

## JOURNAL #10 - FEBRUARY 2026



**Louisiana's economic engine over time:** Most people associate the oil and gas industry with the most prevalent occupation for geologists, but Louisiana has always had a history of mining as well. Salt mines, like Cote Blanche, the one shown in this photo from David Ray Williamson, have traditionally kept geologists busy in Louisiana.

### Long Time, No See

Yes, yet again, we haven't produced an issue of the LBOPG Journal in quite a while, but we're hoping to make up for lost time with articles that you'll find useful and relevant. In this issue, we're taking on questions, confusion, new ideas, new aspects of the board's mission, and an accumulation of information on the demographics of our licensee base. We hope you enjoy the ride.

## Your Application, Your Account – Potayto, Potahto

For many of you who applied in the early days of the board's existence, the online application was just that – an application. However, with advancing technology, the online application now transforms into your online account after you are approved for either Geoscientist-in-training (GIT) certification or Professional Geoscientist (PG) license. Through this online account, you have access to your payment information, including when application and renewal fees are posted as paid, whether your account is up to date, and how long you have been certified or licensed. Because we want you to have the full benefit of this access, we encourage you to log into your account periodically both to be sure everything is accurate, as far as contact information and renewal records, and to assure that you can log in if you want to make a payment or contact us. The online portal is more than just a service for payments; it's a way to maintain contact with the board and to satisfy yourself that your information is accurate.

As with any online database system, glitches and anomalies occur. Sometimes the problems are caused by systemic errors, and others are caused by simple miscommunication regarding the process for logging on. Because the latter of these two is far more prevalent than the first, we are providing you with step-by-step instructions for logging in and with a troubleshooting guide if something goes wrong as you're logging in.

### *First, the instructions*

If you are already licensed, you should always log into your account for any transaction. To log in, select "Log In" from the menu at the top right of the website home page. Your login ID will always be an email address – usually the one you used when you initially applied for certification or license, unless you've either called us to change it or have used the online tool to change it yourself.

Of all the *systemic* errors we have noticed, the most common occurs at this point. If you think you've successfully changed your email address, but you cannot use it to log in, please call us. The fix is simple and quick, but if we don't know, we won't see it.

The most common *human* error of all is not recognizing that the little bar above the login field is a MENU bar, with the choices of "Applicant," "Licensee," "Board Member," or "Reference." The default is "Applicant," so be sure to select "Licensee" before you attempt to log in.

Passwords are yours alone, but if you've forgotten yours, don't worry. You can either use the online "forgot password" tool on the login page or call us. Either way, the result should be seamless and easy.

Once you've successfully logged in, you should see either a "Contact Information Update" page or a button that reads, "Manage license." If you reach the button first, click on it, and it should bring you to that "Contact Information Update" page. If your license is ready to be

renewed, you should also see the details for renewing your license on the right side of the same page. You'll also see other options, such as "payment history," "print certificate," and "print license card."

To renew your license and pay the fee online, follow the online instructions from this point. If you pay online, the acknowledgment that you have completed the required continuing education hours is included in the shopping cart. You'll need to click the checkbox indicating that you have completed those required hours before the system will allow you to complete the online transaction.

### *Problems? Tips and suggestions*

If your license has lapsed beyond the 60-day grace period, your license is considered expired, and you cannot renew without contacting our administrative office. If you attempt to log into your account, and you get a message that indicates that you have no license, chances are that your license has lapsed. Rarely, we have had system glitches in which records for licenses that had not actually expired did not update successfully with a previous transaction. If you get this message, and you feel it is in error, please call us. While systems may not be human, they still make mistakes. But we can usually correct them in mere moments – if we know about the problem.

So, just to recap: When in doubt, call us at 225-505-3766 or email us at [apply@LBOPG.org](mailto:apply@LBOPG.org). We're always happy to help.

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## Continuing Education Credits: Advice from the Trenches

One aspect of the Louisiana statute that created LBOPG always generates more feedback from our licensees than any other. That aspect is the requirement that all licensees and GITs must complete at least 14 hours of professional development and one hour of geoscience ethics training each year. The board is currently made up of members who are, themselves, geoscientists, so this requirement affects them as well. Board members have developed policies and procedures for fulfilling their responsibilities to uphold the statute and have long ago found ways to ensure that they comply with the continuing education (CE) requirements themselves. In this brief article, board members weigh in on their strategies to complete the continuing education hours without having to hustle at the end of the year to find CE opportunities.

