



2014 Annual Report

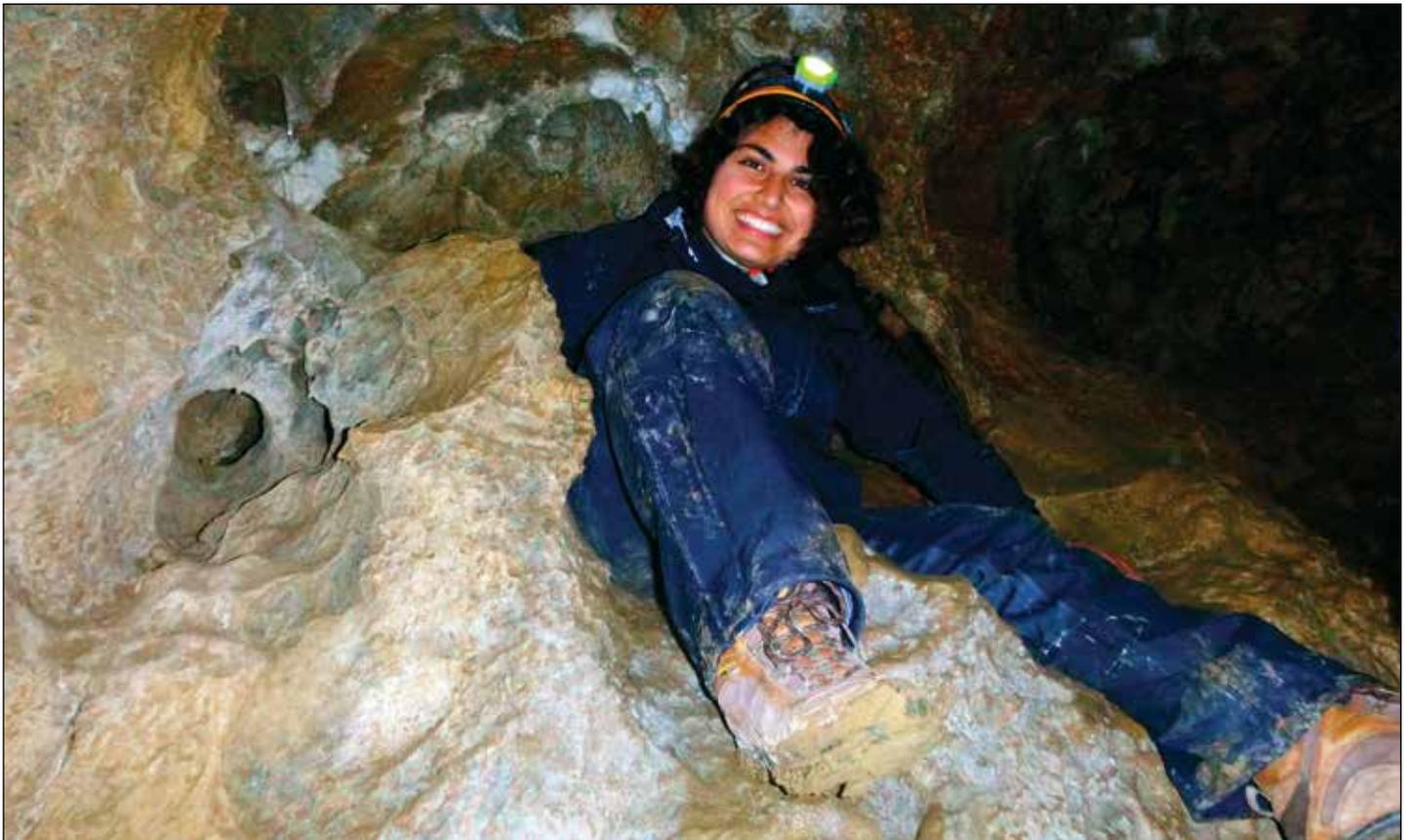


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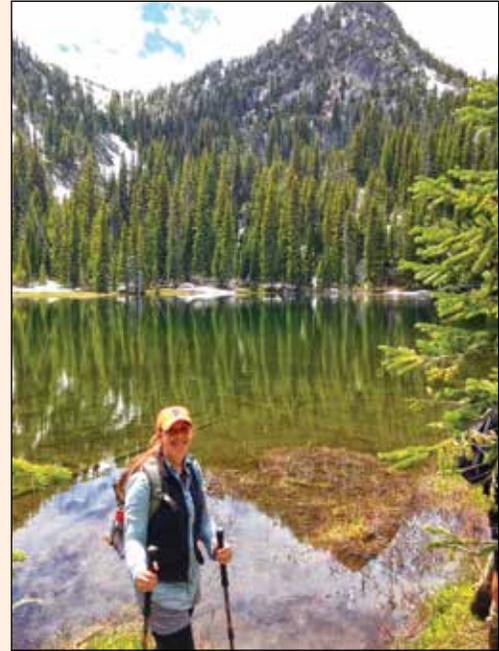
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An Introduction to GeoCorps™ America

What is GeoCorps America?

