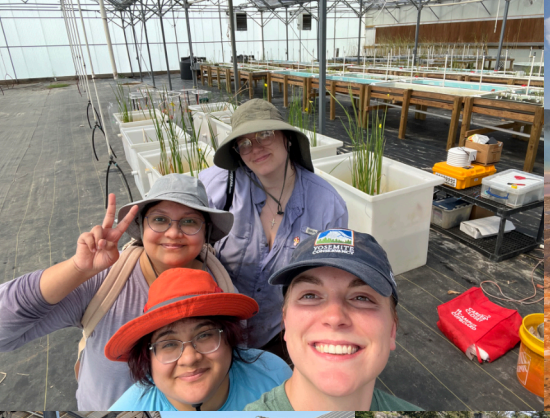





NEWSLETTER MAY, 2026

UNIVERSITY of LOUISIANA LAFAYETTE

Ray P. Authement College of Sciences

School of Geosciences Newsletter

Contents

Greetings from the Director

It's our pleasure to bring you the 2025-2026 newsletter from the School of Geosciences – this year, we had a lot to celebrate! Our faculty and students were recognized with many awards, spanning research, teaching, and service. There are too many to list here (see page 23 for a full list), but I want to highlight a few major milestones here.

Dr. Durga Poudel retired last Spring after more than 25 years at UL Lafayette. He couldn't stay away for long, however, and continued teaching this past year, and was honored as Grand Marshal at the Spring 2026 Commencement Exercises! This recognition represents his dedication to the graduate education community as an educator, scholar, and colleague, but I know he has had an immense impact on our undergraduate students and his colleagues as well. Congratulations to Dr. Poudel, and we wish him the best in his new role as Professor Emeritus!

Dr. Jennifer Hargrave kicked off the academic year with a well-earned promotion based on her sustained excellence in teaching, mentorship, and service. She continues to serve as Geosciences faculty in addition to her Administrative role as Director of the Lafayette Science Museum. You can see how busy she's been in this dual role with her Museum update on page 17. If you have not visited in a while, you should definitely stop by – under Dr. Hargrave's leadership it is constantly being updated and expanding with new exhibits.

In the Spring, we held our second annual Geosciences Research Symposium (page 16), sent a group of students to Memphis to present their research at the GSA Joint Section Meeting, and successfully hired two new faculty to Geosciences. Dr. Alysia Cox (Water Resources) will be joining us in Fall 2026 and Dr. Lizzie Paulus (Environmental Geosciences) will be joining us in Spring 2027. We appreciate the generous donor support that allowed our students to attend this meeting and the university's support of the Geosciences with these new hires. We look forward to welcoming our new colleagues in the coming academic year.

Also this Spring, Dr. Brian Lock (Professor Emeritus) was awarded the Don Boyd Medal at the GCAGS/GCSSEPM awards ceremony that kicked off GeoGulf 2026 in Baton Rouge. This is GCAGS's highest award, and it was wonderful to see so many of Dr. Lock's past students in attendance at the award ceremony. To top it off, Dr. Lock completed a guidebook, "The Five Islands and the Salt Deposits of South Louisiana: A Summary of the Economic Geology," to accompany a field trip at Gulf 2026.

You'll also see the students have been quite busy, too. The (UL Geosciences Society (ULGS) (@ulgeosciencesociety) has been very active (see page 18), and we have a new student group called the American Conservation Coalition - UL Lafayette Chapter (ACCUL). The chapter formed this Spring and is already working on a number of projects, including replanting the native pollinator habitat in front of Hamilton Hall. To stay up-to-date I encourage you to follow our social media feeds on Instagram (@ulgeosciences) and Facebook (@UL Lafayette School of Geosciences).

Last but not least, our AAPG Imperial Barrel Award (IBA) team won the national title for their presentation on "Petroleum Exploration of the North Holland Platform." They'll be competing in the International Competition in August. We wish them luck!

We've had several alumni stop by this past year, and it was great to hear what everyone has been up to. You are welcome anytime, and we appreciate the visits! If you cannot visit in person, feel free to reach out via email, social media, or even the old-fashioned telephone!

Sincerely,
Brian Schubert
Director

Newsletter Editor

Another year, another Newsletter. You know what this means: time for some alligator photos (plus some other cute animals from Cypress Lake)!

This year we decided to change things slightly: some of our students wanted to share their own achievements and proud moments, so we happily added them to our Newsletter. Hope y'all enjoy learning about our School's 2026 updates!

