

The Compass

Department of Geography Newsletter 2018-19



Drones offer campers learning experiences outside the classroom

p. 5



University at Buffalo

Department of Geography

College of Arts and Sciences

SEAN J. BENNETT



Photo by D. Levere

It is with great pleasure that I share with you the Fall 2018 edition of The Compass, the newsletter for the Department of Geography here at the University at Buffalo. The primary message communicated herein is that these are historic times for the department. First, the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA-UB) celebrated 30 years in existence. During this time, NCGIA-UB has emerged as an international leader in GIScience research, education and outreach, and its work is more relevant today than ever before. Second, as of Fall 2018, the department now has 21.5 faculty members. This is the largest number of faculty members in our department's history, which brings enormous opportunities for diversity in scholarship and education. Lastly, the success stories shared here by our faculty, students and alumni provide strong evidence of the positive and lasting impact the department makes in our community and within our profession.

This coming year, we invite you to share your news and information with us and to participate in scheduled events here at UB and at the AAG meeting in Washington, D.C. Finally, I wish to thank everyone who has generously contributed to departmental activities, events, scholarships and awards. Your contributions make a difference.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean J. Bennett".

Sean J. Bennett, Professor and Chair

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Photo by L. Bian

National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA-UB) celebrates...

30 years

On May 11, 2018, NCGIA-UB celebrated 30 years in existence. Invited by the director of NCGIA, Ling Bian, PhD, university administrators, faculty, alumni, and leaders of the local GIS community joined the celebration.

NCGIA-UB was founded in 1988 as part of the National Science Foundation Center for Research in GIScience. For three decades, NCGIA-UB has focused on excellence in GIScience research, GIScience-related grant development, and GIScience services to UB and the local community. NCGIA-UB has earned a national and international reputation, established a research network on campus, and formed strong ties to the Western New York GIS community. NCGIA-UB is widely recognized as a valuable resource to UB and the GIScience community at large.

At the celebration, Senior Associate Vice President for Research and Economic Development Ken Tramosch, PhD, welcomed guests. Three former directors of NCGIA-UB, Ross Mackinnon, PhD, Mike Batty, PhD, and David Mark, PhD, offered insights into the success and impact of NCGIA over the years. Associate Dean for Research Administration, Lorraine Oak, PhD, closed the program by envisioning the challenges and advances of GIScience in the future. President Satish K. Tripathi also sent his congratulations on such an important milestone for NCGIA-UB and UB, and current director Bian paid tribute to all guests and others who have contributed to the 30-year success of NCGIA.

Houston's flooding underscores disaster management challenges

The massive flooding caused by Hurricane Harvey near Houston may illustrate extreme events that are more likely to be intensified due to climate change. **Chris Renschler, PhD**, points out that Houston's flooding is the result of both natural and human-driven processes. Numerous cities in the US that are experiencing rapid population growth



and urbanization increase impervious surfaces that would reduce the infiltration of water into the soil. This would raise the risk of flash floods and make communities more vulnerable to flooding. Renschler highlights the importance of cooperation between different agencies and stakeholders for short-term disaster management as well as long-term sustainable growth and careful development (from C. Hsu, UBNOW)

Scientists win U.N. data prize for monitoring threats to South African biodiversity hotspot

A team of scientists including **Adam Wilson, PhD**, won a United Nations data prize from Global Pulse for creating a digital tool for monitoring threats to this biological jewel. Wilson traveled to Bonn, Germany, to receive the award on Nov. 12, 2017. The digital tool created is a system that maps and analyzes vegetation in the fynbos, a belt of shrubland in the Cape Floristic Region in South Africa. While the tool is still being



Photo by A. Wilson

piloted, it includes an interactive, web-based map that researchers can use to compare expected vegetation status to actual changes seen in satellite images (from C. Hsu, UBNOW)

Bantering with the Bantu

With recent funding from NSF, J. Good, PhD, (LIN) and **Ling Bian, PhD**, will use GIS and social network representations to create detailed linguistic maps that can visually display the wide variety of languages actually spoken on the ground in any given geographical area. The investigators will

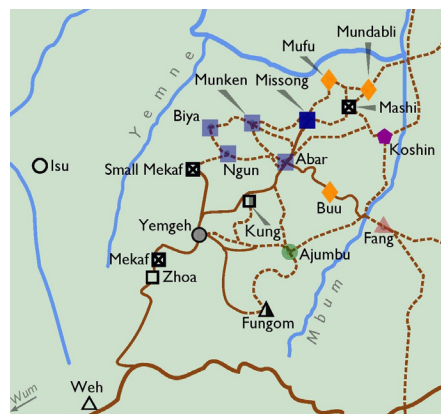


Image from CAS College Matters

utilize new ways of representing and analyzing language distributions using GIS and individual-level data to understand the extent to which people tend to learn languages spoken by those that they live near and languages spoken by their friends and family members (from E. Hawkinson, CAS College Matters).

