



2020 Kentucky Section – American Institute of Professional Geologists Newsletter

KY-AIPG

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2020 Executive Board

President Edward Lo
President-Elect Megan Cleinmark
Vice President John Popp
Secretary Tim Crumie
Treasurer Bill Brab
Communications Coordinator Richard Smath
Past President Donnie Lumm

December 31, 2020

To our Kentucky Section-AIPG community:

My name is Edward Lo, President of KY-AIPG in 2020 and fourth-year Ph.D. Candidate at the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Kentucky (UK). The 2020 year has been a whirlwind experience, to say the least, and I hope that this newsletter finds you and your loved ones in good health and happiness.

The Executive Committee met for eleven (11) monthly business meetings, the exception being November when a virtual social hour was substituted for the usual meeting. All meetings were open to the public, but due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, several modalities were employed. The January meeting was held in person at the Kentucky Geological Survey followed by the February meeting (Fig. 1) at the Wild Fig, then a minority-owned bookstore and coffee shop at 726 N Limestone, Lexington, KY 40508. All subsequent meetings were conducted remotely on Zoom (e.g., Fig. 2), and the link to the meeting was publicized in emails to our membership. Those who were interested in participating but were not members were either asked to email the communications coordinator or the new Section Gmail account kentuckyaipg@gmail.com for the link. For the December meeting, I experimented using Eventbrite for attendee registration.

Regrettably, several planned activities were modified, postponed, or cancelled. The annual Darwin lecture that was organized for February 27 with Dr. Lee Dugatkin (University of Louisville), author of *How to Tame a Fox and Build a Dog*, was cancelled due to personal reasons. The section was unable to reschedule at a later date due in part to Covid-19. Student Chapter activities, which have a long history and importance for the section, were curtailed after March 2020 when officer elections and leadership transitions for Student Chapters across the Commonwealth became unclear. We hosted one in-person career workshop for the University of Kentucky Geology Club on March 3 before statewide social distancing measures went into effect. The Section had planned outreach events to the East Kentucky Science Center in Prestonsburg in collaboration with Director Steven Russo, with whom we completed a pilot outreach event in December 2019. In light of the ongoing pandemic, all field trips and short courses were cancelled or postponed indefinitely.

In the context of the Black Lives Matter movement following the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, the Section acted to issue a KY-AIPG Diversity Statement in August 2020, which was listed on ky.aipg.org until December. We started a monthly forum beginning in June 2020 to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The forum was initially a discussion of

the AIPG Executive Committee and the general public to brainstorm priorities and methods of change. In July, we invited Leila Joyce-Seals, a Doctoral Candidate in geoarchaeology at the University of Kansas. In August, the Section invited a discussion with Ms. Dawn Garcia, 2020 AIPG National Vice President, Diversity Officer, and Senior Consultant at Golder and Associates. In September, we hosted Dr. Ann Harris, Geology Instructor at Hazard Community and Technical College and part-time faculty at Eastern Kentucky University. Becca Dzombak, a Doctoral Candidate in Geology at the University of Michigan and Geological Society of America 2020-21 Science Communication Fellow, was keynote speaker in October. In December, we hosted Laleh Coté, a Doctoral Candidate in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education at the University of California, Berkeley and STEM Education Specialist at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. We will continue to bring exciting discussions in the Spring, following this successful trial period.

The Section continues to recognize geoscientists through its annual awards. A hybrid awards ceremony was organized on July 30 with the Executive Committee and Dan Phelps attending in person and others attending remotely. Mark Sweet and Dan Phelps were awarded plaques for the Lifetime Achievement Award and Geologist of the Year Award, respectively. Students Timothy "Spencer" Dixon (UK) and Kim Kusler (Northern Kentucky University) were each recognized for the Student Award with \$500 scholarships. Additionally, the Section established the KY-AIPG Ally for DEI Award to specifically recognize the efforts towards these initiatives in the Commonwealth of Kentucky starting in 2021. It is our intent to transform the KY-AIPG into a key organization for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the geoscience community across the Commonwealth.

