

APGO Education Foundation Makes a Difference from Mars and Australia to Museums and PhDs

By Kristin Hanson, P.Geo., Director

APGO Education Foundation scholarships have made a big difference in launching the careers of some of our recipients. The scholarship Selection Committee is always impressed with the qualifications of applicants, so we checked in to find out what our 2016 to 2018 scholarship recipients were up to today. We are pleased to share the accomplishments of these geoscientists so far. They are still early in their careers, but if they represent the future of geoscience, we are certain that the future is bright.

2016 Recipients: Matthew DeGasperis (Western), Erin Gibbons (McMaster) and Xueya Lu (UofT)

Matthew is a Geologist at 3DGeo Solution with exploration experience on diamond drill programs. Matthew told us that the scholarship support was greatly beneficial during the busiest year of university and allowed him to focus on his honours thesis. He says, *“with the network I developed from the Foundation ... I expect being a scholarship recipient to pay further dividends in the long term to my career success.”*

Erin is a PhD student in Earth and Planetary Science at McGill U; helping guide the search for life on Mars as a science collaborator to the NASA Mars mission. Erin told us she felt honored to have her hard work and dedication recognized by the scholarship committee. She says, *“the award provided me with a renewed sense of conviction that I was on the right professional path and helped me develop the confidence I needed to apply to graduate school. I am now pursuing my dream.”*

Xueya is a PhD student in Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at UBC, optimizing CO₂ sequestration using mine waste. Xueya told us she valued the industry connections and insights she gained from being a scholarship recipient, but mostly she was very honoured to receive the recognition. She says, *“regardless of how much I was helped financially it was more of that recognition that pushes me further in my career.”*

2017 Recipients: Pamela Iraheta Muniz (Carleton), Adrian Oberland (Laurentian)

Pamela is a Mineralogy Technician for the Canadian Museum of Nature and is focusing on an extremely rare mineral collection from Mont Saint-Hilaire. She is also working toward a Project Management Certificate at Algonquin College. Pamela told us she was extremely grateful for the scholarship. She says, *“it took away my financial worries and allowed me to fully apply myself to my Earth Science studies.”*

Adrian is an exploration geologist working on iron ore projects in Western Australia for Rio Tinto. He is enjoying the work and has been lucky to miss most of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns living and working in Australia. Adrian told us that the opportunity with Rio Tinto came through a connection made at the 2017 Scholarship reception. He says, *“the scholarship played a big role in helping me start my career.”*

2018 Recipients: Derek Leung (Laurentian), Joachim de Fourestier (Carleton)

Derek recently finished a Master of Geoscience at the University of Edinburgh on the damage evolution of curling stones and is starting a PhD in mineral deposits and Precambrian Geology at Laurentian U. Derek told us that the scholarship afforded him the opportunity to focus on his honours thesis, which led to an opportunity to pursue his master's in the UK where he says, *“I formed international networks and was exposed to cutting-edge, synchrotron-based geoscience research.”*

Joachim is working with Fibics Inc developing applications for Focused Ion Beam microscopy and specializes in automated high-resolution correlative imaging. He is also involved in scientific research in a variety of fields including geology and materials science. Joachim told us he is sincerely grateful for the scholarship because it helped him by reducing financial stress. He says, it also provided *“recognition for hard work”* and allowed him to *“focus on my geosciences related endeavours with confidence.”*

We hope you are as proud as we are of these scholarship recipients.

Do you know an internationally trained geoscientist working to satisfy requirements for registration as a P.Geo. in Ontario? The Foundation can help by providing bursaries to help cover costs such as testing and coursework needed to fulfil requirements for registration. Details on both our bursary and scholarship programs are available on the Foundation website www.apgoedfoundation.ca.

Want to help build the future of geoscience? Charitable donations can be made through www.apgoedfoundation.ca/donations; tax receipts will be provided. Thank you to our donors who make it possible for the Foundation to continue to support the future of geoscience.