

# Geography Connection

University of Utah Department of Geography

Volume 18 Fall 2016

## Letter from the Chair

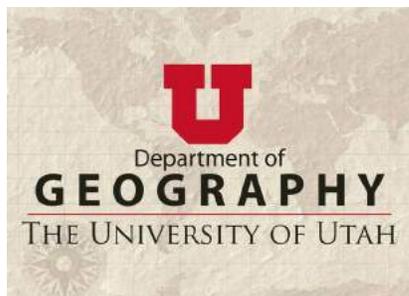
As you know the big news for 2016 was our move out of Orson Spencer Hall. We continue to settle into our temporary digs in Building 73; demolition of OSH is now complete (check out the video and images on our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/uofugeography/](http://www.facebook.com/uofugeography/)). We are hopeful our new building will be ready fall of 2018.



The Transformative Excellence Proposals (“Cluster Hires”) are still underway. We are basking in the glow of our successful recruitment of Dr. Summer Rupper as part of Society, Water, and Climate (SWC) cluster. We will continue to participate in SWC with a current search for an Earth System Modeler as well as the continued search for a Social Scientist. We continue to partner with the Natural History Museum of Utah on another effort related to biodiversity, outreach and geovisualization.

The Geography Department is also currently searching for a new Human Geographer. Check back in a few months to learn about the outcome of this exciting process!

We have a strong, productive and enthusiastic department that continues to grow and improve! Check in with us ([www.geog.utah.edu](http://www.geog.utah.edu)), we’d love to hear how everyone is doing and what everyone is up to. Thanks for your continued support!



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## Carolyn & Kem Gardner Building (New OSH)



Donate to Department of Geography, see last page

# Faculty Bios

**Robert Argenbright:** Robert earned a Ph.D. in Geography from the University of California, Berkeley in 1990. At the U, Robert has taught World Regional, Human Geography, Geography of North America, Russia, Urban Geography, World Cities, and History of the Soviet Union. Robert's research concerns the historical, political-economic, and urban geography of Russia (and the USSR). In August 2016 his book, *Moscow under Construction: City-Building, Place-Based Protest, and Civil Society* was published by Lexington Books. Currently he is collaborating with two Russian geographers on a book about the development of "New Moscow," an area 50% larger than Moscow proper that was annexed by the capital in 2011.



**Simon Brewer:** Simon is an Assistant Professor in the Geography Department. He works with records of climate change and ecosystem response over broad time and spatial scales. He has a particular interest in integrating observations of ecological change with models. He teaches a mixture of classes including advanced statistical analysis, spatial modeling and the impacts of climate change.



**Andrea Brunelle:** Andrea is starting her second term as chair of the Geography Department. She is a paleoecologist who studies environmental change with a focus on climate and past ecosystem disturbances such as fire and bark beetle outbreaks. Much of her work has land management implications. Her geographical areas of interest include the Intermountain West and the American Southwest (including northern Mexico). Her most recent project is investigating the paleoenvironment of the west desert in collaboration with archaeologists from the Dugway Proving Ground. Andrea taught Pyrogeography fall 2016 after several years away from the course and had a blast working with fellow pyromaniacs. She teaches at least one climate change course a year, both in Geography and in the Business school. Both classes draw large enrollments and she is grateful to have the chance to explain and discuss the science and implications of climate change with students from all over campus.



**Larry Coats:** has been a life-long resident of the Colorado Plateau, spending decades in each of the Four Corners states (New Mexico 1956-1973; Colorado 1973-1975, 1983-1994;

Arizona 1975-1983, 1994-2004; and now Utah 2004-2015). His research includes paleoecology and climate change, especially reconstructing past environments in arid lands using packrat middens as a tool. Currently, he is working on reconstructing the paleoenvironments of Range Creek Canyon to support the archaeological investigations that are in progress by University of Utah archaeologists, using alluvial sediments and packrat middens, and assisting students using dendroclimatology and bog sediment cores. He has also worked on the late Holocene distributions of Adelie penguins along the Victoria Land Coast of Antarctica, another very arid environment. Over the past two university breaks, Larry has been exploring the western Grand Canyon in the search for enigmatic polychrome rock art. Along with collaborators Steve Emslie and Tammy Rittenour, Larry recently published two new papers: Packrat middens and Holocene palaeohistory of Colorado pinon (*Pinus edulis*) in western Colorado, *Journal of Biogeography* 2015 42, 565-574, and Investigation of late and post-Fremont alluvial stratigraphy of Range Creek, east-central Utah: use of OSL when radiocarbon fails, *Quaternary International* 2015 362, 63-76.



