# Spring 2019 Geological Society of Washington Membership Report

### GSW Council Meeting, 3 April 2019 Membership Chair, Erik Hankin, ehankin@agu.org

# Overall Membership There are 249 paid members for the 2019 calendar year as of 3 April 2019. There are 46 members from 2018 who have yet to renew, yielding an 84% renewal rate.

# New Membership

Nine individuals have applied for new membership with GSW as of 3 April 2019, compared to 12 at this point last year. Seven of these individuals have followed through with payment and are now members of GSW, compared to 9 last April. Four of the new members are students or early career professionals. Three are regular metro area members.

# Barriers to Membership

The need to have prospective members apply and then pay after hearing they were approved appears to be a significant barrier to entry. Not because applicants are being denied, but because about 20% of approved applicants do not follow through with payment.

Since 2016 when I took on the role of membership chair, GSW has not denied a single applicant. Additionally, most professional societies allow prospective new members to pay dues when applying for membership.

I encourage the Council to explore this option as it could lead to a significant increase in the number of new members.

# Member Value Proposition

While the two-step new member process could improve new member numbers, it does not solve the issue of member retention. Renewal confusion (“I thought I paid my dues already” or “Whoops, I forgot”) may play a role, but there is certainly the larger issue of membership value.

This is something we have recognized as an issue in Council.

What can we do to 1. Better identify the current value of GSW membership and 2. Improve upon that value?