



NEWS

Fall 2016

Volume 21

Greetings from the Chair

Dr. Alberto Giordano, Professor and Chair

Welcome to the 2016 Newsletter of the Department of Geography at Texas State University. As the Fall 2016 semester begins, I want to share with you a few events, updates, and highlights since the last newsletter, starting with two highly successful events held in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. On November 4-7, 2015 in San Antonio, Texas State Geography

co-organized a joint meeting of the Southwest Division of the American Association of Geographers (SWAAG) and the Applied Geography Conference series. Over 300 participants registered from across the United States and abroad, including Canada, China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Brazil, and the Netherlands. On March 11, 2016, the department hosted the Texas State Geography Student Research Symposium (GSRS), a free, student-led, one-day conference designed to celebrate and encourage geography students, both graduate and undergraduate, to present high quality research. The conference, with over 100 registered participants, included paper sessions and presentations, posters, and other activities, including a Geo-Bowl. In addition to Texas State students, we had participants from Texas A&M Kingsville, Texas Tech, Sam Houston University, Blinn College, Austin Community College, the University of Utah, the State University of New York at Buffalo, and other institutions. In addition to organizing these two events,



the department hosted a well-attended reception and had a booth staffed by faculty, staff, and students at the AAG Annual Meeting in San Francisco in April 2016.

The National Center for Research and Geographic Education (NCRGE), a joint venture of the Department of Geography's Grosvenor Center and the American Association of Geographers, has been designated a Research Coordination Network (RCN) by the National Science Foundation (NSF). This is an extraordinary achievement, and to our knowledge, this is only the second time that a center affiliated with a Geography department is designated as a Research Coordination Network. RCN membership in NCRGE stands at over 130 researchers at 49 universities and organizations in the U.S and inter-

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nationally. We also continue to strengthen our research and teaching collaboration with the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, a Texas State University center directed by Dr. Andy Sansom. The latest example of this collaboration is the joint appointment of Dr. Tim Loftus in the department and at the Meadows Center. Finally, under the new leadership of Dr. Rebecca Davio, the Government Partnership Program (GPP) has been renamed to the Institute for Government Innovation (IGI) to re-focus its mission. Dr. Davio succeeds Dr. Robert Larsen, GPP's founder and director for thirteen years, who is now retired, but still active and working with Rebecca to help pursue new opportunities and projects. More on Bob, Rebecca, and Tim later in the column.

In Fall 2015, we welcomed five new colleagues to Texas State Geography. Dr. Thomas Ballinger (PhD, Kent State University, 2015) is a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Climatology who specializes in Polar Climatology, Cryosphere-Climate Interactions, and Extreme Weather Events. Dr. Jennifer Devine (PhD, University of California Berkeley, 2013) is a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Political Geography who specializes in Human-Environmental Relations, Latin American-US Politics, and Critical Social Theory. Dr. Suzon Jammes (PhD, University of Strasbourg, France, 2009) is a Senior Lecture in Geology who specializes in Tectonics, Geodynamics, and Numerical Modelling. Dr. Rebecca Davio (PhD, University of Texas, 2001) is an Assistant Professor of Practice in the Geography Department and the Director of the Institute for Government Innovation (IGI). Rebecca brings to the position considerable managerial and leadership experience, acquired while working in the private sector and for the State of Texas. Dr. Tim Loftus (PhD, Southern Illinois University, 2000) is the Meadows Endowed Chair in Water Conservation and Professor of Practice in the Geography Department. Tim specializes in Water-Use Conservation and Efficiency, Water Sup-

ply Planning and Policy, and Watershed Planning.

In Fall 2016, we are joined by Dr. Eric Sarmiento (PhD, Rutgers University, 2015), a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Urban Geography who specializes in Urban Development, Political Ecology, Cultural Economies, and Social Theory, and by

Dr. Alexander Savelyev (PhD, Pennsylvania State University, 2016), a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Cartography who specializes in Geovisual Analytics, Text Visualization, Big Data Visualization, Visual Cognition, and Web Cartography.

“The work of our faculty and staff is recognized annually with many awards at the university level and beyond”

I also want to congratulate Dr. Sarah Blue and Dr. Jennifer Jensen, who were granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in Fall 2015. Dr. Blue (PhD, UCLA, 2004) specializes in Population Geography, Latin America, and Migration. Dr. Jennifer Jensen (PhD, University of Idaho, 2009) specializes in remote sensing and Land Use/Land Cover Change. In Fall 2016, Dr. Jason Julian (PhD, University of North Carolina, 2007) was granted tenure at the Associate Professor rank. Jason specializes in Water Resources, Land Use/Land Cover Change, River Ecosystems, and Fluvial Geomorphology. Also in Fall 2016, Dr. Christi Townsend (Ph.D., Texas State University, 2012), a Lecturer in the department, was promoted to Senior Lecturer. Christi teaches courses in research methods and environmental and physical geography, with research interests in Natural Hazards, Agriculture and Viticulture.

