



International Geography

by Michael Longan
President

This past August Outreach Coordinator Randy Bertolas and I attended the

combined Regional International Geographical Union/ Canadian Association of Geographers/ National Council for Geographic Education meeting in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. As is our tradition Dr. Bertolas presented the names of our scholarship winners at the NCGE Awards Ceremony (see article page 3). The conference was an excellent opportunity to hear research and perspectives from geographers from across the globe. One of the biggest differences from conferences held in the United States was that presentations were given in languages other than English.

Quebec City was a wonderful city to explore as a geographer. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site its historical geography can be read off the visible landscape, especially after visiting one of the many museums devoted to the city's history. It is also a city of vibrant public spaces, culture, and festivals. I met a local colleague at Les Grand Feux Lotto Quebec, a fireworks and dance party on the riverfront. I also took the ferry across the river one night to attend the Levis Jazz etc. festival and saw a free public circus performance. Finally, I learned from my local guide the degree to which tourism has transformed the city through both much needed economic development and less desirable gentrification and displacement.

This experience reminded me of a few important things that I think are worth sharing. First it brought home to me the importance of foreign language skills for geographers no matter what their specialty. A part of my love for geography was gifted to me by my high school French teacher, Mademoiselle Meyer, who showed photos

l'hoppopotame and l'orangoutan taken during her travels to French-speaking countries every summer as a wildlife conservation volunteer. Second, the experience reminded me of the importance of international travel for geographers. While we must work to minimize our environmental impact, international travel helps one, as the conference theme put it, to "appreciate difference," but also to recognize the common humanity that the world's people share. Music and dance are international languages after all. Finally, the experience reminded me that geography is a vast worldwide discipline shared with people across the globe. For this reason, it is important to continually remind ourselves that GTU is an international honor society and to work toward supporting and encouraging chapters outside of the United States despite the challenges of doing so. Geography is everywhere!

Applications for 2019 GTU Travel Awards

by Susy Ziegler, 1st Vice-President



GTU and the American Association of Geographers (AAG) collaborate on initiatives to promote geography and support geography students. We are delighted to announce that GTU and the AAG

are continuing to offer the **AAG-GTU Student Travel Award** to help offset the cost of students attending the Annual Meeting of the AAG in Washington D.C. in April 2019.

Travel awards in the amount of \$200 each are available for undergraduate and graduate students who are attending the 2019 Annual Meeting of the AAG. GTU will provide as many travel awards as funds and qualified applications permit. Preference will be given to students who are attending an AAG meeting for the first time and who will serve as an author or co-author on a paper or poster being



presented at the conference. Recipients of an AAG–GTU Travel Award will be required to pick up their check at the GTU booth in the exhibit hall during the AAG Annual Meeting.

The application deadline is Feb. 4, 2019 and the form is available for online submission at <http://gammathetaupsilon.org/travel-award-application.html>. Please direct any questions about the process to suziegle@nmu.edu.

The AAG provides financial support for the awards via its AAG-Gamma Theta Upsilon Student Travel Awards Fund. Donations for the fund are collected by the AAG via their website. We appreciate the support of the AAG for geography's next generation of leaders!

2018 AAG–GTU Student Travel Awards Presented to Ten GTU Members

by Susy Ziegler, 1st Vice-President

Last spring ten GTU students received \$200 to attend the 2018 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers in New Orleans. GTU is grateful to the AAG and to donors to the AAG–GTU Student Travel Awards Fund for helping early-stage geographers attend and make the most of the conference as they prepare to launch their careers in geography. We hope that this partnership will help students be able to participate at the 2019 Annual AAG Meeting in Washington, D.C. After the 2018 meeting in New Orleans the AAG–GTU Student Travel Award recipients shared heartfelt messages of thanks. Below are a few of them. We'll include additional messages in a subsequent newsletter. Here are a few of them (some edited for length):

Lauren Andersen

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the American Association of Geographers (AAG) and Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) for the Student Travel Award. This award enabled me to attend all five days of the AAG Annual Meeting. At the

Annual Meeting, I presented the results of my graduate thesis to a wider audience and networked with geography professionals from across the world, all while enjoying beautiful New Orleans, Louisiana. I have looked forward to attending the AAG Annual Meeting throughout my undergraduate and graduate careers in Geography and I am thankful to AAG and GTU for making this possible. As I approach my graduation in May, I will carry the experiences from this trip with me throughout my professional career.



