2019-2020 SME Chapter Activities

Park City Miner’s Day

Each year the Rotary Club and the Utah Section of SME put on a Miner’s Day event in Park City, UT, to celebrate the history of the area. This year a hand full of students met up at the event. They enjoyed the parade in the morning and helped with the drilling and mucking competition in the afternoon. Students volunteered to be judges and timers for the event. Miners Day is an annual event that the University of Utah Chapter looks forward to helping with each year.

Skeet Shoot Fundraiser

In the past, the chapter’s activities have been limited due to funding. This year the University of Utah SME Student Chapter set out to try a new way of raising money. The executive committee realized that those who work in the Utah mining industry would likely enjoy a clay shoot. The goal was to clear $10,000. We scheduled the clay shoot for September 20th and watched as the Utah mining industry jumped at the opportunity to participate and support in any way possible. I (Chase Carroll) didn’t sleep for many nights because I was so stressed about getting enough teams together to make it a worthwhile event. It was also very stressful because we didn’t pull the trigger on planning the event until the end of July, which left us a month and a half to get the word out and organize the shoot. Many companies became event sponsors. Ames Construction sponsored the clays, Granite Construction the lunch, Utah American Energy the drinks/snacks, and FLSmidth sponsored the clubhouse. We also had other individuals give very generous donations. In total, we had 60 industry professionals, and 15 students participate. The University of Utah Student Chapter was able to exceed its goal and raised over $10,500 thanks to the local mining industry.
Late Night Study Groups

There were too many late-night study groups to count this year. We had a large group of seniors, and we all got through our last year with a lot of Chinese food and energy drinks.

The Honerine Mine Exploration

The U of U SME Chapter had the privilege of driving an hour out of Salt Lake City and exploring an old mine called the Honerine. Our professor Dr. Nelson gave us a history lesson on the mine and the district before we went and explored the old audits. The U of U Chapter has received the rights to use this old mine as a student laboratory for underground surveying and potentially a practical mine class. Exploring this mine gave some of the freshmen students a lot of excitement to continue pursuing a degree in mineral extraction.
MEC Mineral Kits

This year our chapter volunteered to help the MEC with their booth at the National Science Teachers of America (NSTA) annual meeting in Salt Lake City. Students helped make a thousand mineral kit boxes that were given to science teachers from around America. Many were also given to parents who home school their children and had no other source for information about rocks and minerals. We helped collect all the minerals from local mining operations and then used the motivating power of free pizza to get members of our chapter to help us fold all the boxes. With a little engineering magic, we made quick work of folding one thousand boxes. This year’s conference was a huge success and all the kits were handed out by the second day of the conference.
Trapper Coal Mine

This year our previous chapter president, Jarom Gleed, organized a field trip to the Trapper Coal mine in Colorado. We rented two vans and made the five-hour drive to Craig, CO. We stayed in a motel, and the next morning we had an incredible tour of the mine. This was the first time at an open-pit dragline coal operation for all our students. Trapper was very accommodating and let us climb up on one of the draglines. We had a large portion of our group that were freshman students, and I think that this trip was instrumental in retaining those students.
Halloween Party

This year the Chapter had a costume party and caramel apple bar.

Morton Salt

We had the privilege to visit a unique mining operation in Utah. We visited Morton Salt in Grantsville, UT. We were able to see where they pump the saltwater from the Salt Lake, concentrate it in evaporation ponds, and then harvest the salt. They also took us through the washing and packing plant. This was a great tour with a small group of students. They fed us lunch and as poor, hungry college students that might have been the best part. One student fit in so well with the staff they offered him an internship on the spot.
The Komatsu Equipment Company invited a group of our senior members out for a tour of their rebuild shop in Salt Lake City. We had a hands-on tour of how Komatsu operates its business in the western united states. They loaded us up with great Komatsu swag, and after the tour, they took us to a local bar for dinner and drinks. This was a great networking experience for the seniors of our chapter.
Dyno Nobel
dyno nobel gave us a tour of their testing facility in Saratoga Springs, UT. We took a big group of students, and they split us up into three groups. We toured the emulsion lab, the testing range, and we got an overview of the operations that Dyno Nobel has around the world. At this facility, almost everyone there has a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering. They did an excellent job of getting the science to a mining engineer's level, and we had an enjoyable time. The highlight of the tour was the blasting bunker. They even let a few of the students set off the explosives. This was another amazing tour by our local mining vendors.
SME Annual Conference and Expo

The SME Conference was the pinnacle of all our activities. We were able to send over 30 students to the conference. These students were fully funded because of our incredible efforts with the fundraising. Phoenix was a great venue, the weather was perfect, and we enjoyed swimming and all the great restaurants. The U of U Chapter organized a bar and game night at the Lucky Strike bowling and bar. We had a huge turnout, and almost every school was present for drinks and fun. All our student members came home from the conference with a long list of contacts, memories, and lifelong friends.

Resolution Copper

After the conference, we rented a couple of vans and headed to the Copper Triangle. Our first stop was Resolution Copper. Zach Brown was an intern for Cementation last year, and he was able to get a personal tour of the surface facilities.
Morenci Copper

After we visited Resolution, we headed to Morenci. We spent the night in the local hotel and played a few rounds of bowling at the brand new bowling lanes. We had a personal tour of the operations from drilling and blasting all the way to electroplating copper anodes. This is a once in a lifetime experience that will remain with our students forever.