WELCOME TO THE 5th edition of our department newsletter. 2013 was another busy year. Last spring, UMD launched a comprehensive Program Prioritization initiative to review all programs and services in order to utilize its financial resources to their fullest potential. We completed ten thorough assessment reports for the academic programs and research centers housed in the department.

Despite these challenges, department faculty continued to make great strides in teaching and research, as well as bringing in awards at a record pace. Adam Pine and John Bennett (an alumnus of the department) received the Minnesota Association of Community and Leadership Education Professional Award for Excellence in Research; Adam also received a CLA Teaching Excellence Award and was a Duluth News Tribune “20 under 40” awardee for 2013. Mike Mageau received the first UMD Staff/Faculty Sustainability Inspiration Award. Randel Hanson was awarded a resident fellow position within the Institute on the Environment (IonE) at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Pat Farrell was awarded sabbatical leave for the 2014-2015 academic year, and Adam Pine was awarded a single semester leave for Fall 2014. Department members also continued to be very productive in publishing books and articles, garnering research funding, and presenting papers at conferences. Last year, over 1,500 students attended classes taught by the department!

This newsletter features a collection of articles from alumni whose stories illustrate the career options possible with degrees offered by the department. I hope you enjoy reading about the interesting career paths they have taken. I would like to thank all of them for sharing their inspiring stories here. Finally, I would also like to thank Linda Klint for her invaluable help in preparing this newsletter.

Tongxin Zhu
Head, Department of Geography, Urban, Environment and Sustainability Studies

Giving Your support keeps our programs strong and gives our students the opportunity to pursue their passions. We are grateful for your generosity to the Geography, Urban, Environment and Sustainability Studies Department at UMD. To explore options for giving to GUESS at UMD, please contact our Development Officer Jennifer Berges at jberges@d.umn.edu or (218) 726-6708 or go online to clagiving.org

Join GUESS at UMD on LinkedIn
Lyda C. Belthuis, age 101 and UMD Geography Professor Emeritus, died on February 14, 2014 in Cedar Falls, just a few miles from her birthplace on the family farm in Parkersburg, Iowa on May 29, 1912.

With a B.A. from Iowa State and an M.A. from Northern Colorado, Lyda Belthuis taught several years in Iowa public schools before she matriculated to the University of Michigan where she was awarded her Ph.D. in Geography in 1947. She then joined Robert B. Heller and Thomas W. Chamberlin at the UMD Department of Geography and Geology. For the next 30 years she taught geography and geographic education and conducted research mainly in Australia, particularly on the Snowy Mountain Development Scheme. During the 1950s and 60s she served for many years as the Head of the Department of Geography.

She retired in 1977 to live in northern Iowa where she continued her ongoing investigations of the world, traveling to numerous countries, walking and skiing the neighboring region, keeping meticulous records of local wild flowers, in addition to lecturing and teaching on diverse topics to countless audiences. UMD students and many others fondly remember her Kodak slide projector presentations.

- Gordon Levine, Assistant Professor Emeritus

Congratulations to our 2013 grads and scholarship winners!

**Environmental Sustainability:** John Anderson, Jonathan Argall, Timothy Bertrand, Natalie Brown, Samuel Cook, Cooper Crose, Thomas Deschenes, Brian Downing, Benjamin Fazendin, James Gannon, Matthew Gutzmann, Tristan Hafner, Kathleen Hammer, Mari Hardel, Valerie Hoven, Daniel Johnson, Zachary Knight, Paul Knoer, Kenneth Maciej, Megan Marren, Sarah Mertz, Ryan Ritter, Andrew Ruona, Brianna Schlosser, Lanae Smith, Katerina Trigas, Ryan Venne

**Geography:** Dylan Brant, Laura Hoglund, Valerie Hoven, Ryan Lee, Benjamin Marwick, Matthew O’Fallon, Becky Sax, Conor Schultz, Rachel Skildum, Alexander Thelen

**Urban & Regional Studies:** Chad Burback, Kathleen Hammer, Dillon Hayes, Erik Miller, Erik Powers, Nicole Smith, Jarret Valdez, Christopher Whaley, Ross Wydeven

