

## **Report to Council; September 2006**

The annual report provides a summary of the past year's accomplishments and the coming year's initiatives, summarized for the most part under the topical headings of the Section's Strategic Plan.

### **Summary, The State of The Section:**

In 1990, the North-Central Section Management Board initiated a long-range planning effort to enhance meeting quality and marketing, which has been successful. Since 1990, meeting attendance has averaged over 600 (this includes joint-meeting attendance figures) and because of this, and the fiscal prudence of local committees, revenues from meetings usually have increased. Our meeting in Akron in 2006 had 546 attendees. Our meeting schedule is confirmed through 2009, including a joint meeting with the South-Central Section in Lawrence, Kansas in 2007, a 2008 section meeting in Evansville, Indiana, and a 2009 meeting in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

The Section had a 2005-2006 fiscal-year-end balance of \$112,218. This balance is a significant increase over 2005, which was in turn a significant increase over 2004, and is due in large part to the excellent organizing and fiscal prudence of our Minneapolis 2005 and Akron 2006 organizing committees. With only one exception, the end-of-year balances of the Section have been increasing since December 2000. The 2006 balance exceeded the Management Board's target: to have assets approximately equal to the cost of one typical-sized annual meeting plus operating costs, to provide stability and ensure continuity of Section activities. For perspective, the dues income for the Section is slightly less than the general operating costs of the Section, hence, to support other programs, the Section must continue to ensure income from the Scientific Meetings Program. As the financial state of the Section has stabilized, the Board has dedicated its fiscal resources to student support programs and to other GSA strategic initiatives, including contributions to the GSA Foundation.

The Section has increased maximum Student Paper Awards from \$400 in 1990 to \$1,000 per meeting since 1999. Student Travel Grants to meetings have been increased from \$0 in 1990 to about \$10,100 in 2005 (cost shared with GSA Foundation). Included in 2005-2006 was approximately \$5,000 for the Section's Student Travel Grant Program for the Annual Meeting. In 1993, the Section initiated a Research Grants Program for undergraduate student associates; five grants totaling \$1,500 were awarded in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. During 2005-2006, expenditures for student support programs were more than 90% of all expenditures (exclusive of meeting costs). In 2006-2007, the Section will continue these student programs.

The Board made an initial pledge and payment of \$2,000 in 1996 to the NC Section Endowment Fund of the GSA Foundation (this Fund was referred to as the Second Century Fund in the previous NC report to council) with funds taken from the Section treasury, and further donations of \$2,000 per year since then if our finances allowed a donation. The Board also approved that a continuing annual contribution to the SCF

would be considered at each Board meeting, after review of the budget and financial status of the Section. The funds from this section endowment fund are intended for use in supplying travel grants. Because of the need to increase the financial stability of the section, however, payments were not made over a number of years. However, \$2,000 was contributed in September of 2005, and, because of the increase in financial stability of the section following the success of the Akron meeting, \$5,000 was contributed in July of 2006.

### **Scientific Meetings Program:**

**2005:** The 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held on 24-25 March 2005 in Minneapolis, MN, hosted by the Minnesota Geological Survey, in conjunction with the Department of Geology and Geophysics of the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Ground Water Association. Approximately 436 papers (244 talks, 191 posters, 1 keynote lecture) were presented. Nine field trips were held. Meeting attendance was 906.

**2006:** The 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held on 20-21 April 2006 in Akron, OH, hosted by the Department of Geology and the Office for Terrestrial Records of Environmental Change of University of Akron, in conjunction with the Ohio Geological Survey and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Approximately 340 papers (224 talks, 115 posters, plus 1 keynote lecture) were presented. Seven field trips were held, with 91 paid field-trip attendees. Meeting attendance was 546.

### **Professional Development/Awards/Membership and Employment Services:**

The Section's primary Awards and Professional Development Programs are targeted to increase student involvement. Student attendance at Section meetings continues to be substantial, averaging 30% to 40% the last few years.

In 2006, the Section provided \$1,000 for 7 Outstanding Student Paper/Poster awards at the North-Central Section meeting. With greater fiscal stability, the Section continued funding for student travel grants of \$10,100 in 2005 (cost shared with GSA Foundation). No grants were offered prior to 1991. In 1996, the Section initiated a Student Travel Grant Program for the Annual Meeting, and in 2005 allocated an additional \$5,000 for this program. Also, the Section has a Research Grants Program for undergraduate student members (see below).

