



▶ NABGG HAS FORMED A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MS-PHD PROGRAM AT USF (UNIV-SOUTH FLORIDA ...



▶ NABGG ANNOUNCES LARGEST SCHOLARSHIP DISBURSEMENT AT NABGG'S HISTORIC 25TH ANNIVERSARY TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE



▶ NABGG HAS BEGUN FORMAL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE AFRICA STUDY GROUP (ASG), A SUBSET OF THE AAG (AMERICAN ASSOC. OF GEOGRAPHERS) ...

NABGG



PRISM

○ 2ND ○ EDITION ○ 2006

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK GEOLOGISTS AND GEOPHYSICISTS

Thanks to Everyone !

*Who assisted in making the
NABGG 2006 Technology Conference
that was held in
Houston, Texas
September 27 – 30, 2006*

AN EVENT THAT WAS TRULY HISTORICAL !



**NABGG Conference 2006
25th Anniversary**

NABGG – Over 25 Years of Achievement

*Thanks to Mr. Daniel Samake, former NABGG Vice President
and Mrs. Sandra Price, former NABGG Asst. Secretary for their years of service.*

*Congratulations to our new NABGG Executive Team and NABGG Advisory Board
for the 2007/2008 term. Please review the new appointments on the NABGG website:*

www.nabgg.org

NABGG ANNOUNCEMENTS

Volunteers Needed – NABGG is planning to increase our outreach activities in 2007. Please contact the new NABGG National Outreach Co-Chairs – Dr. Amanda Mosola & Ms. Tomieka Searcy, if you would like to assist them in the planned outreach activities in 2007. Please see their detailed planned agenda in their joint article (Page 11).

The NABGG 2007 Technology Conference is tentavely planned to be held in Phoenix, Arizona on Sept. 17-20, 2007. Continue to check the website for the latest updates on the conference in the coming weeks.

If you are willing to sponsor a student to attend the upcoming NABGG Conference, please e-mail NABGG. You can contribute towards registration cost, airfare, and/or hotel expenses for a deserving student.

President's Corner

Mr. Robert J. Johnson



Final 2006 Highlights

Greetings to everyone! The second half of 2006 was the beginning of a new chapter in NABGG's growth and history. The following are only highlights of **some** of the NABGG activities during the final two quarters of 2006.

Outreach & Networking

We continued to join hands with professional groups that outreach to the local and national community. NABGG has joined hands in partnership with **Dr. Ashanti Pyrtle**, Director, of the **MS-PHD Program**, based at the University of South Florida. Her program offers fellowship opportunities to deserving minority scholars who are seeking advanced degrees.

NABGG was invited to attend the Nigerian Shell Employees – Nigerian Independence Day Luncheon, by **Ms. Carolyn Green**, Regional Geologist, Shell Oil (NABGG Member). This is a laudable organization that is vitally interested in promoting the upstream/downstream sectors of the energy industry, while maintaining cultural links to Nigeria. The event was well attended and afforded NABGG exposure to new potential members.

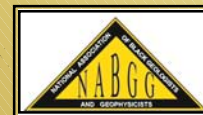
AABE – Houston Chapter's President Mr. Lee Kellough and his members have strongly supported NABGG in 2006. We salute all of their hard work that re-activated the AABE-Houston Chapter. NABGG supports all of their efforts in this regard and will continue to support the new AABE-Houston administration which was recently elected to office.

TSU – NABGG We continue to support the efforts of **Dr. Robert Ford**, Associate Provost for Research, **Texas Southern University** in his quest to expand educational programs at the university. His vision is that earth sciences will be a component of his future vision at the university. He is the primary point of contact for the national MSIRP conference that has been re-scheduled to be held at TSU in 2008. This event promotes the expansion of research opportunities for minority academic institutions. (www.msirp.org)

NABGG 25th Annual Technology Conference

This historic conference was a resounding success! Please review **Ms. Carolyn Green-Jones'** excellent summary of this event. We achieved all of our targeted goals and exceeded them with your continuing assistance and the support of our corporate partners. Many thanks to all of the excellent speakers, volunteers and students who volunteered their time to make our conference a success. All the hard work, that was done to make this a memorable occasion, will be treasured for years to come.

