GEOGRAPHY NEWSLETTER

Academic Year 2013-2014 Graduates

Doctoral Dissertations

- Ryan Bart
  Dissertation Title: Regional Streamflow Response to Wildfire in California Watersheds
  Committee: Dr. Allen Hope (chair), Dr. Trent Biggs, Dr. Oliver Chadwick, Dr. Naomi Tague

- Magdalena Benza
  Dissertation Title: Population dynamics throughout the urban context: A case study in sub-Saharan Africa utilizing remotely sensed imagery and GIS
  Committee: Dr. John Weeks (co-chair), Dr. David Lopez Carr (co-chair), Dr. Doug Stow, Dr. Keith Clarke

- Zia Salim
  Dissertation Title: Building Community? Analyzing Gated Housing Compounds in Bahrain
  Committee: Dr. Fernando Bosco (chair), Dr. Keith Clarke, Dr. Helen Coubelis, Dr. Pascale Joassart-Marcelli

- Ninghua (Nathan) Wang
  Dissertation Title: Statistics for Time Series Spatial Data: Applying Survival Analysis to Study Land Use Change
  Committee Chair: Dr. Li An (chair), Dr. Keith Clarke, Dr. Helen Coubelis, Dr. Andre Skupin

Master Thesis

- Leticia Garcia
  Thesis Title: Feeling at Home with the Unfamiliar: Motivating People Through Visceral Engagements with Food.
  Committee: Dr. Pascale Joassart-Marcelli (chair), Dr. Fernando Bosco, Dr. Anh Hua
  (Women’s Studies)

- Raymond Lee
  Thesis Title: Hydrologic, Climatological, and Biogeochemical Controls on Thermal Structure and Anoxia in Four Hypereutrophic Drinking Water Reservoirs.
  Committee: Dr. Trent Biggs (chair), Dr. Allen Hope, Dr. Tyler Radniecke (Civil and Environmental Engineering)

- Kristin Meseck
  Habitat Distribution for Non-native Amazona viridigenalis Within San Diego County using Maxent Predictive Model.
  Committee: Dr. Li An (chair), Dr. Piotr Jankowski, Dr. Rebecca Lewison (Biology)

- Diane Rachels
  Thesis Title: Comparison of Chaparral Re-growth Patterns Between Santa Ana Wind-driven and non-Santa Ana Fire Areas.
  Committee: Dr. Doug Stow (chair), Dr. John O’Leary, Dr. Doug Deutschman (Biology)

- Dara Seidl
  Thesis Title: Striking the Balance: Privacy and Spatial Pattern Preservation in Masked GPS Data.
  Committee: Dr. Piotr Jankowski (chair), Dr. Ming-Hsiang Tsou, Dr. Carl Eckberg (Computer Science)

- Jared Van Ramshorst
  Thesis Title: ‘I Suffer a lot, we all Suffer so much’: Contexts of Mobility, Migration, and Connectedness in Oaxaca, Mexico and Southern California.
  Committee: Dr. Fernando Bosco (chair), Dr. Pascale Joassart-Marcelli, Dr. Ramona Perez (Anthropology)

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Special points of interest

- 2014 Graduate List
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- June Burnett Endowment
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Undergraduate News—Diana Richardson

SDSU Geography undergraduates continue to flourish, both within the program, and after they graduate. Our students are involved in many projects benefitting the community, such as working with Dr. Tsou to map home- less populations in order to better understand this issue, to developing land use plans for underutilized areas within National City in order to provide the community with healthy outcomes. Our graduates are successfully continuing their education in our graduate program or in others around the country, and are also finding relevant work in private and public agencies. For instance, one of our recent graduates emailed me to tell me she is beginning her graduate work on marine-related issues at the Monterey Institute for International Studies, and another the other day told me she just got a job for a company that creates mapping/data products for real estate and other agencies. It is wonderful to see our students grow and develop into community-minded individuals with talents that are not only needed in the job market, but that are also valuable in making our world a better place!