The Section has solicited exhibitors from the private sector. Roy Shlemon Mentors Programs and John Mann Mentors in Applied Hydrogeology Programs were held in 2005 and 2006 for students. These programs were provided through GSA headquarters. GSA Campus Representatives from the Section met for discussion of GSA business.

### **Research Grants Program:**

The Section initiated a competitive Research Grants Program for undergraduate student associates in 1993. Grant application forms and procedures were developed and have been refined over time. The maximum amount of an individual grant is limited to \$300. The 2006 grants will be awarded after this report is circulated to Council and will be reported to Council in the 2007 report. In the 2005-2006 fiscal year, five grants were awarded for \$1,500. Since 1993, 85 grants have been awarded to students for a total of over \$26,400.

### **GeoScience Education:**

The Section initiated special GeoScience Education sessions at its 1990 meeting. These have now become a standard part of meeting planning. Some costs are generally underwritten by the Section, with reduced or nominal registration for all K-12 teachers. A member of the GSA GeoScience Education Committee is included as an ex-officio member of the Management Board. The success and level of effort of these programs are dependent upon the local committee.

### **Applied and Environmental GeoScience Programs:**

The Section continues to pursue greater involvement from professionals in the private sector in environmental geology, engineering geology/geotechnical engineering, and hydrogeological consulting. The Section initiated this with a highly successful effort at the 1991 meeting. Special sessions for, and by, consultants have become part of standard planning for all meetings. The 2006 meeting included a number of sessions with a focus on applied geology. These included the following sessions: Monitoring Environmental Properties of Large Lakes; Technology for Water Resource Management; Fractures in Glacial Till; Dam Removals as a Tool for River Restoration; Fate and Transport of Nitrate in Hydrologic Systems of Agricultural Watersheds; Lakes and Rivers: Environmental Concerns; Slope Stability Considerations in the Appalachian Region: Investigation, Design, and Remediation; and Solid Waste Disposal and Geology.

With such involvement private firms have also provided various donations to support the meetings and some consulting/applied firms or agencies are repeat exhibitors.

### **Publications Program:**

The Section continues to produce and market its Field Trip Guides to a broader audience than meeting participants. The geological guidebook for the 2005 Minneapolis meeting was published and is available from the Minnesota Geological Survey; two guidebooks published specifically for the 2006 Akron meeting are available from the Ohio Geological Survey.

### **Cooperation with Other Professional Societies:**

The Section continues to foster cooperation with other societies by providing opportunities for joint meetings and sponsorship opportunities. Societies sponsoring

sessions and/or having programs and luncheons at the Section meeting in 2006 included: the North-Central Section of the Paleontological Society who met jointly with the Great Lakes Section of the Society for Sedimentary Geology; the Central Section of NAGT; and the Association for Women Geoscientists.

### **Long-Range Planning and Coordination:**

As a result of its long-range planning the Section has continued to review and implement better marketing strategies for its meeting and activities; has tried to increase attendance at its meetings, has stabilized financially, and has continued to support several student programs. The meeting schedule is now planned through 2009. The confirmed schedule is

- 2007: Combined with the South-Central Section; hosted by the University of Kansas and the Kansas Geological Survey, Lawrence, Kansas
- 2008: University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Indiana
- 2009: Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan

The section responded to one of the major suggestions made in the Ad Hoc Committee on Sections Report of March 2005 by setting up a new section ad-hoc-committee. The charge of the committee, as approved by the Management Board of the North-Central Section on 11 April of 2006 was to: "advise and aid the local committee in organizing the scientific and technical sessions to be held at the section meeting." This committee, called the Program Advisory Board had its first meeting on 21 April 2006 at the Section meeting at the University of Akron. Subsequent work of the committee was to be carried on primarily via e-mail.

Members of the Akron local committee also met with future North-Central Section meeting organizers on the evening of the last day of the Akron meeting.

Members of the Akron-meeting local committee produced a number of reports intended to summarize the meeting and to provide guidance for future meeting organizers. These included a final Meeting Report, a Field-Trip Report, and a Report on Judging of Student Presentations.

Four section representatives attended the Section-Meetings Training Session held in Boulder on 18 August 2006, including two representatives of the 2008 meeting, one representative of the 2007 meeting, and one representative of the 2009 meeting.

### **North-Central Section Website:**

Duane Mohlman, at the Nebraska Conservation and Survey Division (CSD), has continued to be the webmaster of the North-Central Section Website. Thanks are due to him and the Nebraska Geological Survey. Our website has been up and running at the CSD website for several years. The site is at: <http://ncgsa.unl.edu/>.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Executive Secretary, North-Central Section