We also had two changes in department leadership. Dr. Yongmei Lu and Dr. Brian Cooper were named Graduate Coordinator (Fall 2015) and Undergraduate Coordinator (Fall 2016) respectively. Yongmei and Brian succeed Dr. David Butler and Dr. Richard Earl in the positions. In wishing Yongmei and Brian many successful years, I want to thank Dave and Rich for the fundamental role they have played in the many achievements of Texas State Geography with their hard work, passion, vision, and dedication.

The work of our faculty and staff is recognized annually with many awards at the university level and beyond. A prime example is the selection from the American Association of Geographers (AAG) of Dr. Lawrence Estaville as the recipient of the 2016 Enhancing Diversity Award in recognition of his career-long dedication to championing greater inclusion of minorities at various institutions and in the discipline of geography. At the AAG, Lawrence led the establishment of the AAG Ethnic Geography Specialty Group and participated in the AAG's inaugural Diversity Task Force, as well as co-authoring its final report. In addition, Dr. Estaville has served multiple times on the Board of the Race, Ethnicity, Place Conferences, raising funds and contributing to their growing success.

I also want to recognize and celebrate the legacy, accomplishments, and contribu-

tions of Dr. Brock Brown, Dr. Robert Larsen, and Dr. Philip Suckling, who have retired since the last newsletter. Brock, Bob, and Phil have contributed in different ways to Texas State Geography, the university, the geography profession, and the community.

Dr. Brock Brown (nominated for Emeritus in Fall 2016) earned a B.A. and M.E. in Education from Wichita State University, and a M.A. and Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Oklahoma. In 1992 he joined Texas State Ge-

ography, where he taught undergraduate and graduate courses in cultural, economic, urban, and physical geography, as well as geography education. In the course of his career, Brock has received over thirty teaching awards, including the Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Award for teaching excellence in Texas, the National Council for Geographic Education's Distinguished Teaching Award (twice), the Texas State's Presidential Award for Teaching Excellence, the Everette Swinney Faculty Senate Teaching Award, the Teaching Award of Honor: Texas State University Faculty Association, and multiple Alpha Chi Favorite Professor awards. Brock has published several articles on teaching geography, ethnic geography, and the Hispano Homeland, as well as a large and

tion Association, and developed a "virtual field school course" at Texas State in which students visited the village of El Cerrito, NM.

Dr. Robert D. Larsen (Distinguished Emeritus Professor) retired in January 2016 after over forty years of service to Texas State University. Bob received his Ph.D. and M.S. from the University of Wisconsin Madison and his B.S. from the University of Wisconsin Superior. Dr. Larsen specialized in teaching land-use and solid waste planning and management. He has authored numerous book chapters, reports and articles, and administered approximately \$12,000,000 in state, federal and local grants and contracts as Director of the Government Partnerships Program (GPP), which he established in

2003. The GPP has supported more than 400 undergraduate and graduate Geography students,

who have gone on to technical, administrative, and leadership positions with federal, state, and local government agencies, the private sector, and the academia. His public service includes Assistant Director for Technical Services at the Edwards Aquifer Research and Data Center and Director for Precincts 3 and 4 of the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, where he served as President of the Board for several years. In addition to serving as professor in the department, Dr. Larsen has

“We now have over 600 majors, over 270 minors, and over 120 graduate students”

diverse amount of instructional and curricular material. He received funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Geographic Society to develop leadership and professional development courses and programs for geography teachers across North America. Working with the Texas State Distance Learning Program, he developed a human geography course that was the recipient of the Distinguished Independent Study Course Award from the National University Continuing Educa-

held various university administrative positions, including Assistant and Acting Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Assistant Director of the Office of Sponsored Projects (University Grants Office). His achievements were recognized with several awards, among them the Texas American Planning Association Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award, the Centex Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration Educator of the Year Award, and the Distinguished Teaching Achievement Award for Excellence in Geography Teaching in North America from the National Council for Geographic Education.

Dr. Philip Suckling (Emeritus Professor) retired in May 2015 after ten years of service to Texas State University, eight of those years as Chair of the Geography Department. Dr. Suckling received his Ph.D. from the University of British Columbia and his B.S and M.S. from McMaster University in Canada. Prior to coming to Texas State, Phil served as a faculty member at Brandon University, the University of Georgia, and the University of Northern Iowa, where he was Head of Geography for fourteen years. During his career, Phil has taught courses in meteorology, climatology, physical geography, and environmental hazards. For his teaching, he was awarded the General Sandy Beaver Teaching Chaired Professorship at the University of Georgia. Dr. Suckling is the author of books, books chapters, and several journal articles. During his eight years as Chair of Geography, the number of Ph.D. degrees granted by the department rose from 18 to 88, all while retaining the long history of arguably the most successful geography undergraduate program in

the nation. Among Phil's many contributions to the field of geography, especially notable are his membership on the board of Climate Research and the Southeast Geographer, three Geography academic programs reviews, P&T reviews for several U.S. and Canadian universities, and service as a reviewer for research proposals for the NSF and Canada's NSERC.