Regards,
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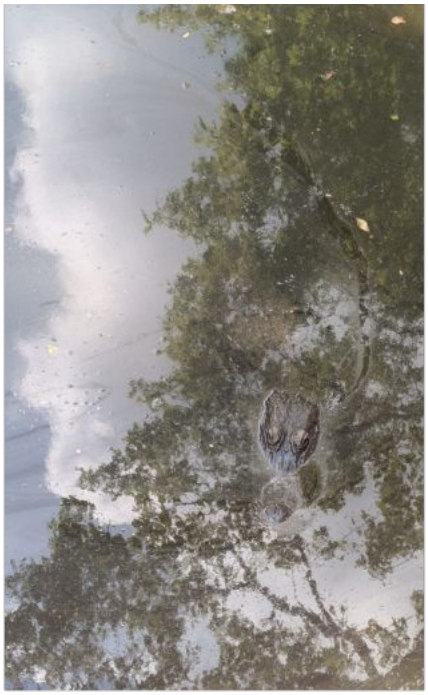



Faculty & Instructor Updates

Jennifer E. Hargrave

Over the past academic year, I continued teaching a range of courses, spanning both general education and upper-level paleontology offerings. I've especially enjoyed continuing to develop the newer courses within our paleontology concentration, which are proving to be a valuable addition to the program, as they offer unique, hands-on opportunities for our students. One major highlight was GEOL 422 (Museum Techniques), where students collaborated to design and produce a full exhibit. From developing content to creating replica mammal jaws, they were involved in every stage of the process, gaining practical experience in museum work. The new exhibit, *Built to Bite: How Teeth Reveal Diet*, opened on May 1.

This fall, a group of eager students traded their classroom desks for the rugged terrain of Oregon's fossil-rich landscapes. The students traveled with Dr. Martin and me on a field trip designed to teach them how to find, collect, and curate fossils, offering a rare opportunity to step directly into the work of paleontology. We visited the classic Fossil Lake Formation, which is known for its remarkable preservation and abundance of prehistoric life. With collecting tools in hand and field notebooks at the ready, they learned how to identify the stratigraphic layers, carefully excavate specimens, and document their findings. At the end of the day, the group numbered and identified the fossils. They learned the importance of fossil curation and now understand how to catalog and preserve specimens for scientific study and public display. To summarize the experience, they presented a summary of their experiences at the monthly Lafayette Geological Society luncheon, highlighting the importance of scientific communication.

I had the pleasure of graduating two master's students this year. Devin Surcouf defended his thesis entitled *Age Refinements and Vertebrate Record from the Neogene Granger Clay Pit, Yakima County, Washington*, and is now working as a geologist for the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement. Cole Phillips finished up his thesis this spring, entitled *Stratigraphic Distribution of Pleistocene Aves at Fossil Lake in Lake County, Oregon*. He is joining the staff at the Burpee Museum this summer.

I've also been continuing work on several research projects, with a manuscript on the first fossil jaguar from Louisiana currently in preparation and expected to be submitted later this summer. This work focuses on a nearly complete specimen and I'm excited to share those results soon!

Figure 1: Top: Dr Hargrave, Dr Martin and geology students posing (left) and collecting fossils (right) at Fossil Lake, OR. Bottom left: Bird fossil specimens collected during the Fall 2025 field trip at Fossil Lake. Bottom center: Students in GEOL 422 painting casts of mammal jaws for a new exhibit. Bottom right: Example of teeth from a fossil jaguar, the first from Louisiana.

Io Ioannidi

Hi again! Another year passed, and admittedly, it was busier but also more balanced between research and teaching than the previous one. I taught Structural Geology in Fall 2025, and Geotectonics and Basin Analysis in Spring 2026. The latter is a new course for me, so it required more time to prepare, but I learned many new things and got many ideas on making my research more relevant to Louisiana. I also attended a geodynamic modelling conference in Portugal, was invited to give one talk at Iowa State University and one at Louisiana State University, and went on a scouting field trip with Dr Kirkpatrick to the west coast, in preparation for our 2-week geology field trip.

Aside from finishing a paper on the frictional characteristics of fault gouges (submitted to GRL), I started a few new and exciting projects, one on the geomechanics of crack-seal veins, one on the effect of sedimentation on oyster stress in South Louisiana, one on the thermal evolution of the East African Rift System, and two on sediment rheology and eclogitization in subduction zones. The last four projects are part of the MS theses of four students I have been supervising since last year (Ohemaa Akosua Amakye, Nnamdi Idowu-Anifowoshe, Alex Owens, Rohan Sharma). By the way, if you want to learn more about the rheology of subduction zones, check out my EGU Geodynamics blog post!

Finally, my lab space looks more and more like an analogue lab (the RheoGeo Lab - trademark pending!), thanks to the assistance of Masie Minnick, now a geology graduate! Next month, I am expecting a shipment of 300 lbs of quartz sand in preparation for Masie's MS project on the geomechanics of fault linkage.

Top left: The most famous geological unconformity of Portugal, Telheiro Beach, in the Algarve region. Top center: Redwoods, CA. Top right: Side mirror view of Mount Shasta. Bottom left: Nearly vertically plunging folds in CA. Bottom right: Mural in Ames, IA.

Heather Kirkpatrick

Hello again! The last year has been busy! I co-taught the second half of field camp last summer with Davide Oppo. The first portion of our time was spent in Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons which are special places to me since my undergraduate field camp was in the area. That field camp was what made me want to focus on geology, so returning was reinvigorating for me.

My first M.S. student, Karis Watson, just finished her M.S. where she examined trace element data from the Wyoming Province. She is continuing into the EESC PhD program! I taught a new graduate course on high temperature geochemistry where we read academic articles and students wrote a mock funding proposal. I also taught introductory mineralogy and introductory petrology where I included course-embedded research projects.

