

# GEOSCIENCES NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2

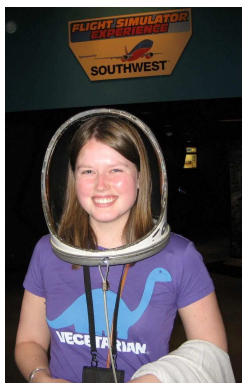
OCTOBER 9TH, 2009



## GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE

Alexandre Fowler (Lexy, as we know her) came to us this year from Hartwick College in NY where she was an undergrad Geology/Environmental Sciences major. You can usually recognize her as the Beach Hall girl wearing a dinosaur T-shirt! While at Hartwick, Lexy was involved in many activities including being president of both the Environmental and Geology Clubs. She received a number of scholarships and awards during her time at Hartwick, and graduated with Departmental Distinction this past spring.

*Lexy blasting off at the Houston Space Center in TX.*



Lexy had applied to a few grad schools but got wait listed at her top choice. When this happened she decided to try both UVM and UConn—both of which made her offers. Upon visiting us here in Storrs at the last minute, Lexy decided to join us in the Center for her graduate studies. Pivotal to her decision was the research focus of both Christophe Dupraz and Pieter Visscher, which closely aligned with her senior thesis work at Hartwick (which was carried out in the Bahamas). When she found out more, she couldn't resist the lure of microbial mat research!

So far Lexy is settling in well to life as a grad student and a TA. While the change from small college to large university has been a big one for her, she is enjoying her time here and has really taken a liking to TA'ing intro labs— she hopes to use her love of geology to be able and inspire one or two of her students to pursue geoscience as a major.

Lexy will be attending GSA this fall to present her undergrad thesis work and currently lives here with her boyfriend Matt who is attending ECSU for Earth Science Education.

*(As a funny side note, Abi and Lexy both had the same undergrad advisor—Dr. David Griffing—10 years apart! Talk about a small world!)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| ANNOUNCEMENTS | 2 |
| EVENTS        | 3 |
| EPOD          | 4 |
| GEOTRIVIA     | 5 |
| NEWS/UPDATES  | 8 |

### IN THE NEWS FOR GEOSCIENCES:

- *The moon isn't quite as bone-dry as once thought — instead, there is evidence for widespread water on its surface, scientists at NASA announced in September. Data collected from 3 different missions pooled their data to all confirm this new fact. The source of the water and whether it exists in ice or some other form remain a mystery. The finding could fundamentally change how many scientists think about the moon.*

## GEOCLUB IS UP AND RUNNING!

With overwhelming interest from the student body, UConn has started back up a student run geology club, known as GeoClub. The main goal of the club is to foster interest in all things related to the science of our planet. We have had 3 meetings so far, and the next meeting is slated to

take place on Wednesday October 21st at 4pm in Beach Hall 233. This club is open to all students at UConn.

We also have a bulletin board up in the 2nd floor of Beach Hall that has announcements, meeting times and upcoming events.

Questions? Want to get on our mailing list?

Email the club at: [uconngeoclub@gmail.com](mailto:uconngeoclub@gmail.com)

See more on our website here: <http://www.geosciences.uconn.edu/u/geoclub.html>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS, AWARDS, PUBLICATIONS, ETC...

**CESE** is the Portal for Environmental Events going on at UConn. You can join their mailing list by emailing [Philip.Caron@uconn.edu](mailto:Philip.Caron@uconn.edu).

