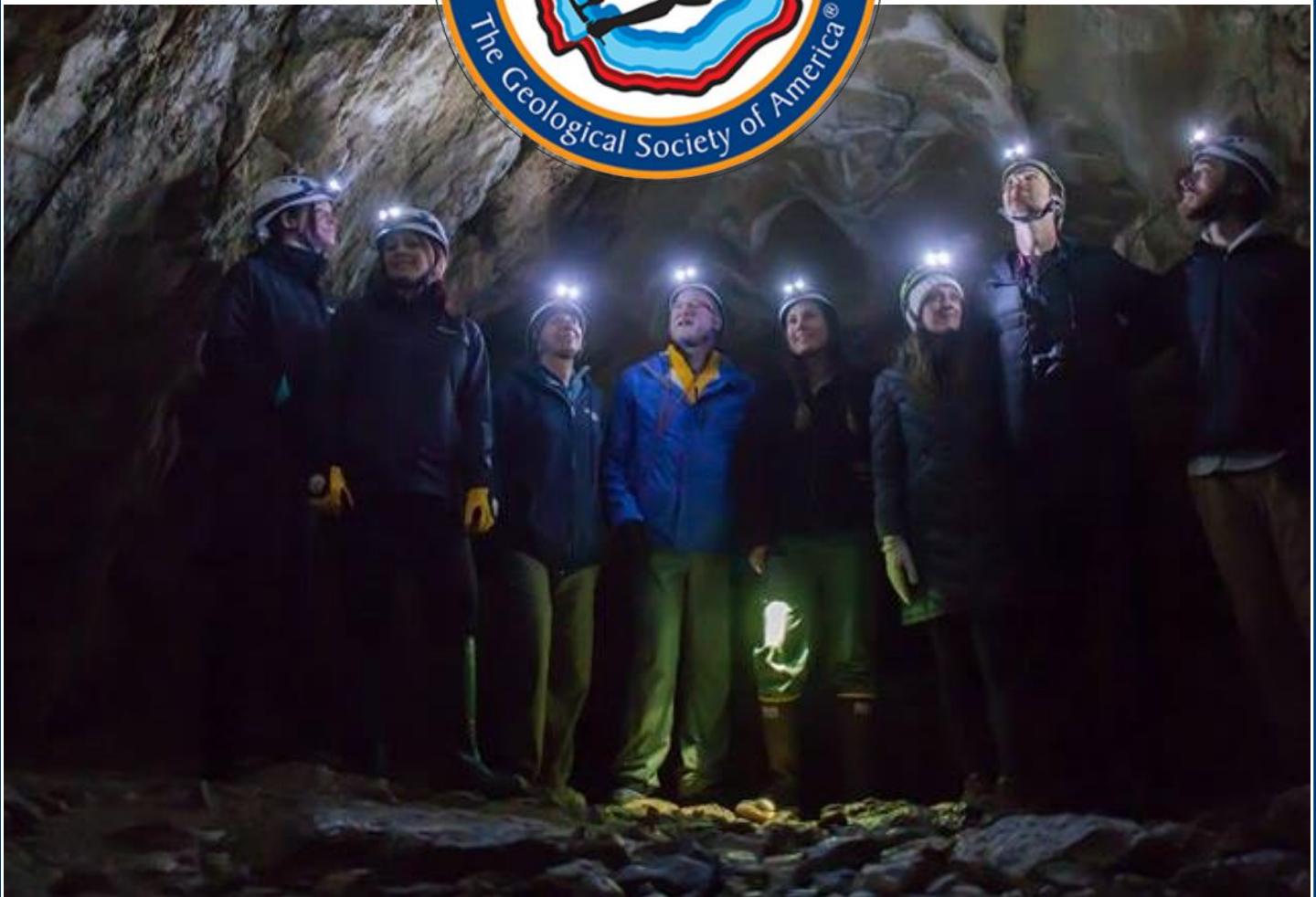


# GeoCorps for Participants: Information for a Great Experience



THE  
GEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY  
OF AMERICA®



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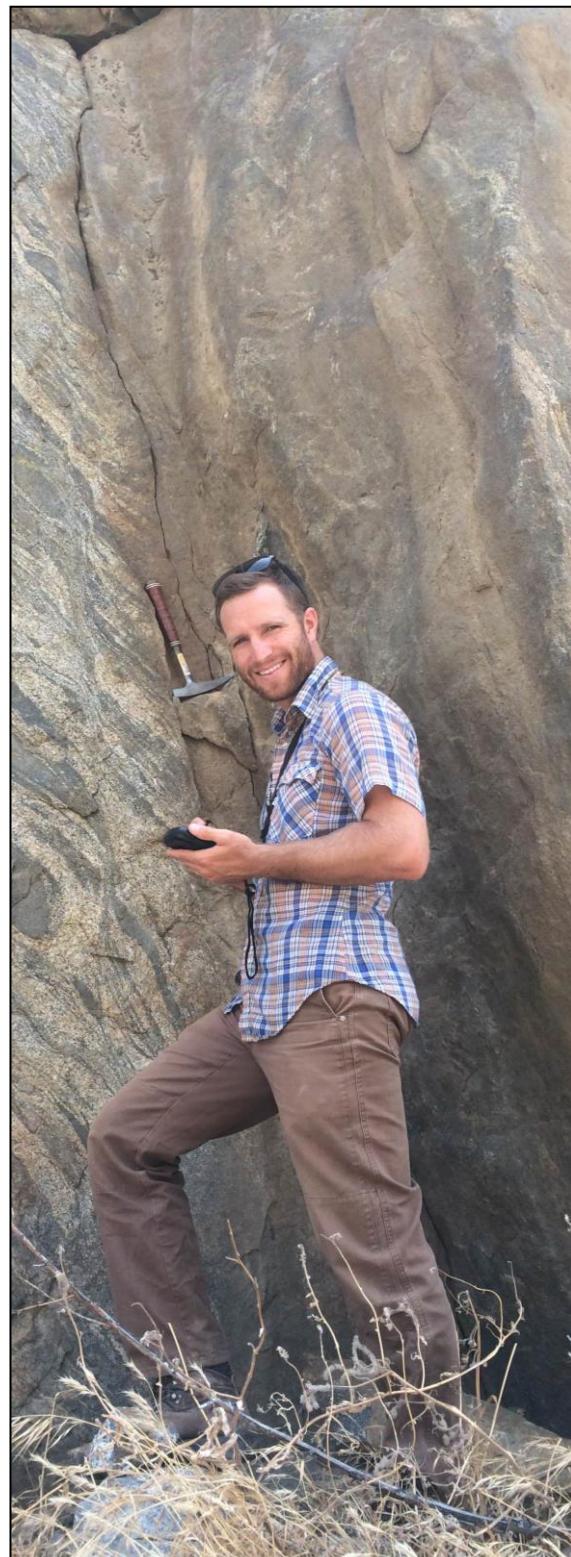
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## An Introduction to GSA and GeoCorps America

