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AGI Announces GeoConnection Webinar:

A Secure Future for Energy, Environment and Hazard Mitigation: Retaining students through the Student-to-Professional Continuum in the Geosciences.

April 18, 2011: 2:00 - 3:00 pm (US EDT)

Alexandria, VA – The geoscience profession is facing critical human resource issues as a result of its aging workforce and low number of new graduates entering core geoscience occupations. Since the mid-1990's the geoscience degree completion rates have hovered near 12 percent for undergraduates and 20 percent for graduate students. Furthermore, data from the National Science Foundation's 2006 statistical databases indicates that only 30 percent of geoscience graduates work in core geoscience occupations. The majority of the geoscience workforce will be retiring over the next decade and data from federal sources, professional societies, and industry indicate this growing imbalance in the profession's age demographics. Over the past three years, the age demographics for geoscientists in academia and the federal government indicate an acceleration in the loss of senior geoscientists from the profession.

Because of increasing pressure to address issues such as energy supply, climate and other environmental concerns, and as seen with the Japan disaster, hazard mitigation, it is estimated that there will be 23 percent increase in geoscience jobs over the next decade on top of a wave of nearly 50 percent of existing geoscientists retiring during the same time. The U.S. is beginning to see the loss of fundamental technical skills in the geoscience workforce, both within academia and in the applied sectors.

Across all fields, future geoscientists will need solid fundamental skills in both geoscience and mathematics that can be applied to many geoscience challenges including water resources, energy, minerals, hazards and climate issues. Given the current trends, many core and specialty geoscience sub-disciplines that are also economically critical are at risk. Without investment in the retention of geoscience university students and the successful transition of geoscience graduates into core geoscience occupations, the sustainability of U.S. geoscience academic infrastructure and pursuit of basic geoscience research is at risk.

To discuss these issues and how to address them, AGI is hosting a free, live web-cast roundtable webinar. It will commence with a brief presentation that highlights these main issues and will be followed by Skype chat-based discussion groups on the topics of retention of currently enrolled geoscience students, and transition of graduates into geoscience occupations. We especially encourage geoscience students and early-career geoscientists to participate in this webinar. For more information and to register go to AGI's GeoWebinars page <http://www.agiweb.org/workforce/webinars.html>.

Roundtable moderators will present their discussion group summaries at the end of the roundtable session. If you would like to serve as a roundtable moderator, please contact Leila Gonzales at img@agiweb.

Roundtable Co-sponsors:

YES Network USA National Chapter, Soil Science Society of America

If your organization would like to co-sponsor this event, please contact Leila Gonzales at img@agiweb.org. Sponsoring organizations promote this event to their membership and will be acknowledged in the above list and during the webinar.

This webinar has been submitted to the Obama Administration's "Roundtables with Young Americans" initiative, and we have also requested that a person from the Administration be in attendance during this session.

As part of this initiative we will be submitting the names and contact information for all participants who would like to be listed as attendees for the final report that is submitted to the Administration's Youth Team. The Youth Team will read the results, and will be in touch with all the participants after the roundtable with White House conference calls, web chats, and other opportunities to talk with members of the Obama Administration on a number of important issues.

*Note: If you would like to have your contact information included in the final report submitted to the Obama Administration's Youth Team, please make sure to fill in the name, address, and email fields on the registration page.

For more information on the Obama Administration's roundtable initiative, visit:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/03/09/president-obama-announces-100-youth-roundtables?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=youth .

The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 49 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 120,000 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.

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