



SPARTAN GEOGRAPHER

Department of Geography

College of Social Science

Michigan State University



The Department of Geography instituted a new program called GEOCAMP in August, 2006 for all incoming graduate students. Pictured above are this year's students enjoying a sunny afternoon at Wilderness State Park on the shores of Lake Michigan. Please see page 3 for more details.





Message from the Chair

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Greetings MSU Geography Alumni and Friends!

It has been a busy year for the Geography Department. Last spring, we successfully filled five new faculty positions. In alphabetical order: **Chris Duvall** specializes in human-environment relationships in West Africa; **Sue Grady** has interests in medical and population geography; **Najib Hourani** (50% Anthropology) studies Middle East urban history and political issues; **Sharon Zhong** is a climate modeler at the regional scale; and **Leo Zulu** studies East African environmental issues with additional interests in GIS and remote sensing. (Please see below for more detailed bios.) In addition, Remote Sensing and GIS Research and Outreach Services (RS&GIS) has hired **David Gwynn** (PhD from Rutgers in 2007) as a grant writer to assist with faculty research ideas and proposals. In these searches, we had a large number of highly-qualified candidates and we believe we have found exceptional new additions to the Department.

Our current spate of growth is continuing this spring with four searches completed or underway. We have a joint position with Forestry that had strong applicants and (at publication time) an offer is pending. We are interviewing candidates for a cartography/GIS position (a replacement for Judy Olson, see below), a joint position with the Global Urban Studies program, and a joint position with the Environmental Science and Policy program. All will be geographers with GIS and other interests. If these searches are successful, next fall the Department will have 32 tenure-stream people equating to 27 FTE faculty. In addition, we will have 5 fixed-term faculty and 35 support staff. It may be time to think about a new building!

We will be losing three people soon.



Professor **Bob Wittick** is in the middle of a consultantship year and will officially retire in July of 2007 after 37 years of service to Geography and

the University Computer Laboratory. Former Geography Chair and AAG President **Judy Olson** has started her consultantship year and will officially retire in January of 2008 after 26 years at MSU. Office supervisor **Marilyn Bria** will retire as



of July, 2007 and will take 35 years of experience and departmental institutional memory with her. We wish them all the best and gratefully thank them for their many contributions over the years.

On a more somber note, long-time RSGIS senior specialist **Bill Enslin** passed away in November of 2006. Bill served the University for 31 years and was recognized as one of the experts in remote sensing, GIS, and software development in and for the state of Michigan. His many contributions to RSGIS, the Department, the University, and the State will long be remembered.



As always, we look forward to hearing from alumni and if you happen to be in the East Lansing area, please stop by for a tour and visit.

Richard Groop
Chair



Message from the Chair



Geo Camp

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Twenty incoming graduate students attended a “GEOCAMP” for 5 days last August at the University of Michigan Biological Field Station near Pellston. Activities included presentations on “how the department works,” graduate student expectations, and life as a graduate student. Students also visited tourist cities in northern Michigan, toured the Soo Locks, studied glacial landforms, and performed GPS exercises. Faculty members Antoinette WinklerPrins, Randy Schaeztl, Sarah Nicholls, and Richard Groop participated along with graduate assistant Eraldo Matricardi. The camp was judged to be a great success and planning is underway for a second GEOCAMP in August, 2007.



Sarah Nicholls discusses tourism in Northern Michigan



Randy Schaeztl and students in the north woods



The Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station and Michigan State University Extension has awarded ongoing funding to **Jeff Andresen** to operate and support a real-time computer weather network in support of Michigan agriculture.

Alan Arbogast reports a good year with the completion of his new introductory textbook in physical geography. Titled *Discovering Physical Geography*, the book is an outgrowth of the online course in physical geography that he developed. The goal of the book is to merge a traditional science-based text with interactive digital animations and simulations. Beyond the long-awaited completion of the book, the year was otherwise eventful as Alan accidentally managed to lop off a couple of fingers on his right hand with a power saw. Both were successfully reattached and they work well enough to type. On the more mundane side of the work ledger, Alan scored a couple of grants that are fueling some good research, one with the Coastal Zone Management Division of MDEQ focusing on an holistic protocol for dune management. Another grant is funded by MDOT involving a geo-archaeological analysis of coastal dunes. Alan also finished a collaborative project with *The Alliance of the Great Lakes* and *Ford Motor Co.* to investigate alternative sources of sand (besides sand dunes) for the foundry industry. In short, there's a lot of sand in northern Michigan that could be used in place of sand dunes.

