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Recent Earth and Space Science PhDs Finding Employment

ALEXANDRIA, VA – The American Geological Institute (AGI), in conjunction with the American Geophysical Union (AGU), released an analysis of employment patterns and demographics of 2003 PhD recipients in the earth and space sciences.

Results from the survey show that employment opportunities remain stable for geoscientists going into the workforce, with 87 percent of respondents finding work directly related to their field. Starting salaries also remained steady or increased slightly in 2003, compared to recent years. Graduates accepting postdoctoral positions slightly increased as did the number of women earning PhDs in 2003.

This survey also examines the demographics of recent doctoral recipients, as well as their perception of the job market and the ease of getting positions in industry, government, academia and the non-profit sector. The analysis also points to changes in research areas, indicating an increasing trend towards environment-related geoscience fields, such as oceanography, while the number of PhDs awarded in solid Earth geology slightly declined.

The earth and space science PhD survey shows some important issues about the interaction of students and advisors, the function of universities in providing support for career development, and the role of networking in finding employment. The survey was conducted by the Statistical Research Center of the American Institute of Physics, AGI and AGU, who have been collecting this data since 1998.

A copy of this report is available online at <http://www.agiweb.org/career/phdreport03.pdf>.

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The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 43 scientific and professional associations that represent 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 our 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 and interaction with the environment. More information about AGI can be found at <http://www.agiweb.org>.