green mwgreen@neo.tamu.edu
Jarrett Poe jpoe322@neo.tamu.edu
ENGS: Jeanne Eckhart
jeanne2d_eckhart@neo.tamu.edu

Upcoming Events in February

8th—Environment Café
10:00-11:00 am
O&M 109

10th—Aggie Green Fund Abstracts Due

14th—Valentine's Day

15th—Marine Sciences Internship Deadline

15th—Globetrotter Grant Deadline

15th—Housing Fair
4-8pm
Rec Center

16th—ENVP Office Closed

18th—Aggieland Saturday

20th—Hudson River Research Deadline

21st—Environment Café
9:00-10:00
O&M 109

26th—C2B2 REU Deadline

