



ZENITH



2017

Department of Geography



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# A LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

Dear alumni and friends of Geography,

One of the more enjoyable projects I have been involved with over the years is the annual production of our *Zenith* department magazine. This forum allows us to share news with our friends and alumni and, through the years, has served as a useful department history. This will be the last *Zenith* I produce in my capacity as Department Head. After (almost) 18 years in this position I will step down as Head in January and hand the keys to a new driver. I have been honored to serve six consecutive terms as Head and will miss many aspects of the job.

One new faculty member joined our department in 2017: Don Colley is the department's new Instructor of Professional Practice and Undergraduate Program Advisor. Don moved here from San Diego State University and replaced Emily Fekete, who left OSU to join the American Association of Geographers in Washington, D.C. Also departing in the past year was Research Assistant Professor Fatemeh (Tannaz) Soltani, who was offered a tenure-track position at another university.

As you will read in these pages, our talented students, staff and faculty have accomplished much during the year and several special events stand out. The Department's newest degree program—the B.A. in Global Studies—became active and has been selected as one of three university programs for special recruitment efforts under a university Strategic Enrollment initiative. Two Geography students received Fulbright Awards for international research and study: undergraduate major Jaryd Hinch (Estonia) and doctoral student Colton Flynn (Ethiopia). Colton was also awarded an OSU Foundation Distinguished Graduate Fellowship. Doctoral student Jordan McAlister was honored with a Humphrey's Travel Grant from OSU, and two doctoral students—Thomas Craig and Keeley Heise—earned awards for research presentations at the spring AAG conference in Boston. Doctoral student Kimberly Johnson won Best Graduate Student Paper for her presentation at the GPRM regional AAG meeting in North Dakota. Geography major Kayla King was awarded a Geospatial Summer Institute Fellowship by the Oklahoma NASA Space Grant and the Center for Spatial Analysis. Three of our graduate students—Keeley Heise, Stephanie Heald, and Emily Ellis—were selected for the Three Minute Thesis presentation finals in the spring. We were very happy to see Michael Larson, Coordinator of Cartography Services, receive the Arts and Sciences Staff Award for 2017.

Enjoy your new *Zenith*. We hope to hear from you before the next edition and we look forward to seeing some of you over the next year when your travels bring you back to Oklahoma State.

All the best,



Dale Lightfoot  
Professor and Head

Check us out! We are now on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Icons to these sites are linked from the front page of our website.

# BLAST FROM THE PAST



Spring 1969 in the Geography Department in Home Economics East, (L to R) Jack Moore, Geography Department Secretary, and Jerry Croft. It was a common sight around the department to see Jack holding a cigar.



Geography Seminar Room in Scott Hall, Spring 2007, during a session of Geographical Analysis with Jon Comer (standing). Graduate students include (clockwise from left) Leo Bombom, Tory Lightfoot, Chris Storm, Brian Martin, Shireen Hyrapiet, and Majunu Seran.



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# AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

## Geography Scholarship Priorities 2017

THANK YOU to the many donors who contributed to our Excellence and Scholarship funds over the past year. Your contribution is helpful, needed, and has a direct impact on the faculty and students in our Department of Geography.

### Geography Scholarship Priorities in 2017

Past alumni support has been a key to the progress of our department. With growth in the number of faculty and new program developments, it's an exciting time for the Department. I hope you can help us maintain this momentum by making a generous contribution to our programs. Your gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or \$1,000 will assist us in making improvements that will benefit current students and enhance the department and your degree in geography. Please make checks payable to the OSU Foundation and designate the fund to which you are donating on the memo line. Every dollar sent to one of these Geography funds goes directly to the Geography Department. Your support will help the Department achieve its goals of enriching the academic experience of current and future students.

### We hope to receive funding in the future to:

- \*Establish an annual scholarship for the Outstanding Senior in Geography
- \*Establish an Endowed Professorship in the Department of Geography
- \*Establish an annual scholarship for Geography Study Abroad
- \*Enhance the Geography Lectureship Fund (complete the endowment) to support an annual Lecture
- \*Enhance the Alyson L. Greiner Undergraduate Travel Scholarship
- \*Finish Endowing the Stephen W. Tweedie Travel Scholarship
- \*Support the Geography Excellence Fund which provides many activities for students and faculty

### **2016-17 Academic Year Awardees:**

Rooney Scholarship for Outstanding Junior (\$2,300)  
Brooke Bastie

A&S Outstanding Senior  
Jaryd Hinch

Norris Scholarship for 1st Year Master's Student (\$2,500)  
Catherine Shropshire

Fite Scholarship for 1st Year Ph.D. Student (\$3,000)  
Ben Hemingway

Shaul Medal for Teaching Excellence (plaque)  
Jordan McAlister

Croft Family Award in Geographic Education (\$1,500)  
Matthew Haffner

### **2017-18 Academic Year Awardees:**

Norris Conference Travel Award (2 @ \$550)  
Thomas Craig, Matthew Haffner

Norris Field Research Award (1 @ \$1,500)  
Brian Gilson

Tweedie Travel Scholarship (2 @ \$550)  
Brian Gilson, Jordan McAlister

Greiner Travel Scholarship (1 @ \$350)  
Curtis Rich



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# AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

## Geography Mentors Program

This program, now in its fourth year, allows undergraduate students to work closely with a selected faculty mentor on research. Students are selected through a competitive process and work with a faculty member on a specific research project. The students enroll for 3 credit hours in an independent study course in the fall semester, and the mentor and student then co-present the research at a conference. The department covers the student's registration fee, transportation, and hotel costs. This year four undergraduate geographers were involved and they attended the Southwest Division of the American Association of Geographers (SWAAG) meeting in Huntsville, Texas.



**Hayden Harrison** is being mentored by Dr. Mathews, and she presented a paper entitled "An object-based image analysis of land cover change in Stillwater, Oklahoma from 2003 to 2015."

**Kayla King** is being mentored by Dr. Cordova, and she presented a poster entitled "Short-term geomorphologic change in the dunes of the Little Sahara State Park, Oklahoma."



**Giovanni Penna** is being mentored by Dr. Hanks, and he presented a paper entitled "Patterns of Islamic religiosity in Kazakhstan: Implications of new data from the north and east regions."

**Chi Chen (Finn) Yip** is being mentored by Dr. Kedron, and he presented a poster entitled "The impact of scale on relationships between social vulnerability and the physical environment." Finn won second prize in the undergraduate poster competition.



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# AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

## Student Awards

**Colton Flynn** (right), a doctoral student, has been awarded a Fulbright Student Award to conduct research in Ethiopia during the 2017-2018 academic year. Colton's research focuses on the development of remote sensing techniques to predict in-field nutrition levels of grains and grasses for livestock and other agricultural applications. He will be working with the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute.



**Jaryd Hinch**, a senior, has also been awarded a Fulbright Student Award. His project will assess Estonian methods of utilizing technology to bring society closer to nature. While there, he will enroll in courses that contribute to his understanding of human-environment geography. Jaryd is shown right at the College of Arts & Sciences Awards Banquet being recognized for his Fulbright by the Dean of Arts & Sciences, Bret Danilowicz, on April 12.



## Staff and Faculty Awards



The Arts & Sciences Fall Convocation took place Tuesday, August 29, 2017 at the Wes Watkins Center. The Geography Department was proud to have Michael Larson (Coordinator, Cartography Services) recognized as a recipient of the A&S Outstanding Staff Award. He is shown with A&S Dean Bret Danilowicz (R).



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS



**Seated (L-R):** Brad Bays, Allen Finchum, Dale Lightfoot, Jon Comer, and Tom Wikle

**Standing, Middle (L-R):** Don Colley, Michael Larson, Alyson Greiner, Steve Stadler, Carlos Cordova, Sharon Elliott, Hongbo Yu

**Standing, Back (L-R):** Hank Yang, Jacqueline Vadjunec, Peter Kedron, Clay Barrett, Rebecca Sheehan, Adam Mathews, Emily Williams, Reuel Hanks, Amy Frazier

**ANN ADKINS** retired in May and has been enjoying every minute since! She has enjoyed trips to Colorado and New Orleans, spent more time with her grandsons and husband, and has continued her craft of photography. We wish her the very best in her new venture.

**CLAY BARRETT** has completed his second year as the GIS Specialist for OSU Cartography Services overseeing the American Association of Petroleum Geologists projects. He has enjoyed the past two years, with six projects completed so far, and four more in progress. In addition to his regular map making duties, he has been working to process lidar and aerial imagery for Dr. Mathew's RMP-GIS Project and manipulating various datasets for Dr. Kedron's EPSCoR research. It's been an exciting time working with all the great Faculty, Staff, and students and hopefully it'll continue for years to come.