Ken Corey and co-author Mark Wilson recently published Urban and Regional Technology Planning: Planning Practice in the Global Knowledge Economy a new book by Routledge Publishing. Corey and Wilson also received a 2006-2007 CASID

International Development Grant to fund visiting scholars for collaborative work.

Joe Darden received the Enhancing Diversity Award for 2007 from the Executive Committee of the Association of American Geographers. The award will be presented during the awards luncheon at the AAG meetings in San Francisco in April 2007. Joe also participated as a featured speaker at Leeds University in England for a meeting entitled "Integration, Segregation, Housing and Public Policies: An International Day Workshop." MSU Geography collaborated in sponsorship of the event.

Harm de Blij (John A. Hannah Professor of Geography) continues his public advocacy of Geography with presentations at Texas State, Texas at Dallas, Dartmouth, Texas Christian, Bridgewater State, Texas A&M, Blinn College, Mercyhurst and Texas at San Antonio. He delivered the plenary address at the NCGE in Lake Tahoe and at the Florida School of Geographers in Tampa. He also spoke at Riverside High School in New York, Town Halls in Oklahoma City and Yakima, and at the Chicago Quantitative Alliance and Wisconsin Investment Board. He received the George J. Miller Award from NCGE in October. He published two new editions of text books and a new book, "Survey of Subsaharan Africa" with Oxford Press and edited the Oxford Atlas of North America. Harm reports that the finer things in life still make his day, including his and Bonnie's three incorrigible dogs, a week's trek in April along the footpaths of Cornwall, a 1997 bottle of Ornellaia found in Texas, and rehearsing for a performance of the Bach A-minor violin concerto. "How did it go? Don't ask."



Jay R. Harman reports that, on the assumption that even good things must come to an end, he has decided that the current academic year will be his last as a full-time faculty member in the Department. Beginning fall 2007, he will start a 2-year phased retirement with half-time teaching allowing him more discretionary time for some serious and sustained writing projects. He looks forward very much to these next two years with more limited professional distraction while continuing to engage students in small seminar courses that he greatly enjoys. As to his feelings overall about retiring, like many decisions we must make in life without perfect information beforehand, this one, too, generates feelings of both apprehension and excitement. His greatest fear is that he will miss the act of teaching students once his retirement is final. Time will tell. Jay ran his usual field trip to the Great Smoky Mountains again this past May to the acclaim of the small group of students who were able to accompany him, but this routine, too, must come to an end. He would very much like to see the tradition of such a spring trip to the Smokies maintained after his retirement because of the great benefit it seems to have conferred on former students, and he acknowledges that he could have his arm twisted for one final trip during May, '08. He continues to dedicate personal time to keeping honey bees and gardening, and this year he and his wife have been pursuing the installation of a power-generating wind turbine on their rural property. When installed, this turbine would help meet their household electricity needs, with the surplus sent back over the power grid for a credit toward future utility bills. Even though this project is being funded out-of-pocket and may never pay for itself, he thinks that such a move is the right thing to do in view of

growing concern about global warming and the importance of trying to set a good example. As always, Jay welcomes correspondence from former students.

Sarah Nicholls was awarded a CASID (MSU) International Development Grant for 2006-2007. The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) Awards Task Force has chosen an article by **Judy Olson** as the recipient of its Best Article for Teaching at the Secondary Level for 2006. The article is entitled "Map Projections and the Visual Detective: How to Tell if a Map is Equal-Area, Conformal, or Neither." The award was presented at the NCGE meeting in Lake Tahoe.

Jiaguo Qi led an overseas study program of MSU and other students to Zhejiang University and other locations in China. Students gained first-hand experience in the Great Lakes region, the Three Gorges Dam, Beijing, and other sites. Dr. Qi is beginning negotiations for a joint degree program with the Zhejiang University.

Randy Schaetzl and geography students were featured in the October 29, 2006 edition of the Saginaw News with a story and photos. The article described research on former permafrost soils in the Saginaw Bay area that involved aerial photo surveys and field excavations.

