



**Association of Environmental & Engineering  
Geologists (AEG)**

**Visiting Professional Program (VPP)  
Manual**

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## **Section 1.0**

### **AEG's Visiting Professional Program**

#### **Summary**

The goal of the Visiting Professional Program (VPP) of the Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists (AEG) is to increase advocacy for AEG and the professions of engineering geology, environmental geology, and related fields. This can be accomplished by AEG members who volunteer their time in order to share their experiences with other professionals, community members, students, and others who may somehow benefit from the services AEG and its members provide.

The VPP shall be administered at the Chapter level, which may translate to a greater awareness of AEG and the role our industry plays in society. As an added benefit, increased membership within Chapters may occur, though the number of new members as a result of this program is difficult to estimate.

Each AEG Chapter is responsible for the program within their boundaries. This includes, but is not limited to, scheduling VPP presentations and promoting the VPP. A VPP Liaison position is suggested as a voluntary position within the Chapter. The duties of the Liaison, VPP volunteers, and AEG operational committees are described below.

The AEG committees that have collaborated in developing this plan include: Advocacy, K-12, Membership & Messaging, Strategic Planning, Chapter Support, and Student & Young Professional Support.

## **Section 2.0** **Responsibilities and Duties of Chapter VPP Liaison**

One or more VPP Liaison position(s) is recommended to be established in each Chapter. This is a Chapter member who volunteers for this position (or is nominated by a Chapter member and accepts) who will be required to organize and administer the VPP program in the Chapter. This will result in better organization of the program and simplify and streamline efforts to schedule and support the VPP at all levels. The responsibilities of the VPP Liaison are described in detail in this handbook and include the following steps:

- 1) Recruitment of volunteers for VPP**
- 2) Identify Venues and Events**
- 3) Solicit Organizations or Points of Contact to Promote VPP**
- 4) Assign a VPP Volunteer to a Scheduled Event**
- 5) Attend a Scheduled Semi-annual VPP Conference Call**

Each of these responsibilities will be discussed in detail below.

### **2.1. Recruitment of volunteers for VPP**

**The VPP Liaison shall maintain a list of current VPP volunteers within their Chapter and enlist additional Chapter members to participate in the VPP.**

The VPP liaison may generate a list of volunteers by sending out an email to all Chapter members requesting participation in the VPP program and asking members to respond if they are interested in participating. (Email and other contact information for Chapter members can be obtained from the Chapter Chair who maintains an Excel spreadsheet of current members.) The VPP Liaison will then create a list of those who responded and volunteered to be part of the VPP program. A current list of volunteers is then maintained by the VPP liaison. It is recommended that requests for volunteers be done on an annual basis. A VPP volunteer can then volunteer or be selected for a specific event based on their level of interest and proximity to the function location.

#### **Example of email soliciting a VPP Liaison:**

(you can copy and paste this text into your email message)

*Dear Chapter members;*

*The \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter is seeking a Visiting Professional Program (VPP) Liaison to oversee the VPP program in our Chapter.*

*The goal of the VPP is to increase advocacy for AEG and the professions of engineering geology, environmental geology, and related fields to the general public. This can be accomplished by AEG members who volunteer their time in order to share their experiences with other professionals, community members, students, and others who may somehow benefit from the services AEG and its members provide.*

*The VPP liaison will coordinate with both VPP volunteers and potential venues to set up specific activities. If you are interested in this worthwhile role, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Thank you,*

*John Doe, \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter VPP Liaison*

### Recruitment at Chapter Activities

The VPP liaison may also recruit volunteers at Chapter meetings and Chapter activities. During introductions at a meeting, the VPP liaison could be introduced by the facilitator (usually the Chapter chair) and then can generally explain the VPP program and ask for volunteers at that time. In addition, the VPP liaison can network among attendees at Chapter activities and look for those members that may be good candidates as a VPP volunteer. The best candidates would be those that have experience speaking in front of large audiences, have a passion for their profession and are interested in advocating environmental and engineering geology to the general public.