GeoCorps America is a program of The Geological Society of America (GSA), partnered with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the National Park Service (NPS) Geoscientists-In-the-Parks (GIP) program. Through GeoCorps America, GSA places volunteer geoscientists from all walks of life in temporary, short-term projects on America's public lands. The Education and Outreach Department of GSA administers the program. The partner agencies provide scientifically rigorous projects and mentor the contributions and development of the GeoCorps participants. GeoCorps participants are rewarded with new and valuable experience and training in career-related projects. They have the opportunity to conduct fieldwork, interpretation, or research in some of the most stunning natural settings in the United States. In addition, they receive a living allowance and housing. In return, the BLM, the NPS, and the USFS gain access to the knowledge and experience of geoscientists to complete resource management, conservation, research, and education projects that otherwise might not be possible.



Paige Kercher, BLM Bruneau Field Office.

"My favorite aspect of this experience was the diversity of my work. With my own supervision, I was able to hike through majestic canyons along the Gunnison and Colorado Rivers, searching for mining camps or stunning rock art panels from many periods of Native American settlement. I was also able to engage with a variety of staff in many departments. I participated in educational outreach, seed collection, paleontological monitoring, and construction with the recreation team. Although my focus was cultural resources, I was able to explore many aspects of the BLM and learn about the diversity of seasonal and career possibilities for my future."

—Adam Bouché, GeoCorps Participant, BLM Grand Junction Field Office

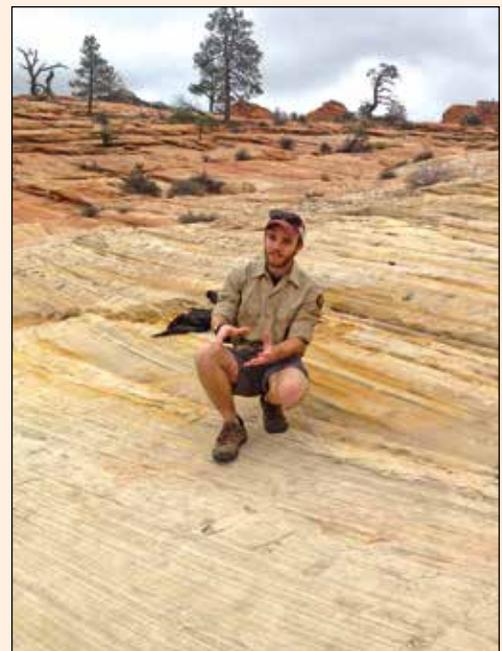
The GeoCorps America Mission

The mission of GeoCorps America is to further the stewardship of America's public lands through geoscience awareness, education, and research by providing inclusive, hands-on career development opportunities.

The program seeks to achieve this mission through the following objectives:

- a. Increase the number of geoscientists interested in conducting research, education, and resource management on America's public lands by providing rewarding opportunities for hands-on education and career development;
- b. Broaden the diversity of the geoscience community by providing inclusive opportunities to gain valuable, career-related experience;
- c. Promote the adoption of a land ethic by current and future geoscientists, resource managers, and policy makers;
- d. Build public and professional awareness of the role of the geosciences in resource management and policy making;
and
- e. Raise public knowledge of the value of geological, and other, natural resources.

The three focuses of GeoCorps America, *awareness, education, and research*, relate to the goals and strategic plan of GSA. The program's objectives serve as stepping stones on the path to fulfilling those goals.



Scott Ireland, Zion National Park.

GeoCorps™ America in 2014

2014 GeoCorps Projects by Location



Legend

● Bureau of Land Management

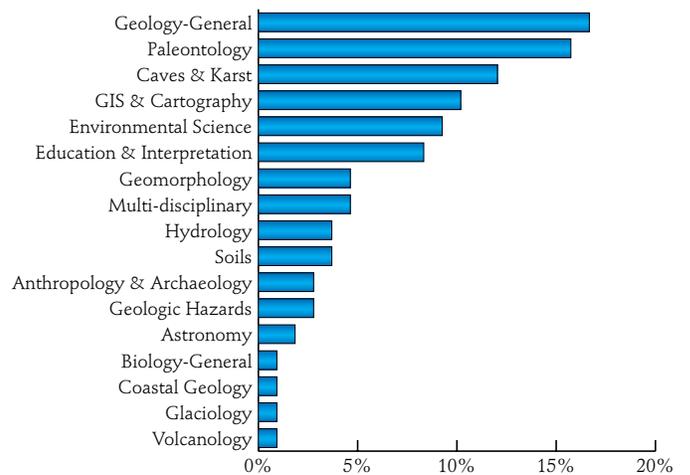
● National Park Service GIP Program

● U.S. Forest Service

GeoCorps America Projects

In 2014 GeoCorps America partnered with 16 BLM units, 46 National Parks, and eight National Forests on 157 individual projects on America's public lands. 2014 saw an amazing amount of growth for the program. Though there was a small decrease in the number of positions hosted by the USFS, there was a large increase in the number of projects hosted by both the BLM and the NPS. The BLM hosted 29 projects, and the NPS hosted 116. In total the program grew by 34% between 2013 and 2014. This growth may be attributed to the program's reputation, the career development opportunities for students and early career professionals, and the value of having geoscience expertise on federal lands. As word spreads from colleague to colleague within the public land agencies, and locations can demonstrate the benefit of hosting GeoCorps projects, multiple departments within locations, and new locations, are hosting GeoCorps participants. This continued growth is very important to maintaining the program's relevance. A greater number and variety of projects allows the program to impact more early-career geoscientists, looking for their first opportunity to gain meaningful experience in their field. In 2014, GeoCorps projects focused on inventory and monitoring, conservation and management, research, and education and outreach in 17 different disciplines.