**Majors Fair** Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> 4-6pm Student Union ballroom.

**Geological Society of Connecticut:** First meeting coming up Monday November 9th! At Dinosaur State Park in Rocky Hill. For membership application and meeting details see our website: <http://www.geosciences.uconn.edu/news.html>

**School for Field Studies:** Study abroad opportunities for Environmental and related fields, find our more here: [http://www.fieldstudies.org/pages/228\\_prospective\\_students.cfm](http://www.fieldstudies.org/pages/228_prospective_students.cfm)

**Grads: CESE Funding is seeking applications!** The Center for Environmental Sciences & Engineering is pleased to announce the availability competition for a number of Graduate Research Assistantships for Spring 2010. Assistantships are intended to support multidisciplinary environmental research efforts or programmatic efforts in multidisciplinary environmental research, education, or outreach. Proposals are due by Dec. 4th at 5pm. Announcement is here:

[http://www.geosciences.uconn.edu/documents/CESE\\_Research%20Grants\\_RFP\\_2009-2010.pdf](http://www.geosciences.uconn.edu/documents/CESE_Research%20Grants_RFP_2009-2010.pdf)



Eruption of Kilauea.

## AMERICA'S NEXT TOP...ICHTHYOSAUR!

Beach Hall's ichthyosaur recently had a bit of a makeover as it underwent some much needed repair and maintenance. Next time you're by the copier room check it out! Picture to the right shows what the Ichthy looked like prior to its face-lift and what it looks like now. A plaque has also been attached that tells a bit

more about what, for many years, has been the 'mystery fossil of Beach Hall.' Many thanks to Patrick Getty for his hard work on it!



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- **Thursday Oct. 22. Teale Lecture Series:** Dr. John Elder “*Literature and Sustainability*” 4:00pm Konover Auditorium (Dodd Ctr.)
- **Friday Oct. 30 NRE Seminar:** **R i c h a r d H o o p e r** President and Executive Director, Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science, Inc. (CUAHSI) “*Advancing Environmental Research through Data Sharing*” 2:00pm Young 100.
- **Tuesday Nov. 3 Geoscience Seminar Series:** Amy Rhodes, Smith College. *Title TBA.* 4:00pm Beach Hall 233 (library) Refreshments served!

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- **Thursday Nov. 5. EEB Seminar Series:** David Jablonski, University of Chicago “*Out of the Tropics: Paleontological insights into the dynamics of the latitudinal diversity gradient*” 4:00pm BPB 130.
- **Friday Nov. 13. NRE Seminar:** Kathleen Segerson, **U C o n n E c o n o m i c s .** “*Integrating Ecology and Economics in the Study of Ecosystem Services: Some Lessons Learned*” 2:00pm Young 100.
- **Thursday Nov. 19. Teale Lecture Series:** Dr. Stephen Polasky “*Coming Down to Earth: Valuing Nature to Improve Decision Making*” 4:00pm Konover Auditorium (Dodd Ctr.)

## DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

- **Geoscience Seminars take place on Tuesdays at 4:00pm in Beach 233 (not all weeks, please look for schedule)**
- **EEB seminars take place on most Thursdays at 4:00pm in BPB 130.**
- **Physics seminars take place on most Fridays at 4:00pm in Physics building P038.**
- **Chemistry seminars take place Wednesdays at 4:00pm in Chem A203.**
- **MCB seminars take place on most Tuesdays at 4:00pm in BPB130.**
- **Marine Science seminars take place on Fridays at 3:00pm at the Avery Point campus in room 103. \*Seminars students are interested in? We can see about setting up a webcam to cast the seminar here in the Beach Hall library.**

## RESEARCH GRANTS FOR UNDERGRADS

**Office of Undergraduate Research** - Each year the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) provides funding and support for undergraduates conducting research and their faculty research advisors. Undergraduate students can apply for one of three types of OUR Grants during the 2009-2010 academic year – a Research Expense Grant, a Travel to Conduct Research Grant, or a Travel to Present Research Grant.

These grants are available to students working on a faculty member’s research project or students working on their own research projects under the supervision of a faculty member. A Research Expense Grant can cover any consumable or expense associated with the student’s research. The Travel to Conduct Research Grant can reimburse travel expenses associated with collecting data. Finally, the Travel to Present Re-

search Grant can reimburse travel expenses associated with student presentations at regional, national, or international conferences. Each of these grants is worth a maximum of \$500. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and review of applications has already begun.

