



# Society of Independent Professional Earth Scientists

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## President's column

Steve M. Smith, #3351  
Houston, TX



Hello from H-Town! I have been elected to be the SIPES National President for 2026-2027. Thank you for allowing me to hold this position. I have worked with and watched Tom Pronold, John Stephens, Dan Earl Duggan, Chris Reed, Gregg Alletag, Dawn Bissell, and Barry Rava as Presidents in the past and have the aspirations to succeed in continuing their work to help SIPES grow and move forward.

I have been the SIPES Houston Chapter Secretary for two years, the SIPES Houston Chapter Director, the SIPES National Secretary, the SIPES Foundation Scholarship Chair for the past four years, the SIPES Foundation President, and the SIPES VP of Membership. I work on a daily basis with Nicole Christofilis, our SIPES Executive Director of Operations, and Phyllis Davis, our SIPES Foundation Scholarship and Member Services Coordinator. I hope that I can do a good job as SIPES President, but Nicole and Phyllis are the two SIPES employees who make SIPES run. Please treat them with kindness, they get new bosses every year!

We had our 62nd Annual Convention in Grand Junction, Colorado in June and it was outstanding (see pages 8 - 9) for a recap). This convention was co-hosted by the Denver Chapter and they did an excellent job. Led by convention chairman Gary Thompson, James Applegate, George Carlstrom, David Godsey, John Horne, Connie Knight, and Bill Pearson

were the Denver Chapter Convention Committee members who did all of the work in helping Nicole design this convention.

Walter S. Light, Jr., from our SIPES Houston Chapter was the Convention Platinum Sponsor. He's the only Platinum Sponsor that we had this year – *and* he was the tote bag sponsor. Walter has 45 years of prospect generation and geoscience exploration experience, and his company Thunder Exploration, Inc. seeks non-operated working interest participation in projects and prospects. Thunder Exploration has participated in more than 100 wells in the last seven years and now has oil and gas production in seven states. Thank Walter for his support when you see him and be sure to call on him if you are looking for participants in a project or prospect.

At the convention, SIPES conferred our Outstanding Service Award and our Honorary Member Award. Dawn Bissell from our SIPES Corpus Christi Chapter was awarded the Outstanding Service Award. She served as 2020-2021 SIPES President, was the Chair of the Corpus Christi Chapter, and Convention Chair of the 60th Annual Convention Meeting hosted by the Corpus Christi Chapter in 2024. If I have a question related to SIPES, I call Dawn because I always appreciate her opinion.

Jeffery W. Lund received the Honorary Member Award for his SIPES Maps in Schools Program and his service working with younger people.

*(continued on page 3)*

## Featured article - Corpus Christi Chapter

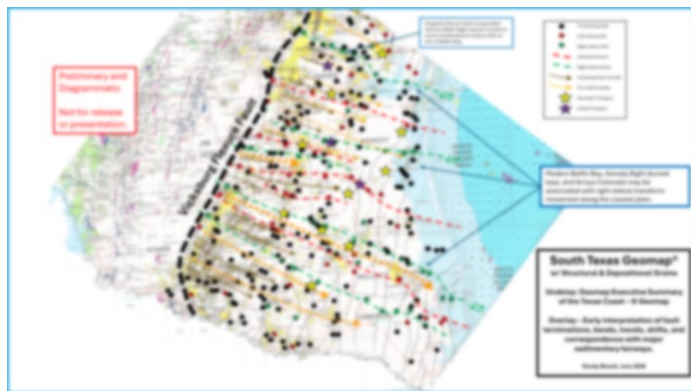
Emerging Research: Using Geomap® to Reconsider the Structural History of the Texas Gulf Coastal Plain

By Randy Bissell, #3547

The Geomap® Executive Reference Map was developed years ago to document the history of petroleum exploration and development trends, providing an essential service to our industry. It is a reliable reference and a good friend. Who has not pored over a beautiful desk- or wall-sized Geomap® to consider the myriad of structural terrains, the labyrinth of fault intersections, and the history of field occurrences: their ages, dates, and sizes?

And expectantly, I have sometimes asked, “*Where’s that Geomap prospect?*”

But Geomap® has new value as a forward-looking basin analysis research tool. That use *may* be greater than its historical and reference applications. This amazing compilation of producing fields, structural orientations, fault trends, and hydrocarbon accumulations allow the Gulf Coast to be viewed as an integrated structural system. The map becomes more than a collection of long-ago found fields and trends. It reveals a long tectonic process – the slow deformation of the coast and hydrocarbon migrations – it is not just a record of recent petroleum extraction history.



Intentionally fuzzy Geomap® Research – *Not ready for prime time.*

Geologists clinically describe the Gulf of Mexico as a “passive-margin basin” shaped by sediment loading, salt movement, growth faulting, and gravity-driven deformation. Most simplistically, we have massive historic piles of Tertiary coastlines sliding into the big gulf hole. Gravity is at work. History slip-sliding on layers of salt and shale. Thankfully full, and I mean *really* full...of oil and gas.