**Tom Cova:** Tom's research interests are environmental hazards, transportation, and GIS. This year he presented a talk at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the AAG in San Francisco on "Spatio-temporal representation issues in modeling evacuation warning triggers" drawn from research he did as part of an NSF project. He continues to teach Introduction to GIS in the fall semester along with GIS & Python, which is part of the curriculum for the Department's Masters of Science in GIS and GIS Emphasis, and in the spring he is teaching the Geography of Disasters and Human Geography.



**Phil Dennison:** In addition to working with his grad students on projects involving remote sensing, vegetation, and wild-fire, Phil has been busy with efforts related to a proposed NASA satellite mission, the Hyperspectral Infrared Imager (HyspIRI). As part of the National Academies' Decadal Survey for Earth Science and Applications, Phil recently led a white paper on remote sensing of non-photosynthetic vegetation (NPV). NPV includes dead and senesced vegetation and plant litter, and NPV increases in response to seasonal drought and disturbances. Phil presented the findings of the white paper and a new analysis of metrics for NPV mapping at a NASA workshop in October and at AGU in December.



**Elizabeth Dudley-Murphy:** Elizabeth is Adjunct Associate Professor in the Geography Dept., originally from the Atacama Desert in northern Chile. She received her PhD from the Geography Dept. in 1996 and worked with the Energy & Geoscience Institute (EGI) through 2014. She has been teaching GIS in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department for several years as well as teaching our Intro to GIS Online class (3140-090). As of this year, Beth has added two more online GIS courses to her list: Geog 6139 – GIS Fundamentals and Intro to GIS in City and Metropolitan Planning. Besides GIS, Elizabeth also teaches three other online classes for the Geography Department and is the faculty representative at the University of Utah for the School for Field Studies, Environmental Field Studies Abroad Program, based in Salem, Massachusetts. Elizabeth is taking a break from research, but her research interests include the application of remote sensing and GIS for urban and vegetation analysis - specifically the urban forest. In the past she worked with colleagues to develop new methods based on high spatial resolution imagery for characterizing the urban forest in the Salt Lake Valley.



**Rick Forster:** Rick is Associate Dean for Research of the College of Social and Behavior Science. He is a glaciologist using remote sensing satellite and airborne data along with field measurements to study climate change effects on glaciers and seasonal snow. Rick's current NSF and NASA funded research is focused on the Greenland ice sheet where his team discovered an aquifer of water stored year-round in the upper part of the ice sheet within the buried snow. He traveled with his team to Greenland this summer to make more measurements on the aquifer.



**George Hepner:** George is the Director of Undergraduate Programs, with responsibilities for undergraduate programs and emphasis areas, funding undergraduate students and programs, and outreach to prospective students on and off campus. He is Director of the initiative with the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to support the Department as a National Academic Center of Excellence in Geospatial Sciences. Also, he manages the US Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (<http://usgif.org/>) certificate program in GEOINT. Along with his course on the Geography of International Terrorism, George is teaching a course on "Project Management" GEOG 6162 to prepare MSGIS and others for project management responsibilities, primarily in the GIS/information technology arena. George is coordinating the departmental development effort. If you would like to financially support, provide internships and mentoring for students, or assist with funding internships and



mentoring for students, or assist with funding student areas, labs and programs in the new building; contact him.