2014 GeoCorps Projects by Discipline



2014 GeoCorps America Project Highlights

Craters of the Moon National Monument, Bureau of Land Management

Megan Saalfeld, IT Developer/Interpretive Volcanologist

Megan's GeoCorps contribution focused on a way to use current technologies to make the harsh but fascinating desert environment of Craters of the Moon National Monument more accessible to visitors. She started the process of creating a smartphone application that will provide a driving tour of the monument. To create this app Megan engaged with both the NPS section of the monument and the BLM section. The NPS area already had a driving loop, and Megan enhanced the already existing signage along this route using the app, to make information about the geology of the park accessible to visitors taking a driving tour. The BLM area of the monument had no paved roads or signage. For the BLM app, Megan decided on the best route for a driving tour, put together information on the geologic features visible along the route, created an easy to follow map, and created a layout for the app. When complete, the app will also include information about safe traveling in the desert to assist visitors while they are making plans for their tour. With these steps done, the project will be handed over to the next GeoCorps America participant at Craters of the Moon. Megan had a very well-rounded experience of Craters of the Moon National Monument; in addition to her geology-focused project, Megan had the opportunity to take part in surveying for maternal bat roosts, monitoring cave resources, studying volcanic ejecta patterns, and training in wildland fire-fighting, search and rescue, and cave rescue.



Megan Saalfeld, Craters of the Moon National Monument.

"Working at Denali provided me with so much—I can only hope that I gave back a fraction of what I got. I gained valuable experience that I may have never even contemplated had I opted not to leave my small graduate school office for the summer. In addition to all the information I gained from my fieldwork and project, I learned about so much more than geology. Whether by going to staff talks, presentations at the Murie Science and Learning Center, or by just talking to other scientists and participating in other projects, I learned about the work, time, effort, and passion it takes both to know what we know about everything from glacier dynamics to caribou populations, and to keep a park like Denali preserved for the benefit of future generations as well as our own. Denali has shown me that I truly want to continue to be a part of that effort and enthusiasm."

—Andrew Collins, GeoCorps/GIP Participant, Denali National Park and Preserve

Denali National Park and Preserve, National Park Service Geoscientists-In-the-Parks Program

There have been one or more GeoCorps/GIP participants at Denali National Park and Preserve every summer, with few exceptions, since 1998. This long history of participation in the program has resulted in positive opportunities for GeoCorps and Denali alike. The park has continued to find more inspiring projects for participants to be involved in, and program alumni are returning to the park as staff, and to mentor new participants. Three participants took part in GeoCorps America at Denali National Park and Preserve in 2014.

Andrew Collins, Geohazards/GIS Specialist

Andrew Collins spent three months at Denali focused on geohazard inventory and assessment. His contribution included creating a record of known hazards and hazard areas within the park, studying the Igloo Debris slide that took place in October of 2013, and creating a risk assessment and management plan to help mitigate these hazards. This project required data collection in the field, research into new remote data collection equipment, and great attention to detail. Andrew's contribution to geohazards management helped to keep the park safe and accessible for staff and visitors.



Andrew Collins, Denali National Park and Preserve.



Sasha Leidman, Denali National Park and Preserve.

Sasha Leidman, *Glacier Monitoring Assistant*

Sasha's focus at Denali was tracking ice loss in key glaciers within the park. The research that Sasha participated in included fieldwork where he recorded GPS and elevation information for the glaciers. The larger-scale project that Sasha was contributing to was able to investigate not only whether the glaciers are retreating, but if they were losing volume—which they are. Sasha also gained experience communicating the science of glaciology to the public through participating in a citizen science program. (You can learn more about the citizen science program by watching this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zc7jev3ri4c#t=74>). The research that Sasha contributed to will be included in an NPS Natural Resources Technical Report.

"The Geocorps America program gave me valuable skills for my career while placing me in a beautiful area waiting to be explored, and I learned a little more about myself too."

—Michael Stepowij, *GeoCorps/GIP Participant, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area*



Sarah Strand, Denali National Park and Preserve.

Sarah Strand, *Digital Research Communicator*

Sarah Strand focused on communicating to the public the geologic history and research taking place at Denali National Park and Preserve. With a combined education in geology and graphic design, Sarah's goal was to bring an ongoing project—a geologic guide to the park road—most of the way through the design phase. The park road is the way that the vast majority of visitors at Denali experience the park. Making an accessible geology guide, usable from inside a vehicle, would interest visitors in attractions at Denali other than the wildlife. Sarah's contribution involved editing, writing, and fact-checking the content of the guide, collecting images, and then creating a layout for the guide in InDesign. By the end of her time at Denali, the geologic guide had a solid design theme, two sections were complete, and Sarah had the opportunity to hand the project over to staff. When finished, the guide will improve visitors' access to information about the exciting geology that formed Denali National Park and Preserve.

