



Happy May!

by Susy S. Ziegler,
President

A colleague who is not a professor said to me the other day, “It must be nice to have the semester winding down.” I

responded, “Winding down?!? It has to wind up before it winds down.” With so much to do between now and when grades are due, what better way to procrastinate than to compile the next issue of the GTU Newsletter. In this communication we share with you some news from the Executive Committee meeting at the AAG conference and announcements about upcoming deadlines. Perhaps reading the articles will be just the break you need from end-of-semester tasks.

We enjoyed seeing so many GTU members, prospective members, and AAG–GTU Student Travel Award recipients stop by the GTU booth in the exhibit hall in Washington, D.C. and attend the business meeting. Feel free to follow up with any of the GTU leaders to make sure your questions are answered. We are happy to help you reactivate a chapter, start a new one, or celebrate your accomplishments.



New GTU Initiation Ceremony Published

by Michael Longan,
Past President

GTU has published a new official initiation

ceremony on our website that chapters may use the next time they initiate new members. I had long recognized that the language of the existing ceremonies reflected outdated ways of conceptualizing the discipline of geography and the

world that it studies, particularly in its description of the symbolism of the GTU badge. In my own chapter we long ago cut the problematic aspects of the ceremony out and I heard that other chapters did the same. Having been reminded of the problematic nature of ceremony in conversations with several chapter sponsors, last fall I convened an ad hoc committee led by two Student Outreach Assistants to consider revising the ceremony. My charge to the committee was to update the ceremony to reflect our discipline better, but also to maintain a link with tradition and preserve parts of the ceremony that they felt worked well.

I am happy to report that the committee has produced an excellent revision to the ceremony that accomplished these goals. The new ceremony was adopted by the Executive Committee at our April meeting in Washington, D.C. Student Outreach Assistants Zach Hilgendorf and Adam Dohrenwend are responsible for the revisions, and Historian Dawn Drake and Past President Burrell Montz played an advisory role. The committee sought to modernize the ceremony to reflect the many different spheres of geography. They expanded the ceremony by adding the goals of GTU to communicate the purpose of the society more directly. The ceremony also allows room for customization by adding elements unique to a chapter including a recitation of the chapter’s history or a description of the chapter’s accomplishments. I recommend that chapter leaders review the new script prior to trying it out for the first time to consider adding such elements and to create and rehearse stage directions that may need to be added to fit the unique setting of your ceremony. My own chapter used the ceremony for the first time at our spring initiation ceremony and I was impressed by the improvement. I want to thank everyone involved, especially Zach and Adam, for the considerable amount of work that they invested in the revision! You can find the newly revised ceremony at

https://gammathetaupsilon.org/documents/gtu_initiation_april2019.pdf



Historian's Column

by Dawn M. Drake,
Historian

It is the end of the semester. Flowers are blooming at Missouri Western State University.

Students are freaking out as

they cram for finals and struggle to complete semester projects. It is also the season for GTU initiations. In general, GTU receives more new initiates in the spring semester than the fall. If you have been following the GTU Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/GammaThetaUpsilonInternational/>, you know we are eagerly anticipating that our 70,000th initiate will be entered into the list of GTU members in the near future. That means nearly 70,000 people have experienced some form of GTU initiation ceremony. So it seems only fitting to shed some light on the history of the ceremony and the people behind it.

There are many versions of the GTU initiation ceremony. Although the GTU website lists several different versions of the ceremony, there is no one "right" way to induct students into a chapter. Individual chapters have histories and traditions of their own, which are important to preserve. That being said, there has always been an initiation ceremony model provided by the Executive Committee and I examined the history of that ceremony for this column.

A caveat before I launch into this history.... This newsletter article is just a start. There is a lot more material to be explored in the GTU archives in order to grasp the full history of the GTU initiation ceremony. For the purposes of this article, I am going to start with the recent re-drafting of the GTU initiation ceremony that is on the website http://gammathetaupsilon.org/documents/gtu_initiation_april2019.pdf and travel back in time to the GTU Executive Committee meeting in November 1979 in Mexico City.