“It is wonderful to see our students grow and develop into community-minded individuals”

Department News

- Dr. Piotr Jankowski is the new Department Chair for Geography
- In January 2014 the department moved into the newly renovated Storm Hall
- An HDMA center and Weather center have been added
- The department has added The Center For Information Convergence & Strategy (CICS)
- A New faculty member will be joining the department in Geocomputation Methods—Dr. Atsushi Nara
- The department has new adjunct faculty joining the team: Carlos Castillo, Chen Feixiang, Chin-te Jung, Kyonghwan Park, Gernot Paulus, Akshav Pottathil, Yong Yang, Bohua Yu.
- The department will be hiring a new faculty member in Climate Modeling
- Alison Bailund has became the new Graduate Coordinator
- Mary Najjar has been hired as the newest staff member of the department
- All 3 individuals successfully completed oral exams: Jaime Rossiter, Geoffrey Fouad, Lydia Wood

2014 GRADUATES

Morgan Alyson Chan
Catherine Elizabeth Scott
Ryan Roger Bart
Magdalena Benza
Nicole Elizabeth Callais
Norman Dale Carter
Boris Dev
Jose Guadalupe Gomezvillalobos
Ryan James Goode
Allison Elizabeth Leak
Rebecca Carol Lostia
Jasmine Millan
Randy Dale Mitchell
Fritz Adolfo Ochs
Patrick Chunkit Pun
Tyler Christopher Reeves
Zia Ulhaq Salim
Ninghua Wang
Steven Philip Allison
Kathleen Anne Butler
Leticia Lysette Garcia
Steve W Norwood
Alex William Samarini
Madeline Anne Tuller
Jared Patrick Van Ramshorst
Noah Matthew Albers
Evan Donald Casey
Faculty News—Dr. Stuart Aitken

I’ve enjoyed a productive year since stepping down from the Departmental Chair in August 2014. I received a Fulbright Research Scholarship to study Izbirani (literally, “erased” youth) in Slovenia for the 2013-2014 academic year. These are young people who lost all their rights (to education, health care, citizenship, and so forth) in the 1990s after Slovenia gained independence. I spent Fall 2013 in Koper on the Adriatic studying the Izbirani issue and making contacts. I also spent a lot of time reading Slavoj Žižek and Giorgio Agamben (they both lived very close to where I was staying), and set up a theoretical argument for my empirical work around the contexts of young people ‘locked-in-place and recreating space’. This theme, in addition to Elizabeth Grosz’s notion of geo-power, became prominent in a new book I have coming out with Ashgate in August. The book began as an elaboration of my work on ethnopoetics, which started with my 2009 book on fathering. The work took off to the degree that Ashgate wanted to publish another volume that enabled me to develop ideas of affect, emotion and poetry as they show up in youth activism. It turned out that the Slovenian case provided a beautiful context to think through my theoretical arguments and so examples from that ‘nation of poets’ peppers the book along with other work I’ve engaged in the USA, China, and Chile. The Ethnopoetics of Space and Transformation will be launched at the Royal Geographical Society’s annual meetings in London this August.

In December 2013 I started interviewing young people all across the country of Slovenia with the help of lawyers and researchers at Ljubljana’s Peace Institute. At exactly the same time, the European Commission on Human Rights in Strasbourg awarded reparations to Izbirani families, so the topic became hot and contested. Our project hit the headlines of Devo, the Slovenian national newspaper, six times and we also had slots on prime-time television. In addition to the attention from the popular press, I’ve been busy writing for academic journals and edited scholarly volumes. I am particularly excited about representing the discipline of Geography in an international volume on children’s right

I look forward to returning to SDSU this August for a bit of a rest.
Faculty News—Dr. Kathleen Farley

Professor Kathleen Farley continues to teach and do research on land use and management, production of and payment for ecosystem services, and conservation policy and practice. She and former PhD student, Leah Bremer (currently a postdoc at Stanford University), continue to work on research on the outcomes of payment for ecosystem services programs in the Ecuadorian Andes, and published articles based on this work in the journals Land Use Policy and the Ecosystem Services over the last year. Professor Farley is spending much of this summer traveling around San Diego County interviewing ranchers about rangeland management, conservation practices, and participation in conservation programs. In the fall, she will extend this work to San Luis Obispo County as part of her sabbatical, collaborating with master’s student, Kyle Walsh. She continues to teach Research Design for first year graduate students and Geography Environmental Conservation Practice, with fieldtrips this year to the Ramona Grasslands and Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. In addition, she and her class joined Professors Richardson and Costello again this year on a fieldtrip to Yosemite National Park, where they learned about fire management and vegetation change in Yo-

