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*in this issue*

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**Greetings from Athens**

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Faculty Updates

Graduate Research

Notes from Alumni

Support the Department

**THIS YEAR HAS BEEN A VERY GOOD YEAR** for the department.

Undergraduate enrollment continues to grow and latest estimates range from 65 to 85 geology majors. This has led to crowded classrooms and the need to offer GEOL 3010, Earth Materials, the initial core course, in both semesters. A second major development was the generation of more than \$1,000,000 in external funding by Geology faculty during the last fiscal year, which made Geology one of the better-funded research programs in Franklin College. We also were authorized to search for an assistant professor specializing in the physics or chemistry of hydrologic processes, a field that has numerous applications in Georgia and offers many employment opportunities for graduate students. Newmont Mining Corporation made a very generous donation to the department for the support of graduate students and for the creation of scholarships for undergraduates to attend Field School. Our new Alumni Advisory Board acted as an effective advocate for the new faculty position, and helped to facilitate the donation from Newmont. Finally, we were fortunate this spring to have a distinguished visiting professor, Jere Lipps, professor of integrative biology at the University of California, Berkeley, visit campus. Jere specializes in the evolutionary biology of marine animals and protists and was able to teach two courses; one upper level course in marine geology (with an emphasis on climate change) and one on his research specialty.

Our buildings continue to undergo renovation with a new focus on the Hydrothermal Lab, where an outside contractor reinforced the structure and Physical Plant repaired the interior. We hope to contract with Physical Plant to provide renovated office space within this building for Alberto Patiño Douce and other faculty in the coming year. We have yet to receive our budget for the coming year, but expect it to be flat or cut by some small amount in the range

of 1-10%, owing to the continued stress on the state budget.

Given the difficulty of obtaining research grants from national and state sources, we are extremely grateful to our alumni who continue to support our students through donations to the Allard Award, the Berg Scholarship, the Wheeler-Watts scholarship, the Levy award as well as the general account for Geology. The primary use of all these funds is to support graduate and undergraduate research as well as student travel to scientific meetings. This year with the budget cuts, the alumni funds have been particularly important and have allowed us to support student travel to meetings of the Geological Society of America, the Georgia Geological Society and more specialized meetings. We are thankful for your past donations and hope that you will continue to support the department in the future. Please stop by the department when you are in Athens and visit our website ([www.gly.uga.edu](http://www.gly.uga.edu)). News events and weekly seminar schedules are also posted there.

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