William H. (Bill) Schramm, who has served as the board's chair and liaison to ASBOG and is currently the chair of the Compliance Committee, worked for many years at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, where he became instrumental in setting up in-house mini conferences to keep LDEQ staff up to date on issues in geology and ethics. Schramm has several strategies for obtaining at least the minimum number of CE

credits each year, but he emphasizes that those credits don't have to be expensive. "Most of the credits I earn cost very little or nothing," he explains. "I've always attended the local geological society meetings, and that's good for as many as 12 hours of continuing education credits each year, including ethics. All it costs is the \$20 annual membership fee and lunch."

David Ray Williamson, another past chair of the board and chair of the examination committee, has over 53 years of experience in geoscience and is licensed or registered as a Professional Geoscientist in four states. Williamson, who works full time as a consulting geologist, concedes that meeting the requirements for professional development can be a challenge. He manages to meet that challenge by planning ahead and not waiting until the end of the year to be sure he has enough hours. "Work on it all year a little bit at a time," he suggests.

Both Schramm and Williamson emphasize the importance of organizational and community service. Schramm points out that community service can be worth up to five hours of credit at no cost at all. Williamson offers several ideas from his own experience, including talking with elementary school students or scout troops about rocks and minerals; helping a local college or university geology professor with class field trips or with talks about what it's like to be a professional geologist; or joining the local geological society and perhaps even serving as an officer on the society's board.

Like Schramm, Williamson also enjoys independent study, which can become continuing education experiences. He says that opportunities are often found in leisure activities, such as reading books about the geology of areas "where you spend time to work, vacation, hike or fish." He points out that even watching videos on geological processes can be used as continuing education credit.

Both say that, if your work or independent study leads you to new ways of working in or thinking about an area of geology, then writing a short paper and presenting it at a professional meeting can also be an option for credit. Most conference administrators will waive attendance fees for those who make presentations at the meetings. And those credits are significant: a one-hour presentation is worth 3 hours of credit. If you're academically inclined, taking a three-hour-per-week semester course is worth up to 15 hours of credit, and teaching the course is worth 45 hours of credit, of which 30 hours will carry over for up to three years. There are limitations, of course. If the instructor teaches the same course every year, only the first course prep can be counted.

If you still have questions about what you can do to earn enough continuing education credits to satisfy Louisiana's statutory requirements, more information can be found on the board's website [here](#). Still need help? Give us a call at 225-505-3766 or send an email to [apply@LBOPG.org](mailto:apply@LBOPG.org). We'll be happy to talk with you.

## Maintaining the LOUISIANA Continuing Education Log Sheet

Central to complying with the Louisiana statute is maintaining accurate records of your continuing education activities. To assist you in this responsibility, we've created a log sheet – and you'll notice that it isn't like the Texas log sheet – that includes a legend of the codes for the various categories of CE activities that are allowed. We recommend that you use the template on our website to create one spreadsheet that you can use every year simply by adding a page. If you're especially proficient with Excel, you can even link the pages so that any carryover can be migrated forward into the page for the new year. In this article, we refer to the log sheet to explain step-by-step how to record activities with the correct codes, so you'll be ready in case your license number is randomly selected for audit.

### Step 1: Use the Right Form

The very first step for those licensed as Louisiana Professional Geoscientists is to recognize that they should be using the Louisiana Professional Geoscientist log sheet. One of the most annoying problems audit reviewers complain about is trying to navigate some other state's log sheet during an audit of a Louisiana license. **[As an added bit of advice: Don't annoy the reviewers.]** Each state has its own statute, its own rules, its own list of acceptable continuing education activities, and its own preferred method for recording those activities. While all states with license programs have similarities, their forms are all very different, so please be courteous and use the correct form.

### Step 2: Provide *All* the Requested Information

The next step is to provide the requested information on the form. Reviewers often see several license log sheets during their review sessions, and having the licensee's name, license number, and anniversary date at the top of the log sheet makes sorting out the various packets of audit materials much easier.