The June Burnett Chair in Children’s and Family Geographies

The Children’s and Family Geographies Chair was created in 2013 as part of the Department of Geography’s June Burnett Endowment. The chair is in support of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Youth and Space (ISYS), and focuses on spatial research and therapeutic/ethnographic practices related to the well-being of children and young people. Professor Stuart C. Aitken, internationally recognized for his research on children’s geographies, youth activism, critical theory and qualitative methodologies is the first holder of the chair.

Newest Faculty Member GIS—Dr. Atsushi Nara

Atsushi Nara received his PhD in Geography from Arizona State University, MS in Geography from University of Utah, and BS in Environmental Engineering from Shimane University, Japan. His research interests center on Geographic Information Science, spatio-temporal data mining and knowledge discovery, modeling behavioral geography and complex urban dynamics, and geovisualization. In his recent works, Dr. Nara has investigated human movement behaviors including GPS offenders, pedestrian crowds and evacuation on streets, and surgical staff in highly complex hospital environments. He has developed advanced spatio-temporal analytic algorithms, data mining and geovisualization frameworks and toolkits, monitoring methodologies, agent-based models, and web-GIS applications to facilitate understanding and decision making of moving object dynamics. He has been extending his works by utilizing open-source development environments and distributed computing systems. Before joining SDSU, he spent three years as a post-doctoral research scientist in the Center for Spatial Analysis at the University of Oklahoma. He also worked as a research scientist in the digital human research center at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology and in the Department of Systems Innovation at the University of Tokyo, Japan.
Faculty News—Dr. John O’leary

Dr. John O’Leary continues to teach courses in introductory physical geography (recently re-named ‘Earth’s Physical Environment’), the geography of natural vegetation, regional climatology, a seminar in California Ecosystems, and the teaching of college geography. He also continues to supervise the four teaching assistants who teach the eight Earth’s Physical Environment labs. During spring/early summer of 2012 and continuing until December, 2013, he has been working with a doctoral student (Kellie Uyeda) and master’s student (Ian Schmidt) in measuring biomass of chaparral shrubs in the San Dimas Experimental Forest in the San Gabriel Mountains and near Kitchen Creek in eastern San Diego County. The effort is part of a larger research project funded by the U.S. Forest Service. The overall goal is to utilize remote sensing technology to estimate annual peak fuel biomass and dry season biomass in chaparral vegetation over the southern California region. This spatially explicit information may be used to predict wildfire spread and intensity in the wildland-urban interface. Dr. Doug Stow is the project’s principal investigator, and Drs. Allen Hope and Ming-Hsiang Tsou are co-investigators.

“SDSU’s Geography faculty and students have been working hard to help promote geography education in schools across the state of California”

California Geographic Alliance (CGA)

As the new host institution for the California Geographic Alliance (CGA), SDSU’s Geography faculty and students have been working hard to help promote geography education in schools across the state of California. Under the leadership of Dr. Kate Swanson and Dr. Thomas Herman we have: 1) held professional growth seminars for teachers and credential students; 2) collaborated with K-12 schools to promote geo-literacy; 3) developed exciting new educational materials for the California Atlas; and 4) advocated structural changes at local and state levels to institutionalize geographic education across the curriculum.

We’re particularly excited about the work of our Geospatial Technology Coordinator Dr. Ming-Hsing Tsou. Working closely with graduate students Cynthia Paloma and Yi-Ting Chuang, Dr. Tsou’s team is developing a “next generation” atlas that will run on mobile computing platforms and use interactive mapping applications. We believe this will become an invaluable classroom resource for teachers across California. We’ve also developed a new website and blog where you can follow the exciting work of the CGA: www.calgeography.org.