“Every year we distribute tens of thousands of dollars and multiple awards to our undergraduate and graduate students”

I want to close this column by thanking the faculty and staff of Texas State Geography for their support, counsel, patience, and friendship, and for their dedication

to our students, the department, the university, the profession, and the community. We now have over 600 majors, over 270 minors, and over 120 graduate students from all over the US, Central and Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

As many of our readers already know, every year we distribute tens of thousands of dollars and multiple awards to our undergraduate and graduate students. The awards and the scholarships come for the most part from Geography faculty, past and present, and from the support of generous individuals and families, and are distributed at our Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration, held annually at the end of the Spring semester. (The next reunion is on April 29, 2017.) On the back page of this newsletter, we are including a call to contribute to our scholarships fund, with donations going in full to our students. Any amount you may be able to give will make a difference: if you are in the position to do so, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the students of Texas State Geography. Thank you.



ALUMNI FOCUS

Kelly Blanton '15 works for the City of Torrance, California as a Professional Transportation Planner.

Andrew Cabana '14 recently began working as a Geospatial Technician in City of Austin's Watershed Protection Department. Andrew is also a Platoon Leader in the Army National Guard.

Clayton McNaught '15 is an Encroachment Planner contracted by the U.S. Air Force.

Courtney Peres '14 is a Planner/GIS Coordinator with the City of Harker Heights, Texas.

Sarah Eason Watson '10 was recently promoted to Lead GIS Analyst at the Edwards Aquifer Authority.

Candace Bryant '14 is a Senior GIS Analyst with Wilhoit Properties, Inc. overseeing operations of the San Marcos GIS office.

Erica Hylemon '15 began working as an Associate Planner with the City of Houston this year. Erica gained urban planning experience during an internship with the City of San Marcos' Planning and Development Services Office.

Xi Gong '16 accepted a position as a Visiting Associate Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of New Mexico.

Andreina Alexatos '14 is helping repair the damage caused by last year's floods by serving as the TreeFolks organization's Blanco River Reforestation Program Coordinator.

David Parr '15 accepted a tenure-track assistance professor position in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Science at Metro State University of Denver.

Yan Lin '14 accepted an Assistant Professor position in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of New Mexico.



FACULTY NEWS

Benjamin Zhan, PI of the project “Spatially Informed Strategies for Cancer Intervention,” has been funded by Texas State University’s Multi-disciplinary Internal Research Grant (MIRG) program for the 2016-2017 cycle

David R. Butler was quoted in the Wall Street Journal in “British Beavers Gnaw Their Way Back, but Are They Worth a Dam?,” about the recovery of beavers and the effects of increasing numbers of beaver dams in Great Britain

Received the College of Liberal Arts Achievement Award for Excellence in Teaching, for the 2015-2016 academic year

Authored a new book, *San Marcos*, as part of the popular “Images of America” series published by Arcadia Publishing. The book contains approximately 200 historical and recent photographs illustrating the history and development of San Marcos and Texas State University

Alpha Chi Omega Honor Society’s “Favorite Professor Award” for 2015 go to:

Denise Blanchard
Alberto Giordano
Jason Julian
Ron Hagelman
Rusty Weaver
Benjamin Zhan

Nate Currit was featured in the *University Star*, giving an interview about the Department of Geography’s recent collaboration with NASA

Selected for College of Liberal Arts award for exceptional accomplishments in grant/contract funding

Lawrence Estaville was presented with the 2016 AAG Enhancing Diversity Award at the San Francisco Meeting

Jenniver Devine received a Research Enhancement Program Award

Yongmei Lu, co-author of “Impact of Climate Change on Human Infectious Diseases: Empirical Evidence and Human Adaptation,” published in *Environment International*, has been selected to receive the Elsevier Atlas Award for best article. The award recognizes research that could significantly impact people’s lives around the world

Featured for her aforementioned research on KVUE news: <http://www.kvue.com/news/health/study-climate-change-can-affect-the-spread-of-infectious-diseases/281961345>

Sarah Blue was featured in the *University Star* highlighting the importance of Texas State’s study abroad program to Cuba and the unique experience it provides for students

Tenured and promoted to Associate Professor

Awarded a Research Enhancement Grant for 2015-2016

FACULTY NEWS

Years of Service

Nathan Currit (10)

Yongmei Lu (15)

Benjamin Zhan (20)

Richard Dixon (20)

James Petersen (35)

Alberto Giordano was featured for his research in the article, Crime Scene Scavenger: Vultures Help Forensic Experts with CSI Research, in Discover Magazine.

