

*2026
Wilson
Awards
Banquet*



PennState
College of Earth
and Mineral Sciences

2026
*Wilson Awards
Banquet*



*The College of Earth and Mineral Sciences'
annual celebration of accomplishments*

Sunday, March 29, 2026

5 p.m. Reception

6 p.m. Dinner

Welcome

Lee Kump, John Leone Dean in the
College of Earth and Mineral Sciences



Tenure and/or Promotion

Nasim Alem, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering

Ryan Baxter, Teaching Professor of Geography

Christopher Fowler, Professor of Geography

Steven Greybush, Professor of Meteorology and
Atmospheric Science

Casey Helgeson, Associate Research Professor in the Earth
and Environmental Systems Institute

Athanasios Karamalidis, Associate Professor of Environmental
Systems Engineering

Hojong Kim, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering

Giannakis Panagiotis, Associate Teaching Professor
of Geography

Jesse Reimink, Associate Professor of Geosciences

Emily Rosenman, Associate Professor of Geography

Greg Thomas, Teaching Professor of Geography

Luke Trusel, Associate Professor of Geography

Kimberly Van Meter, Associate Professor of Geography

John Wang, Professor of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering

Meng Wang, Associate Professor of Environmental
Systems Engineering

Maria Wherley, Assistant Teaching Professor in the Dutton
Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence

Manzhu Yu, Associate Professor of Geography

25-Year Service Awards

Ryan Baxter, Teaching Professor of Geography

Kenneth Davis, Professor of Atmospheric and Climate Science

William Groves, Associate Professor of Industrial Health
and Safety

Jerry Harrington, Professor of Meteorology
and Atmospheric Science

Christopher House, Professor of Geosciences

Beth King, Associate Teaching Professor of Geography

Paul Markowski, Department Head and Distinguished Professor
of Meteorology and Atmospheric Science

Stevie Rocco, Director of Learning Design and Associate
Teaching Professor in the Dutton Institute for Teaching
and Learning Excellence

Melissa Wright, Professor of Geography and Women's, Gender,
and Sexuality Studies

Retirements

Peter Heaney, Professor Emeritus of Geosciences

Laura Liermann, Assistant Research Professor in the Earth
and Environmental Systems Institute

Russell Johns, Professor Emeritus of Energy and Mineral
Engineering

Chris Marone, Professor Emeritus of Geosciences

Joel Morrison, Associate Research Professor
Emeritus in the EMS Energy Institute

Kwadwo Osseo-Asare, Distinguished Professor Emeritus
of Materials Science and Engineering

Mark Patzkowsky, Professor Emeritus of Geosciences

Susan Sinnott, Former Department Head and Professor
of Materials Science and Engineering

Denice Wardrop, Research Professor of Geography

*Gladys Snyder Faculty
Enrichment Grants*

Nicholas Clark and Maziar Montazerian

Assistant Research Professors, Materials Science
and Engineering

“In vitro Bioactivity Assessment of LionGlass”



Benjamin Cardenas

Assistant Professor of Geosciences

“Filming videos at analog sites as part of the development of a free introductory online planetary geology course, Geosc 50: Planetary Geology”



Ida Djenontin

Assistant Professor of Geography

“Advancing Social-Ecological Research on Ecosystem Restoration through Student-Focus Engaged Scholarship”

George H. Deike, Jr.
Research Grant

Tieyuan Zhu

Associate Professor of Geosciences

**“Listening to Arctic Sea Ice: Seismic Tremor
as a Proxy for Ice Strength”**



E. Willard and Ruby S. Miller
Faculty Fellow

Robert Hickey

Associate Professor of Materials Science
and Engineering

**“From Waste to Capacitor Materials: Chemical
Transformations of Discarded Plastics”**



Wilson Research Initiation
Grant

Ivy M. Isuo

Assistant Professor of Materials Science
and Engineering

**“Reliable Ambient Optoelectronic
Performance through Complementary
Human-Robot Materials Optimization”**



COLLEGE-LEVEL STUDENT AWARDS

Jay M. and Katherine DeFinis Award for Outstanding Student Leadership

Alexander Massa, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science

Nicholas E. Prince, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science

Ellen Steidle Achievement Award

Senior: **Sofia Sarracino**, Earth Sciences

Junior: **Tara Staresinic**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science

Dean Edward Steidle Memorial Scholar Award

Lizzie Johnson, Geosciences

Student Marshal

Emily Shor, B.S. Meteorology and Atmospheric Science

She will graduate Summa Cum Laude with a 4.0 cumulative GPA

Engineering Honor Marshal

Eman Husain Y Alsalman, B.S. Petroleum and
Natural Gas Engineering

She will graduate Summa Cum Laude with a 3.99 cumulative GPA



Fall 2025 EMSAGE Laureates

- **Maria Abreu**, Energy Engineering
- **Elizabeth Aichele**, Materials Science and Engineering
- **Ava Blansfield**, Geography
- **Sofia Hoffman**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Erick Kirchner**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Logan Madden**, Geography/Earth Sciences
- **Kaleah Moran**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Miranda Quezada**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Isabel Rivera**, Geography
- **Sofia Sarracino**, Earth Sciences
- **Allison (Allie) Scarlett**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Emily Shor**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Zachary Simms**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Luke Snyder**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Aaliyah Thompson**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Jiawen (Jenny) Zhang**, Energy Business and Finance