**Geographic Information Science:** Christopher Anderson, Allen Best, Stephanie Gibeau, Brandon Keinath, Ryan Lee

**GIS Certificate:** Jonathan Argall, Christopher Whaley

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**2013 Scholarship Winners**

- Matti Kaups Geography Scholarship: **Shane Bernard**
- Catherine E. Cox Scholarship in Geography: **Arne Kallas**
- Emma Goldman Scholarship in Geography: **Tami McDonald**
- Fredrick and Lois Witzig Geography Scholarship: **Joshua Sandstrom + Forrest Steinhoff**

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UMD GUESS Department Newsletter, 2014
Niall Johnson ’09
I graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with a B.A. in Geography in 2009. Immediately following graduation I will admit that I had a hard time finding a job in the geography field, whether it was a sign of the current economic times or my lack of experience. Roughly a year out of college I secured a job in Maple Grove, MN, as a GIS Mapping Technician. Using the company’s own driver-collected data, similar to that of Google Street View, I began collecting parcel photos of properties throughout our project areas. In addition, I surveyed street signs remotely for various state transportation departments.

After two and a half years I decided to move on to a different employer, where I currently preside. My title is GIS Journeyman Cartographer and although all projects that I have worked on vary, they all relate to producing quality cartographic maps for print or in raw GIS vector format. Knowledge of GIS software, tools, extensions and map design has been very important in this position. Attention to detail, understanding a certain project’s focus and the ability to adjust to changes in guidance are all crucial facets of my job. The department that I work in shares a strong sense of teamwork and communication and understands the “feast or famine” way of describing how contractual projects operate. Meeting deadlines is essential in this industry, which can lead to long days and stressful times. However, it’s very rewarding to know that the work you’ve done has been noticed, has purpose, and can make a difference.

Andrew King-Scribbins ’07
I graduated from UMD in 2007 with a Bachelor of Arts in Geography, focusing on GIS and minoring in Linguistics. This degree, combined with the experience I received working in the GIS lab, allowed me to find employment immediately after graduation, and it also offered me the opportunity to work in a variety of professions.

In the GIS lab I worked with archeologists and soil scientists, helping to create predictive models to find potential settlement sites. After graduation, I stayed in Duluth and worked as a cartographer for an atlas publisher. I contributed to statewide atlases for five states over the course of two years. In 2009 I was hired by a private GIS consulting company which greatly expanded my skills and experience. I worked on projects in cartography, forestry, transportation, land records management, pollution mitigation, web, mobile, and desktop programming, modernizing
Where are they now? UMD GUESS Alumni

Janelle Stauff ’04

After graduating from UMD with a degree in Environmental Studies, I went on to complete the MAPL (Masters in Advocacy and Political Leadership) Program at UMD. My focus throughout my education was always on sustainability and community development. With a passion for finding solutions to the many problems we were learning about, I found myself headed down the path to renewable energy. I worked under Mike Mageau at the Center for Sustainable Community Development on campus and was exposed to the highs and lows of research, grant-writing, and project implementation.

With both degrees and a little bit of “real-world” experience in hand, I headed west and landed in Missoula, MT. I got a job working for a local solar company and learned the technical design and installation aspects of renewable energy. I became a certified solar PV installer through the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) and spent many days on the rooftops of buildings throughout Montana. It’s a great way to see the Big Sky State. Last year, we installed the largest solar PV array in the state (85 kW) on a parking garage in downtown Missoula.

historic records, organizing non-profit events, and much more. I worked with people from local, state, federal, and tribal governments, as well as private corporations, non-profit organizations, and individuals.

I was awarded my GISP certification in February of 2012. That same year, I moved to Minneapolis and was hired by an international map and GIS data provider. I worked as a traveling salesman, selling maps and data to customers throughout the U.S. I was able to travel all over the country attending conferences and visiting various universities and libraries. In addition to U.S. sales, I managed map and data sales to foreign universities and libraries, and to all customers in China.

Towards the end of summer 2013 I was hired by Hennepin County in the office of the Recorder/Registrar of Titles. In this position I reviewed and processed property divisions which included recording plats, creating and maintaining property descriptions and maps, and updating auditor records.

Currently, I am working towards my Master of Science in GIS at Saint Mary’s University in Minneapolis, set to finish December 2014. I am still working for Hennepin County, but soon I will start a new position in the GIS department. I will be a GIS Coordinator, working with corrections and probation, emergency management, and law enforcement.