### The Geological Society of America

The Geological Society of America (GSA) is a global professional society with a growing membership of more than 22,000 individuals in 115 countries. GSA provides access to resources for geoscience professionals to continue their career growth, including meetings, publications, grants and awards, professional development opportunities and education programs. You can learn more about the Geological Society of America at [www.geosociety.org](http://www.geosociety.org).

### The GeoCorps America Program

GeoCorps America is a program of the Geological Society of America (GSA) operated in partnership with government agencies and other organizations committed to science and stewardship. Through GeoCorps America, GSA places geoscientists from all walks of life in temporary, paid projects focused on geoscience, stewardship and conservation. Details of GeoCorps' current partners and available opportunities can be found on the [GeoCorps home page](#).

The GeoCorps America mission is to further geoscience research, education, and awareness, by providing inclusive, hands-on, career development opportunities in partnership with government agencies and other organizations that are committed to science and stewardship.

The GeoCorps program works towards this mission by meeting the following objectives:

1. Increase the number of geoscientists interested in conducting research, education, and resource management with government agencies and stewardship-focused organizations by providing rewarding opportunities for hands-on education and career development
2. Broaden the diversity of the geosciences professional community by providing inclusive opportunities to gain valuable, career-related experience
3. Promote the adoption of a land ethic by current and future geoscientists, resource managers, and policy makers
4. Build public and professional awareness of the role of the geosciences in resource management and policy making
5. Raise public knowledge of the value of geological, and other, natural resources.

### GeoCorps America Staff

GeoCorps is operated as part of the Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) Department of GSA.

*Lesley Petrie* is the Education and Outreach Program Coordinator for the GeoCorps America and NPS Scientists in Parks programs at GSA. Lesley has a background in paleobiology and biogeochemistry.

*Matt Dawson*, GSA's Education Programs Manager, directs the GeoCorps America program at GSA. Matt has a background in geology, and he is an alumnus of the GeoCorps America program. Matt participated in the program in 2007 with the BLM at the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Fort Benton, MT.

If you are ever in Boulder, CO please visit GSA! Besides saying "hi" to the GeoCorps staff, the building and grounds around GSA are full of interesting geological specimens. "Big Al," a 9ft piece of Silver Plume granite, will greet you in the lobby.

To learn more about GSA headquarters and "Big Al" take a look at our [visitor guide](#).

Either Matt Dawson or Lesley Petrie can be contacted with questions about the GeoCorps America program.

Lesley Petrie  
Phone: 303-357-1097  
E-mail: [lpetrie@geosociety.org](mailto:lpetrie@geosociety.org)

Matt Dawson  
Phone: 303-357-1025  
Mobile: 617-909-9430  
E-mail: [mdawson@geosociety.org](mailto:mdawson@geosociety.org)

### **GSA's GeoCorps America Program Roles and Responsibilities**

GSA is responsible for the management and administration of the GeoCorps America program. This includes:

- Guiding the overall direction of the program, including ensuring the program meets best practice standards for career development programs
- Advertising the GeoCorps program and exploring new agency, organizational, and diversity focused partners
- Managing GeoCorps' online presence, including webpages, Facebook page, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts
- Recruiting participants for the GeoCorps program
- Maintaining program and participant records
- Making position offers to selected participants, when requested by a partner agency.
- Working with our staffing agency partner to provide participant payments, and provide worker's compensation, FICA, and required participant benefits
- Act as secondary approver for participant's weekly timesheets
- Collecting participant reports and products that result from the program
- Program evaluation and reporting
- Maintaining contact with program alumni, and providing alumni with support and networking opportunities
- Pursuing opportunities to expand and enhance the GeoCorps program through new partnerships, grants, and awards

## An Introduction to GeoCorps America's Partners

### GSA's Staffing Partner: Actalent Services, Inc.

Actalent Services, Inc. is the largest staffing and talent engagement firm in the US, with over 200 offices in North America. Actalent Services' mission is to bring great people and great organizations together.

#### Actalent Services' Roles and Responsibilities

Actalent Services will be the official employer of GeoCorps participants, recruited by GSA. Actalent Services is responsible for administering the employment related aspects of the GeoCorps America program. This includes:

- Collecting participant information for enrollment
- Organizing participant background checks (This is separate from the federal background check.)
- Managing participant payments through direct debit or a reloadable debit card
- Managing payroll taxes, FICA, worker's compensation, and unemployment insurance
- Providing health insurance, and other benefits, for participants when required
- Working with GSA to keep participant reimbursement information current
- Managing an online timesheet system for participants and their mentors
- Troubleshooting any issues with participant payments and the timesheet system

Actalent Services is associated with Aerotek, Inc. The [Aerotek Facebook page](#) is a great place to learn more about Aerotek's focus on people, and they share great professional development articles.

### Government and Stewardship Partners



The GeoCorps America program currently partners with the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Land Management Direct Hire Authority (DHA) Program. GSA also partners with the [National Park Service Scientists in Parks \(SIP\)](#) program. The information in this document does not apply to the SIP program.

## **Government and Stewardship Partner Roles and Responsibilities**

GeoCorps America's Government and Stewardship partners are responsible for directing GeoCorps positions, overseeing, and acting as mentors for GeoCorps participants. This includes:

- Interviewing and selecting candidates
- Mentoring participants and overseeing their project
- Providing training and feedback to participants throughout their project

Your mentor during your GeoCorps project will usually be the person who was listed as the Primary Contact on your position's online position description. On occasion your mentor will be someone else within the same office, who will be working with you more directly. Your mentor will usually be part of your interview as well.