These familiar exploration notions are playfully satisfying, but a more serious look suggests that the coastal mor-

phologies (including the present-day bays and river valleys) formed due to a complicated tectonic framework - fabric inherited from Triassic-Jurassic rifting and the opening of the Gulf. But not that simple! The shelf and slope are continually shaped by downslope movements of large chunks of the basin edge – expansive blocks of Paleogene/Neogene sediments creeping southeastward at differing rates. Their bounding edges persistently deformed by trans-tension and trans-compression. Now look at the map again. See the field alignments and the misalignments, strike and dip trends broken, abrupt changes in structural orientation of faulting, lateral offsets of faults, and terminations may mark persistent basement weaknesses, transfer zones, and rift-bounding faults between large coastal blocks. See how the modern bays and rivers are associated with subsurface features. An arm of Baffin Bay fortuitously above the Kingsville Dome Field?!

Wouldn't it be great to re-look at Geomap®? Better yet, let's get a student involved in the research. That's what is brewing at TAMUCC this fall - curious geologists with the support of Geomap®. We are excited about the possibilities; we are enthusiastic about what we will see. A fresh look at an old friend, Geomap®. Stay tuned.

Randy Bissell – SIPES #3547  
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

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*Special thanks to Geomap Company® and Mr. Chris Clayton for supporting this research by making their Gulf Coast Executive Map available*

## President's column, *continued*

Jeff has been a Member of SIPES since 2004 and currently serves as the SIPES Houston Chapter Public Relations Chair. He has spearheaded the MiS program since 1995, and despite Covid and other challenges, SIPES Houston has made 38 presentations to 33 schools - 12 public schools, eight private schools, nine schools outside Houston (including four Native American schools in Arizona) and three colleges. Maps in Schools delivers a geologic map to each school along with a presentation on geology and a fossil display. Jeff has been President and is an Honorary Member of HGS and GCAGS; chairman of the AAPG House of Delegates, Honorary Member of AAPG and is currently the Trustee of the AAPG Foundation.

The SIPES Foundation has done well receiving donations and investments and now has more than \$500,000 in the Foundation account. Robert Springer, our 2025-2026 Foundation Treasurer, recommends that we should increase our \$30,000 Scholarship disbursement to a higher amount. I guess we will do that next year, because this year we had 12 students who were awarded a total of \$30,000. SIPES Foundation has given out \$30,000 in Scholarships each year for the last four years. Read about some of the scholarship winners on pages 10 - 11.

The SIPES Houston Chapter held their Deal Buyers Event in June at the Petroleum Club. Jeff Allen did a great job in organizing this event. A number of different prospect presenters from different SIPES Chapters took part in the event. SIPES needs to have more events like this. We need to sell deals!

Houston has declined to co-host the 2027 Convention, so alphabetically the SIPES Lafayette Chapter is next on the list as co-hosting chapter. Lafayette would like to host, but has asked to defer to 2028 possibly, to give them more time to find a date and location. So, that leaves SIPES Midland (alphabetically) to co-host the 2027 Annual Convention. Stayed tuned to the SIPES web site and emails for information about that meeting.

The Board of Directors will be forming two committees - the SIPES Employees Contracts Committee and the By Laws Review Committee. Tom Pronold, SIPES Past-President, will be the Chair of the SIPES Employees Contracts Committee and Marc Maddox will be the Chair of the By Laws Review Committee. At the board of directors meeting in June, there was a vote to create a By Laws Review Committee to review and update the current by-laws. They have not been revised since 2017. We have committed participants of Deborah Sacrey, Gregg Alletag, Dawn Bissell, Craig Smith, Tom Pronold and Mike Austin. I'll be working on getting more committee participants from each chapter soon.

SIPES will again be participating in the 2027 NAPE Expo February 4th and 5th. We plan to have six booths again that will host oil and gas prospects. If you are a SIPES member and have a prospect that you want to show and find new participants for at NAPE, then please contact our Executive Director of Operations, Nicole Christofilis or Barry Rava with the Houston Chapter ([barry@icarusog.com](mailto:barry@icarusog.com)). We hope to have 15 total prospects presented in four-hour time slots during the two days of NAPE Expo. A SIPES prospect exhibitor will have to register to attend the Expo and pay SIPES for each four-hour time slot. SIPES National pays for the booths and the presentation boards in each booth. NAPE's slogan is "Where Deals Happen". SIPES wants to be a part of that - we want to "sell deals".

I was born in Houston's Memorial Hermann Hospital, but I grew up somewhere between El Paso to New Orleans. My dad was a football coach and retired as a Major in the United States Marines Corp. He coached me at De La Salle High School in New Orleans and that was quite a treat, so to speak. My brother is a Petroleum Engineer from A&M, and is a partner in my company. He always says our family was part of the Witness Protection Program because we moved around a lot. I played football at UTEP and Baylor and I threw a lot more interceptions than touchdowns, so my five years of free scholarship education allowed me to get a geology degree. That was the great thing. My geology thesis professor at Baylor, Dr. O.T. Hayward, said that when I graduated with a geology degree, oil companies will pay me a lot of money to work for them. And then he said, every Sunday I can pay someone to beat me up, so I won't miss football at all. Thanks, O.T.!

If I can do anything for any SIPES member, please contact me. Thanks for letting me be a SIPES President. It will be a great year. Talk soon.

Steve M. Smith  
SIPES President

## Corpus Christi Chapter updates

William A. Ambrose a Senior Research Scientist (retired) at the at the Bureau of Economic Geology was our Speaker for April. He discussed the *Stratigraphic Evolution of Fluvial-Dominated Deltaic and Wave-Modified Shoreline Systems in the Eocene Yegua Formation in northern Jim Wells County, South Texas*.