### Step 3: Code Activities Accurately and Honestly

Another very important aspect of the process is coding the activities according to the rubric provided with the log sheet. If an activity seems to fit more than one category, use your best judgment, but be aware that the reviewers use these codes to determine how the item fits into the licensee's overall continuing education activity. For example, Louisiana allows *up to* five hours of environmental and/or engineering activities each year. If a licensee reports more than that number, anything over the five hours will not count toward the required 15 hours. However, if an item is reported as G for geology and it is obviously *not* a geology activity, the reviewers must take the extra step of researching the activity to determine what the item should be coded.

## Step 4: Be Aware of the Variety of Allowable Activities

A corollary to the advice on coding activities is to develop an understanding of the types of continuing education activities that the board allows. The Compliance Committee reviewers allow almost anything related to geology, but some things just are NOT geology or in any way related to the profession this board regulates, including activities related to safety, business practices, finance, sexual harassment, and individual company policies.

However, the board recognizes the importance of promoting the profession in the wider community, helping others understand what geoscientists do, and helping other geoscientists learn more about new techniques and developments. For this reason, the board allows up to five hours of volunteer activities. Those activities may include teaching elementary school children about geological processes, paleontology, and rocks; being on hand at a local museum to talk about geology; or working with the local geological society on special community events.

Even better for your log sheet, if you develop a presentation on some aspect of geology or a related topic, you can claim three times the length of that presentation. For example, if you create a program for a one-hour lunch and learn, you earn three hours of credit. If you teach a course at a college or university that meets for an hour three times per week for a 15-week semester, you can earn up to 45 hours. One caveat applies for this type of activity: you can only use the triple credit once for each course prep. If you teach the same material using the same syllabus, you can only count 15 hours for those subsequent courses.

## Step 5: Provide Accurate Titles that Match the Documentation

Another issue reviewers report is the difficulty of matching activities claimed on the log sheet with the supporting documentation. Please be sure that the title on the log sheet matches the title on the documentation. Additionally, be sure presenters or authors listed on the log sheet match the documentation.

## Step 6: Make Sure Times Claimed Are Accurate

The board allows activities to be recorded in increments as small as 15 minutes (.25 on the log sheet). If an activity takes 20 minutes, for example, that's a third of an hour (.33 on the log sheet). Please don't claim a full hour for activities that clearly are *not* a full hour. Also, the board allows up to five hours for field trips; however, please **do not** count travel time to get to the field trip destination.

## Step 7: When In Doubt, Please ASK!

Members of the Compliance Committee and their staff are always willing to work with our licensees and are happy to help in any way they can. If you have any questions at all about how to record an activity or if it will count toward the required hours, please contact us.

## Geoscience Employment Statistics

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that, as of 2025, there were approximately 335,000 active geoscientists in the U.S. Approximately 25,000 to 30,000 of that number are geologists. Since it first began granting licenses in 2014, Louisiana has licensed 1464 Professional Geoscientists as of January 2026; approximately half of those licensees are still active.

The BLS and latest employment data show the monthly average number of working geoscientists in the U.S. was 337,167 as of December 2025. The BLS expects the number of jobs for geoscientists to increase from 461,152 in 2024 to 478,091 in 2034, a projected 3.7% increase.

The median annual salary for geoscience natural science managers was reported in 2024 to be \$161,000; the median salary for geologists, \$99,000; and for geological technicians, \$48,000. The median salary for environmental science post-secondary teachers was reported to be \$88,000.

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## Trends in the Profession: Resource from AGI

In an effort to assist our licensees in keeping up to date with the geoscience profession, we will begin in this issue to provide resources and links to materials on this topic.

### AGU/AGI Webinars

David Culpepper, LBOPG Board Member and Chair of the Outreach Committee, shared the following link to a recent webinar hosted by AGU and AGI. Please let us know what you think, and feel free to pass the link to others.

**Divining Workforce Trends in an Era of Chaos:  
AGU/AGI Heads and Chairs Webinar Series**

<https://profession.americangeosciences.org/webinars>

### GSA Position Paper

The Geological Society of America recently published a position paper on the importance of licensure. You can find the entire statement on their website [here](#).

