Remembering back to...

Dec. 5th, 2014: Centenary Party

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF GEOGRAPHY AT SDSU

Former students, faculty and staff joined current students, faculty and staff and friends of geography on December 5, 2014 for drinks and a sumptuous dinner to celebrate the department at 100 years of age. A string quartet serenaded the assembled group before dinner, and after dinner speeches by past and current faculty set the tone for how academic excellence was achieved through hard work, fun and a little luck. The focus on the creation of the department by Ms. Vinnie Clark on July 1, 1914 and its growing strength with the leadership of Alvena Storm in the 1940s suggested the importance of women faculty members throughout the history of the department. In addition, the work of Ernie Griffin and Richard Wright in founding the PhD program and the department's current location at SDSU was recognized. Everyone left humbled, feeling nostalgic but also buoyed for the next 100 years.
SPOTLIGHT

MARCH 4-5TH, 2016

SRS Presidential Award

The Student Research Symposium awarded its Presidential Award “for outstanding student scholarship” to Alex Messina (Doctoral Student, Geography) and Stephanie Estrada (Undergraduate Student, Geography).

MARCH 31ST, 2016

Albert W. Johnson Research Lectureship

Dr. Douglas Stow was awarded the Albert W. Johnson Research Lectureship by SDSU. This is awarded annually to an SDSU faculty member for outstanding achievement in research and scholarship. Its purpose is to recognize such achievement, to foster its continuation, and to enable a distinguished resident faculty scholar to share his/her knowledge more broadly with and beyond the academic community. Dr. Stow was named Distinguished Professor in Geography and delivered his public lecture, "Sensing the Environment from Above Over Time: How We Monitor, Study and Manage Geography Phenomena and Processes".

APRIL 22, 2016

AAG Lifetime Achievement Award

Emeritus Professor John Weeks received the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Association of American Geographers' (AAG's) Population Specialty Group. During his over forty year scholarly career, John has amassed an impressive record of scholarship that has gained him international recognition as a population geographer with expertise in demography, spatial demographics and Geographic Information Science (GIScience). His work is well known in sociology, geography, urban planning, public health and demography. He is sought by colleagues and policy-makers for his knowledge in, and development of, techniques in demography that utilize geographical techniques such as remote sensing, spatial analyses and Geographic Information Science (GIScience). His research abilities are matched by excellence in the classroom and with graduate student advising; John truly exemplifies the teacher-scholar model. The award was presented at a special session of the AAG meeting in San Francisco, CA.

Congratulations
DEPARTMENT UPDATES

THE SAGE PROJECT

Geography classes are actively collaborating with neighboring jurisdictions in San Diego County as well as in Tijuana, Mexico, through our participation in the Sage Project at SDSU. Pictured are community members in Tijuana and students from Geography 570, Environmental Conservation Practice, who have worked with students from Universidad de las Californias International and Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Tijuana to prepare concept design plans for two parks in Tijuana. In addition to this project, Geography students in GEOG 375 and 584, Environmental Hydrology and GIS Applications classes worked with the city of San Diego to research San Diego River hydrological characteristics, and to map park assets within the city. The Sage Project gives students the opportunity to work on “real world” projects in these high impact classes, gaining valuable skills, giving back to the communities, and building networks within the region.

GEOG 496 FIELD TRIP

Dr. Arielle Levine and some of the students from GEOG 496 and Peter Halmay, San Diego sea urchin fishermen and one of the organizers of the Tuna Harbor Dockside Fishermen’s Market.

Students from the new special topics in Geography course, Oceans, Coasts, and Society, visited the Tuna Harbor Dockside Fishermen’s market to learn about local fisheries and seafood. The market allows multiple fishermen to organize and market directly to local consumers, as well as to clean and prepare fish on the dock, as a result to the recent passage of the “Pacific to Plate” bill, AB 226. Students had the opportunity to talk with local fishermen about how they fish, what they caught, issues in fisheries management and marketing, and marine sustainability. Some students even took the opportunity to sample fresh sea urchin shooters.

Principal

FACULTY/STAFF

UPDATES

FEB 14-17, 2016

In mid-February, Dr. Art Getis hosted the 4th Annual Getis-Ord Lecture of the Western Regional Science Association at Waikaloa in Kona, Hawaii. The speaker was Edward Glaeser, the Harvard urban economist. At the conference, he also gave a paper on the Cliff-Ord spatial autocorrelation monographs and took part in the affairs of the Regional Science Academy, of which he is a founding member.