## GeoCorps America Program Details

### Program Characteristics

#### *Projects*



GeoCorps projects may be focused on a wide variety of geoscience or geoscience related fields. Past projects have focused on some of the following disciplines:

- Geology
- Hydrology
- Paleontology
- GIS/Mapping
- Minerals
- Soils
- Glaciology
- Karst
- Astronomy
- Archaeology

Projects provide the GeoCorps participant with a unique career development opportunity where they:

- Apply skills and knowledge learned through school or previous experience;
- Enhance pre-existing skills;
- Learn new skills;
- Gain exposure to working with stewardship focused organizations;
- Learn more about different career paths in their field; and
- Are provided with supervision and mentoring.

The average GeoCorps project lasts 12 weeks. Projects can last no less than 10 weeks and no more than one year.

### Program Timeline

Action	Summer Dates
Applications Open	Beginning of December
Applications Close	Beginning of February
Applications are Distributed	Mid-February
Agencies begin interview process	Beginning of March
Offers made to top candidates	Mid-March
Candidates accept offers	Mid-March
Agencies start background check process	Beginning of April
GSA and Actalent Services start the enrollment process	April
GeoCorps Participants start their projects	May - June

Past participants have gained the skills to become employees of our program partners. Vincent Beresford and Christopher Bolen, BLM Direct Hire Authority participants in 2015, now work for the BLM.

## Project Compensation

### *Wage*

As a participant you will be an employee of Actalent Services, Inc. Actalent Services will be responsible for collecting the information required to pay you.

The minimum you will be paid is \$15.00 per hour (\$7,200 for a 12-week position). In areas where the local minimum wage is higher, you will be paid the local minimum wage.

Some GeoCorps locations may choose to raise participant wages above the minimum level, in order to compensate for additional expenses. Any pay above the minimum is at the discretion of the location hosting the position and the primary mentor.

These are the amounts you will be paid before taxes. Income tax will be deducted from all of your payments.

Payments will be made by Actalent Services, Inc. by either direct deposit or a reloadable debit card. If you choose to have your payments made by direct deposit your first payment will be mailed to you as a check.

### *Overtime*

While you are a GeoCorps participant you are a non-exempt employee. This means that you must be paid the overtime rate of one and a half times your standard rate for any overtime hours. Overtime laws vary state by state, and local overtime laws are applicable to your GeoCorps project.

GeoCorps participants must work no more than 40 hours per work week (Sunday through Saturday). GeoCorps participants cannot work overtime unless their mentor has specifically planned for it and coordinated with GSA.

In Alaska, California, and Nevada, overtime also takes effect when a participant exceeds 8 hours in a day. In Colorado, it also takes effect when a participant exceeds 12 hours in a day.

Alaska has a “Flexible Hour Work Plan” that could allow for work days up to 10-hours long. If you are interested in working flexible hours, and your mentor is supportive of this plan, GSA can work to obtain a flexible hour work plan exemption for your project. In order to apply for a flexible hour work plan exemption the participant must be willing to work a flexible schedule. The flexible schedule cannot be a requirement of the position.

The GeoCorps America program also partners with the [Interior Federal Credit Union](#). As a GeoCorps participant you are eligible to open an account, and to participate in financial management webinars they may be offering in the future. Watch your e-mail for an invite to upcoming events.

### *Benefits, Insurance, and Work Injury*

GeoCorps positions do not include health or other medical benefits. Actalent Services may offer health insurance options that you can buy into.

Each GeoCorps participant is covered by worker's compensation through Actalent Services. If you are injured as a result of your work with the GeoCorps America program please notify your mentor first. Notify GSA and Actalent Services as soon as it is safe to do so. To notify GSA of an injury please contact Matt Dawson and/or Lesley Petrie. To notify Actalent Services of an injury please follow the guidelines provided and contact the Actalent Services Worker's Compensation Injury Reporting Hotline: (844) 884-3119.

## Preparing for Your GeoCorps Project



### Enrollment

As a GeoCorps participant you will need to complete enrollment documents with both GSA and Actalent Services.

Once you have been selected, and your start date has been set with your mentor, your mentor will contact us to inform us of their selection. You will receive a participant agreement from GSA within the following weeks of being selected for the position. You will need to initial, sign and return the participant agreement to GSA, and complete the pre-program survey for the organization that will be hosting your project.

At the same time your mentor will start the process of completing any background checks required by their organization to allow you access equipment. It is important that you complete any paperwork related to federal background checks promptly. Delays with your federal background check could result in not being able to access computers and other equipment during your project.

You will be contacted by a representative of Actalent Services, Inc. two weeks before your GeoCorps project starts to begin the Actalent Services enrollment paperwork. It is best to have this paperwork done before you start your travel to your work site, and it is essential that this paperwork is complete before you start your GeoCorps project. Until this paperwork is complete Actalent Services will not be able to pay you.

### Travel

Most GeoCorps participants travel to a project site. Depending on your project location - and your needs once you arrive - your travel plans and expenses may vary. For any air travel that is being funded or reimbursed by the host agency, you are required to fly on a U.S. flag air carrier. When booking air travel, please be fully aware of all fees, as well as refund and cancellation policies.

Many GeoCorps projects are in remote locations, where a vehicle is required for transportation, and to access amenities, such as groceries. If this is the case, you will need to drive to your project site so that you have access to a personal vehicle during your project.

For projects located in most locations within the D.C. area a vehicle is not required. You will have access to trains and the D.C. Metro. The cost of parking in the D.C. area can be prohibitive. Projects in Alaska and Hawaii also do not usually require a personal vehicle.

No matter what location will be hosting your project be sure to speak to your mentor about whether or not you will need a personal vehicle before you make your travel plans.

## **Housing**

GSA does not determine housing arrangements. Your on-site mentor will determine whether your project site will be able to provide free housing. If your project site provides free housing your mentor should clearly describe housing arrangements for you before you arrive. Spouses, guests, and pets cannot be accommodated in most cases. Some job sites have nearby camping, RV, and hotel facilities should you have visitors.

If free housing is provided your host site will also provide electricity/gas and water (general utilities.) Phone service, internet, and laundry facilities may or may not be provided, depending on the location. In some remote locations there may be no phone or internet options.

If your project site is not able to provide free housing, you will be required to arrange your own accommodations for the duration of your project. Your mentor, or other staff at the location, may be able to provide you with information on the local rental market, and make recommendations on good places to start looking. GSA is also willing to help participants find accommodations for their project.