The 2007 NABGG scholarship disbursement was the largest that NABGG has ever distributed in our history. NABGG is proud of the excellent scholars that were scholarship recipients in 2006.



United States Department of Energy & NABGG

NABGG members acknowledged the efforts and past support of the DOE at the annual Mickey Leland Fellowship Awards Dinner that was held to honor new DOE scholars. The DOE is very interested in hosting NABGG interns to participate in their 2007 Summer Intern program. Please send emails to **Ms. Aisha Ragas** for more details.

GSA Conference Philadelphia - October 2006

I had the opportunity to attend the Geological Society of America Conference that was held in Philadelphia, PA. Oct 22 - 25, 2006. NABGG manned a booth at this show and was very well received by the attendees. The exposure allowed the NABGG to gain new members and provided a great visibility to those unaware of the organization. Please see **Mr. Jerome Murphy's** detailed report on this conference.

Thanks !

NABGG 2006 Holiday Fundraiser Gala – December, 2006 – Many Thanks to **Ms. Teresa Dimmer Ms. Geraldine Grant, and Ms. Marian Walters**, for coordinating an excellent evening this year. We also thank **Mr. Olufemi Akanbi** for his final official act of service in collecting our donated toys and delivering them to the Star of Hope. Femi, thanks for all your work in the past years with Outreach.

Looking forward to 2007 ! New Outreach Opportunities

I am excited about the coming year and the future plans of **Dr. Amanda Mosola** and **Ms. Tomieka Searcy** (The new National Co-Chairs of the NABGG Outreach Committee) This dynamic duo has plans to outreach to elementary schools, middle schools and high schools to expose students to the fun and opportunities found in the geosciences. Please support them in their efforts this year!

Get ready for the 2007 NABGG Technology Conference

Dr. Wesley Ward, Chair and **Ms. Nicole Scott** Co-Chair will be managing the NABGG 2007 Technology Conference that is planned to be held in Phoenix, Arizona on Sept.. 17-20, 2007. They are being assisted by **Ms. Angela Talbot** (former AABE – Officer Houston). Angela will act as the liaison to them and has volunteered to assist NABGG in coordination of conference venue and events.

Last but not leastNew NABGG Office

As a part of our continuing effort to grow the organization, we have taken a leap of faith and will be opening an office in February, 2007. This space will provide needed storage and meeting space for monthly technical sessions. News will be forthcoming on our Open House 2007. Thanks for all of your support and efforts to keep our organization active and vital!

Blessings Always,

RJ

Mixers Helped Generate Conference Support

The first of two Pre-Conference Mixers in preparing for the 25th Annual Conference of the NABGG was held at the beautiful home of **Mr. Darryl and Mrs. Dawnia Willis** on July 21, 2006. Approximately twenty five to thirty persons attended the event, including members of the NABGG, American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE), and invited prospective NABGG members.

The event was filled with networking, socializing, and just great conversation. Dinner was prepared by **Mr. Michael S. Mitchell**, NABGG Assistant Treasurer and dessert supplied by **Ms. Teresa Dimmer**, NABGG Assistant Secretary. **Mr. Robert Johnson**, NABGG President, gave motivating remarks regarding conference participation, and words of gratitude to Darryl and Dawnia for the use of their home. Everyone in attendance enjoyed themselves and pledged support for the upcoming conference.

The second Pre-Conference Mixer was held on August 25, 2006, at the home of **Ms. Marian V. Walters**, National Treasurer of NABGG. NABGG members and the executive members of the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE) - Houston Chapter were invited guests. NABGG was pleased to welcome the attendees to this event, which included past, current, and future members of NABGG and AABE.