New book explores how to keep neighborhoods intact and affordable while pursuing environmental goals

Trina Hamilton, PhD, and Winifred Curran, PhD, (DePaul University) are co-editors of "Just Green Enough: Urban Development and Environmental Gentrification" published by Routledge. In this book, the two authors wanted to present alternative narratives about how cities can go green the right way. The authors argue that it is necessary to plan for affordability and social justice when planning to build new parks and condos since



Image from UBNOW

such amenities will lead to increasing real estate prices and displacing lower-income residents. For cities to be truly sustainable, all residents should have access to affordable housing, living-wage jobs, clean air and water, and green space (from C. Hsu, UBNOW).

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Symposium

The Center for Global Health Equity and UB's AMR research group—composed of D. Aga, PhD, (CHE), S. Islam, MD, (Pediatrics), and **Jared Aldstadt, PhD**,—hosted a cross-disciplinary symposium, the aims of which were to generate creative responses to AMR and promote dialogue between UB scientists and the distinguished international experts. The symposium will serve as an important part of the AMR research group's efforts to cultivate a UB-based research community that will commit to tackle one of the most critical public health problems of our time (from the UB Community for Global Health Equity).

America's graying population (UB Now)

According to **Peter Rogerson, PhD**, the two most prominent demographic changes over the past 50 years relate to age. The entire nation has substantially aged as baby boomers age. It is not surprising that popular retirement states like Florida and Arizona have high concentrations of older Americans. What may be more of a surprise is significant aging in the Midwest and the Appalachians, as many younger residents headed toward the coasts. Not only is the U.S. aging, but the number of deaths is rising, and this trend will accelerate over the next few decades (from The Conversation).

Drones offer campers learning experiences outside the classroom

High school students who attended the GIS summer camp learned how to fly drones at Cradle Beach on the shore of Lake Erie in Angola, N.Y., with **Le Wang, PhD**, piloting the drone. The flying exercise was part of this year's GIS Summer Camp, presented by UB's



Photo by D. Levere

Geo-Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (GTEST) project. The NSF project, led by J. Gardella, PhD, (PI, CHE), and co-PIs J. Cerne, PhD, (PHY), **Ling Bian, PhD**, X. Liu, PhD, (LAI), and S. Sodano, PhD, (CSEP), aims to teach concepts and skills of geo-technology to high-potential students from high-need areas (from R. Johnson, UBNOW).

Imperiled, some freshwater mussels endure. How?

A recent study published by B. Sansom (CSEE), **Sean Bennett, PhD**, J. Atkinson, PhD, (CSEE), and C. Vaughn, PhD (University of Oklahoma) in Freshwater Biology explored how a certain species of freshwater mussels, which are among the most imperiled animals



Photo by D. Levere

in North America, have persisted despite habitat loss, pollution, and other threats. The study offers possible explanations of how these poorly understood and ecologically important mollusks are adapting to changes in their environment. Preliminary findings suggest that mussel density and shell

roughness play roles in keeping mussel beds at steady population levels (from C. Nealon, UBNOW).

This "wonder of the Earth" is the size of Minnesota and built by bugs

In northeastern Brazil, termites have been busy at work for millennia. The only external signs of their labor are dirt mounds described in a paper published in Current Biology by S.J. Martin, PhD, (The University of Salford), R.R. Funch, PhD, (Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana), P.R. Hanson, PhD, (University of Nebraska-Lincoln), and **Eun-Hye (Enki) Yoo, PhD**. The conical mounds, each about 8 feet



Photo by S.J. Martin

tall and 30 feet wide, erupt from the ground and spaced about 60 feet from each of six neighbors. As many as 200 million mounds cover an area larger than Minnesota, and they could be as old as 3,800 years (from B. Guarino, The Washington Post).