**Andrew M. Linke:** Andrew is a new faculty member in the Geography Department. Andrew's research investigates violent conflict, political geography, and Kenyan environmental change effects using GIS analysis, large population surveys, and fieldwork. Andrew finished his PhD in Geography at the University of Colorado Boulder (UCB) in 2013 and was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at UCB's Institute of Behavioral Science before moving to Salt Lake. Recently his articles have been published in the *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, *Global Environmental Change*, *Political Geography*, *International Interactions*, and other peer-reviewed academic journals. His work has been awarded research funding by the National Science Foundation and the Social Science Research Council. He teaches and advises students in the areas of conflict and political violence in addition to human and political geography.



**Zach Lundeen:** Zach is a Research Assistant Professor and Director of the multi-disciplinary Bonderman Field Station at Rio Mesa (formerly the Rio Mesa Center), located outside Moab on the Dolores River. His primary research interests are paleoenvironmental reconstruction and the assessment of physical and ecological impacts of climate change on the landscape. Zach currently teaches Ocean Environments, and has in past taught Earth Environments and Global Change, Pyrogeography, World Regional Geography, Water in Utah, Geoexcursions, and Geomorphology. Zach is also a University of Utah Geography and RED Lab alumnus (Ph.D. (2012)).



**Phoebe McNeally:** Phoebe is a Research Associate Professor and Director of the DIGIT Lab at the University of Utah. This past year has been very exciting in the DIGIT Lab. The DIGIT Lab continues to support geospatial research across campus as well as provide GIS support to a very diverse group of outside clients. A few notable projects include supporting the Escalante River Watershed Partnership's invasive species mapping and mitigation efforts in southern Utah and supporting the management of the national historic trails for the National Park Service - National Trails Intermountain Region. Phoebe also serves as chair on the Utah Geographic Information Council and is actively involved the Utah professional GIS community. Phoebe's research interests include geographic information science, geographic visualization, spatial decision support systems (SDSS), and snow science.



**Richard M. Medina:** Rich is a human geographer with research interests in terrorism and extremism, crime, and other anthropogenic/environmental hazards. His current projects focus on domestic extremism and hate based behavior, sentiment of ISIS propaganda, and crime and housing inequality in Salt Lake City. He teaches courses on human geography, GIS, and geospatial intelligence. On the weekends he enjoys, playing music, golfing, and spending time with his family.



**Kathleen Nicoll:** Kathleen continues her research on desert geomorphology in the Middle East, Southern Africa and (of course) in Utah. Common themes in her recent published papers include karstic springs, paleolakes, streams and archaeology. She is also working on dust storm dynamics in the Great Basin, and how these impact air quality in Utah. This fall, her "Water in Utah" field trip featured hydrogeology of the Snyderville Basin-Park City region, and surface hydrology of the Jordan Basin. For more info and a bit of scenery and science every day, check out her class Facebook page "Geomorphology Rules."



**Kenneth Petersen:** Ken's specialties are palynology and environmental archaeology. He joined the Geography Department and the RED Lab as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the summer of 2009. His earliest exposure to studies of the interaction of climate and humankind occurred in the mid 1960s while working on high elevation game drive systems and Holocene cirque glaciation in the Colorado Front, above Boulder, Colorado. He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology at the University of Utah (where he T.A.ed a pollen analysis class in the Stewart School building in 1970) and went on to get his Master of Arts and Ph.D. degrees in anthropology at Washington State University - all using pollen studies in the western United States. He completed a post doc with field work in Egypt doing pollen studies on Nile flood history. He has lived in Utah, Colorado and Washington as he pursued careers associated with archaeological salvage ahead of dam construction, nuclear waste cleanup, college outreach, and as adjunct faculty at a number of colleges and universities. Since joining the department in 2009 he has led the GEOG 6430 PERG Reading Group each semester and taught GEOG 5420/6420 Pollen Analysis and is currently teaching GEOG 3600-090, the on-line-version of Utah Geography. He and his wife like to visit their grandchildren and take walks together. Ken is also an avid Amazon Kindle reader.