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Chase Cromwell and wife Madeline Dickson (photo courtesy of Chase Cromwell)

## Profile of a Geoscientist: Chase Cromwell

Chase Cromwell loves rocks. That seems to be a defining characteristic of nearly every geologist, so he shares that love with most Louisiana Professional Geoscientist licensees. However, Chase's fascination has developed into a belief in, and a passion for, geology that is infectious. As I began to look over the notes on this profile, I kept coming back to that concept of "belief" because Chase took a long way round to embracing it. In fact, I was reminded of lines from one of my favorite holiday movies, the original *Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street* (I believe. I believe. It's crazy, but I believe.), when he explained his wayward path toward a career in geology.

His passion started as an avocation. He is a self-confessed rockhound, who has, from the time he was a young child, collected rock specimens, and still does, wherever he goes. "My wife has limited me on the number of samples I can bring home to only the best ones," he admits.

But after he graduated from high school and decided to attend the University of Mississippi, he had no idea what he wanted to do with his life. He had chosen to major in business marketing, relegating his rock collecting to just a hobby. When he took a physical geology course in the spring semester of 2006, he almost made that leap of faith to follow his true calling, but the Ole Miss



business school counselor managed to talk him out of it. So he graduated in 2009 with a business administration degree and went to work in that profession.

Two years later, he sat down with his parents to tell them that his heart wasn't in business – he was going back to school to get a degree in geology. “I wondered when you were going to do that,” his father responded. Apparently, his passion was evident to everyone but Chase.

Back at Ole Miss, he found the geology degree program was exactly what he needed. The program gave him a solid foundation in geology to build upon. At Ole Miss, the Department of Geology is a part of the School of Engineering, so he picked up additional classes and skills, like AutoCAD and GIS, that are still helping him in his career.

One of the most important aspects of his time in the program, however, was that the University of Mississippi Department of Geology stressed the importance of taking and passing the ASBOG exams. At the time, the department required seniors to take the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology exam, and if they passed, they were reimbursed for the cost of the exam.

Chase remembers group sessions where faculty members met with the exam candidates each week prior to testing. During those sessions, students answered questions and received feedback on their responses from their teachers. Students also became familiar with each other and traveled together from Oxford to Jackson to take the examination. He recalls that, on the trip back, they all compared notes on the exam and commiserated with each other.

As a bit of a good omen, he found out that one of his favorite professors, Dr. Cathy Grace, had also started out in another profession and changed to geology. When he had a choice of either taking a job after graduation or continuing in the master's program, he turned to her for advice. “The university will always be here,” she told him. “Take the job. You can always come back if you need to.”

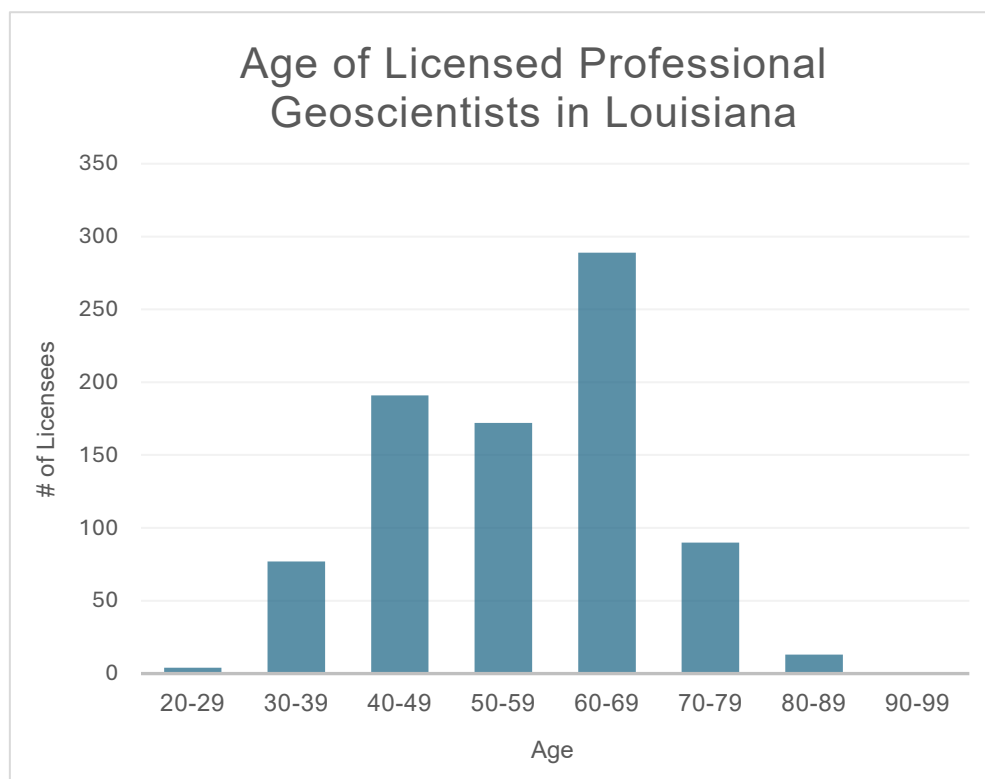
He took the job, which was in the oil and gas industry, but an economic downturn in that industry led him to switch to environmental geology. He joined LEAAF Environmental in 2016, where he remains today. He loves the field work, he says, and teaching the younger geologists on staff. Seeing and hearing the relief his work brings to the company's clients after a project is completed, he says, “is very special and makes everyone involved proud to help.” Of course, he also has the opportunity to travel to new and interesting locations, collecting more rocks as he does.