Ashton Shortridge and **Jiaguo Qi** were two of the authors of an article, "Exploring Complexity in a Human-Environment System: An Agent-Based Spatial Model for Multidisciplinary and Multiscale Integration," appearing in the *Annals of the AAG*. The article was selected by the U.S. Chapter of the International Association of Landscape



Ecologists as the year's outstanding paper in Landscape Ecology in all world-wide journals.

Professor Emeritus **Larry Sommers** celebrates his 50th year as a member of the Association of American Geographers and 50+ years in the Department of Geography at MSU. Larry visits his office in the department on a regular basis and continues an interest in economic geography research topics with colleagues.

Professor Emeritus **Robert Thomas** has received a 2007 Distinguish Alumni Award from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Alumni Association. The award recognizes outstanding lifetime achievements and includes a weekend on campus and an awards banquet. Bob and wife **Dorothy** continue to contribute substantial funds for graduate student travel support to professional meetings. Last year, we were able to help send over 20 students to the AAG in Chicago and to other meetings. Bob remains actively involved in the Department and resides in his office daily.

Igor Vojnovic won a faculty award for best poster, "Building Communities to Promote Physical Activity: Exploring the Lansing Capitol Region," at the 2006 Annual Land Use Summit at MSU.

Professor Emeritus **Jack Williams** has just returned from a fall, 2006 teaching appointment in Hong Kong. Although officially retired as of July 2006, Jack remains active with several activities including an invited keynote speech to a conference on Jeju Island, South Korea, and co-editing a special issue of the Israeli journal, "Geographical Research Forum." He was

also awarded a plaque signifying distinguished service and outstanding contributions to the China Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers.

Julie Winkler has been invited to serve on the U.S. Department of Energy's Climate Change Science Program Product Development Advisory Committee for 2006-2008.

It was a busy year for **Sharon Zhong** with two major field studies. In March and April, Sharon and students visited the Owens Valley of California as part of a field program called the Terrain-Induced Rotor Experiment, or T-REX. The T-REX program, funded by NSF Atmospheric Sciences Division, explores the dynamic structure of atmospheric rotors and mountain waves that form in the lee of mountain ranges and are hazardous to aviation. Sharon is a PI in this coordinated program. In October, Sharon and her graduate students and visiting scientists spent another month collecting data inside the Meteor Crater in northern Arizona. The work is part of an NSF-sponsored field study aimed at improving our understanding of the structure and evolution of temperature inversions that form on a daily basis in topographic basins and valleys and the formation of atmospheric seiches. MSU is one of four universities funded by NSF to jointly carry out this study. The investigators launched weather balloons and flew tethered-balloons all night long in below freezing temperature inside the crater. The data set was great and the starry sky of Arizona viewed from the Meteor Crater was amazing.



New Faculty

Sharon Zhong was named associate professor of geography in August. Her research focuses on land-atmosphere interactions, boundary layer and mesoscale meteorology, regional climate modeling,



air pollution meteorology and atmospheric transport/dispersion, and fire-atmosphere interactions. She is currently a principal investigator for two NSF-funded projects to study the structure and evolution of mountain boundary layers. She is also a lead investigator for a USDA Forest Service project to develop tools for estimating how wildland and prescribed fires affect air quality. Sharon came to MSU from the University of Houston where she served as associate professor and graduate director for the atmospheric sciences program from 2003 to 2006. Before that, she was a senior research scientist at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Washington. She received her doctoral and master's degrees in atmospheric sciences from Iowa State University and her bachelor's degree in atmospheric physics from Nanjing University.

Sue Grady reports: I am a medical (health) geographer. I started my career as a registered nurse working in a cardiovascular surgical intensive care unit.



During that time I volunteered with the Children's Heart Fund in Honduras working with physicians and nurses on the post-operative care of children who received valve replacements because of rheumatic heart

disease. I traveled back and forth between the extremes of health care –helping to treat patients with similar problems but a very different set of resources. And then I met Connie Weil, a medical geographer who conducted health-geographic research in Latin America. She introduced me to the model of human ecology –a conceptual framework within which to view health and disease, and that has led me to where I am today. I am particularly interested in understanding how different environments impact people's health –both directly and indirectly, across space in time. My research agenda includes measuring the impact of residential segregation, poverty, and other environmental stressors on the high rates of infant mortality in African-American women in Michigan over the last decade, using spatial-analytical techniques. I appreciate the welcome that I have received in Geography and I look forward to future collaborations with faculty and our students and teaching what I have learned.