### **2.2. Identify Venues and Events**

**The VPP Liaison shall identify those venues (and points of contact) in your area that can be utilized to communicate information about AEG and the geosciences profession to the general public.**

The VPP liaison will be responsible for maintaining records of current and potential venues within the Chapter and also promoting the VPP to potential new venues (a list of possible venues may be supplied by AEG operational committees and also generated by the VPP).

Venues, events or activities can be identified through an internet search, existing databases, telephone directory, Chamber of Commerce, etc. Below are examples of venues:

- **Community** – Rotary Club, Lions Club, VFW, YMCA, media, some religious organizations
- **Education** – Geology programs at universities, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, school science clubs, regional and local science fairs, Engineers Week, Geosciences Week, Professionals Day, Parents Day. The AEG K-12 Committee is working on a list of education activities around the US that your Chapter can participate in. Check with the K-12 committee chair to see if/when this is available. In addition, two current lists of points of contact at universities that have geology programs are available through the Student and Young Professionals Support Committee (SYPS).

- **Other Professionals** – lawyers, bankers, real-estate professionals, surveyors, well drillers
- **Other Geosciences organizations** – Association of Women Geoscientists, Geoscientists without borders, local geology clubs, etc.
- **Government** – legislators, state agencies, regulators; Congressional Visits activities
- **Design Professionals** – architects, engineers

In addition, local organizations may already have a current list of ongoing science or other outreach activities occurring within an area. For example, the National Engineers Week Foundation maintains an ongoing list of activities occurring during Engineers week each year. In addition, typically the Engineers Week foundation solicits scientists and engineers to sign up for specific outreach activities during the week. A VPP volunteer could sign up for an outreach opportunity at a local school or museum. (An internet search may result in learning about many of these activities.)

### **2.3 Solicit Organizations or Points of Contact to Promote VPP**

**Solicit organizations or points of contact and offer for a VPP volunteer to give a presentation, attend a function, host a booth, etc.** The VPP liaison can send an email or telephone the contact person at a specific organization to request to participate in a function, attend a monthly meeting, or schedule a presentation.

The following examples are a general outline of what can be done to set up a VPP activity.

Example of specific steps taken to set up an activity:

*(Non-scientific group) SETTING UP A TALK TO THE ROTARY:*

- 1) Googled Rotary International and clicked on their main website.*
- 2) Clicked on Club Locator and searched state and/or city.*
- 3) Scanned the list of clubs and their meeting times and locations for when you were going to be here and narrowed the focus down to 3-4 possibilities, then prioritized them with respect to convenience of location and time.*
- 4) Reviewed the websites that were available for those 3-4 possibilities, and refined my priorities.*
- 5) Called the contact name for the first Rotary Club on my priority list and let her know who you were and what your talk was about (you'd need to send a short description to the Chapter Chair so they can "sell" you, like I did). She said it sounded appropriate, but she didn't set up the meeting presentations, and she gave me the email of the person who did.*
- 6) Sent an email to the meeting coordinator from my first priority club choice.*
- 7) Got a response in less than 30 minutes with an enthusiastic "yes." Followed up with two or three short emails coordinating logistics.*

*(Student organization) SETTING UP A TALK AT ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY:*

- 1) Googled some of the local private schools that are specifically geared to college-bound students.
- 2) Picked 2-3 possibilities (looked at things like classes offered [the school I picked as first priority had AP Environmental Science, Geology, Earth Science, and Environmental Biology classes listed] and faculty education/specialties), then also prioritized the schools with respect to numbers of students that could be reached, and convenience of location.
- 3) Called the school's general number and gave the receptionist a little background on who you are and that AEG wants to teach students about how geology affects their lives on a daily basis and what applied geologists do in their work. The receptionist passed me on to the Administrative Assistant to the head of the Science Department. Left a message on her voicemail.
- 4) Admin. Asst. called back and was enthusiastic about what I said, and asked for an email to send to teachers in the department. I'll copy and paste that email below.
- 5) Within 2 days, heard back from the school with an enthusiastic "yes." In fact, they'd keep you there all day if you could manage it (but we opted for talking three times in the morning in which you'll address somewhere between 75 and 100 students).
- 6) Followed up with two to three short emails coordinating logistics.