Dinosaur National Monument, National Park Service Geoscientists-In-the-Parks Program

Benjamin Otoo & Nicole Ridgewell, Paleontologists

During the three months of their GeoCorps/GIP project, Benjamin Otoo and Nicole Ridgewell focused on creating a database of part of the historic Carnegie Quarry in order to make the fossils left in-situ in a wall of the quarry more accessible to researchers and the general public. The first stage of their project involved taking very high-resolution pictures of the entire 40 foot by 100 foot wall, sometimes requiring them to climb to get the best shot. The photos that this process produced are extremely high detail so that researchers can use them to study fossils that they cannot get close to. The images are so detailed that they even show small specimen numbers, teeth or claw marks, and sutures. While moving around in the quarry, Benjamin and Nicole also took note of any conservation concerns and fixed problematic specimen numbers. By the end of the photo section of their project, they had collected 4,319 individual photos. The second part of their project was to reconcile the photos they took with photos that had been taken before they arrived, to be turned into a 3-D photomosaic, historic maps, LiDAR scans, and GPS data, thereby creating a very detailed map of the quarry wall. This part of the project included a lot of computer work and involved retracing the historic quarry maps into the computer and realigning numbers on the map. This second half of their project was so large that it could not be completed during their three months. However, they managed to produce 344 map files before the end of the summer. When the project is eventually finished it will be available through an online database that can be searched by specimen number, taxon, and any other unique features present in the fossils.



Nicole Ridgewell & Benjamin Otoo, Dinosaur National Monument.

Medicine Bow–Routt National Forest, U.S. Forest Service

Emily Woolsey, Hydrology Technician

Medicine Bow–Routt National Forest provides a vital source of water for irrigation, domestic use, and industry. Emily Woolsey's GeoCorps project was focused on a variety of tasks involving the management of this important resource. During her time at Medicine Bow–Routt National Forest, Emily helped monitor the flow of water from the forest to the city of Cheyenne, Wyoming; replace culverts with more fish-friendly versions; inspect ditches for integrity and water flow; and complete the Burned Area Emergency Response for the Owen Lake Fire. Her contribution included field work, analyzing data, and writing reports. Knowing that the characterizations and treatment recommendations that she provided were going to be used by future land managers gave her a welcome sense of responsibility. Emily stayed at Medicine Bow–Routt National Forest as an emergency hire after her GeoCorps America project ended to continue hydrology work for the remainder of the season.



Emily Woolsey, Medicine Bow–Routt National Forest.



Somalia Randle, Olympic National Park.



GeoCorps/GIP participant Somalia Randle completing an invertebrate beach transect at Rialto Beach, Olympic National Park.

GeoCorps America Participants, Partners, and the Public

Participants

The geosciences have a pivotal role to play in how we understand Earth, its climate, and resources, and therefore in how we approach earth stewardship as a society. However, the geosciences fare poorly when compared to other Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) disciplines, with regard to the diversity within the discipline. GeoCorps America encourages as much diversity among its participants as possible with the aim of broadening the diversity of the geoscience community as a whole. A diverse geoscience community encourages the variety of perspectives that is key to scientific discovery and ensures that the resulting strategies and perspectives on stewardship reflect the opinions of the entirety of America's diverse and multicultural society.

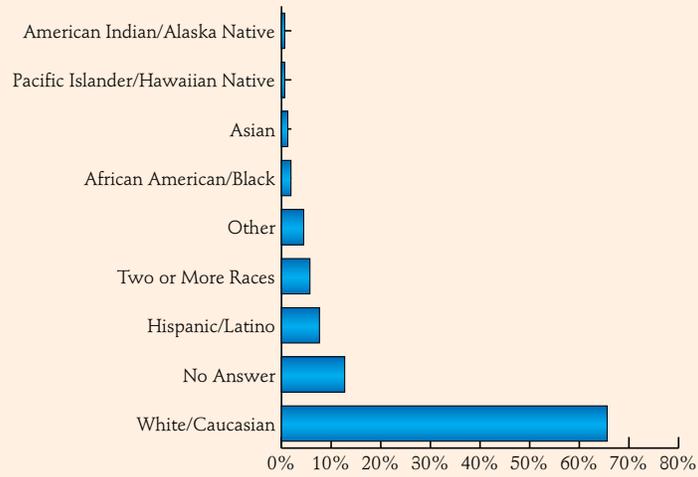
One-hundred fifty-two participants took part in the GeoCorps America program in 2014. The average age of GeoCorps participants in 2014 was 25 years, with the majority of participants being between the ages of 21 and 30. The majority of GeoCorps participants were undergraduate students (24%) or had earned an undergraduate degree within the last five years (34%). A smaller percent were graduate or postgraduate students (15%) or had earned a higher degree within the past five years (5%). The remaining participants had a variety of career experiences, and include K–12 teachers, retired professionals, and those looking for a new experience within the geoscience industry. As a whole, the program is successfully providing opportunities to students and early-career professionals in the geosciences, while still providing an exciting and unique opportunity to a group with diverse experiences.

The number of male and female participants in the program was close to even, with women representing a slight majority, as they did in 2013.

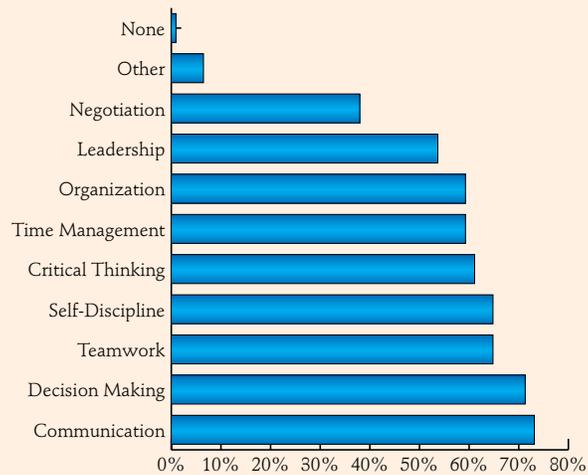
The diversity of the program participants increased in 2014: 65% percent of participants identified as white/Caucasian and 21% identified as part of a group that is underrepresented in the geosciences. In addition to racial and ethnic diversity, the 2014 program also included veterans, participants that identify as having a disability, and participants from the LGBT community.