Dr. Kate Swanson presenting a geo-literacy award to Academy of Our Lady of Peace sophomore student, Mariana Fernandez, along with teacher Ms. Katie Turner.
Faculty News—Dr. Arielle Levine

Dr. Arielle Levine’s recent research explores human-environment interactions in marine and coastal regions in the Pacific. She recently co-authored a paper with PhD student Jaime Rossiter, examining fisheries management areas designed to limit the harvest of aquarium fish species along the Kona coast of Hawaii. This paper has received recent press attention—it was quoted in Hawaii newspapers in relation to upcoming fisheries regulatory changes, and Levine was quoted in an Associated Press article regarding Hawaii’s aquarium fishery.

Levine also published an article in Ecology and Society this year comparing fisheries co-management programs in Hawaii and American Samoa.

She continues to collaborate with American Samoa’s Community-based Fisheries Management Program to help understand local human activities that affect fisheries resources and to assess village perceptions of fisheries management issues. Levine has also been assisting the National Coral Reef Monitoring Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). As part of this program, she completed surveys in American Samoa to assess resident behaviors and perceptions of coral reef resources. In addition, she has continued to undertake human use mapping, recently mapping human coastal activities, as well as critical watershed issues, in a priority area for coral reef management in American Samoa.

A member of our local survey team interviewing an American Samoan resident about coral reef resources

Former Student News—Van Richter

When I graduated SDSU with a degree in Environmental Geography in 1983 there were absolutely no job opportunities in my field (even after several internships). In fact I knew of only one classmate who was lucky enough to get a job. However my involvement with KCR Radio and the Cultural Arts Board at SDSU lead me to work opportunities and my long career since in the music industry. I started as a night club DJ and booking agent for the Distillery Night clubs (Escondido and Solana Beach), managed local bands and also was a DJ at various venues in the city of San Diego. I got out of the night club game in 1989. Thereafter I worked for various Independent Record Labels including the legendary Wax Trax Records. After the Bankruptcy and acquisition of Wax Trax in 1993 I founded Van Richter Records. The label has enjoyed a now twenty year run and has survived many challenges including Napster’s illegal downloading and file sharing to the shuttering of the storied Tower Records Record store chain. Van Richter’s business model and focus is artist development in the niche genre of Industrial Music. We have a roster of seven of the leading bands in the genre including Testify, The Fair Sex, Plastic Noise Experience, Sielwolf, Death and Horror Inc., Girls Under Glass and Underwater Pilots. Van Richter was one of the first Record Labels to have a website vanrichter.net with almost 5 GB of deep rich content. The Label was an early partner with Apple’s Itunes in 2004. That relationship has allowed us to provide digital distribution for other record labels and artists of all genres. This ancillary revenue stream has allowed Van Richter to stay tune to its old school roots of industrial music without a compromise of artistic integrity. Since Founding Van Richter I have acted as its Label Manager overseeing the employees and artists as well as handling all A & R duties, business development marketing and promotions, new media and even creating some of the art work with its Geography influence.
This is the year of our centenary and we are devoting Friday Dec. 5th for the celebration. We would love for all of you to attend the event, so please mark your calendars. More announcements to come at a later time.
SDSU Geography

The SDSU Geography Department offers undergraduate, Masters and PhD programs with concentration in human and physical geography, and methodological technologies. The department now offers a new MS/BS program in Geographic Information Science. We have a diverse range of faculty with research interests including: physical, cultural, urban and economic geography, environmental, natural resource and land use analysis, remote sensing, geographic information systems, and spatial techniques.

We have an active and collegial group of faculty, staff, and students, housed in a first-rate office setting that contains state-of-the-art laboratory facilities.

Giving Back

Gifts from alumni, parents, students, and other friends help the Department of Geography at San Diego State University make a lasting impact on our world. By donating to the department, you are helping students achieve excellence, encouraging knowledge and discovery, and supporting teaching and learning.

Every gift makes a difference. Your support enriches the experiences of our students, and through them, our community and our world. All donations are tax-deductible, private and secure.

There are two convenient ways to support Geography; online or by mailing a check.

To make a gift online via credit card using our secure giving website, please visit the SDSU Planned Giving site. Please make sure to specify "Geography," in the department box.

To make a gift by mailing a check, please follow the directions found on the College of Arts and Letters Giving site. Please make sure to specify "Geography," in the department box on the form.

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