For some time chapters and also the Executive Committee have been concerned about the datedness of the GTU initiation ceremony. Geoffrey Marcus and Sammie Thomas, student GTU members of the University of Oregon's Theta Kappa Chapter, made major revisions for their chapter's own use. Those changes were subsequently shared with the larger Gamma Theta Upsilon community via the website during the 2010s as a means of updating some of the language in the ceremony and providing chapters with other options. But there was still a desire for the standard ceremony to be updated and remodeled to better reflect the mission and values of GTU and the role of geography in the world today. To that end, our Immediate Past President, Mike Longan, tasked a small group, led by Student Outreach Assistants Zach Hilgendorf and Adam Dohrenwend, to rewrite the ceremony. The other officers on the committee gave the students a lot of latitude, considering that they are more in tune with what student members want.

The result was an expanded version of what the Executive Committee had often dubbed the "short ceremony." To paraphrase Zach's words when the draft was delivered to the rest of the committee, the Outreach Assistants felt that the long version, which is still available on the GTU website, provided more "pomp and circumstance," but it also was not the best reflection of geography today. The newest version of the ceremony is an attempt to modernize the script and better reflect the interdisciplinary nature of geography without destroying the work of previous GTU student representatives (see later in the article). At the same time, Zach and Adam wanted a ceremony that was highly flexible and had the ability to be personalized.

Is the new version of the ceremony the perfect fit for every chapter? No. That is why GTU encourages individual chapters to adapt ceremonies to fit their needs and priorities. Initiation ceremonies are about the students in a particular



chapter and the values of that chapter. One of the sections that Zach and Adam preserved was the history of the organization and its symbolism. Interestingly enough, the addition of a discussion of the symbolism surrounding the GTU key was not a part of the ceremony until 1980. In reviewing documents of previous Executive Committee meetings, Executive Secretary James Lowry unearthed the minutes of the November 1979 meeting in Mexico City where student representatives Ruth Sowers (who also authored the GTU song) presented new language about the symbolism of the organization to be included in the ceremony. She and Elizabeth Boehringer had been asked to write a narrative regarding the symbolism of the key. Prior to their research, presumably, the initiation ceremony only included a history of the organization. I am hoping that a deeper dive into the archives in the next year can shed light on the reasons that the student representatives were given this task as well as more of the history of the GTU initiation ceremony. (Stay tuned!) What is clear from the cursory history I have provided here is that GTU has a long tradition of its student officers being involved in shaping the initiation ceremony and the direction of the organization.

For now I will let this discussion of the initiation ceremony rest, other than to thank Zach Hilgendorf and Adam Dohrenwend, as well as Ruth Sowers and Elizabeth Boehringer, for their service to GTU in updating the initiation ceremony over the years. An organization is only as strong as its members, and when its student members are engaged it makes for a vital and bright future for the organization as a whole.

GTU's 70,000th Member Will Join in 2019

by James Lowry,
Executive Secretary



As of the first day of May the number of members who have joined GTU since the organization began was 233 shy of 70,000 members. **To celebrate this upcoming milestone, GTU leaders have decided to send a GTU stole and pin to the 70,000th member to join GTU.** You will see from the photo below that it is not just any old stole. The lucky new member who is the 70,000th person to join GTU will receive a specially embroidered token of this momentous occasion.

Chapters with new members this spring should submit their signed initiate reports and check to cover the membership fees as soon as possible to the address at the bottom of the form.





2019 Scholarship Competition Deadline is June 1

by Jimmy Wilson,
1st Vice-President

Gamma Theta Upsilon holds a scholarship competition each year. The Maxfield, Richason, and Rechlin

Scholarships are awarded annually to a junior or senior with career or graduate school aspirations. The Buzzard Undergraduate Scholarship is awarded to a college senior to use toward graduate school expenses. The Buzzard Graduate Scholarship is awarded to a continuing Master's or Ph.D. student. The deadline is not until June 1, but before students and faculty members scatter for the summer we hope that applicants will consider lining up the materials and letters of recommendation that they will need to submit a complete application packet. Details about the 2019 GTU Scholarships are posted at <http://www.gammathetaupsilon.org/scholarships.html>.

A total of five awards of \$1000 each are available to support the education of GTU members. Follow the links from the scholarship page to access the criteria, instructions, template for the cover page, and timeline. Applications should be e-mailed to h-wilson.1@onu.edu no later than June 1, 2019 at 11:59 p.m. U.S. Pacific Time. The GTU Scholarship Committee looks forward to reading about the accomplishments and contributions of GTU undergraduates and graduate students who will continue their geography education next year as they prepare to be part of the next generation of leaders in geography. Questions about applying for scholarships may be directed to 1st Vice-President Jimmy Wilson at h-wilson.1@onu.edu or 419-772-2608.

