Careers in Engineering Geology, Mining and Mineral Exploration Symposium

The Leeds Student Society of Economic Geologists and Leeds Engineering Geology Society are proud to summarise the outcome of the first ever ‘Careers in Engineering Geology, Mining and Exploration Symposium’. The University of Leeds, School of Earth and Environment, opened its doors to welcome a mix of current students, alumni and industry representatives.

Aim of the day...

With the current decline in the commodities sector, geoscientists looking towards an industry facing career are finding it even more difficult to get a foot hold on the ladder. This event was designed to bring back Leeds alumni that have progressed into a wide variety to specialties. Inviting people back to speak about their journey post-graduation provided current students with the chance to hear the multitude of options that are available to them.

The event also wanted to bring previous students back to the school to maintain the relationship between alumni and the university. It also provided an excellent chance for a pure and simple catch-up with old friends.

A series of short talks, poster session and post-event meal made for a thoroughly enjoyable day that has benefited all attendees. With the great success of this symposium, the first of its kind, we hope this is the start of a regular fixture at the School of Earth and Environment!

“Thank you to all organizers for this fantastic event, where our alumni helped give current students some new insight and prospective on potential career pathways”

- Prof. Simon Bottrell, Head of School Earth and Environment

Owen Lokuciejewski-Taylor, Leeds Student SEG Chapter President
Guest Speakers

Throughout the day we had a total of 16 guest speakers! During the morning Dr Dan Morgan and Neal Gunn provided a summary of the current courses being offered here at Leeds; a great chance to inform industry representatives and past students about the benefits and opportunities of studying here. Dr Rob Chapman, fresh from presenting at the AME BC Mineral Exploration Roundup Conference, Vancouver, also gave a presentation highlighting the current state of the industry. Prof. Stephen Hencher followed with an excellent presentation looking at a particularly interesting engineering geology project he worked on in Sebuku, Indonesia. David Boon and Helena Toman also gave presentations looking at their progression after graduating at Leeds. Both talks gave insight into the many opportunities available to graduates and proved how unforeseen turns can lead to a remarkable career.

The afternoon then saw key note speaker, Julian Smallshaw of The Institute of Quarrying, provided a great summary of how he worked his way to where he is now Head of Education. Julian also explained the history and role of the Institute and current opportunities for geologists. Dr David Jameson, Principle Geotechnical Engineer at GWP and member of the Institute, also provided a wonderful summary of some interesting projects his career has allowed him to work on. David’s experiences and words of wisdom proved incredibly helpful for soon-to-be graduates attending the symposium.

We would like take this opportunity to once again extend our huge thanks to all speakers that gave up their time to join us.

International Skype Calls

The nature of this profession means that the ‘Leeds reach’ extends right across the globe. We were lucky enough to arrange two live Skype calls with Leeds alumni currently working overseas.

Kate Wroot is currently working in Western Australia and gave us a great Q&A session. Kate is currently a Senior Geotechnical Engineer at BHP Billiton Iron Ore. Tim Wrighton, currently working in BC, Canada as a Project Geologist at Radius Gold Inc., fantastically showed his experiences in the Mineral Exploration industry as well as detailing possible diversifications within the sector.

Many thanks go to Kate and Tim!
Poster Presentation
Lunch saw the opportunity for people to catch-up and look over posters produced by alumni unable to attend the event. The posters detailed more stories of career paths taken by past students and gave current students examples of how diverse their degree can be!

Soapbox Speakers
In the afternoon we opened the floor to everyone to allow people to present about their current work in a ‘Soapbox’, quick-fire style session. Each speaker had 5 minutes on the clock to provide a complete summary of what they’ve been up to!

This proved to be successful in providing snappy talks from a wide range of disciplines. We had presentations from a PhD fellow to a Commodities Analyst to Geotechnical Engineers and Environmental Consultants.

Thank you to everyone that put a poster together or spoke in the soapbox session.
Post-Event Pint
In the afternoon we retired to what some might say is the most important part of the day. A large collection of attendees enjoyed a drink at the Victoria Hotel where they talked, laughed and networked! The photo below shows a nice mix of university staff, students, alumni and industry reps sampling a variety of local beers.
In the evening a meal in the near-by Thai Edge nicely finished what was a wonderful day.

Thanks and acknowledgments
This event would not have been possible without the many extra hours given by Owen Lokuciejewski-Taylor and Neal Gunn. Their ideas and hard work made this event a huge success.
The Leeds Student SEG committee and Dr Rob Chapman also deserve a large thank you for their contributions behind the scenes and on the day.

Joanna Bowen and Katie Livesey also needs an extended thank you for their crucial help in arranging the day.

Raffle Winners!
In an effort to raise money for the Leeds SEG Student Chapter we organized a raffle and prize draw.
Small hampers made up of local honey and cottage jams were generously provided by QAPP, a small independent local produce business.

Contact Us
Leeds Student SEG Chapter are eager to keep providing valuable speakers and event to past and current students.

For more information, or if you are interested in getting involved with our chapter, please email us visit our website.
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Visit us on the web at www.segleeds.com