Hannah Eboh

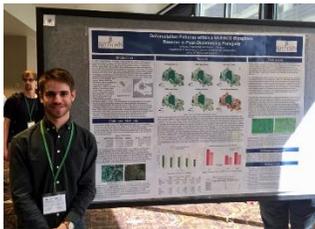


I am exceedingly grateful to have received a Gamma Theta Upsilon Student Travel Award to attend the 2018 AAG conference in New

Orleans! Being able to attend this year's conference was especially meaningful for me since I am a hazard geographer and one of this year's themes was "Hazards, Geographies, and GIScience." At the conference, I had the opportunity to present the results of my master's Thesis on Risk Perception in Small Island Developing States. Additionally, I was able to attend many sessions related to my sub-field and meet several scholars whose work I admire at the Hazards Specialty Group business meeting! The exhibit hall was a great place to learn more about potential Ph.D. programs. On another note, it was fantastic to see a bit of New Orleans. Thank you, Gamma Theta Upsilon, for making these funds available for students- it is much appreciated!



William J. Havrilchak



I just wanted to follow up in regard to my first AAG conference experience. I am pleased to inform you that my first American Association of

Geographers Annual Meeting was a very enlightening and educational experience. I was blown away with how many geographers were present from all over the world. I was honored to be able to interact with so many experts within the field of geography and was pleased to be a part of such expertise. My first AAG meeting also gave me a fantastic understanding of how scientific research presentations are presented in a formal academic setting. I am extremely thankful for being given such an opportunity. I am most certain this will not be my last AAG conference.

Benjamin Ingalls

Hello, my name is Ben Ingalls and I am currently a senior in my final semester at the State University of New York at Geneseo where I study Geography and have minors in both urban and business studies. I am extremely excited to be attending my first AAG Annual Meeting in New Orleans where I will be presenting research on farmers' markets in my hometown of Buffalo, NY. I can't thank you enough for the assistance that you've offered me in the form of the AAG-GTU Student Travel Award. This funding will certainly lift some stress off of my shoulders and will make it a lot easier for me to take care of all of the logistical arrangements related to attending the conference. As the Vice President of our local chapter of the organization, I will be sure to remind my fellow members of the opportunities that GTU has generously made available for us. I look forward to meeting some more of my fellow members this April and enjoying the beautiful city of NOLA with them.

Congratulations to the 2018 GTU Scholarship Recipients

by Susy Ziegler, 1st Vice-President

Each year Gamma Theta Upsilon holds a competition for five scholarships of \$1000 each that are awarded to four undergraduates and one continuing graduate student. Through their academic excellence and considerable service to GTU and their departments, the awardees have demonstrated that they are some of the outstanding future leaders in geography.

Many talented students applied for funding, and the scholarship committee wished it were possible to award even more scholarships. GTU is pleased to announce the following scholarship recipients:

Buzzard Undergraduate: Anthony Jreije, Clark University

Maxfield: Allison Carvalho, DePaul University

Buzzard Graduate: Meredith Moore, Auburn University

Richason: Jonathan Tejada, California State University, Northridge

Rechlin: Jimmy Feng, SUNY Geneseo

Next spring these scholarship recipients will share how the funds helped support their professional activities. Students interested in applying for scholarships in 2019 should look for updated information on the GTU website after Feb. 15 at <http://gammathetaupsilon.org/scholarships.html>.

Thanks to every talented GTU member who applied for a scholarship, and to the scholarship committee members for the time they spent carefully considering many applications.



Interview with Dr. Kari Jensen on Being a Successful Chapter Sponsor

By Jimmy Wilson, 2nd Vice President

A few weeks back, I had the pleasure of visiting with Dr. Kari Jensen, associate professor of global studies and geography at Hofstra University, about her ongoing experience as faculty sponsor for the Mu Kappa chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon. Her chapter has been quite active and recent years, and has the distinction of receiving our GTU Honors Chapter award for the last four years. Below is the narrative of our conversation. Thank you, Kari, for making time to visit with me and for passing along your experiences.

Jimmy: When and where did you become a member of GTU?

Kari: I was inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon Penn State in 2007.

Jimmy: How did you become the GTU chapter sponsor at Hofstra University?

Kari: I founded the chapter in 2012. Since then I have been President and Faculty Sponsor of the chapter.

