Becker Family Award in Geology

The 2020 award will be $3000

Ulf Becker (NAU MS alumnus) and his wife Kelly Becker have endowed a fund with NAU to provide support for a graduate-undergraduate research group. The Letter of Understanding states the following:

“What Ulf found while attending NAU and traveling around the Basin and Range / Colorado Plateau was an amazing variation in geographies and geology that is second to none in the United States. Most importantly, Ulf found a tight community of graduate and undergraduate students that interacted to provide a collaborative learning experience unlike the larger departments that he had experienced and visited.

Ulf also experienced coming to terms with the passing of his older brother, Carsten, who died at the age of 23 while attending law school at Boston College. While Ulf was conducting his field work in the Whipple Mountains, he turned 24 and experienced the heavy reality that he was older than the age at which Carsten died.

Ulf worked as a field assistant at the Kansas Geological Survey after having completed his work at NAU and hired on as a geoscientist at Exxon (now ExxonMobil) in 1997. Ulf has enjoyed many assignments at ExxonMobil, including two short term assignments in Germany and a two year assignment in Calgary, Canada. At the time that this fund was established he worked as strategic advisor for GIS applications in ExxonMobil’s Upstream Technical Computing Company.

Ulf and Kelly are advocates for education and experiential learning and encourage their two daughters in their studies. They are establishing this endowment in honor of Carsten, their daughters and other family members to encourage and support students at Northern Arizona University in the Geology Program of the School of Earth Sciences and Environmental Sustainability.

…

This Fund shall be used to provide support for research field expenses of a graduate student/undergrad team in the Geology Program of the School of Earth Sciences and Environmental Sustainability.” This year we have been given permission by the Becker family to make one or two awards.
One to two awards will be given each year following these criteria:

a. All team members must include one or more undergraduate geology majors and one graduate geology major or PhD student from the Earth and Planetary Sciences focus area of the Earth and Sustainability PhD program; and

b. The research project must be within the scope of the Division of Geosciences.

Preference will be given to projects that involve mapping as a major component of the research. Mapping components of the field work are encouraged to be completed with ArcGIS or equivalent quantitative mapping tools.

To apply for this award, submit a one-page application that includes the following information:

* the topic of your research, including the “gap” in knowledge that you are addressing, its significance, and a hypothesis that addresses how you are filling that gap. Be sure that the field component of your research is clear

* what the undergraduate student will do. Bearing in mind that research projects change as they progress, provide as much detail as possible. It is important to describe
  - how you envision your role as a mentor
  - what the field component of the research will be
  - how the undergraduate student’s research will complement your own
  - how the undergraduate student’s research will be entirely separate from your own
  - how the undergraduate student’s research will be disseminated: will you likely mentor the student through the process of submitting an abstract to a meeting, making a poster, and presenting? Is it more likely that the student’s work will become part of a manuscript, and if so, how will you include the student as a co-author?

* a very approximate budget

Submit this page by April 6, 2020, 5pm to Nancy Riggs (nancy.riggs@nau.edu) as a pdf titled “Becker_family_award_[your name]”