Chris Duvall writes: This past fall I completed my dissertation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, on the spatial and ecological relationships



between human settlement practices, vegetation composition, and chimpanzee distribution in southwestern Mali. This project reflects my interest in understanding humans as components of ecosystems—how do human activities interact with biophysical processes to create landscapes that are neither entirely cultural nor entirely natural? This area of research is exciting to me because it allows me to pursue my interests in physical geography (especially biogeography) as well as my interests in knowledge creation and



transmission—cultural landscapes are constructed both socially and biophysically. These interests arise clearly from my educational and professional experiences. My undergraduate degree, from the University of California-Santa Cruz, is in African History, while my M.S. is in Environmental Science, from San José State University. After Santa Cruz and before San José, I served in Peace Corps-Mali, helping to establish a national park, where I still conduct my field research. Like many Peace Corps Volunteers, my experience was terribly important in my learning how people from different cultures can experience a single landscape in profoundly different ways. Causes and consequences of differing perspectives on natural resources remains a central feature of my curiosity, whether I am researching in Mali, or spending time on family ranches in Wyoming (where I am from). Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my wife and 11-month old daughter, and running as much as my various joints will allow.

Najib Hourani returned to Michigan this year upon acceptance of the Cultural Geographer position shared by Geography and Anthropology. Raised in Ann Arbor, Professor Hourani also completed his BA (1989, Political Science) as well as a Masters Degree in Middle Eastern and North African Studies (1993) at the University of Michigan, before moving to NYU to pursue his doctorate in Politics (2005). He is currently working on transforming his doctoral thesis dealing with the transnational political economy of the Lebanese civil wars (1975-91) and post-conflict reconstruction into two separate manuscripts for publication. He also is



developing and teaching new courses on Urbanism in the Arab World and the economic geography of civil conflicts in the Middle East.

Leo Zulu: I am a human geographer coming to MSU as an Africanist via a rather tortuous route from the University of Edinburgh (Scotland), to Clark University (Worcester, MA) and finally the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign reflecting a shift from the natural sciences (forestry) to geography. Before coming into academe, I have had considerable professional experience in social forestry management and planning and international coordination of forestry and biodiversity management in the southern African region, with an operational base in Malawi. Frustrations of trying to resolve deforestation problems from a technical perspective and within sectoral confines of governmental organization led me not only to human geography, via a detour in GIS/remote sensing, but also informs my research and teaching interests. Those interests are: political ecology, environment and development, community-based natural resources management in rural Africa, deforestation, food security, socio-spatial, temporal and biophysical processes of land use and land cover change in southern Africa and the geospatial techniques (including remote sensing and GIS) that facilitate their examination. I also have interests in GIS applications for medical geography, and assessing and mapping vulnerability and adaptation of rural African communities to climate change. I am currently teaching courses on the geography of sub-Saharan Africa and an upper-level GIS.





Steve Aldrich and **Marcellus Caldas** (both advised by Bob Walker) received National Dissertation grants from the National Science Foundation.

Graduate student **Bilal Butt** has won a scholarship from the MSU Graduate School program, the Residential College of Arts and Humanities/Carnegie Academy of Scholarship, Teaching and Learning Fellows (RCAH/CASTL Fellows).

Annalie Compos won a graduate student award for best poster, "Demographic Trends, Transportation Spending, and their Relationship to Urban Sprawl in Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Lansing Metropolitan Areas," at the 2006 Annual Land Use Summit at MSU.

Ph.D. students **Annalie Campos**, **Yasuyo Makido**, and **Narumon Wiangwang** were all awarded Dissertation Completion Fellowships by the College of Social Science at MSU.

Graduate Student **Mark Finn** received a Rasmussen Fellowship from the MSU Graduate School for 2007-2008.

Graduate Student **Anthony Knapp** won second place in a Student Paper Competition sponsored by the Asian Studies Center at MSU.

Graduate student **Brad Schrottenboer** and faculty member **Alan Arbogast** were featured in a *Holland Sentinel* news story on sand dune mining in Michigan. Their research report indicated that coastal sand dunes are environmentally vulnerable and that many inland sand dune deposits may provide suitable alternatives for industrial needs.