**DR. BRAD BAYS** and Tom Wikle completed a thematic survey of Oklahoma's World War II Army Training Airfields and produced 47 new entries to the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory (OLI). Brad also completed a Reconnaissance-level survey titled Modern Houses of Payne County, which produced over 100 new OLI entries. Both projects were funded by the National Park Service through the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Office. Brad's current research interests include an examination of twentieth century mesoscale land use change related to agricultural mechanization, a project that evolved from his fieldwork documenting Oklahoma's historic barns. Among Brad's newest research interests involves online learning in higher education, such as how discipline-specific barriers affect the diffusion of online course and program development. Brad teaches introduction to cultural geography online, historical geography of North America, the geography of federal Indian policy and trust land use titled Geography of Indian Country, as well as the department's graduate research design course. Brad was recently named a Faculty Teaching Fellow in the OSU Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence.





# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS



**DON COLLEY** joined the department this Fall 2017 from California State University San Marcos where he was a Lecturer in the Department of Liberal Studies. He is currently ABD from San Diego State University and is finishing his dissertation on the topics of Millennials and young people, social movements and online activism, and violence. At OSU, he will oversee our Undergraduate program as advisor and coordinator, while also teaching Intro to Cultural Geography, Readings in Geography for Honors students enrolled in Intro to Cultural, and Geographies of New Media. In the future, he will teach a course on

Children and the Environment, developed from his background in Children's and Young People's Geographies. His research focus going forward will be to continue his work with young activists and to further develop his training in Critical Pedagogy and Geographic Education. Originally from Ohio, Don has found Stillwater a wonderful pleasant small city despite living most of the past decade in San Diego. In his spare time, Don is an avid marathoner and ultra-runner and pop culture guru which he feels keeps him connected to his students.

**DR. JON COMER** continues to stay busy and is wondering when he gets to sit back as a "senior" professor and relax a little. He attended the Applied Geography Conference in October 2017 in Louisville, but skipped AAG this year even though he loves Boston. He continues to teach quantitative methods courses to geographers, taught his last summer school course (meteorology) due to declining enrollments, and is now back to teaching regular world regional geography sections (i.e. ~100 students) after over a decade of teaching honors courses (~20 students). It's been a rough transition. Jon had two trips to Europe in 2017. He and Tom Wikle went on an exploratory trip to Iceland in January, which is a rugged but majestic (and dark) time of year to visit. Then, in May/June, he and Tom led a 2-week study abroad trip to Spain and Portugal (see travelogue elsewhere in this *Zenith*). They plan a study abroad trip to Russia, Estonia, and Finland in May 2018 and beyond that, who knows?

**DR. CARLOS CORDOVA** submitted the manuscript of his book *Geoarchaeology: A Human-Environmental Perspective* to I.B. Tauris publisher. The book is hopefully appearing in 2018. This summer Carlos was invited to conduct a Landscape Archaeology field seminar at the site of the Medieval city of Bolgar in Tatarstan, Russia. After the seminar he was interviewed by the various officials of Kazan Federal University. Later he was nominated by the Faculty of Archaeology and Ethnography as an Invited Scholar, a title that is similar to Adjunct Professor in the US. After submitting the tons of papers needed for that title, he will be officially confirmed as an invited scholar of that university where he will collaborate in various projects and conduct summer seminars. Carlos visited Mexico to acquire material for his next book, *The Basin of Mexico and its Lakes*. However, his plans were thwarted by the September-19 earthquake, an event that oddly relates to part of the content and purpose of the book, which will require a special mention in the preface. His past book *Crimea and the Black Sea: An Environmental History* has received a good reception in certain academic circles in Europe and North America. He has been invited to give a colloquium on Crimea at a Black Sea lecture cycle at Columbia University next spring. Carlos has from time to time written short stories, some of which have been posted on the board of the Geography breakroom under the nom-de-plume Dədə Qdoba the Chronicler, and has engaged in literary battles with The Aleph and Dr. Strahler using sophisticated weapons such as haikus and short stories. During his breaks from his literary tasks he is advising PhD student Tom Cox and mentoring undergraduate student Kayla King (Undergraduate Mentor's Program) and serving in the committees of Colton Flynn and Amanda Thomas.



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS



**SHARON ELLIOTT** joined the department mid-April in preparation for Ann Adkin's retirement May 5th. Although new to the department, Sharon has been on staff at OSU for 10 years (8yrs Spears School of Business, 1.5yrs OK EPSCoR). Besides staying busy at work, Sharon stays even more busy raising her two sons, Ezekiel (16yrs) and Gunner (10yrs) in Cushing. The boys keep her busy with their hunting, fishing, football practices/games, and just being super ornery! She loves to watch college football and hopes to watch Gunner play collegiate (hopefully OSU!) in a few years.

**DR. ALLEN FINCHUM** continued his longstanding work with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office as well as working on some other small research projects of personal interest. Allen is still grateful for the support that Mike Larson gives to the SHPO project and its ongoing success. Allen has expanded his analysis of cell phone usage by operating system for select US cities in relation to other demographic patterns after working with a small startup in San Francisco to get new data that significantly improves the location information on where the phone "calls home". He presented a poster on Apple Stores at the AAG Meeting in Boston. During the Christmas Break in December 2016 he visited New York City and made a one day sojourn via subway to visit all 7 Apple Stores in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

**DR. AMY FRAZIER's** ongoing research program is focused on creating new geographic knowledge and developing innovative solutions for translating information across scales. During the past year, she has continued to serve as the Principal Investigator for an NSF-funded grant to develop algorithms for predicting geographic patterns at scales (i.e., resolutions) finer than the original data were captured. This work has resulted in several peer-reviewed publications including an invited review article for the journal *Current Landscape Ecology Reviews*. Amy is also engaged in a multi-institutional, multi-disciplinary project focused on developing unmanned aerial systems (a.k.a., drones) for severe weather monitoring called CLOUD-MAP (Collaborative Leading Operational Unmanned Systems Development for Meteorology and Atmospheric Physics: [www.cloud-map.org](http://www.cloud-map.org)). Together with Geography Ph.D. student Benjamin Hemingway, she is developing new methods and protocols for sampling atmospheric parameters using small, unmanned systems. Their work was recently published in the journal *Atmosphere*.

**DR. ALYSON GREINER:** the start of 2017 ushered in prospects for a big change as she carried out plans to step down from her role as Editor of the *Journal of Cultural Geography*. (More on that in the section about the *Journal*.) This year Alyson was invited to contribute an article focusing on the impacts of the Dust Bowl on local and regional architecture to the *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*. She was also invited to write a chapter on cemeteries in an edited book for funeral service majors. In other necro-geo activities, she also participated in a gravestone conservation workshop where she learned about and helped to restore several broken or otherwise impaired grave markers. She was subsequently interviewed about her cemetery interests by the Video Production Manager of the Cherokee Nation. This year also saw the publication of the third edition of her textbook, *Visualizing Human Geography*. She and life partner, Luis enjoyed travelling to Austria and southern Germany this summer. We didn't go on any *Sound of Music* tours while in Salzburg, but we walked so much that it sure felt like we really did "climb ev'ry mountain!"

**DR. REUEL HANKS** had a superb year in 2017. He lost a bunch of weight, bought a house, and now owns two beagle puppies, King and Cyrus. He published some stuff too, and visited Kazakhstan and Turkey during the summer. He spends all of his "free" time with his daughter, Kami, who is now in second grade.



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. PETER KEDRON** continues to adjust to life in the cross-timbers of Oklahoma. He is happily juggling a number of research projects covering topics ranging from Oklahoma's adaptation to climate change to the statistical analysis of the modifiable areal unit problem. Still trapped in the Northern Hemisphere, Peter will present his research at conferences in Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States this coming year. He's also vowed, yet again, to get into the 'best shape of his life'.

**MICHAEL LARSON:** November 2017 will start Michael's twenty-second year as Coordinator of Cartography Services. While Michael performs extraordinary work for the faculty members and students of the Department of Geography, he also continues to support faculty, staff and students from other departments on campus as well as work for various entities, large and small, public and private, off campus. Michael's focus encompasses several major project areas, his work for the Association of American Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), his work and role assisting on Dr. Vadjunec's *Land System Vulnerability and Resilience to Drought* grant, and his role directing the data update and cleaning for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Oklahoma Landmark Inventory (OLI) database update. Continuing his role as an educator, Spring 2017 was Michael's fifteenth year teaching the Computer Cartography course. In addition to teaching, he continues to be involved with assisting a number of the Geography faculty with their field courses. At the 2017 OKSCAUG Conference, Michael gave a presentation titled "Cartography in the Digital World: Why it Matters". As recognition to his work and dedication to the Geography Department, Michael was nominated and awarded the 2017 A&S Outstanding Staff Award. When he is not involved in Departmental business, Michael enjoys spending time with his two granddaughters and puttering in his garden.

