

Howe Report

LSU

Department of
Geology & Geophysics

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Dear Friends and Supporters of LSU Geology and Geophysics,

(Pre-Delta variant Summer Edition)

It's high summer here in Louisiana, and that means hot hot hot. Years ago, department founder Henry Howe drove out to Colorado to establish a field station for summer research. Not just to escape the pre-AC heat of a Baton Rouge summer, but also to show students some of the best exposures of the geologic record and Earth processes there are, that are not accessible to us here on the Mississippi delta. The tradition of summer field camp has lasted ever since then with the establishment of a permanent facility in the 1950's, and an unbroken record of providing field instruction. Last year we came close to shutting down for the COVID-19 pandemic, as nearly every other geology field camp did. Working with Dean Peterson and the Provost's office, we made it a priority last year to provide a full field camp experience to 6 of our graduating seniors using a strict set of anti-COVID protocols.

This year I'm happy to report to you that Field Camp is back up and running full strength with the incomparable Dr. Amy Luther at the helm as always. We had 14 students in 3666, and added 8 Intro Field Camp students, who have re-inaugurated what has been one of our most successful and inspiring programs in the past. This year we were also proud to host a "wounded warrior" week of the National Association of the 101st Airborne Division Screaming Eagles. Their organizer and past President Jimmie Keeton is heir to the Keeton family who first rented and then sold us the Field Camp property originally, a great friend of the department. Our own alum and benefactor Dolphe Gueymard was also among the most celebrated 101st members too, a coincidence we rediscovered this summer. Inspiring all around.

Back in Baton Rouge we're feeling the heat a bit. AC is out on two floors of the old Howe Russell Building as accumulated deferred maintenance over the past decades take its toll. About half of our faculty are displaced from their offices and labs just as we were ready to start returning to work. Some of our labs are shut due to malfunctioning fume hoods and filtered air supplies. The roof of the Annex chose this moment to start leaking profusely, and part of it fell off over the Tower Drive entrance! We're hoping to get repairs and routine renovations to our beloved building done soon.

Meanwhile we continue to bask in the accomplishments of our faculty: We're celebrating the "retirement" of our colleagues and close friends Dr. Huiming Bao (moving to Nanjing University) and former department Chair Dr. Brooks Ellwood (remaining in Baton Rouge). Dr. Barb Dutrow is poised to become GSA President, Dr. Patricia Persaud starting her NSF CAREER award, coming back to us from her (sadly virtual) year as a Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard-Radcliffe, Dr. Achim Herrmann is invited to a summer guest professorship at the University of Innsbrück next year. Our students have won awards and support from sources as diverse as the NSF, NASA, NOGS, HGS, SGS and direct support from some of you, for which we are eternally grateful. Our faculty continue to lead in their disciplines and at home.

Cheers,

Jon

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