The event began with a wine and cheese reception and continued in the evening with a lavish buffet. The delicious meal was prepared by **Mr. Michael S. Mitchell**, Assistant Treasurer, and the amazing buffet display was arranged by **Ms. Carolyn Jones**, Advisory Board Member. Immediately following dinner, members and friends continued to mingle until a reception speech was given by NABGG's President, **Mr. Robert J. Johnson**. During his speech, it was clear that a great deal of admiration, motivation, and enthusiasm for the NABGG was shown by guests throughout the room. Robert's speech, in addition to a few Executive Team Members and Board Members, inspired several guests to commit to attending and/or participating in the 25th Anniversary Conference. Following the President's speech, networking and hospitality continued throughout the evening

These events contributed to the success of the NABGG 25th Anniversary Conference and NABGG thanks those who hosted and participated in these mixers.

-Contributed by: Michael S.Mitchell and Marian Walters

Walking to Support Education



On September 16, 2006, several NABGG members and friends participated in the 21st Annual UNCF Walk-A-Thon. The event was held at MacGregor Park in Houston, Texas. All participating members successfully completed the 6-mile trek.

The annual UNCF Walk-a-thon allows NABGG members, along with hundreds of Houston-area volunteers, to join in the effort to improve the lives of deserving students. We have been an active participant in this event for several years, and hope to continue showing our support in enhancing the quality of education for minority students at historically Black colleges and universities.

Thanks to all members whom participated by walking, raising funds, and organizing our team walk. We look forward to NABGG supporting the UNCF in 2007.

-Contributed by: Teresa Dimmer



Celebrating a Milestone: NABGG's 25th Anniversary Conference



2006 - 2008 NABGG Officers Elect

Left to right: Deborah Branch - Parliamentarian, Geraldine Grant - Secretary, Marian Walters - Treasurer, Robert J. Johnson - President, Roxanne Lamb - Member-at-Large, Michael Mitchell - Asst. Treasurer, Jerome Murphy - Member-at-Large, Teresa Dimmer - Asst. Secretary

The National Association of Black Geologists & Geophysicists celebrated its 25th Anniversary Technology Conference at the Historical Magnolia Hotel in downtown Houston.



NABGG President Robert J. Johnson
25th Anniversary Chairperson Carolyn Green Jones

Members came together from all across the nation and abroad to 1) Conduct the business of the organization, 2) Award scholarships to deserving college students, 3) Research new career opportunities and 4) Engage each other in technical and academic discussions of the latest trends in various geoscientific disciplines, highlighting topics such as; geoscience visualization, environmental justice, astrophysics, structural geology, and hydrocarbon exploration techniques.

In addition to the business, members, spouses, students and friends, enjoyed various activities, including a golf tournament, a reception hosted by NABGG President **Mr. Robert J. Johnson**, the Scholarship Awards luncheon featured **Mr. A. T. Cejka**, President of ExxonMobil Exploration Company & Vice President of ExxonMobil Corporation, and the Benefactor's Appreciation Luncheon which featured **Ms. Annell Bay**, Vice President of Shell E& P Americas.

The Conference Opening Session Speaker was **Mr. Michael Carroll**, first President of the NABGG. The Conference Final Session's Keynote Speaker was **Ms. Rachel Dunn**, President of TATNET, TransAfrica Technical Network and first woman to serve as president of NABGG.



Geoscience Scholars Attending the NABGG Black & Gold Ball

This year, over 30 students majoring in the geosciences participated in conference activities. Students from the following universities were in attendance: Penn State, University Park, PA; University of Missouri-Rolla, Rolla, MO; Oklahoma State, Stillwater, OK; Wayne State, Detroit MI; Fort Valley State, Ft Valley, GA; Rice University, Houston, TX; West Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI; Elizabeth City State University, Elizabeth City, NC; and the University of Texas at Austin & Galveston. The NABGG also invited students from two local high schools math and science magnet programs, Booker T. Washington and Madison High Schools. The students were thrilled to see so many professional geoscientists who look like them and come from very similar backgrounds. The NABGG hopes to continue to spread the awareness of opportunities in the geosciences to minority students who are deciding on future career paths.

