



DEPARTMENT OF  
**GEOGRAPHY**

College of Arts and Sciences

# Geography Newsletter

April 2023

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Geography

## Geography Scholarships and Awards

The Geography Department would like to announce the following Award and Scholarship recipients for 2022-23, who will be recognized at the Awards Gathering on April 27:

- John F. Rooney, Jr. Scholarship for Outstanding Junior: **Perri Lewis**, Global Studies (BA) major with Public Health minor.
- CAS Outstanding Senior: **Jackie Harsha**, Geospatial Information Science (BS), Spanish (BA), and Geography (BS) majors with minors in International Studies, Aerospace Studies, and Hispanic and Latin American Studies.
- Robert F. Norris Scholarship for Outstanding 1<sup>st</sup> Year Graduate Student: **Nivedita Kamaraj**, Geography PhD student.
- Jerry Croft and Family Award in Geographic Education: **Kathy Osei**, Geography MS student.
- Susan Shaull Medal for Outstanding GTA: TBA on April 27.

### Travel Awards for 2023-24:

- Robert F. Norris Conference Travel Awards: **Ny Aina Rakotoarivony** and **Nivedita Kamaraj**, Geography PhD students. Both plan to attend the American Geophysical Union (AGU) annual meeting in San Francisco in December.
- Stephen Tweedie Travel Scholarship: **Suzu Piccolo**, undergraduate Global Studies major, who plans to spend Spring 2024 studying abroad in Japan.

For more information about the Awards Gathering, please see page 9 of this newsletter.

## Departmental News

PhD students **Ny Aina Rakotoarivony** and **Nivedita Kamaraj** received the J.E. Weaver Competitive Grants Program from The Nebraska Nature Conservancy. This grant will support their research on grassland ecosystems.

**Dr. Saber Brasher** was awarded a College of Arts and Sciences Research (ASR) Award to support scholarly development during the summer.

**Dr. Tao Hu** was a co-author of the Best Paper Award-winning article in the *Annals of GIS* in 2023, titled "Human Mobility and COVID-19 Transmission: A Systematic Review and Future Directions.

(<https://doi.org/10.1080/19475683.2022.2041725>)

**Dr. Tao Hu** chaired a session at the AAG Denver meetings titled "Geospatial Big Data for Public Health," during which he delivered a presentation titled "Examining Inequality in the Travel Time of Health Services: An Analysis of Open Mobility Data."

**Dr. Rebecca Sheehan** (right) presented her paper, "The Politics of Memory-Work between Local and National Actants and Networks: The Case of the Equal Justice Initiative and the Jefferson County Memorial Project" at the AAG on March 24, 2023 in the session Public Memory and the Political Visions of Black Geographies 2, organized by Katrina Stack, PhD student, University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Dr. LaToya Eaves, Visiting Scholar, Wesleyan University College of the Environment and Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



## Departmental News (cont.)

At the AAG meetings in Denver, Geography PhD student **Erin Templeton** (below left) gave the Cultural Geography Specialty Group Keynote at the American Association of Geographers Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado. Her talk was about her paper “Infrasecularity in Stardew Valley,” where she examines various sacred spaces in the video game Stardew Valley (photos courtesy of Geography MS student Katrina Ward).



Also at the AAG meetings in Denver, Geography MS Student **Katrina Ward** (above right) presented their thesis research entitled “The presence of a prison: A case study examining how collective memory and the cultural landscape influence carceral values of residents in the prison town of McAlester, Oklahoma” as part of the paper session “Material Culture and Geography: Commemoration and Art” (photo courtesy of Dr. Rebecca Sheehan).

## Geographer in the Field

At the end of February **Dr. Carlos Cordova** had to fly to Mexico to assess some salvage archaeological excavations on the shores of one of the ancient lakes of Mexico City. The findings include an ancient aquatic farm field. The area is being developed as a new airport and will need support infrastructure, so that means more excavations are coming up in the area.



## GIS Day at the Capitol

A number of students, staff, and faculty of the OSU Geography Department attended the 2023 GIS Day at the Capitol in Oklahoma City on March 9. GIS Day at the Capitol is a unique opportunity for both public and private sectors to highlight their uses of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other geospatial technologies and to showcase how the technology is being used as a decision-making tool throughout the state.



(Left to right): Jackie Harsha, Samuel Harris, Blaine Mann, Hadley Brumley, Erica Rule, Dr. Yuting Zhou, Michael Larson, Kellen Bullock, and Jordyn Walls. PhD student Kianoosh Hassani was also in attendance.

## Jenks Day at the Department

About 35 high school students from Jenks (near Tulsa) visited the department on Wednesday, March 29. They were on campus all day, toured the department, and had with quick meet-n-greets with faculty/staff/students in the afternoon.



## Upcoming Colloquia

The flyer below provides info on a colloquium at OU on April 7 that is of interest to some in our department. Nat Raisbeck-Brown also visited the department on April 3 and hosted an informal discussion of her work.