Undergraduate major **Jonathan Stiegel** was awarded a New Horizons Kathy LeTarte Scholarship from the Tourism Cares for Tomorrow Foundation.

Michigan's IMAGIN Poster and Paper Competition had several MSU Geography student winners: **Dan Wieferrich** won in the Undergraduate Poster division with "Modeling the Spread of Beech Bark Disease." Four Geography graduate students won in the Paper Competition: **Scott Harding** for "Improving Geocoding Accuracy in Network Analysis;" **Brad Blumer** and **Tara Lalonde** for "Comparison of 10m NED and LiDAR Dem Error in the Context of Critical Dune Management;" and **Pariwate Varnakovida** for "Spatial Pattern Analysis of Settlement Locations Using Logistic Regression."



Jay Harman and students in The Great Smoky Mountains



Overseas Study and Distance Education 10

The Geography Department remained active in Overseas Study Programs this past year with many interesting locations and solid enrollments. They included:

- Rome, Italy, summer; **Assefa Mehretu**
- Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, summer; **Bob Thomas** and **Rene Hinojosa**
- Sydney, Australia, summer; **Alan Arbogast**
- Beijing and other locations, China, summer; **Jiaguo Qi**
- Merida, Mexico, winter break; **Bruce Pigozzi** and **Rene Hinojosa**

In addition, **Jay Harman** led a week-long expedition to the Smoky Mountain area at the end of spring term and **Alan Arbogast** made his annual trek to the Great Plains of Kansas.



Overseas study students on a field trip in China

The Department's Virtual Courses via the internet offered last summer were again highly successful with nearly 1500 students participating in four courses: People and Environment, U.S. and Canada, World Regional, and Introductory Physical Geography. Virtual Coordinator **Beth Weisenborn** is currently developing a new internet course on remote sensing of the environment in collaboration with **Dennis Hudson** and **Bob Goodwin**. Former graduate student **Juliegh Bookout** has been hired as a second virtual person to assist with this growing dimension of the Department.



Alan Arbogast and students in Sydney, Australia



Graduate Student Degrees Completed 2006 11

Victorino Bato, MA (David Skole), "Establishing an Open, Distributed GIS Data Archive System."

Juliegh Bookout, MA (Alan Arbogast), "Using Digital Elevation Data to Predict Slopes of Coastal Sand Dunes in Berrien County, Michigan."

Sissi Bruch, Ph.D. (Eric Strauss/Rex Lamore), "Environmental Equity of Lansing's Urban Park Policy."

Benjamin Gaeth, MS-GIS (Dave Lusch). Non-thesis degree.

Laurie Gasahl, Ph.D. (Jack Williams), "An Analysis of Factors Affecting China's Population Planning Program: Cases from Jiangsu and Jiangxi Province."

Edward Hartwick, MS-GIS (Ashton Shortridge). Non-thesis degree.

Christina Hupy, Ph.D. (Catherine Yansa), "Ecotone Dynamics: 2000 Years of Forest Change in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, USA."

Joseph Hupy, Ph.D. (Randy Schaetzl), "Assessing Landscape Disturbance and Recovery Across a WWI Battlefield: Verdu, France."

Ranjeet John, MA (Jiaguo Qi), "Comparing Land Use/Land Cover Dynamics and Water Quality in the Muskegon River Watershed: A Case Study."

Jessica Kidder, MA (Antoinette WinklerPrins), "Recycling at Home and Away: Differences of Recycling Participation

Between Residents and Non-residents on Two Northern Michigan Islands."

Narendran Kodandapani, Ph.D. (Mark Cochrane), "Comparative Studies of the Fire Regimes and Their Ecological Effects in Seasonally Dry Tropical Ecosystems in the Western Ghats, India."

Yasuyo Makido, Ph.D. (Jiaguo Qi), "Land Cover Mapping at Sub-Pixel Scales."

Kevin McKnight, MA (Joe Messina), "Spatial Trends of West Nile Virus in Detroit, Michigan 2002."

Angelo Podagrosi, MA (Igor Vojnovic), "Social Upgrading and Residential Displacement in the Effort to Physically Upgrade and Redevelop Deteriorated Inner-City Areas of Houston Texas."