Jimmy: Has the experience been rewarding?

Kari: Yes, it has. I will admit that in the beginning I was a bit reluctant since I was very busy with teaching, research, and a lot of service engagements, so when my chairperson of the department of global studies and geography at Hofstra University approached me about it, I did it mainly because it would count positively towards my tenure case. I felt ambivalent about this whole honors society and honors ceremony thing. In Norway, from where I have my academic training up to the PhD level, we didn't have anything like that – we didn't even have commencement ceremonies! So I felt the whole thing was a bit foreign and elitist in nature. However, when I saw how much this opportunity of recognition meant to our students, and how it could help us raise awareness of Geography as an academic discipline, I became motivated to continue. Since the chapter was started in 2012 we have initiated 118 members!

Ten of these are faculty, so we have initiated 108 students into Mu Kappa in the seven years since Mu Kappa was founded. Including Vice President Veronica Lippencott, who was also initiated at Penn State, and me. Mu Kappa has 120 members!

Jimmy: What do you feel are important qualities for chapter advisers?

Kari: You have to be organized, patient, social, and appreciative of the opportunity to spend time with young geographers. Or at least it will make your life easier if you have these qualities.

Jimmy: Your chapter has a reputation for being very active. What are the more important characteristics of your chapter that accounts for its success?

Kari: We have dedicated faculty and a supportive chairperson, Grant Saff, who himself is a member of Mu Kappa. Our department's office administrators (Christine Kempinski back then when the chapter was founded, and Jackie Geis the last few years) have also been supportive of the logistical needs and helpful with planning of events, etc. And it helps a lot if there are at least a few students who are willing to be active in the chapter. Until now we have only had one or maximum two active students on the board at the same time, but this is about to change. I am very excited to convey that since our last induction ceremony in May this year, several of the new members have contacted me to say that they are very interested in getting actively involved. This is a new trend – in the past I usually had to try to convince students that this would be a good thing for them to do. I think the fact that we have now inducted a lot of students and the chapter has had some fancy induction ceremonies with luncheons and guest speakers – Geographers of course – several years in a row, has made membership more attractive. And there is strength in numbers – several students who already know each other are running for positions on the new board. Our first ever election for board positions in Mu Kappa will actually take place next week! Students are running for all positions, including President and Vice President, because we feel it is time for us to step down and let the



students take over the leadership of our chapter. Only one position (a position we added to the usual GTU positions), the Director of Events, will still be a faculty, our GIS professor Craig Dalton, because of his excellent network of potential speakers. I will continue as Faculty Sponsor and I look forward to guiding the new board during this exciting transition period.

Jimmy: What chapter activities or events are you especially proud of?

Kari: Our textbook drive, which we ran last semester. Students, staff, and faculty all became involved in collecting text books that we shipped to the organization Books for Africa in Atlanta, and they are shipping the books to several universities in different African countries. We learned about this organization through GTU. Especially our student Rachel Scarpino, Mu Kappa secretary, did a great job in organizing this drive. I am also proud of our induction ceremony events with outside speakers, and our Geography Awareness Week celebrations, where we have been able to host a Geographer as guest speaker several years in a row. Thanks to funding from Hofstra's Cultural Center, we have been able to pay honorariums to some of the guest speakers and organize a nice lunch afterwards where students and faculty get a chance to talk more informally with the speaker. In this way our students have been able to start networking with Geographers who have been and can be of assistance for many years to come. As an example, I want to mention Burrell Montz, who was the speaker at our initiation ceremony back in 2014. Subsequently, based on networking and flows of information resulting from this encounter, two of our students have had graduate assistantships in her department at East Carolina University, and one of them, Tom Vogel, is now pursuing his PhD there!

Jimmy: For those flirting with the idea of becoming a chapter adviser, what advice can you offer?

Kari: Just do it. It is rewarding, and it may give you some important reminders about why Geography is such a unique and important discipline.



Historian's Column

by Dawn M. Drake
Historian

I thought I would deviate from my normal musings on GTU history this month to talk about establishing a GTU chapter in a small department. This is

information that is relevant not only to those who are in departments with few students or faculty, but also for those larger departments with chapters that are seeking to reach out and support other schools. One of the criteria for the Presidential Honors award is to "Sponsor a new GTU chapter at a college (or community college) or university that doesn't have one or assist an inactive chapter reactivate." While reactivating a chapter is relatively easy for a small department, as it only takes one new member to reactivate, the initial chartering of a chapter can be harder as it takes six initiates. It can be done however and there are lots of strategies that can help a small department get started. I would like to share my experience in chartering a chapter in one of these small departments as a means to help others, whether small department or larger program pursuing Presidential honors.

