



MIZZOU GEOLOGY 2022 FALL NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends of Mizzou Geology:

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I'm happy to inform you that we will resume the Mizzou Geology newsletter, after a three-year interruption by the COVID pandemic and budget cuts that reduced our staff support. We are happy to have Marsha back in the front office; she is our lone staff member, and she also helps other departments from time to time. After talking with the Geology Development Board, we have decided to send out E-newsletters twice a year, after the spring and fall board meetings, to share with you the updates we shared with the board. This letter is our first try. Please let us know what you want to see in the E-newsletter so we can improve. You can also find more updates about Mizzou Geology via our social media [[Facebook](#), Instagram and [Twitter](#) @MizzouGeology].

Best wishes for you and your family,

Mian Liu
Dept. Chair and E.B. Branson Professor

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Geological Sciences
University of Missouri

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Department Updates

Our faculty size has reduced over the past few years, mostly to retirement in addition to a couple of transfers while coinciding with some hiring freezes. Currently, we have nine tenured and tenure-track faculty and two non-tenure track faculty, which is the smallest size in the past few decades. We aspire to rebuild the department back to 14-15 in the next five years. As a first step, we are opening a search for an assistant professor in the fields of mineralogy and petrology. We also have several applicants for the Mizzou Forward Program ([Website](#)), MU's talent recruiting plan that hopefully will bring us a couple of top-notch faculty members in the next few years. Otherwise, we are small and strong: Miriam Barquero-Molina won the Kemper Award for Teaching Excellence last year ([Blog Post](#)); Paco Gomez has been promoted to full professor this fall; Ken MacLeod won a Fulbright Distinguished Scholar award to collaborate with colleagues at the University of Birmingham in UK; Hector Lamadrid, Sarah Jacquet, and Jim Schiffbauer won a \$100K grant from MU to renovate the teaching lab for our intro-geology classes; and Jim Schiffbauer and Tara Selly were recently visited by President Choi for a tour of the MizzouX lab ([Blog Post](#)).

Graduate Program

Last year (academic year 2021-22) we had 30 graduate students (15 MS, 15 PhD). They presented or were co-authors on 23 presentations at national or international conferences, published 10 papers, and received 2 external research grants or fellowships based on proposals that they wrote. We graduated 4 PhD and 10 MS students (including this past summer). For the current academic year (2022-23) there are 23 graduate students, a reflection of lower faculty numbers and budget cuts in the previous two years that reduced university support of teaching assistantships. We anticipate 5 MS and 7 PhD students will complete their degrees this academic year. Six MS students and one PhD student were admitted during the Spring 2022 recruiting cycle, with one additional PhD student and likely another MS student to enroll in the Spring 2023 academic term.

To be competitive for graduate students with peer institutions, the department supplements the university stipends with scholarships for our teaching and research assistants. We would not be able to make competitive offers to students without the generous support of our alumni and the work of the Geology Development Board.

Undergraduate Program

Our undergraduate program has been strong. As of fall 2022, we have a total of 50 active undergraduate majors (45 in the BS degree program and 5 in the BA degree program). Six students graduated in May and summer 2022, and four are scheduled to graduate in December 2022. Several of our undergraduate students are working on research projects with our faculty members. The department provided undergraduate scholarships to thirty-seven of our undergraduate majors for the 2022-2023 academic year, thanks to our alumni's generous support.



Asst. Prof Sarah Jacquet with graduate students Eury Speir and Clara Wong in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges, S. Australia.



Undergraduate student Madi Bruner is currently conducting research with Asst. Prof Hector Lamadrid.

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Field Camp

Our Branson Field Camp is recovering from the interruption due to COVID. We had 21 students enrolled for this past summer, 10 of them from our own department. We also had students from Sam Houston State, Central Michigan, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis University, The University of Tennessee at Martin, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, and California State University-Bakersfield.

Even though we have raised the academic standards to receive camp scholarships (3.4 overall GPA), we continue to attract strong applicants who qualify for our various scholarships from the Garvin, Johnson, Viele, and Allen endowment funds. Nine students qualified for scholarships last summer, four of them from our own department: Madi Bruner, Noah Cadwell, Wesley Clarkson, and Andrew Richardet. Go Tigers!



Field Camp 2022

Noah Cadwell and Andrew Richardet were the recipients of this year's Estwing Hammer Award, as the MU students with the highest GPA going to field camp this summer. This was the first time, in recent history, that two Mizzou students received this award ... certainly a good problem to have! Check out this nice article of our field camp if you have not seen it (<https://showme.missouri.edu/2021/school-of-hard-rocks/>).

Development Board

The Geology Development Board has been active, meeting twice a year even during the darkest time of the COVID pandemic. In the spring 2022 board meeting, Larry Knox stepped down as the Chair (thank you Larry!); Vice-Chair Martha George was elected the new Chair, and Jim Frank the Vice-Chair. In the fall meeting held last week, the board welcomed two new members: Randy Cox (MU PhD 1995), and Justin Tiffney (MU MS 2011), and one new graduate student member, Mikaela Pulsipher. Victoria Marshall, an MU junior in environmental sciences, was invited as a special guest to represent the John Marshall family at the meeting. The board congratulated its own member, Carey Bridges, who has recently been selected as the Director of the Missouri Geological Survey and also serves as the new State Geologist for Missouri ([Blog Post](#)).

The Board highlighted the history of generous giving by our Alumni and their families, sharing our current total of 57 different endowment/scholarship funds with corpus amounts totaling over \$8 million. We look forward to reaching the milestone of \$10 million with the continued generosity of our alumni.

The board identified the Geology Alumni Endowment Fund as the primary target for present fund-raising efforts. At present this fund provides various support to faculty. Once this fund reaches \$1 million, the Geology Alumni Endowed Professorship will begin and the fund will provide start up assistance to new professors. You can see the information about this fund and donate at <https://geology.missouri.edu/giving>.

The Board also thanked Sarah and Tara for the improvements in the department's website and are starting discussions on future improvements. As you visit our website, if you have suggestions, please feel free to forward them to Martha at martha.george@outlook.com.

Donate Here

Please consider donating to one of our Endowment Funds so that we may continue to offer unique opportunities to generations of geologists to come ([Give Here](#)).