This is the email sent to Albuquerque Academy (see Step 4 above):

*Dear Jane,*

*Thanks for taking the time to talk with me earlier today. As I said, I'm a consulting geologist who lives in Your Town, USA and I'm very active in a professional organization called the Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists or AEG (a 3,000 member organization of applied geologists with members throughout the US and some international members as well). Our organization is actively working to inform the public about how people are affected by geology in their daily lives, and what environmental and engineering geologists do to make people's lives safer, cleaner, and easier. We especially want to reach young people, and so we thought of your science students. The AEG President, Jennifer Bauer, will be in the area for a few days in early February and we would love to have her speak to your students on Tuesday, February 7. She's available in the morning (until about 11 a.m.) or from mid-afternoon on (she's talking to The Rotary Club at noon that day). Her talk is called "Between a Rock and a Geologic Disaster: How Geologists Work toward Making You Safer." It is a PowerPoint-based presentation that can range from 25-40 minutes in length (let us know what works best for you) and she'd love to entertain questions after the talk. I've seen this talk and it's very engaging. Jennifer is a great speaker. Also, she does include local/regional issues, so the audience can relate it to places and projects they know. It may also be an inspiration to your students to meet her, as she is young (early 30's), has just started her own company, and is the leader of an international*

*organization - pretty impressive. I've attached two files for your review, one with Jenn's bio and one with an abstract for the presentation.*

*I know this is somewhat short notice, but we just got Jennifer's travel schedule set. I very much hope some of your science teachers will be interested in having her come speak to your students. I'll coordinate the logistics. My contact information is listed below.*

*Thank you so much for your consideration.*

*Sincerely, John Doe*

#### **2.4. Assign a VPP Volunteer to a Scheduled Event**

**Coordinate with available VPP volunteers to schedule a volunteer to participate in a specific activity.** This could be done by sending an email request to all volunteers with details of the event including date, time, location and what is expected of the volunteer (i.e. handing out materials, giving a presentation, etc.) Ask them to contact the VPP liaison if they are willing to participate in the event.

Once a volunteer has accepted to participate in an activity, contact the organization and give them the volunteer's name and contact information. The volunteer can then contact the organization directly or the organization can contact the volunteer.

Provide supporting materials to VPP volunteers (these materials may be provided to the Liaison by AEG operational committees). These materials may include PowerPoint presentations, handouts and other material.

#### **2.5. Attend a scheduled Semi-annual VPP Liaison Conference Call**

Attend semi-annual VPP Liaison conference call with other Chapter VPP Liaisons. The conference call will be attended/led by at least one AEG committee member and serves to:

1. Update committees on status of VPP and recommend improvements/request new supporting materials, where appropriate
2. Share successes, strategies, areas where improvement may be needed, get motivated/inspired, etc.
3. Stay in regular contact with VPP volunteers
4. Provide short article on VPP activities for Chapter newsletter and AEG NEWS.

VPP liaisons will get an email notifying them of the date/time set-up for the semi-annual conference call.

## **2.6 Keep of record of all VPP activities within your Chapter**

The VPP liaison should keep an ongoing record of all VPP activities within the Chapter including copies of lists of which organizations have been given talks or specific individuals at organizations that were good contacts, letters or requests sent to organizations, any responses from organizations, examples of what worked well, and example topics that were well received. A central electronic location that is accessible by other Chapter VPP liaisons is planned to be developed in the near future, This location path will be provided to VPP liaisons once it has been developed.

### **Section 3.0** **Responsibilities of VPP Volunteers**

As a potential VPP volunteer, inform the VPP Liaison that you would like to participate in the VPP program. If you would like to volunteer, but haven't seen a solicitation, notify the VPP Liaison (or Chapter Chair if you don't know who the Liaison is) that you would like to volunteer. A current list of volunteers is maintained by the VPP Liaison so a VPP volunteer can then volunteer or be selected for a specific event based on their level of interest and proximity to the function location.