### **Remember: Ask Questions about Your Housing**

Whether your project site is providing housing, or you have arranged a temporary rental, remember to ask questions so you know what to expect. Here are some recommended questions to ask about your housing:

1. What are the house rules? (Visitors, parties, pets, smoking, grilling, shared space with other tenants.)
2. What supplies will I need to bring for my stay? Do I need items such as sheets, towels, pots, dishes, sleeping bag?
3. Are utilities included? If not, do you know what the average utility cost is per month?
4. Does the housing include laundry facilities? How far is it to the nearest laundry facilities?
5. Is there parking included/available with my housing? OR Are there any public transportation options in this area?
6. How close is the housing to amenities, such as a grocery store?
7. How close is the housing to activities for me to pursue on my time off?
8. How do I get to the housing? (Never forget to ask for directions to your housing. GPS units are not always dependable in remote areas.)
9. When can/should I check into my housing? (We suggest arriving a day or two before your project starts so you can get settled in.)
10. What are the check-in procedures? Where can I pick up my key?

## **Holidays and Time Off**

GSA recommends that GeoCorps participants receive paid time off (PTO) for federal holidays (Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, etc.), as well as one day of PTO per each six-week period served on a GeoCorps project. To use PTO, a participant will simply need to submit the hours on their time sheet and contact GSA to let them know which submitted hours represent PTO. The participant and their mentor are responsible for tracking PTO.

GeoCorps participants may take unpaid time off, with permission from their primary mentor. If the primary mentor is willing to allow the time to be made up later, and the participant is willing and able to do so, the hours can be added to the end of the project, pushing back the project end date. It is also acceptable for the participant to not make up hours missed, if that is not feasible (due to the participant's availability, primary mentor schedule/needs, etc.). All of a participant's time off and schedule changes are up to the discretion of the primary mentor unless otherwise covered by local or national laws. Please be sure to notify GSA of all time off and schedule changes ASAP so that GSA can track the hours and ensure that the total time worked fits within the project budget.

If a participant feels ill or shows symptoms of illness, they should inform their primary mentor, remain at home, and not report to the project site that day. If they are already at the project site, they should inform their primary mentor and return home immediately.

## **Flexible/Alternative Work Schedules**

The default schedule for most GeoCorps projects is 40 hours per week, worked Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (local time). However, if permitted by the agency host site and project mentor, GeoCorps participants may work flexible/alternative schedules. For example, participants may work a compressed workweek and complete 40 hours in fewer than five work days, but they must not work more than 10 hours in a 24 hour period. Any arrangement made for flexible/alternative schedules will be on a trial basis, and may be discontinued, at will, at any time at the request of the participant, GSA, the hosting agency, or Actalent Services. Once approved, the participant (and mentor) should communicate their flexible/alternative work schedule with GSA and with any team members. The weekly timesheets submitted by the participant should reflect their flexible/alternative schedule and the actual hours worked.

## **Outside Employment**

GeoCorps participants are permitted to work at jobs outside of their GeoCorps project, as long as it does not interfere with their participation in the GeoCorps program. Participants with outside jobs are expected to maintain the work schedule they have agreed to with their GeoCorps mentor and GSA. Work done outside of the GeoCorps program will not be considered an excuse for poor project performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, or refusal to conduct project-related travel. If outside work activity causes or contributes to project-related problems, it must be discontinued. If problems persist, the participant may be removed from the program.

## **Telecommuting**

GeoCorps participants may telecommute (work remotely) on a case-by-case basis, subject to the procedures, rules, and regulations set by the host agency. Telecommuting is a voluntary arrangement that may be appropriate for some participants and some projects. The GeoCorps mentor and participant should work together to coordinate resources, such as computers and files. Neither GSA nor Actalent Services are responsible for providing resources to support a telecommuting arrangement. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a program-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of

participating in the GeoCorps program. In general, a GeoCorps participant should have worked at least six full weeks (240 hours) on the project before transitioning to telecommuting, but this requirement can be waived at the host agency's discretion. Any telecommuting arrangement made will be on a trial basis, and may be discontinued, at will, at any time at the request of the host agency. If you enter into a telecommuting arrangement with your host agency, please notify GSA and provide as many details as possible.

# GeoCorps Gear List

This list is intended as a guideline to assist you in preparing for your GeoCorps America project. Every project has slightly different required gear, depending on the nature of the work and outdoor environment. Use the check boxes to create a customized gear list for your project and needs. We suggest that you review this gear list with your mentor to ensure that you bring everything that is required for your project, and don't bring items that will be provided for you.

## Every GeoCorps Participant

### Clothes & Personal Items

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Socks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Underwear
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bottoms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tops
<input type="checkbox"/>	Comfortable Shoes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacket
<input type="checkbox"/>	Layers (For changing weather)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Outfit (For presentations)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water bottle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Glasses
<input type="checkbox"/>	Toiletries
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Screen
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect Repellant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Antihistamine
<input type="checkbox"/>	ID (Driver's License and/or Passport)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Dental Insurance Cards
<input type="checkbox"/>	Watch
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety Pins

### Household

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pots and Pans
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dishes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating & Cooking Utensils
<input type="checkbox"/>	Favorite Snacks or Local Ingredients
<input type="checkbox"/>	Favorite Drinks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bedding
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pillow
<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sewing/Mending Kit

### Travel

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vehicle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Camera
<input type="checkbox"/>	Memory Card/Film
<input type="checkbox"/>	Laptop/Personal Electronics
<input type="checkbox"/>	Batteries
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cell Phone
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cell Phone Charger
<input type="checkbox"/>	Books About Your Field Area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pack of Cards/Games
<input type="checkbox"/>	Headphones
<input type="checkbox"/>	Musical Instrument

## Field Work

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hiking Boots (Sturdy and broken in!)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Long Sleeve Shirt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Full Length, Durable Pants
<input type="checkbox"/>	Warm Layer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Layer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Hat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bandana
<input type="checkbox"/>	Backpacking Pack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Daypack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dry bag
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Bladder
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Bottle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Compass/GPS Unit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Binoculars
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notebook
<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing Utensil
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clip board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whistle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency Blanket/Bag
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid Kit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Head Lamp
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rope/Para cord
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hand Lens
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rock Hammer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photo Scale
<input type="checkbox"/>	North Arrow