My own research continues. My paper on using trace element and Hf isotope chemistry to understand Archean tectonics in India was published in EPSL, and I co-authored a paper on using mineral inclusions to understand provenance in Chemical Geology. I continue to collaborate with colleagues on early Earth geochemistry, mineral inclusions, high temperature geochemistry, and Cordillera geology. Additionally, I am starting new lines of research here at UL Lafayette.

Top: Students at Bryce Canyon National Park. Bottom: Students in Grand Teton National Park analyzing stream properties.

Top: Hydrothermal field in Yellowstone. Center: Students looking over canyon in Utah at dusk. Bottom: Students standing in front of mountains outside of Grand Teton National Park.

Carl Richter

Carl Richter's research program currently centers on environmental magnetism, conducted in close collaboration with his graduate students, Joyeeta Chakma, Victoria Sanchez, Rachel Kelk, and Ashley Mindt, who recently joined the group. Their work focuses on applying magnetic susceptibility measurements as a tool for identifying and assessing heavy metal contamination in urban soils from Lake Charles and New Orleans.

Joyeeta successfully defended her M.S. thesis and presented her research at major conferences, including American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting (AGU), Geological Society of America (GSA), and the GeoGulf Convention. Her results were exceptional and are currently under review for publication. Following graduation, she has continued her work in our Ph.D. program in Earth and Energy Sciences, further advancing her research in environmental magnetism.

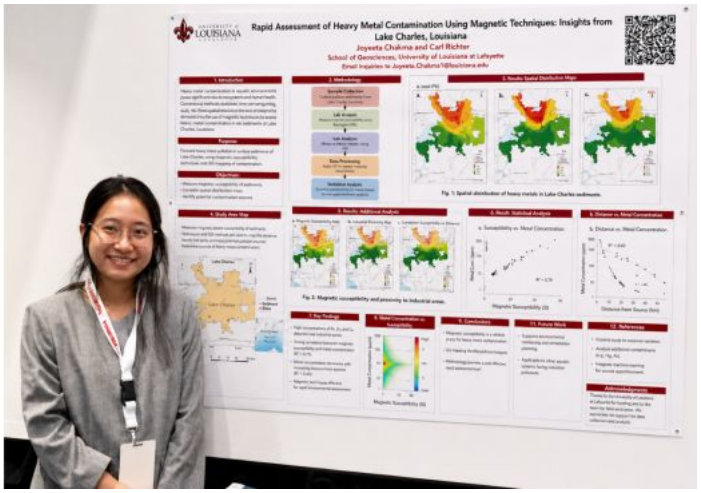
During the current academic year, Carl has been on sabbatical after 23 years of research, teaching, and service at the University. This period provided an opportunity to focus on advancing several ongoing projects toward publication while also developing new research directions.

With the conclusion of the International Ocean Discovery Program supported by the National Science Foundation, Carl is wrapping up his long-standing work on marine sediment magnetism and bringing several projects to fruition. He has presented recent results at the Ocean Sciences Meeting 2026 in Glasgow and is preparing them for publication.

Carl also visited his former colleague Eric Ferré at New Mexico State University, where he discussed collaborative research opportunities and delivered a seminar talk on the Pacific Equatorial Age Transect. One of the highlights of the visit was the Zuhl Museum at NMSU, home to one of the most visually striking collections of petrified wood.

The Spring 2026 GeoGulf Convention in Baton Rouge provided an excellent opportunity to reconnect with alumni working across the region, learn about new developments in Gulf Coast geoscience, and present two studies focused on Baton Rouge and Lake Charles on environmental magnetism conducted with current and former students.

Looking ahead, Carl is eager to return to teaching this fall, offering both a Ph.D.-level course and an introductory undergraduate class.



Left: Carl at the Ocean Sciences Meeting in Glasgow. Right: Joyeeta Chakma was awarded the 2026 GCAGS/GCSSEPM Gordon I. Atwater Best Poster Presentation Award (2nd Place) at the GeoGulf Convention.

Brian Schubert

We have a really great group of people in the lab this year, from a wide range of backgrounds, with many of the units in the College of Sciences represented in the lab this year. This has made for a really engaging and fun set of projects, all using stable isotopes.

Neva Powers is pursuing a new area for her MS Geology research – she is testing if stable isotopes can be used to trace the origins of shrimp. This highly applied research stems from two new labeling laws passed in the State Legislature. We honestly have no idea if this will work, but Neva is bravely taking on this exploratory investigation – stay tuned for the results!

Dr. Ishita Pal graduated with her PhD in our Earth and Energy Sciences Program studying stardust and is now working in the lab as a postdoctoral researcher using stable isotopes in tree rings to studying seasonal rainfall, as part of a large NSF project on flooding in the Gulf Coast states.

Undergraduates Izamary Lara (Chemistry) and Clinton Vincent (Environmental Science) are wrapping up their Advance Undergraduate Research Project studying the live oaks on campus and received some nice press for their research. They also earned prestigious "Leaf Awards" from the Advance Student Research Office for this research and will be graduating this Spring. We wish them both the best, and will miss them in the lab!

Xzayvion Gaye (Environmental Science) is studying how air quality affects cancer rates along an industrialized section along the Mississippi River, known as Cancer Alley, and Kaitlyn Black (Biology) and Benjamin Kane (Geology) started assisting on various lab projects this Spring.

