

STUDENTS AND EARLY CAREERS (SEC) COMMITTEE 2024-2025 REPORT

Committee chair: Kurang Mehta

Committee members: Uzonna Anyiam, Jose Arce, Luigi Bianco, Sakshi Dahiya, Peter Duncan, Francesca Fazzari, Roddys Gil, Nicole Gonzalez, William Hill, Yong Ma, Laxmi Pandey, Rosalynn Wang

Board liaison: Lillian Flakes

Staff liaison: Jessica Dostal

Alternate staff liaison: Annabella Betancourt

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Students and Early Career (SEC) Committee is an integral part of the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG). The committee is composed of seven subcommittees:

1. Challenge Bowl Subcommittee
2. Evaluations Subcommittee
3. Engagements Subcommittee
4. Field Camp Subcommittee
5. Scholarships Subcommittee
6. SEG EVOLVE Subcommittee
7. EPIC (Emerging Professionals International Committee) Subcommittee

The committee's primary objective is to ensure continued engagement with students and young professionals worldwide within the geophysical community. This goal is achieved through diverse programs that foster technical collaboration, project implementation, and mentorship between students, early-career professionals, and industry experts.

CHALLENGE BOWL SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Peter Duncan

Members: Peter Duncan, Paolo Mazzucchelli, Aldo Vasnevar, Scott Cook, Gustavo Carstens, Alexander Justel, Aaron Girard, Bhavana Raj, Jeff Hume, Chinazaekpere Mary Arukwe, Andreas Gerner, John Duhault, Sergio Barros, Mike Yates, Ana Curcio, Andy Williams, Sofia Shahir

Mission

- Organize, promote, and execute the annual SEG Challenge Bowl World Finals.
- Promote and facilitate regional preliminary Challenge Bowls in collaboration with SEG Sections, Associated Societies, and student chapters. Winners of these regional contests advance to the World Championships.

- Develop and maintain rules, procedures, and a question database for the program.
- Raise funds to support the Challenge Bowl's mission.

Highlights from the Past Year

In 2025, nine local and regional preliminary contests were held, involving 107 teams globally. The World Finals took place virtually on 15 October 2025 with 19 competing teams representing nine countries and 16 universities.

Top Three Teams:

- University of Lagos, Nigeria - First Place
- Ekiti State University, Nigeria - Second Place
- University of Colorado, USA - Third Place

Date	Location		Number of Teams
1/20/25	WIUGC Local in Winnipeg	Live	12
2/12/25	Italian CB in Bologna	Live	7
3/5/25	Rocky Mtn CB in Denver	Live	10
3/6/25	Gulf Coast CB in Houston	Live	6
5/14/25	CSEG Finals in Calgary	Live	12
5/22/25	Asia Pacific	Virtual	18
5/23/25	US Open	Virtual	13
5/24/25	Latin America	Virtual	14
6/25/2025	Sub-Saharan	Virtual	15
8/26/25	World Finals	Virtual	19

Regional contests were not held in Mexico or the Middle East for the first time in several years.

Regional contests were locally funded. The World Finals and overall program expenses were supported by the SEG Foundation through an endowed fund. The adoption of virtual formats, aided by the QuizXpress platform, has significantly expanded global participation. However, funding limitations prevented a live event at IMAGE 2025.

Goals for the Coming Year

- Reestablish regional contests in Mexico and the Middle East.
- Revitalize the committee by recruiting an active chair and at least four new members.
- Secure funding to host a partially live event at IMAGE 2026.
- Establish consistent regional champions from each SEG global region.

Challenges

- Engaging faculty advisors to encourage student participation.
- Organizing and funding regional contests.
- Covering travel and event costs for World Finals participants.
- Maintaining and updating the question database.
- Managing the time and workload required to create new quiz content.
- Planning for succession as the current quiz master transitions out of the role.

EVALUATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Laxmi Pandey

Co-Chair: Uzonna Anyiam

Co-Chair Elect: Jose Arce

Members: Diane Doser, Seth Haines, Sara Kellal, Zhiguo Wang, Payson Todd, Leonardus Tjahjadi, Clark Trantham, Elly Bogi, Kun Fu, Rebekah Lee, Bunmi Elebiju, Ashley Hutton, Annette Veilleux, Cara Hunter

Mission

The Evaluations Subcommittee supports SEG's professional development initiatives by assessing the effectiveness and impact of SEG programs and ensuring alignment with the Society's mission. The group provides objective feedback to enhance the quality and relevance of SEG programs and services.