**Mitchell Power:** This past year Mitchell continued working on projects in Ethiopia, the Caribbean, Bolivia and several projects here in Utah. He recently published some of his research on natural disturbances in the Bolivian Seasonally Dry Tropical

Forest in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society. Through his joint appointment with Geography and the Natural History Museum he continues to provide University of Utah students with experience working with museum collections. Mitchell and his students spent the fall doing fieldwork in the Uinta Mountains, beginning a new multi-year project with the Ashley National Forest to explore the long-term role of fire in ponderosa pine and other mid-elevation vegetation communities. This coming year he plans to return to Ethiopia for more fieldwork to continue investigating the collapse of the Aksum and D'Mt empires on the Tigray Plateau.



**Summer Rupper:** Summer recently joined the Geography Department as part of the "Society, Water, and Climate" cluster. Summer and her students use and develop a variety of field-based, numerical modeling, and remote sensing tools to quantify glacier and climate change and the associated impacts on society. She is currently funded by an NSF grant focused on reconstructing changes in Himalayan glaciers and quantifying the downstream impacts on water resources. She was also recently awarded two NASA grants in 2016. One project will be focused on climate change in High Mountain Asia and the other will quantify trends and variability in Antarctic surface mass balance and impacts on sea-level rise. Summer, with her students and collaborators, published seven peer-reviewed papers since joining the Geography faculty. She is excited to collaborate with students and faculty across campus on these projects and many more.



**Neng Wan:** Neng is a health geographer interested in using GIScience methods to understand the complex interactions between society, environment, and population health. He is also the founding director of the Utah GeoHealth Lab. His current research topics include using mobile technologies to solve problems such as aging, physical inactivity, and tobacco cessation, modeling human exposure to environmental pollutants such as agricultural pesticides and PM2.5, modeling spatial access to healthcare services, and understanding disparities in health and healthcare. His work has been supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health, the Chinese National Science Foundation, and the University of Utah.



**Dennis Wei:** continues his work on spatial inequality in China and USA, and has also been working on Urbanization in India and Southeast Asia. His special issue in Sustainability will be published as a book (Urban Land and Sustainable Development, MDPI, 2017). He has finished the editing of a spe-

issue on The Geography of Inequality in Asia in *Geographical Review*, and is editing a special issue on Urban Expansion, Sprawl and Inequality in Landscape and Urban Planning. He published a dozen articles in 2016, including a paper on housing in Salt Lake County with Han Li et al.



(Amenity, Accessibility and Housing Values in Metropolitan USA: A Study of Salt Lake County, Utah. *Cities* 59: 113-125, 2016).

**Ran Wei:** is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Utah. Wei received her PhD in Geography from the Arizona State University in 2013. Her research has focused on GISciences, spatial analysis and optimization, with applications to important urban and environmental problems, such as transportation and energy infrastructure, public health and crime issues. Her work has been published in a number of peer-reviewed journals including *Geographical Analysis*, *International Journal of Geographic Information Science*, *the Professional Geographer*, *Journal of Geographical Systems*, *Environment and Planning B*, *Transactions in GIS*, and *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. In addition, she was the recipient of 2012 Benjamin Stevens Fellowship from the Regional Science Association International, Best Student Paper awards from the Spatial Analysis and Modeling specialty group of the American Association of Geographers and the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science. Her research has been funded by the Utah Transit Authorities, U.S. Department of Transportation, National Academies of Sciences, Regional Science Association International, and University of Utah.



## New Graduate Students



**L-R:** Durban Keeler, Sandra Miller, Steven Lizotte, Kate Baustian, Matthew McCullough

**Not pictured:** Michael Hess

**Kate Baustian:** Kate is a new Master's student in the Glaciology Group. She was raised in Eastern Iowa, but relocated to the Southeast for her undergraduate studies in Geology at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill. She graduated in 2012, then spent two summers working as a glaciology field assistant in Alaska and two summers working for the National Park Service in Washington. During the winter, she lives in Salt Lake City where she enjoys skiing, hiking and exploring the Colorado Plateau.

