

THE BOARD OF VISITORS

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Greetings from your Department of Geology and Geophysics Board of Visitors! It has been an eventful year for the department and I am enjoying the honor of serving as Chair of the Board of Visitors. The Board of Visitors is currently assisting the department in many ways, including student mentoring, diversification, fund raising, and facilitating alumni support for the department.

The Board of Visitors has continued to sponsor and expand the highly successful **Student Mentoring Program**, and hosts annual Mentor-Student events in conjunction with our meetings. The program is coordinated by Mentoring Committee Chair, Carol McCartney. Volunteer "Mentors" are available to serve as advisors to the department's graduate and undergraduate student population, and welcome contact from students seeking career advice. The portal to establish mentor contacts is located on the department's website at www.geology.wisc.edu/alumni/mentor.html. If you are interested in participating in this very worthwhile and personally rewarding program, please contact Carol at mccartneypg@charter.net.

Prior to the fall board meeting, board members Tom Holley, Tom Johnson, Bill Morgan, and Mark Solien met with Department Chair, Jean Bahr, and several faculty members to explore the potential for interested faculty members to establish an **Industrial Associates Program**. Board

members described the types of consortia typically funded by the petroleum industry, and then the entire group discussed prospective topics that could be of mutual interest and benefit to industry and faculty. As a follow-up to the meeting, interested faculty may plan a trip to Houston to meet with petroleum industry representatives and further explore possible consortia topics.

Under the guidance of Department Chair, Jean Bahr, and Jay Nania, Chair of the Board's Diversity Committee, the Board of Visitors also is committed to expanding our **Diversity Initiative**. This is an especially important effort for both the UW and the department. With the help of the BOV and generous support from industry, the department is continuing its highly successful minority research assistance program. Jean Bahr also is pursuing exciting teaming opportunities with universities and community colleges throughout the U.S. and with UW state-wide diversity programs. For more information about this exciting initiative, please visit the website at www.geology.wisc.edu/misc/diversity.html or contact former Board Chair, Jay Nania (nanaijc@bp.com) to learn more about this exceptional program.

The Board of Visitors is currently working with the department and the UW Foundation to raise the necessary funds to address some critical needs of the department. The most immediate need is to obtain increased funding for student and faculty support,

including stable funding for Geology Museum staff, as well as graduate fellowships, equipment, and faculty expansion through an endowed professorship. The department also has long-term plans for enhancement and expansion of the Geology Museum, one of the UW's most popular outreach facilities. Anne Lucke of the UW Foundation is assisting us with all of our Geology and Geophysics initiatives, and would be happy to provide you with any additional information you may desire.

Anne can be reached at (608) 262-6242 or (Anne.Lucke@uwfoundation.wisc.edu). To learn more about these and other related activities, please contact Ken Ciriacks, Chair of the Board's Development Committee at (kwcir@msn.com).

Following the highly successful fund-raising campaign and completion of the West Wing Addition and remodeling of Weeks Hall in 2005, the department has been able to focus on recruiting new faculty and students to take advantage of these outstanding new facilities housing state-of-the-art laboratories for geomicrobiology and nanogeoscience research.

The Board of Visitors is also involved in efforts to enhance funding for student field

experiences, one of the most critical aspects of a student's education. The department has recently established a **Student Field Experiences Fund**, with a goal of creating a \$1 million endowment to provide sustained support for student field activities. We encourage all of you to consider donating to this fund or any of the other department funds that support field work and research in a variety of sub-disciplines.

If you have visited the department recently or attended the Building Dedication and Alumni Reunion event, you undoubtedly shared the same excitement I feel every time I am in Madison and reconnecting with old friends. Many of you have also generously contributed to the West Wing Addition, volunteered for the Mentor Program, or participated in other department activities. In doing so, all of you have played a critical role in supporting this outstanding institution. For those of you who have not yet reconnected with the department, I encourage you to do so now.

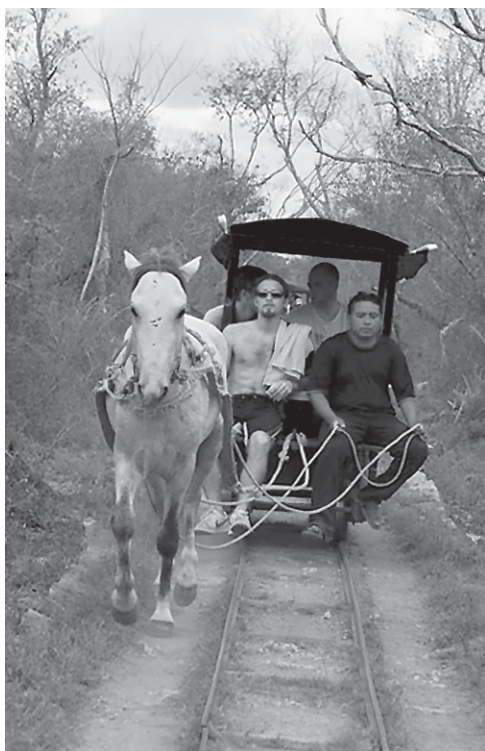
The Board of Visitors of the Department of Geology and Geophysics is the oldest such board in the College of Letters and Sciences and is recognized for its history of accomplishments, enthusiasm, organization and

initiatives. This is due to the leadership and participation of all those who have contributed to the board. Vice Chair, William Morgan, and I are both looking forward to exciting and challenging times as the department seeks to continue its excellence in facilities, faculty, staff and students. In order to facilitate those efforts, we are seeking alumni and other interested persons who are interested in serving on the board or its committees to help in achieving this mission. If you are interested in serving on the board or on any committee, please contact me. Please also contact me with any topics, issues or suggestions that you would like the board to address at our spring and fall meetings in Madison.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact me.



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Alumni gifts supported a 2006 spring break field trip to Mexico that served as a capstone of a hydro graduate seminar (Karst Hydrogeology of the Yucatan Peninsula). Read about the trip on page 16.



Above: Yucatan field trip organizer and alumnus Luis Marin, MS 1986, of UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), UW students and faculty take a boat tour of the estuary at Celestun. (Jean Bahr)

Left: The group went by horse-drawn carts to see a series of three cenotes aligned along a fracture near Calica. (Carl Bowser)