In addition, we have Gracie Babineaux graduating this Spring with her PhD in Earth and Energy Sciences (co-advised with Davide Oppo) and Natasha Syed (Environmental Resource Science) who won $10,000 as leader of team Bio-Pod in the Pelican Cup, a premier collegiate entrepreneurship challenge in Louisiana.

Some of you may remember Junbo Ren, who visited our lab as a PhD student for two years during the pandemic. He has since earned his PhD and continues to do cutting edge research with fossil wood. We published two papers together this past year, one in Analytical Chemistry and another in Chemical Geology. Our lab also published a paper on some new carbon isotope data from Svalbard in which we identified a rapid change in CO2 during the Middle Devonian Taghanic crisis.

Hope Jahren (Adjunct Professor) and I spent much of the year working on a review paper on stable isotopes in plants. This effort has been years in the making and hopefully we will have more to share on this in the next newsletter.

On a personal note, I joined the ULL Tennis Club this Spring. I last played this much tennis more than 20 years ago, but it has been great fun getting back into the sport. I appreciate that the students on the team allowed a professor to join them (particularly fellow club and lab member, Ben Kane)! My level of soreness got better as the season went on. Alex (now age 10) also started playing tennis this Spring, and Noah (age 13) is deep into baseball. I also (finally) joined Instagram. If you are on there, you can find me @brianschubertgeo.

Left to Right: Clinton Vincent, Izamary Lara, Kaitlyn Black, Natasha Syed, Xzayvion Gaye, and Ishita Pal.

Jorge Villa

The School of Geosciences is proud to announce that Madeline "Maddy" Moore has been selected as the recipient of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association Outstanding Master's Graduate Award, one of the university's highest honors for graduate students.

The award recognizes exceptional achievement in academic performance, research, leadership, professional engagement, and community service. Moore was selected from among nominees across the university for her outstanding contributions to research and student leadership during her time at UL Lafayette.

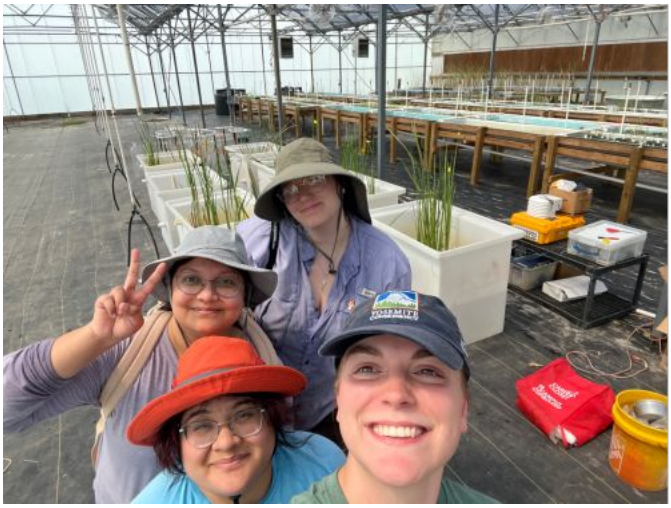
An environmental science graduate student, Moore distinguished herself through an impressive record of academic and research accomplishments. During her studies, she earned a competitive NASA internship, secured undergraduate research funding, and received the prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to support her master's degree research.

Working in the research group of Dr. Jorge A. Villa, assistant professor in the School of Geosciences, Moore developed an independent research project that contributed to both a successful UL Advance Program Faculty Award proposal and her NSF Graduate Research Fellowship project. According to Villa, Moore consistently performed "at a level comparable to my PhD students," demonstrating exceptional independence, creativity, and critical thinking.

In addition to her academic achievements, Moore has been a dedicated advocate for students and environmental research. She has served on multiple boards and volunteer groups and recently led a student effort to ensure student voices were represented in discussions surrounding the future of the UL Experimental Farm in Cade.

The School of Geosciences congratulates Moore on this well-deserved recognition and celebrates her continued contributions to environmental science, research, and community engagement.

Maddy Moore receiving the UL Lafayette Alumni Association Outstanding Master's Graduate Award.



Left: Students of the Wetland Lab moving an experiment into the ecology center. Right: Wetland Lab visit to LUMCON.

Rui Zhang

S. M. Shamsul Hoque successfully passed his Ph.D. defense in Spring 2026. His dissertation, supervised by Dr. Zhang and titled "Development of Artificial Intelligence–Based Geophysical Techniques for Unconventional Resource Exploration," presents a machine learning–driven workflow that integrates conventional P-wave and multicomponent seismic datasets to evaluate reservoir brittleness and total organic carbon (TOC) in unconventional resources.

Moreover, under the guidance and support of Dr. Rui Zhang and Mr. William Finley, the Imperial Barrel Award (IBA) team of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette earned 1st place at the North American Semifinals. This experience pushed the team, which includes Myllah Brown, Caitlyn Mullis, Anna-Sophia Henry, Ashley Mindt, and Amadeo Suazo, to grow tremendously as geologists, critical thinkers, and teammates. Faculty advisors Zhang and Finley, along with industry advisors Mary Broussard & Brian Brennan, and young professional mentor Peyton Dardeau, provided guidance, insight, and support throughout the process. This year's team will be representing not only the state and university, but all of North America at the International IBA Competition in Houston, Texas in August.