In order to achieve the program's goals, GeoCorps America must not only provide opportunities to a diverse group of youth and early career professionals, but also ensure that the opportunities being provided are of a high value. Participants must gain job and life skills, learn the ethics of land management, learn about the opportunities available to them within public land agencies, and have an overall positive experience contributing to the preservation of America's public lands. In 2014, 98% of GeoCorps participants enjoyed their time with the agency that hosted their project. According to evaluations completed by the participants at the end of their project, most felt they grew as a person during their project, gaining professional and life skills, a stronger connection with the natural world, and familiarity with our public land agency partners. In addition, participants felt that they were contributing worthwhile resources and research during their projects. Participant feedback in 2014 was overwhelmingly positive, with 95% of participants stating they would recommend the program to their peers.

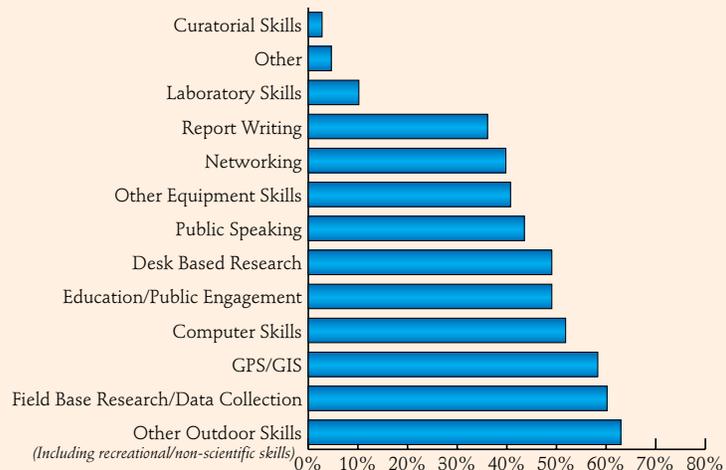
2014 GeoCorps Participants by Ethnicity



2014 Life Skills Learned



2014 Job Skills Gained



GSA 2014 Annual Meeting Presentations
by GeoCorps Participants, Mentors, and Program Partners

AstroCorps: Linking Astronomy and Geology in Bryce Canyon National Park	—Kara Baker, participant
Effectiveness of Different Sagebrush Removal Treatment Methods in Northern New Mexico	—David Banuelas, participant
The Successful Use of GeoCorps and Geoscience Teacher Interns to Further Geologic Research at Mount Rainier National Park, Washington, USA	—Scott Beason, mentor
Development of a Geologic Guide for Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument	—Bridget Borce, participant
National Junior Ranger Program: Junior Cave Scientist (Making Caves and Karst Fun for Kids)	—Joe Camacho, participant
Spatial Analysis of Karst Feature Occurrence in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park	—Brandee Carlson, participant
Characterizing Interseasonal Core Water Quality Parameters in Bedrock Pools at Saguaro National Park	—Kristan Culbert, participant
Drought Sensitive Montane Spring Reliability and Hydrologic Controls in Mojave National Preserve, CA	—Franklin J. Dekker, participant
Biostratigraphy and Relative Abundance of Orodonts in the John Day Formation	—Meaghan Emery, participant
Evidence of Volcanically Induced Turnover in Mammalian Communities of the John Day Basin, Oregon	—Nicholas A. Famoso, participant
Cave Management: Assessment and Implementation at Coronado National Memorial, Arizona	—Jessica Garcia and Quinn Butler, participants
Monitoring Mountain Lakes at Mount Rainier National Park and the North Coast and Cascades Network	—Arianna Goodman, participant
I Speak Geology: A Summer as an Interpretive Specialist at Mount Rainier National Park	—Benjamin M. Gross, participant
Testing and Evaluation of the 2013 Cultural Resource Sensitivity Predictive Model in the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area, Mesa County, Colorado	—Elizabeth Haussner, participant
The Forest Service Cave and Karst Program and Geological Society of America GeoCorps Internships: A Beneficial Partnership	—Johanna Kovarik, program partner
Creating Education and Research Worthy Interpretive Content for the Parks Service: GeoCorps Involvement at the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument	—Hayden Lewis, participant
Mapping Three Generations of Fractures in Bryce Canyon National Park: A GeoCorps America Internship	—John S. Maclean, mentor
Interpreting the Geology if an Icon: Igneous Petrology, Rock Climbing, and Science Communication in Yosemite National Park	—Roger Putnam, participant
An Initial Archaeological and Soil Survey of Little Spring Creek and the Influence of Groundwater Sapping on Headward Erosion at Great Sand Dunes National Park, USA	—Katie Schultz, participant
Building a Case for Tectonic Switching at the Klamath-Siskiyou Mountains	—Rafael Velazquez, participant

We are striving to ensure that the impact of the GeoCorps America program does not end when the participants' projects end. A GeoCorps America and Mosaics in Science Session is held at the GSA Annual Meeting every year, along with a GeoCorps and Mosaics Alumni reception. At the 2014 GSA Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 18 participants presented in the GeoCorps/Mosaics session, and 50 people attended the GeoCorps America and Mosaics in Science Alumni Reception. In 2014, a new Alumni Survey was implemented to seek information on what resources would be useful for our program alumni, and we will use the results of this survey to direct the creation of these resources in the coming years.

