

## ***Operation of a Public Geologic Core and Sample Repository In Houston, TX***

**DE-FG26-02NT15290**

### **Goal**

The project goal was to establish a regional geologic research center that curates—and provides public access to—geologic materials from around the world.

### **Performer**

*University of Texas at Austin  
Bureau of Economic Geology  
Austin, TX*

### **Results**

BEG's Houston Research Center (HRC) is now well-established as a premier regional research center for geologic studies serving not only Houston, but geoscientists from around Texas, the United States, and the rest of the world. HRC provides a state-of-the-art core viewing facility, two fully equipped conference rooms, and a comprehensive technical library, all available for public use. HRC currently houses over 600,000 boxes of rock material and has space to hold about 300,000 more boxes.

### **Benefits**

HRC houses cores, cuttings and thin sections that were acquired primarily by private industry. This invaluable resource for geoscientists in academia and industry alike is now publicly available for the first time, and the materials can be studied in a venue conducive to research.

### **Background**

BEG acquired HRC as the result of a gift from BP in late 2002. The facility was built by Amoco (now part of BP) in the late 1970s, expressly for the purpose of curating and researching geologic samples. BEG now operates the facility for the public and is building an endowment through donations of rock and cash from it can draw funds to operate the facility well into the future.

### **Summary**

The project's recent milestones include the following:

- In the past year, HRC has been successful in securing donations of rock material and cash contributions totaling over



Core repository at the Houston Research Center.

234,000 boxes of material with accompanying endowment contributions of approximately \$1.87 million.

- HRC has received cash donations earmarked for upgrading of conference room equipment. Conference tables and chairs for 100 people, as well as a state-of-the-art projection system, have been installed in the large conference room.

- HRC averaged 160 patrons per month during the past year. This number reflects patrons that physically visited the HRC for conferences and/or core examination and does not reflect the hundreds of patron requests for cores and cuttings that were processed and filled for the shipping of

materials to patrons' offices.

- Over 25 organizations held short courses or other training at HRC in the past year.

- The official grand opening of the HRC took place on June 4, 2004. More than 210 people attended the dedication ceremony hosted by Dr. Scott W. Tinker, Director of the BEG and State Geologist.

### **Current Status (June 2006)**

This project began April 2002 and will continue at least until September 2006. DOE has provided the basis of support for this ongoing operation.



Industry core workshop at the BEG's Houston Research Center.

## Funding

This project was a sole-source award. Support for this effort is provided from the oil technology program.



Core layout room.

## Publications

Blakeney-DeJarnett, Beverly, The Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas at Austin: Core and Sample Repositories. abstract, Geological Society of America Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, October 2005.

Dutton, Shirley P., Goldstein, Steven L., and Blakeney-DeJarnett, Beverly, Curation of Terrestrial Scientific Cores, Samples, and Collections, abstract, Geological Society of America Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, October 2005.

Tinker, Scott W., Blakeney DeJarnett, Beverly, Operation of a Public Geologic Core and Sample Repository in Houston, Texas, DOE Technical Progress Report—Reporting Period April 15, 2004-May 31, 2005.

Fisher Mallick, J., Blakeney-DeJarnett, B., and Zahm, L.C., Big Rocks Found in Houston, Houston Geological Society Bulletin, V. 47, No. 11, September 2004, pp. 66-67.

Blakeney DeJarnett, B and Zahm, L. C, 2004, Cores and Cuttings °© An Extraordinary Resource. Abstr., American Association of Petroleum Geologists Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX, April, 2004.

Zahm, L., and Blakeney-DeJarnett, B., Dramatic carbonate reservoir facies illustrated in cores from the teaching collection of the Bureau of Economic Geology, abstract, American Association of Petroleum Geologists Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX, April 2004.

Berman, A.E., The Bureau of Economic Geology: An Interview with Director Scott Tinker and Staff—and a New Houston Research Center, Houston Geological Society Bulletin, February 2004, pp. 37-45.

Blakeney-DeJarnett, B., and Zahm, L.C., World-Class Public Core, Cuttings, and Sample Facility Right Here in Houston, Texas, Houston Geological Society Bulletin, May 2003, pp. 39-43.

**Project Start:** April 15, 2002

**Project End:** September 30, 2006

**Anticipated DOE Contribution:** \$1,430,000

**Performer Contribution:** \$462,246 (24 percent of total)

## Contact Information

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