Narumon Wiangwang, Ph.D. (Jiaguo Qi), "Assessment of Hyperspectral Data for Water Quality Studies in Michigan's Inland Lakes."



Luis Aragon (Ph.D., 1978) is Professor, Nucleo de Altos Estudos Amazonicos (Association of Amazonian Universities) where he coordinates a research group on environment, population, and development in the Amazon. He has done post-doctorates at Brown University and the Institute of Latin American Studies at Stockholm University and was a visiting scholar at Swansea University. He has also served in various administrative positions at NAEA. His address is Universidad Federal do Para, Campus Universitario do Guama, 66075-900 Belem, Para, Brazil.

Eugenio Arima (Ph.D., 2005) is one of two winners of the Gill-Chin Lim Award for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation in Global Studies at MSU.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) won a prestigious President's Transportation Award from the American Association of State Transportation Officials. In the planning category, the MI Travel Counts team was recognized for conducting the first-ever travel survey identifying seven regions with diverse travel characteristics. The team included MSU Geography alumni **Garth Banninga, Dennis Clark, Jesse Frankovich, Jesse Gwilliams, Yali Li, Don Mayle, Kelly Merchant, Jennifer Osborne, and Donna Wittl.**

Le Roy Barnett (Ph.D., 1979) has just authored a brief history and inventory of the published soil surveys for Michigan with emphasis on their cartographic components. The article is in *Michigan Historical Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (fall, 2006, pp. 119-130).

Jim Biles (Ph.D., 2001), after several years at Western Michigan, is now a faculty member

at Indiana University in Geography and Latin American Studies. Jim spent parts of August and September in the Yucatan as part of an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development analysis team studying opportunities for the region.

Chuck Croner (MA, 1969 and Ph.D., 1972), Geographer and Survey Statistician, Office of Information Technology, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is one of four staff to be tasked with developing a CDC-wide plan to build geospatial science excellence at the institution. "This is quite exciting and reflects the high regard for geography at today's CDC," states Chuck. Also, Chuck continues to serve as the editor for the widely-read CDC newsletter, "Public Health GIS News and Information." In April and May, 2007, Chuck will be the plenary speaker at the CDC's Statistical Methods Symposium and the annual URISA meetings, respectively.

Dr. Tarek A. Joseph is Professor of Cultural Geography in the Social Science Division at Henry Ford Community College and Adjunct Associate Professor of Geography in the Social Sciences Department at the University of Michigan - Dearborn. At Henry Ford Community College, he is past chair of the Council of American Cultures – a committee designed to create culturally diverse programs for students and faculty. His teaching and research interests include perception of people and place, cultural diffusion and colonial legacy, and economic development issues. A resident of Ann Arbor since 1998, Dr. Joseph is a recipient of the University of Michigan – Dearborn's Distinguished Teaching Award.



Chuck Kovacik (Ph.D., 1970) writes: Life is busy and good in the retirement zone. We returned from a Caribbean cruise and are between house guests. We relocated to Florida which is warmer in the winter and believe it or not – considerably cooler in the summer than Columbia, South Carolina. I thought I would miss going into the office and University life, but I don't. Instead of the same old, same old...we started a new life in a new place. And, it is working out great for us. I highly recommend it. Best wishes to you and please say hello to Bob Thomas and John Hunter for me.

Bryon Middlekauf (Ph.D., 1987) will be writing "Great Jobs for Environmental Studies Majors" for McGraw-Hill this coming year.

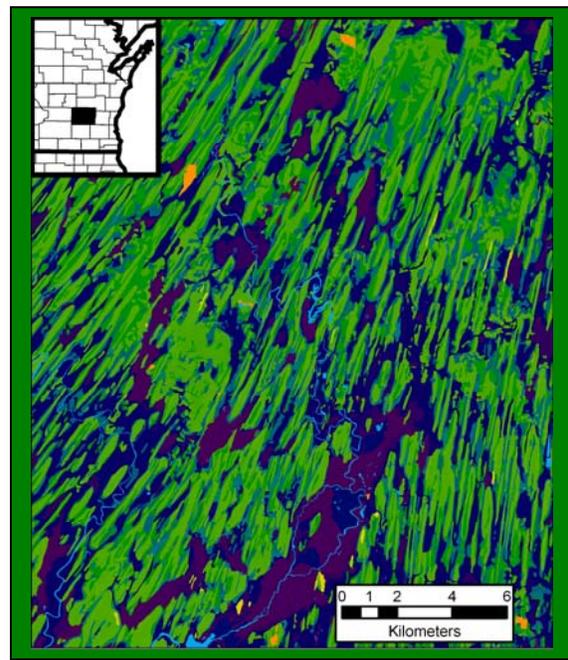
Jenny Olson (Ph.D., 1995) continues work on several Africa-related research projects at MSU, most recently, "Assessing Impacts of Climate Change In East Africa on Emerging Human and Livestock Diseases." Geography faculty **Joe Messina**, **Dave Lusch**, and **Jiaguo Qi** are also involved.