IBA team members (from left to right) Ashley Mindt, Anna-Sophia Henry, Amadeo Suazo, Caitlyn Mullis, and Myllah Brown receiving their first-place award.

Gary Kinsland

Yes, I am retired, now for almost four years; however, I have remained active in research related to tsunami megaripples from the Chicxulub Impact. I, and co-authors, graduate students and industry personnel, have now published two megaripples papers:

Kinsland, Gary L., Kaare Egedahl, Martell Albert Strong, Robert Ivy, 2021, Chicxulub impact tsunami megaripples in the subsurface of Louisiana: Imaged in petroleum industry seismic data, Earth and Planetary Science Letters, volume 570, 15 September 2021, 117063.

Kinsland Gary L., Rui Zhang, Rika Burr, and Stephen Klug, 2025, Chicxulub impact tsunami megaripples, imaged in 3D seismic data: Distribution and characteristics on the northern Gulf of Mexico shelf and slope, Marine Geology, 481, 107466.

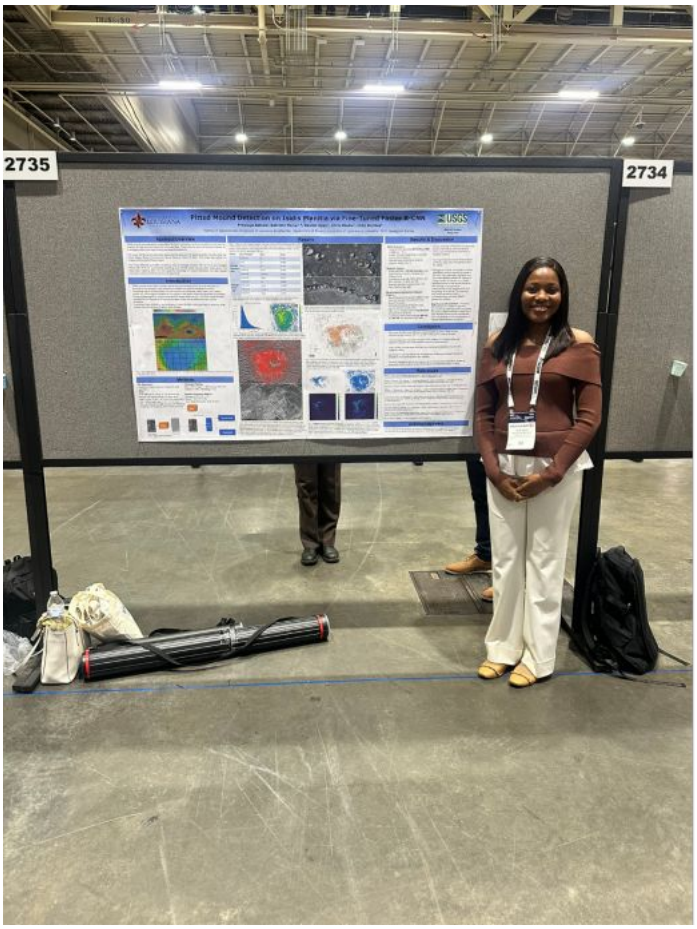
For several years, graduate students and I have been studying the Justiss LA Central IPNH No. 2 Conventional Well-Core from LaSalle Parish, donated by Justiss Petroleum and housed in Houston at the core repository. This core contains the complete K/Pg impact section. Early in 2025 I had no students studying this core. Then during the summer Ebenezer Sanny, from Ghana, and Amadeo Suazo, most recently from University of Kansas, and I agreed how we would study, mapping and elemental analysis, the hardgrounds, which occur in the core and bound the impact induced mass transport. Then things changed. Ebenezer became a U.S. citizen and....joined the army which wants him to complete his MS degree...but not here and not studying the core. He and they are aiming for an Army Corps of Engineers career. Amadeo and I have changed our approach to concentrate on mapping the two hardgrounds. I now need help in performing precise elemental analysis of constituents in the hardgrounds. If any of you have suggestions of someone who might want to be a co-author in such an endeavor, and has access to the appropriate equipment, please let me know at: glkinsland@louisiana.edu.

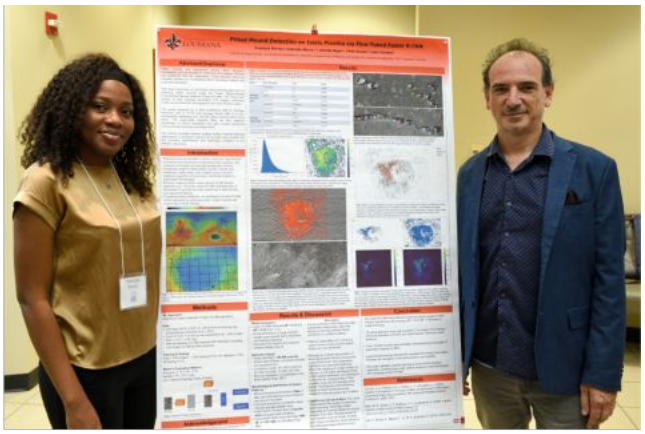
Photo credit: Carl Richter.