What is a "shadow ban," and is Twitter doing it to Republican accounts?

When President Trump accused Twitter of "shadow banning" Republicans in a tweet, it was the latest salvo in a long-running debate over whether social media platforms suppress conservative users because of their political views. When a person is shadow banned, their posts on a platform are rendered essentially invisible to everyone but themselves. Their experience using a site may not change — they feel like they are still posting normally — but other people cannot see the material they produce, said **Monica Stephens, PhD**. "Shadow banning is when you are algorithmically being kind of shut down, and that often has to do with, particularly, the content that you are

posting," Stephens said (from L. Stack, New York Times).

For survivors of California wildfires, next danger could come from water, UB expert says



Photo by C. Renschler

Chris Renschler, PhD, visited the Montecito area of California this past summer to see communities devastated by debris flows following wildfires. His research team led to the development of watershed modeling

techniques that have been used in Burned Area Emergency Response for emergency risk management assessment in post-wildfire situations over the past 15 years. Due to the wildfires, there now is a higher risk of flash floods and landslides that can endanger both people and property (from C. Hsu, UBNOW).

UB co-hosted GIS Day

Western New York's 2018 celebration of GIS Day—an annual, worldwide event—was held at UB on Nov. 14. Geographic information systems (GIS) have made an enormous impact on society, enabling technologies that range from satellite-based navigation to epidemiological modeling. Faculty and students from different universities and



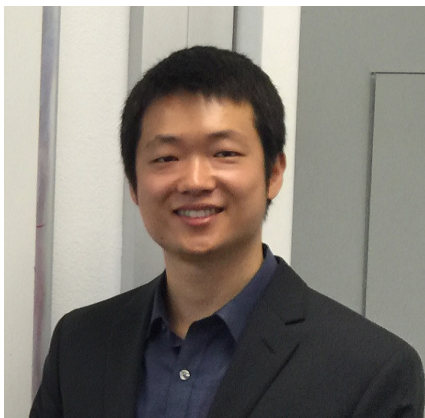
Photo by Y. Hu

professionals enjoyed GIS Day activities hosted by the WNY GIS Users Group and UB Geography Graduate Student Association. Events included student presentations, a smartphone-based geo-jeopardy, and a presentation by the global GIS company Esri on the firm's latest news and technologies (from C. Hsu, UBNOW).



New Faculty

In 2018-19, the department hired two new tenure-track faculty members.



Yingjie Hu, PhD

Yingjie is excited to join UB Geography and NCGIA! He is an Assistant Professor in GIScience, and his research focuses on spatial data science and computational methods. Hu develops and leverages artificial intelligence, machine learning, and natural language processing methods to discover a variety of knowledge from data, which can support disaster response, urban planning, and other applications. He received his PhD from the University of California, Santa Barbara.



Stuart Evans, PhD

It's been an exciting first year in Buffalo and being a part of the department. Coming from an atmospheric science background I've enjoyed getting to see the world through geography eyes. My research focuses on the role of dust in the climate system, and feedbacks it creates with rainfall. I'm interested in learning about the physical processes governing how the atmosphere and the land exchange water, energy, and carbon dioxide, giving rise to the climate we experience.



Jessica Gilbert (left) and Marissa Bell (right) in Singapore

Marissa Bell (PhD candidate) won an Association of American University Women Olga Lindberg Scholarship and an AAG Energy Specialty Group Award to support her research on nuclear waste siting and environmental justice in Ontario, Canada, and she co-edited a book published by Brill Rodopi entitled “Strangers, Aliens, Foreigners: The Politics of Othering from Migrants to Corporations.”

Jessica Gilbert (PhD candidate) won an Association of American University Women Olga Lindberg Scholarship to support her research on school food justice project, and she just published a paper entitled “Just Transitions in a Public School Food System: The Case of Buffalo, New York,” in the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*.



Ikenna Smart (tallest in the back row) with his family in Umuahia, Abia, Nigeria (Photo by UBNOW)

Qiang Pu (PhD candidate) won Best Student Presentation at Spatial Accuracy 2018 Conference in Beijing, China, May 21-25, 2018, for the paper entitled “Prediction of Urban PM2.5 Concentrations using a Bayesian Spatio-temporal Modeling Approach.”