Please visit [www.our.uconn.edu](http://www.our.uconn.edu) for more information on student eligibility for this

grant program as well as other programs, such as the SURF grant program and Frontiers in Undergraduate Research, sponsored by the OUR. You may also contact the OUR staff by emailing [our@uconn.edu](mailto:our@uconn.edu) or calling 860-486-6255.

## EARTH SCIENCE PICTURE OF THE DAY



***EPOD from 9/6/2009***— The photo above features a freshly mined face of [phosphate](#) ore in northwest Queensland, Australia. This deposit was laid down some 500 million years ago when the region was a warm, shallow inland sea and has since been subjected to dramatic geological forces, resulting in the severe folding of the strata shown. The height of the mine face is approximately 25 feet (eight meters). If you look closely interesting patterns can sometimes be picked out in the abstract folds. Note the "[love heart](#)" at upper left. Photo taken on July 7, 2009. .—[Photo by Greg Ruttner](#)

## UNDERGRAD OPPORTUNITIES

- Undergrads—have you ever wanted to take part in an interesting research experience? Check out the **Research Experience for Undergrads (REU)** website through NSF.

[http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/list\\_result.cfm?unitid=5050](http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/list_result.cfm?unitid=5050)

- **2010 Academic Year EPA Greater Research**

**Opportunities (GRO)** Fellowships for Undergraduate Environmental Study

[http://www.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/2010/2010\\_gro\\_undergrad.html](http://www.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/2010/2010_gro_undergrad.html)

Open Date: 09/15/2009 -  
Close Date: 12/10/2009

- **Teacher Certification Program scholarships** - Noyce Scholarship program at UConn. This program is funded

by the NSF. It offers \$15,000 scholarships to students with a Bachelor's degree in math or a science who enroll in the Neag School of Education's one-year Teacher Certification Program for College Graduates (TCPCG). Those who receive a scholarship must commit to teaching two years in a high-need school district within 6

years after completion of the TCPCG. See attachments for more information or visit

<http://www.education.uconn.edu/departments/teachered/TCPCG.cfm>

## GEOSCIENCE CURRENTS AND GEO-TRIVIA

**Geoscience Currents #26** examines the sources of high school graduates from which geoscience programs and their universities recruit. Geoscience departments see students coming from generally the same catchment as their parent institution, though geoscience students tend slightly to be more "local" than their peers on campus. Some regional variations are evident, especially

in the Northeast where a higher percentage of undergraduate students are recruited from outside the region as compared to other U.S. regions. Also, geoscience departments in the South tend to have a higher percentage of bachelor degree recipients that graduated from high schools in the South as compared to all bachelor degree recipient

from universities in the South.

### Fun with Geoscience Trivia.

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1. What is another more common term for a "wiggly stick"?
2. What name is given to the instrument used to measure the depth of water?
3. What is the earth science educational game based on

geocaching that can take you, following your GPS, to geologically exciting sites across the planet?

**Check your answers:**

[http://www.mmsend3.com/ls.cfm?r=201076977&sid=7213131&m=796599&u=GEOSOCIETY&s=http://www.geosociety.org/GSA\\_Connection/0908/trivia.htm](http://www.mmsend3.com/ls.cfm?r=201076977&sid=7213131&m=796599&u=GEOSOCIETY&s=http://www.geosociety.org/GSA_Connection/0908/trivia.htm)

## GEO-WEBSITES

- **The Size of Things:** Just a warning, this YouTube video will make you feel small. But maybe that's not such a bad thing. It's hard to imagine how big the universe really is. This video will give you an idea.

