

UK GEOLOGY

Summer News Update 2015

Dear UK Geology Alumni and Friends-

There has been so much happening in the past 6 months in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences that we really can't wait for the 2015 Newsletter to share some great news, and some sad news, with you. So I'm sending along this update for your summer reading enjoyment.

New Faculty

With the support of Dr. Mark Kornbluh, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, we were able to hire **FIVE** new Assistant Professors this past academic year! By the time all five will be on board in August 2016, the Department will have 13 faculty, the highest number of tenure track faculty since the mid-1980s.

Dr. **Rebecca Freeman**, who has been a Lecturer in EES for the past three years, was promoted to Assistant Professor with an emphasis on earth science teaching. Prof. Freeman will also advise and coordinate the recruiting of undergraduate majors. Rebecca is a native Kentuckian, with a Ph.D. from Tulane University. Rebecca has been a key factor in increasing the number of majors and increasing enrollment in our undergraduate courses.

Dr. **Ryan Thigpen** comes to us from BP, where he was a staff geologist for five years. Ryan received his Ph.D. from Virginia Tech. Ryan will team up with Prof. Mike McGlue, the Pioneer Natural Resources Professor of Stratigraphy, to continue building our petroleum geosystems program. In addition to graduate courses in basin analysis and petroleum geology, Ryan will help teach our field geology and structural geology courses.

Dr. **Keely O'Farrell** is currently a post-doctoral research associate at University College London, who investigates mantle convection using computer modeling. She earned her Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Toronto. She will teach courses in computational methods, geodynamics and plate tectonics.

Two new faculty members were hired to assume the responsibility of directing the stable isotope geochemistry laboratory in Slone Building. Dr. **Sora Kim** (Ph.D. Univ. California-Santa Cruz), currently a T.C. Chamberlain post-doctoral research associate at the University Chicago, and Dr. **Andrea Erhardt** (Ph.D., Stanford Univ.), currently a



post-doctoral research associate at the University of Cambridge, will bring to the department a wealth of expertise in stable isotope geochemistry as applied to problems in

environmental geology, paleoclimatology, and paleoecology. Sora and Andrea will teach courses in geochemistry, environmental geology, and paleo-ecology. We were able to hire two faculty members in this field because the candidate pool was deep and strong. The College realized this and recommended that we hire two faculty members instead of just one!

These new faculty come to UK with very impressive research and teaching credentials, and we are all excited about the future of the Department having so much youth on the faculty!

And in case you weren't counting, we will have **FOUR** female faculty members in Geology at UK by the time everyone arrives in August 2016. There have been only two tenured female faculty members in the entire history of the Geology Department at UK (Profs. Lois Campbell and Sue Rimmer). With an increasing number of female undergraduate students, and with half of the graduate student body being women, we need strong female role models.

Alumni Development Success Stories

Many alumni regularly support the Department's teaching and research activities with generous charitable donations to our endowments. We greatly appreciate that support! However, there were three notable contributions this past spring that were particularly noteworthy:

Many of you knew that Mr. Wendell Overcash (UK Geology B.S. 1977, J.D. 1980, and current Chair of the UK Geology Alumni Advisory Board) initiated a challenge-type fund drive to create the Wendell H. Overcash Earth & Environmental Sciences Student Travel Fund. We are thrilled to announce that this fund very quickly met its goal of \$100,000! We were able to achieve this goal in part because of a \$50,000 matching donation by Wendell, and a \$25,000 matching commitment to the fund from the College of Arts & Sciences. Many thanks to Wendell, the Alumni Board members and other alumni who helped support this initiative, and to Dean Mark Kornbluh. Our ability to hire more faculty is partly due to the generous

financial support of UK Geology alumni, which is viewed by the College as an investment they are willing to match.