MAR 1, 2016

On March 1st, Dr. Getis gave a paper at the University of California, Santa Barbara on “Modeling, Regional Science, and UCSB.” Later in the Spring, Dr. Getis will address the AERUS organization in Urbana, Illinois. AERUS is a consortium of graduate students in geography attending central Big Ten universities.

APR 1, 2016

Dr. Arielle Levine was published in Science magazine. You can find her article, “Engage key social concepts for sustainability” in Volume 352 Issue 6281 of Science (sciencemag.org).

FALL 2016

Blue Gold: Mitigating Water Scarcity, is an Area of Excellence awarded to Geography, Public Health, Civil Engineering, and Geological Sciences and includes four hires to strengthen water-related research at SDSU. The hire in the Geography Department is Hilary McMillan, an internationally-recognized expert in hydrological analysis, modeling, and field methods.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. DOUGLAS STOW

All is good in the Department and with our research group. Always great to work with smart and motivated student advisees, and I have plenty. Cindy Tsai (PhD) has been in residence at UCSB this academic year, and continues to work on our NASA IDS Ghana (regional and urban land use change, demography and health) and NSF CNH China (monkey habitat, payment for ecosystem services, tourism and quality of life of rural residents) projects. Doctoral students Ace Shih and Sory Toure are also supporting the NASA Ghana project. Rachel Snavely (MS student) is assisting Prof. O’Leary, Kellie Uyeda (post-doc and recent graduate from the joint doctoral program) and me with a project on developing image-based vegetation classification procedures for mapping vegetation on San Clement Island, funded by the US Navy. Two companion projects on post-hazard damage assessment based on the repeat station imaging technology that Pete Coulter (research staff) and I developed are supported by and providing thesis research topics for two MS students, Andrew Kerr and Gene Schweizer. Manny Storey, a doctoral student working on post-fire recovery of chaparral is also supporting the project with research on minimizing shadow influence on image-based change detection. Former doctoral student Chris Lippitt, now a professor at U. New Mexico, is a collaborator and PI on these NSF and DOT funded projects. Most of the graduate students mentioned above are engaged in my seminar on Airborne Remote Sensing this semester. Finally, Pete Coulter recently transferred from a Research Foundation research specialist to a State-funded analyst, so that he can lead a campus GIS database initiative.
DEPARTMENT UPDATES

FACULTY CORNER

PROFESSOR MING-HSIANG TSOU

Professor Ming-Hsiang Tsou received the Interdisciplinary Behavioral and Social Science Research (IBSS) Award ($999,887) from National Science Foundation in September 2014 (project title: Spatiotemporal Modeling of Human Dynamics Across Social Media and Social Networks, 2014-2019, http://socialmedia.sdsu.edu). Tsou is the PI of this project and collaborates with faculty members from SDSU, Kent State, and University of Arkansas. This large interdisciplinary research project studies human dynamics across social media and social networks, focusing on information diffusion modeling over time and space, and the connection between online activities and real world human behaviors. His research team has developed innovative methods of analyzing space-time dimensions of the spread of ideas using social media and Big Data on the Internet. Two web-based social media analytic tools have been developed via the Center for Human Dynamics in the Mobile Age (http://humandynamics.sdsu.edu), SMART dashboard and GeoViewer. Tsou also works with the San Diego Office of Emergency Services (OES) to develop social media outreach platform for monitoring disaster warning and evacuation messages in real time via social media channels. One mobile App (ReadySD Social) is underdevelopment to facilitate rapid dissemination of official alerts from OES during disaster events. This platform can identify and recruit the top 1,000 San Diego volunteers based on their social network influence factors and help government agencies communicate more effectively to the public and be better prepared for both natural disasters and human-made crises.

BALLONS, GO PROS, & UAVS

TOP: Here we have PhD student, Kris Tanaguchi, doing a practice run with the drone in San Diego County. Traditional topographic survey methods can be expensive, time-consuming, and labor-intensive. In the students’ research on erosion and sediment production in Tijuana, Mexico, they are utilizing a GoPro and an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) to quickly and efficiently map the topography of the land and monitor both hillslope and stream channel erosion. By taking a series of overlapping images, they are able to implement Structure from Motion (SfM) techniques to create detailed digital terrain models which aid in the understanding of how the landscape evolves over time.