Proclamations were received from Texas Governor **Rick Perry**, City of Houston Mayor **Bill White**, The **National Science Foundation**, and The **Geological Society of America**. Numerous corporations, education institutions and other professional organizations were on hand to showcase their resources by setting up exhibit booths in the conference exhibition hall.

Friday night, NABGG members closed the celebration out by enjoying a beautiful evening at the Black & Gold Ball in the grand ballroom of the hotel, which included a night of special presentations, cocktails, dinner, and dancing featuring the musical talents of **Joe Carmouche & Company**.

On Saturday morning, the NABGG and their sister organization, the **American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE)**, in conjunction with the **Houston Area Urban League** took part in the Youth Career Explosion at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Over a thousand young people came out to seek information regarding career opportunities and college assistance.

NABGG announced its largest scholarship distribution in its quarter century of support to NABGG scholars, with over \$25,000.00 going to the recipients. NABGG has raised over \$400,000 over the past 25 years to assist students pursuing degrees in the earth sciences.

This milestone conference truly embodied NABGG's purpose to provide an avenue for professional relationships to develop among its members and to support and encourage students in the geosciences.

-Contributed by: Carolyn Jones
-Photography by: Guy E. Bouldin

Join Us In Phoenix on Sept. 17-20, 2007 !



NABGG 25th Anniversary 2006 Scholarship Recipients

The NABGG would like to congratulate the following scholars:

Ovieme Aki- University of Houston
Hendratta Ali- University of Missouri- Rolla
Inyene Awakessien- University of Oklahoma
Keisha Durant- Grand Valley State University
Ernest Fonyuy- University of Missouri- Rolla
Baraka Kinabo- University of Missouri- Rolla
Malcolm Lockett- Fort Valley State University
Haile Mengistu- Western Michigan University
Moikwathai Moidaki- University of Missouri- Rolla
Sylvia Nassaka- Makerere University
Albert Oko- Kansas State University
Elebiju Olumide- University of Oklahoma
Shakira Turner- Elizabeth City State University
Odumah Ugo- University of Houston



Congratulations and continued success with your studies!!!

2007 Geoscience Scholarship Opportunities:



NABGG Scholarship: Deadline April 1st www.nabgg.com

Society of Exploration Geophysicists: Deadline Feb 1st students.seg.org (no www)

Geological Society of America: Deadline Feb 1st www.geosociety.org/students.htm

American Geological Institute: Deadline Mar 1st for scholarship, Feb 1st for fellowship, Mar 15th for internship www.agiweb.org

Association for Women Geoscientists: Deadlines in March and April (multiple scholarships offered) www.awg.org

Society of Petrophysicists & Well Log Analysts: Deadline April 1st www.spwla.org

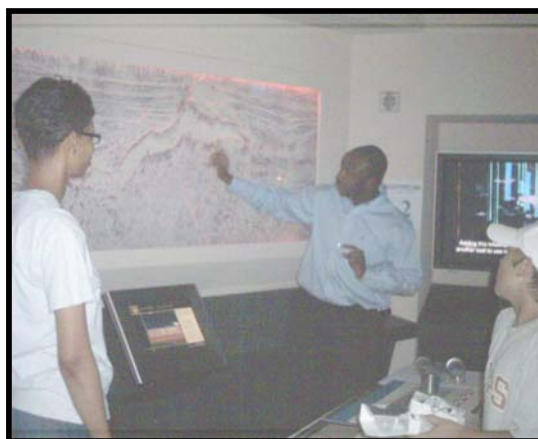
American Institute of Professional Geologists: Deadline Feb 15th www.aipg.org