Ikenna Smart (BA '18) played 33 minutes and had 17 points with 10 rebounds and two blocks over three games in a MAC Basketball Tournament in 2018. He came to America from Nigeria when he was 16 years old for a good education. He graduated in May, 2018, with a dual major in geography and international trade. Smart is a good example of what the college student-athlete is supposed to be about, a player who values academics above all else (from J. Sullivan, The Buffalo News).

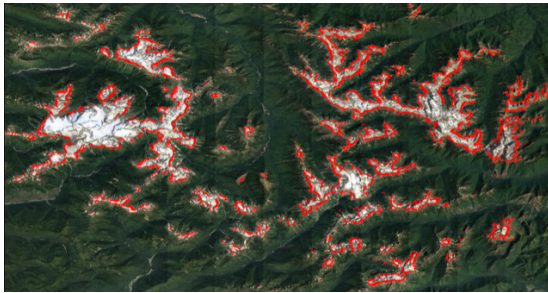


Image from Chenyang Wei

Gordon Tan (PhD candidate) won first prize in the Student Paper Competition at the Applied Geography Conference at Kent, Ohio, Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 2018, for the paper entitled “The Geography of Financial Complaints in the United States.”

Chenyang Wei (PhD candidate) was awarded a highly competitive three-year Earth Science Graduate Fellowship from NASA for the project entitled “Monitoring, Modeling, and Projecting Global Dynamics in Alpine Treeline Ecotones under Climate Change.”



Photo by Misa Yasumiishi

Misa Yasumiishi (PhD candidate) received the 2018 NSF GSS-Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Award and the 2018 CAS Dissertation Fellowship award for her ongoing research on radioactive contamination in soils in a region that was affected by the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident in 2011.

Xiang Ye (PhD candidate) received funds from the Graduate Student Employees Union (Buffalo Chapter) Professional Development Awards Program to support his AAG presentation.

Merlin Lawson (BA '63) Merlin was “recruited” into the Geography Program at the University of Buffalo by the best teaching professor that he has ever encountered, Charles H.V. Ebert, PhD. He also happened to be in the first graduating class of SUNY at Buffalo in 1963. Merlin earned both masters and doctoral degrees at Clark University. He joined the faculty at the University of Nebraska in 1968, retiring 43 years later in 2011. Merlin retired from UNL and was awarded the status of Emeritus Professor of Earth and Atmospheric Science, Emeritus Dean of International Affairs, and Emeritus Dean of Graduate Studies. Merlin continues to reside in Lincoln with his wife of 55 years, Nin Rising Lawson.

Patricia Barth (BA '69) Patricia Barth (Peters) graduated with a degree in Geography in 1969, and did graduate work at Kent State University. Spent most of my working life as a statistical analyst, mostly as a consult for researchers. Have since retired, but still occasionally consult for “fun.” STILL remember Charles Ebert and Roy Mitchell... great profs!

Barry Glick (BA '74, PhD '81) I've been President at PTV America Inc, an international company based in Karlsruhe, Germany. PTV is a leading provider of traffic simulation and logistics modeling used by government agencies, engineering and consulting firms, and logistics service



Barry Glick

providers. I serve on the boards of several companies including Location Inc (Mass.) and Automotive Navigation Data (Rotterdam, Netherlands). I also have my own advisory

business, Carillon Ventures LLC (Va.). My wife Catherine and I split our time between Arlington, Vermont, Arizona, and Europe. We have one grandson in Seattle and a son and daughter in-law in Sydney, Australia, so we spend lots of time on planes!

Chi Ho Sham (MA '80, PhD '84) Chi Ho Sham is residing in the Boston area with his wife (Joan) and two children (Alex and Cassie). He is currently a Vice President and the Chief Scientist of Eastern Research Group, Inc. in Lexington, Mass. Over the past three decades, he has worked extensively in drinking water



Chi Ho Sham and family

protection, underground injection control, and water quality issues. He is a very active member of the American Water Works Association and is currently the chair of its Technical and Educational Council. He also serves on the Massachusetts State Board of the Conservation Law Foundation, UB's College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Advisory Council, and the advisory board of the Urban Watershed Research Institute.



Daniel Visone

His directorate is responsible for providing GEOINT engineering and domain support to the following: the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology System of Systems Engineering

Daniel Visone (BA '85)

Daniel has served as Director of the Systems Acquisition & Support Directorate, U.S. Army Geospatial Center, US Army Corps of Engineers, in Alexandria, Va., since August 2013.

and integration Directorate; Program Manager, Distributed Common Ground System – Army; Project Director, Tactical Exploitation of National Capabilities; and Program Manager, Terrestrial Sensors for the implementation of the Army Geospatial Enterprise.

