

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **National Science Foundation awards \$294,000 grant to UWF Earth and Environmental Sciences for interdisciplinary research**

**Pensacola, Fla. – May 13, 2016** – The University of West Florida Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, in partnership with colleagues in the UWF Department of Chemistry and Office of Undergraduate Research, has been awarded a \$294,000 grant from the National Science Foundation that will be used to enhance interdisciplinary undergraduate research.

“Specifically what we’re trying to do is set up earth science projects that collaborate with one or more other departments and that will involve students in earth sciences working with students and faculty in other departments on a multidisciplinary project,” said Dr. Matthew Schwartz, chair of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences.

The multidisciplinary projects that will be selected will have “at their core” an earth science component, Schwartz said.

“From an earth science perspective, we want to demonstrate to our students and faculty that earth sciences involve a lot of other disciplines and a lot of other areas that we may not think about – math or chemistry, for example,” Schwartz said.

These projects coincide with the Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering’s larger efforts to provide interdisciplinary academic opportunities for students to gain exposure and hands-on experience in fields outside of their own. Such experiences yield skills that provide students with a comprehensive foundation for professional success in STEM fields.

The National Science Foundation grant will provide funding over a three-year period. The funds will support summer research stipends for students, as well as equipment costs to support their research. The grant will also provide opportunities for travel, as students and faculty from Earth and Environmental Sciences and other departments will be able to travel to national level geoscience conferences.

“Almost all of the funds are going directly to supporting students,” Schwartz said. “This is an exciting opportunity for our faculty and students. We’re looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish with these new resources.”

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**About the [University of West Florida](#):** Founded in 1963, the University of West Florida is a vibrant, distinctive institution of higher learning with undergraduate, graduate and targeted research programs. With multiple locations in Northwest Florida, the University serves a student population of more than 12,000. Dedicated to helping students realize their full potential, UWF favors small class sizes with quality teacher-scholars innovative, hands-on learning and leadership opportunities.