May 13, 2020

RE: Open Letter to AAPG President, Mike Party; AAPG Executive Director, David Curtiss; AAPG Advisory Council Chair and Past-President, Denise Cox; AAPG Canada Region President, Peter Bauman; and AAPG Canada Region Advisory Counselor, Ryan Lemiski.

Since its inception in 1927, the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists (CSPG) has been an association dedicated to supporting the professional development of geoscientists and the advancement of science in Canadian petroleum geology. The CSPG is an affiliated society of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) and the two societies have a long history of joint conferences, events, and publications. Many of our members are also members of the AAPG.

We are writing this letter to share our disappointment in the recent comments made by the AAPG President Mike Party when asked about women in AAPG. To say that he does not see gender is to be blind to the issue. We cannot find the solution if we fail to recognize the problem.

Within the CSPG, we track the member demographics by gender and observe a discouraging trend. We have gender balance in our student members, but with each successive demographic group the percentage of women decreases (chart below). Analyzing this data through time, we understand this is not just about the lower enrollment of female geologists in the past, but about retention. Female geoscientists are more likely than their male counterparts to leave their careers and our society; the perception is that our industry is unwelcoming to women.

We are looking for ways to improve our engagement and retention of women geoscientists and would like to collaborate on solutions. We support the AAPG leadership in taking on these challenging questions around culture and gender-bias. We know our industry is enriched by diversity and we need that to be heard by all of our members and future members.

Sincerely,

Jen Russel-Houston
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