



From the Rep

Summer as an Academic Transition Season

Many of us use January 1 as a time to make changes and set new goals. For students and academics in the Northern Hemisphere, the middle-of-year boreal summer is also an important time of transition and turnover.

We could use the summer months as a time to re-evaluate goals, set intentions for the upcoming year, and plan our next steps. This is partly what we do when we select which classes to take or teach, and when we research graduate programs, jobs, and/or fellowships to apply to. Evaluating project goals and timelines is built into the processes of fieldwork and experiments, which often increase during the summer months. It's also what we are doing when we participate in internship programs, because those experiences help us to evaluate what directions we'd like to go for our careers.

I'd like to encourage all of us (myself included) to spend some time this summer thinking about some specific long-term goals. Which skills do you want to develop over the next academic year? What steps can you take this summer to set yourself up well for this year's application cycle? Some of the links and resources included in this issue are designed to help you think through these questions, like the Individual Development Plan. Other pieces help with defining goals, developing writing skills, and contacting potential graduate advisors.




— Chrissy

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TOS Student Highlight

JOSHUA MALIDZO CHIDZUGWE. Reminiscing about my childhood days growing up along the Western Indian Ocean coast in Kenya in East Africa stirs up a lot of warm memories. I remember how I would sit on the white sandy beaches, curiously trying to decode the encrypted messages carried by the swash and backwash from the deep sea. Later on, this hobby set a path for me to pursue a BSc. degree in geology at the University of Nairobi. Marine geology was one of my favorite courses; poring over bathymetric maps gave me insight into the world of the tallest seamounts and the deepest trenches known to humankind.

In the spring of 2018, I got an opportunity to advance my studies at Georgia State University where I am currently enrolled as a master's student. My ongoing research revolves around the effect of lacustrine brine compositions on the formation of iron minerals in paleo-lake geochemical settings. It involves a lot of lab simulations that can take hours or even days to undertake. My near future aim is to conduct a similar study in a broader geochemical environment—the ocean—while working toward a doctorate. However, I still leave my options open to pursue other interesting subjects that oceanography offers. Do I love what I do? Without a doubt. I am proud of my research and I believe it will lead me to fulfill my childhood dream.

Other than science, I love poetry and stamp-collecting. I am also learning Japanese under a self-teaching program. *Asante* (Kiswahili word for "Thank you" in English)

Resources

Struggling with Your Academic Writing?

Try these experiments in the *Science* "Letters to Young Scientists" column to get the words flowing. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.caredit.aay5007>

How to Correspond with Potential Graduate School Advisers

Read this helpful Clastic Detritus blog post by Brian Romans, a geology professor at Virginia Tech. <https://clasticdetritus.com/2015/08/21/how-to-correspond-with-potential-graduate-school-advisers/>

Have You Tried Making an IDP?

An Individual Development Plan helps you explore career possibilities and set goals. Get started at this *Science Careers* web page: <http://myidp.sciencereaders.org/>

Goal-Setting vs. Goal-Achieving

In this blog post from GradHacker, Katie Shives talks about how to stay on track in graduate school when thrown into an open-ended project. <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/goal-setting-vs-goal-achieving>

Making the Most of Your Summer Internship

In another GradHacker post, Andrew Bishop talks about lessons learned from past internships. <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/making-most-your-summer-internship>

Have You Read...?

Time Is Running Out for Sand

In a commentary published in *Nature* this week, authors describe how sand and gravel are being extracted faster than they can be replaced. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-019-02042-4>

Hot Carbon: Carbon-14 and a Revolution in Science

If you have time this summer to read a book, you might want to consider this new one by John Marra. See a review of this book in *Nature*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-019-01895-z>

Seen in *Oceanography*

POPs, PAHs, AND PLASTICS

Examples of the Status, Trend, and Cycling of Organic Chemicals of Environmental Concern in the Ocean

By John W. Farrington and Hideshige Takada

<https://doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2014.23>