



News and Information: News-November 2004

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Emmett Evanoff

Over the years a fair amount of thought and discussion have been given to how to increase student involvement in the Colorado Scientific Society. We currently have two programs that support students. One is the CSS program that gives out \$10,000 per year in student research grants. The other program will be held this month, and that is the annual student night. Geology students from the Colorado School of Mines, Colorado State University and the University of Colorado at Boulder will present short talks on their research projects, in competition to win cash awards. Each of these schools have competitions that produce one of the finalists. Because of the GSA annual meeting, the school competitions have had to be rather late, and no announcement of the finalist are available. The finalists abstracts will be published in the December newsletter. All three schools have excellent research programs, and the three finalist should give interesting talks this year. Please come to the talks this week to give support to the students and the society.

What would be the benefits of student participation in the society? For the most part, students have a short time investment in the local scientific community. Students spend a short time period in the Front Range urban area during the time which they are finishing their college degrees. Many of the students later move away from the region, but some stay and a surprising number return to the Front Range urban area as professionals. By making students aware of the Society and its programs, we may invest in future members who come to the Denver area and remember an active Society. As Vince Matthews has pointed out, younger scientists are not joining scientific organizations as much as earlier generations have tended to, so the problem is—how does the Society reach out to students?

I believe there are a couple of things that we could do. First, as field trip coordinator, I need to advertise our field trips in the geology departments through out the Front Range Urban area. The brown-bag, one day field trips are not expensive, and I think many of the trips would be of interest to students. The longer, more expensive field trips are often beyond what students can afford. The late Chuck Pilmore was aware of this problem, and in May of 2003 he contacted me about perhaps setting up a fund that would help defray the costs of the long trips for students. The pending Pilmore Memorial Fund could be set up to help students with CSS field trip costs. At the current time there is about \$6000 in this fund, and we will need \$10,000 in the fund by next year to make it a permanent endowment fund.

Another possible way that we can get student involvement with the Society is to sponsor a student

research symposium in April of every year. What I have in mind is a one-day session in which graduate and undergraduate students present posters on their research. Since both undergraduate and graduate students would be participating, we could get posters not only from CSM, CSU, and UCB, but also from students from the University of Northern Colorado and Colorado College. Some colleagues that I have talked with about this idea have suggested that we eventually could invite students from other schools in the state, such as Mesa College or Fort Lewis College. There are some great research projects being done in our geology departments along the Front Range (and throughout the state), and this poster symposium would gather all of the various schools together and provide a means of discovering what all the various schools are doing in geology. This symposium would be open to the public and should be advertised to the general public so everyone interested could learn of what research the state colleges and universities are accomplishing. The CSS could fund some awards to the top three presentations in two categories, undergraduate and graduate divisions. The venue for such a symposium could rotate between the various schools year after year. The annual symposium on a topic of regional geology (such as the Front Range Symposium last spring) would be moved to the fall to allow for a spring student symposium. Such a symposium is still in the planning stage, and I would welcome your thoughts on this proposed symposium, or any other ideas of attracting student participation in the Society



Questions or comments? E-mail us at info@coloscisoc.org

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