Partners

Though the main focus of the program is providing valuable career experience for a broad group of early career geoscientists, the GeoCorps America program also benefits our public land agency partners at the BLM, NPS, and USFS. The program participants contribute valuable time to projects focused on conservation and management, inventory and monitoring, research, and education and outreach. Many of the projects would not get completed without the help of program participants. In total, GeoCorps participants contributed 89,080 hours of volunteer service to our public land agency partners in 2014. Based on the Independent Sector's Value of Volunteer Time, the value of the time contributed by GeoCorps participants in 2014 comes to \$2,008,754.

Our public land agency partners, and the mentors that train participants, recognize the value of the contribution that GeoCorps participants make. Feedback from mentors was very positive in 2014: 61% rated the program as outstanding, and 38% said that it exceeded their expectations. All of the mentors that responded to the program evaluation felt that the location that they work at would benefit from continued participation in the program.



Participants Roger Putnam and Lana Morris with mentor Herb Meyer and GeoCorps Program Officer Matt Dawson at the 2014 GSA Annual Meeting.

"I am extremely pleased with the caliber of students and recent graduates that the GeoCorps program provides. After working with other programs, where it is sometimes hard to find a student who is qualified, I find the GeoCorps program refreshing in that we have the opposite problem. There are so many great candidates to choose from, it is often hard to decide which one to pick! Thanks for offering such an amazing program. It's a great learning situation for the participants and a fabulous benefit for the National Park Service."

—Sally Hurlbert, Park Ranger, Shenandoah National Park

The Public

Through the course of their projects on public lands, participants in GeoCorps America often interact with members of the public. Some participants have projects that bring them in contact with hundreds of people per day while they lead guided tours or deliver programs for school and camp groups. Other participants interact with the public on a more informal basis, answering questions while they go about their fieldwork or research. In 2014, GeoCorps participants interacted with 272,495 people visiting BLM units, National Parks, and National Forests.

The projects that GeoCorps America participants complete, however, impact more than the members of the public with whom they interact directly. Many of the GeoCorps participants leave behind a legacy that will impact members of the public for years to come. The legacies of GeoCorps participants take the form of resources that have been conserved for the future, research that improves resource management, or materials that make resources more accessible such as signs, guidebooks, and updated websites. In 2014, visitors to National Parks hit a record 294 million (Outside Online, 2015). Combined with the estimated number of visitors to National Forests and BLM units in 2014, the contributions of GeoCorps America participants could potentially impact 479 million members of the public (Pomarico, 2013; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service; USDA Forest Service).



Andrea Rocchio at Shenandoah National Park swearing in a very young Jr. Ranger.

GeoCorps™ America Success Stories



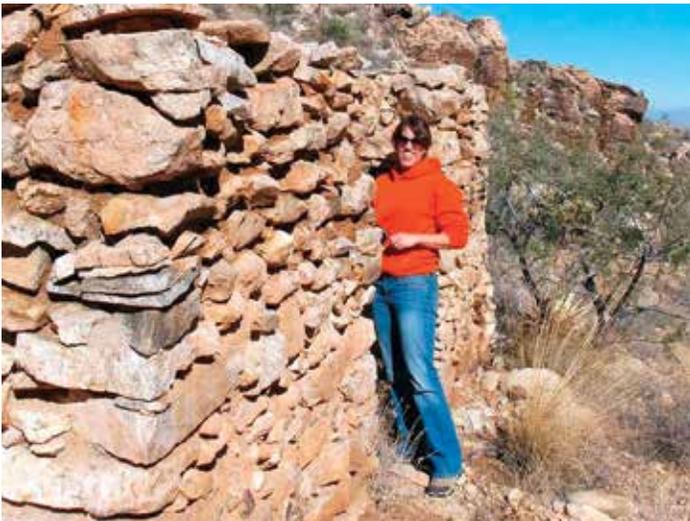
Amy Titterington, GeoCorps Participant, BLM Royal Gorge Field Office.

Amy Titterington, P.G.

Geologist, U.S. Forest Service

Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands (PSICC), Colorado

Amy Titterington participated in GeoCorps America in 2012 as a geologist assisting the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office in Cañon City, Colorado. The research and fieldwork that Amy contributed to during her GeoCorps placement was later presented at the 2013 GSA Annual Meeting. In early 2013, Amy was hired as a permanent geologist for the BLM Lake Havasu Field Office in Lake Havasu City, Arizona. At the BLM, she was responsible for the permitting, environmental review, and monitoring of locatable and salable mining projects in the Field Office. She was also able to obtain her Professional Geologist's license from the State of Wyoming. In 2014, she was hired as the Forest Geologist for the PSICC in Colorado. She is currently responsible for the permitting and environmental review of all proposed mining projects on the forest. She leads interdisciplinary teams of resource specialists through the environmental review for each project. She also collaborates with members of the public, environmental groups, mining companies, and other state and federal agencies throughout this process. Through the collaborative and interdisciplinary review process that Amy leads, mining projects are conducted so as to minimize adverse environmental impacts on National Forest resources. Amy will be mentoring a GeoCorps participant at PSICC during the summer of 2015.



Amy Titterington working as a geologist for the BLM.