Other than work, my wife and I got married and honeymooned in Hawaii in 2008, and we’ve gone back twice since then. We are living in Northeast Minneapolis, and when not at work or school we’re around the city with our dogs, enjoying the northeast brewery craze, or traveling near and far.
Where are they now? UMD GUESS Alumni cont.

With that project in particular, and many others that we work on, we ran into several roadblocks, such as funding, net metering limitations, and community support. My background and education armed me with the tools and resources necessary to work through these issues. I’ve also used much of what I learned in my undergraduate and graduate studies in my involvement with MREA, the Montana Renewable Energy Association. MREA is a non-profit with a focus on persuading public policy in favor of renewable energy, as well as educating the residents of Montana.

I recently started a new job working for another local company called Montana Solar. I am still designing renewable energy systems, but now my focus has shifted more on sales and project management than on the actual installation. After several years of either sliding around on frozen metal roofs three stories up or working on black asphalt shingles in 90 degrees, I’m happy to be doing the work “on the ground.”

I feel extremely fortunate that I am able to do work that I love and am proud of. I am grateful for the seed that was planted in ‘Issues in Global Ecology’ to strive to find solutions that are both environmental and economical for all.

Shannon McGrath ’08
Major: Environmental Studies
Minor: Geography

Current Occupation: Transportation Planner, Minnesota Department of Transportation, St. Paul, MN, 2013 to present

Past Jobs:
- Research Analyst, Minnesota Department of Transportation, St. Paul, MN, 2011 to 2013
- GIS Cartographer, East View Cartographic, Minnetonka, MN, 2009 to 2011
- GIS Technician, Community GIS Services, Duluth, MN, 2008-2009
- GIS Intern, Superior National Forest Headquarters, Duluth, MN, 2007-2008

What I liked best about UMD Geography Department: Smaller class sizes allow camaraderie and networking, which increased learning and collaboration while in school, and has helped with networking throughout my career path.

Currently: Living in St. Paul, MN and will be getting married to fiancé Steve in Stillwater, MN in June of this year. Enjoy traveling back to Duluth and the Arrowhead region for its array of outdoor activities.

If you would consider writing an article for a future newsletter, please email Linda Klint at umdgeog@d.umn.edu
“And you, do you have a name?” Professor Robert Clark of the University of East Anglia asked me. Naturally, I said yes, and told him my name and home of Duluth, Minnesota. “Ah,” he said, “but you’ve been to England before, surely?” I answered in the negative, as we strolled through a narrow lane with overarching trees creating a mottled mix of sun and shade on the ground. He expressed surprise. “Well!” he continued, “You’ve certainly done well then. Tea at the Queen’s home on your first trip to England,” as he jerked his head to the side and gestured at the sweeping lawns, brusque statues, and burgeoning flower blossoms that surrounded us.

I was certainly in agreement. Granted, this was not Buckingham Palace, but St. Paul’s Walden Bury, the birthplace of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, that is, the mother of the currently extant Queen Elizabeth. Her family, the Bowes-Lyons, have lived on the estate since 1725, and continue to live there today, obligingly serving tea and biscuits to us, this group of Jane Austen academics gathered for the Locations of Austen conference at the University of Hertfordshire. Simon Bowes-Lyon, previous Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, joined us in one of his now very crowded drawing rooms as we listened to the second plenary paper, given by Professor James Thompson of UNC Chapel Hill. The topic under scrutiny was Box Hill, a location of importance in Austen’s ‘Emma’, made particularly notable for it being an actual, findable location.

A little over an hour later, we were given free reign of the estate’s grounds, with various widely mown paths through sheer walls of shrubbery radiating out from the back of the house, up and down rolling hills reminiscent of Midwestern ski slopes. Off these main paths though, one could easily find trails winding away from the sculpted bushes into a landscape that felt freer from man-made intervention, as flowers grew spontaneously and blooming trees provided the ideal spot for an afternoon picnic and laziness. I felt a deeper understanding of Jane Austen’s love for the outdoors, as I kept picturing her walking in these types of landscapes, although assuredly she came from much more meager means than this. Still, I couldn’t shake the feeling that I was closer to Austen than I’d been before. Perhaps my film adaptation studies of Austen’s work were starting to cloud my mind, since these lanes would be a lot more likely to sport Gwyneth Paltrow or Keira Knightley meandering down them, film crews in tow, than Austen, coming from her stratified societal position, never mind her being dead.