William A. (Bill) Ambrose

The late middle Eocene Yegua Formation in northern Jim Wells County in south Texas is a stratigraphic succession of fifteen, fourth-order depositional units composed of fluvial-dominated delta, wave-dominated delta, and shoreface deposits. These depositional units collectively compose an offlapping, progradational clastic wedge punctuated by two major retrogradational cycles. During periods of coastal offlap, a succession of fluvial-dominated deltas prograded eastward and southeastward across northern Jim Wells County. In contrast, retrogradational cycles are marked by strike-elongate, northeast-trending, net-sandstone trends that record wave-reworked deltaic headlands and continuous (>25-mile [>40-kilometer]), sandy belts composed of wave-dominated shoreline deposits.

Distributary-channel deposits in the Yegua Formation are defined by narrow (<2-mile [<3.2-kilometer]), dip-elongate and southeast-bifurcating net-sandstone trends with  $\geq 30$  ft ( $\geq 9$  m) of net sandstone. The transition from prodelta to proximal-delta-front and channel-mouth-bar facies, interpreted from whole-core data, consists of 40- to 50-ft (12- to 15-m), upward-coarsening sections of burrowed, silty mudstones interbedded with thin (<1-ft [<0.3-m]), very fine grained sandstone beds, in turn overlain by 10- to 12-ft (3- to 6-m) sections of ripple-stratified, very fine and fine-grained and planar-stratified sandstone beds with scour surfaces.

Oil and gas production in the Yegua Formation in northern Jim Wells County is primarily related to fault-bounded, sandy distributary-channel, delta-front, and upper-shoreface deposits. Major Yegua oil and gas fields include Alice, Amargosa, Ben Bolt, Braman, Muerto Creek, Orange Grove, and San Diego East fields. Primary producing facies in Yegua fluvial-dominated deltaic systems include distributary-channel margin, distributary-channel, and channel-mouth-bar/proximal-delta front, with production in individual gas wells ranging from <100 MMcf (million cubic feet) to >1 Bcf (billion cubic feet). Oil production in the Yegua Formation in northern Jim Wells

County is comparatively minor compared to that of gas production, with greatest cumulative production in many individual wells <20,000 bbl (barrels), although oil production in some wells exceeds 100,000 bbl. Oil and gas production in Yegua wave-dominated shoreline systems is less than that in fluvial-dominated deltaic systems, with cumulative oil production in most individual wells <5,000 bbl. Numerous areas in northern Jim Wells County exist where potential reservoir facies in the Yegua Formation could be tested for additional oil and gas production. These areas occur where narrow and sandy distributary-channel deposits are transected by regional faults and where sandy, wave-reworked deltaic headland deposits pinch out into delta-fringe mudstones.



Bill Ambrose and Brent Hopkins at the April meeting.

For the May meeting, we co-convened with the Corpus Christi Geological Society for a sunset shrimp boil on the Laguna Madre.

The Corpus Christi Chapter is on summer break and will resume meetings in August.

Dawn Bisell, #3095

Corpus Christi Chapter Secretary

## Dallas Chapter updates

The Dallas Chapter has had a productive 2026 so far with several activities that brought our earth scientists together for fun and professional development. Our January speaker was Dr. Christopher Smith whose topic was about extracting volatile subsurface fluids from cores and cuttings in the STACK and SCOOP plays of Oklahoma, helping clients better understand their petroleum system. Dr. Smith has been with Advanced Hydrocarbon Stratigraphy (AHS) as Senior Chemist since 2019.

In February we were treated to a fantastic south Texas regional talk by Dr. Christine Griffith, a career Shell geologist who earned her PhD after retirement and now is an instructor at Texas A&M. Her topic was the impact of Cordilleran tectonics on the San Marcos Arch and Sabine-area uplifts in the northern Gulf of Mexico basin. Dr. Griffith related the timing of the uplift of these structures to the initiation of the contractional forces of the Sevier fold-and-thrust belt, collision of terranes along the southwest US margin, and the development of the southern portion of the Western Interior Seaway.

We co-hosted a luncheon with the Dallas Geological Society in April. Dr. Lee Krystinik, ex-Chief Geologist of UPRC and ConocoPhillips and now with Equus Energy Partners, spoke on *Unconformities Gone Bad and How Syn-Sedimentary Tectonics Impact Sequence Stratigraphic Prediction of Reservoirs*. His formative observation that tectonically controlled unconformities may appear identical to sequence boundaries created by falling sea level led him on a tour of wonderful examples throughout the US showing how spurious interpretations and needless expenditures can result from this confusion.

Our May speaker was SIPES Dallas' own Donald P. Muth, Sr., an active independent geologist and consultant. His topic was *Capillary Seal Trap Reservoirs... Often Unrecognized and May Be Large*. Potentially large accumulations tend to get our attention and this talk was filled with excellent illustrations of things you may have once learned but since dis-remembered. Fluid pressure gradient data calculated from DSTs, core, etc. may indicate an oil column present below a wet low-perm zone.

In July we held our annual Independent's Day Dinner replete with outstanding Tex-Mex cuisine and margaritas. An energetic and late-lingering crowd of members, spouses, and partners noisily bonded and resolved to find more oil and gas, especially in large accumulations.