On Pages 7–9 read some notes of thanks from the 2018 GTU scholarship recipients to find out what a difference this support has made.

Annual Chapter Reports Are Due on June 15

by Karen D. Johnson-Webb,
2nd Vice-President



As most of us are transitioning into summer mode, I wanted to remind chapter sponsors that this is the time of year to prepare and submit your chapter reports. A chapter report should include your chapter's accomplishments and activities, as well as any news you would like to share with the Society. These reports are published on the GTU website each. The GTU Awards Committee gathers the chapter reports, reads them and selects those that have the required criteria to be considered for the annual Honors Chapter Award. The criteria for being considered for this award can be found at <https://gammathetaupsilon.org/chapter-awards.html#honors>. In 2017–2018, eight chapters were awarded Honors Chapter Awards!

GTU has provided a report template which is available at <http://gammathetaupsilon.org/chapter-report-form.html>. You may also get some ideas for length and style from previously submitted annual reports. You can find these at <http://gammathetaupsilon.org/chapter-reports-archive.html>. There is a wealth of great ideas in these reports that you may like to try out with your chapter next year.

GTU also awards the Presidential Honors Award. Chapters are selected for this award by the GTU President. The criteria for this award are ambitious and the last time it was awarded was in 2015. See the criteria at <https://gammathetaupsilon.org/chapter-awards.html#presidential>.

Annual chapter reports are due on June 15, 2019. Before moving on to summer activities, be sure to submit your chapter report. Last year more



than fifty Gamma Theta Upsilon chapters submitted reports highlighting the creative ways in which they are promoting geography. I have received several reports already. Let's see if we can get even more reports this year!



The Geographical Bulletin: Open to All

by Casey Allen,
The Geographical Bulletin
Editor

As stated on the website of
The Geographical Bulletin

<http://gammathetaupsilon.org/geographical-bulletin.html>: “The Geographical Bulletin is a scholarly peer-reviewed journal that is published twice a year by GTU. Articles concerning any area of geographical interest are solicited from students and faculty. The Geographical Bulletin is available free of charge, online, and open access to ensure accessibility to the articles.”

While part of our mission is to give students a peer-reviewed outlet for their research, ANYONE can submit to *The Geographical Bulletin*. In the upcoming issue's Editor's Note (vol. 60, issue 1!), I outline some of the well-known scholars who have previously published in *The Geographical Bulletin*. Some names might surprise you, as several of the articles were published at peaks during these scholars' illustrious careers. Whether you're a student who received excellent feedback on a research project (or thesis!) from your instructor, or a seasoned scholar, consider a submission to *The Geographical Bulletin*.

Our Diamond Anniversary volume also debuts our new section, *Geographical Essays & Reviews*. I've mentioned this in previous newsletters, but I'm hoping for more submissions. These are informal write-ups of varying topics, as well as the standard book review. For example, if you've had an interesting field experience, write it up and submit

it. Have you discovered a fascinating geographer during one of your classes? Tell us about them. Does your department have an important history or legacy? We want to hear about it. Is a beloved professor retiring? Honor them with a write-up in *The Geographical Bulletin*. Have you read a good geography-centered book lately? Submit a review. Like the journal itself, this new section retains a wide scope in topics. Submission guidelines can be found on the journal's website.

In addition to regular research articles, essays, and book reviews, *The Geographical Bulletin* also welcomes special issues of almost any topic. The most recent special issue in volume 58, issue 1 (May 2017), for example, was *The Geographies of Star Trek*, and guest edited by Mark Alan Rhodes II, Fiona M. Davidson, and Hannah C. Gunderman. Other special issues have included such topics as “Maintaining Sanity in Graduate School” (vol. 52, issue 2) and “Vulnerability to Climate Change” (vol. 47, issue 2). Please email me if you have an idea for a special issue. We'll be happy to consider it!