**DR. DALE LIGHTFOOT** lived another year and, for the most part, thrived. Classes remained enjoyable and ongoing research projects saw progress. A manuscript from previous fieldwork on a canal network in the Tafilalt Oasis, Morocco was completed (with co-authors Odenwald, Finchum and Vadjunec). He published a paper on *The Sustainability of Ancient Water Control Techniques in Iran* (with co-authors Manuel and Fattahi) in *Water History*, and his book chapter slated for inclusion in a UNESCO volume on *Water History and Humanity* received a publication date. He was invited to write the Foreword to a new book on *Qanat Knowledge*, published in 2017 by Springer. Dale delivered a presentation on *Qanats in the New World* at the AAG meeting in Boston in April, and an invited presentation in October at an international conference on karez in Bidar, India. The travel schedule was lighter this year but remained both enlightening and adventurous and included trips to Missouri to work with an aircraft designer/builder during key stages in the construction of the Sopwith Camel. This full-scale WWI-era replica is nearing completion and should be airborne in a few months. The summer also included a road trip to national parks/monuments in the U.S. Southwest where the yellow Jeep lived the life it was intended to have on backcountry trails in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada. The fall included a professional trip to India and side trips to the center of Sikh faith in the Punjab with a fascinating walk across the border to Pakistan and several days spent exploring the relic Mughal sites and strident street life of Lahore. December included a family ski trip to Taos to celebrate (son) Adam's graduation from OSU with a degree in Business Administration and dual majors in finance and accounting. Adam begins employment in January with Grant-Thornton, an international audit and financial services firm. Tory continues as Manager of Research Support Services in the College of Arts & Sciences. After 17 years and 9 months in the hot seat, Dale completed his final year as Department Head in 2017 and will ring in the New Year as a free man.



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. ADAM MATHEWS:** The previous year was a productive one in terms of research. I co-authored a number of research articles that were published in *Cartography and Geographic Information Science* (with Dr. Tom Wikle), the *International Journal of Remote Sensing* (with PhD students Yun Zhao, Gustavo Ovando, Colton Flynn, and MS student Emily Ellis as well as Dr. Amy Frazier), *Geographical Review* (with lead author and PhD student Matt Haffner, Dr. Emily Fekete and Dr. Allen Finchum), and the *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* (with PhD student Matt Haffner and MS student Emily Ellis). These papers covered a variety of topics including professional certification in GIS, urban population estimation using lidar-derived building volumes, GIS-based modeling of tornado siren sound propagation, and university student views/perceptions of location-based social media, respectively. In addition, Dr. Amy Frazier and I co-authored an entry in the newly online *Geographic Information Science & Technology Body of Knowledge* entitled “Unmanned Aerial Systems”. These efforts and other projects were presented at the SWAAG Regional Meeting in Denton in October 2016, the AAG Annual Meeting in Boston in April 2017, and the EnviroDrones Conference at Dartmouth College in June 2017. In other research news, my MS advisee Emily Ellis graduated in May 2017. Emily’s thesis utilized object-based image analysis with both aerial imagery and lidar data to identify and assess change of urban tree canopy in Oklahoma City from 2006 to 2013.

Regarding external funding, the Resource Management Plan-Geographic Information System (RMP-GIS) project with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department continues to provide GIS support to Oklahoma State Parks including upgrading their web GIS capabilities. GIS Specialist, Hank Yang, continues to lead the work on the project. We welcomed two new GRAs to the project this year, Amanda Thomas and Catherine Shropshire, who will lead our field data collection efforts. Regents Professor Emeritus Dr. Lowell Caneday continues to contribute to the project as well.

In addition to making progress in research, I continue to make advancements in instruction. In the spring semester of 2017, I offered a new course entitled ‘Geospatial Applications for Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)’ that drew in graduate students from across campus (Geography, Geology, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, Plant & Soil Science, and Integrative Biology) that conducted interdisciplinary research projects focusing UAS-based data collection, structure from motion image processing, and data analysis. Further, Digital Tools for Environmental Exploration (aka “Cool Tools”) continues to evolve by incorporating the latest geospatial tools and techniques (for example, recent updates and additions include smartphone-based crowdsourced GPS data collection, geotagged Twitter data analyses, smartphone-based structure from motion 3D modeling, and much more). Lastly, in personal news, my wife Carolyn and I welcomed our daughter Sofia into the world in January. She is keeping us happy as well as busy and, most definitely, tired.

**DR. REBECCA SHEEHAN:** Over the last year, she has continued research in New Orleans with the all-female marching krewes and the Confederate monument controversy. While continuing her analysis of the all-female marching krewes, the Confederate controversy has taken center stage. In April, Rebecca and her co-author, Jennifer Speights-Binet, a colleague at Samford University in Birmingham, AL, presented at the AAG with the paper, “The Last ‘White’ Stand: Preserving Confederate Monuments in New Orleans and the Trump Victory,” in the session, “Memory and Place.”

In the summer, Rebecca traveled to Spain, Andorra, France, Morocco, and Portugal with Jon Comer and Tom Wikle from the Department of Geography on their study abroad trip. The trip was a huge success as they explored the culture, architecture, public spaces, and food (!) of these unique places. Her favorite parts of her travel included the scenic beauty of Andorra, the Art Nouveau architecture in Barcelona, and the Old Medina in Morocco!

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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

Additionally, she recently submitted a book chapter, “Spatial Justice in the City and Rethinking Memorial Public Spaces as Regenerative” for the Routledge book *Regenerative Development: Urbanization, Climate Change & the Common Good*, editors Beth Schaefer Caniglia, Beatrice Frank, John Knott, Ken Sagendorf and Eugene Wilkerson. While cities have begun to think about their parks in sustainable and perhaps even regenerative terms, especially regarding agriculture and carbon off-setters, city public spaces such as squares, places, and monuments that memorialize tend to lie outside the reach of ideals concerning sustainability and perhaps far outside ideals of regeneration. For by definition, memorializing is inclined to set in time and space a portion of the public landscape.

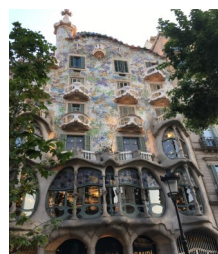
In November, she was invited by the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP) at the University of Cincinnati to present the removal of four Confederate monuments in New Orleans at a public colloquium and to lead to a graduate seminar, Public Art in Public Space.

Finally, Jennifer Speights-Binet, and Rebecca are finishing up an article manuscript, “Removing White Confederate Monuments: The Work of Remembrance not Reverence in New Orleans’s Cultural Landscape,” to be submitted by the end of the year to the journal, *Cultural Geographies*. Using newspaper articles, they explore the memory work of pro-Confederate and anti-monument supporters as well as that of prominent official actors. They show how the past, present, and future are used in different ways as a means to justify positions. Moreover, they show how indirect and direct discursive strategies, including legislative and legal maneuvering, buttress these arguments. In illuminating these strategies, they aim to provide insight into the processes involved in creating more democratic public spaces.



Andorra

Casa Batlló  
by Antoni



**DR. STEVE STADLER** is working in his 38<sup>th</sup> year at OSU and likes the teaching, research, and service as required in his job. Although his colleagues keep asking/suggesting he retire, he is not quite ready to pack it in. He teaches physical geography, climatology, and meteorology and is coordinator of the introductory physical geography course which lumbers along with lots of “interesting” logistical details to manage. Steve’s research is still focused on wind turbine climatology and the placement of turbines in an increasingly hostile political arena. Recent manuscript submissions include a co-authored piece about blizzard vulnerability in the northern Great Plains with recent PhD graduate Keeley Heise and an Oklahoma place names essay. He is working on the connection between weather events and public Web site use of Oklahoma Mesonet data. He continues service on the steering committee of the Oklahoma Mesonet and has now finished his stint as president of the board of the Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education.

Barb reckons this will be her last year teaching at the Stillwater campus of Northern Oklahoma College. Although she loves the students, the thought of the pending move to the new building this summer was enough to have her consider her exit to other tasks she would like to take on. The big joy comes from son John and daughter-in-law Audrey and grandchild Jacob. They have their home in Jenks, Oklahoma, about an hour and a quarter away. Steve’s mom has certified Jacob as the cutest, smartest child on Earth. Barb and Steve agree. He is a year and a half and is doing entertaining and amazing things.

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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

The Big Trip of 2017 was a cruise from Montreal to Boston. It was geographic heaven with lots of cultural and physical landscapes. Barb and Steve posed on the north shore of Prince Edward Island (below). Steve, of course, gave an extensive lecture on longshore currents.



**DR. JACQUELINE VADJUNEC** continued to work on a variety of human-environment issues in the Americas. She spent a month this spring and summer in the grasslands of New Mexico and the Oklahoma Panhandle completing some archival research on issues related to land-use, vulnerability, and resilience, especially under drought conditions. In particular, team members Peter Kedron, Mike Larson, Brian Birchler, Austin Boardman and Todd Fagin (OU) are using archives such as historic Plats to look at land holding size for predicting Dust Bowl Survivability and land-use legacy. Additionally, Amy Frazier, Peter Kedron, Todd Fagin and Jackie have been working hard on formalizing their next steps for the continued growth of the project. The field trips with students continue. Last year, the students of her Field Techniques and GPS methods classes explored Cimarron County, OK and Union County, NM. They worked on various archival, mapping, and tourism-related research projects for the local museums and the Black Mesa State Park.