Michael Adams, #3524, Chapter Chairman

## Fort Worth Chapter updates

SIPES Fort Worth finished its Spring 2026 schedule with speaker Kelly Hattori from the Bureau of Economic Geology. Kelly's presentation, *A Refined Model for the Spatiotemporal Evolution of a Highly Heterogeneous Mixed Siliciclastic-Carbonate Icehouse System: Pennsylvanian Upper Strawn Group, Eastern Shelf*, was well received by the group.



Kelly Hattori presenting at the April luncheon.

Our luncheons are held at the Petroleum Club on the first Tuesday of each month.

Daniel Sevier, #3615  
Chapter Chairman

## Lafayette Chapter updates

Our April meeting was combined with the Lafayette Geological Society and featured eight poster sessions presented by University of Louisiana at Lafayette geology students. The topics that were presented included (Imperial Barrel Award project) *Tectonic History and Petroleum System Elements of the North Holland Platform*; *Remote Sensing Assessment of Hurricane Ida* (2021); a poster on rapid assessment of heavy metal contamination and two paleontology related posters. All students did a great job, illustrating the high caliber of students and the great work being done by the faculty of University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

May is our annual crawfish boil and steak barbecue. Our Jack Shirley Scholarship was awarded at that meeting. We had two awardees, Ashley Mindt (also a SIPES Foundation Scholarship winner) and Caitlyn Mullins. Two outstanding students with bright futures in geology ahead of them!



Jack Shirley Scholarship winners Ashley Mindt and Caitlyn Mullins (right) at the crawfish boil.



Lafayette members relax and visit at the annual crawfish boil and barbecue at The Camp.

We don't meet again until September. We look forward to a great fall season of good talks and good fellowship.

Jamey Walker remains as Secretary/Treasurer and I am still Chair and Vice Chair. We both contribute to membership issues and finding new speakers.

King Munson, #3025  
Lafayette Chapter Chair

## Midland Chapter updates

Our luncheon speakers were as follows:

April - Dan Mooney, Founder/Managing Partner, Enstream Capital Management:  
Trapped Reserves. Produced. – Activating Proved Reserves through ORRI Conveyance

May - Steve Melzer, Melzer Consulting:  
Formation Ductility and its Critical Role in Fracturing

June - we had an evening social with wives and friends at LaBodega Mexican Restaurant.

July - Seth Buseti, University of Texas at the Bureau of Economic Geology: Investigating the Role of Geological Architecture on Shallow Injection in the Delaware Basin through Field Studies and Finite Element Modeling

We are looking forward to the West Texas Geological Society's joint convention in September with the AAPG SW Section to celebrate WTGS' 100th anniversary.

The Midland Chapter had nine members attend the National convention.

The Midland Country Club clubhouse is undergoing renovation, therefore we had to change our luncheon location. Currently, and maybe into the future, we are having our meetings at The Bush Convention Center, downtown Midland. We couldn't keep the same 3rd Wednesday schedule, but we getting as close as we can.

The officers and committee members are:

Chairman - Wendell Creech  
Vice Chairman - Jack Bradley  
Secretary - Bob Lindsay  
Treasurer - George Friesen  
Political/Environmental - Earl Sebring  
Sponsorship - Jeff Shultz  
Publicity - Dylan Wiemer  
Web Master - Randy Anderson  
Membership - Wendell Creech  
National Rep - Michael Raines

Wendell Creech, #3308  
Midland Chapter Chairman

**Thank you to the 2026 convention sponsors!  
Your generous contributions to SIPES helped  
make the convention a success.**

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Thunder Exploration, Inc.

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## 2026 Annual Meeting and Convention Wrap Up

By planes, trains, and automobiles, SIPES members, guests and speakers made their way to Grand Junction, CO for the 62nd SIPES Annual Meeting and Convention June 8-11. No matter the mode of transportation, all attendees said making the trip west was well worth it. The days were warm, but the mornings were cool, and everyone enjoyed strolling up and down Main Street to peruse shops and restaurants and take in the scenery.

Convention events began Monday with the Board of Directors meeting, as well as Past Presidents (11 in attendance!) and Chapter Chair meetings. The convention itself kicked off with the Foundation seminar in the afternoon. Matt Darling, curator at the Cross Orchard Historic Site, was the seminar speaker. He talked about the history of the Uintah railway. All the attendees enjoyed his presentation, and hoped that they were going to get a ride on a real train!



Monday's welcome reception on the Avalon rooftop.



Chairs held jackets while their owners mingled on the rooftop!

The Avalon Theatre rooftop on Main Street was the setting for the Monday night welcome reception. That event is always a good reminder of why members and their guests make the trip to SIPES conventions. Everyone gets caught up on what has been happening in each other's lives the past year - travel, new grandbabies, and of course some networking and shop talk. New members, non-members and sponsors are welcomed in to the conversations and new bonds are formed.

Tuesday and Wednesday mornings are devoted to education - the focus of the convention. One presentation Tuesday morning was given by Richard Boyce, #3245. He spoke about how an independent approaches a project and how to compete against larger corporations. Other speakers included SIPES member David Godsey, #3553, and



Sandy Perry presenting her talk, *Mineral Mapping from Space*, Wednesday morning.