After a few hours of solitary ramble, I returned to yet another drawing room for tea. The night before, at conference registration, Dr. Penny Pritchard of the University of Hertfordshire, who spearheaded the entire conference, had told us with excitement of her looking for Austen at the Queen Mother’s...
telephone conversation with “Lady Caroline,” as she placed great emphasis on the ‘Lady.’ Now, the tall and stately Lady Caroline stood quietly at one end of a long table, serenely pouring tea from a capacious ceramic pitcher, answering questions in a muted tone. I gratefully took my cup and saucer and moved to a corner where I could be out of the way and take in the surroundings. A few minutes later a woman came up to me and started discussing the presentation I had given that morning. She admitted she’d only arrived for the last part, but she showed interest in my work and asked me about myself. I explained I’d just finished a master’s degree in English at the University of Minnesota Duluth, was taking time off from school now before deciding whether to continue my studies, and I described my current work in UMD’s Geography Department doing geospatial analysis, and we discussed how that field might be integrated into English studies. I turned the questions on her then, and learned she was a professor at Cambridge University studying landscape and the novel’s form. She also informed me she’d just written a book on the ellipsis.

I continued to feel very out of my league for the rest of the day.

Returning to the gardens, I walked down a path leading to a large duck pond, where a white structure with Roman columns stood gracefully, reflecting into water blotched with bright green sludge. Insects hummed and the sun felt steamily warm. Tall, drippy lime green weeping willows graced the water’s edge on the other side of the pond, and geese floated lazily through the mucky surface. Continuing on, I came to the edge of the carefully tidy gardens to a landscape under equal control: farmland. Most of the 1,500 acres belonging to the estate is used for agriculture. Fields of green and golden grasses were only interrupted by the occasional round hump of a distant oak tree. In a few spots across the rolling landscape I could see wide expanses of brilliant yellow covering the earth, slightly deeper in color than a highlighter. Brassica Napus covers nearly four percent of English farmland, used to make canola oil, biodiesel, and animal feed, and to make unfamiliar passersby stare at its vibrancy.

Before long, a large bus would whisk us away down the narrow lanes, tree branches dragging on the roof and windows, back to smooth tarmac, the roads remaining wide enough for barely a car and a half. In less than an hour we would be back in the city of Hatfield, in a parking lot for the University of Hertfordshire, returning to a windowless room for more presentations.

But for a little while, exactly two hundred years after the first publication of Austen’s ‘Pride and Prejudice’, I felt a closer connection to the author and her characters, experiencing an awe like I imagine Elizabeth Bennet feeling on her first visit to Pemberley. I glimpsed the landscape in which Austen wrote and her characters thrived.

I walked on amongst the riotous flowers, knowing none of their names, as I too, nameless, took it all in. If only Austen could know the enduring impact of her writing.

Micaella Penning graduated from UMD in 2011 with degrees in Geography and International Studies. She then went on to complete an M.A. in English, focusing on Publishing & Print Culture and minoring in Geography, also at UMD. She works as a research assistant and cartographer for the Geospatial Analysis Center.
Congratulations to UMD GIS major graduate and former GAC employee Steph Gibeau on winning first place for her presentation ‘A Spatial Assessment of Glacier National Park in Montana’ at the 2013 MN GIS/LIS Consortium Annual Conference in Rochester. Steph received an $800 scholarship prize.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically and help save department resources, please email umdgeog@d.umn.edu stating you would like to receive the newsletter electronically via email.

Sustainability Inspiration Award – Staff and Faculty

The Staff and Faculty Sustainability Inspiration Awards are presented to one staff and one faculty member (or team/collaboration) from UMD who have demonstrated leadership in establishing, promoting, or working in other ways to support the campus in a sustainable manner and/or advance sustainability in education on campus. The award recognizes those who have created or implemented a project or activity that impacts campus or community sustainability awareness, education, and action.

In 2013, the winner was Mike Mageau, and the 2014 award went to Randy Hanson.