Finally, keep in mind that while *The Geographical Bulletin* is (now) an open access, online-only journal, we still retain a strong double-blind peer-review process for all research articles. And we never charge authors for submission or subsequent publication. Watch the GTU Facebook page for the May issue

(<https://www.facebook.com/GammaThetaUpsilonInternational/>), or check the *Bulletin* website the first week of May for issue 1 of our Diamond Anniversary volume. We have some interesting articles from both US and international scholars, as well as a thought-provoking essay and solid book review.



Notes of Gratitude from GTU Members Who Received a 2019 AAG–GTU Student Travel Award

Ten AAG members received \$200 each to offset costs of attending the Annual Meeting of the AAG. Thanks to a partnership with the AAG we have been able to offer travel awards for the past two years, with preference to applicants who are attending the AAG conference for the first time and who are an author or co-author on a paper or poster at the meeting. Stay tuned for an announcement in the fall regarding the 2020 competition.

<http://gammathetaupsilon.org/travel-award-application.html>

The AAG provides financial support for the awards via its AAG-Gamma Theta Upsilon Student Travel Awards Fund. The AAG collects donations at https://www2.aag.org/AAG_Prod_Imis/AAG_MB/Donate_Now.aspx?ItemID=AAG-GTU. We appreciate the support of the AAG for geography's next generation of leaders!

Excerpts of some notes of thanks are included in this newsletter. Read more details from the awardees and see larger photos at the GTU Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/GammaThetaUpsilonInternational/>.



**Meredith Gregory,
Mary Washington
University**

Thank you again for supporting my travel to the AAG meeting in Washington, D.C. This was my first AAG, and I

was overwhelmed by the number and variety of presentations and posters. It was amazing to hear about so many different aspects of geography. I

learned so much and met people from all over the country as well as reconnected with past coworkers, peers, and professors. This was a wonderful experience.

Sasha Pesci, University of California, Davis

Thank you so much to GTU for supporting my travels to Washington DC to attend the AAG annual meeting for my first time. I had a wonderful experience participating and presenting my research in the conference. I was inspired by the diversity of research that was presented in various sessions and had the opportunity to connect with fellow geographers around the world.



Claire Dumont, University of Vermont

I enjoyed the AAG thoroughly, especially since I was able to attend for the full conference. As an undergraduate, it was inspiring to see other geographers' research. I particularly enjoyed the session in which I presented as it allowed me to connect with other students and professors who had similar academic interests. I also appreciated the mentorship I received from fellow women in geography through a workshop I attended. One of my favorite events was the tour of the Maps and Geography Division of the Library of Congress where we got to see their expansive collection. Thank you again!





Katya Rudnik, University of Vermont

I was honored to have been selected. While at the AAG Annual Meeting, I was able to attend numerous poster sessions as well as talks on a variety of

interesting topics. Thanks to this travel grant, I was also able to have the opportunity to present at the Meeting. I gave a presentation on my undergraduate geography department at the University of Vermont, sharing what I have observed its strengths to be in educating and retaining undergraduate students. This was an incredible experience for my academic growth and professional development. I would not have been able to take advantage of this opportunity if not for the generous support of GTU....



Haley Churchill, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

I would like to reiterate my gratitude.... I was eager to attend and meet geographers from all over the world and learn about the research they

are doing. I was able to attend many sessions, including those focused on feminist cartography and the methods of teaching climate change in schools across the world. These sessions sparked productive discussions among the geographers in attendance and I was excited to be a part of them. I was also able to meet many professionals in the exhibition hall and was able to make some connections with potential future employers, something that will be incredibly helpful as I prepare to graduate this May. These experiences were made possible with the help of AAG and GTU donors, and I am very grateful for their generous scholarship.....

GTU Merchandise

Order GTU cords, stoles, and pins for your induction ceremony and graduation. Check out what is available at the Herff Jones site

<https://www.hjgreek.com/products/showCategories/OrganizationID/635>.



Display your "GTU certificate suitable for framing" in a custom frame from Framing Success

<https://www.framingsuccess.com/category/list/sid/19667>.

Check Us Out on Facebook

We enjoy seeing pictures of your chapter's events (e.g., initiations, speakers, conference attendance, or community service). Post them at

<https://www.facebook.com/GammaThetaUpsilonInternational/>

All pictures of chapter initiations on our Facebook page this spring will be automatically entered into the 4th annual GTU Initiation Ceremony Photo Contest. First prize is a 36-inch inflatable beach ball globe donated by the geographic Educators of Nebraska. Hours of fun for the whole department.



