U.S.-China Collaboration on Landslide Research and Student Training
Introduction to 2018 Attendees

(1) Zachary Parra

Zachary Parra is in the process of acquiring his Master of Science in Geophysics at the University of Houston. He graduated from Texas A&M University in May of 2017 with a Bachelor of Science in Geophysics and minors in Mathematics and Geoinformatics. While at Texas A&M University, Zachary worked at the John W. Handin Laboratory for Experimental Rock Deformation conducting research to understand how masses of rock deform under various temperature and pressure conditions. In addition to working in the rock deformation laboratory, he conducted undergraduate research to investigate the relationships between earthquakes and hydrogeologic processes utilizing water well and GPS data sources in New Zealand. At the University of Houston, Zachary is currently investigating urban subsidence and faulting within the Greater Houston Area under the guidance of Dr. Guoquan Wang. Additionally, he is partially responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the HoustonNet GPS Network. Zachary is an avid programmer in the following languages: MATLAB, Python, Bash/Shell, R and Java.

(2) Daniel Rusinek

Daniel Rusinek is a Geophysics graduate student at the University of Houston. As an undergraduate, he volunteered with Dr. Wang's group and installed GPS stations as part of the HoustonNet GPS Network. His current research includes monitoring coastal erosion in Freeport, Texas, using Real-Time Kinematic GPS and LiDAR. He has taught Geophysical Field Camp at the University of Houston and assisted in teaching GPS and LiDAR courses. This will be Daniel's first time to China (and Asia) and he hopes to learn more about the culture, customs and food.

(3) Matthew Law

Originally from the small town of Coldspring, Texas, Matthew moved to Houston in 2016 after transferring from Sam Houston State University where he first discovered his passion for geoscience. He graduated in Spring 2018 with a Bachelor of Science in Geophysics and a minor in Mathematics from the University of Houston. He will continue pursuing a Master of Science in Geophysics beginning Fall 2018 at the University of Houston where he will be working with Dr. Wang on UAV applications for mapping the Long Point Fault located in Northwest Houston. Matthew plans to start his own company one day that conducts surveys for engineering and environmental purposes using various geophysical methods.

(4) Bhavya Merchant

Bhavya Merchant is a junior in the College of Natural Science and Mathematics with majors in Geophysics and Computer Science. He is also a member of the University of Houston Honors College. Prior to enrolling at UH, he graduated from Riverside High School in South Carolina. He loves to do a lot, both in the sense of keeping himself busy and in the hopes that he finds something new that piques his interests. He is the Vice President of Redprint Houston, a student advisory organization that creates concrete additions to student life at the University of Houston. His academic interests include computational geodynamics, reservoir modeling, and machine learning. He hopes to do research in the future, but his main career goal is to develop technologies to aid in the exploration of other planetary bodies. He is a huge advocate for scientific literacy, and he is working on creating an educational solution to reduce the effects of false information on the general populace. In addition, some of his hobbies include singing and sketching.

(5) Lorena Ramirez

Lorena Ramirez is currently attending the University of Houston in pursuit of a degree in Geology with a minor in Geophysics. Juggling working part-time for an engineering firm and being a full-time student, Lorena finds new ways to explore her passion in Geology outside of the classroom as well. As the newly elected Historian for the University of Houston's Geosociety chapter, Lorena hopes to further the organization's mission of encouraging cooperative research and public dialogue on Geology issues. Lorena was also chosen to become the 2018 Energy Coalition Officer for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), an organization that fosters communication and collaboration among students and professionals pursuing similar career paths. Lorena hopes to use this platform to help aid AAPG towards solidifying the university's international position as the Energy University. Lorena's interest in geology started when she was younger when she fell in love with Indiana Jones and wanted to play more with dinosaurs rather than dolls. Lorena plans to continue her education and pursue a master's degree in Geology.

(6) Margarita M. Solares Colón

Margarita Solares is a graduate student from the Department of Geology at the University of Puerto Rico. She is completing an M.S. in Geology with emphasis in Geophysics and Tectonics working with the GPS Network in Puerto Rico by installing GPS equipment, reoccupying sites and processing GPS data. In the future, she plans to continue in this field and pursue a Ph.D. in Geophysics. Her goal is to contribute to the knowledge and better understanding of the geological processes and natural hazards that occur in the Caribbean region.

(7) Anika Huq

Anika Huq is a senior at Hamilton College in upstate New York. She is currently pursuing a double major in Geoscience and Studio Art with a minor in Chinese. She is from the Boston area and has visited China twice through study abroad programs in high school and college. Her previous research experience has mainly been in the biomedical field when she interned at Beth Israel in Boston. Now, she is excited to gain more experience in geological research methods. For her undergraduate thesis, she plans on further exploring and mapping the Katkut gravel formation in Egypt to get a better sense of its formation and geologic history. This summer she is excited to bridge the gap between her interest in Chinese culture and her enthusiasm for research.