**JING WANG:** In the third year as the CARS Coordinator, Jing Wang completed the OK-FIRE research and joined several NSF-funded projects with her expertise in GIS, Remote Sensing and programming for spatial data analysis. She continues to oversee activities in 3 computer labs and manage software, licensing and equipment for the department, and updates the departmental website. In the summer she traveled to San Diego for the ESRI User Conference.

**DR. TOM WIKLE** returned to full-time duties as Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences after completing a year as interim head of Plant Biology, Ecology and Evolution. Tom had a busy year in terms of travel and research. In January 2017, he and Jon Comer visited glaciers, waterfalls, and small towns near Reykjavik and elsewhere on the southern coast of Iceland. In May and early June the Wikle/Comer team was in Europe again, leading students on a study abroad course in Spain and Portugal. This was Tom's first visit back to Spain since 1980 when he was an American Field Service exchange student there after high school. Traveling to Barcelona in advance of students, Tom and Jon were joined by colleagues Rebecca Sheehan and Jordan McAlister for a pre-course adventure in Andorra and southern France. Tom was also busy with in-state travel. Between February and April, Tom and Brad Bays completed fieldwork for an Oklahoma Historical Society-funded research project examining aircraft hangars and other structures constructed in support of flight training operations during WWII. Tom's other research projects included an evaluation of GIS textbooks with colleagues Amy Frazier and Peter Kedron (forthcoming in *Transactions in GIS*) and a chapter examining language variation and change with longtime collaborator, Guy Bailey. Tom's wife Missy was recently promoted to Assistant Vice President at OSU with responsibility for new student orientation, university academic advising, and a first year success office. Their son Garrett graduated from OSU in December 2016 with a degree in Political Science and is now completing a church residency in Branson, MO. The biggest news in the Wikle family is their daughter's engagement! Following their marriage in November of this year, Paige and her husband will reside in Dallas.



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**EMILY WILLIAMS:** 2017 has been an uneventful year for me. The first third of the year was spent at the hospital taking chemo, and the second third was spent in the hospital fighting to keep the chemo from killing me. I'm so grateful for the Geography Department for being patient and encouraging to me during this time. I anticipate my holiday time making up for the down time as Tom and I will head off to see the WeihnachtsMarkts as we cruise up the Danube! This will be a dream come true for me.

**CHANG-HENG (HANK) YANG:** In the past year, RMP-GIS team members and I have done interesting work from data cleaning to web-friendly applications setup for Oklahoma State Parks. Former team members, Nick Rose and Jake Holliday, finished the GPS data collection and editing for Lake Texoma and McGee Creek State Parks. The current team including Amanda Thomas and Catherine Shropshire have been collecting the GPS data in the Sequoyah State Park and Beavers Bend State Park. In addition, the data transition from the old server to the new server was done to improve the security and performance of our current state park features data and web mapping applications. An interactive, mobile-friendly trail application was also created with dynamic charts to display the trail information by the ESRI javascript API and other resources. We are also working on incorporating an open, web-based platform to interactively view lidar point clouds.

**DR. HONGBO YU** continued to work on GIS, time-geography, and transportation related research projects and serve as the Coordinator of the GIS Certificate program in the department. Hongbo took a sabbatical leave in the fall semester of 2016. He traveled to China to meet with researchers for collaboration opportunities to expand his research on applying the time-geographic framework to study individual's travel behavior and pattern in an urbanized environment. Early this year, he had two peer-reviewed papers in print, one in the *IEEE Intelligent Transportation Systems Magazine* and the other in an edited book *Spatial Data Handling in Big Data Era*. He also continued to supervise his two doctoral students with their dissertation research, with Yun Zhao investigating how a proposed high-speed rail service may compete with other transport modes as an alternative for inter-city travel in the United States and Arlene Pan examining how urban spatial structure affects the equity of job accessibility between male and female workers living in an urban area.



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## FORMER STAFF/FACULTY NEWS

**DR. JERRY CROFT (Professor Emeritus):** has announced that he is retiring from teaching geography & international studies after 54 years. Jerry began his college teaching career at OSU at the age of 25 in 1966 and taught geography for the next 25 years- one of his best students during those years was a young fellow by the name of Brad Bays. During these years we were the unequal partners with geology in the department of geology & geography. The university decided to restore geography to a separate department. Jerry happened to know a red-headed kid that enjoyed playing golf and was a geography of sport specialist when he was the only such specialist in the entire country (John Rooney, Jr.) and Jerry thought John would be a good selection to become the first department head of the modern department of geography and so as they say, "the rest is history". After retiring from OSU with over 30,000 students being processed through his many classes, Jerry followed his wife, Laurie, to the University of Iowa where he taught International Studies and only classes he designed with a maximum of 20 students per class. I told the people at Iowa I had been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize- if you have ever been to Iowa the people there believe everything you say! So they allowed me to do everything I wished to do which included these classes: Germany & the Amanas, Pella & the Dutch, and the European Union. I have had a wonderful life teaching a subject I dearly love, Geography. I would also like for you to know that a famous teacher at Stillwater Jr. High School, Jay Croft, is my son and our Dean's kids have had Jay's classes and believe him to be a very good teacher. Jerry would also like for you to know that if you have any money that you would like to donate to the university please consider donating it to the endowed scholarship entitled "Jerry Croft & Family Teaching Geography". Now that I am retired I hope to see some of my old friends (and I mean OLD) as I miss them a great deal and OSU is a swell place- be sure to enjoy your connection to it.

**KEITH HARRIES (Faculty, 1970-85):** My year got off to an interesting start with a visit to OSU alums Virawan and Chanchai Sombutsiri in Bangkok. The Sombutsiris had planned two side trips, one to Myanmar, and the other to Laos where Virawan works as an environmental consultant on the Xanaburi dam project, intended to help make Laos the "battery" of Southeast Asia with a (controversial) series of dams on the Mekong. Some 9,000 workers are employed 24/7 on the project, housed in what are essentially ethnic villages, built from scratch as the site is isolated and workers have been drawn from all over the world, but mostly from Laos and its neighbors. In Thailand we also visited Chanchai's home town, Samut Songkhram, on the Gulf of Thailand, where he has a charming small restaurant with great seafood.



In June I was able to take a trip to Costa Rica, something I had wanted to do for quite a while. It was standard tourist stuff, with visits to two national parks in the mountains and one on each coast. There were sightings of the Resplendent Quetzal and proof that it can be photographed with a spotting telescope on a tripod and a cell phone camera. Later this month (October as I write) I'll be meeting another OSU alum, Glenn Carver, in London so we can attend a Premier League soccer match. Yes, this is the *real* football- the game that involves actually frequently kicking the ball!

Son Phil continues on the faculty in biology at Pittsburg State U in Kansas. His two boys are both in high school there. Daughter Melanie lives in a group home about 15 minutes' drive from me in Columbia, MD. Well, you know – stuff happens. Best wishes to all the OSU geographers.





# FORMER STAFF/FACULTY NEWS

**DICK HECOCK (Professor Emeritus):** The Hecoeks remain healthy and happy mostly in NW Minnesota where we continue to be active, enjoy ample rewards from community service and good friends, and grateful for opportunities to enjoy woods, waters and changing seasons. We leave once in a while for road trips as in last autumn's color tour around Lake Superior which included a few days with John and Sandy Rooney. As usual, Rooney/Hecock conversation topics came easily- a wide range and good balance of reminiscences, family updates, health discussions, future plans and solutions to world problems. Dogs too - Annie is the more athletic and perhaps smarter, Audrey is more opinionated and passionate. Guess who belongs to which family?

Not long after, we headed "Out East" for a family Thanksgiving gathering, which included visits to friends in New York and Virginia, and Columbia (where we enjoyed more memories with Keith Harries). In the summer of 1967 I led a two-month European study trip with 15 students – one of whom was Georgia. In a few days we will return to Switzerland and Germany to mark the start of a year-long 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

## NEW FULBRIGHT PROGRAM ADVISOR AT OSU

**Dale Lightfoot** began service as the OSU Fulbright Program Advisor (FPA) in July. The FPA reports to the Dean, School of Global Studies and Partnerships, and is responsible for directing and enhancing the University's participation in the **Fulbright** Scholarship Program and the **Boren** Scholarship and Fellowship programs. He will also serve as Faculty Advisor to the international OSU Fulbright Students and Scholars Organization, attend annual meetings of the National Fulbright Association and coordinate the Provost's annual reception for OSU Fulbright alumni and current Fulbright international students and scholars.