Student Updates

Precious Batubo, PhD

It's been an exciting and rewarding year for me! I had the opportunity to publish a research paper: and present my work at conferences. A major milestone was successfully defending my PhD thesis, and I'm excited to share that I will be graduating this semester. My research focuses on using machine learning to analyze geological features on Mars, and it has been incredibly fulfilling to share these results with the scientific community.





Left: Presenting my research at the AGU 2025 annual Fall meeting in (Dec, 2025). Right top: Presenting my research at the College of Sciences Research Poster Symposium (October, 2025). Right left: A picture with some committee members after successfully defending my PhD (March, 2026).

Joseph Kolb, Graduate

Joseph Kolb, a former environmental undergraduate student (May '25), Mr. Rodney B. Yantis, director of the Regional Application Center, and Dr. Courtney A. Poirier Chicola, postdoctoral researcher at the Regional Application Center, co-authored a paper recently published in the Journal of Earth Observation and Geospatial Application. This study, conducted at the ULL Regional Application Center, uses satellite and aerial imagery to examine how socio-economic and environmental factors contribute to higher heat exposure in lower-income areas. The relationship between household income, land surface temperature, and vegetation cover was analyzed to assess disproportionate heat burdens across Lafayette, Louisiana.

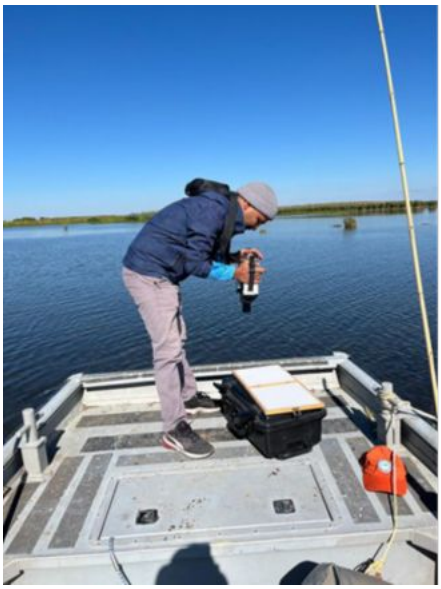
Average land surface temperatures for Census Bureau block groups within Lafayette's city limits were estimated using Landsat 8 thermal infrared imagery from the summer of 2023. NAIP aerial imagery from 2023 was then used to classify land cover at a 0.3-m resolution into vegetation and non-vegetation classes. After an accuracy assessment was performed to validate classification results, vegetation cover percentages were calculated for each block group.

These data were compared to 2018 Census income data, revealing that household income is negatively correlated with average land surface temperature and positively correlated with vegetation cover. These findings demonstrate how urban heat inequities can occur even in smaller cities like Lafayette and emphasize the importance of expanding green infrastructure in vulnerable communities to reduce heat-related risk and lower energy costs.

Joseph Kolb collects localized temperature readings from multiple surface types across downtown Lafayette to compare with satellite-derived land surface temperatures.

Nirmal Raila, EESC PhD Candidate

Since August 2024, I have been pursuing my Ph.D. in the School of Geosciences at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. My research focuses on bio-optical properties of complex coastal waters, particularly in the Barataria Estuary, where I conduct fieldwork to collect water quality and optical data. I also use high-resolution satellite data, such as PlanetScope, to study river–estuary interactions and environmental changes, including flooding events.



Left: Taking radiometric measurements using a handheld spectroradiometer at the Atchafalaya River Basin, Louisiana. Center: Coy A LeBlanc and Nirmal Raila EESC Ph.D. candidate collecting submerged aquatic vegetation samples during fieldwork in the Atchafalaya River Basin, Louisiana. Right: Measuring water-leaving remote sensing reflectance (Rrs) using radiometric observations at Lake Salvador, Louisiana.

Cole Phillips

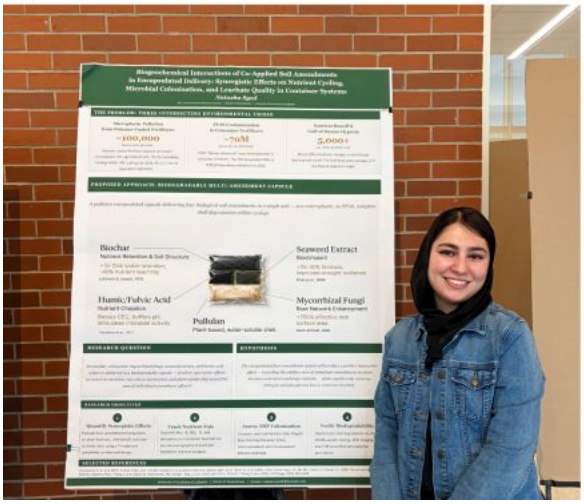
This semester I defended my thesis titled "Stratigraphic Distribution of Pleistocene Aves at Fossil Lake in Lake County, Oregon." I also collected fossils from a Louisiana bayou! Lastly, I was able to help establish a brand-new exhibit at the UL Lafayette Science Museum titled "Built to Bite: How Teeth Reveal Diet". After I graduate, I am traveling to Hanksville, Utah as the Field Manager and Principal Investigator for the Burpee Museum of Natural History. Afterwards, I will be working in Rockford, Illinois within their museum.