Highlights from the Past Year

- Developed and implemented a comprehensive evaluation plan for SEG programs.
- Conducted evaluations for:
 - o SEG/Chevron Student Leadership Symposium (57 applications)
 - o Near Surface Student Research Award (21 applications)
 - o Student Chapter Annual Reports (68 submissions)
 - o Student Chapter Outreach Grants (11 applications)
 - o Technical Program Travel Grants (17 applications)

These evaluations provided insights into program impact and identified opportunities for improvement.

Goals for the Coming Year

Continue to expand membership and maintain alignment with SEG's strategic mission through program evaluations and process enhancements.

Challenges

- Limited volunteer capacity and tight timelines for application review.
- Staying current with industry best practices amid rapid advancements in geophysics.

ENGAGEMENTS SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Sakshi Dahiya

Executive Summary

The Student Engagement Subcommittee strengthened communication and participation among global SEG student chapters.

Highlights from the Past Year

- Established a dedicated student communication email for centralized outreach.
- Contacted inactive chapters to encourage reactivation.
- Maintained coordination with other SEC subcommittees to align engagement efforts.
- Appointed Iris Valeria as the new chair, ensuring smooth leadership transition.

Goals for the Coming Year

Expand communication channels, support chapter sustainability, and leverage digital platforms for engagement.

FIELD CAMP SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Francesca Fazzari

Vice Chair: Afolabi Babalola

Executive Summary

Field camp funding remains limited, with individual awards remaining small. Of six camps awarded in 2025, five were held outside the United States, demonstrating the international reach of SEG's field camp program.

Highlights from the Past Year

- Received 15 applications (same as 2024) totaling US\$96,164 in funding requests.
- Selected seven awardees totaling US\$31,338, with awards ranging from US\$1,000 to US\$12,000.
- Supported field camps in Bulgaria, Indonesia, Nepal, Romania, Sweden, and the United States.
- Continued collaboration with the HSSE Committee to assess safety plans and train organizers.
- Featured student presentations from Romania and Indonesia at the 2025 IMAGE Conference.
- Welcomed new members Afolabi Babalola and Michael Olajide Okunubi; Roman Petrokushyn stepped down.

Challenges

Securing sustainable funding remains the key challenge for the Field Camp program.

SCHOLARSHIPS SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Yong Ma

Members: Adam Mangel, Ahmed Ismail, Jaewoo Park, Loren Zeigler, Nizar Chemingui, Zhemin Tan, Lian Duan

Mission

Review, rank, and select scholarship recipients based on merit and donor restrictions.

Highlights from the Past Year

- Awarded US\$276,368.90 to 96 students (26.6% of applicants) across 13 countries.
- Received 361 applications globally.
- Each committee member ranked applicants based on academic merit, goals, publications, and community involvement.
- Continued mentorship for scholarship recipients.

Challenges

- Application timing before university acceptances can complicate fund allocation.
- Maintaining engagement during the two-day virtual consensus meeting. The committee recommends returning to in-person meetings for improved collaboration.

SEG EVOLVE SUBCOMMITTEE (ENERGY EXPLORATION)

Chair: William Hill

Executive Summary

The EVOLVE Energy Exploration Program engages student teams to apply geoscience, engineering, and economics in real-world exploration challenges.

Highlights from the Past Year

- Received 24 applications from universities across 11 countries; 12 teams were selected, and 11 completed the program.
- Each team produced an integrated interpretation and final economic prospect presented at the EDGE Convention in August 2025.
- The program strengthened technical collaboration and communication skills among participants.

Recommendation

- Expand and standardize the interview process to evaluate time commitment, team roles, and scheduling.
- Distribute datasets earlier and reinforce software readiness.
- Encourage active faculty advisor participation.
- Incorporate early tutorials on petrophysics and mapping fundamentals.

EPIC (EMERGING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE) SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Nicole Gonzalez

Co-Chair: Joshua Novello

Members: Jessica Warden, Izabelle Buentello

Mission

The EPIC Subcommittee fosters community among emerging geoscience professionals through leadership, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

Highlights from the Past Year

- Hosted a one-hour event, *Get to Know SEG EPIC & Stand Out Above the Rest!*, at IMAGE 2025, featuring speakers Rebecca Caldwell and James White.
- Added 13 new members following the event.
- Enhanced connections among early-career professionals through discussion and mentorship.

Goals for the Coming Year

- Host a second event for networking and collaboration.
- Continue volunteer recruitment and cross-committee engagement.

Challenges

Maintaining active participation and continued enthusiasm among early-career professionals.





Caption. Pictures from the Get to Know SEG EPIC & Stand Out Above the Rest! event at the IMAGE Conference with invited speakers Rebecca Caldwell and James Painter. Nicole Gonzalez (Chair) at the EPIC booth proudly showcasing our giveaway items!