Ren Vasiliev (MA '88) I got my Masters in Geography in 1988, and PhD from Syracuse in 1996. Taught for 25 years at SUNY Geneseo, earning full professor status. Also, somewhere along the way, I received the Chancellor's Award in Teaching. Retired from everything on Sept. 1, 2018. Yippee! Now I can concentrate on my art and making collages and letterpress prints.

Hui Lin (PhD '92) Hui is the Chen Shupeng Professor of Geoinformation Science and Director of Institute of Space and Earth Information Science (ISEIS) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). He has published more than 270 research papers and co-authored 10 books. Hui was elected academican of International Eurasia Academy of Sciences in 1995, and he received



Hui Lin

the Outstanding Contribution Award from Asia Association of Remote Sensing in 2009 and the AAG Miller Award in 2017. Hui was also elected the Vice Chairman, China National Committee of International Society of Digital Earth. He is the founding president of International Association of Chinese Professionals in Geographic Information Science and the chief editor of the journal Annals of GIS.

Randy Bertolas (PhD '95) Randy, professor of geography and department chair at Wayne State College in northeast Nebraska, was recognized with two awards at the annual National Conference for Geographic Education held in Quebec City from Aug.



Randy Bertolas

6-10, 2018. He received the NCGE Distinguished Mentor Award and the NCGE Geographic Excellence in Media Award for his "Student Atlas of Nebraska." In addition, he won a couple teaching honors this year, one at his college and then at the system-wide level in his state.

Richard Quodomine (BA '96, MA '03)

Richard has recently been promoted to Senior Lead GIS Analyst at the city of Philadelphia's Department of Public Property. He is responsible for the city's Asset Management Database and resulting GIS Feature Classes, GIS-based Decision Support Tools, and leadership and management of the InVision program, categorizing the city's Spaces and Places, valuing their investment and utilization, and preparing for future use as times change. Richard is a volunteer tech teacher at a local high school, author on geography in books and periodicals, and enjoys cycling.

Scott Steigerwald (MA '97) I currently live in Denver and am an Associate Director of Development at IHS Markit. I've been working for IHS Markit for six years now. My duties include application development specializing in geospatial technologies and team leadership.

John Kavanagh (BA '02) John is currently VP, Product at Synacor in Buffalo leading a team of product managers and software developers to build online identity management services. If you have ever signed into the HBO GO app, then you have



John Kavanagh and family

used some of the technology that his team has built. John also returned to UB in Spring 2018 as Adjunct Instructor with the School of Management, teaching Digital Product Management to MIS and MBA students. He and his wife Kelly have three energetic boys and they live in Clarence, N.Y.

Mark LaRussa (BA '04, MA '06) Mark is currently Vice President, Sr. Manager at Citigroup responsible for Process Improvement and IT Solutions Delivery within the Business Continuity Department and has achieved a PMP and CBCP certification. He is married with two children and lives in Orchard Park, N.Y.

Michael (Ivan) Chamdani (BA '05) I work as the head of equity for PT Maybank Asset Management Indonesia, which is part of Maybank Asset Management Group, a regional-Asia company based in Malaysia. My role is to manage equity and balanced (equity and bonds) funds and also to manage a group of fund managers. We focus on Indonesian asset classes for now. Previously, I worked for Trimegah Asset Management as head of research and Deutsche Bank as institutional equity sales.



Douglas Gress

Douglas Gress (PhD '05) Douglas, Professor of Economic Geography, Seoul National University, was recently featured in AAG's "Profiles of Geographers." In

addition to sharing his experiences in education and research, he notes that "...had I not received my PhD in economic geography from SUNY Buffalo, I obviously would not have the job I do today. Formally, it was a top-notch program that provided me with a great education from some of the leading names in the field. Informally, I owe much to the professors that mentored me for their great advice and early career guidance."



LaDonna Knigge

LaDonna Knigge (PhD '06) LaDonna was promoted to full professor on April 20, 2018 and began a three-year term as the chair of the Department of Geography and

Planning at California State University, Chico in August 2018. LaDonna was an IGERT fellow with David Mark, PhD, and Meghan Cope, PhD, as her co-advisors.