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program, the country's largest student exchange program, places U.S. students in schools around the world where they act as an ambassador for the United States, work with research advisers in the host country, and learn about its people and culture. Boren Scholarships, an initiative of the National Security Education Program, provide funding opportunities for U.S. undergraduate students to study less commonly taught languages in world regions critical to U.S. interests, and underrepresented in study abroad, including Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Boren Scholars represent a vital pool of highly motivated individuals who wish to work in the federal national security arena.



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## 2017 VISITORS

Several former students and friends of the department visited us in Stillwater since we last published the Zenith. It is always great to see you and we welcome your visit!

**Chris Horacek** (M.S. 1981) visited Dr. Stadler and Dr. Lightfoot and toured our facilities in Murray Hall in February.

**Joel Helmer** (Ph.D. 2005) traveled to Stillwater from Concordia University in Nebraska in April to deliver a colloquium presentation, catch up on news, and visit many friends in the department.

**Hawta Khayyat** (Ph.D. 2012), now GIS Advisor to the Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government (Iraq), visited in July for two weeks while collaborating on a research and training project with Matt Haffner and Allen Finchum for the Ministry of Natural Resources/KRG.

**Phil Paul** (B.S. 2010), GIS Analyst from Landlocked GIS, came to visit Michael Larson at Cartography Services in September to catch up on news and visit friends and tour our facilities in Murray Hall.

**Michael Slovacek** (B.S. 2008), GIS Analyst with RazorTek Inc. came to visit Michael Larson at Cartography Services in September to catch up on news, visit friends, and tour our facilities in Murray Hall.

**Tom Daxon** (M.S. 1978), from Oklahoma City, visited campus with his wife, son, and family friends in September to attend the Arts & Sciences Hall of Fame ceremony where he received the 2017 Outstanding Alumnus in Geography award and was honored with an entry to the Arts & Sciences Hall of Fame.

**Eli Hines** (B.S. 2008), has returned to OSU to pursue a pre-med degree. He visited Michael Larson at Cartography Services in October to catch up on news and visit friends in the department.

**James Hollan** (B.S. 2008) is the new Manager of Geospatial Systems for the OSU Facilities Management. He visited Michael Larson at Cartography Services in October to catch up on news and visit friends in the department.

**Shellie Whilloughby** (M.S. 1999), from the Office of Geographic Information, OK Conservation Commission, and President of OKSCAUG, accompanied Charles Brady III, the GIS Coordinator for the City of Ardmore and President of SCAUG, as he gave a talk to our undergraduate students as part of the new series *Geography Career Spotlight* sponsored by the OSU Geography Club and Cartography Services.



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# GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

## MASTER'S STUDENTS:

Brian Birchler  
Tessa Cook  
Ava Keenen  
Shelby Rider  
Catherine Shropshire  
Amanda Thomas  
Christina Woehrle  
Lauren Wood

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## DOCTORAL STUDENTS:

Samayita Bandyopadhyay  
Thomas Cox  
Thomas Craig  
Colton Flynn  
Robert Garrett  
Brian Gilson  
Matt Haffner  
Stephanie Heald  
Ben Hemingway  
Puja Jana  
Kimberly Johnson  
Jordan McAlister  
Stuart McAllister  
Gustavo Ovando  
Qinyue Pan  
Fernanda Ramirez  
Maria Ramirez  
Nick Rose  
Sean Thomas  
Jamey Voorhees  
Amanda Weber  
Yanxia Wu  
Yun Zhao



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# GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

**THOMAS COX:** I am a fourth year, and God willing final year, PhD student from Claremore Oklahoma. My research focuses on using geoarchaeological techniques to determine whether or not mammoth sites in Oklahoma are archaeological or paleontological, as well as whether or not they could be associated with a Pre-Clovis occupation. I have been involved in all processes analysis; everything from the excavation, geomorphological analysis, soil analysis, phytolith analysis, and the 3D reconstruction of mammoth sites. My objective is to not only understand why the mammoth localities are located where they are, but to understand what the landscape and climate might have been like when the mammoths roamed the landscape and were eventually preserved by depositional processes. My ultimate goal is to become extremely well rounded in all aspects of geoarchaeology and to shed new light on our understanding of past mammoth ecosystems. My motto for this year is: "I should be proof enough that dreams can come true as long as you persevere. You do not have to be the smartest person in the room to succeed, only the most determined."

**THOMAS CRAIG:** I am a fifth year PhD student, with interests in cultural/historical geography, popular culture, and geographic education. I am in the throes of frantic dissertation writing, but with the aspirations of defending this coming spring. My research examines how U.S. undergraduates construct, practice, maintain, and challenge knowledge about their "imagined geographies," or places they have never been. In April I shared my research at the annual AAG meeting (Boston), where I was selected as the winner of the Gail Hobbs Graduate Student Paper Competition (Geography Education Specialty Group). This summer I attended the National Conference on Geographic Education (Albuquerque) to also present on my dissertation findings. Along with fellow PhD students Gustavo Ovando and Jordan Brasher (University of Tennessee), we are finishing up a project using TripAdvisor reviews, examining Brazilians' perceptions of sacred space, identity, and the 'Lost Cause' of the *Confederados* – the descendants of Confederate immigrants to Brazil following the end of the American Civil War. Recently we were invited to discuss our research at the upcoming AAG meeting in New Orleans, within a special session, "'Placing' the Confederacy: Constructing, Maintaining, Removing, and Renaming Confederate Monuments in the South and Beyond." My wife Keira and I, along with our children, Jackson (8) and Madison (5), continue to enjoy living in Stillwater, but are eager (read: antsy) for what lies ahead!

**BRIAN GILSON:** is a second year PhD. student, with interests in geopolitics, religion, and identity. Brian, his wife Shelly, and their two youngest kids have been in Stillwater for three years, and it has become home. Jacob (16) and Laura (14) are both in high school now, and Brian is not sure whether it is the teenagers or the PhD program that is making his hair gray. Shelly thinks it makes him look distinguished but he thinks it makes him look too old to still be a student!

**MATTHEW HAFFNER:** I am a fourth year PhD student, and I achieved ABD status in March of 2017. My research interests include GIScience, urban geography, volunteered geographic information, and big data. I completed a M.S. in geography at Oklahoma State in the summer of 2014, and I completed a B.S.Ed. with majors in geography and mathematics at Pittsburg State University in 2012. I am originally from Pleasant Hill, Missouri.





# UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

**HAYDEN HARRISON:** In the summer of 2017, Hayden Harrison participated in the Transportation Intern Program. She interned at the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), a metropolitan planning organization located in Oklahoma City, where she conducted a vehicle crash analysis of Oklahoma City and its surrounding communities. By utilizing both statistical and spatial software, Hayden was able to calculate various crash conditions as well as where these crashes were likely to occur. This internship was made possible by the Center for Local Government Technology (CLGT) at Oklahoma State University.

**SIERRA TRAVIS:** This summer, Sierra Travis interned at KAMO Power in Vinita, Oklahoma. She was employed through a temporary service called Express Employers. She will graduate in December with a Bachelor of Science in Geospatial Information Science.



## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS & THEIR HOMETOWNS



Haley Best, Mustang, OK  
Joel Bjornen, Bartlesville, OK  
Parker Bledsoe, Claremore, OK  
Sam Brander, Tulsa, OK  
McKenzie Cady, Carrollton, TX  
Jeleeza Clark, Lewisville, TX  
Racine Cleveland, Prague, OK  
Taylor Dodd, Collinsville, OK  
Matt Dunn, Stillwater, OK  
Austin Fessler, Broken Arrow, OK  
Christine Giles, Stillwater, OK  
Joshua Grundy, Afton, OK  
John Hall, Drumright, OK  
Luke Hammond, Stratford Upon Avon, UK  
Hayden Harrison, Stroud, OK  
Zeth Higgenbottom, Newcastle, OK  
Katy Hites, Oklahoma City, OK  
Abigail Hobbs, Seminole, OK  
Frank Jensik, Tulsa, OK  
Diane Johnson, Amarillo, TX  
Ryan Jones, Edmond, OK  
Kayla King, Cyril, OK

Amanda Lahue, Stillwater, OK  
Madahi Lozano, Oklahoma City, OK  
Nolan Malloy, Arcadia, OK  
Rachel Mathews, Murrieta, CA  
Giovanni Penna, Cleveland, OK  
Anthony Pennington, Edmond, OK  
Robert Quinn, Stillwater, OK  
Curtis Rich, Edmond, OK  
Zachary Robinson, Stillwater, OK  
Bennett Shipley, Deer Creek, OK  
Brenton Smith, Tulsa, OK  
Daniel Soupiest, San Angelo, TX  
Richard Surratt, Hennessey, OK  
Alexandra Thomas, Stillwater, OK  
Ramsey Thornton, Bixby, OK  
Sierra Travis, Edmond, OK  
Hunter Tuck, Ringold, OK  
Dre'Shoun Wallace, Lawton, OK  
Audrey Ward, Tahlequah, OK  
Cale Williams, Coyle, OK  
Chi Cheng (Finn) Yip, Iph, Perak, Malaysia



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# CENTER FOR APPLICATIONS OF REMOTE SENSING

During the 2016-2017 academic year, CARS continued to serve the Geography Department and OSU campus in GIS and Remote Sensing research, IT & technical support, and outreach for geography education. CARS successfully completed work for the Mesonet OK-FIRE website in collaboration with Dr. J.D. Carlson in the Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering here on campus. The goal of this project was to update the algorithm used to compute relative greenness across Oklahoma. This information is calculated on a weekly basis and is used to create maps to aid in decision making for wildland fire management in the state.

