

# Community Spotlight

**Bryce Belanger**

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## **Q: Tell us about yourself.**

I am third year PhD candidate at Vanderbilt University studying with Dr. Jessica Oster. I am originally from Hamilton, New York and got my undergraduate degree from Middlebury College in Vermont.

## **Q: How are you connected to the AGeS program?**

I was awarded an AGeS-Grad grant in 2021.

## **Q: Describe your research (Beyond AGeS).**

My research focuses on reconstructing past climate change in the western US using speleothems, which are mineral deposits that grow in caves over time. I use geochemical techniques to better understand how precipitation changed during warm periods in earth's past.

## **Q: What geochronologic techniques do you use?**

I worked with Warren Sharp at the Berkeley Geochronology Center and used U-series techniques to date speleothem material.

## **Q: What excites you about your research?**

Speleothems provide a really unique way to investigate past climate change in areas where other archives may not exist. Plus, I love caving and the field work associated with my research!

## **Q: What are your hobbies outside work?**

I love getting outside to hike and camp. I also enjoy playing basketball and golf in my spare time.

## **Q: What inspired you to get into the earth sciences?**

I took a class my first semester of college and was hooked. I love the passion people have for the field, and the opportunities it has given me to travel and spend time outdoors.