

Dear Class of '55,

I want to thank you very much for the grant you supplied towards my education. The course I took was a National Parks class that studied the volcanic activity on the islands of Hawaii. We spent most of our time on different areas of the volcanoes. For our first week in Hilo, we explored the wet region of the island and the more recent areas of activity on Kilauea. Also as part of the itinerary, we spent time on the older, more vegetated side of the island where we were able to explore the most interesting formation that I have ever seen: a lava tube, formed from a lava flow where the outside crusts over and insulates the inside magma. Once the magma is gone from the inside, a tube of hardened lava is left behind.

On the other island, we hiked to the top of Diamondhead and through the decaying craters of the two extinct volcanoes that make up O'ahu. We were also able to spend time on the beaches of the islands, including the green, black, and white sand beaches. My favorite was the Green Sand Beach, of which I have included a picture.

Your grant took a large weight off of my shoulder in my search for financing the course. I spent much more time focusing on my studies than on the expenses. It meant a lot to me to be able to go on this trip and, because of it, I have decided that I will look to specialize my geology degree in Volcanism and other Hard Rock/Metamorphic Rock Geology.

Once again, thank you very much for your help in funding my travel in the Geology of National Parks class.

Sincerely,

*Natasha M. Pierce*



Rift found in the Thermal area of a Pit Crater on the Big Island.





Green Sand Beach at South point on the Big Island.



The Black Sand Beach, known as a sea turtle resting place, on the Big Island.