- Contributed by: Aisha Ragas & Roxanne Lamb

Encouraging Earth Science at the Museum

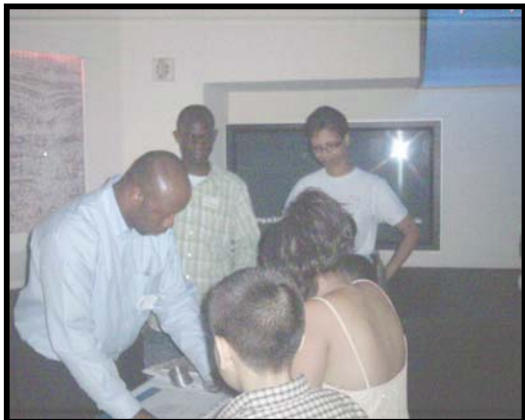
The **2006 Earth Science Week** at the Museum of Natural Science, Houston Texas kicked off on Saturday October 7th, 2006 with the “Family Day”. The event titled “Be a Citizen Scientist” was sponsored by the American Geological Institute (AGI), and its member societies were actively involved in the week long activities.

The NABGG, among other organizations, was actively represented by members who volunteered at one of the 12 designated tables set up for the event to enlighten visitors at the museum. NABGG members manned the seismic and well log interpretation table, showing visuals of seismic lines, cross-sections, well-logs, science study materials and Earth science learning kits provided by AGI.



Nicole and Ozzie explaining a seismic section to the kids

Ozzie, Nicole, and Olufemi displaying a geological map.



The event provided NABGG members the opportunity to explain the processes involved in the exploration and production of oil and gas. In addition, volunteers used the event to explain various careers in the geosciences and their job responsibilities. They also encouraged students to take an active interest in science and use the event to ask questions about this field of study.

The event was well attended by parents and kids from all over the city of Houston and very encouraging feedback about NABGG’s presentation was received from many visitors. The NABGG Outreach Committee would like to thank all the volunteers for their support of this event and hope that 2007 will provide an increased participation from NABGG members. Special thanks to: **Nicole Scott, Robert J. Johnson, Amanda Mosola (and daughter), Ken Yarbrough, Ozzie Ilaboya, Tomieka Searcy, Teresa Dimmer, and Liz Watkins.**

-Contributed by: Olufemi Akanbi

NABGG Exposure at 2006 GSA Conference

On October 22-25, 2006, the Geologic Society of America (GSA) hosted its annual conference in Philadelphia, PA. The NABGG had a significant presence at this conference, with a booth and several members in attendance. NABGG had one of the more popular booths at the conference and generated quite a bit of interest; with consistently more than one visitor at a time, it was necessary to have several members present to answer questions and address concerns.



Member at Large, Jerome Murphy welcomes a new NABGG student member to the NABGG

NABGG Board member, Wes Ward (r) with a colleague.



Frequently asked questions included, *"Where can I find more minority geoscientists for these opportunities?"* and *"I did not know that this organization existed, how can I join?"* During the GSA conference, 25 new student and professional members joined the NABGG either online or at the booth. It is clear that NABGG's participation in the 2006 GSA annual meeting was a tremendous success, which is why NABGG has already committed to participate in the 2007 meeting in Denver, CO.



New NABGG Student Members from various parts of world

NABGG scholars manning the booth with Member-at-Large, Jerome Murphy (r)



NABGG Member, Dr. Susan Eriksson, UNAVCO (l) with her staff members at the UNAVCO booth



NABGG Members exchanging ideas on the conference floor

-Contributed by: Jerome Murphy

A New Approach for NABGG Outreach Efforts - NCOP

The objective of the **NABGG Community Outreach Program** is to support students and teachers in the learning of geoscience at all levels of our public education system: elementary school, middle school, high school and their teachers. The program will focus on schools in lower income neighborhoods with predominantly African-American student populations. Each event will focus on geology and education. In addition to the program outlined below, the events we have participated in for the last few years will continue: Earth Science Day event, UNCF Walkathon, and the Annual Holiday Toy Drive for the Star of Hope shelter.