CARS is also involved in several NSF-funded projects that have been awarded to faculty within the department including a grant to Dr. Amy Frazier to investigate the impacts of spatial scaling on landscape patterns and a grant to Dr. Peter Kedron from the Oklahoma EPSCoR to study adaptation to climate variability in Oklahoma. Jing Wang, the CARS coordinator, has developed several mapping programs in support of these projects and has participated in outreach programs to introduce students to geography and geospatial technologies. CARS has also supported field work from unmanned aerial systems (a.k.a. UAS or drones).

## CARTOGRAPHY SERVICES

This past year has once again been very busy for all of us at Cartography Services. As usual, we have spent most of our time split between several key working areas; the major cartographic projects, map design and compilation work (for both departmental and non departmental clients), large format printing, and education and outreach.

Cartography Services is in its eighth year working with Dr. Allen Finchum on the SHPO/OLI project. This project funded by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office has moved from field collecting property data to cleaning and updating the Oklahoma Landmark Inventory (OLI) database. Undergraduate student, John Hall has shouldered most of the burden working on this project this past year.

It's been another productive year for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists Foundation-OSU GIS consortium at OSU Cartography Services, the second under Cartographic Specialist Clay Barrett. There were two completed projects over the course of the past year, the Geological Highway Map: Mid-Continent Region and the Geological Highway Map: Pacific Southwest Region. The Mid-Continent GHM map includes Oklahoma, and is available for sale in the AAPG's bookshop (<http://store.aapg.org/detail.aspx?id=661>). The Pacific Southwest map should be printed and available for sale within the next month. One additional project was brought to the final review stage and is expected to be completed this fall: the Geological Highway Map: Northern Great Plains Region.

There are still three additional regions under contract and in progress. The next couple of years will be focused on digitization of these maps and then hopefully completing the final four in the series of regional highway maps printed by the AAPG.



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## CARTOGRAPHY SERVICES (CONT'D)

OSU Cartography Services continued to support one Graduate Assistantship position, which was filled by Lauren Wood. Hayden Harrison (BS Geography senior) continued working with us from last year on production of the Geological Highway maps and recently Nick Rose was hired as well.



(L –R): Chang-Heng (Hank) Yang, Sierra Travis, Jing Wang, Lauren Wood, Hayden Harrison, Michael Larson, Clay Barrett, and John Hall

Last spring, Cartography Services once again took the lead and with the help of a number of students and staff sponsored an exhibit at the 2017 GIS Day at the Capitol. Participating in this event were: Hank Yang, Sierra Travis, Jean Wang, Lauren Wood, Hayden Harrison, Michael Larson, Clay Barrett, and John Hall.

Lastly, Cartography Services would like to thank the following student employees: Brian Birchler, Graham Davis, and Austin Boardman, for their help and hard work. These three students worked in various capacities on a pair of Faculty research grants: Dr. Jacqueline Vadjunec's grant *Land System Vulnerability and Resilience to Draught* and Dr. Peter Kedron's EPSCoR grant *Socio-Ecological Systems*.





# JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

Way back in 1998, the same year that is now perpetually linked with Windows 98 (how time flies!) and the founding of Google (but well before it became a household word), Alyson Greiner began her service to the *Journal* as Assistant Editor. She became Editor in 2002. The *Journal* was then quite small and many manuscripts were submitted as hard copies, usually accompanied with CDs containing Word and image files. Who knew the publishing landscape would change so substantially? Alyson created the *Journal's* first web page, managed subscriptions and advertising, and guided the *Journal* through its adaptation to successive digital transformations. Altogether, she devoted 19 years to the management and production of the *Journal*. Remarkably, her (other?) marriage to Luis survived! As of this writing, it is quite true that she edited the *Journal* nearly as long as she has been married. In that time, she helped the *Journal* become an important international outlet that is now accessible on every continent. The geography of downloads and citations has likewise globalized dramatically. She also arranged and published a special 30-year anniversary issue, and coordinated and published 12 different special thematic issues. The most recent special issue published in June 2017, examines the emerging subfield of Deaf Geographies. Our former colleague, Dr. Emily Fekete, now with the AAG, served as one of the guest editors. None of this would have been possible without the support of the Department of Geography, and the diligent work of several students: Michal Ward, Marvin Sebourn, Liz Taylor, Will Price, Sean Thomas, Jordan Brasher, and Aanika Islam. All of you share a special and timeless bond of having helped the *Journal* become what it is today! Thank you for your intrepid work. On a final note, the publication of the October 2017 issue marks the last one in Alyson's editorial queue. Her successor is Dr. Steven Schnell at Kutztown University. They have worked together in a transitional period to ensure a smooth changeover in responsibilities. In all, working on the *Journal* has been a good run—better yet, marathon—and Alyson especially enjoyed mentoring new faculty as they developed their first manuscripts for publication. As the saying goes, “all good things must come to an end.” So long, *JCG!*

## GAMMA THETA UPSILON

The Chi chapter of GTU has had a busy year! We have introduced a new conference travel award, which is funded through our coffee fundraiser. This past year, Emily Ellis was the recipient of our first award for \$250. We hope to increase that amount for this year. GTU also participated in “garage archaeology,” as we helped Tom Cox (GTU Treasurer) relocate the skull of his Helena Mammoth from its old super-secret location in a certain professor's garage to its new super-secret location within Murray Hall! Several members of GTU were involved, as well as several spouses, soon to be spouses, and kids.



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# UNDERGRADUATE GEOGRAPHY CLUB

The Geography Club's main goal is to get undergraduates involved in activities within the Geography Department. From the Student v. faculty softball game to the biannual Geography Bowling Night in which the students *always* dominate, the Geography Club is a great way to bridge the gap between the students, staff, and faculty. The Geography Club also invites professionals in the field of Geography to come and talk to students about what they do. Other fun activities sponsored by the Geography Club include the annual Geography Trivia Night during Geography Awareness Week in November, as well as an end of the semester BBQ at Boomer Lake in May. The picture below is from the Students vs. Faculty Softball Game in September.



A GREAT turnout for this year's Geography Trivia Night during Geography Awareness Week!



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# CERTIFICATES IN GIS EARNED

## FALL 2016:

Jacob Holliday  
Elliott Edens  
Ryan Smith

# BACHELOR'S DEGREES EARNED

## FALL 2016:

Avonlea Keenen  
Maddison Mayer  
Maria McKeaigg  
Rachel Oestmann  
Ryan Smith

## SPRING/ SUMMER 2017:

Jaryd Hinch  
Jackson Nail

## FALL 2017 (projected) :

Frank Jensik  
Curtis Rich  
Zachary Robinson  
Sierra Travis

# MASTER'S DEGREES EARNED

## SPRING 2017:

Emily Ellis  
Advisor: Adam Mathews  
Thesis: "An Optimal Object-Based Approach to Identify Urban Vegetation and Assess Change: A Study of Oklahoma City, 2006-2013"

## SUMMER 2017:

Stephanie Koehn  
Advisor: Alyson Greiner  
Thesis: "Place-Making in American Renaissance Festivals"

# PH.D. DEGREES EARNED

## SUMMER 2017:

Keeley Heise  
Advisor: Stephen Stadler  
Dissertation – "Blizzard, Risk, Perception, and Preparedness in the Northern Great Plains"

William McBrayer  
Advisor: Alyson Greiner  
Dissertation- "Koreatown Georgia: A Geography of Korean Ethnic Churches Engaged in Community Development in Gwinnett County, Georgia"



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# COLLOQUIA

## Spring 2017

February 17: Joseph Kerski (ESRI Education Manager)  
“Why Data Quality Matters—Now More Than Ever”

March 3: Bill Doolittle (University of Texas at Austin)  
“The Importance of the Seemingly Insignificant and Going Far Afield”

April 21: Joel Helmer (Concordia University, Nebraska)  
“A Boot Leather Geography of the Nebraska Sandhills”

April 28: Colton Flynn (Oklahoma State University)  
“Eragrostis Tef – Where Does the Ancient Ethiopian Grain Have Cultivation Potential in the United States and Can Precision Agriculture Further Aid Its Success?”