Geology students Myllah Brown, Caitlyn Mullis, Cole Phillips, and Alex Owens posing next to the exhibit their class put up in the UL Lafayette Science Museum.

Natasha Syed

In November 2025, I placed fourth in the Inn-eaux-vate 2025 Entrepreneurship Pitch Competition, hosted by the B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration at UL Lafayette, earning $2,500 for my Bio-Pod soil amendment capsule concept. In March 2026, Team Bio-Pod went on to win third place in the Graduate Division of the Entrepreneurship Pelican Cup, one of the largest statewide business plan competitions in Louisiana, representing UL Lafayette and earning $10,000 in prize funding.

I also received a Graduate Honors Award in March, which I am happy to share. Additionally, I presented my soil amendment capsule research poster at the Second Annual Geoscience Symposium. I was recently selected for a student spotlight feature for the University website redesign, and the article is scheduled to be published next week.



2nd Geosciences Research Symposium

Thank you to our presenters and everyone who attended our 2nd annual Geosciences Research Symposium! This year, more than 30 research posters were presented by undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. It was wonderful to hear the energy and excitement around everyone's research and the wide range of topics covered. A big thank you to Nadean and Rachel for handling all the logistics and to the ULGS students for volunteering their time to help with setup and take-down.

UL Lafayette Science Museum

Jennifer E. Hargrave – Director

This past year was a busy and rewarding one for the UL Lafayette Science Museum. We welcomed over 10,000 visitors, including school groups, families, and community members, and continued to grow our role as a hands-on learning space for the campus and in the region. Our educational programming remained a central focus, with offerings like our STEM Saturday program (sponsored by Halliburton), which provides interactive opportunities for visitors of all ages to engage with STEM fields from university faculty and students.

One of the highlights of the year was the opening of Built to Bite: How Teeth Reveal Diet, developed in collaboration with students. From initial research to exhibit design and installation, students were involved throughout the process, gaining valuable real-world experience while helping bring new content to our visitors. We also updated existing exhibits, continuing to enhance both the visitor experience and the museum's resources.

In addition to on-site visits, we worked with local schools to bring science to them with a variety of topics, strengthening our connections beyond campus and reaching new audiences. These efforts reflect the museum's mission of delivering hands-on STEM learning, supporting research, and maintaining collections for education and study.

Overall, it has been a year of steady growth and meaningful engagement, and we're excited to build on this momentum in the coming year with plans for summer programming and new exhibits.

The Lafayette Science Museum relies on the support of members, donors, corporate sponsors and partners, and volunteers to sustain our mission to provide informative and interactive experiences in STEM fields to the community, K-12 students, and University students, provide innovative research opportunities, and preserve current and future museum collections for use in exhibits, classrooms, and scientific research. Your donation helps to support our educational mission and outreach efforts as well as the creation of new exhibits. Thank you for your generosity and support of science education. You can support the museum by donating your time, purchasing an annual museum membership, or monetary donation. Please consider donating any size to the museum following this link.

Top: Museum visitors interacting with students from Dr. McClain's lab from the UL Department of Biology on STEM Saturday. Center: Museum exhibit created by students in GEOL 422 during the spring semester. Bottom: Third-grade students at Broadmoor Elementary participating in Dino Dig, an annual event. Students from the School of Geosciences spent the morning teaching the students about geology and fossils. Here, the students pretend to be paleontologists, as they dig modern bones from a sand pit.

UL Geosciences Society

During the Fall 25 - Spring 26 academic year, ULGS has participated in several academic outreach events, including STEM Saturday at the Lafayette Science Museum, where visitors could learn about different topics of science such as Biology or Geology, along with both Science Day and Preview day, events that high school students could attend at UL Lafayette to get a glimpse at different departments, including Geosciences. ULGS students also volunteered to assist with a DinoDig at Broadmoor Elementary, where third graders explored real fossils, learned and practiced fossil excavation, dinosaurs, and the overall geology of the Earth. ULGS has hosted a variety of social and fundraising activities, such as painting pumpkins for display outside of Hamilton Hall, decorating cookies for a bake sale fundraiser, bleaching T-shirts, and celebrating Halloween at Rock'n'Bowl, dubbed "Geoloween". Members have strengthened connections outside of the classroom through a camping trip and other group activities that promoted community and engagement within the club.

ULGS members and some of their fun activities!