<http://discovermagazine.com/2015/june/12-crime-scene-scavenger>

Richard Dixon was appointed as a Permanent Honorary Professor of International Studies at Texas State

Oswaldo Muniz participated in the IGU Regional Conference celebrated at Lomonosov Moscow State University in Moscow, Russia, August 17-21, 2015. The Regional Conference brought together more than 1000 geographers from around the world

Appointed as a Permanent Honorary Professor of International Studies at Texas State.

Jennifer Jensen was featured as a Texas State Rising Star.
<http://www.txstate.edu/rising-stars/jennifer-jensen>

Awarded the Presidential Distinction Award for Excellence in Teaching

Tenured and promoted to Associate Professor

Tim Loftus was featured in an article, "The Q & A: Tim Loftus," in the Texas Tribune

<https://www.texastribune.org/2016/06/14/q-tim-loftus/>

Andrew Sansom was named "Harte's Heroes: Champions of the Gulf" by the Harte Research Institute (HRI) for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

http://www.txstate.edu/news/news_releases/news_archive/2015/June-2015/Sansom060915.html

Awarded the Bob Armstrong Award for Lifetime Achievement in conservation at the 2nd Annual Shoal Creek Awards

Jason Julian received a Presidential Distinction Award in Scholarly/Creative Activities, an award for Grant/Contract Funding, and a Research Enhancement Grant for 2015-2016

Tenured at the Associate Professor rank

FACULTY NEWS

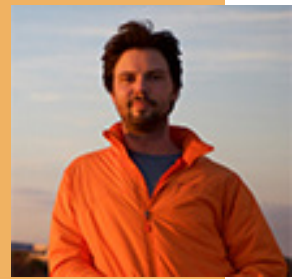
WE PROUDLY WELCOME TO THE FALL 2016 DEPARTMENT:

Dr. Alexander (Sasha) Savelyev

Assistant Professor

Ph.D., Geography, The Pennsylvania State University, 2015

Research Interests: cartography and information visualization (geovisualization, geovisual analytics, text and document visualization, web-based visualization and cartography), evaluation methods for information visualization (experiment and task design), visual cognition (visual variables, psychophysics), BigData (visualization of massive movement datasets, Social Media data visualization)



Dr. Dolores van der Kolk

Geology Lecturer

Ph.D., Geology, The University of Texas at Austin, 2016

Dissertation: Marine-Continental Transitions in a Greenhouse World: Reconstructing Late Cretaceous Deltas of Paleopolar Arctic Alaska and Utah



Dr. Eric Sarmiento

Assistant Professor

Ph.D., Geography, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 2015

Research Interests: Urban development, cultural geography, political ecology, economic geography, social theory



GRAD STUDENT FOCUS

Graciela Sandoval

Awarded a Graduate Scholarship (\$3,000), Atlantic Housing Inc., 2015 – 2016

Received the Bernard W. Detlefsen Doctoral Candidate Scholarship (\$1,250), Department of Geography, 2015

Selected for the Buzzard Graduate Scholarship (\$1,000)

Selected as the 2016-2017 Grosvenor Scholar

Monica Medel was

awarded the Alpha Chi National College Honor Society's Joseph E. Pryor Fellowship (\$5000)

Guixing Wei was award-

ed the Registration Fee Grant of the 33rd International Geographical Congress (\$200)

Paepin Goff was awarded the Ray and Marian Butler Environmental Geography Scholarship to support her research in the American West

Yunuen Reygadas was awarded a 3-year full tuition plus stipend scholarship by CONACyT, the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (National Council of Science and Technology). CONACyT is Mexico's equivalent of the National Science Foundation. Over 1,000 applicants applied and fewer than 100 applicants received the award

SWAAG Awards

Kristen Newcomer, 1st place, Graduate Student Paper Competition (bottom picture, center)

Ioannis Kamarinas, 1st place, Graduate Student Poster Competition (top picture, right)

Yahan Teng, 3rd place, Graduate Student Poster Competition (top picture, left)



GRAD STUDENT FOCUS

AAG Award

Yahan Teng: Inaugural Illustrated Paper Award (\$100), China Geography Specialty Group

Francesco Zignol was awarded the graduate South Central Arc User Group (SCAUG) Memorial Scholarship (\$1500)

Mackenzie Carhart received the 2016 Bill Hogue Memorial Scholarship (\$10,000)

3MT Competition Program Heats



Ph.D. in Geography:

1st: **Chris Holtkamp** (\$300)

Runner-up: **Ross Martin** (\$200)

People's choice: **Chris Holtkamp** (\$100)

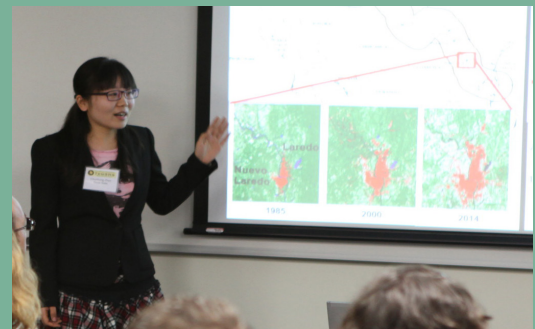
Ph.D. in GIScience:

1st: **Chunhong (Chloe) Zhao** (\$300)

Runner-up: **Christine Ames** (\$200)

People's choice: **Chunhong (Chloe) Zhao** (\$100)

Prize for participation: **Guixing (Fred) Wei** (\$50)



Ph.D. in GeoEd:

1st: **Jinhee Lee** (\$300)

People's choice: **Jinhee Lee** (\$100)



UNDERGRADUATE FOCUS

Claire Stone was the 1st place winner of the Undergraduate Student Paper Competition, Business Geography Specialty Group at AAG

Dusti Bridges was awarded the Presidential Upper Level Scholarship for the College of Liberal Arts

Joe Porter was awarded a South Central Arc User Group (SCAUG) Regional Scholarship (\$1500)

Corby Schaub and **Andi Hollier** were each awarded TexasView Research and Education Grants to conduct Land Use Land Cover Change research for major metropolitan regions in Texas. With the collaboration of Dr. Jennifer Jensen, their research projects will contribute to an ongoing study that uses remote sensing data to document four decades of urban growth in Texas and enable subsequent analyses to predict trajectories of change

For the second year in a row, the **Texas State Geography GTU chapter** has received designation as Presidential Honors Chapter

Rachel Wilson won an Honor College Scholarship, and was also nominated by numerous professors to be featured in Hillviews

The **Student Urban Planner's Organization** travelled to Denver, Colorado in April to visit the 4,000 acre Stapleton Airport Mixed-Use Redevelopment as well as meet with Long Range Planners of the City of Denver Planning Department to learn about their multi-modal transportation successes. While in Denver, the students took bus tours of Stapleton, walking tours of downtown Denver, explored public transportation throughout downtown, and got caught in a famous Colorado Spring Snowstorm



Denver's public planning office



DEPARTMENT NEWS

The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Southwest Division of the American Association of Geographers (SWAAG) was held jointly with the Applied Geography Conference (AGC) November 4-7 in San Antonio, TX. In partnership with AGC, the meeting was hosted by the Department of Geography at Texas State University and the Department of Geography at the University of Texas-San Antonio. Nearly 350 students, faculty, and practitioners attended, with equal numbers attending from both organizations. In addition to numerous institutions within the SWAAG region, AGC members attended from a wide variety of programs nationally and internationally. The opening session included an address by Dr. Sarah Bednarz, President of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) on the state of current research opportunities in our discipline and the meeting concluded with a plenary by Dr. John Morris, Professor of Geography at the University of Texas-San Antonio, entitled "Water Dreams and Water Schemes." In addition to awarding numerous student paper and poster awards, SWAAG hosted its first GeoBowl with student winners being funded to attend the annual AAG meeting in Spring 2016 to compete in the national GeoBowl. It was a great success and all agreed that it should become a fixture of future meetings. The business meeting highlighted the strong leadership of current SWAAG officers, the superb work of student presenters at the conference, and the excitement over visiting the vibrant redevelopment of downtown Denton, Texas at the Fall 2016 meeting, hosted by the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of North Texas.

The National Science Foundation has awarded the AAG and Texas State University a five-year \$400,000 grant to develop a research coordination network (RCN) for transformative research in geography education. The RCN is a continued effort from the National Center for Research in Geography Education (NCRGE) under the direction of Dr. Michael Solem (AAG) and Dr. Richard Boehm (Texas State University). The RCN for Geography Education currently has over 50 U.S. and international partners and is continually expanding.

NCRGE will facilitate research coordination, collaboration, and information sharing among geographers and educational researchers in other disciplines. Funding from the NSF grant will be invested into the RCN over the next five years to establish research groups and support research planning and networking activities that ultimately result in sustainable lines of research tied to the Road Map Project agenda. The research groups will be interdisciplinary, involving geographers and experts in STEM, the learning sciences, cognitive science, and other fields of educational research. International collaborators will also be included in the RCN.