April 28: Tom Cox (Oklahoma State University)  
“Preserving the Un-Preservable: Applying Structure from Motion to Geoarchaeology”

## Fall 2017

September 15: Joe Holler (Middlebury College)  
“Bridging the Scale Gap in Vulnerability Science: From generalized models to local context in Tanzania and Oklahoma”

September 22: Jessie Clark (University of Nevada-Reno)  
“My life is like a novel!: Women and security in Turkey's Kurdish regions 2006-2017”

November 10: Jordan McAlister (Oklahoma State University)  
“Exploring the Diverse Cultures and Landscapes of Mainland Southeast Asia: A Geographer’s Account of Four Countries”

December 1: Robert Garrett (Oklahoma State University)  
“Western Self-Initiated Expatriates in Bangkok, Thailand”



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

## JACQUELINE VADJUNEC: Land System Vulnerability

This summer flew by! I spent 3 weeks this summer in Cimarron, OK and Union, NM counties completing archival fieldwork and hunting down old plats. In August, I spent another week at the Union County fair, talking to community residents about our research project and research results. All in all, it was another good field season!



Another amazing sunset in Cimarron County!

## AMY FRAZIER, PETER KEDRON, JEAN WANG, & GUSTAVO OVANDO: STEM Fair at Will Rogers Elementary School

Department faculty members Dr. Amy Frazier and Dr. Peter Kedron along with PhD student Gustavo Ovando and staff member Jean Wang, who is the Coordinator for the Center for Applications of Remote Sensing, participated in a STEM outreach fair at Will Rogers Elementary school last spring. The group are working together on a National Science Foundation-funded grant to explore the issues of scale in remote sensing images and develop methods to predict land cover components at finer scales than data are captured. More information can be found on their project website: <http://amyfrazier.wixsite.com/nsf1561021>.



(L-R): Jean Wang, Dr. Peter Kedron, Dr. Amy Frazier, and Gustavo Ovando



Dr. Kedron teaching students about remote sensing and scale.



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

## JON COMER and TOM WIKLE: Spain and Portugal Study Abroad

Jon Comer and Tom Wikle co-led a Study Abroad trip on the Geography of Spain and Portugal in May-June 2017. Overall, the OSU contingent comprised 15 people, including Dr. Rebecca Sheehan and PhD student Jordan McAlister from the Geography Department.

The four geographers arrived in Barcelona several days early to take in the sights and scenery of the region before the students arrived. Two days/nights were spent exploring Andorra, one of Europe's microstates, and then another day/night was spent in the historic and scenic corridor between Andorra and Perpignan, France. Two highlights of this piece of the journey was stopping at the Spanish enclave of Llívia and later visiting two of the twelve sites of the Fortifications of Vauban UNESCO† World Heritage Site – Mont-Louis and Villefranche-de-Confluent. A final night was spent at the Spanish beach resort town of Lloret de Mar, whose primary attraction was, of course, the beach.

[Other UNESCO sites visited will be denoted by †]

Finally, it was time to get to “work” and the geographers made the trip back down to Barcelona on May 30 to meet their students. After assembling the group at the airport and getting transported into the city, they spent this day and the next seeing the major sites of Barcelona including the main cathedral, La Rambla, the Columbus Monument, Plaça d'Espanya, Park Güell and other works by Antoni Gaudí†, La Sagrada Família cathedral, Sants-Montjuïc, and Plaça de Catalunya.

On June 1, the group headed towards Madrid, with a stop for a couple of hours in Zaragoza to visit Our Lady of the Pillar Cathedral. Upon arrival in Madrid they had a short walking tour starting in Puerto del Sol and ending in Plaza Mayor, and then the next day hit all the big sites: Santiago Bernabéu Stadium (where Real Madrid plays), the Plaza de España (Cervantes monument), and a tour of the Royal Palace. The afternoon consisted of a trip to the old capital of Toledo†, home of the best sword-smiths in Europe.

June 3 the group departed Madrid from the famous Atocha Train Station on a high-speed AVE train to Córdoba†. They toured the Mezquita mosque-cathedral and then got to walk across the famous Roman Bridge over the Guadalquivir River to continue onto Seville. June 4 consisted of a tour of Seville including the Torre del Oro, Plaza de España, Seville Cathedral† (location of Columbus' tomb), and the Royal Alcazar† and its amazing gardens. That evening featured a flamenco show.

On June 5, the group departed Seville and traveled to Granada to tour the old Moorish fortress of the Alhambra†. After the tour, they continued on to their home base for the next two nights, the coastal city of Málaga, and June 6 found them up and out early for a bus ride to Algeciras to catch a ferry to Ceuta, a small semi-enclave of Spain on the African coast and their entry point into Morocco.

The border crossing was a bizarre scene as it appeared all traffic was stopped, had been for days (?), but our tour group connections got the bus traversing past thousands of stopped cars and angry passersby up to the border, through which they finally passed and entered Morocco (and Africa) to travel onto the city of Tétouan and its old *medina* (marketplace). The return crossing back into Ceuta and the EU was almost as frantic, but we made it through again for the same reasons as before and caught the ferry back to Algeciras and finally Málaga. Gibraltar stood just off to the east of the ferry route both ways so it was a good chance to lay eyes on this British outpost and pene-exclave. The final transit for the group occurred on June 7, traveling from Málaga to Lisbon with a lunch stop in Itálica (Spain), an old Roman city with a preserved amphitheater that reminds one of Pompeii. They reached the outskirts of Lisbon later than evening, and June 8 was a full day of Lisbon sites: Mosteiro dos Jerónimos†, Tower of Belém†, Monument to the Discoveries, Praça do Comércio, and up to Castelo São Jorge which commands a view over the old city core. The day concluded with a Fado show, about which we will speak no further. June 9 found everyone on board a United 757 for the flight back to Washington Dulles International Airport and thence back to OKC.



# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

Jon and Tom are planning a trip to Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg), Estonia (Tallinn), and Finland (Helsinki) in May 2018 and welcome any and all geographers to travel with us – the trip is open to both students and non-students alike. Please contact us at [jon.comer@okstate.edu](mailto:jon.comer@okstate.edu) or [t.wikle@okstate.edu](mailto:t.wikle@okstate.edu) for more details.



Royal Palace, Madrid, Spain



Our Lady of the Pillar, Zaragoza, Spain



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD



Panorama of Toledo, Spain



Park Güell, Barcelona



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# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS

## 2016 Christmas Party

On December 2, 2016 the department gathered for its annual holiday party and Dirty Santa Gift Exchange. Catherine Shropshire won the “Ugly Christmas Sweater” contest.



Catherine anointed with the ugly sweater medal.



The household cats are a source of unexplained fascination to party-goers.



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# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS



Sighting of “Bongo Boy” with his Congo toy.



Finalists for the Ugly Sweater award.



# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS

## Homecoming Tailgating 2017

On Saturday, October 14, the department hosted an alumni homecoming tailgating event outside Old Central on campus. The Baylor Bears were no match for the Cowboys as they were beat 59-16! Geographers old and new had a grand time on a picturesque day.



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# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

## 2017 Geography Distinguished Alumnus: Tom Daxon



Oklahoma native Tom Daxon earned a B.A. degree in economics in 1970 and a M.S. degree in geography in 1978 from OSU. In between he earned his CPA certificate. With these tools Tom became a nationally recognized expert in state and local government finance. Also in 1978, Tom put his master's thesis- Spatial Allocation of Marketing Resources in a Political Campaign- to the test by running for the newly reorganized office of Oklahoma State Auditor and Inspector. The state Election Board ruled Tom ineligible to run twice due to age but the Oklahoma Supreme Court unanimously reinstated Tom's name on the ballot, resulting in him becoming, at the age of 30, the youngest person ever to win statewide office in Oklahoma, and the only Republican elected to statewide office that year. Oklahoma was a very blue state back then. When Tom took over as state auditor Oklahoma was about to lose federal revenue sharing funds due to its poor audits. Tom upgraded the office personnel from one to 26 CPAs, though reducing its overall size, and introduced generally accepted auditing standards into the office's audits. The federal threat was removed. The office's audits also played a key role in sending a number of county commissioners to jail in what became the largest public corruption scandal in U.S. history. Further, corruption was exposed on the part of a former President Pro Temp of the State Senate who then went to jail, and the powerful head of the state Department of Human Services was forced to resign. This success earned Tom the Republican nomination for governor in 1982, but he lost to incumbent George Nigh. In 1983 Tom joined the Arthur Andersen Office of Federal Services in Washington, D.C.

In November 1994 two major events coincided to take his career in a different direction: Frank Keating was elected governor of Oklahoma, and Orange County, CA, declared bankruptcy weeks apart. Gov. Elect Keating asked Tom to join his administration as Secretary of Finance and Revenue; Tom accepted. But the next day Arthur Andersen sent Tom to Orange County to lead the effort to restore solvency in what was the largest public bankruptcy in the U.S. up until that time. As the appointed county treasurer Tom worked in Orange County fulltime for the next five months, but on weekends often flew to Oklahoma to help Keating develop his fiscal policy and his first budget. By April of 1995 Tom's work in Orange County was done with the county on the road to financial stability without the need for a tax increase or cutting key services. Tom returned to Oklahoma and stayed with the Keating administration for the next eight years. In 2003, with a new administration at the Capitol, Tom went to work for the Oklahoma House of Representatives as Budget Liaison. In 2006, Tom was elected chairman of the Oklahoma Republican Party. The following year Tom formed his own consulting firm, assisting state and local governments with financial issues. Tom has been a featured speaker at conferences and meetings all over the country and has been published in the Wall Street Journal, Washington Times, Orange County Register as well as the Tulsa World and The Daily Oklahoman. Additionally, Tom has been an adjunct professor of accounting at the University of Tulsa and Oklahoma City University. Tom is recently retired, living with his wife of 45 years, Linda, in Oklahoma City. The two were the first couple ever married in the Oklahoma State Student Union. They have two sons.