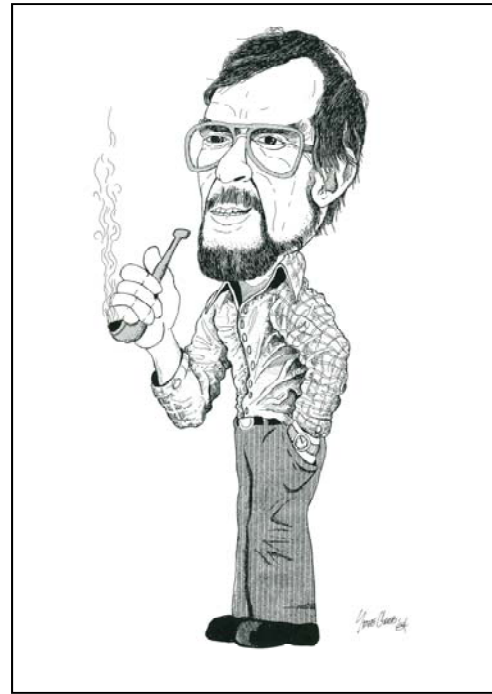
Mr. Jay Henthorne (UK Geology B.S. 1962), a long time Ohio independent operator and President of Petro Evaluation Inc., of Wooster, OH, recently made a major donation to establish the J.G. Henthorne Jr. Endowed Scholarship in Geology, which will provide an annual scholarship for an outstanding undergraduate or graduate student pursuing a degree in Geological Sciences at UK. We thank Jay for his many years of service on the Geology Alumni Board and for his generous support of Geology students at UK. Jay has long been active in the AAPG Foundation, and had previously arranged for the donation of all AAPG online publications to the UK library system, in honor of Prof. Lois Campbell.

We also received notification of a planned bequest from an anonymous alumnus for \$100,000 that will ultimately be designated for the Pirtle Fund endowment, which we use for graduate student summer stipends and scholarships. This support is greatly appreciated!

In Memoriam

We were saddened by the news of the passing of **Professor John Thrailkill** in February of 2014. John was a professor at UK from 1965 to 1992. He was a military veteran and received his Ph.D. from Princeton University. John served as Department Chair and advised numerous graduate students who went on to successful careers in the public and private sector. John was preceded in death by his wife Lavine, who also worked at UK for decades at the campus computing center. Upon hearing of John's passing, we heard from several of John's former students, who shared their memories of working with John and their time at UK. Chuck Taylor (UK B.S. '84, M.S. '92), currently Head of the Hydrogeology Section of the Kentucky Geological Survey, provided the following:

“Thrailkill definitely put UK on the map in karst research. John focused early on the geochemistry of karst while others were more geomorphologically or speleologically oriented. His “Chemical and Hydrologic Factors in the Excavation of Limestone Caves” was and is considered to be one of the seminal papers on karst hydrogeology—it is still much cited. In the late 70’s-early 80’s karst research was taking off in the U.S. and if you were a grad student who wanted to specialize in that area it was pretty much either Penn State, SUNY-Oneonta, or UK. Much of what became the definitive conceptual model of karst hydrogeology of the central U.S. Ordovician carbonates derives from the research that John did with students like



Caricature of John Thrailkill drawn by Steve Greb (UK Geology M.S. '85, Ph.D. '92).

Steve [Sullivan] and Larry [Spangler] here in the Inner Bluegrass, and it is still included in overviews of regional karst systems like that in the Hydrogeology volume of the Geology of North America series. John was very quantitatively oriented and initiated the first classes at UK devoted to hydrogeology, low-temperature geochemistry, and to geostatistical methods. A lot of students, hydrogeology majors as well as others, have benefited from those efforts.”

Several of John's students shared their memories via email – feel free to contact me (moker@uky.edu) if you would like to read those testimonials or share your memories with John's former students. John's obituary may be viewed at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/staugustine/obituary.aspx?pid=169747466>

Harvey Young (1933 – 2015; UK Geology B.S. 1955) passed away in January at his home in Colorado. A native of Louisville, Harvey was a military veteran and an independent oil man in Kentucky, Indiana, and Colorado. Some of his prospects in Kentucky were collaborative efforts with Prof. Bill MacQuown. Harvey and his wife Jacke were good friends of Prof. Bill Brown and his wife Blessing. As for many of us, field camp remained one of the defining moments of Harvey's undergraduate education and career. Harvey's obituary may be viewed online at: <http://olinger-andrews-caldwell-gibson.tributes.com/dignitymemorial/obituary/Harvey-Charles-Young-102124567>