Elementary School Rock Show

The purpose of the rock show for elementary schools is to introduce elementary school children to geology, geologists, and give them a chance to touch and examine rock samples as well as do simple geology, map, porosity, and other exercises. A short introduction will serve to focus the children's attention and give them some geologic fundamentals to think about as they look at the rocks. As they are young, the role of the volunteer is to answer questions, inspire them, be a familiar face who is also a practitioner of science, and to keep things under control. We have two different rock shows in mind. For a single classroom setting, two volunteers, a short powerpoint slide show, and a magnificent rock kit is already assembled with several samples in a separate container for each of several tables. Children will sit in a circle (kindergarten and 1st grade), or at tables and examine rocks samples (2nd-5th grades). Older grades (4th and 5th) will describe rock samples as time allows. The single classroom elementary school rock show has already been successfully given to kindergarten, 1st and 4th grade classes. We will begin scheduling single classroom elementary rock shows in January.

For a larger group, we are developing a multiple class rock show. This event would be held in a large room with several tables of rock samples as well as tables for an elevation map exercise, triangulation exercise, compass exercise, photos of environments, porosity exhibit (sand and water to fill in the pores), and more hands on activities. Although several volunteers would be required for the multiple class rock show it has the advantage of reaching large groups of children in a short period of time. It is also a suitable format for an after school program or community center. This larger rock show will be tested at a community center in January or February.

We plan to have some small item to give to the students, such as a bookmark with a great photograph of a mineral on it as well as our organization logo or an inexpensive magnifying glass with our logo on a sticker stuck on it at the end of the rock show. This way, they have something to remember us by, can find our organization again, or at the very least show their parents which organization those nice black people who had all those cool rocks came from.

Middle School Field Trips

Field trips for middle school students are an opportunity to spend a few hours with students selected as high achievers with promise at challenged schools. The students would be nominated by their science teacher and sent an invitation to attend along with recognition of their selection. The field trip would involve as many NABGG members as possible. The destination might be the Galveston Island State Park (to be evaluated) or the Matagorda Peninsula.

FIELD TRIP

During these trips, an NABGG buddy would get to know a small group of students and encourage them to talk about their personal vision of the future or introduce the concept, if they have not considered it before. At the site, Matagorda Peninsula, for example, the kids would be broken up into smaller teams, mixing students from different schools to do a field scavenger hunt to find a dune, a seagull, the direction of the waves, ripple forms, evidence of tides, fresh water, etc...(to be refined). The checklist would be designed to get them to observe closely the different environments (marsh, beach, bayou, estuary, and coastal wetlands), what comprises them, and how they are formed as well as influenced by animals and humans. With adequate funding, each student would be given an atlas at the conclusion of the trip which they might not have at home and would be able to put to immediate use in their studies.

A field trip was chosen, rather than a classroom exercise, as middle school is a challenging time for students as their workload is increasing, and also their high energy levels. Many of these students may not have spent much time in natural environments. Rewarding those children, who are striving hard with an outside activity, rather than a classroom lecture, would be an experience that will leave a lasting memory for the child.

These trips will require some funding. In the coming months, sources of funding will be researched. There is a fair amount of money for promoting science to U.S. students as our numbers are low and performance rather dismal as compared with other countries. Hopefully, we can tap into some of these funds.



High School Talks

Giving lectures at high schools is a great way to reach many students, inspire them with a familiar (brown) face, and highlight a field they may not have even realized existed as a rewarding and well paid profession. The talks must be of high quality and openness. For that reason, talks will be developed according to general guidelines by willing NABGG members to discuss their personal path through geology and their practice of the profession. Before presenting to a high school group, the talks will be reviewed and rehearsed with fellow NABGG members, and collectively honed to excellence. This also provides an opportunity for new NABGG members to develop and expand their presentation skills. Such presentation development workshops and test sessions would be planned for the annual technology conferences. Students who undergo training might then go back to their local communities, help other students to develop and refine their presentations, and inspire even more students with really engaging and memorable talks.

Teacher Certification

Mr. Carroll Ellis, Jr. of Virginia has developed a teacher certification course to improve the teaching of geology in school. Many states don't require earth science and many teachers have little or no background in geoscience. Mr. Ellis called on us to help with his program. The first step will be to understand Mr. Ellis's current efforts and how we can assist, augment and adapt his program for other parts of the country.