Robert F. Lindsay, #3605. Bob Lindsay brought more than 300 pounds of cores to display during the convention. The cores were from fields of discovery he discussed during his talk Wednesday. For a complete list of speakers and their technical programs, visit the SIPES website Convention page for a link to the Convention program.



Core samples on display



SIPES' new president Steve M. Smith presiding over the annual meeting.

At the Tuesday luncheon and business meeting, incoming president Steve M. Smith introduced the new board of directors and acknowledged and thanked all the sponsors present. Tom Pronold, the immediate past president couldn't be on hand to introduce Steve because he was laid up at home with a severe respiratory illness. Steve thanked the Denver chapter for their hard work the past year putting together the meeting and events in Grand Junction — Convention Chairman Gary Thompson, George Carlstrom, Jim Applegate, Bill Pearson, David Godsey, Connie Knight and John Horne. The Tuesday lunch speaker was SIPES' very own Deborah Sacrey, #2429 - past president of SIPES and AAPG. Deborah talked about her career and the "pivots" everyone has to make from time to time to stay in business and grow.

## 2026 Annual Meeting and Convention Wrap Up

Of course the other draw for convention attendees and spouses are the optional tours and to get out and about to discover the surrounding area. Tuesday morning (while it was still cool), a few convention spouses took a guided tour of the art and architecture along Grand Junction's Main Street. After the All Convention lunch, a small group toured wineries and tasted what the local orchards in Palisade, CO have to offer. Wednesday afternoon, a large group took a guided trip through the Colorado National Monument with expert and "Volunteer in Residence", Dr. Bill Hood.



A glass sculpture on Main Street.

wine-related treasures the owner, Scott High, has collected for 50 years. It features antique wine corks and stoppers, designer wine bottles and accessories. The dinner was prepared by Chef Jason Fang in the tasting room and the group enjoyed Colterris wines poured throughout the evening. Some lucky folks who didn't have to fly home bought bottles to take with them! The dinner recognizes and celebrates the Cornerstone donors who have supported the Society at the Prospector level and above.

On Thursday, the post-convention field trip was attended by the faithful geologists in the group. Guides from Colorado Mesa University and local geologists led members and spouses through Unaweep Canyon.



Dawn Bissell receiving her award from Gregg Alletag.

The Tuesday evening Awards banquet honored past president and Corpus Christi member Dawn Bissell, #3095 and Jeff Lund, #3024 from the Houston Chapter. Dawn was presented with the Outstanding Service Award for her almost 20 years of service to SIPES, the Cor-

pus Christi chapter and other geological societies. (Read Dawn's acceptance speech on page 13). Jeff was awarded the Honorary Member award for his dedication to the Houston Chapter's "Maps in Schools" program. The dinner was held at the Avalon Theatre. The Foundation's No Hassle raffle was held during the dinner. Scott Brown (San Antonio) won first place \$400; D.J. Bergeron (Lafayette) won second place \$300; and Brian Calhoun (Corpus Christi) won third place, \$200, but donated his winnings back to the Foundation. Bill Pearson (Denver) won the on-site raffle drawing. More than \$1200 was raised for scholarships that night.

The convention's final event, the annual Cornerstone dinner, was held Wednesday night at the Colterris Collection Winery in Palisade, just 20 minutes east of Grand Junction. The winery houses an amazing museum of



Inside the Colterris wine museum.



Listening to the chef describe the Cornerstone dinner menu.

## 2026 Scholarship Recipients

**Conor McCaa** is a petroleum engineering student at Texas A&M. He is pursuing an upper-level finance certificate through the Petroleum Ventures Program. Conor's passion for the energy industry is driven by a desire to bridge technical engineering with financial strategic decision making to help create long-term value within the oil and gas sector. This summer, Conor is working as a production engineer intern with Devon Energy. At A&M, he serves in a leadership role with the Texas A&M Society of Petroleum Engineers and helps organize their career fair to connect students with employers across the energy industry.



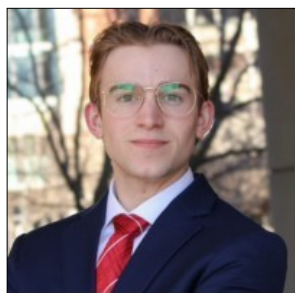
Conor is honored to receive the Edward A. McCullough Scholarship and is grateful for the Foundation's investment in students who are committed to advancing the earth sciences and the future of the energy industry.



**Ashley Mindt** is a geology grad student originally from Mandan, North Dakota attending the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She is pursuing a thesis on the research of magnetic susceptibility of soils found in Lake Charles to understand how man-made pollution distributes throughout this area. Along with her thesis, she has participated in the Imperial Barrel Award this spring and her team took first in North America and plans to compete this August for internationals! Ashley said she enjoys geology but also has a passion for gemology and has worked in the gemological research lab at Stuller Inc., a jewelry store in Lafayette, as an intern for the summer and hopes to apply these skills to future paths within the various industries. Outside of academia and work, Ashley has an array of hobbies such as drawing, crochet, cooking, and anything nature related. She said she is grateful to

be considered for a scholarship from SIPES as it will help support her final year of grad school, but more importantly for the opportunities and experiences it may provide in the future.