## Will Be Camping

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleeping Bag (Appropriate to local conditions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flashlight/Lantern
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matches
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleeping Pad
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

## Office Setting

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transit Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Comfortable, Professional Shoes (For city walking)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Collared/Polo/Button Down Shirt /Blouse
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trousers/Skirts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Backpack/Shoulder Bag/Messenger Bag



## Mountains

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Long Sleeve Shirts
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Durable, Full Length Pants
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Sweater/Sweatshirt/Fleece
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Warm Jacket
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Base Layer Top
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Base Layer Bottom
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Thermals
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Windproof/Waterproof Layers
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Warm Hat
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Scarf
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Gloves
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Warm/Wool Socks
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Sunscreen
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Moisturizer
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Insect Repellant
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Lip balm with SPF
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Waterproof Hiking Boots
<input type="checkbox"/>	□ Walking Poles



## Desert

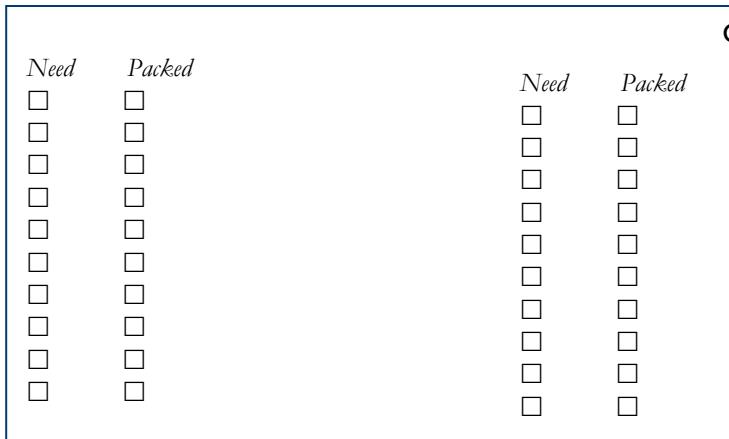


## Forest

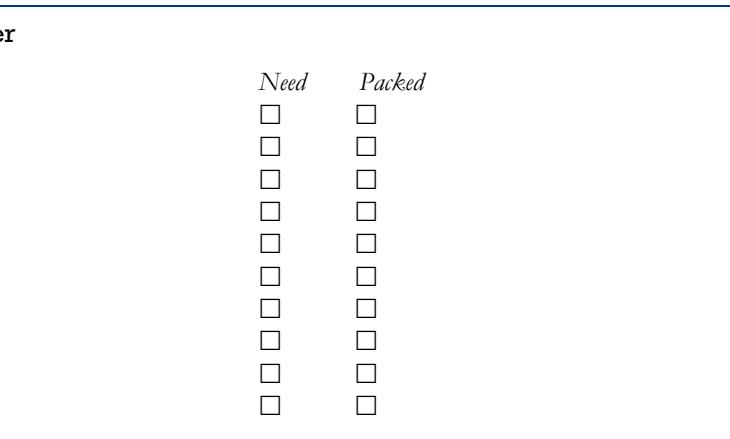


## Coast

Need	Packed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Breathable, Long Sleeve Shirt
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pants with Zip Off Shorts
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Breathable, Full Length Pants
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof Layers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof Hiking Boots
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Shorts
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Swimwear
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sun hat
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sandals
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Insect Repellant
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mosquito Netting



Other



## During Your GeoCorps Project

### Making the Most of Your Experience



Past GeoCorps participants have participated in a wide variety of activities and training, including:

- Wildland fire training
- Recording bat flights
- Bear safety training
- Taking a sled dog for a walk

To learn more about the experiences of past GeoCorps participants read their contributions to GSA's [Speaking of Geoscience](#) blog.

During your GeoCorps project you will be presented with a variety of opportunities and challenges. How you approach each of these will, in part, determine how much you get out of your GeoCorps experience.

Here are some tips for making the most of your time as a GeoCorps Participant:

- Say “yes” to new opportunities and training.

The agencies you are working with often have opportunities and training for things that you may not have thought of. If you are offered these opportunities, take them! Even if they are not directly related to your project, or your eventual career, new opportunities and training can shape your career in unexpected ways. And you never know when that unusual piece of training might make you stand out in a pile of applications.

- Face challenges with solutions.

You will face bumps and challenges in your GeoCorps projects. Focus on facing each challenge by coming up with solutions. If you realize a research or field method won’t work, before you bring the problem to your supervisor, jot down a few possible solutions. Being proactive like this will make the problem-solving process more fun, and less stressful.

- Expect the unfamiliar.

You should expect some differences in climate, amenities, and culture, especially if you have travelled a good distance to your GeoCorps project. Bring one or two small things with you that will remind you of home, or a supply of those treats you can’t live without, for when you need something familiar. Otherwise, face the unfamiliar with a sense of adventure, and new cultural habits as an opportunity to strengthen your communication skills. North to South, East to West, the USA has a great variety of cultural practices and communities. Enjoy the variety.

## Your Responsibilities

- Agree on start and end dates for the position with your Agency mentor
- Inform GSA of any changes to these dates
- Sign and return the GSA Participant Agreement
- Complete federal background check paperwork promptly
- Complete Actalent Services enrollment paperwork promptly
- Abide by all rules and regulations outlined in the participant agreement, Actalent Services contract, and stipulated by the agency supervisor
- Carry out all position responsibilities as outlined by the Agency mentor and written in the position description
- **Complete an Actalent Services timesheet no later than your last shift**
- Wear the official GeoCorps America patch, that will be sent to your work site
- Announce that you represent the GeoCorps America program during any formal or informal presentation
- Acknowledge the Geological Society of America in any publication, audiovisual, or written material developed as part of your participation in the program
- Work 40 hours a week for 11 -12 weeks unless otherwise agreed by both GSA and your mentor
- Complete additional reasonable duties relevant to the position
- Notify GSA if unreasonable duties are being assigned
- Complete and submit project final materials to GSA
- Get permission from your primary mentor, and relevant staff at your work site, before making any plans to publish or present work related to your GeoCorps project

## *Safety*

Rules are necessary to protect the health and safety of participants, maintain uninterrupted service, and protect the host organizations goodwill and property. Safety procedures and policies will be given to you and will vary by organization. Safety training specific to your project will be provided by the organization. You will be responsible for your personal safety during your GeoCorps term.