**Mike Hess:** Mike is a new Master's student with research interests in glaciology, hydrology, and climate change. He grew up all over the United States, and landed in Utah in 2005 while serving in the US Air Force. Upon separating from the military he worked on a helicopter crew as a wildland firefighter between earning degrees in Geology and Geography from Weber State University. Mike currently works as a hydrologist for the US Geological Survey in Salt Lake—a job that has taken him to some of the most remote areas in Utah to study everything from abandoned mines to surface and groundwater hydrology. When he's not studying or doing fieldwork Mike can usually be found up on the trails with his dog Jake, ice or rock climbing in one of the local canyons, or exploring Utah's backcountry with friends.

**Steven Lizotte:** Born last century on the New Hampshire seacoast, Steve found his way to Utah in 2004 via places such as the Philippines, Guam, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Arizona, and few other spots here and there. After spending time as a Store Sales Training Manager for a Fortune 500 fashion retailer, Steve returned to school in 2012 attending Salt Lake Community College studying Geography and tutoring students in the Geosciences. Steve earned an Associate of Science in Geography and an Associate of Applied Science in Geospatial Technology at Salt Lake Community College before transferring to the University of Utah. In the spring of 2016 he completed his Bachelor's of Science in Geography here at the U. Today Steve continues his studies at the U working toward a Master of Science

### Emeritus Faculty

Donald R. Currey (*Deceased*)  
Genevieve Atwood  
James W. King  
Chung-Myun Lee  
Merrill K. Ridd

Albert L. Fisher  
Thomas Kontuly  
Roger M. McCoy  
Leroy H. Wullstein

### Auxiliary and Associate Instructors

Evan Burgess	Jordan Clayton	Tim Edgar
Steven Farber	Tom Hale	Val John Halford
Jack Hamilton	Jesse Morris	Ola Opara
Ralph Patterson	Pam Perlich	Vincent Salomonson
Jennifer Shah	Jennifer Watt	Ingrid Weinbauer
	Bing Xu	

in Geography with a focus on Medical Geography and Spatial Epidemiology. Steve continues to tutor students in the Geosciences at Salt Lake Community College.

**Matt McCullough:** Matt McCullough graduated from the U of U in Geography in 2005 and has since earned a GIS certificate from Penn State, a masters degree from Utah State University, and spent 9 years working as a GIS specialist. He started his own company in 2007, Carte Design, LLC, building custom online mapping applications with open source tools and he is now pursuing a PhD in Medical/Health Geography along with a graduate certificate in public health. He is an RA for Dr. Quynh Nguyen working on the HashtagHealth project. His particular interest and dissertation topic is the spatial and temporal variation of Type 1 Diabetes. He and his wife live in Layton and have 5 kids who range in age from 11 years old to 9 months (2 boys and 3 girls). He enjoys landscape and astro-photography, snow skiing and spending time with his family in the mountains, on trails, playing sports and having fun.

**Sandra Miller:** Sandy is from Massachusetts, but for the last 13 years, home is where her truck is. She has lived all over the US and abroad. Now settled in SLC, she is a first year graduate student in the URSA Lab. Her interests lie in forestry and the application of remote sensing.

## MSGIS Students Fall 2016



**Rear L-R:** Somerset Ellis, Michael Eichorn, Mitchell Ottesen, Michael Mason, Adrian Sellars

**Front L-R:** Marc Wilson, Sarah Rivera, Megen Theobald, Siwen Cheng

**Not pictured:** Steven Arnold, Alex McComb, Sabita Silwal, Yiwei Wang, & Chelsea Welker

**Geography needs your support!**  
Please see form provided at the  
end of this letter.  
Thank you!

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Lindsay Decker:** Lindsay Decker received her B.S. in Geography with a GIS certificate from the University of Utah in 2012 and a B.S. in Geosciences with an emphasis in Geology in 2014. In May 2016, she received her M.S. in Geographic Information Science and Technology from the University of Southern California. She began working for the US Geological Survey at the end of graduate school. She works for the Contour Unit in the National Geospatial Technical Operations Center in Lakewood, CO. Her team creates and edits the elevation contours for the 1:24,000 national topographic maps. The entire country is completed on a 3-year cycle and all maps are available for download via the National Map, US Topo database. She lives in Denver, CO with her 2 cats Horton and Yertle. Her advice for geography majors is to take a wide variety of elective courses to determine which field they want to further pursue. The biggest key to success is networking. Make connections with professors and attend conferences to meet professionals; having references within your field is crucial in furthering your education and obtaining a job. Lastly, don't be afraid apply for any job you want even if you don't meet all of the qualifications, sometimes your enthusiasm and willingness to learn will get you the job.



