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Fifty years of achievements and service to the geologic community by the Gulf Coast section of SEPM

Over the past half century the GCSEPM has had an enviable record of promoting the science of stratigraphy in the Gulf Coast states through research in paleontology and sedimentary petrology, especially as it relates to petroleum geology. This presentation chronicles major contributions by the section for the increased understanding of depositional systems and biostratigraphic successions in the Gulf Coast basin. Of equal importance, the presentation will focus on individuals and committees who played primary roles in these developments.

A little known fact is that the GCSSEPM petitioned the GCAGS in 1954 to link with them and present papers at their annual meeting. In the early years a primary concern was consistent quality of well cuttings supplied to paleontology staffs. In 1954 a committee published a widely distributed document titled "Well-site Sample Catching Practices" which became the standard reference for this critical link in high-quality stratigraphic determinations. The second major undertaking was the Type Locality Project. Information on some 80 formations was published in a three volume set, while later ones were published in the *Transactions*. In 1966 almost half the papers presented at the GCAGS convention focused on paleoecology. These were the culmination of the Houston and New Orleans Paleocology Committees which codified the present day zonal scheme for Gulf Coast basin Tertiary foraminifera.

The most significant events for the Section occurred in 1980 and 1981 when the Section initiated the Annual Research Conference and formed the GCSSEPM Foundation. The annual research conference, now named the Annual GCSSEPM Foundation Bob F. Perkins Research Conference, has truly internationalized the membership through a broad spectrum of topics presented at these conferences. The topics of these conferences focus on leading-edge science related to petroleum exploration world-wide. The services now provided to its members and to the geologic community surely far exceed the expectations of the charter members of 1953-54.