It is MANDATORY to wear a seatbelt at all times when operating or riding in a government vehicle. Please consult with your mentor regarding agency policies on the use of phones and mobile devices in government vehicles.

## *Publications of GeoCorps Project Information*

When appropriate, GeoCorps participants are encouraged to publish and/or present the scientific results of the work they conduct through the GeoCorps program. However, no results from GeoCorps projects may be published or presented in any venue without the advance, written permission from the agency staff listed as your primary mentor, any additional agency staff relevant to your project, and GSA.

If you plan on publishing or presenting work related to your GeoCorps project please complete the online form [Permission to Publish/Present](#). Information you supply in this form will be shared directly with the agency staff member listed as your primary mentor in GSA's records. If you are submitting a request to present at a GSA Annual or Section meeting you must have completed this form by the Abstract Submission Deadline.

GSA is happy to provide feedback and guidance on abstracts submitted for GSA Annual or Section Meetings. Receiving feedback on your abstract does not replace getting permission to present from your mentor, other agency staff, or GSA.

Before agreeing to provide and providing any information about GeoCorps to the media, GeoCorps participants must give both GSA and the partnering agency advance notice, and discuss with the partnering agency its policies relating to communicating with the media. The GeoCorps participant should inform GSA and the partnering agency of the media outlet's name, the reporter/author's name and contact information, the date(s) they expect to communicate with the media, the topic(s) they plan to discuss, and the anticipated release date and location/publication in which the information will appear.

#### *Acknowledging the Program*

GSA requires that participants recognize the GeoCorps America Program, the Geological Society of America, and the agency where they work in written materials, publications, and oral presentations.

On-site Agency mentors can provide specific information about how to acknowledge their agency.

GSA requires participants to make acknowledgements as follows.

1. Participants are encouraged to wear the GeoCorps Field Shirts and Patch. If the project site stipulates an area on the uniform where the patch must be worn, you should adhere to the agency policy.
2. Participants must announce their participation in the GeoCorps program during any formal or informal presentation (to the public or agency staff.)
3. Participants must acknowledge the Geological Society of America GeoCorps America program in any publication, audiovisual, PowerPoint presentation, or written material developed as a part of their GeoCorps project since GSA is their main sponsor.

#### **GSA Code of Conduct**

As a GeoCorps participant, whether you are a member of GSA or not, you agree to follow the GSA Code of Conduct when you sign your GSA Participant Agreement.

#### *Purpose*

This code provides responsibilities and guiding principles of conduct for all members of the Geological Society of America (GSA), or participants in GSA programs. It is the mission of GSA to advance all fields in the geosciences, enhance the professional growth of all members, and promote the geosciences in the service of humankind, and in fulfilling this mission, members have professional obligations to their colleagues, students, clients, employers, and the public as well as to their science.

In support of these obligations, this code aims to:

- Further understanding in geosciences through open and honest communication of research;
- Ensure appropriate accessibility of accurate and reliable geological information to educators, students, employers, policy makers, and the public; and
- Encourage effective education and training in all disciplines of the geosciences.

### *Statement of Responsibilities and Principles*

Members of GSA, and participants in GSA programs, are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct and to maintain personal and professional integrity. GSA members should observe the following responsibilities and principles in the conduct of their professional affairs.

Responsibilities to:

- The Sciences and Profession

Geoscientists should seek to advance all disciplines of the geosciences, understand the limitations of their knowledge, and respect objectivity and truth in their professional endeavors. Geoscientists should ensure that their scientific contributions, and those of their collaborators, are thorough, accurate, and unbiased in design, implementation, and presentation. Where appropriate, geoscientists should remain current with developments in their field, share ideas and information, keep accurate and complete laboratory records, maintain integrity in all conduct and publications, and give due credit to the contributions of others. Conflicts of interest and scientific misconduct, such as fabrication, falsification, omission/suppression of results, and plagiarism, are incompatible with this code.

- The Students and Colleagues

Geoscientists should mentor and encourage all students in a manner that is open-minded, objective and enthusiastic; promotes curiosity, and recognizes that education is a fundamental trust conferred by society for the promotion of the student's learning and professional development. Geoscientists should treat associates with respect, regardless of the level of their formal education, encourage them, learn with them, share ideas honestly, and give credit for their contributions.

- The Employer and Employees

Geoscientists should promote and protect the legitimate interests of their employers, perform work honestly and competently, fulfill obligations, and safeguard proprietary information. Geoscientists, as employers, should treat subordinates with respect for their professionalism and concern for their well-being, and provide them with a safe, congenial working environment, fair compensation, and proper acknowledgment of their scientific contributions.

- The Clients and End Users

Geoscientists accept uncertainty and integrate information with a unique perspective involving time, space, and scale. Geoscientists should provide for, advise, and serve clients and end users in a manner that is honest, objective, competent, dependable, honorable, respectful, and fair.



- The Public and Humankind

All geoscientists have a professional responsibility to serve the public interest and welfare and to further knowledge of science for the benefit of humankind. Geoscientists should actively be concerned with the health and welfare of humankind and effectively communicate knowledge about potential natural hazards to the public. Public comments on scientific matters should be made with care and precision, without unsubstantiated, exaggerated, or premature statements.

- The Environment and Natural Resources

Geoscientists should strive to communicate their knowledge to protect the environment and to provide appropriate stewardship of natural resources. Geoscientists should also understand and anticipate the consequences of their work on the environment and natural resources.

Principles of Conduct for Members:

In meeting these responsibilities, members will follow these guiding principles in conducting their professional activities.