SIDE: A snapshot of the resulted reconstructed surface in Tijuana, Mexico.

BOTTOM: Professor Gernot Paulus from Carinthia University of Applied Sciences in Austria demonstrated the tethered balloon imaging system. The faculty, staff, and students involved in the project all walked the balloon across part of the parcel that is being developed and took digital images from a camera on the balloon. That night the images were processed with Structure from Motion software to generate a digital surface model and a orthoimage mosaic of the parcel. The company demonstrating the drone/UAV is Action Drone. It is minority-owned company in Chula Vista founded and run by SDSU alums. The site where the demonstration occurred is a 1 sq. mile parcel in Otay Mesa that is being developed for a subdivision by McMillan development company. Most of the students in attendance are in Professor Stow’s GEOG 780 Airborne Remote Sensing seminar.

Students Participate in BioBlitz

On April 12th the CGA co-hosted a BioBlitz on the Sacramento Capitol grounds with 240 elementary school children from Bowling Green Elementary School. At this event, educators, naturalists, and students came together to learn about, and celebrate biodiversity in one of California’s most recognizable urban parks. The CGA collaborated with the Education and the Environment Initiative of CalRecyle to organize this hugely successful day. Everyone had a wonderful time, and students came to appreciate the importance of geographic, environmental, and outdoor education. For more information, visit Dr. Kate Swanson’s blog post: http://calgeography.sdsu.edu/240-students-participate-sacramento-capitol-park-bioblitz.
Urban Food Spaces

Professors Joassart-Marcelli and Bosco are in the final stages of their “Food, Ethnicity, and Place” project, which has been funded by the National Science Foundation for the past four years.

The early phases of the project focused on understanding the food environment through comparative analysis of different neighborhoods in San Diego. Working with undergraduate and graduate students, they collected extensive data on food retailers and mapped access to various types of food at a fine-grained neighborhood scale. They also studied so-called alternative food spaces such as community gardens and farmers’ markets and explored their relationship to urban change, including gentrification and neoliberal urban governance.

More recently, they have been analyzing and mapping data from participatory research activities with school children to investigate how food landscapes influence everyday food practices. Using photo-voice, they explored the contradictions that young people face while navigating spaces like home, school, and neighborhoods, where food carries different meanings.

In addition, they pursued related research on the role of ethnic businesses in promoting food security in City Heights, a low-income urban neighborhood where many immigrants and refugees have settled. They found that ethnic markets, which are typically too small to be included in typical indicators of food access, provide a significant source of healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food (see figure 1). Preliminary results suggest that families in low-income and ethnically diverse neighborhoods shop and consume food in ways that differ from what is typically assumed from a normalized health perspective. The lack of acknowledgment of the positive role these retailers play seem to reflect a racialized and classed understanding of health and a stigmatization of the food environment of low-income neighborhoods.

Pascale and Fernando encouraged the participation of undergraduate students in this research, primarily through a new “community-based geographic research” course they taught. They also worked closely with several graduate students, including Jaime Rossiter, Emanuel Delgado, Helena Taflin and Billy Orihuela. Blaire O’Neal, a first year PhD student interested in urban agriculture, recently joined the “research team”.

An Update from the California Geographic Alliance (CGA)

The CGA, which has been hosted by SDSU Geography since late 2013, is a statewide organization that works with educators to support geography education from kindergarten to college, with a particular emphasis on raising the quantity and quality of instruction in geographic knowledge and skills in elementary and secondary schools. As many of you know geography education at those grade levels needs help, and the CGA focuses on education policy, teacher professional development, and the development of high quality and standards-aligned teaching and learning resources.

This year, the CGA visited legislative offices on Capitol Hill to advocate for funding for geography and social sciences to be included in the Every Student Succeeds Act, which replaces No Child Left Behind (Did you know that geography is the only one of the 8 core subjects identified in NCLB that received no funding from the federal government???). We also worked with Sweetwater Union High School District to develop and launch a new 9th grade geography course, trained more than 40 teachers in ArcGIS Online, and initiated more than a dozen new free educational accounts with Esri. For the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, National Geographic launched a national initiative to engage students in BioBlitzes (biodiversity inventories which can be carried out in a National Park or any open space, including a school campus). The CGA led a BioBlitz at Kimball Elementary in National City, another event at Capitol Park in Sacramento that involved 240 elementary students, and is partnering with organizations across the state (as a founding partner in the California Outdoor Engagement Coalition) to support a total of 25 events. In addition to new partnerships through the COEC, the CGA is pleased to have forged a partnership with Geography for Tomorrow, a non-profit started by a high school student Arvind Sridhar in San Jose that provides geography education throughout that region via after school and library programs. The CGA is also proud to be developing relationships with university college departments across the state, including UC-Santa Barbara, Cal State Fullerton, Sacramento State University, and Shasta College. All of these partnerships will help the CGA to continue to increase its impact in the coming years.
CICS Hosted Second Annual *Left of Boom* Conference

