

October 31, 2019

Message from the President

Dear members of Professional Geoscientists Ontario,

2019 is a busy year for Professional Geoscientists Ontario (PGO). With the new CEO at the helm, a lot of changes have taken place to make PGO well-equipped to face the demands and challenges of the present and the future. As a regulatory body, our mandate is to ensure that we protect the public by licensing and maintaining standards of practice of professional geoscientists in Ontario. In an environment where we have to navigate the government's priority of regulatory burden-reduction initiative and the public's demand for sustainability initiatives to mitigate climate change, our mandate has never been more important.



I would like to highlight significant milestones that we have achieved this year. These milestones are the culmination of the past and current work of member volunteers in collaboration with our outstanding staff. As president, I am continuing with what my predecessors have tirelessly worked on.

Government Relations

Under the leadership of Tony Andrews, PGO has intensified its focus on government relations to advance our amendments to the Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000. With support from Policy Concepts, we continue to meet with key government representatives and staff to ensure that our proposed amendments remain at the forefront of the Ontario government's transformation initiatives.

PGO is also active in responding to government's call for submissions to its proposed changes on various regulations and acts, from no fewer than three ministries and five review requests. In our submissions, we emphasized the need for science-based decision-making process and mandating the use of Qualified Persons in application and permit approvals and all related activities that impact or may impact the public.

Rebranding APGO to PGO

PGO embarked on a low-budget rebranding exercise this year and the outcome was a new business name for the organization, a new logo and a new look. The new name, Professional Geoscientists Ontario, was unveiled at our 2019 Annual General Meeting in June. The word "Association" was removed to clearly reflect our public protection mandate and to remove any perceptions about PGO being the voice of geoscientists in the province.

Hiring of New Staff

PGO recently hired two full-time staff to enhance the capacity of PGO, particularly its Registration department. Eilidh Lewis, M.Sc., P.Geo. is the new Assistant Registrar and Ami Mogaji, M.Sc. (in Applied Environmental Geology) is the Office Manager. They are excellent additions to the PGO team that includes Marilen Miguel, Director of Stakeholder Relations; Aftab Khan, Registrar; Bernard Kradjian, Digital Communications Specialist; and Florentina Groza, Bookkeeper. Under the guidance of Tony Andrews, the enhanced team is making PGO a high performing organization.

Steady growth of PGO membership

I am very pleased to report that PGO continues to grow its membership. The steady growth in Practising members is incredibly encouraging but the leap in Geoscientist-in-Training (GIT) and Student members over the past two years is astounding. Through our outreach to geoscience students across Ontario and through our work on enforcement and compliance, PGO is reinforcing the message of the importance of being a registered geoscientist in Ontario. Please see the latest registration numbers below:



Strategic Planning for the Future

PGO Council embarked on a strategic planning session in April to establish PGO's strategic focus for 2020-2023. PGO Council wants to ensure that PGO is well positioned to tackle the challenges ahead and foster regulatory excellence.

The three main strategic goals for PGO are:

1. PGO is a strong and effective regulatory body.
2. PGO is recognized and respected as a regulatory leader.
3. Members are competent and professional and engaged in our work.

PGO is rolling out a workplan that builds on existing initiatives and leveraging partnerships to enhance the good things that we are already doing and explore new opportunities.

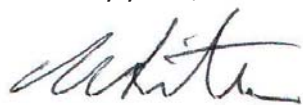
Professional Development (PD) Events

PGO has endeavoured to provide PD events that are relevant, accessible and affordable. This year, PGO provided a mix of regulatory, technical and career development topics through a series of webinars, conference and short courses. Please subscribe to our e-newsletter, [Field Notes](#), to keep yourself informed of relevant professional development opportunities hosted by PGO and by other organizations. You are also encouraged to check PGO's [Events](#) page regularly.

The above are just part of the many milestones achieved by PGO throughout the years. Big thanks to our Council, committee and subcommittee volunteers - past and present, for their invaluable contributions to PGO. I thank the small but mighty staff team led by Tony Andrews for their hard work and dedication – Aftab Khan, Ami Mogaji, Bernard Kradjian, Eilidh Lewis, Florentina Groza and Marilen Miguel.

To our members, thank you for your commitment to uphold the integrity of the geoscience profession.

Sincerely yours,



Milan Situm, P.Geo.
President, PGO Council