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## AGI Collaborates with Experts on New "Leadership in Diversity" Initiative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The American Geosciences Institute (AGI) is excited to announce its participation in the National Science Foundation's Geoscience Opportunities for Leadership in Diversity (GOLD) program. Five projects were funded through the GOLD solicitation, which "seeks to cultivate a new generation of leaders within the geosciences research and education communities who have the passion, the knowledge, the skills, and the tools to catalyze high-impact efforts to broaden participation of traditionally underrepresented minorities in the geosciences education pipeline and workforce."

AGI's Workforce Development Specialist Heather Houlton is a co-principal investigator (co-PI) for the "Geoscience Diversity Experiential Simulations" (GeoDES) project, led by Jason Chen (PI) at the College of William & Mary, which will train 30 faculty and administrators through a 3-day intensive workshop to proactively seek opportunities to make structural changes in their institutions. The project will design interactive virtual simulations, which will teach participants how to respond to discrimination in academic and workplace settings. To generate authentic examples, interview data with geoscientists who have faced discrimination in academia will be integrated into the simulations.

As a collaborative leader for the geosciences, AGI would like to acknowledge the four other GOLD projects:

- Robert Kirsch (PI) at Arizona State University describes the project "Sparks for Change," which focuses on improving retention of underrepresented faculty and enhancing departmental culture towards broadening participation. Small groups comprised of junior faculty from underrepresented groups, senior faculty in the same department, and experienced diversity experts will be utilized to ignite department-level change. The grant is centered on a 3-day workshop that will build a network of scholars, provide participants with leadership skills, and support the development of group plans for enacting change.
- "Active Societal Participation In Research and Education" (ASPIRE), led by Corey Garza (PI) at California State University, Monterey Bay, will use the Mobile Working Group (MWG) model, in conjunction with place-based science, to move geoscientists outside of the "ivory tower" and into the community. Led by geoscientists with one foot in the academy and the other in the community, each MWG will focus on a single issue linked to a single community. ASPIRE supports multiple MWGs working across the geographic, ethnographic and "in practice" community spaces, as well as within geoscience research and application.
- The "FIELD" (Fieldwork Inspiring Expanded Leadership for Diversity) project, led by PI Darrin Pagnac at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, will make field activity in the geosciences more accessible and inclusive by equipping field leaders with perspectives and skills to recognize and reduce common barriers in field settings. The project team will convene an immersive leadership development institute for field scientists to engage in practical skills training (e.g., bystander intervention, managing cross-cultural relationships) and collaboratively develop new approaches that can be implemented in their own field experiences. They hope in the long term to reduce the exclusionary nature of field culture.
- The goal of "Hearts of GOLD" is to help leaders in the geosciences become champions for diversity. Grady Dixon, the Principal Investigator at Fort Hays State University, describes that many well-established geoscientists have histories of

promoting and mentoring colleagues and students from underrepresented groups, but they are rarely outspoken about this practice. This project will bring together those giants in the field in an effort to teach them the tools and skills needed to become champions for diversity in the greater interest of the geosciences.

To learn more information about the GOLD program and each of the projects, contact Brandon Jones, Program Director - Education & Diversity, National Science Foundation, GEO/OAD at [mbjones@nsf.gov](mailto:mbjones@nsf.gov).

### **About the American Geosciences Institute**

The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

*The American Geosciences Institute represents and serves the geoscience community by providing collaborative leadership and information to connect Earth, science, and people.*

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