- Members will strive to communicate their knowledge of the geosciences to the public; to promote proper stewardship of all natural resources in manner that is environmentally and economically responsible; to effectively communicate their knowledge of natural hazards to the public; to apply their knowledge for the enhancement of public policy and land-use planning; and to support educational opportunities for students, the profession, and the public.
- Members will treat students respectfully and without exploitation.
- Members will strive to accurately represent an understanding and knowledge of the geosciences, avoiding and discouraging the dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements about the geosciences.
- Members will offer their professional advice and guidance only on those subjects in which they are informed and qualified through professional training or experience.
- Members will strive to cooperate with other researchers whenever possible and appropriate to assure rapid interchange and dissemination of knowledge in the geosciences.
- In publications, members should strive to differentiate facts, opinions, and hypotheses.
- Members will not plagiarize in verbal or written communication and will give full and proper credit to the creativity, ideas, and efforts of colleagues and students. Members will not fabricate, falsify, or suppress results, deliberately misrepresent research findings, or otherwise commit scientific fraud.
- Members will not attempt to injure the reputation or professional opportunities of another scientist by false, biased, or undocumented claims. Members will not seek employment, grants, or gain by offers of gifts or favors, or by any other malicious action.
- Members will undertake reasonable efforts to ensure inclusiveness and will not discriminate against others, in the course of their work on the basis of race, sex, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, and disability. Members will not practice or condone harassment in any form in any professional context.
- Members will not represent themselves as spokespersons for the Society without express authorization by the President of GSA.

## General Conduct

GeoCorps Participants must also follow the codes of conduct established by their host organization. If a participant violates any agency conduct or policy rule, the agency may discipline the participant.

Each Agency has its own rules for conduct. The following list is a sample of actions that may violate general codes of conduct.

- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information or other sensitive information, such as the location of geologic, paleontological, archaeological, historic, and cultural artifacts.
- Unauthorized possession or destruction of federal, state, or private property.
- Deliberate misuse or unauthorized use of agency supplies, materials, or machines.
- Altering or misrepresenting one's work hours or travel expenses.
- Fighting, threatening or attempting to injury another on agency premises.
- Falsifying agency records or reports.
- Visiting, loitering, loafing, lounging, or sleeping during scheduled hours, or leaving the office/field area without mentor's permission.
- Receiving or making excessive personal telephone calls.
- Allowing an unauthorized person on agency premises.
- The use of abusive, threatening, or obscene language.
- Exceeding the agreed upon number or length of break periods.
- Absenteeism and frequent tardiness.
- Failing to properly complete required reporting.
- Failing to properly operate an agency vehicle.
- Failing to meet agency service standards in terms of quantity and quality.
- Interfering with the work of an Agency employee or volunteer.
- Violation of sanitary or safety rules.
- Intoxication during project time, including possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs on agency property, and any other violation of the agency's Substance Abuse policy.
- Tampering with or mishandling mechanical equipment.

When you wear a host organization uniform and/or a GeoCorps patch you represent that organization, and GSA. Please remember this and act accordingly.

GSA is dedicated to being an organization where a variety of ideas, abilities, backgrounds, and needs are encouraged, and our diverse membership is provided with opportunities to participate and contribute. To learn more about how GSA approaches diversity please read GSA's Official Position Statement on [Diversity in the Geosciences Community](#).

## Harassment

All defamatory, abusive, profane, threatening and offensive comments are strictly prohibited. Personal attacks, harassment, bullying or cruelty are also prohibited. If you are subjected to any hostile behavior as described above, or witness such behavior, you should report this behavior to your agency mentor and/or the GSA GeoCorps program manager.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination and is unlawful. If you are subjected to sexual harassment, or you witness sexual harassment occurring to others, you should report this behavior to your agency mentor, the GSA GeoCorps program manager, and/or to law enforcement.

## **Complaints**

If you have complaints related to your project responsibilities or housing arrangements, please attempt to resolve them with your agency mentor first, then notify the GeoCorps program manager at GSA. If you are uncomfortable making a complaint to your agency mentor, or another appropriate agency representative, the GSA GeoCorps manager should be contacted. The agency mentor, agency representative or liaison, or GSA GeoCorps manager will promptly and fairly investigate any complaint by a participant.

## **Disciplinary Action and Dismissal from the Program**

If a mentor or the GeoCorps program manager feels that a participant's conduct or performance does not follow these policies, reflects poorly on GSA or the GeoCorps program, or threatens the health or safety of others, then action may be taken to discipline or dismiss the participant. The participant acknowledges this in the signed GSA Participant Agreement. The agency mentor will contact the GeoCorps America program manager if immediate dismissal is required. You will not be paid for the weeks not completed.

## Completing Your GeoCorps Project

### Final Materials

Submission of final materials is required for each GeoCorps participant in order to successfully complete the program. Final materials are due by **12 Noon Mountain Time on September 1, or 10 days after your project end date**, whichever comes last.

Projects that extend over two calendar years (Example: project starts October 2022 and end February 2023.) also require a short progress update, due by **12 Noon Mountain Time on December 10**.

If your GeoCorps project is extended you will only be required to submit one set of final materials, at the end of your project. However, you will be required to submit a short progress report if your extension is 12 weeks or longer.

The final materials required from each participant include:

- An informal report on your project and time as a GeoCorps participant.
- 5 - 10 photos of you in action during your project.
- Thank you letter
- Completion of the online Program Evaluation.

For details on the requirements for each of the components of the final materials please refer to the Final Materials Guidance document, specific to the organization hosting your project, on the GeoCorps [Resources: Participants](#) page.

Once you have submitted all of your final materials to GSA you will receive:

- GeoCorps Alumni OpenBadge, and
- Hard copy completion certificate, mailed to the address included in your program evaluation.

If you do not submit your final materials you have not officially completed the GeoCorps America program. Failure to complete and submit your final materials will result in:

- Not receiving a GeoCorps OpenBadge;
- Not receiving a Completion Certificate;
- Potential negative reference should GSA be contacted by a potential employer, or future GeoCorps mentor; and
- GSA not signing off on Public Land Corps paperwork.

#### What is an OpenBadge?

An [OpenBadge](#) is digital badge that contains data describing the skills and experience you have gained. You can add the GeoCorps Alumni badge to certain social media platforms, such as LinkedIn, to create a record of your achievement.

## Special Hiring Authorities

GeoCorps participants may be eligible for Federal special hiring authorities. Eligibility for special hiring authorities is determined by a number of factors, all controlled by the federal government, including the formal agreement between GSA and the agency or location hosting your project.

If you are dedicated to pursuing a career within the federal government you can:

- Speak to your agency mentor about whether your project is part of an agreement that includes the Public Land Corps Act (PLC), and whether you might be eligible to use this benefit.
- Speak to GSA about any upcoming Direct Hire Authority (DHA) positions.
- Request a copy of our FAQ document about the Public Land Corps Special Hiring Authority and who is eligible.
- For information about the Direct Hire Authority for Resource Assistant Internship Program read this [Department of the Interior Bulletin](#).