There are a few notable changes and achievements to our Executive Committee. John Popp helped judge the first annual UK Research Symposium in Earth and Environmental Sciences (ReSEES) online on October 3. Bill Brab, Donnie Lumm, and Edward Lo were present for the AIPG National Executive Committee Meeting on October 17, affirming that other sections across the country have faced similar challenges engaging with members this year. Timothy Crumbie and Faith Fiene (associate member) were newly appointed and John Popp was reappointed to the Kentucky Geological Survey (KGS) advisory board. Richard Smath retired at the end of September 2020 after 37 years of service to KGS. Kentucky section membership as of December 15, 2020 consists of forty-one (41) certified professional geologists (CPGs), six (6) early career professionals, twenty-one (21) associate members, and forty-two (42) student members. Bill Brab, a member of the Kentucky Board of Registration for Professional Geologists, assembled the graph (Fig. 3) below illustrating the steady gains of Geologists-In-Training (GITs) and steady decline of Kentucky Professional Registered Geologists (PG) membership during the past 25 years.

The results of recent elections of Executive Committee members include Megan Cleinmark, who will take lead of the Section as President in 2021, and I am very pleased with the direction that the section is headed with her leadership. Others reelected are Bill Brab as Treasurer, Tim Crumbie as Secretary, Richard Smath as Communications Coordinator, and Donnie Lumm as Vice President. The Section welcomes Donny Prater as President-Elect. Feel free to reach out to us through our new or traditional channels of communication if you have any ideas for us. The section is now present on Instagram (@kyaipg), Twitter (@kyaipg), and LinkedIn (@kyaipg) to complement the existing Facebook page, and we look forward to more interactions. Cheers for a New Year!

Best,
Edward Lo, 2020 KY-AIPG President



Figure 1: Executive board business meeting in the Wild Fig on February 18



Figure 2: screen capture of Executive Board Zoom meeting on November 30, 2020. The section conducted all business meetings remotely starting in March 2020, and the meeting link was emailed to all members.

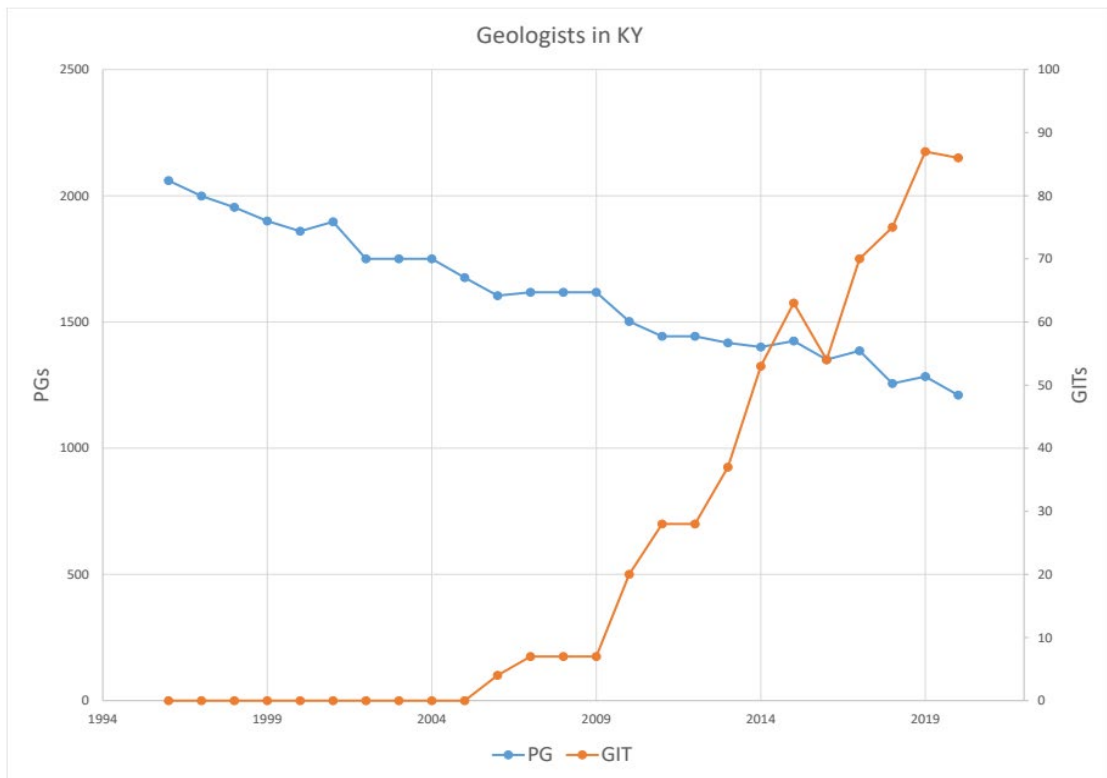


Figure 3: Historical graph of membership of Professional Geologists and Geologists-In-Training for the Kentucky Section from 1994 to present (2020).