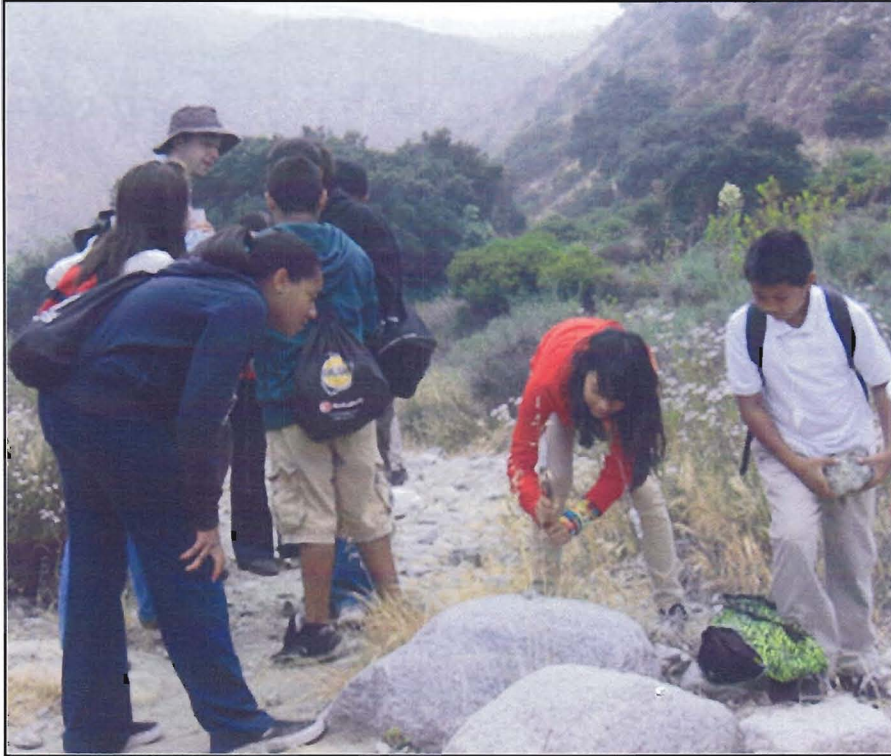




Geology Grad Students Lead Kids on an Educational Hike



Three graduate students from Caltech's Tectonics Observatory recently led a class of 40 sixth graders from Burbank Elementary School on a geology field trip through Eaton Canyon. The graduate students, Alan Chapman, Janet Harvey, and Steve Kidder, each led a third of the class on an exploration of the geological features of the canyon, teaching them about rocks and their origins, faults of different scales, why some boulders are rounded and others angular, and the difference between gabbro and granite.

As the groups hiked along, they whacked their way through bushes, threw rocks into streams, and made several stream crossings. Each of the students also had a chance to hammer on rocks to reveal fresh surfaces—hidden garnet was the students' favorite discovery. Finally, the entire class met together at a waterfall for lunch. One of the sixth graders said it was "the best field trip ever," and a chaperone mother pointed out, "Hiking isn't as interesting without a geologist along!"