Hoehun (Bryan) Ha (MA '07, PhD '11) I'm currently working as an Assistant Professor of Geography at Auburn University at Montgomery. My current research interests focus on the linkages between socio-physical environment and human interactions, using GIS and statistical methodologies. Since being hired at AUM in 2016, I have conducted six different research projects and six first author peer-reviewed journal articles and one first author news article have been published. I'm developing spatial models in public health - physical/socioeconomic based approach. Also, I've been teaching a wide range of courses including GIS, world regional and human geography, and earth systems science.

Joe Morgan (PhD '07) I am currently Head for the Department of Chemistry and Geosciences (Associate Professor) at Jacksonville State University in Alabama. I am a Fulbright Alum also...was in Nanded, India, for six months in 2011 doing research and teaching GIS at Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University. I am also an Alwaleed bin Talal Fellow offered by the National Council for U.S. and Arab Relations. The fellowship program is designed to expose a new generation of American college and university faculty members to the Arab world through study visits.

Adam E. Chetrit (BA '10) Adam works as financial representative at Wealth Advisory Group where his focus is helping families and businesses plan for their future. He works with his clients to achieve financial balance by showing them uncommon strategies lowering their debt, increasing their rate of savings. After graduation, Adam spent five years working in Panama. He was offered a job by the Florida branch of the Guardian Life Insurance Company in 2016. As his practice expanded to the tri-state area, Adam moved back to New York City and joined WAG.



Amy Hinchcliffe

Amy Hinchcliffe (BA '15, MA '16)

After graduating in 2016, I moved to Sidney, Neb., for work. I accepted a position as an Import Compliance Analyst 1 in the Global Trade

Compliance Department at Cabela's World Headquarters. During my time at Cabela's, I studied to become a Licensed Customs Broker and Certified Customs Specialist and was promoted to an Import Compliance Analyst 2. In April 2018, I accepted a position as a Compliance Supervisor in the Traffic Department at David's Bridal in Bristol, Pa., where I currently work. I live in Haddon

Township, N.J., with my fiancé Fabio, and we will be getting married on July 20, 2019.

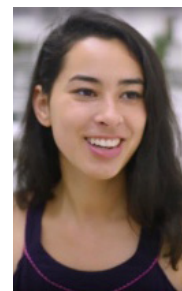
David Harary (BA '15) In an article published in New Security Beat, the blog of the Wilson Center's Environmental Change and Security Program, David discusses the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. He notes that many African developing countries are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Increased economic specialization and development can occur more rapidly because regional value chains and infrastructure projects can cross borders. David notes that perhaps most importantly, the free trade area can allow Africa to become a beacon of sustainable development as advanced technologies can be readily implemented at a larger scale than previously possible.

Willard Schulmeister (MA '15) In 2016, I founded a drone data and services company called EagleHawk, with Patrick Walsh, a mechanical and aerospace engineer and RIT alum. I have always had a passion for GIS and mapping and I saw an opportunity to author infinite maps and collect geospatial data with drones. To date, EagleHawk has completed



EagleHawk

hundreds of inspections and collected over 15,000 acres of geodata for mapping purposes. EagleHawk has been recognized by the NYS GIS association having received a UAS innovation award in 2017, and in October 2018, EagleHawk officially became an Emerging Business partner with Esri, the global leader for GIS.



Christine Tjahjadi-Lopez

Christine Tjahjadi-Lopez (BA '14, MA '17)

As recently featured in UBNOW by C. Anzalone, Christine is in Guatemala, running a ballet school, volunteering as director of an indigenous

women's textile group, and generally working to make a lasting difference for people who need her help the most. She had begun teaching ballet to a small group of young Guatemalan girls. Christine works with indigenous artisans and designers at Mercado Global, a fair trade bag-making company, as production manager. She also is director of a natural/eco-dyed indigenous women-owned weaving association called TEIXCHEL. Christine started without compensation and now gets a small commission for transportation.