Cynthia Valle

Hydrogeologist, National Park Service

Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

Cynthia Valle had her first GeoCorps/GIP experience as a Hydrology Technician at Grand Canyon National Park in 2011. During this project Cynthia assisted in researching and creating an inventory of springs, caves, and groundwater dependent ecosystems. Her project with the NPS opened her eyes to a new prospective career and after her final year of graduate school she returned to the Grand Canyon National Park in the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) (which has since been replaced by the Pathways Program), and then as a GeoCorps/GIP Guest Scientist. During this second GeoCorps project, Cynthia conducted water resource inventories and mapped springs for water resource evaluation, stewardship, and conservation planning. In 2013, Cynthia was hired as an NPS Hydrogeologist at Grand Canyon National Park. Her job is to monitor the springs and seeps, collecting information to help predict water amount, quality, and threats to water quality in the future. Cynthia, and the important work she completes, is featured in *Grand Canyon in Depth—Episode 2, Hidden Waters*, which can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6yuKXKD2WI>.



Cynthia Valle at Grand Canyon National Park, 2011.



Cynthia Valle at Grand Canyon National Park with 2014 GeoCorps/GIP participants and Mentor Vince Santucci.

"These agencies can seem intimidating as a system, but they are full of welcoming, helpful, and incredibly knowledgeable people who all have connections with other people in many different fields. If you're a GeoCorps or Mosaics participant, chances are you are an intelligent hard worker, but try to stay flexible and open to new experiences that are in and out of your line of work. Putting yourself out there by expressing your interest and willingness to try new things can open up many new opportunities that you didn't even know existed."

—Marissa Reis, *Mosaics in Science Alumna*



Alex Eddy as a GeoCorps participant at the BLM Washington Office.

Alex Eddy

GIS and Data Technician, National Park Service

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, California

Alex Eddy is a GIS professional with an academic background in natural resources, physical geography, and climate change. She participated in GeoCorps America in 2010 and 2012, providing GIS and data services to the Bureau of Land Management in Washington, D.C. She developed thematic maps and other visual aids to communicate science and policy on protected lands for the National Landscape Conservation System, and she facilitated a long-term geospatial data development project as part of the Division of Recreation and Visitor Services. Alex is a Term GIS and Data Technician for the National Park Service; she previously served as part of Hurricane Sandy Recovery Operations in Gateway National Recreation Area and the National Parks of New York Harbor, and she is currently employed at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in the southern Sierra Nevada, California. Alex is invested in expanding the analytical applications of geospatial information in resource management and planning. She works with resource managers and specialists from a variety of disciplines to model and synthesize resource trends, manage data, and explore resource management alternatives through cartographic products and other geospatial tools.



Alex Eddy at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park, 2015.

GeoCorps™ America Milestones

GeoCorps America Receives the National Park Service Director's Partnership Award

The National Park Service Director's Partnership Award recognizes the most significant achievements of NPS partner organizations, where through partnership with the NPS they have provided lasting benefit to parks and communities nationwide. In 2014, GSA was awarded the National Park Service Director's Partnership Award for its ongoing and successful partnership between the Geoscientists-In-the-Parks program and GeoCorps America, and for its work on the Mosaics in Science program.

Certificate of Recognition from the Bureau of Land Management Front Range District Office

GeoCorps participants working with the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office have contributed valuable resources toward the conservation and management of paleontological resources in Cañon City, Colorado. In 2013, the Garden Park Fossil Area National Natural Landmark (NNL) was expanded and then officially dedicated in 2014. The Geological Society of America GeoCorps America program received the certificate of recognition from the Bureau of Land Management in acknowledgement of the valuable contribution that the program participants have made to this change in the NNL designation.

Thank you to all of the GeoCorps Alumni who took on paleontological projects at the Royal Gorge Field Office in Cañon City. Your work has made a lasting impact!

GeoCorps America Participant 1,000

In 2014, GeoCorps America reached its 1,000 and 1,001 participants. Participant 1,000 was Claudia Velasco Campos, who spent three months at Devil's Tower National Monument, focused on interpreting the stunning geology of Devil's Tower for the public. Claudia's GeoCorps/GIP project at Devil's Tower was generously funded by Rare Element Resources in memory of Mario Alberto Mansilla Teran. Participant 1,001 was also a GeoCorps/GIP project participant at Devil's Tower National Monument. Piper Lewis' project focused on public outreach and education through media, such as a series of podcasts titled *The Tower Frequency*. You can listen to *The Tower Frequency* at <http://www.nps.gov/deto/photosmultimedia/index.htm>.



Jack Hess, Gary Lewis, and Matt Dawson receiving the NPS Director's Partnership Award at the 2014 GSA Annual Meeting.



GeoCorps participants 1001 and 1000: Piper Lewis and Claudia Velasco Campos.



GeoCorps/GIP participant Claudia Velasco Campos speaking with a visitor to Devil's Tower National Monument.

Learning More about the Public Land Corps Hiring Authority

In 2013, the agreements that the GSA GeoCorps America program operated under started to include the Public Land Corps Hiring Authority. This authority allows youth who have contributed 640 hours to an eligible conservation project to qualify for non-competitive hiring status with the Department of the Interior. In 2013, the Public Land Corps Hiring Authority was unfamiliar not only to GSA but to our agency partners as well. Throughout 2014, we worked with our partners to become more familiar with this authority. It is hoped that in the near future, a GeoCorps participant will successfully use this authority to obtain federal employment. The federal land management agencies will issue detailed guidance on this hiring authority in 2015.