Under the leadership of Co-Directors Akshay Pottathil and André Skupin, the Center for Information Convergence and Strategy (CICS), founded in 2014, continues on its mission to catalyze the advancement of SDSU as a global leader in knowledge-driven, transdisciplinary thinking and strategic solutions. One of the key elements in pursuing its vision has been the founding of the *Left of Boom* conference series, whose second annual installation was held on the SDSU campus. Over the course of three days in May 2016, *Left of Boom II* brought together key government, academic, and business experts to discuss trending issues, offer innovative solutions, and share cutting-edge technologies that aim to detect, deter, and defend against obvious and non-obvious threats. Judging by the enthusiastic reactions of speakers, participants, and sponsors, there is indeed no other venue where concerns regarding global security, law, cyber security, medicine, urban planning, environmental degradation, the sexual exploitation of children or the language and rhetoric of terror are discussed at equal footing, resulting in unprecedented cross-fertilization.

The conference has quickly become a national and international focus point for proactive threat mitigation efforts, thanks to high-profile speakers and a format that is uniquely inclusive of a wide range of perspectives. Its tone was set at the inaugural conference in May 2015 with keynotes given by General Charles Jacoby, former commander of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and Dr. Anthony Chang of CHOC Children's, renowned pediatric cardiologist and a pioneer in medical intelligence innovation. The global reach of Left of Boom is illustrated by such speakers as Ambassador Venkatesan Ashok, Consul General of India, and Mr. Michael Cosgrove of the Organization of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The use of intelligent computational solutions has been among the recurring themes, from CICS’ launch of the *BIG:DATA* initiative in 2015 to this year’s presentation by a white hat hacker on critical vulnerabilities in the infrastructure systems that contemporary society relies upon. The conference has also become a showcase for SDSU’s best and brightest to inform governmental and business leaders of their vision and concerns, from Geography’s own Professor Emeritus Dr. John Weeks to Dr. Bruce Appleyard of the School of Public Affairs and other speakers from the Colleges of Arts and Letters, Business Administration, and Sciences.

The range of collaborative ventures that *Left of Boom* has already triggered is a key indicator of it delivering on its promise. Moving forward, it will continue to nurture a proactive stance in support of future-aware living. CICS is looking forward to hosting *Left of Boom III* in May 2017.
TAREK RASHED, PHD ’03

Tarek Rashed was just announced the newest Director of Geoinformatics at the Polis Center at IUPUI (Purdue University Indianapolis). Tarek completed his PhD at SDSU/UCSB in 2003. For more information on Tarek’s new position go to: http://news.aag.org/2016/04/tarek-rashed-announced-as-new-director-of-geoinformatics-at-the-polis-center-at-iupui/.

JOAN ISAACSON, MA ’90

Joan Isaacson has joined Kearns & West as Vice President and will be directing work for the firm in Southern California. Kearns & West specializes in public participation, facilitation, and mediation for public policy and infrastructure projects in the areas of environmental management, community planning, transportation, water, and infrastructure. She is also teaching a course on public participation for UCSD Extension this spring. Her new office is in North Park in San Diego, and you can reach her at jisaacson@kearnswest.com.

KATHERINE SANTOS, MA ’02

Katherine Comer Santos (Geography graduate 2002) did her master’s thesis on sea turtles at Guantanamo Bay (GTMO). In 2006 she founded The Science Exchange Internship Program, a non-profit that allows her to continue to do her research as an Adjunct Research Associate under Dr. Rebecca Lewison in the SDSU Biology Department.

The Science Exchange’s Vision is to create leaders who use science, technology, and international teamwork to tackle global conservation issues. Our main activity is to create sea turtle research internship packages in Latin American or the Caribbean for undergraduate and graduate students from anywhere in the world. Interns work for at least two months at a sea turtle camp or research lab under the supervision of a local mentor. The program offers all-inclusive travel packages with up to nine units of credit at San Diego State University (or their own university) for completion of the course work.