## Returning to the Program

There are no limits to how many times you can participate in the GeoCorps America program. If you have participated in the GeoCorps America program previously, we encourage you to seek out GeoCorps opportunities that require a higher level of skill and/or experience.

## Opportunities for Alumni

### *Make the Most of Your GSA Membership*



Visit the GSA website to see all that GSA has to offer its [members](#). We strongly encourage you to attend future GSA Annual Meetings or Section Meetings. Consider presenting your GeoCorps work at the next GSA Annual Meeting, and volunteering during the meeting. (Volunteers receive a reduced registration fee.) Of special interest to students and recent graduates are the On To the Future program, Employment Service Center job search tool, Field Camp Scholar Award, and GSA Research Grants.

### *GSA's Graduate Student Research Grants*

The [GSA Graduate Student Research Grants](#) program provides partial support for research being conducted by graduate students in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Central America. If you are a current graduate student consider applying for a Graduate Student Research Grant.

### *GSA's On To the Future Program*

GSA's [On To the Future](#) program provides partial funding for diverse GSA members to travel to their first GSA Annual Meeting. If you have never attended a GSA Annual Meeting consider applying to the On To The Future program.

#### *Present at Conferences, Publish, and Seek New Opportunities*

We encourage participants to present at conferences other than GSA meetings, publish their work (with agency permission) and continue to seek new and exciting geoscience opportunities.

#### *Participate in Scientists in Parks (SIP)*

Are you looking for more geoscience opportunities on America's public lands? Visit the National Park Service's [SIP website](#) for more information.

#### *Find GeoCorps Memorabilia at Zazzle.com*

The Geological Society of America has a Zazzle shop. Visit the [Geosociety Shop](#) to purchase memorabilia for GeoCorps and other GSA programs.

#### *Submit Photos to the Share the Experience Contest*

The nationwide [Share the Experience](#) contest seeks images that highlight the best of America's public lands. As GeoCorps participants you have experienced the best of America's public lands in a way many never have the opportunity to otherwise. Submit all those incredible photos you send us for a chance to win some great prizes!

### **Keeping In Touch**

GSA GeoCorps staff like to hear about what GeoCorps participants do after they complete their GeoCorps project. Please, keep in touch by e-mailing the GeoCorps program manager, or by completing the [GeoCorps Alumni Survey](#).

You can keep up to date with news and events related to the GeoCorps America program by following us on social media.



[www.facebook.com/geocorps](http://www.facebook.com/geocorps)



@ GeoCorps

## Contacts

If you have questions about the GeoCorps America program please contact the program staff at GSA.

Lesley Petrie  
Education and Outreach Program Coordinator  
303-357-1097  
[lpetrie@geosociety.org](mailto:lpetrie@geosociety.org)

Matt Dawson  
Education Programs Manager  
303-357-1025  
[mdawson@geosociety.org](mailto:mdawson@geosociety.org)

If you have questions specifically pertaining to timesheets, please contact Actalent Services.

Jody Rubin  
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303-224-4468 (office)  
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## Further Resources

### About GSA and the GeoCorps America Program

- The GeoCorps America Homepage  
[www.geosociety.org/geocorps](http://www.geosociety.org/geocorps)
- About GeoCorps America  
[https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Education\\_Careers/Field\\_Experiences/GeoCorps\\_America/GSA/fieldexp/GeoCorps/about.aspx](https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Education_Careers/Field_Experiences/GeoCorps_America/GSA/fieldexp/GeoCorps/about.aspx)
- The GeoCorps America Participant Resources Page  
[https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Education\\_Careers/Field\\_Experiences/GeoCorps\\_America/GSA/fieldexp/GeoCorps/resources\\_par.aspx](https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Education_Careers/Field_Experiences/GeoCorps_America/GSA/fieldexp/GeoCorps/resources_par.aspx)
- About the Geological Society of America  
<https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/about/GSA/About/Home.aspx>
- The Geological Society of America's Official Position Statement on Diversity in the Geosciences Community  
<https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/about/Diversity/GSA/About/Diversity.aspx>

### GSA and GeoCorps Social Media

- The GSA Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/GSA.1888>
- The GSA Twitter Feed (@geosociety)  
<https://twitter.com/geosociety>
- GeoCorps America Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/GeoCorps/>
- GeoCorps America Twitter Feed (@geocorps)  
<https://twitter.com/geocorps>

### About the BLM DHA-RAI Program

- BLM Careers Page  
<https://www.blm.gov/careers/students-and-grads/direct-hire-program>

### About Actalent Services, Inc.

- Actalent Services Homepage  
<https://www.actalentservices.com/>
- Actalent Services Timesheet Page  
<https://timeandexpense.actalentservices.com/webtime/>
- Aerotek Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/Aerotek>
- Aerotek Twitter Feed  
<https://twitter.com/aerotek>

### Diversity

- Executive Order — Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce  
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/25/executive-order-on-diversity-equity-inclusion-and-accessibility-in-the-federal-workforce/>
- Executive Order 13583 – Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/08/18/executive-order-13583-establishing-coordinated-government-wide-initiatives>

- US Office of Personnel Management, Government Wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2011  
<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/diversity-and-inclusion/reports/governmentwidestrategicplan.pdf>
- “Education Supports Racial and Ethnic Equality in STEM.” *U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration.*  
<https://www.commerce.gov/news/reports/2011/09/education-supports-racial-and-ethnic-equality-stem>
- “Good Jobs Now and for the Future.” *U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration.*  
<https://www.commerce.gov/news/reports/2011/07/stem-good-jobs-now-and-future>
- “Women in STEM: A Gender Gap to Innovation.” *U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration.*  
<https://www.commerce.gov/news/reports/2011/08/women-stem-gender-gap-innovation>

### Diversity Organizations

- Institute for Broadening Participation (IBP)  
<https://www.pathwaystoscience.org/>
- American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)  
<https://www.aises.org/>
- Society for Advancement Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)  
<https://www.sacnas.org/>
- National Association of Black Geoscientists (NABG)  
<https://nabg-us.org/>



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GeoCorps America is a program of The Geological Society of America  
[www.geosociety.org](http://www.geosociety.org)



With support from the GSA Foundation  
[www.gsafweb.org](http://www.gsafweb.org)