Missouri Western State University (MWSU) is a medium-sized university of around 6,000 students, located in St. Joseph, MO, about 45 minutes north of Kansas City. We are the applied learning university for the state of Missouri and therefore provide many opportunities for students to conduct research independently or with faculty, engage in internships, and present at regional, national, and international conferences. Geography is housed in the Department of History & Geography, which is co-located with the Department of Philosophy & Religion and both departments share a single chairperson. Geography is the only program in the department that does not have a major. Currently we have one faculty member, who teaches a rotation of 10 courses in service to general studies,



education, history, religion, biology, and the geography minor. In any given semester there are approximately 10 geography minors with several other students using geography as part of a Bachelor of General Studies degree.

So, given those conditions, what tools does a faculty member have at their disposal to charter a chapter of GTU? I would recommend starting small. Identify a nearby university with a chapter of GTU in place. Begin to collaborate with them where you can. For MWSU, there were several options. We partnered with Northwest Missouri State University for a Visiting Geographical Scientist grant in 2015. This allowed me to start showing students what GTU was all about and the benefits of the organization. That same year, I also found a partner in Park University, just north of Kansas City. For the longer-term plan to stimulate the development of a GTU chapter at MWSU, this proved to be our best option as the chapter sponsor at Park was also an MWSU alum.

So how do you build a culture of GTU on your campus before you even have a chapter? You partner with another college or university with a GTU chapter to get your students involved and initiated as GTU members. For those who are not aware, any GTU chapter can agree to initiate eligible students from another college or university. This was exactly what the Mu Theta Chapter at Park University did for us. It can take some negotiation between the two schools to work out details like applications, eligibility verification, payment, and initiation, but it can be done. In the first year that I partnered with Park University, the Mu Theta Chapter at Park inducted five students from MWSU. The MWSU students were invited to Park's initiation ceremony and then we invited Dr. Fox, Park's chapter sponsor, to attend the ceremony we had on our campus. I continued to work with Dr. Fox after that for several years to integrate GTU into the lives of MWSU's geography students.

With persistence, the geography program at MWSU continued to grow and in 2018, I had four students eligible for GTU using Park's criteria. I contacted our institutional research office and found out that, as an open enrollment school, using 3.3 as the cut-off GPA for the top 35% of the class was not reasonable at MWSU. For our institution, a 3.25 GPA was more accurate. This gave us a fifth candidate if I wanted to charter my own chapter. So, now what? I needed six initiates to charter a chapter. A potential sponsor has several options at his or her disposal. The chapter sponsor must be a member of GTU, so if he or she was never initiated, that would make six. I already was initiated into GTU as an undergrad and again when I helped charter a chapter at the University of Delaware. I technically still could initiate again though, if I needed a sixth person. I had a few other options available as well. I am the only geography faculty member on my campus, but we do have a few faculty members that are trained in GIS and have some geography coursework in their background. I approached each of them to see if they were eligible and interested in joining our new chapter. Ultimately, that did not pan out, although it is an option. The other pool of people that a small program should not forget are its alums. My sixth initiate was an alum who was eligible for GTU as an undergrad, but never joined Park's chapter. I contacted him when it looked like we would be able to charter our own chapter and he was excited to join.

These are only a few suggestions of how a small program might get started. By far, I am not the expert on ways to charter a chapter of GTU, but I am happy to share my experiences or help others to brainstorm. Please feel free to contact me at ddrake4@missouriwestern.edu and share this column with anyone you think might benefit. Back to the history in the next edition!



Share Your Chapter News!

If you have news from your local chapter that you'd like to share, an account of a great chapter activity, or other items of interest to GTU's membership, we invite you to submit your item for consideration in the next edition of the GTU Newsletter. Send your news to Mike.Longan@valpo.edu.

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Want to know what's going on with GTU internationally? Interested in telling the world about your great GTU Chapter event? Looking for ideas for your next chapter event? All that and more can be found on GTU's official Facebook Page.