The feeling of community he has found among geologists has had a profound effect on Chase, and he wants others to experience both the professionalism and the camaraderie. He is a member of the executive board for the New Orleans Geological Society (NOGS) and has been working to reach geology students at local universities. Foremost in his presentations to students is the importance of becoming licensed. He says taking the first exam as early as possible sets students up for the best possible success in their careers, and he wants to spread the word as far as he can.

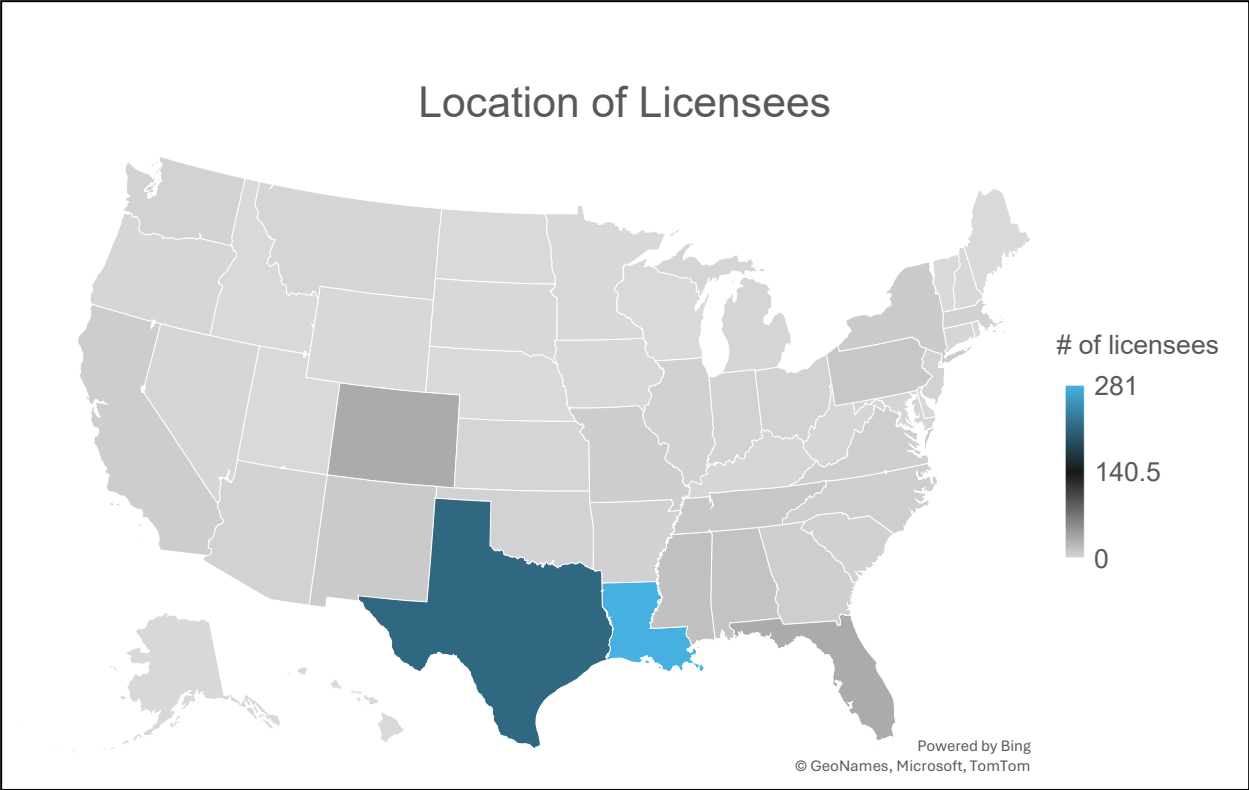
*Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary  
Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists*

