



**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314**

**Office of the Assistant Director  
Directorate for Geosciences**

**September 15, 2021**

Dr. Luis Gonzalez  
Department of Geology  
The University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

Dear Dr. Gonzalez:

Thank you for submitting the report of the Committee of Visitors (COV) for the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO), Geosciences Education Program held on May 12-13, 2021. Both the COV report and the NSF response will be presented to the NSF Advisory Committee for Geosciences (AC-GEO) at the upcoming meeting in October 2021. Once approved by the AC-GEO, the report and NSF's response will be made public.

I sincerely appreciate the time and energy that you and each member of the COV dedicated to this process. NSF and the Geosciences Education community will benefit greatly from your thorough and thoughtful analysis. I was pleased to hear that the COV concluded that the Geosciences Education program is well-managed, and I am particularly appreciative of your constructive suggestions for improvements. The insights and recommendations provided by the COV will help us balance the near-term and long-range strategic and management objectives for the Directorate of Geosciences (GEO).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a decision was made to convene the COV through a virtual platform. It was a time when everyone was facing challenges on the work and family front. I greatly appreciate your willingness on the part of the COV to commit the time to gather virtually. Furthermore, I recognize the effort went far beyond the two days of virtual meetings. I am particularly grateful for the COV's responsiveness to the Self Study Report that the Geosciences Education Program undertook. The many hours of advance work with the self-study and reviewing portfolios of awards and declinations were clear from the informed discussions and thoughtful recommendations you have provided. We owe you and all members of the COV many thanks.

Dr. Brandon Jones, as well as the rest of the Geosciences Education Program team, have provided a specific set of responses to the committee's findings and recommendations in the enclosed document. This initial set of responses often includes a promise to consider the way forward, develop an action plan, and report on impacts of the action plan. As such, the first response will be followed at annual intervals, with the actions and impacts being more specifically documented over time.

Thank you again for your team's contribution to maintaining the tradition of close cooperation between NSF and the Geosciences Education community through the process of periodic outside review by a COV.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexandra Isern', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alexandra Isern  
Assistant Director

CC: AC-GEO Chair  
COV Chair Members