**Capri Montgomery** is a Geology Master's student at Texas A&M University. Her research focuses on investigating geologic structures and tectonics in the Bolivian Andes using field mapping, cross section creation, and dating techniques like U-Pb zircon geochronology. Capri plans to use this degree to continue pursuing a career in academia. "I am very honored to have been selected for the SIPES Foundation Scholarship," she wrote in her thank you note.



**Jakob Rogers** is from Palmer, Alaska, and graduated with a B.S. in Geoscience from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 2025. Since 2021, he has worked at a variety of mineral exploration projects in remote Alaska applying skillsets learned during his studies. Jakob is very excited to attend the University of Georgia in the fall to pursue a Master's of geology with a concentration in structural geology.

## 2026 Scholarship Recipients

**Ben Schulke** is a Petroleum Engineering graduate and MBA candidate at the University of Oklahoma. Raised in a military family, Ben eventually made Oklahoma his home and developed a passion for energy, engineering, and investing. He has completed internships with ExxonMobil, Devon Energy, and a New York-based multi-family office, where he worked on energy analytics, investment research, and capital allocation projects. At OU, Ben served as President of Geothermal Rising student chapter and Conference Chairman for the Society of Petroleum Engineers. Following graduation, he plans to pursue a career at the intersection of energy, finance, and infrastructure. Ben is honored to be selected for a SIPES Foundation Scholarship and is grateful for the Foundation's support of students pursuing careers in the earth sciences.



**Matthew Sliwinski** received the Stephen E. Collins Memorial Scholarship. He was born and raised in central Ohio, and is currently entering his fifth and final year as an undergraduate student at The Ohio State University. He will graduate with a B.S. in earth sciences along with a Planetary Science certificate and a minor in music. Matthew said he has held a deep-seated fascination with geology, most especially volcanology, since he was a child. His time at Ohio State has allowed him to deepen this fascination, as well as explore newfound interests in structural geology, geomorphology, and petrology. Once Matthew finishes his degree - in addition to realizing another dream of "dotting the i" - this year, he plans to pursue a graduate-level degree in the hopes of eventually starting a career as a professional research scientist.

The other scholarship winners are: **Hutson Smith**, an undergraduate student in petroleum engineering at the University of Tulsa who received his scholarship from the Marvolene Speed Bennett and Carleton D. Speed, Jr. Endowed Fund. **Kaden Harris** from the University of Oklahoma; **Caden Chin**, from the University of Texas at Austin; **Kaylie Dana**, from UT-San Antonio; **Brandon Ferguson** from Louisiana State University; and **Ayann Tiam** from Texas Tech University.

The recipients have been invited to attend a chapter meeting nearest their school or home town. Be sure to congratulate them if they attend your meeting.

The SIPES Foundation Scholarship Committee awarded \$30,000 in total to these 12 undergraduate and graduate students (double the number from the last few years). Applicants were chosen from 31 currently enrolled, upper-division and graduate-level students representing 20 different universities, and studying any field of earth science or engineering, and who have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. The scholarships are awarded based on financial need as well as academic achievement.

Since its founding in 1981, the SIPES Foundation has awarded scholarships to 305 exceptional earth science and engineering students. Funding for the 2026 awards was made possible through generous donations from SIPES members, bequests from the Foundation's endowed funds, and from designated gifts from the SIPES members and chapters. The Foundation is a 501c3 organization. Donations are gratefully accepted all year.

# SIPES Foundation Donations

## \$2000 - \$2999

SIPES Midland Chapter  
Scholarship Fund

## \$1000 - \$1999

Ralph J. Daigle  
James A. Gibbs  
In memory of Patrick J.F. Gratton  
Robert C. Leibrock  
In honor of Dan Earl Duggan  
Robert F. Lindsay  
Scholarship Fund  
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## \$500 - \$999

Dawn S. Bissell  
Dan Earl Duggan  
Scholarship Fund  
In memory of Charles A. Goebel  
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Kevin B. Hill

Walter S. Light, Jr.  
Thomas G. Pronold  
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## \$200 - \$499

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Donations listed are from January 1 to August 1, 2026.

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## Dawn Bissell's Award Ceremony comments, June 9, 2026, Grand Junction, CO

I just returned from another incredible SIPES annual meeting and convention.

Thank you to the Denver Chapter for hosting that wonderful convention. All of the hard work was very evident and much appreciated. And of course, thanks to Nicole and Phyllis at Headquarters who keep everything running smoothly for us all year, and not just during the convention.

I had the honor of receiving the Outstanding Service Award during the convention. Thank you, Gregg Alletag and the nominating committee. While I don't think I've done anything outstanding that any one of our members wouldn't do, I am grateful for the award.

Someone suggested that I share my comments from that evening for the newsletter. So . . .

This is the 20th year of my membership in SIPES, thanks to Bryan Calhoun's gentle, and frequent, invitations to join. I was *just* a member for the first 10 years. Then Patrick Nye asked me to come along to the 2017 convention hosted by Corpus Christi the year it was held in Vail, Colorado.

That was my first SIPES convention experience, what great fun, and I haven't missed one since.

Through being on the National Board as a director, then on the Executive Board, I have met many people whom I am thrilled to now call friends. I have been inspired, gained insights, and grown personally with my involvement in SIPES. This happened because I strived to be **there** - *where* these individuals were. They did not come to me. I can assure you that these last 10 years have been much more fun and rewarding than my first 10.