Spring 2026 EMSAGE Laureates

- **Asad Al-Abri**, Materials Science and Engineering
- **Westin Boyd**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **McKenna Burke**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Ann Ehrlich**, Geography
- **Allison Evans**, Materials Science and Engineering
- **Joshua Hasenau**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Joseph Hokky**, Energy Engineering
- **Lizzie Johnson**, Geosciences
- **Amanda Kulak**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Hanlet Leonardo**, Energy Engineering
- **Skyler McKinney**, Geography
- **Raya Pauling**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Anna Penird**, Geosciences
- **Irena Potochny**, Materials Science and Engineering
- **Pavan Kumar Reddy Pothula**, Materials Science and Engineering
- **Mariam Salama**, Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering
- **Veronica Sciulli**, Environmental Systems Engineering
- **Allison Sousa**, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
- **Sophia Warnock**, Energy Engineering
- **Ryan Zaff**, Geosciences

*G. Montgomery and Marion Mitchell
Award for Innovative Teaching*



Benjamin Ahlswede

Assistant Research Professor
of Meteorology and Atmospheric
Science



Kevin Bowley

Associate Teaching Professor
of Meteorology and Atmospheric
Science



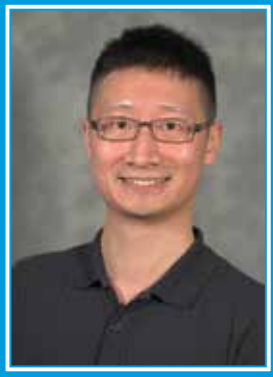
William Bristow

Professor of Atmospheric
Science



Kenneth J. Davis

Professor of Atmospheric and
Climate Science



*Wilson Award for
Excellence in Teaching*

Xingchao ("XC") Chen

Assistant Professor of Meteorology
and Atmospheric Science

*Wilson Award for
Outstanding Service*

Christopher S. Fowler

Professor of Geography



*Faculty Advising
Award*

Nelson Y. Dzade

Assistant Professor of Energy and
Mineral Engineering and Chair for
Undergraduate Energy Engineering



Faculty Mentoring Award

Elizabeth Hajek

Professor of Geosciences



Wilson Award for Excellence in Research

Shimin Liu

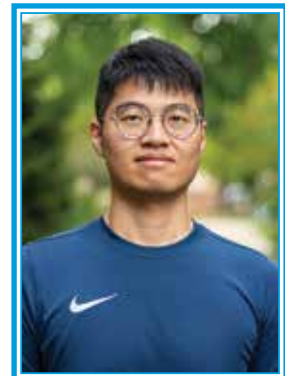
George H. Jr. and Anne B. Deike Chair
in Mining Engineering and Associate
Department Head for Graduate
Education



Postdoctoral Excellence in Research Award

Qitao Zhang

Energy and Mineral Engineering



*Catherine Lyons Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion
Undergraduate Student
Award*

Undergraduate Award

Miranda Quezada

Environmental Systems Engineering



*Catherine Lyons Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion
Graduate Student Award*

Graduate Award

Lily Houtman

Geography

*Charles Hosler Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion
Post Doctoral Award*

Kavyashree Keremane

Materials Science and Engineering



*Charles Hosler Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion
Faculty Award*

Anthony C. Didlake, Jr.

Associate Professor of Meteorology and
Atmospheric Science



*Paul F. Robertson Award for Research
Breakthrough of the Year*



Mohammad Rezaee

Centennial Career
Development Professor in
Mining Engineering



Feifei Shi

Assistant Professor of
Energy Engineering

Matthew J. Wilson, Jr. & Anne Coghlan Wilson

Through their bequests, Matthew and Anne Wilson are the major benefactors of the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences (EMS). In the 1950s, Matthew Wilson inherited a stock portfolio that provided the basis for the funds he generously gave to the then-named School of Mineral Industries. His giving started in 1957 with a modest scholarship endowment and was later increased with additional gifts. Over the years the endowments blossomed into a substantial fund that today provides the college with support for its well-known student loan program and a number of faculty and student awards and scholarships. The fund also supports the annual Wilson Awards Banquet.

Matthew Wilson was born in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Penn State in 1918 with a bachelor's degree in mining engineering. He attended the University of Colorado, where he received master's degrees in geology and chemistry and met his wife, Anne, a biochemist. After graduating, he started working as a chemist for the Atlantic Refining Company in Philadelphia and later moved to Holland, Michigan, where he developed a career in sales starting first with the U.S. Industrial Company, then the Karr Spring Company, and later with the Spring Air Company. He served as the Washington representative for Spring Air's industrial and military sales for many years; he also served on the company's board of directors. In retirement, the Wilsons lived in Michigan but moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, shortly before Matthew died in 1963.

Throughout the next twenty years Anne Wilson increased the family endowments and took an active interest in EMS students and faculty. When she died in 1983, it was said of her:

“Anne believed in giving. Her dream to become a doctor was never realized so she wanted the dreams of others to come true. She felt it was important that the University hold on to its best teachers. Awards were a wonderful way to do so.”



PennState

College of Earth and Mineral Sciences

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