**Visiting Geoscientists Committee/Special Interest Group**

**By Co-Chairs, Robbie Gries and Andras Nemeth**

**FY2016-17**

**Visits Records**

The most impressive part of the report this year is that in spite of the major industry downturn, we managed to reach **11,814** students and completed **275** visits, including 12 special events for students with students from multiple schools gathering at one location. Fred Schroeder introduced a webinar teaching session and completed 26 visits in three U.S. Sections and in Canada – reaching 843 students. He was a superstar. Dwandari Ralanarko was our other superstar with 14 visits – reaching 830 students in the Asia Pacific Region.

To illustrate the progress of new efforts in this SIG, note the records for visits over the last seven years, with the new program initiated in late 2014. Support from AAPG and the AAPG Foundation has greatly impacted the program’s reach.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Seven years of total visits and students** |  |  |  |  |
| **2016-17** | **2015-16** | **2014-15** | **2013-14** | **2012-13** | **2011-12** | **2010-11** |
| 274 | 297 | 165 | 47 | 32 | 47 | 74 |
| 11,814 | 12,041 | 6,350 | unknown | unknown | unknown | unknown |

The Latin America Region has excelled at promoting and supporting the Visiting Geoscientist Program, reaching 2,640 students with 58 visits (including four special events) with 46 percent of their VGs and another 1,681 students with flash/pop-up visits (visits from geologists who are not official VGs) for a total of 4,321 students reached this year. They had visits to 64 percent of their student chapters, plus nine universities that do not yet have student chapters.

Europe’s Visiting Geoscientists have been busy, with almost 70 percent of them making a visit this year and reaching nearly 1,200 students during their 36 visits. It is very commendable that 70 percent of the VGs made a visit this year. With 58 student chapters, they managed to visit 31 percent of the schools, plus eight universities that did not have student chapters. Two special events reached more than 150 students from various universities.

Asia Pacific reached almost 1,500 students with only eight of their 30 VGs making visits. The number of visits was 29. With the largest number of student chapters (63), they still need more VGs to help cover them. Only 19 percent had visits this year. Dwandari Ralanarko produced impressive visit numbers for this Region, personally reaching 830 students as mentioned above.

Africa had a strong program this year, where 56 percent of the student chapters in North Africa had visits from almost 80 percent of the VGs and 962 students were reached. In addition, four special events attracted 300 students. Sub-Saharan Africa reached 33 percent of their 33 chapters with only 50 percent of their speakers (three of six). Records show 755 students attended university visits, while a special event had additional 150 participants.

Canada benefited from a multi-school visit conducted by Gulf Coast VG Fred Schroeder, reaching eight universities, three of which did not have student chapters. Only two Canadian VGs were able to make a visit this year.

The number of visits and students reached in Regions is illustrated in the diagrams below.

The number of special events and students reached worldwide by special events are shown in the diagrams below.

The U.S. programs were propped up with multi-school visits by Fred Schroeder – a real hero for our program. He had multi-school visits in his home Section, the Gulf Coast, plus the Eastern Section and the Pacific Section, and then he added in Canada. All hail to Fred. He personally had contact with 843 students including one visit utilizing webinar capabilities for more than 200 students.

The number of visits and students reached in U.S. Sections is illustrated by the diagrams below.

The global percentage of visits and students reached are shown below.

**Structural Changes**

The VGP Committee officially converted to a SIG (Special Interest Group) late in the year, allowing for more flexibility in the ability to self-govern, without having to get permission from the AAPG president for persons added to the membership.

The leadership co-chairs for 2016-17 were Robbie Gries and Andras Nemeth. Andras rotated out of the leadership role June 30 and Piotr Krzywiec began a term as co-chair.

The new SIG website is under construction.

**Annual Meeting, April 4, 2017, Houston, Texas**

The Committee met (prior to becoming an SIG) at the Annual Convention and Exhibition and centennial celebration in Houston.

**Attendees included:**

Robbie Gries

Andras Nemeth (via teleconference)

Brian Brister

Stephanie Nwoko

Doug Patchen

Noelle Joy Purcell

Dallas Dunlap

Art Johnson

Chris Piela

Dave Weinberg

Susan Morrice

Raffa De Cuia

Ameed Ghori

Peter Grant

Piotr Krzywiec

Bill Bosworth

Skip Hobbs

Jonathan Craig

Stuart Harker

Emily Llinas

Bob Davis

Salim Mahruqi

Wen Lin

Jesus Ochoa

Laura Zahm

**Others via teleconference:** Herman Darman, Amdad Ali, Allagu Balaguru, German Bayona, Janos Csizmeg, Krishna Persad, Brent Wilson, Andrew Zolnai and Claudia Duenas

**Staff attending:**

Vern Stefanic, Susie Nolen, Bogdan Michka, Katie McElhaney

**Outstanding Visiting Geoscientists Honored**

Our rules require that a VG visit a university once a year, and if no visits take place in a three-year period, a VG can be made inactive. This is an enormous contribution … to make a visit once a year.

Therefore, when Visiting Geoscientists make more than that we are very appreciative and proud of their efforts. This year we celebrate Fred Schroeder who made 26 visits and Dwandari Ralanarko who made 14 visits. Phenomenal.

And, still considered amazing stars are Berend Van Hoorn (9), Samir Abdelmoaty and Stuart Harker (6). Pedro Alarcon, Piotr Krzywiec, Peter Lloyd, Xavier Moonan and Igor Viegas all had five visits! Victor Vega, German Bayona, Raffaele di Cuia, Antonio Velasquez all had four visits, while Juan Carlos Llinas, Bill Maloney, Martin Oviedo, Jonathan Redfern, Anthony Salem, Ione Taylor and Scott Thornton all made three visits each.

Thank you for making this program as successful as it was this year. And thanks to all who made one-two visits, these really add up (we had 58!).

**Region and Section Reports**

**Regions**

North Africa, Bill Bosworth for Joe Versfelt and Dave Blanchard

Sub-Saharan Africa, Samuel Akande **–** written report

Latin America, Ricardo Vargas/Emily Llinas – written report

Eastern Europe, (web contact) János Csizmeg

Western Europe, (web contact) Andrew Zolnai

Middle East, Salim Al-Mahrouqi

Asia Pacific, Peter Grant for Herman Darman and Dwandari Ralanarko

Canada, report Wen Lin for Jean Hsieh

**Sections**

Eastern, Ione Taylor

Gulf Coast, Noelle Joy Purcell and Dallas Dunlap

Mid-Continent, Robbie reported for Douglas Davis (Rick Fritz)

Pacific, Michelle Judson

Rocky Mountain, Laura Mauro Johnson

**Conversion to a SIG**

AAPG Staff talked about the conversion from a Committee to a Special Interest Group, both the process and the advantages.

**IT Wish List (still needs addressed)**

The “Wish List” for the VG program (re: conference with Janet Brister, Salmon and McBroom, 6/2015) continues to remain our greatest desire for help from AAPG headquarters and includes:

* Online map: to show where VGs are located, (a click goes to their contact information) where they have visited, where student chapters are located and which have had a recent visit. A click on the student chapter would provide contact information.
* VG topic file: We provided data a couple of years ago to allow student chapters and other universities to search by topic and be taken to VGs who lecture on those topics. This has not been done, would need updated now.

**New Business**

Fred Schroeder suggested to the Committee that we try doing webinar outreach to students and offered to conduct a few to get this effort under way. Everyone thought it to be a good idea.