NABGG Outreach Projected Timetable - 2007

| Community Outreach Event | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Elementary Rock Show single class | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elementary Rock Show multiple classes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Middle School Field Trip | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| High School Lectures | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Presentation workshop | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher Certification | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Earth Day | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UNCF Walk | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holiday Toy Drive | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| color key: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| research and development | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| planning and preparation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| events | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Publicity



All of these events are excellent reasons to be recognized in the press. This will help with community outreach in the future, possibly increase membership, and aid in requesting funding from corporations. Press kits will be developed for events and sent to local press as appropriate. Digital photos will also be taken to document this community outreach on our website, as well as to give recognition to the wonderful students and teachers, that we reach with our efforts.

Resources

There are so many resources to draw from as we develop and test this program. First and foremost are our NABGG members. We hoped in writing this article to inform you of our plans for community outreach and to solicit your input. There is also a tremendous amount of material already developed and readily available on the web for bringing science into the classroom as volunteers. In the coming months, these resources will be explored and the program refined as appropriate materials are found. The institutions and corporations we work for may be another source of support and resources. Please send your wisdom, ideas, contacts, commitment, and experience to us so that we can strengthen the outreach program and ensure its success.



-Contributed by: Amanda Mosola & Tomieka Searcy



The next generation of geoscientists.

NABGG Holiday Fundraiser Gala 2006

The NABGG held its annual Holiday Fundraiser Gala on December 15, 2006 at **Ral's Café Bistro** on Wirt Road in Houston, TX. This fundraiser event was truly deemed a success. The event drew quite a group of NABGG members, prospective members, family and friends for a great evening of networking and socializing with the NABGG. It was a festive evening beginning with drinks and hors d'oeuvres and an assorted buffet dinner of fine cuisine followed. Dancing concluded the evening with music provided by DJ **Terry Willis**.

NABGG President, **Robert J. Johnson**, announced the new NABGG office location and unveiled the NABGG Leadership Plaques that will adorn the walls of our new office.

Continuing in our annual effort to assist others in need, we received lots of toy donations from members and guests for the Annual Toy Drive for the Star of Hope Facility. Your generosity is appreciated.

We would like to thank the local retailers that donated to the success of our fundraiser. The names and gifts are listed below. We look forward to patronizing these businesses in the future.

| <u>Company</u> | <u>Donation</u> |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Carmelo's | 2 Gift Certificates |
| Cleburne Cafeteria | 2 Gift Certificates |
| Hilton Houston Post Oak | Weekend Night with Breakfast for 2 guests |
| Hotel Galvez | Sunday Brunch for 2 guests |
| Magic Island (Houston) | Dinner and Show for 2 guests |
| Ruth's Chris Steak House | Gift Certificate |
| Spaghetti Western Italian Café | Certificate for Dinner for 2 guests |
| The Strip House | Gift Certificate |

The 2006 Holiday Fundraiser Committee thanks you for your continuing support of the NABGG organization:

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ms. Teresa Dimmer | Chairperson |
| Ms. Geraldine Grant | Co-Chairperson |
| Ms. Marian Walters | Co-Chairperson |
| Mr. Michael S. Mitchell | Host |
| Mr. Robert Stewart | Raffle Coordinator |
| Mr. Olufemi Akanbi | Holiday Toy Drive Chairperson |
| Ms. Tomieka Searcy | Holiday Toy Drive Co-Chairperson |

Guests attending the NABGG Holiday Fundraiser Gala 2006



- Contributed by: Teresa Dimmer
(Photography by: R. J. Johnson)

Backstory: In Houston - Dr. Kidane Araya, a Father to Many

Excerpt from The Christian Science Monitor -9/6/2006

Dr. Kidane Araya, a genial geophysicist, opens his heart and home to children fleeing the strife of East Africa.

