The University of Arizona Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum is happy to announce the hiring of Susan Leib as the new Assistant Curator. The position is endowed through a gift by Freeport McMoRan.

Susan Leib has joined the museum from Texas Tech University, where she is finishing up her PhD in metamorphic petrology. Her research uses thermodynamic modeling and mineral histories (ages, compositions, isopleths) to determine a metamorphic and tectonic history for the Jurassic Rattlesnake Creek terrane in the central Klamath Mountain province. Leib is a part of the TTU Kalmath Research Group, where she works closely with Dr. Callum Hetherington, Dr. Calvin Barnes, and Dr. Aaron Yoshinobu. In addition to finishing her Geology doctorate, Leib holds a B.S. in Geology from Olivet Nazarene University, a M.A. in Museum Studies from Western Illinois University, and a M.S. in Geology from the University of Kentucky.

While working toward her PhD at Texas Tech, Leib worked to create a database for Texas Tech’s geology department’s rock samples, finding a solution to a long reoccurring problem for students and faculty having trouble locating samples for teaching and research.

Along with her educational background, Leib has an extensive background working with databases and museum collections. With Olivet Nazarene University, Leib was a Department Curator for the Geology Department where she created and maintained both the database and mineral collection. At Putnam Museum and Science Center, Leib was a museum educator and intern working with the geology collections. There Leib assisted in photographing and inventorying the mineral collection, museum label creation and STEM interactive displays. Recently, she assisted the American Windmill Museum with cataloguing and organizing documents and information within their database. Leib’s passion for both museums and geology made working at the UArizona Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum an ideal fit.

Leib is also a lecturer for the new undergraduate course: Introduction to Gems and Minerals (GEOS 260) within the College of Science, Geoscience department. She is co-teaching the course with Museum Director Eric Fritz this fall semester. The class is the first of its kind where students will learn how and where gems occur, their composition and crystal structure, properties, and methods used to identify gemstones.

Leib has been collecting rocks, minerals, and fossils for as long as she can remember at Buckskin Lake in Northern Wisconsin. In addition to collecting, she also enjoys fieldwork and hiking, usually ending up with a backpack or pocket full of rocks. Originally hailing from the central Midwest, she already admires the scenic mountain views surrounding Tucson.

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