



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

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Summer Recap

Our last departmental newsletter came out in April, just as we were heading into the spring and summer months. As usual, May began with many of our field schools, and I'm very pleased to report that they were once again very well received by our students. Just as importantly, they concluded without any reported injuries or other unfortunate incidents. My thanks to everyone who put so much work into making these important field experiences possible.

The remainder of May and June was relatively quiet from a departmental perspective, as faculty, staff and students settled into their summer research, fieldwork and other activities. One particularly important development came on July 1, when Dr. Brian Smerdon joined EAS as an Assistant Professor. We are delighted to welcome Brian to the department. Brian brings extensive expertise in hydrogeology and groundwater systems, and we are very pleased to have him as part of EAS. I hope everyone will take the opportunity to welcome him as the new academic year gets underway.

July was otherwise fairly quiet within the department, although the week of July 6 provided an excellent opportunity for me and colleagues from the Faculty of Science (Development) to reconnect with a number of our alumni in Calgary during Stampede week. We met with alumni representing a remarkable range of generations and careers, including Jesse Schoengut, Greg Baniuk, Dave Bechtel, Sean Bond, Don Hoyda, Tako Koning, Andre Koladich and Bill Thompson. These meetings are valuable for reasons that go well beyond fundraising. Our principal objective is to strengthen relationships between EAS and its alumni, and to build connections with the very substantial geoscience and professional network that exists in Calgary. Strong relationships create opportunities for our students and programs, provide connections with industry and the broader community, and, when future philanthropic priorities appear, give us access to potential donors, and people who can introduce the department to much wider support networks. It was an enjoyable and very productive few days.

Speaking of alumni, I had a wonderful reminder yesterday of just how enduring some of these departmental connections can be. Alumna, Astrid Arts, who completed both her BSc and MSc in our program in the 1990s, sent me a small package of photographs from a 1995 field trip to the McMurray Formation. Astrid and I were both on that trip, which was led by another EAS alumnus, Mike Ranger, who completed his PhD in the department only shortly before. The photograph below captures some of that trip. Mike is the tall fellow in the red jacket. It was my first visit to the oil sands and, looking back, a remarkably formative experience in my own career. We visited spectacular outcrops of the McMurray Formation and were given an extraordinary tour of the mine, including the pits, exposed faces, draglines and conveyor systems, much of which bears little resemblance to mining operations today. In the distant background of the photograph you can even see part of the processing plant, which we also toured from beginning (oil sand in) to end (oil out).

The timing was particularly important for me. The following year I began my MSc with George Pemberton, working on modern tidal environments at Willapa Bay, Washington. That research had natural connections to the Cretaceous tidal deposits of the McMurray Formation, and Mike and

I soon began what has become a collaboration lasting now for 30 years. Fittingly, in the second week of September this year, Mike and I will once again be in the field together, leading a field seminar focused on understanding and teaching the McMurray Formation.

Receiving Astrid's photographs brought back a lot of very good memories. That 1995 trip was the beginning of three decades of learning about the McMurray Formation for me, but it was also a reminder of something equally important about university life: the people we meet as students and colleagues can remain part of our professional and personal lives for decades. I am still in touch with almost everyone from that trip.

August has likewise been relatively quiet, although that is rapidly changing. We now find ourselves staring at the beginning of another academic year, with classes starting on Tuesday, September 1, which seems extraordinarily early. I teach EAS 364 on Wednesday. Working on my lecture and outline as you read this.

I hope everyone has had a productive and enjoyable summer, and I look forward to seeing the department come back to life over the next few weeks.



1995 McMurray Formation field trip, standing in front of the Syncrude North Mine near Fort McMurray, Alberta. Back row, from left: Piotr (surname forgotten); Astrid Arts (B.Sc. 1995, M.Sc. 1999); Dan Krpan (B.Sc. 1995); Dr. Mike Ranger (centre, red coat; Ph.D. 1994); Sean Bond (third from right; B.Sc. 1997); Ph.D. candidate Kevin Brett (second from right); and Ph.D. candidate Yaojun Han (right). Front row, from left: Murray Gingras (B.Sc. 1995, Ph.D. 1999); Jason Montpetit (M.Sc. 1998); and Demian Robbins (M.Sc. 1995).

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Welcome Back Event

When: Friday Sept 18 | 5-7pm

Where: Tory 3-36

Come celebrate the new academic year with fellow students, faculty, and staff. Food provided.

If possible, please bring your own plate, and feel free to bring a board game!

2nd year students and up



Grad Pantry

The Grad Pantry provides food staples for graduate students in need. The pantry is generously stocked by our EAS staff and faculty, and includes items such as canned goods, dry foods, produce, meat, and more.

The Grad Pantry is located in the Grad Lounge (ESB 3-01A).



WELLNESS COMMITTEE CONT'D...

Personal Hygiene Lockers

Lockers 301 and 321 on the 3rd floor of ESB contain personal hygiene items, such as toothbrushes/toothpaste, dental floss, deodorant, soap, and more.

These items have been generously donated by EAS staff and faculty, and are intended to be used by graduate students.

Locker combinations can be found on the EAS Intranet site, or by scanning the QR code located on the locker door.

Please take what you need!



Welcome Walk

Join us for a lunchtime walk around campus on **Thursday Sept 10th.**

We will be meeting in front of the main office (ESB 1-26) at 12:05pm.

