

The KU Geologic Record



The Earth, Energy and Environment Center Is a GO!

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and KU Geology are pleased to announce that The Earth, Energy and Environment Center will be built. Enough funding has been raised to assure construction.

"We're thrilled to build the new Center, and we are profoundly grateful for the generous support of our alumni and friends," said KU Geology Chair Luis González. "Thank you for everything you've done."

But there is still more work to do, González added.

"The funds we raise now will determine exactly which facilities we will be able to include," he said. "We envision the new project as a world-class Earth, Energy and Environment Center for research, learning, and outreach, but we can't turn that dream into reality without your continued support and help."

The Center will include classrooms, auditoriums, cutting-edge laboratories, a staging area for fieldwork, facilities for the Tertiary Oil Recovery Project and much more. It will attach to Lindley Hall and extend into the parking lot next to Lindley.

To make a donation or add to an existing gift, contact Nancy Jackson at KU Endowment, njackson@kuendowment.org, (785) 832-7357.

Slawsons Give \$16 Million for E³ Center

The family of KU alumnus Donald C. Slawson has made a \$16 million lead gift for construction of a hall to be located in the Earth, Energy and Environment Center. Slawson Hall will honor Don Slawson's longstanding dedication to KU, to higher education and to the oil and gas industry.

A lifelong resident of Wichita, Don Slawson died on July 7, 2014. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from KU in 1955. At the age of 24, he founded Slawson Exploration, an oil and gas exploration firm that became one of the most active oil drilling operations in the United States. He later expanded the firm to include residential and commercial real estate development. Slawson and his wife, Judy, met at KU and raised three sons, including two KU alumni — Steve Slawson, Craig Slawson ('80 geology) and Todd Slawson ('84 petroleum engineering).

"The generosity of Don and his family has made it possible for us to move forward on this landmark project that advances our efforts to identify new and sustainable sources of energy for our world," said KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little. "With Don's passing, KU and Kansas have lost a true advocate for higher education, but his legacy will live on and benefit countless others through Slawson Hall. On behalf of the University, I offer my sincere condolences to Judy, their children, and all who are grieving Don's death."

Distinguished Hydrologist Comes to KU

Mary Hill, a hydrologist with a long career at the U.S. Geological Survey, joined the KU Geology faculty as a full professor in August.

Hill is a world-class expert on the computer modeling of environmental systems, and especially groundwater systems, and a veteran geoscientist who has traveled the world as a distinguished Darcy lecturer for the National Ground Water Association.

Coming to Lawrence after leaving her post at the USGS National Research Program office in Boulder, Colo., Hill served at the highest level a government scientist can attain. Hill has taught at Rutgers University, the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Colorado and the University of California, Davis.

Geophysicist to Join KU Faculty in 2015

Chi Zhang will join the KU Geology faculty as an assistant professor in January 2015 after completing a postdoctoral fellowship at Rutgers University.

Zhang earned a BS in environmental science from Sun Yat-sen University in China in 2006 and a doctorate from Rutgers in 2012. Before joining Rutgers as a postdoctoral fellow in 2013, she served as a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Geophysics at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colo., and as a researcher and postdoctoral fellow at the Idaho National Laboratory in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Blum and McLean Arrive

Two other new faculty members have begun their work at KU. Ritchie Distinguished Professor Mike Blum, who was profiled in the previous *Geologic Record*, and Assistant Professor Noah McLean, who was profiled in last year's *GHawker*, both began work in August. The upcoming *GHawker* will have a complete feature about Blum.

Rolfe Mandel Named Distinguished Professor

Kansas Geological Survey Senior Scientist and longtime KU Geology collaborator Rolfe Mandel has been named a University Distinguished Professor by KU. It is the University's most prestigious faculty honor.

Danny Anderson, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, said of Mandel, "He strives to support the growth and success of both colleagues and students. His service record is truly extensive, stretching across units within the University, across the state of Kansas, throughout the nation and internationally."

AAPG Awards Goldstein

The American Association of Petroleum Geologists Foundation has given Merrill Haas Distinguished Professor and Associate Dean Bob Goldstein its Professorial Award.

More Accolades

The Kansas Geological Survey has given its first annual Outstanding Support Staff Award to KGS water data manager **Brownie Wilson**.

The National Association of Geoscience Teachers has given the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award to KU Geology Teaching Assistant **Leah Moelling**. Moelling served as a TA for Geol. 101, The Way the Earth Works, during the fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters while the course was undergoing redesign.

Visiting Assistant Professor **Kelsey Bitting** and Associate Professor **Jen Roberts** gave a poster presentation at the SENCER Summer Institute in North Carolina. The NSF launched SENCER (Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities) in 2001 to apply the science of learning to the learning of science. Bitting and Roberts' presentation was entitled, "Earth Processes from a Bird's Eye View: Reinforcing Introductory Geoscience Concepts Through Guided-Inquiry Homework in Google Earth."

Charity Phillips-Lander (PhD '14) has had quite a year. She won first place for advanced graduate students in the KU/Sigma Xi Research Competition for her research, "Microbial Mining in Acid-Sulfate Springs: Indicators of Epithermal Ore Deposit Formation," and presented the same research at the 2013 GSA meeting. She also presented a poster at AAPG and gave a talk at the Goldschmidt Conference's Mars Mineralogy session. In August she began a postdoctoral position at the University of Oklahoma on a NASA-funded project researching the geochemistry of Martian brines to understand clay formation and the evolution of the Martian crust.

Doctoral candidate **Sarah Gibson** gave an oral presentation on fossil fishes from the Triassic Chinle Formation of southern Utah at the Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists in Tennessee in August. She also received an award for the best student paper in Ichthyology in the 2013 volume of the journal *Copeia* published by the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists.

Associate Professor **Gwen Macpherson** presented on "Establishing an International Database of Plant-Available Metals in Urban Garden Soils (PAM-UGS)" and led a discussion at the first International Association of Geochemistry Urban Geochemistry Workshop in August. The IAGC Urban Geochemistry Working Group event defined the term "Urban Geochemistry." Expect a white paper from the workshop to be submitted to the IAGC journal *Applied Geochemistry* before the end of the year.

Be Sociable!

Find us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/KUGeology), Twitter (@KUGeology) and LinkedIn (University of Kansas Geology Department Alumni Group).

The KU Geologic Record

See You in Vancouver

Join us on Monday, Oct. 20, for the KU Geology Alumni Reception at the Geological Society of America meeting in Vancouver, BC, Canada. See the convention program for the specific time and location.

Watch for the 2014 *GHawker*

The 2014 *GHawker* will be in your mailbox in November. Watch for news updates on the Earth, Energy and Environment Center, along with more information about the Slawson family's generous gift, full profiles of the Department's newest faculty members, photos of KU Geology in the field, an update on geochemistry research at KU, and much more.

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