Join The Science Exchange! They are always looking for community partners, volunteers, and interns!

For more information, please contact Katherine Comer Santos at Katherine@thescienceexchange.org or 619-519-9876, or visit our website at www.thescienceexchange.org.

TERI FENNER, MA ’92

Teri Fenner is a Vice President at the firm AECOM. She is based in the downtown San Diego office, but leads the Environment Business Line in several offices throughout southern California; specifically, Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Camarillo, Ontario and San Diego. AECOM is a global engineering, planning and environmental firm with over 80,000 employees. The focus of her So Cal team is environmental planning with strong technical skills in CEQA/NEPA, natural resources, cultural resources, air quality/GHG, and noise. The client base includes federal, state and local public agencies; utilities; renewable energy providers; and oil/gas providers. She completed her MA in 1992. Occasionally she runs into Dr. Doug Stow while working on SANDAG projects and she continues to stay in touch with Diana Richardson for student interns. She is married to a fellow SDSU alum (business, not geography). She has a daughter studying in at College of Wooster in Ohio, plus a high school senior son who is considering Geography as his college major. She can be reached at teri.fenner@aecom.com.

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For more information, please contact Katherine Comer Santos at Katherine@thescienceexchange.org or 619-519-9876, or visit our website at www.thescienceexchange.org.
Dr. Elmer A. ("Burr") Keen (1925-2015)

Elmer A. ("Burr") Keen, a former professor of Geography at SDSU, passed away at the age of 88 on about March 8, 2015 in San Diego after a long bout with Alzheimer's disease. Burr was born and raised in Florida, and attended George Peabody College where he graduated with a B.A. in 1950. He subsequently attended the University of Washington where he received his doctorate in Geography in 1965. Burr joined the Geography Department at SDSU in 1967, served as department chair from 1975-1977, and retired in 1989. His research and teaching interests were in the areas of marine resources, natural resource conservation, and cultural geography, with regional expertise in China and Japan. Burr played an important role in the establishment and development of SDSU’s Center for Asian and Pacific Studies. He is survived by his son (Ricky) and daughter (Carolyn).

Dr. Engbert ("Conrad") Jan Coen Kiewiet de Jonge (1920-2010)

Dr. Conrad Kiewiet de Jonge passed away on October 17, 2010 in Alameda, California. Conrad was born November 3, 1920 in Leiden, the Netherlands, to Albert and Anna Maria Kiewiet de Jonge. He was a longtime resident of Roswell, New Mexico, having met his wife, Benita Maria Kiewiet de Jonge neé Duran there in 1959. Benita preceded him in death. Conrad spent his early years in the Netherlands, attended the College of Nyon, and was then accepted to Clark University to study geography in 1939. When World War II broke out he voluntarily put his studies on hold to enlist in the Dutch Army Air Force. He continued his flight training in the United States where he was awarded his wings and became a B25 bomber pilot. He flew some 40 missions with the 18th Squadron, then was attached to the USAF 5th squadron as a C47 copilot doing transport missions out of New Guinea. He was ultimately demobilized in 1946 after some 2000 flight hours and was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands in 1949 for his service during the war.

After being decommissioned, Conrad spent the 1948-49 academic year at the Universit de Paris before returning to Clark University where he completed his Ph.D. in 1951. Shortly thereafter he accepted a job as a photogeologist with the exploration department of Shell Oil Company. He worked for Shell Oil Company in Venezuela until 1959, when he was transferred to Roswell where he met Benita. He and Benita moved to Santa Fe in 1963, where he taught briefly at St. Michael's College before he was granted a tenure-track position in the Geography Department at what would become San Diego State University. From 1963 until his retirement in 1990 he taught courses in physical geography, geomorphology, regional geography, and aerial photo interpretation. 1964 saw the birth of their daughter Annette, after which Conrad was naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1965. He spent a sabbatical leave at the Universit de Strasbourg in France from 1973-74. Following his retirement in 1990, he and Benita moved back to Roswell.

CONTACT US

The Department of Geography at SDSU would love to hear about your news for future newsletters. For submissions, change of address, or if you want to be added to our alumni e-mail list, please contact Ira Zukanović at izukanovic@mail.sdsu.edu.

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