By **Erica Lehrer Goldman** | *Correspondent*

HOUSTON – Geophysicist **Kidane Araya** grew up in East Africa's war-torn culture and knows the stories of its people - the ones who've been tortured, killed, the ones who've disappeared. But he's not thinking of those dark times tonight. At the Blue Nile Restaurant, he's in a celebratory mood, ordering huge platters of Ethiopian specialties - *kitfo*, *tibs*, *doro wot* - to please his dinner companions. He's preparing to say goodbye to yet another person he's helped to establish a new life in the United States.



NABGG Member, Dr. Kidane Araya

Although he has only two children of his own - sons in their 20s - Dr. Araya says most days he feels like a "father to hundreds." In a way, he is. He emigrated to the US 23 years ago from Eritrea, and has spent the past three years opening his heart, his pocketbook, and his home to scores of other young men and women fleeing religious and political persecution from Eritrea and Ethiopia, which have been embroiled in conflict for more than four decades, attracting world attention for their human rights violations.

When he's not toiling as a research scientist at an oil exploration firm, Araya is driving his battered Toyota through Texas, bringing comfort, advice, and friendship to detainees awaiting asylum hearings. More than 5,000 Ethiopians and Eritreans live in the Houston area. Araya stays in constant touch with pastors, lawyers, and members of the community who work on their behalf.

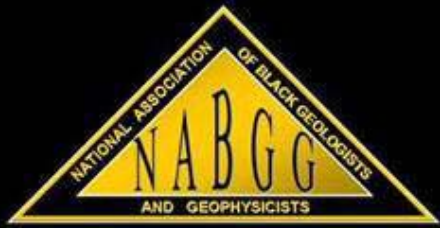
Ethiopian émigré **Kebede Gebray**, resettlement services director for the YMCA's International Services in Houston, says Araya stands out for his humanitarian work. Several years ago, Mr. Gebray asked Araya whether he would be willing to help lawyers translate documents. "From that day on, he just got more and more involved," says Gebray. "He took it as his personal responsibility to help."

Serving the oppressed has been a lifelong priority, says Araya. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in physics from Ethiopia's Addis Ababa University in 1978 during the "Red Terror," when the government systematically removed perceived opponents by intimidation, imprisonment, and execution. In the mid-1970s, he helped Eritreans escape persecution in Ethiopia by escorting them to villages that would shelter them. "Even now, I'm trying to help those who flee," he says.

Some of those he helps arrive in Houston as stowaways, climbing the anchors of Houston-bound ships docked in the Eritrean ports of Massawa or Assab. Others arrive by plane or car with bogus passports. Still others enter the country on foot, working their way up through Latin America.

Araya came to the US in 1983 on a World Bank and United Nations fellowship. In 1986, he earned his master's in geophysics from the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colo., following up with a PhD in 1993. Given the turmoil at home in 1993, Araya decided to stay in America.

Influenced by middle school teachers who were Peace Corps volunteers and an illustrated language textbook filled with anecdotes about American life, Araya had dreamed of living in the US since childhood. His sons **Aaron**, 22, and **Mussie**, 25, joined Araya in Houston 10 years ago. Inspired by his dad's example, Aaron, mathematics major at the University of Houston, now works with asylum seekers himself, taking them to get their drivers licenses, helping with job searches and what he calls "simple stuff." "I feel extremely proud of my dad, doing what he does, coming where we came from," Aaron says.



Is proud to announce the opening of our new location in Downtown Houston.

An open house is planned in Feb, 2007

Look for your invitation in the near future.



*723 Main Street, Suite 1006
Houston Bar Center*





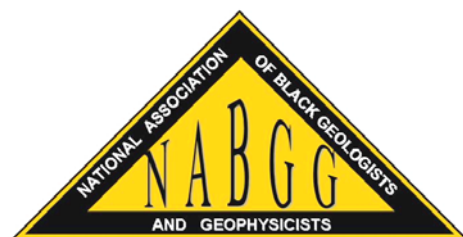
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