### Mapping and growing the Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Network for plants and animals in Australia



A presentation by **Nat Raisbeck-Brown**  
an "experimental spatial scientist"  
with CSIRO, Australia's National Science Agency

Friday April 7, 2023

2:45pm refreshments/3pm talk

**location on OU Norman campus TBD**

Nat Raisbeck-Brown has been mapping and working with Aboriginal Peoples for 22 years on fire mapping as well as cultural and resource mapping. Most recently Nat has focused on working with Aboriginal Communities to collect, protect, and share Indigenous ecological knowledge for plants and animals for the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA), Australia's online biodiversity website ([www.ala.org.au](http://www.ala.org.au)). Since 2016, the ALA has partnered with Aboriginal linguists and Indigenous Rangers to facilitate relationships with Community endorsed Knowledge Holders, people who have the cultural right to share knowledge. The ALA creates the nest for these projects, but how the projects are done rests with each Aboriginal Community. Since 2019 we have published over 3200 Aboriginal names for plants and animals in 12 languages and incorporated the local Indigenous ecological knowledge for more than 450 species

Nat is here on a Churchill Fellowship to talk to American Indian peoples about how they are using maps to collect, protect and share their traditional and environmental knowledge. She is spending March talking to First Nations in Canada, April in Oklahoma and Kansas, and then May working with Saami mappers in northern Norway. Upon return to Australia, Nat will share her insights with Aboriginal peoples through her work with Aboriginal Language Centres, Indigenous Ranger groups and the Australian Indigenous Mapping Workshops. Please contact Laurel Smith ([laurel@ou.edu](mailto:laurel@ou.edu)) if you would like to meet and talk to Nat about her work or yours.

The flyer on the next page is for our annual ConocoPhillips Geography Career Spotlight Speaker, Michael Scott from Scranton PA by way of Salisbury University...

# ConocoPhillips

Geography Career  
Spotlight Speaker

ConocoPhillips

## Saving the World, One GIS Layer at a Time:

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The Case for  
Geographic  
Information Science  
in a World Awash in  
Spatial Data.



**Michael Scott**

Dean of the Henson School  
of Science and Technology  
at Salisbury University

OSU Geography Club

Monday, April 10

3:30pm

108 Classroom Building (CLB)



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## 2022-23 Awards Gathering

On April 27, the annual Geography Awards Gathering will take place in the basement auditorium of our building (SSH 035). The Awards Ceremony starts at 5:15 and Gamma Theta Upsilon inductions immediately thereafter. Over \$25,000 of awards and scholarships were awarded for the FY 2024 cycle.

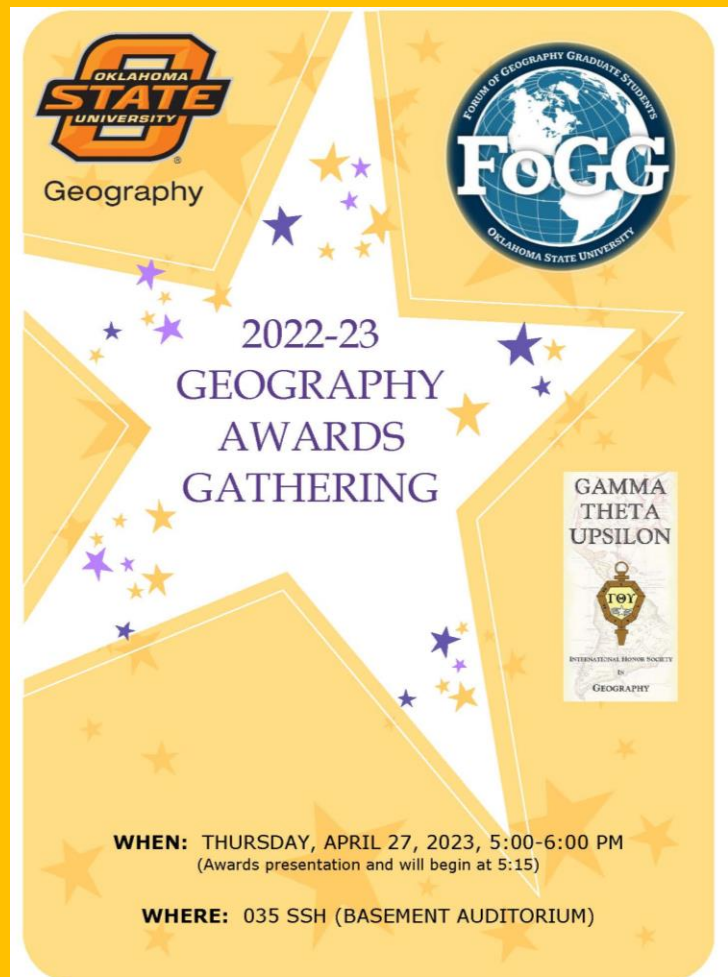
### 2022-23 Recognition Awards:

- John F. Rooney, Jr., Scholarship for Outstanding Junior
- CAS Outstanding Senior
- Robert E. Norris Scholarship for Outstanding 1<sup>st</sup> Year Graduate Student
- Jerry Croft and Family Award in Geographic Education
- Susan Shaull Medal for Excellence in Teaching
- Mark and Susan Miller Fellowship in Geography

### 2023-24 Travel Awards:

- Norris Conference Travel Award
- Tweedie Travel Award

Other awards and honors earned by students, staff, or faculty (on campus or off) will be recognized, so if you received some type of award or scholarship in the past year, please let [Jon Comer](#) know so he can add it to the list to be announced at the Gathering.



The poster features a large white star on a yellow background with scattered yellow and purple stars. In the top left is the Oklahoma State University logo with 'Geography' below it. In the top right is the FOGG logo (Forum of Geography Graduate Students) with 'OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY' around the globe. The central text reads '2022-23 GEOGRAPHY AWARDS GATHERING'. In the bottom right is the Gamma Theta Upsilon logo with 'INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY IN GEOGRAPHY' below it. At the bottom, the event details are listed: 'WHEN: THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023, 5:00-6:00 PM (Awards presentation and will begin at 5:15)' and 'WHERE: 035 SSH (BASEMENT AUDITORIUM)'.

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