



AAPG

DISCOVER

The Latin America Region Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Victor Ramirez, Latin America Region President

Dear AAPG Latin America Region Members,

For our fourth quarterly newsletter, I would like to use this opportunity to highlight once again our Region's emphasis on supporting students and young professionals. This is our Association's contribution toward developing interest and enthusiasm for the energy industry among the new generations of geoscientists.

In addition to technical presentations and lectures, a fundamental tool we are using to reach the new professionals is the documentary SWITCH, which provides a complete view of our energy future, explaining both the responsible use of energy sources as well as challenges and opportunities for the next generation of geoscientists.

My latest experience showing SWITCH was last July, during a visit to the Universidad de Caldas AAPG Student Chapter in Manizales, Colombia (my birthplace!) I gave a lecture there on offshore exploration and then presented SWITCH the movie to an audience of about 40 students. As with other SWITCH screenings, the discussion related to the film was very interesting. In my opinion, these gatherings represent a key point of interaction between industry and academia.

During my visit to the Universidad de Caldas, I met with the student chapter leadership, who are very concerned about the continuity of the chapter as current chapter members conclude their academic life and move on. They presented a proposal for an election process that brings new students in to chapter leadership, as well as other great ideas to keep their activities running even as the student chapter leadership changes.

Reflecting on this experience, I invite student chapter leaders throughout the Latin America Region to consider options for replacing outgoing

officers, training new officers and providing continuity to efforts that are producing positive results.

I also encourage all outgoing student chapter leaders to become involved with Young Professional chapters as soon as they graduate (if not before). Staying involved with AAPG not only supports your personal and professional development, but also prepares you to hold increasingly influential leadership roles throughout your career.

Best wishes to all.



Victor Ramirez



Ramirez visits the Universidad de Caldas Student Chapter in Manizales, Colombia

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RECENT NEWS

Region's Newest Affiliated Society Promotes Discussions Between Industry, Government and Environment

Communication and collaboration between nontraditional partners was an overarching theme at the 2nd Biannual Explorer's Symposium organized by the AAPG affiliated society, Sociedad Colombiana de Geología (SCG) on 27-29 August in Bogotá, Colombia.

The SCG, accepted as an AAPG affiliated society by the House of Delegates in April 2014, seeks to advance geology and related sciences in Colombia, to contribute to scientific education, to uphold professional ethical standards and to advise the Colombian government on issues related to development.

The society achieved all these purposes at the symposium, in which 221 participants discussed the complexities of addressing social, environmental, technical, political and regulatory dynamics inherent in conducting hydrocarbon and mineral exploration activities in tropical areas.

SCG president, Carlos A. Vargas, described the symposium as a "unique event in Colombia" designed to promote sincere, respectful, and constructive discussions between the national government, the mining and oil industry, as well representatives of civil society.

Bringing together such a diverse group of experts is an effective way to examine how exploration has changed in the last few decades and how to move forward into the future, he said.

"Thirty years ago, having an idea and a budget was sufficient for exploration. Ten years ago, it was ideas, budget and good socio-environmental practices. Today, in order to have effective exploration, we need ideas, budget, good socio-environmental practices, as well as a permanent cooperative relationship with the government," Vargas said.

"It is not acceptable for the state to delegate its obligations to industry, nor for industry to interfere with the state, but both entities should work together to guarantee conditions for the efficient development of exploration activities oriented toward the discovery of new reserves," Vargas concluded.

The importance of finding new reserves in Colombia was a common theme throughout the symposium, particularly in the New Tendencies in Oil and Gas Exploration forum, which included participation of industry representatives, trade groups, professional associations and the National Hydrocarbon Agency. All speakers agreed that increasing the country's reserves – which, at the current rate will be used up in 6.6 years – should

be a national priority. Also widely accepted among the speakers was the notion that governmental agencies should explore ways to expedite the regulatory and environmental licensing process to increase exploration efficiency without compromising quality.

Representatives from the mining industry, academia and the National Mining Agency participated in the New Tendencies in Mineral Exploration forum. They recognized negative international perceptions related to mining in Colombia and discussed the importance of working with communities, universities and environmental groups to make practices safe and efficient.

The Reconciling Environment and Exploration forum brought together representatives from trade associations, industry, universities and non-profit organizations. While speakers developed solutions for promoting both exploration and environmental protection – establishing barriers around national parks, for example – they recognized a widespread lack of confidence among community members that government agencies are interested in and capable of protecting the environment. They agreed that the government will need to strengthen its institutions and to work hand in hand with academic institutions to promote a culture of environmental responsibility.

A conclusion drawn from the Environment and Exploration forum was the benefit of having government agencies conduct environmental studies before assigning the blocks to private companies. Doing so would help to identify socio-environmental concerns present before companies begin working in the area and would limit the amount of time that personnel and equipment remain idle while waiting for licenses.

The symposium's final session, a Regulatory Framework for Mining and Energy Resources, focused on regulatory and licensing aspects related to exploration contracts. Proposals delivered during the session included developing a Mining Management Plan designed to promote more sustainable mining and a medium and long-term fiscal framework that provides scenarios for exploration and production of new petroleum reserves in coming years.