Weekly Yoga

Did you know that EAS provides a lunchtime self-guided yoga practice each week?

Where: ESB 2-18

When: Wednesdays from 12:05-12:50pm

Mats provided, no experience required, and no special clothing needed.

Contact Sarah Woodland, at swoodlan@ualberta.ca for more information.



Intermediate First Aid - Level C CPR & AED

In this two-day BLENDED learning course, students will learn to recognize and provide interventions for life-threatening emergencies until medical aid arrives. Topics include: shock and unconsciousness, severe bleeding, head & spinal injuries, major medical conditions, AED training and certification, head and spinal injuries, and fractures of the upper and lower limbs. This course includes Level C CPR training and certification (Adult, Child, Infant, and 2-rescuer resuscitation) and AED training and certification.

RECERTIFICATION is available. The blended learning can be combined with recertification training as long as the certificate is approved in Alberta and still valid. Individuals completing the recertification must attend the Day 2 in person training.

Available dates: Oct 19 & Oct 22, 7:45am - 4:15pm
Where: BSB CW410

[Pre-register Now!](#)



Refresh Your Emergency Response Plans

With the start of the semester, many new group members will be coming onto campus. Hold a tabletop discussion on your emergency response plans to remind the team of key processes for your area.

- Request an updated [Emergency Response Plan](#) from emergency Management (replaces the UAP documents)
- Hold a table top discussion on an emergency of your choosing! Try out this [tabletop discussion tool](#) to support your conversations

Have
you
met...



Would you like to introduce yourself to the department? Or maybe there is someone you'd like to recommend? Contact Sasha Wilson (sawilson@ualberta.ca) for more information.

APEGA: Volunteer Call

Looking to share your passion for geosciences with young people? Not a geoscientist and want to meet new people and make an event a huge success? Like free food/shirts? The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA) is partnering with organizations across the province on their annual [Rock and Fossil Clinic](#) being held **Saturday Oct 3rd**. The Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences is hosting its own activities and those organized by the Alberta Geological Survey and the Edmonton Geological Society.



There are many [volunteer opportunities](#), ranging from rock or fossil identifiers, museum guides, to volunteer sign-in and support, to name a few. Please take a look at the volunteer opportunities and use [this form](#) to join the team that will make this a spectacular event. Please share this message with other UAlberta colleagues and students who may be interested in volunteering. Forms are due by the end of the day **Friday Sept 18th**. Early form submission is greatly appreciated.

Feel free to email me (gbradley@ualberta.ca) if you have any questions that aren't answered above or in the forms!

Gavin Bradley, event organizer



ATLAS Elections

Looking to get involved in the department? ATLAS, the EAS graduate student group elections will begin soon! It is a great way to get involved, meet new people and bolster your CV. The nomination period will start on **September 7th**, with the voting beginning on **September 14th**.

ATLAS Elections

- Boost your CV
- Meet new people in EAS
- Help make the 2026/2027 school year one to remember

Call for Nominations Sept 7th

Elections Start Sept 14th

FIND MORE INFO ON ROLES AND ATLAS @ [ATLASUALBERTA.COM](https://atlasualberta.com)

Grace Anne Stewart Initiative Anniversary Gathering

GRACE ANNE STEWART INITIATIVE ANNIVERSARY GATHERING



OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER



FRANCES J. HEIN
FORMER GEOLOGY
ADVISOR AT ALBERTA
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
PRESENTING:
WOMEN GEOSCIENTISTS IN
CANADA & BEYOND

**RSVP TO SAVE
YOUR SPOT!**



FRIDAY
OCT 2, 2026

12:00-4:30 PM

TORY 3-36
U OF A

**Reception to
follow**

Join us in celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Grace Anne Stewart Initiative at the University of Alberta! All students, staff, and faculty members are invited for a conversation with GASI's founding members, an afternoon of discussion on the future of EDI in the geosciences, and a chance to gather together and celebrate how far we've come.

12:00-1:00 - KEYNOTE BY DR. FRANCES HEIN

1:00-2:00 - LUNCH

2:00-3:30 - PANEL DISCUSSION WITH FOUNDING MEMBERS

3:45-5:00 - RECEPTION AT THE FACULTY CLUB

[RSVP here](#)

POLAR International Partnership Research Development Program

Description: Projects seeking funds under the POLAR International Partnership Research Development program must meet at least one of the three pillars.

RAS Full Application Deadline: September 1, 2026

Sponsor Deadline: September 9, 2026

Mitacs: Globalink Research Award

Description: The Mitacs Globalink Research Award (GRA) program supports research collaborations between Canada and eligible countries and regions through intern(s) international mobility.

RAS Full Application Deadline: 5 business days prior to sponsor due date

Sponsor Deadline: 12-16 weeks prior to project start date

University of Alberta and NTU: Seed Grant Program

Description: The intent of this competitive Seed Grant is to encourage and catalyze international collaborations between NTU and UA in new and innovative research directions that lead to larger-scale and longer-term partnerships funded by external sources. The theme of the Seed Grant is Energy transitions.

RAS Full Application Deadline: N/A

Sponsor Deadline: October 9, 2026

Call for Submissions

If you would like to submit an event, or information to be included in next month's issue, please email s.hemrick@ualberta.ca by 12pm (noon) on **September 30, 2026**.



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