# LBOPG's Demographic Database

The board's special project coordinators handle a variety of projects for us, and one of those is a newly developed demographic database. Seija Meaux and Sadé Dennis, our current coordinators, and former coordinator Mallory Pilié have worked through a large amount of data to create this new tool. Board members themselves have been curious about general information related to our licensee base – including the median age of a Louisiana Professional Geoscientist (56), the university that granted degrees to the largest number of our licensees (Louisiana State University), and the state in which the majority of our licensees live (Louisiana) – and their questions led the staff to put the information together in a more streamlined and accessible format. By collecting this data in a usable yet anonymous database (records on individual licensees are kept secure), the board now has a better understanding of its primary constituents. A few of the graphs our coordinators have developed from the information they have documented follow.

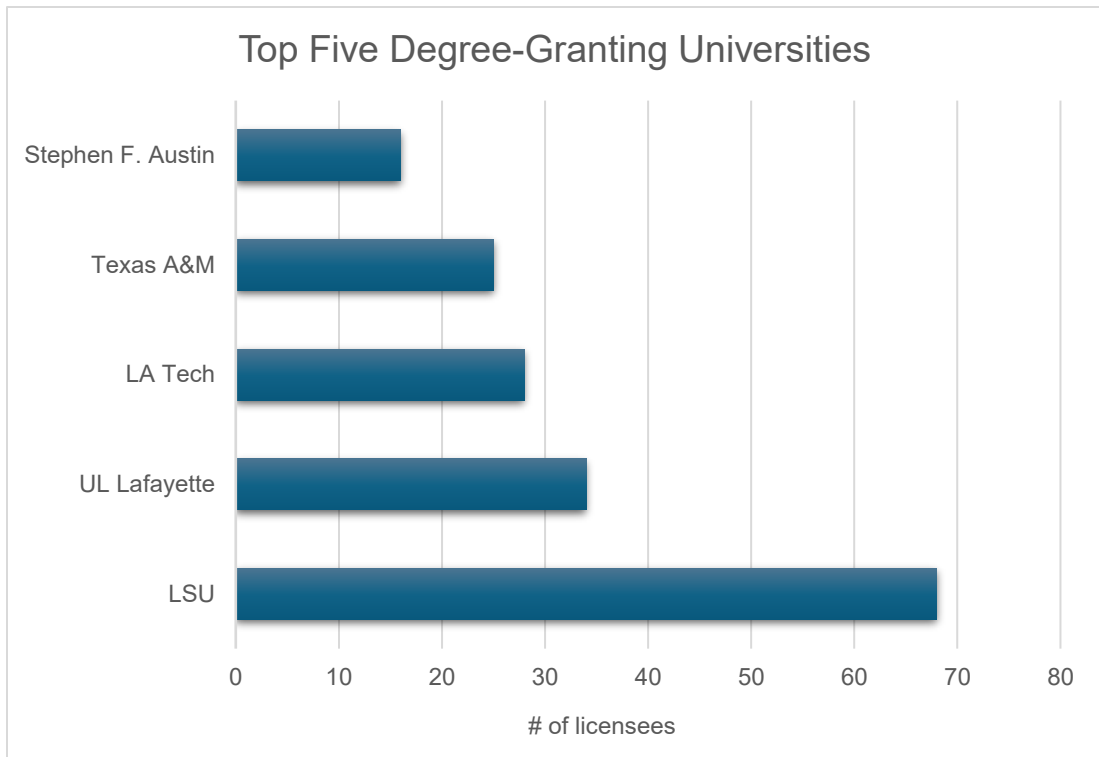


Ages of licensed professional geoscientists in Louisiana. The median age is 56 years, with ages ranging from 27 to 89. Data obtained from the LBOPG demographic database (December 2025).