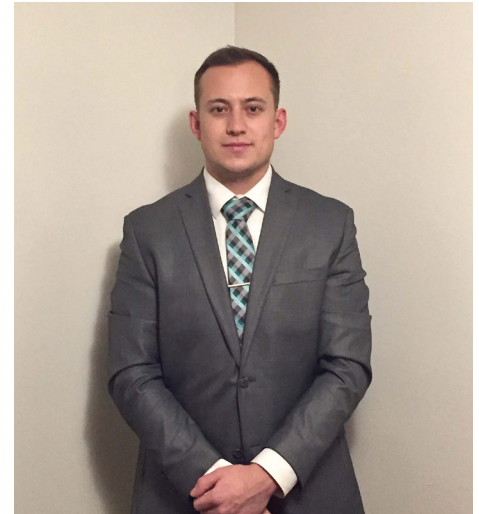
Eric Heusinger (BA '17) I graduated in May of 2017. Two months later in July, I began a one-year Master of Public Administration program at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. In July of 2018, I graduated with my MPA and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Civil Society Organizations. In 2018, I started a job with Deloitte Consulting, based out of Rockefeller Center in New York City, as a Strategy and Operations Consultant in the Public Sector. I continue to reside in Buffalo with my husband, Darryl. I'm very grateful for Marion Werner, PhD, and Abigail Cooke, PhD, for their ongoing support and assistance.

Interview

with an *Alumnus*

Connor Kennedy, BA, International Trade, 2018

Abigail Cooke, PhD, recently chatted with Connor about his current work experience. Connor joins about ten other UB alumni, including several recent International Trade majors, who work at the Buffalo office of Expeditors, an International Logistics and Freight Forwarding Company. GEO has sent several interns to Expeditors, providing real-world, experiential learning for our students.



Connor Kennedy

Abigail Cooke (AC): How long have you worked at Expeditors?

Connor Kennedy (CK): I've been working at Expeditors for six months now.

AC: Briefly, what does the company do?

CK: Expeditors is an International Logistics and Freight Forwarding company. We operate on six out of seven continents (Antarctica is hard to navigate) in 103 countries with over 17,000 employees worldwide. We offer a magnitude of services, but our core services are Supply Chain Solutions, Transportation, Customs and Compliance and Warehousing/Distribution.

AC: And what do you specifically do?

CK: I am in the Customs Brokerage department here in Buffalo. I work on the highest volume account we have, Corning Incorporated. My daily duties consist of acting as the middle ground between Corning operations and US Customs to ensure that their imports get into the US in a timely manner, legally, and as cheaply as possible.

AC: What is something from your education at UB that you find particularly useful in your job?

CK: I use a lot of things I learned from my degree on a daily basis but the most precise thing I can think of is GEO 419: Transportation and Society. The entire semester we learned about different modes of transportation, different national hubs, the effects of spatial distribution, etc. It is all now something that I deal with on a daily basis when I handle truck, air, and ocean shipments from Taiwan, Honolulu, Anchorage, Buffalo, and any other city imaginable. And of course my time at UB taught me how to organize myself and use my time

productively. In such a fast paced industry with everything moving in real time, it is important to stay on your toes and not fall behind.

AC: What have you learned about international trade since starting this job that surprised you?

CK: I think what really surprised me the most when I started was seeing just how much takes place behind the scenes to get even the smallest of products into the US. Of course coming from the International Trade program, I knew that there was more than just clicking purchase on Amazon and getting your package three days later. But it wasn't until I was fully immersed that I truly got an accurate representation of all of the work it takes so that consumers can obtain those products that they want/need.

AC: This has been a busy year for news about trade, particularly changes in US trade relations with China and the re-negotiation of NAFTA. Did these headline grabbing events affect the daily work you all do, and if so, how?

CK: This is actually something that we have to deal with on a daily basis. We constantly have to work with our customers and with US Customs to ensure that as additional tariffs are added to certain products that we stay compliant. Obviously additional tariffs make importing a product more expensive, so we also have worked with our customers in recognizing new and more affordable lanes and suppliers to ensure that their business models are not disrupted by the changing trade landscape. It has been difficult on many businesses, but we are here to try to ease that burden.

AC: Thanks, Connor! And congrats on your six-month anniversary at Expeditors.

Give to the Department of Geography

Thank you for your support of the Department of Geography! With the support of alumni and friends, we can access vital resources to enhance our department and provide support for students, research projects and programs. We are grateful for your generosity.

You can support your department and help to provide for our students by making a gift online:

www.buffalo.edu/cas/geography/about-us/give-to-us.html

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- Help build a strong network of alumni in your region
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- Connecting with an alumni chapter in your area
- Giving to UB and making an impact on students
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