In addition to the forums, the Explorer's Symposium featured three short courses, Double Dating Applied to Natural Resources Exploration, an Introduction to Oil and Gas and Mining for Non-Miners.



SCG president, Carlos A. Vargas, delivers opening remarks at the Explorer's Symposium in Bogotá.



Alvaro Acuña, of Inforpetrol and Juan Carlos Vega, of Petronorte and the Colombia YP Chapter at the AAPG stand at the Explorer's Symposium.

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

New YP Lead Describes “Remarkable” Experience at Aapg Leadership Days

Nashomi Belfon is the former AAPG Student Chapter president at the University of the West Indies and the current YP lead for the Trinidad & Tobago YP Chapter. She was one of two Latin America Region YP leads to participate in the 2014 YP Leadership Summit and Leadership Days.

In August 2014, I participated in AAPG’s 34th annual Leadership Days in Snowbird, Utah. I attended because of the passion that I have for volunteering with AAPG and the incentive that there is a lot to learn from an event such as this, where individuals from various committees throughout the world are present. Such knowledge and concepts can then be brought back to the Latin America Region. I personally can tell you that my expectations were exceeded; Leadership Days truly was remarkable.

My experience at Leadership Days was so memorable that it is challenging to select one best moment. If I had to choose however, I’d say one of the things that really stuck with me was the presentation by guest speaker Jay Barney, “Essential Shifts to Move from a Functional Leader to a Strategic Leader.” The lecture explained what it takes to make that transition, something that we all can benefit from as leaders within AAPG.

One of the most valuable parts of the weekend was being able to work with Young Professionals from other AAPG Sections and Regions at the fifth Young Professionals Leadership Summit, held prior to the start of Leadership Days. The summit focused on key concepts including sustainability and marketing and internal and external communication within YP committees. I found these discussions to be of great value because they highlighted the roles and responsibilities of YPs, especially new YPs like me. It was great to share thoughts and be able to get an inside view on what other Sections and Regions are doing and to determine what will work for our Region.

Another valuable part of the weekend was the field trip to Albion Basin and a two-hour hike to Cecret Lake. There were two amazing aspects of this hike. One was being able to do what I enjoy most – be a geologist. I was honored to explore the geology of the Little Cottonwood Canyon with the expert himself, Ron Harris, author of “Exploring the Geology of the Little Cottonwood Canyon, Utah.”

The second aspect was the opportunity to interact with new and experienced geoscientists, to have meaningful discussions and to bond with other representatives from the Latin America Region. Participating in the YP Leadership Summit and AAPG Leadership Days had a remarkable impact on my future work with the Latin America Region. As a newly appointed and dedicated YP for Trinidad & Tobago, being able to interact with new and experienced YPs and professionals was invaluable. The sessions helped me understand the roles and responsibilities of a YP leader and also helped to identify leadership traits and skills, key information for new leaders like myself. Being able to contribute ideas and opinions during AAPG leadership Days was an added bonus.

Leadership Days is an event that every AAPG leader should attend if given the opportunity. Learning from others and participating in various discussions reinforced what I already knew about AAPG and enhanced my respect for and commitment to the organization. It showed me that the sky’s the limit and encouraged me to inspire others as well. I look forward to continuing to work with the AAPG in advancing the world of petroleum geosciences.



Latin America Region representatives (left to right): Carlos Quinto, YP Peru Chapter president; Patricio Marshall, Region vice president; Nashomi Belfon, YP Trinidad & Tobago Chapter lead; Ignacio Iregui, Region student chapter liaison

STUDENTS & YPS

Student-YP Leader Network Grows Region-Wide

Geoscience students are taking center stage in the Latin America Region during the latter half of 2014. Packed out conferences held throughout the region are developing a network of geoscientists who not only have strong technical skills but also demonstrate the leadership and teamwork necessary to guide the industry through the coming decades.

212 students and professionals from nine countries gathered at the second annual **Latin America Geoscience Student Conference**

(LAGSC), held at the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM) in Mexico City 4-7 August.

The conference, organized by UNAM’s AAPG and SEG (Society of Exploration Geophysicists) student chapters, opened with field trips and short courses focusing on geophysical prospecting, research and resources.

The conference theme, “Latin America: Source of energy and

knowledge," encouraged participants to share ideas and take advantage of the presentations, networking and interview opportunities available throughout the week. Students from 16 universities presented their research in 36 oral presentations in eight technical sessions. Industry and academic professionals shared their experience in 12 lectures.

The LAGSC also included an exhibition, a robust social program and two region-wide competitions, Latin American EAGE Geo-Quiz and the eighth Latin America Challenge Bowl. Students from the Universidad Nacional Colombia, Medellín (Unalmed) took first place in both contests and will represent the region in final competitions in Madrid and Denver in 2015.

UNAM AAPG Chapter president, Antonio Castillo, expressed gratitude to all of the organizations and individuals that contributed to the LAGSC. "With the participation of 21 companies and institutes, the event was a success," he said.