Hae Un Rii (Ph.D., 1983) remains as Professor of Geography at Dongguk University, South Korea. She served as president of the Korean Urban Geographical Society in 2004-2005 and was recently elected as an Executive Member of the International Council of Monument Sites, an NGO and advisory committee to the World Heritage Committee. She spends much of her research time with cultural heritage matters in South Korea.

New "Soil Drainage Index" Launched by MSU Geography Department

Geography Professor **Randy Schaetzl** and a collaborator at the US Forest Service have created and released a new index of soil wetness - the Natural Soil Drainage Index (DI). DI values reflect the amount of useable water that a soil can supply to growing plants under long-term, natural conditions. It ranges from 0 for the very driest soils, e.g., those shallow to bedrock in a desert, to 99, for areas of open water. The DI can be calculated for any soil by knowing its taxonomic subgroup and, if GIS applications to soil maps are desired, map unit slope. When paired up with an appropriate color scheme, the DI values clearly and accurately depict wetness at a landscape scale. Schaetzl and colleagues believe that this index will be widely used by geographers, soil scientists, environmental modelers, wetland mappers, ecologists and foresters. The DI web site has more information:

<http://www.drainageindex.msu.edu/>





Awards Banquet 2006

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The annual Geography Department awards banquet was held last April with former graduate student **Bill Johnson** (MA, 1984) as the featured speaker. Undergraduate Gamma Theta Upsilon inductees included **Robert Cousins**, **Karly Pence**, **Amber Schultz**, **Kelly Steffens**, **Theresa Straubel**, and **Gale Sullwold**. Winner of the John M. Hunter was **Karly Pence**; **Bree Harrison** won the Daniel Jacobson Endowed Scholarship; **Jonathan Archer** was named Undergraduate of the Year (provided by Harm deBlij); and **Stephen Aldrich** was named Graduate Student of the Year (also provided by Harm deBlij).



Amber Schultz



Scenes from the 2006 Geography Banquet





Thanks to all of you who contributed to the various Geography Department funds and scholarships. We are nearing the end of a University-wide Capital Campaign and are making continued efforts to increase our departmental contributions to enhance our programs and benefit students. Please consider donating to one of the Geography Department funds listed below.

John M. Hunter Award

Established in 1995 for outstanding geography students who demonstrate academic potential and dedication to the field of geography.

Ian Matley Memorial Fund

Established to bring guest speakers to campus to enrich the geographic education of students and faculty.

Daniel Jacobson Endowed Scholarship

Established in 1995 to encourage undergraduate students interested in studying Native American and cultural geography topics.

Marjory and Lawrence Sommers Geography Graduate Fellowship for International Research and Travel

A graduate fellowship to be awarded yearly for Masters or PhD students to support international research and travel.

GTU/Geography Endowment Fund

Established in 1999 by Robert and Dorothy Thomas to fund geography-related student activities.

Harold A. "Duke" Winters Scholarship

To support graduate study in Geography at MSU.

Jay R. Harman Undergraduate Scholarship in Geography

To support undergraduate study in Geography at MSU.

Geography at MSU Fund

Established in 2001 to promote the MSU Department of Geography, including related advertising, fundraising, travel, and similar expenses.

Geographic Field Experience Fund

Established in 2001 to fund student field experiences, including field trips, primary data collection, course related field experience, and transportation and lodging expenses.



Please contact us

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We hope you find this newsletter informative and interesting. One way you can help keep it that way is to send us news about yourself. Share news about your career, family, or other things with your fellow alumni. Send an e-mail or letter and we will insert it into the next issue of the newsletter. Thanks for helping make the newsletter even better.

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