Thank-you Notes from 2018 GTU Scholarship Recipients



**Allison Carvalho
Maxfield Scholarship**

I am extremely appreciative to Gamma Theta Upsilon for the Maxfield Scholarship I received in 2018. The funding allowed me to take a fellowship working at the intersection

of welfare policy and welfare recipient experiences in New York City last summer, work on a campaign for an incoming Chicago City Council member, and apply/be accepted to the University of Illinois at Chicago's Master's Program in Urban Planning and Policy. Without the scholarship funding, I would not have been able to afford to follow my passions. I am extremely thankful for the financial stability this scholarship provided and the opportunity it has given me to take my geographical thinking to multiple arenas. I am excited to continuously find new ways to utilize geographical theories as a means to enacting inclusive social change.



**Jimmy Feng
Rechlin Scholarship**

Being awarded the GTU Rechlin Scholarship is an incredible privilege, and I am so grateful for the generosity afforded to me by the GTU Scholarship

Committee. The award has made it significantly easier to pursue geographic research and, selfishly, continue my passion for geography as a graduate student. As I write this reflection, I am deeply involved in research that seeks to improve current understanding of the New York City public transit system and its role as both a facilitator and

prohibitor of educational and job opportunities for under-served and minority communities. This scholarship provided me necessary funds to acquire a laptop capable of running the different geostatistical and geospatial technologies I frequently rely upon, and also allows me to fully devote myself in my lifelong journey of learning about all things related to geography. Due in large part to Gamma Theta Upsilon and the wonderful faculty at my undergraduate and current institutions of SUNY Geneseo and the University of Tennessee, I feel beyond fortunate to be able to commit my time and energy towards geography in academia. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

**Jonathan Tejada
Richason Scholarship**



First and foremost, thank you to GTU for this momentous opportunity. I am truly blessed to be selected amongst the finest

emerging scholars for the 2018 GTU Richason Scholarship. I am very proud and privileged to be representing my local chapter at California State University, Northridge (CSUN). Although our department at CSUN is very small, we make a major impact on campus and within our community. So this award isn't truly just for my recognition but it's for my local chapter and the department of geography at CSU, Northridge. I am overjoyed with gratitude that ever since I converted into the path of geography I have received endless support. Especially with moments like these, it definitely enhances my experience and validates the reasons why I am confident that I made the right choice of converting into geography. So thank you so much for the support and I appreciate everything this honor society stands for.



Meredith Moore
Buzzard Graduate
Scholarship

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for the GTU Buzzard Graduate Scholarship. I feel

incredibly honored and proud to not only have been awarded this scholarship but also to be a part of Gamma Theta Upsilon. This is an organization that exudes a passion for geography and, as someone who has not worked in this field for long, it has helped connect my work and our chapter at Auburn University to a larger community. Our program at Auburn University is consistently growing, and I am very grateful for this scholarship which has enabled me to devote more energy toward both our program and my work in water resource management. I have been proud to represent Auburn University and GTU at several conferences this year, including AAG in April, which was made possible through the Buzzard Scholarship. I will continuously work to help with outreach and share how rewarding being part of a geography community can be. I hope that my appreciation and gratitude is properly expressed, because I could not be more thankful for the award and the hard work and enthusiasm of GTU participants, donors, and this community that promotes geography studies. Thank you again for this award and opportunity.

Anthony Jreije
Buzzard Undergraduate
Scholarship



I am honored to have been the GTU Buzzard Graduate Scholarship recipient. Not only did this award help me pay my tuition for a Masters in City Planning at the University of Pennsylvania but it allowed me to prioritize my studies over working. I have been learning how to increase the efficiency of public transit, planning new routes, and building models. I have had the opportunity to work with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and attend the Transportation Research Board (TRB) conference. In addition, I have been telling colleagues about GTU and encouraging them to become a member of the organization at Penn. I look forward to continuing my studies and am extremely grateful for the extra push that GTU provided to pursue my degree.

Share Your Chapter News

We invite you to submit content for consideration in the next edition of the GTU Newsletter. Send your news to suziegle@nmu.edu with the subject line of GTU Newsletter. Thank you, and may you have a productive and rejuvenating summer!