GeoCorps America at the Association of National Park Rangers Ranger Rendezvous

In 2014, GeoCorps America hosted a booth at the Ranger Rendezvous held in Estes Park, Colorado. This is the first time that GeoCorps America was represented at the Ranger Rendezvous, and it was a wonderful opportunity to interact with many National Park Service staff. GeoCorps hopes to be able to attend additional Ranger Rendezvous in the future.

GeoCorps America Program Exceeded 2018 Goals

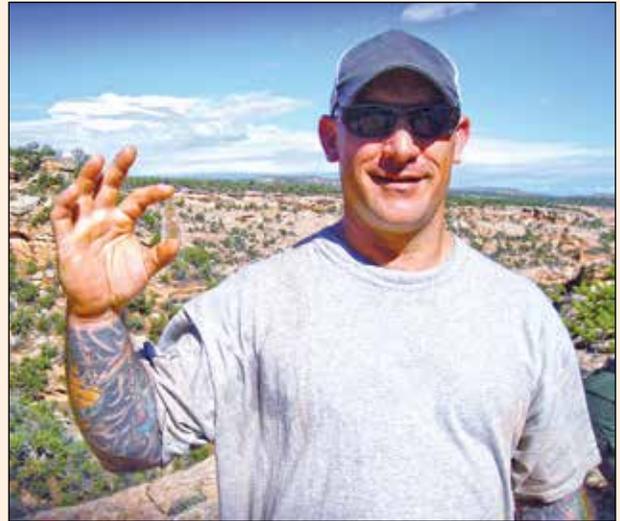
In 2013, GSA set the goal of reaching 150 program participants and 150 GeoCorps America projects per year by 2018. In 2014, GeoCorps America included 157 projects and 152 individual participants, exceeding the goal set for 2018 by a small margin. As mentioned earlier in this report, the program has also met its goal to increase the diversity of the program participants.



GeoCorps participant Christopher Moreno, BLM White River field office.

New Evaluation Program

A new evaluation plan and set of tools was created for the GeoCorps America program at the end of 2013. The new tools include surveys to gather information from participants before they start the program, from those who have been offered a GeoCorps project but decided not to participate in the program, and a survey for GeoCorps alumni. The updated evaluation program also include revamping the participant and mentor evaluations and moving all of the program evaluations to an online format. The new evaluation program was used during 2014 and has already resulted in more detailed information about what participants are learning during their projects, what areas of the program need improving, and what program alumni would find useful after they complete their GeoCorps project. Used on a yearly basis, the new evaluation tools will allow us to better track long-term program goals and improvements.



GeoCorps/GIP participant Brandon Mauk conducting a cultural resources Survey at Colorado National Monument.

Alumni Outreach

In 2014, the program introduced GeoCorps America lapel pins. The pins have been distributed to program alumni who have remained active in the geoscience community either by presenting at conferences, acting as a representative for the program, continuing to work in the geosciences, and in some cases by mentoring current GeoCorps participants. The purpose of the pins is to foster recognition between program alumni at geoscience related events and create a stronger alumni community for the program.

The GeoCorps America program is aiming to provide a stronger community for its alumni overall. The alumni survey will guide us in reaching this goal. We encourage any alumni who have feedback for the program to complete the online alumni survey or to contact the program.



GeoCorps participant Briana Smith taking part in paleontological excavations with the BLM New Mexico State Office.

The Future of GeoCorps™ America

Adapt to Changing Best Practice Standards

The relevancy of programs like GeoCorps America is increasing along with an emphasis from the federal government to increase diversity in the federal workforce and to engage more young people in activities in the great outdoors. The environment in which the program operates is also changing. As The Corps Network and its accreditation process grows, and the federal agencies set new standards for best practice in their youth and career development programs, it will be critical for GSA to stay informed and adapt quickly to meet these changing standards within the GeoCorps America program.

Add Value to the Program

With program numbers now close to 200 projects/participants per year, it is more important than ever that focus be placed on the quality of the program rather than the quantity of the projects. For the next few years, program evaluation will focus on improving the existing characteristics of GeoCorps so that they function efficiently for this large number of partners, participants, and alumni. In addition, the program will seek out new ways to add value to the experiences of partners, participants, and alumni throughout their involvement in the program. These efforts to improve the quality and value of the GeoCorps America program will include working toward the goals outlined in the accompanying diagram.

GeoCorps America: Focuses for the Future

<p>2015–2016</p>	<p>Increase Partnerships Continue to pursue a partnership with USGS</p> <p>Increase Program Value Pursue a partnership to provide additional resources for participants and mentors Continue to grow communication with program alumni Engage Further with 21CSC and the Corps Network Provide clear guidance for participants and mentors on PLC Hiring Authority</p>
<p>2016–2021</p>	<p>Increase Partnership Explore possible partnerships with additional Federal and State Agencies</p> <p>Increase Program Value Achieve Corps Network Accreditation Work with agencies to create paths from GeoCorps projects to full-time federal employment Explore Direct Hiring Authority eligibility Continue to use evaluation results to drive program improvements Continue to adapt the program as best practice for youth and career development programs change</p>
<p>Targets</p>	<p>Reach 200 Projects by 2018 Increase participant diversity</p>

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GeoCorps/GIP participant Meaghan Emery with a series of Oreodont skulls from John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.



If you have questions regarding
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