

2002 Board of Visitors News

Greetings from your Department of Geology & Geophysics Board of Visitors! 2002 was an important year for our team, making significant progress on our three core initiatives.

First and foremost, I want to thank all of the alumni and friends of the department who have responded to the call for support of the **Building for the New Millennium Campaign**. The Weeks Hall West Wing Addition continues to be the primary focus of our energy, and we are excited to see the Campaign gain momentum across the country. The Board of Visitors sees this project as a cornerstone to ensuring the department's future as a leading geoscience institution. I am happy to report that our Board membership unanimously supports this fund raising effort, and each of us has made a financial commitment towards this ambitious initiative. Even with all of the generous support to date, we are at a critical point in the campaign, and have not yet met our million-dollar goal. I ask that each of you think deeply about this project, and consider offering your support. This is a once in a lifetime chance for all of us to participate in building a lasting legacy that will impact generations of geoscientists yet to come. You will be hearing more about the campaign through a mail and follow-up phone campaign. Your support at any level is greatly appreciated. For those of you who have already contributed—Thank You!!

Our **Student Mentor Program** continues to grow its volunteer base. We have been involved in active discussions with students to better understand the likely customers for this super program. "Mentors" are those willing to serve as advisors to the department's graduate and undergraduate student population. The portal to establish mentor contacts is located on the department's website at www.geology.wisc.edu/alumni/mentor.html. Contacts are initiated by the students, and can be as simple as the establishment of an email dialog, or as involved as a visit to the Mentor's work location. The degree of appropriate interaction is decided upon jointly by the student and the Mentor. If you are interested in participating in this very worthwhile program, please contact Board Member Jamie Robertson at jdr@alumni.princeton.edu.

In addition to this program, the Board of Visitors will be hosting a Career Options Panel Discussion scheduled for Madison in April 2003. We will be tapping the vast experience of our alumni, to present a range of career paths open to today's graduates.

We have also made progress on our **Diversity Initiative**. The UW-Madison is committed to improving the diversity of the overall student population and the Board of Visitors has acted as a champion for the effort within the Department. The Board's active leadership in this area has directly influenced the decision of BP Corporation to renew its minority scholarship funding commitment for 2003. The Department has supplemented this commitment with internal funds, and has created the Joint BP-UW Research Assistantship. For more information about this exciting initiative, please visit the

website at www.geology.wisc.edu/misc/diversity.html.

In closing, I would like to invite each and every one of you to take an active role in our alma mater. I encourage you to reconnect with our Department, and become involved in its

dynamic evolution. Whether you make a contribution to the West Wing Addition, volunteer for the Mentor Program, or participate in a debate about the issues facing the Department, you all have a lot to offer. Our next Board of Visitors Meeting will be in Madison on April 4, 2003. I welcome interested alumni to sit in on our meeting, and participate in our efforts directed at enhancing our Department as a leading center for geoscience education and research in the 21st Century. Please feel free to contact me directly if there is anything I can ever do to help you reconnect with the Department. Also, I encourage you to connect with each other via the alumni forum at www.geology.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/netforum/geo_alumni/a/3-1. This is an exciting time for the future of the UW Department of Geology & Geophysics, I hope you will all choose to be a part of it! I look forward to seeing you at the Alumni Reunion and Conference coinciding with the **West Wing Dedication in the Fall of 2004!**

Good health and good fortune,
Chairman Jay C. Nania
naniajc@bp.com



Jay Nania addresses the department at the Spring Banquet, 2002. (photo by Carl Bowser)

The Board of Visitors

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