<http://vid-eos.komando.com/2009/06/15/putting-the-earth-in-perspective/>

- **The Relevance of Geology:** Video put out by Union College addressing why Earth Scientists are needed now and in the future.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJaUzJUAyJI&feature=related>

*More to come next issue!*





## UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Center for Integrative Geosciences  
354 Mansfield Road U-2045  
Storrs, CT 06269  
Phone: 860-486-4432  
Fax: 860-486-1383  
E-mail: [geology@uconn.edu](mailto:geology@uconn.edu)

Pieter T. Visscher—Director  
Abigail Hastillo—Program Assistant

<http://www.geosciences.uconn.edu>

The Center for Integrative Geosciences mission is to offer transdisciplinary programs of instruction and research that advance understanding of the interaction of biological, chemical, geological, and physical processes, including feedback mechanisms, at all spatial and temporal scales that have shaped Earth through geologic time, continue to shape the environment today, and which provide the basis for understanding the present and future impact of human activity on this planet.

*We will be issuing these newsletters monthly throughout the academic year to keep associated students, staff, alumni, and faculty up-to-date on the Center's activities!*

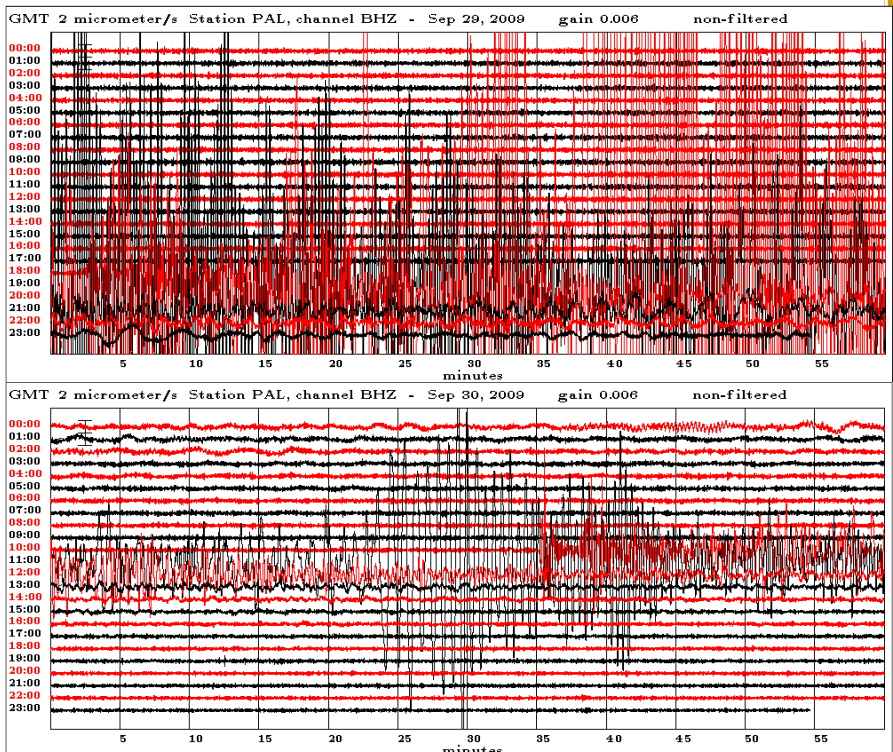
## RECENT EARTHQUAKES

Making headlines last week were the very large magnitude 8.0 earthquake/tsunami on 9/29 in the Samoa Islands Region and magnitude 7.6 earthquake in Indonesia on 9/30. The Indonesian event has been followed by a series of magnitude 5 to 6.6 aftershocks, as well. When large events like these happen, geoscience takes a drivers seat on the news - reminding us of how strong the forces of our planet are, and how pertinent the study of geoscience is to our lives.

These events have all been recorded by local seismometers and can be seen to the right. The top seismograph is from 9/29 indicating the 8.0

earthquake. The bottom is from 9/30 indicating the 7.6 earthquake.

Anyone wanting more info on the seismic network can have a look at the LDEO Cooperative Seismic Network website.



<http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/LCSN>