I know we encourage mentoring relationships, but mentoring happens with proximity and common activities. I would have had none of my opportunities and experiences had I not been present **where** and when these folks were. As you go about your professional activities encountering other professionals, young people, or students, encourage them to **show up** and participate.

I am also involved with the scholarship committee for the Corpus Christi Geological Society. We pay for student lunches at every meeting. I always encourage and advise kids to sit with the "old guys", not with their fellow students. Then, there are the wisest students who have shown up and participated by assisting with our field trips and other field work. It is very easy and rewarding to give these students recommendations and scholarships.

There is also a concern about our declining membership, which seems to be the case for many organizations. However, if you know "employed" folks who would be good SIPES members, encourage them to join, *often and frequently*, just like Brian Calhoun did for me. Those of us who have not been an independent our entire careers know that at some point almost everyone will become *independent*. If they are already familiar with SIPES, these transitions might be easier for them to navigate.

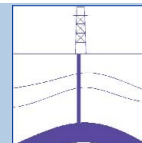
I appreciate the ideals and standards of SIPES. I have confidence in our system that helps assure competence, capability, and honesty in its members. I had been in the independent world long enough before I became a SIPES member to know there are a lot of snakes out there. Today, when in the presence of trusted SIPES friends, I don't worry.

I appreciate this acknowledgement of my **Outstanding Service**, but I think all of you perform distinguished service every day that you conduct your businesses with competence and observe the professional and business ethics stated in the SIPES constitution.

Thank you for inviting me to be part of your organization.

## 2026 SIPES CORNERSTONE GROUP

*Many thanks to these members for their generous support of the Society.\**



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\* Donors as of August 1, 2026

## Welcome SIPES' newest members!

In accordance with the SIPES Constitution, By-Laws and Code of Ethics, the following new members have been unanimously approved by the SIPES Membership Committee. These members have completed the 30-day waiting period and we welcome them as members of the Society.

SIPES National Membership Committee

| SIPES # | Name                | Chapter       | Sponsors   |            |          |
|---------|---------------------|---------------|------------|------------|----------|
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| 3669    | Aaron Thomas Hoak   | Oklahoma City | G. Alletag | K. Kolar   | G. Riepl |
| 3770    | Deane Campbell Foss | Houston       | M. Boyce   | S. Jackson | A. Munoz |

Dr. Thomas E. (Tom) Ewing, #1610, Secretary and Treasurer of the San Antonio chapter, will receive AAPG's Sidney Powers Memorial Award, and Jeffrey W. Lund, #3024, of the Houston chapter, will receive the Michel T. Halbouty Outstanding Leadership Award at the AAPG IMAGE '26 conference in Houston August 18. The Sidney Powers Memorial Award is presented in recognition of distinguished and outstanding contributions to, or achievements in, petroleum engineering. The Michel T. Halbouty Outstanding Leadership Award is presented in recognition of outstanding and exceptional leadership in the petroleum geosciences.

Other SIPES members being recognized at the conference are William (Bill) DeMis, #3545, (Houston chapter) Honorary Member of the House; and Joel Alberts, #2084, (Oklahoma City chapter) Distinguished Member of the House.

Congratulations to these SIPES members for your service and leadership to the earth science community! Well done.

**SIPES will again host its own Prospect Hub on the NAPE Expo floor! Spots available only to SIPES members. Email the National Office for more information and an application form — [sipes@sipes.org](mailto:sipes@sipes.org) — or Barry Rava at [barry@icarusog.com](mailto:barry@icarusog.com).**

*Here are a few pages of one of the earliest SIPES newsletters,  
recently discovered in the National office.*

**SOCIETY OF INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL EARTH SCIENTISTS**

711 HOUSTON CLUB BUILDING

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**NEWSLETTER**  
**July, 1964**

**Tel. CA 4-2523**  
**Area Code 713**

**Differentiation**

How can you tell when you're succeeding? When others volunteer remarks which voice your hopes out loud, you are probably on the way.

Recently, a friend of ours stretched himself out in an office chair and observed, "Say, I understand your Society aims to become the law west of the Pecos." A moment's reflection reminded us that our friend is conditioned to seeing things west of the Hudson, east of which he normally says "intend," so we were not offended. Instead, we gave the matter back as calmly as we could: "Not that; but we hope eventually to represent order west of the written agreement." Unnerved, our friend hastened to explain that he is thoroughly behind us, which he should be. The company he helps manage operates on either side of both streams, and needs us on every bank.

Later, this exchange reminded us of a recent statement by an eminent American jurist:

"In civilized life, law floats in a sea of ethics. Each is indispensable to civilization. Without the law, we should be at the mercy of the least scrupulous; without ethics, law could not exist."

It would be difficult to put the objectives of the S.I.P.E.S. more exactly. Our vast opportunity is to differentiate ethics out of the general disorder. Further, no earth scientist can fail to see the particular aptness of the jurist's imagery in our case. Seas, granites, the atmosphere, the biosphere - and all the basic processes of tectonism and mineralization - are results of secular differentiation of the earth's primal mass.

Seas from primary magma? Yes! Ethics from disorder? Of course! - if only we will differentiate. Another great jurist, Oliver Wendell Holmes, used to remark impatiently from the bench to lawyers trying cases, "Distinguish, young man! Distinguish!"