For more information about NCRGE and how to join the RCN visit www.ncrge.org.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Every year the Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education hosts the Grosvenor Distinguished Lecture which features prominent geographers and public figures to whom geographic education has great meaning. In April of this year we were honored to host Dr. Douglas Richardson as our 17th distinguished lecturer. Dr. Richardson is the executive director of the American Association of Geographers and the title of his talk was "Transforming How We Experience and Understand our World: Real-time Space-time Interaction in Geography and GIScience." The lecture was well attended by geography students and faculty, in addition to President Dr. Denise Trauth and Liberal Arts Dean Dr. Michael Hennessy.



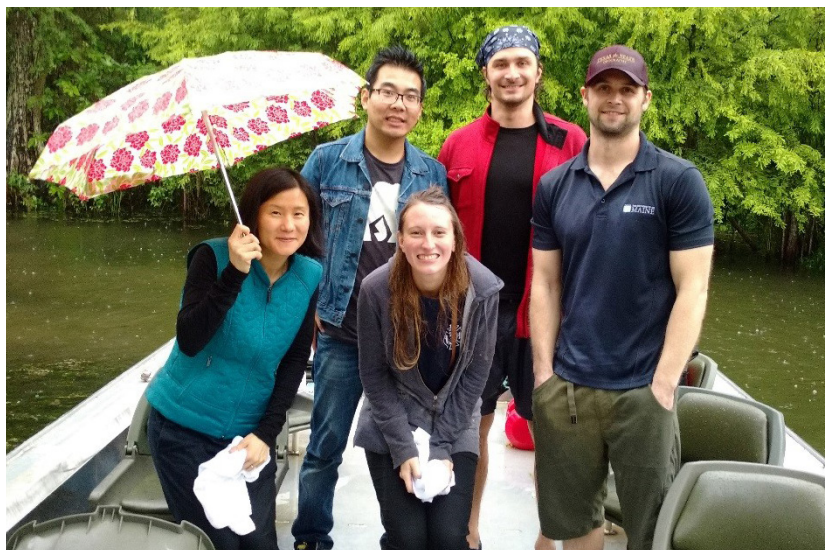
(Left to Right: Dr. Alberto Giordano, Chair of Department of Geography; Dr. Douglas Richardson, Grosvenor Distinguished Lecturer; Dr. Denise Trauth, President of Texas State University; Dr. Richard Boehm, Director of Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education; Dr. Michael Hennessy, Dean of College of Liberal Arts; Dr. Ronald Hagelman, Associate Chair of Department of Geography)

On March 22, 2016 a team from the RAND Corporation visited Texas State to conduct a study requested by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to examine the needs for graduate education in Texas and to develop criteria that could guide THECB and higher education institutions in deciding whether and when to expand their masters, doctoral, and professional programs. We are honored that at Texas State the RAND team interviewed only our department, with a focus on our GIScience PhD program.

The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment and several other organizations were honored at the White House Water Summit for the Texas Environmental Flows Initiative on March 22 in Washington, D.C.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

In May of 2016, the National Center for Research in Geographic Education (NCRGE) hosted an early career workshop in Lafayette, Louisiana. The workshop, *Validating Geospatial Thinking in Modules: An Analytical Approach by Early Career Scholars*, brought together eight early career scholars from across the United States to



work together with senior geography education researchers. One of the outcomes from the workshop was the creation of geospatial thinking test items that align to four content modules developed from a previous NCRGE NSF-funded project, *GeoSTEM*. Lafayette was a great destination for some delicious Cajun food and southern culture. A few of the participants even partook in a swamp tour in the pouring rain to see some alligators and over 250 species of birds.

This summer Dr. Hiner led six geography students on a month-long field course titled “TXST to Tuscany” to Tuscany, Italy, to study the geography of food and agriculture in Central Italy. Students lived and worked at Castello Sonnino, a 14th century castle featuring vineyards, a winery, and educational facilities. In addition to focused readings and classroom discussion, the students participated in tours, workshops, and site visits to examine both the cultural and environmental



landscape and to observe processes of change at a variety of scales. This trip was conducted in addition to other off-campus programs offered by the department in Germany, Cuba, the US Southwest.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

GIS Services at Alkek Library

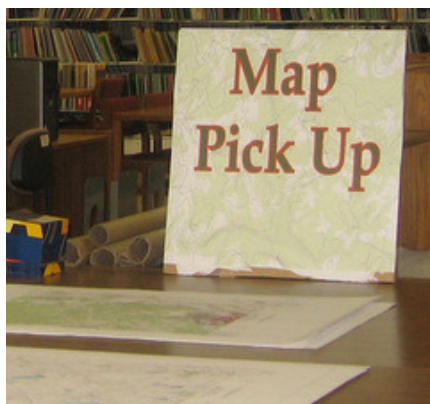
Nathaniel Dede-Bamfo recently joined us at the Alkek Library as the new GIS Services Specialist. He will be overseeing the Alkek Library GIS Lab (currently 8 computers on the 4th Floor of the library loaded with ArcGIS). Some of what he will be offering:

- Providing support for GIS data-related coursework, research, and teaching.
- Assisting with research involving geospatial techniques including: locating and accessing spatial data sets; helping with geospatial analysis, map making and converting data to other formats.
- Providing patrons guidance on data management best practices.
- Providing public service via in-person consultation, chat, phone, and email on geospatial needs.
- Conducting periodic workshops and classes on basic geospatial techniques



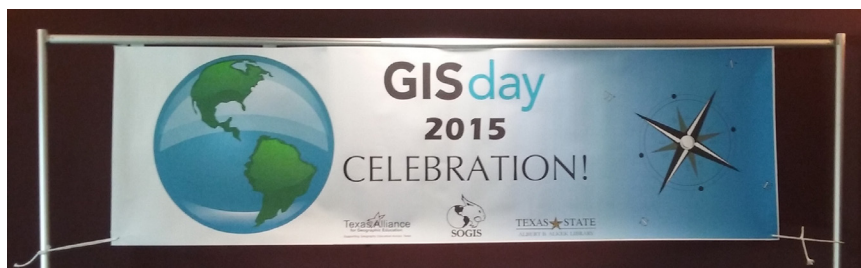
You may reach Nathaniel at 512-245-3216, nd1115@txstate.edu, or via the research consultation form.

Other Library Services



Some of the resources we have in Government Information on the 4th floor of the Alkek Library: we provide free printing of USGS topographic maps for Texas State University students, faculty, and staff. Map requests are filled usually within 24 hours. Government Information also has a print topo map collection of over 13,000 maps, as well as several other resources pertinent to Geography from different government agencies. We are currently working to catalog all of our Department of Interior documents in the Gov Info collection.

You may want to check out the Faculty Library Guide for more information about library services, such as the Faculty Article Delivery Service.



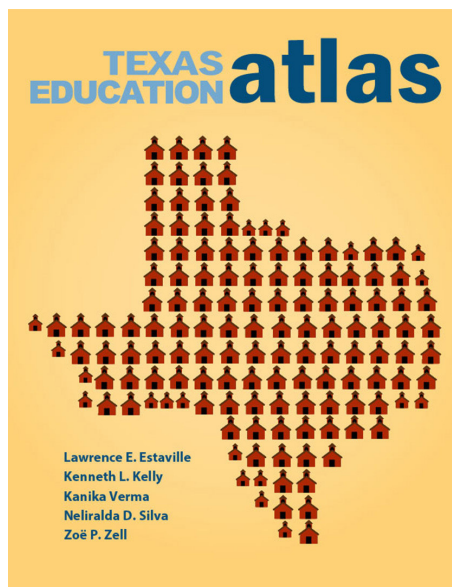
DEPARTMENT NEWS

Announcing the Texas Education Atlas

The Texas Atlas Project creates thematic atlases about important Texas topics in the 21st century to provide visualizations of geospatial data for policymakers, researchers, students, and the general public. The peer-reviewed Texas Education Atlas (2015) is the fifth atlas published by the Texas Atlas Project, a component of the Texas State Geography Department. Lawrence Estaville, Kenneth Kelly, Kanika Verma, Neliralda Silva, and Zoe Zell authored the atlas. The Texas Education Atlas was a featured e-book at both the South by Southwest Interactive Innovation Lab and the international Smart Cities Summit in Austin, Texas.

The Texas Education Atlas, the first of its kind, promotes evidence-based decision making through: (1) interactive visualizations, (2) a straightforward point-and-click interface for non-technical users, and (3) a Web-based system that enables policymakers, researchers, students, and the general public the ability to explore quickly a myriad of data about education in Texas from kindergarten to university. The atlas is organized into five interactive mapping divisions, each with its own data set: (1) K-12 Snapshot, (2) K-12 School Districts, (3) Community Colleges (4) Public Universities, and (5) Private Universities. The data span the

years 2004 to 2013, and the atlas has a time slider that allows for animation of the data through the period. A User Guide with Quick Start and a Tutorial Video accompany the atlas.



The atlas allows the visualizing and analyzing of discrete data for all 1,247 Texas school districts, 127 public and private universities and community colleges, and 539 independent variables or indicators. The school district data are from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) provided the college data. Powered by the StatPlanet program, the atlas' large data sets are processed through Excel spreadsheets and GIS shape files. In other words, the time-consuming work of mining extensive

datasets, manipulating the data for mapping, and constructing geographic information systems (GIS) layers have been completed for the atlas users.

