



APGO Education Foundation Releases Rockway GeoHike on GeoscienceINFO.com

December 18, 2024, Toronto, Ontario: The APGO Education Foundation (“APGOEF”) and the School of Environmental and Earth Sciences at McMaster University are pleased to announce the release of the **Rockway GeoHike**, located on the north side of the Niagara peninsula, in the Niagara Geopark and the Rockway Conservation Area (see Figure 1). This virtual tour, which follows the Bruce Trail, features 6 stops that highlight the local geology. To see this as well as all our GeoHikes, visit [our GeoHikes page](#).



Figure 1. Map of the Niagara Peninsula, showing location of the Rockway GeoHike (blue marker).

The Rockway GeoHike is a beautiful place to observe the enormity of the geologic history of the Niagara Escarpment. At the scenic Rockway Falls, the walls of the gorge showcase five rock units of the Niagara Escarpment, from the Lockport Group limestone/dolostone at the top, to the Reynales Formation dolostone and shale near the base (Figure 2). As you continue through the hike, you will see evidence of erosion and the powerful effect this process has on the Niagara Escarpment itself. Learn how different rock types erode at different rates, thus shaping the escarpment walls over time. You will also encounter trace fossils called *Chondrites*, which are the preserved remains of the activities of ancient marine animals and are invaluable tools in interpreting their ancient lifestyles and ecosystems (Figure 3).



Figure 2. Exposed rock units at Rockway Falls – Stop #1 on the Rockway GeoHike.

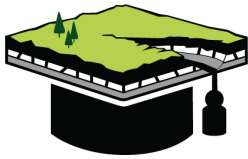


Figure 3. *Chondrites* trace fossil preserved in limestone on the Rockway GeoHike.

The Rockway GeoHike was developed by the GeoscienceINFO team led by Manager Dr. Deana Schwarz, P.Geol., and the School of Environmental and Earth Sciences at McMaster University, led by Dr. Carolyn Eyles and Dr. Daniel Dick. It is part of a growing series of geoscience-based hiking tours released across Ontario that aims to enhance public knowledge of geoscience using a hands-on and virtually accessible approach. We plan to release more GeoHikes in 2025 and subsequent years, throughout Ontario.

GeoHikes are 1-3-hour non-intensive hiking tours on maintained trails in Ontario that highlight local geology and describe their geological and environmental significance. GeoHikes can be used as guides while walking the trail in person, or as a virtual alternative at home or in the classroom. Visiting sites in person is a great way to learn but virtual tours are also an exciting way to expand one's knowledge when in-person access is not possible. Through the use of ESRI's innovative ArcGIS-StoryMap™ application and the integrated features, GeoHikes provide the user with an immersive experience. GeoHikes typically include:

- 360-degree photos and/or drone videos to provide a detailed overview of each site.
- LiDAR-based virtual 3D models that show locations of key features such as fossils, important structures and other geological features at the buildings or rock outcrops.
- Slide bars to show multiple images or overlays of important features or geologic information.
- Descriptions of geological features.
- Audio descriptions of written content.



About the APGO Education Foundation

The APGO Education Foundation ("APGOEF) is a registered charitable organization under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, registration number 84604 5052 RR0001.

The purpose of the charity is to advance the education of the public in the area of geoscience by:

- Holding lectures, presentations, and conferences on geoscience both in person and virtually to introduce geoscience to high school and university students as well as enhance the knowledge of the general public.
- Providing scholarships to post-secondary students for the study of geoscience in the final year of a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree program.
- Providing bursaries to immigrants to Canada who are internationally trained geoscientists and have demonstrated financial need for completion of licensure procedures for registration as professional geoscientists (P.Geo.s) in Ontario.

APGOEF provides funding to support innovative geoscience education projects working with university geoscience departments, community groups and not-for-profit organizations across Ontario. Please see our website at <https://apgoef.ca>.

[GeoscienceINFO.com](https://geoscienceinfo.com) an innovative one-stop spot for the public for information about the earth beneath their feet. This new website provides interesting information on all facets of geoscience. A particularly exciting feature of [GeoscienceINFO.com](https://geoscienceinfo.com) is the highlighting of virtual fieldtrips in different areas in Ontario. This enables viewers to experience and learn about the geology of an area while traversing it digitally in ESRI ArcGIS Online™ and StoryMaps™. Information on the latest discoveries and news in the world of geoscience is featured on the website, on our blog [Beneath Your Feet: A Geoscience Blog](https://www.apgoef.ca/blog/beneath-your-feet-a-geoscience-blog), as well as on our social media.

If you like our work, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to support our programs.

To Donate - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/apgo-education-foundation>

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