A&S Dean Bret Danilowicz (left) and OSU President Burns Hargis (right) with members of the 2017 Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame inductees: Tom Daxon, Vik Gaute, and Anital Hill.



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# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES



**PAT DOLAN (M.S. 1990):** Pat continues to work as the IT Compliance & Quality Assurance at Mott MacDonald having joined in 2003 and splits his time between the Croydon (HQ), Birmingham office and working from home. Pat largely focusses on Information Security and spends the majority of his time preparing for, attending and dealing with the outcomes from external ISO 27001:2013 audits. Pat's most significant current challenge is preparing the India offices to be positioned to achieve ISO 27001:2013 in Q4 2017/Q1 2018. Without doubt Information Security is a hot-topic for Mott MacDonald and increasingly current and prospective clients are seeking written clarification about our IT arrangements and controls within Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQs) and Invitations to Tender (ITT). Responding to PQQs and ITTs is like writing a MS thesis every other week! On a personal note, Angela and Pat have just celebrated their 24th wedding anniversary and will be taking their daughter (Ruth, 15 years) and son (Joseph, 11 years) for a week's vacation to the Amalfi Coast, Italy. The 2017 summer vacation again saw the Dolans visit Boa Vista, Cape Verde for some well-earned rest and relaxation (and, importantly, Hotel WiFi for the kids!). Angela has been promoted to a Supervisor at a DIY-supplier and continues as a School Governor. Pat and Angela continue to relive their youth by attending concerts with The Who, Adam Ant and Texas already chalked-up in 2017 and OMD next-up in November followed by Erasure (February, 2018). Ruth is at High School and in 2018 will take her national exams. Her forte is English, History and Religious Education and is aiming to become a High School Teacher. She has been taking a casual look at Universities and Bristol is topping her current list. Recently Ruth has become a big fan of baseball. Joseph is at Middle School, would like to become an Architect, and utterly loves sports including football (soccer) and rugby. The Dolans can be contacted at [dolan.family@gmail.com](mailto:dolan.family@gmail.com).

**CHARLES FAIRBANKS (B.S. 1996):** Currently working as the Command Executive Officer for the 108th Training Command of the U.S. Army Reserve in Charlotte, North Carolina. I am the senior Full-Time Unit Support (FTUS) staffer for a Major General echelon command with Mission Command of 7,300+ Soldiers and 450 FTUS stationed in 44 states and Puerto Rico. Parallel to my civil service career I am a Lieutenant Colonel in my 22nd year of service as an officer in the Army Reserve. I am married to the former Tonia Brown and we are exploring the mountains, beaches, and National Park sites of the Carolinas as we adjust to east coast living.

**TONIA (BROWN) FAIRBANKS (B.S. 1996, M.S. 1998):** Currently working as a Senior GIS Analyst consultant with Patrick Engineering. The company is head quartered in Lisle, Illinois, but I work remotely from my home in Huntersville, NC. In my current assignment, I am working for a large energy company from the southeast region completing an ESRI platform integration with the company's asset management system. I am married to Charles Fairbanks and we have one very active 5 year old and two barking dogs.



**JORDAN HAGGARD (B.A. 2009):** I moved to Seattle, Washington over two years ago to work for Patagonia but just recently started working at a fantastic non-profit known as The Mountaineers whose mission is "to enrich the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond." I'm pretty excited about this opportunity. It marries a few passions of mine; conservation, nature and books. I work in the publishing arm called Mountaineers Books. I really enjoy living in the Pacific Northwest and having so many opportunities to camp, hike, snowshoe and hopefully this winter get into cross country skiing. The beer and coffee isn't too shabby either.

**TERESA HARRIS (B.S. 1981):** I've been working on my invention: multiple ice and water dispensers on the refrigerator. In June, I was an exhibitor at INPEX 2017 in Pittsburgh Pa. Launched a website Stillwater Dispensers and Facebook page where folks can see a short video. Although its not on the market yet, I'm looking for a manufacturer and licensing agreement. It's great for multi-generational families and group homes because it increases accessibility to ice and water without blocking the front fridge doors. Please visit the Facebook page, like and share.

# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

**CHRIS HORACEK (M.S. 1983):** Chris and Cheryl are still living in Marietta, GA and have been busy this Fall getting ready for our oldest daughters' (Maggie) wedding at the end of October. Cheryl is leading the Special Education Transition Academy at our local high school, helping young people with special needs transition into the workforce. Chris is still working with SpaceTime Insight leading transportation and logistics initiatives. Major projects include building a flash flood alerting system for a major Class I railroad and a transportation hub optimization application for a global parcel couriers' ground network. Chris will be speaking at the Geography 2050 Mobility Summit hosted by the American Geographical Society this November in New York. Outside of the wedding, two of our kids are wrapping up college and two are gainfully employed! Cheryl and I are still touring on our tandem bicycle and are starting to plan our 2018 schedule.

**SHIREEN HYRAPIET (Ph.D. 2012):** This year, in 2017, I completed 5 years as an Instructor at Oregon State University and was promoted to Senior Instructor I. I was also awarded the Undergraduate Teaching Award from the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences. While I enjoy lending in with my Orange and Black colors at Oregon State, I make it a point to note that I graduated from the OSU with the better football team. Go Pokes!!

**JERRY OVERTON (B.S. 1970, M.S. 1971):** I am still only semi-retired. I continue to work half time as the President and Senior Hydrogeologist/ Hydrologist for ATOKA, Inc. At this point, basically all I am doing is Expert Witness work. I have turned all other client related duties over to my staff of four Geologists, one Geographer (GIS Specialist) and our Professional Engineering staff. My wife, Tina, a Speech Pathologist for the public school system in Hot Springs, Arkansas, retires at the end of the current school year. I plan to fully retire when she retires in the summer of 2018. I expect that I will continue to assist ATOKA with litigation related work the foreseeable future and for as long as I am still capable of doing so.

## IN REMEMBRANCE

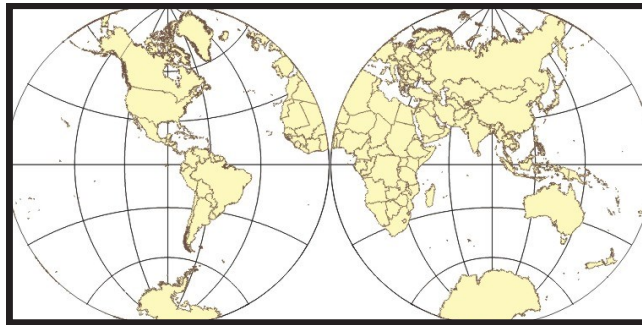
**Donna Lemon McCool**, of Pullman, Washington, was born January 25, 1942 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and passed away June 30, 2015 in Pullman, Washington. Funeral services were held July 6, 2015 at the Simpson United Methodist Church with Pastor Shane Moore officiating. Donna's final resting place is at the Hydro Masonic Cemetery, Hydro, Oklahoma.

**Nancy Thorwardson**, of Lyons, Colorado, passed away April 11, 2017. Nancy was born in Cavalier, North Dakota on March 2, 1955, to Lee and Helen (Kennedy) Thorwardson. She lived her life with arms wide open to countless friends and a big smile that said "I'm happy to be here." She earned a bachelor's degree in geography from Moorhead State University in Minnesota. She received a master's degree in geography from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. In 1979 she worked for the National Park Service in Denver as a cartographer until 1995 when she moved to Port Townsend, Washington to care for her mother and to work as a web developer. She returned to Colorado in 2003 and settled in the foothills northwest of Lyons where she lived in the small bunkhouse next to her friends Jani and Zeke Little and their daughters Anna and Kate. From 2005 through early 2017 she worked as a professional research assistant and information technology specialist in the Institute of Behavioral Science at the University of Colorado Boulder.



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The mission of the Department of Geography is to advance geography instruction, research and outreach, to promote and maintain a growing statewide workforce skilled in geographic research and applications. We strive to achieve national and international stature in scholarly and creative activities to enhance the visibility and desirability of the geography program at Oklahoma State University. We plan to capitalize on new opportunities and respond to the changing needs of Oklahomans and society to provide Oklahoma schools, university, industries and businesses, and those in the surrounding region, with the highest caliber professionals in the field of geography.