Other than the visual associations among educational indicators for particular institutions and their relationships through time, the Texas Education Atlas does not offer any explanations for the mapped data. The data, however, can be easily exported for statistical analysis. The atlas maps and graphs can likewise be exported. The atlas is therefore a reference source of geographical insights that will ideally assist educational policymakers and researchers in thinking about geospatial relationships of the mapped data and related variables that may lead to constructive research questions and subsequent policy modifications. The extensive mapping should also be valuable to university students in various fields and the general public in understanding the scope and detail of educational information. The analytical geospatial data in the hundreds of maps should thus have fundamental effects regarding educational policy-making and funding in Texas from kindergarten to university at the beginning of the 21st century.

The Texas Education Atlas is free to the public at:

<http://www.geo.txstate.edu/research/texasatlas.html>.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Call for Alumni Business Cards

We continue to update our Texas State Geography Alumni Business Card Directory. Please send your business card by postal mail or scanned e-mail attachment to address below and be part of this geography department tradition.

The Texas State Geography Alumni Business Card Directory is a collection of alumni contacts, job titles and names of organizations that employ geographers serves as a concise, informative reference for anyone asking: "What do geographers do?" or "What can I do with a geography degree?" Since the first edition of the business card directory was published in the late 1990s by the Gilbert Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education under the guidance of Dr. Richard G. Boehm, hundreds of prospective geography students (and their parents), geography majors, geography graduates and geography alumni have all gained a better understanding of the career opportunities available to those with geographic knowledge and skills using this resource. Connections made through the directory have helped many geography students find contacts for informational interviews, job shadowing, internships and full-time employment.

Recently graduated geography majors now consider the inclusion of their business card in the directory a 'right of passage' and an announcement that: "I made it!"

Previous editions of this directory presented at state and national geographic education conferences have received enthusiastic reception inspiring many other geography departments across the country to follow our lead and produce their own directories.

All eight editions of the directory is available at the department's website:

<http://www.geo.txstate.edu/geography-careers.html>

Please send your business card by postal mail or scanned e-mail attachment to:

Mark Carter - Department of Geography

Texas State University - ELA 139

601 University Drive

San Marcos, Texas 78666

MC12@txstate.edu

Careers & Jobs in Geography

Alumni Business Cards and Linked-In Profiles
Department of Geography Texas State University
Spring 2016 - Eighth Edition



TEXAS STATE
GEOGRAPHY

<http://www.geo.txstate.edu>





UPCOMING EVENTS

Southwest AAG Division Meeting (SWAAG)

Denton, Texas
October 20-22, 2016

Applied Geography Conference

Louisville, Kentucky
October 26-29, 2016

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

Washington, DC
December 2-4, 2016

Geography Student Research Symposium (TxGSRS)

Texas State University, Evans Liberal Arts
March 24, 2017

American Association of Geographers (AAG)

Boston, Massachusetts
April 3-8, 2016

23rd Annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration (ARSC)

Freeman Ranch
April 29, 2017

National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE)

Albuquerque, New Mexico
July 27-30, 2017

ALUMNI REUNION

JOIN US!

At this Spring's Geography
Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration!

Saturday, April 29th

- Department Open House 1:00-3:00pm
- Geography Alumni Career Panel 1:30-2:30pm
- Scholarships & Awards Ceremony 3:00-5:00pm
- Dinner on The Quad under The Oaks 5:00-7:30pm
- Walking Tour of Downtown Redevelopment 7:30-8:30pm



More Information: www.geo.txstate.edu



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Your Texas State Geography undergraduate program continues to be the largest and one of the finest in the country, and in 2015 we reached a milestone by graduating our 100th Ph.D. Our full-time faculty now includes 35 accomplished, diverse, and international teachers and researchers.

At our annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration, the Department of Geography distributes an average of \$35K to \$40K in scholarships and awards, raised from endowments from faculty and staff in the department, alumni and other supporters of Geography, as well as corporate sponsors. As a vital member of the department's community and its strong sense of commitment, purpose and place, we are reaching out to you to ask you to consider giving back to one or more of our scholarships. Your tax deductible donation, no matter the amount, will make a difference in students' lives.

To make your contribution:

- Go to donate.txstate.edu/giving
- Select the "Geography" department
- Please write on the check the scholarship or scholarships you like to contribute to. **Consider contributing to one or more of our scholarships.**
- A full description of the scholarships is at geo.txstate.edu/resources/scholarships.html

Send us your contribution via mail to:

Department of Geography
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666
Attn: Scholarship Fund



Regardless of your ability to contribute, we invite you to keep in touch with your department and with each other:

- Visit geo.txstate.edu for news and updates
- Join LinkedIn and list your degree(s) in Geography at Texas State
- Send us or e-mail us (geography@txstate.edu) your business card for our directory and your career updates and achievements.