The following week, 450 students from Colombia, Venezuela and Peru gathered at the Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS) in Bucaramanga for the **XI Geology Technical Week and I Geosciences Annual Meeting**. The week featured short courses, field trips and a series of lectures on stratigraphy, paleontology, mineralogy, geophysics, environmental geology, hydrogeology, petroleum geology, as well as mineral and nonconventional resources.

The annual meeting was designed to help students develop leadership skills and volunteer service, two areas that contribute to geoscientists' professional development. Psychologists and industry recruiters delivered sessions focusing on leadership and entrepreneurship.

"We are proud to announce that several agreements for cooperation and joint projects were signed between Colombian and Peruvian universities during our event," he said. "These exchanges of students and projects surely will further enrich and strengthen the spirit of research and knowledge, which is key for students."

Rodríguez, former UIS Student Chapter president and current YP Colombia Chapter education liaison, was one of several YPs present at the event. Other YP Colombia Chapter leads attended throughout the week and hosted a SWITCH movie showing and discussion about the future of energy.

Rodríguez said events developed by students and recent graduates provide invaluable benefit to today's geoscience students and tomorrow's industry leaders.

"We celebrate the seed sown in the new generations, which will encourage them to continue to develop activities related to our profession that incorporate best practices, teamwork and excellence," Rodríguez said.

Student leadership development continues next month at the **Latin America Region Student Chapter Leadership Summit (LAR-SCLS)** 31 October - 2 November in Lima, Peru

The summit, organized by student and YP leaders from throughout the region, will bring together the leaders of 20 AAPG Student Chapters from seven countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Participants will strengthen their network, learn best



LAGSC participants awaiting the results of the Latin America Geo-Quiz competition



LAGSC Secretariat Enrique Arce (UNAM) (second from left) stands with Leon Ramírez, José David Henao, and Mauricio Arboleda from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín, which won both the GeoQuiz and the Challenge Bowl.



Juan Fernando Martínez, Technical vice president of Colombia's National Hydrocarbon Agency (ANH) addresses the XI Geology Technical Week at the Universidad Industrial de Santander in Bucaramanga, Colombia.



XI Geology Technical Week organizing committee president Flover Rodríguez (center) with Mayra Vargas (left) and Ricardo Vargas (right), of the YP Colombia Chapter, at the event's opening reception in Bucaramanga.

practices, share experiences and develop leadership and teamwork skills.

Juliana Ceballos, LAR-SCLS organizing committee chair said the SCLS experience provides lasting benefits not only to participants but also to the chapters they represent.

"The Summit represents an important step toward creating a strong geoscience student leader network, which will benefit geoscience programs throughout the Americas and provide the industry with a cadre of well-equipped future leaders," she said.

The LAR-SCLS also will give student leaders a chance to network with industry veterans and young professionals in Peru. The Peruvian Geological Society will host the event, and members of the YP Chapter will help with logistics.

**Congratulations to our new student chapter
Universidad Central de Ecuador – July 2014**

UPCOMING EVENTS

22-26 September 2014

Education Week Colombia

Quantification of Geological Risk (22-24 September) Uncertainty and Decision-Making in Exploration and Development (25-26 September)

Organized by the AAPG Latin America Region and Asociación Colombiana de Geólogos and Geofísicos del Petróleo (ACGGP)

Radisson Royal Hotel, Bogotá, Colombia

12-15 October 2014

GXVII Congreso Peruano de Geología: "Alberto Benavides de la Quintana"

Organized by the Sociedad Geológica del Perú (SGP)

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Peru

31 October – 2 November 2014

Latin America Region Student Chapter Leadership Summit

Sociedad Geológica del Perú (SGP) headquarters, Lima, Peru

By invitation only

3-7 November 2014

VII INGEPET 2014: "Facing Latin America's Energy Challenges"

Hotel Westin, Lima, Peru

3-7 November 2014

IX Congreso de Exploración y Desarrollo de Hidrocarburos: "Unraveling Paradigms"

Organized by the Instituto Argentino del Petróleo y del Gas (IAPG)

Hotel Intercontinental, Mendoza, Argentina

10-11 December 2014

GTW Colombia 2014: "Expanding the Science of Unconventional Resources in Colombia: from Heavy Oil to Shale Gas/Shale Oil"

Organized by the AAPG Latin America Region and Asociación Colombiana de Geólogos and Geofísicos del Petróleo (ACGGP)

Hotel Bogotá Royal, Bogotá, Colombia

Something to report?

Do you have something to share with the Latin America Region?

Send us your articles, photos and upcoming events for publication in our newsletter and on our website. Send submissions to latinamerica@aapg.org

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OUR STUDENTS**



Sponsorship opportunities still available for the Latin America Region Student Chapter Leadership Summit! Contact latinamerica@aapg.org for more information.

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Region website

latinamerica.aapg.org

Email

latinamerica@aapg.org

Phone

+571.485.2338 (Colombia)

+1.281.886.8525 (USA)



facebook.com/aapglatinamerica



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