Above: Geographic distribution of Louisiana licensees across the United States. The majority reside in Louisiana, followed by Texas, Colorado, Florida, and Mississippi. Below: Table illustrating number and total percentage of licensees in these top five states. Data source: LBOPG website roster (<https://lbopg.org/roster>) November 7, 2025; percentages are based on a total of 770 licensees.

Top Five States		
State	# of licensees	%
Louisiana	281	36.5
Texas	214	27.8
Colorado	33	4.3
Florida	33	4.3
Mississippi	18	2.3



The top five universities granting degrees to the largest number of licensees: Louisiana State University (n = 68), University of Louisiana at Lafayette (n = 34), Louisiana Tech University (n = 28), Texas A&M University (n = 25), and Stephen F. Austin State University (n = 16). Data obtained from the LBOPG demographic database and are limited to bachelor's degrees. December 2025.

## Looking for Someone to Make a Difference

Executive Secretary Brenda Macon, who has been with the board since 2016, is retiring at the end of 2026. The board is searching for her replacement and would like to have someone in place by September 2026 to work with Brenda and learn the ropes before she leaves. If you want to make an impact, this small state agency is the place to be. You can become instrumental in determining the direction of the board's administrative activities and find your niche. The Executive Secretary prepares for board meetings, maintains the website, and supervises all operations, including new applications, license renewals, state reporting, budgeting, workflow, and special projects. This challenging career opportunity offers flexibility for professional growth and responsibility while providing an exceptional work environment. The position requires at least an undergraduate degree with experience in business administration and office systems, databases, and governmental services. Salary is commensurate with experience and education. If you know of someone who may be interested in the position, or if you are interested in giving back to the profession yourself in this position, please contact Brenda at [apply@LBOPG.org](mailto:apply@LBOPG.org) or 225-505-3766.

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## Lloyd G. Hoover Memorial Service Award

On May 22, 2025, the Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists unanimously approved the creation of the Lloyd G. Hoover Memorial Service Award. This award was inspired by the life and work of former board member Lloyd Guice Hoover, of Shreveport, who passed away on January 2, 2025. Hoover was the engineering representative on the board from the very beginning (in 2015) and served with intelligence and humor, winning over his fellow board members, who were all geologists, even as they won his respect and friendship. He was a licensed Louisiana Professional Geoscientist as well as a licensed Louisiana Professional Engineer and a licensed Louisiana Professional Surveyor.

In his memory, the board is establishing this award to be presented to a geoscience professional who shares Lloyd's passion, vision, and commitment to service. Candidates will be nominated from among the licensed geoscientists who reside in Louisiana. A nomination review committee selected by the chair of LBOPG will review all nominations received by the end of the calendar year and award a deserving candidate by the end of January.

Criteria for nominees include:

- Licensed geoscientist in Louisiana in good standing with the board;
- Minimum 25 years of practice in the field of geoscience;
- Leadership in their career service;
- Membership and active participation in professional organizations;
- Mentorship of young professionals and students;
- Contributions to the field of geoscience; and
- Societal involvement outside of the profession of geoscience.



The nomination can be from anyone familiar with the nominee and that person's work experience and other relevant qualities. It should elucidate sufficient examples of the candidates' criteria for the committee to decide the award. For a nomination form and more information, please contact Brenda Macon at [apply@LBOPG.org](mailto:apply@LBOPG.org).

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## And finally...

Our board members and staff have always benefited from the board's association with the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) for many reasons. Not only do we all learn from each other when we get together, but we make new discoveries along the way. Meetings are always relevant to the issues we all share, but perhaps one of the most anticipated and appreciated aspects are the field trips that are integral to every meeting. In October, Dave Culpepper attended the ASBOG Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City as the voting delegate from Louisiana. Gathering inspiration from other attendees of the 2025 Fall Field Trip, he later took this pic of the Entrada Sandstone formations as seen from La Sal Mountains Viewpoint, Arches National Park in Moab, Utah.