### How It All Begins

Given that the Society responds to a widely felt need, the organizational histories of local groups show a remarkably consistent pattern. Malcolm D. McGregor, the Society's first member in Billings, Montana, describes what is happening there:

"On May 12, I asked 13 of the independent geologists residing in Billings, to lunch to discuss SIPES. Of the 13 asked, seven attended. (Two refused and four were out of town.) Of the seven attending, four wished to think it over for a while. To date, one of the four has completed his request for membership, and the other three are in the process.

"I will repeat the program in June, at which time I will discuss SIPES with the four who were out of town in May, and add to them Billings' two independent geophysicists and two of our petroleum engineers. I expect to bring the total SIPES membership in Billings up to no less than five by the end of July."

Essentially, this is how it began in Midland, Texas, where a selectively expanding membership has grown to sixteen in less than a year. We meet at twice-monthly luncheons. We smile now at our old apprehension whether "so many individualists can work together." The work accomplished has been astonishing, and the consensus arrived at, even more so. Reasonable men share a broad area of common ground, and it is easily accessible. Whatever persuaded us to imagine otherwise?

### Chapter Organization

Under S.I.P.E.S. By-Laws, five members suffice to form a local chapter, subject to authorization by the Board of Directors. Model forms of chapter by-laws now are available from Robert M. Beatty or A. H. Wadsworth, Jr., Co-chairmen of the Society's Committee on Organization of Local Chapters.

The Houston Chapter, formed June 2nd, has elected as its officers:

Chairman - James O. Lewis #25  
Vice Chairman-Sidney A. Parkans #20  
Secretary and Treasurer - Ivan J. Fenn #11

Members in Midland, Texas are also preparing to request authorization for a chapter, as are others.

Chapter organization carries double significance. In the case of Houston, the chapter newly formed will give Society officers additional time to concentrate on planning and execution for the Society as a whole. In other areas, the formation of chapters is invaluable for defining regional problems, initiating some plan of action, and presenting these to the Society in general for a cohesive program of improvement.

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### CORPUS CHRISTI

Chair: Scott Hines  
V-Chair: Brent Hopkins  
Secretary: Dawn Bissell  
Treasurer: Zach Corcoran  
Meets: Vietnam Restaurant  
4th Tuesday

### HOUSTON

Chair: Paul Habermas  
V-Chair: TBA  
Secretary: Ryan Price  
Treasurer: TBA  
Meets: Petroleum Club  
3rd Thursday

*sipeshouston.org*

### OKLAHOMA CITY

Chair: Tiffany Stephens  
V-Chair: TBA  
Secretary: Cody Griffin  
Treasurer: Terry Hollrah  
Meets: Petroleum Club  
1st Wednesday

### DALLAS

Chair: Michael Adams  
V-Chair: Stephen Zagurski  
Secretary: Gary Knapp  
Treasurer: Dan Dolan  
Meets: Prestonwood  
Country Club  
3rd Tuesday

### LAFAYETTE

Chair: King Munson  
V-Chair: TBA  
Secretary: Jamey Walker  
Treasurer: Jamey Walker  
Meets: Petroleum Club  
2nd Wednesday

### SAN ANTONIO

Chair: Phillip Forney  
V-Chair: Donna Balin  
Secretary: Tom Ewing  
Treasurer: Tom Ewing  
Meets: Petroleum Club  
3rd Thursday

### DENVER

Chair: Gary Thompson  
V-Chair: Bill Pearson  
Secretary: TBA  
Treasurer: David Godsey  
Meets: Wynkoop Brewing  
Co.  
4th Thursday

*sipes-denver.org*

### MIDLAND

Chair: Wendell Creech  
V-Chair: Jack Bradley  
Secretary: Bob Lindsay  
Treasurer: George Friesen  
Meets: Midland Country  
Club  
3rd Wednesday

*sipesmidland.org*

### WICHITA

Chair: Tom Pronold  
V-Chair: TBA  
Secretary: TBA  
Treasurer: TBA  
Meets: Time and Location  
TBD

### FORT WORTH

Chair: Daniel Sevier  
V-Chair: Josh Luig  
Secretary: TBA  
Treasurer: Robert Springer  
Meets: Fort Worth  
Petroleum Club  
1st Wednesday

### NEW ORLEANS

Chair: Louis Lemarié  
V-Chair: Toby Roesler  
Secretary: TBA  
Treasurer: Eric Broadbridge  
Meets: Bistro Orleans,  
Metairie  
3rd Thursday

### AT-LARGE

Kevin Hill

## SIPES HEADQUARTERS

1401 N. Central Expwy.  
Suite 105  
Richardson, TX 75080

Phone: 214.363.1780

Email: [sipes@sipes.org](mailto:sipes@sipes.org)  
[www.sipes.org](http://www.sipes.org)

Director of Operations  
Nicole Christofilis

Member Services  
Phyllis Davis

### Board Meeting dates:

September 15, 2026  
December 15, 2026  
March 2027 TBD  
June 2027 TBD

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## SIPES Vision Statement



To be the preeminent organization for furthering the professional and business interests of independent practitioners of the earth sciences. In achieving this vision, emphasis will be placed on:

- 1) professional competence,
- 2) professional business ethics, and
- 3) presenting a favorable, credible and effective image of the Society