2025-2026 in Pictures

Scholarships, Degrees & Awards in 2025-2026

Environmental Sciences Scholarship Recipients

Charles & Julia Walker Bourque Scholarship
Mason Venable

Dr. Gonzales/Dean Fletcher Scholarship
Kaylie Abel
Simone Brown
Seth Guidroz

Farmers & Merchants Bank Scholarship
Mael Missier
Heather Brown

Joel Fletcher Scholarship
Clinton Vincent
Heather Brown

LA Garden Club Federation Dist III Scholarship
Chloee Holt
Mason Venable
Diana Kreamer

Overton Cade Scholarship
Mael Missier
Chloe Boone

Dr. S. L. & Mrs. G.A. Solymosy Scholarship
Daniel Chautin
Diana Kreamer
Chloe Boone
Alayna Martin
Caleb Fumuso

ULL Collegiate FFA Scholarship
Alanna Gaspard

Charles Joseph Miller & Vivian Miller Scholarship
Xzayvion Gaye
Anna Guidry

J.C. Higginbotham Scholarship
Heather Brown
Clinton Vincent

Mary Sandoz Brown Scholarship
Meal Missier

Tommy Sander Scholarship
Francis O'Brien
Amelia Day
Spencer Vitello

South LA Mid-Winter Fair Association Scholarship
Cole Johnson
Will Dupuy
Alanna Gaspard
Heather Brown
Xzayvion Gaye
Anna Guidry
Bree Landry
Riley Trahan
Alayna Martin

Geology Sciences Scholarship Recipients

Chevron Gulf Oil Foundation Endowed Geology Scholarship
Ebeneezer Sanny

Marvin & Hazel Harvey Morris Endowed Scholarship
Peyton Madere

Bill Paine - LGS Endowed Scholarship
Cole Phillips
Myllah Brown
Ujjwal Kharel
Victoria Sanchez

Eberhardt E. Leschin Endowed Scholarship
Ebeneezer Sanny
Hamza Rehman
Peyton Madere

Nolan J. Badeaux Endowed Geology Scholarship
Cade Halbach
Scott Leedy

Walter James Rudick Endowed Scholarship
Ethan Hebert

Bill & Heather Finley Endowed Geology Scholarship
Shayla Jenkins

POGO Producing Company Endowed Scholarship
Hamza Rehman

Paul M. Toce Endowed Geology Scholarship
Drew Davis
Fallon Ryland
Grayson Gillies
Zoe Allgood

Joe Battle - LGS Memorial Geology Scholarship
Madison Lacombe
Masie Minnick
Shaun Gaspard

Enhancing Excellence in Subsurface Geology Non-Endowed Scholarship
Ujjwal Kharel
Hamza Rehman
Sophia Henry
Caitlyn Mullis

Degrees Granted in 2025-2026

Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences

Aucoin, Cameron	Brown, Heather	Day, Amelia
Dupuy, Will	Fabacher, Lawren	Franklin, Maria
Johnson, Cole	Landry, Bree	O'Brien, Francis
Theriot, Caleb	Trahan, Riley	Van Eaton, Andrew
Vincent, Clinton	Vitello, Spencer	

Bachelor of Science in Geology

Allgood, August (Zoe)	Dunn, Chaz	Gies, Cole
Halbach, Cade	Leedy, Scott	Minnick, Masie

Master of Science in Environmental Sciences

Emeghiebo, Chisom Moore, Madeline Okunbor, Faith

Master of Science in Geology

Brown, Myllah Duhon, Anthony Phillips, Cole Bradley Watson, Karis

Doctor of Philosophy in Earth and Energy Sciences

Dr Hoque, S M Shamsul Dr Babineaux, Gracie Dr Batubo, Precious

Awards

- Myllah Brown, Anna-Sophia Henry, Ashley Mindt, Caitlyn Mullis, Amadeo Suazo - First Place place at the 2026 North American Semifinals Imperial Barrel Award (IBA).
- Joyeeta Chakma and Carl Richter - 2026 GCAGS/GCSSEPM Gordon I. Atwater Best Poster Presentation Award (2nd Place).
- Caitlin DeNux – Sustainable Development Research Award.
- Jennifer Hargrave - Eminent Faculty, Leadership Service Award.
- Bree Landry – Completed the Spring 2026 ASRE Environmental Science Pathway of Excellence.
- Bree Landry - Received the 2026 Leaf Award in Education.
- Bree Landry – 2025 Sustainable Development Research Award: Tracking Troubled Waters: Community-Based Field Research with the AREN AquaROVER.
- Izamary Lara - Advance Leaf Provost Award, 2026.
- Izamary Lara - Advance Leaf Award for Exceptional Performance in Dissemination, 2026.
- Izamary Lara - Advance Leaf Award in Physical Sciences, 2026.
- Brian Lock - Don Boyd Medal at the GCAGS/GCSSEPM awards ceremony at GeoGulf 2026 in Baton Rouge.
- Madeline Moore - Spring 2026 UL Alumni Association Outstanding Master's Graduate Award Finalist.
- Dr. Courtney Poirier Chicola – 2025 Sustainable Development Research Award: Discovering the Early-Time Photodegradation Mechanisms of Emerging Contaminants in Marine Ecosystems.
- Durga Poudel - Grand Marshal at Spring 2026 Commencement.
- Natasha Syed and Mansu Acharya are two-thirds of team Bio-Pod that won $10,000 in the Pelican Cup, the premier collegiate entrepreneurship challenge in Louisiana.
- Jorge Villa – 2025 GeoCUR Early Career Undergraduate Mentor Award, Geosciences Division of the Council on Undergraduate Research.
- Jorge Villa - Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor Award, College of Sciences (Office of the Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Development).
- Clinton Vincent, Advance Leaf Award in Life Sciences, 2026.

Left: IBA team receiving their first place award. Right: Jorge Villa receiving his Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor Award.

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