The main responsibility of the VPP volunteer is to participate in the outreach event. All presentation scheduling and supporting materials will come from one person: their Chapter VPP Liaison. (The VPP volunteer may schedule their own outreach participation (i.e. their community Boy Scout meeting), but should notify the VPP Liaison of this activity.) The responsibilities of VPP volunteers are as follows:

- Recognize that the Chapter VPP Liaison is the point of contact for VPP tasks, including scheduling presentations and requesting supporting materials.
- Where appropriate, the VPP volunteer may do scheduling and/or provide their own materials, providing the VPP Liaison is made aware of the activity. For example, if the VPP volunteer is a member of the Lion's Club and volunteered to give a presentation on the profession to the Lion's Club, the VPP volunteer may schedule their own activity, and will notify the VPP of this activity. The VPP Liaison may facilitate this request by providing PowerPoint materials or handouts. In addition, if the VPP Liaison is aware of this activity, it can be included in the Outstanding Chapter Award application submitted to HQ.
- With support of the Liaison, develop a presentation topic and style as deemed appropriate for scheduled audience. The Advocacy Committee has developed an outreach PowerPoint presentation that may be used by the volunteer and can be obtained from the VPP Liaison. The PowerPoint can be revised/edited as needed for the specific activity.

- No minimum number of presentations is required, and the VPP volunteer maintains the right to accept or decline any presentation.
- Help the VPP Liaison to identify those venues (and points of contact) in your area that can be utilized to communicate information about AEG and the geosciences profession to the general public. Volunteers that live in various areas within the Chapter may have knowledge of venues and ongoing scheduled activities (i.e. science fairs, Lion's club meetings etc.) Communicate these venues/events to the VPP Liaison so that they can be added to the list of potential venues.

#### **Section 4.0** **Available VPP Packet Materials**

The operational committees that are responsible for facilitating the VPP program have created a VPP “packet” to be distributed to all Chapter VPP Liaisons. All current supporting materials are provided to each VPP Liaison in the “VPP Liaison Packet” upon accepting the position. Please notify the Chair of the Student and Young Professionals Support Committee that you have accepted the VPP liaison position in your Chapter and to request the VPP packet. New supporting materials will be distributed as they are made available.

The electronic packet will include at least the following:

- Detailed VPP Liaison manual for the program, detailing recommended responsibilities and procedures that should maximize the effectiveness/success of the program.
- List of all current VPP volunteers within the Chapter.
- List of well established venues within the Chapter (VPP Liaison and volunteers will be responsible for supplementing the list with additional, local venues).
- AEG printable brochures and flyers (to promote both the VPP and AEG in general).
- AEG membership forms (for all levels of membership).
- New Student Chapter application forms.
- Sample PowerPoint(s) (VPP volunteer may use as a template or incorporate into their own presentation).
- FAQ list for VPP volunteers.
- Post-visit survey (for VPP volunteer to complete).

- Power point presentation to solicit VPP liaison/volunteers

### **Section 5.0** **Responsibilities of AEG Operational Committees**

AEG Operational Committees will continue to support the VPP. The responsibilities of the AEG Committees are as follows:

- At least one AEG Committee member must attend the semi-annual VPP Liaison conference call. The calls will serve to maintain an open line of communication with Chapter VPP Liaisons to identify where additional support is needed. Appropriate committees will be assigned to provide that support. For example: sample PowerPoints for high school presentations could be provided by K-12, materials for community outreach could be developed by Advocacy, etc.
- Evaluate surveys from VPP volunteers at least annually and revise the VPP program as necessary.
- Continue to create supporting materials for the VPP, and provide these materials to the VPP Liaison:
  - Handouts
  - Presentations
  - List of Chapter venues
  - List of geology programs at colleges/universities
  - Survey