## S.A.C./Geography Club/GTU News

It's been another great year for Geography Club/GTU/SAC! Members of Geography Club and GTU have dined at several restaurants serving international



foods, hosted the third annual Geography Bowl Competition, and helped with Geography Awareness Week and GIS Day. The Undergraduate and Graduate SACs have worked closely with the College of Social and Behavioral Science and the University to promote academic and social activities for students. Members have met with campus leaders to implement changes in the college and one student received travel funding from ASUU to attend a conference in the spring! We look forward to another year of promoting Geography among University of Utah students! (Tucker Smith)

## Recent Graduates



**Back L-R:** Tom Cova, Andrea Brunelle, Philip Dennison, Richard Forster, Andrew Linke

**4th L-R:** Phoebe McNeally, Summer Rupper, Richard Medina

**3rd L-R:** Neng Wan, Dennis Wei, Weiye Xiao, Austin Coates

**2nd L-R:** Seth Bishop, Ling Zhang, Han Li, Clement Miede

**Front L-R:** Danielle Ward, Vanessa Chavez, Vachel Carter, Dapeng Li

## Recent Undergrad Graduates



**Back L-R:** Andrea Brunelle, Mitchell Power, Tom Cova, Andrew Linke

**3rd L-R:** Phoebe McNeally, Carlie Teague, Genevieve Atwood, Richard Medina

**2nd L-R:** John Israelsen, Jolene Hess, McKenna Bearson, Marli Stevens, Layne Nelson, Taylor Morris

**Front L-R:** Natalie de Montreux, Jordan Wilkins, Steven Lizotte, Shannon Thomas

## Brian Haslam Undergrad Scholarships 2016-17

**Emma McFee:** I am very excited to be entering the geography program at the University of Utah with an emphasis in Hazards, Resources, and Human Security. My home that is located in upstate New York has been flooded twice within my lifetime, along with the rest of my street. I will never forget the Red Cross handing out meals as we slogged through the muck to bring our community back to normal. Since then, I have always been interested in how natural disasters affect communities and how they can be prevented. This program at the University of Utah is a perfect fit. Being an out of state student, this scholarship will help me to make the transition to Utah and tackle the financial burden that coincides with it. Receiving this scholarship made it clear that this is where I am meant to be. I'm from the small town of Bainbridge, located in upstate New York. I have been an active member in my school and community. I keep myself very busy with my passion of Irish dance and I will continue to pursue my dream of dancing at the World Championships with the Scariff School in Salt Lake City.

**Chloe Betts:** I never thought I wanted to earn a degree in Geography. I went to a performing arts high school, completing a conservatory program for dancers, not even considering a future outside of dance. I always thought I would end up on the stage—that is until I went to Science Day last year. I took a class in remote sensing and was hooked. I emailed the professor and set up a tour of the department and the RED Lab and talked to students involved in the DIGIT Lab. I fell in love. I didn't know it was possible to like anything more than I liked dance. As a geographer, I want to work in research. I am hoping to earn my degree in Geography with an emphasis in GIS. I am also going to double major in International and Area Studies with an emphasis in Global Health. This will hopefully give me the experience I need to continue to graduate school. There I want to continue learning about how to use GIS to solve medically related problems. I cannot wait to start looking at health events and disease maps to attempt to understand the distribution and spread of illness. Chloe is from Taylorsville, Utah.

**Baylee Olds:** I am from Ogden, Utah. I graduated with my Associates of Science from Weber State University with High Honors, through the early college program at my high school. I began volunteering at the Ogden Nature Center and took every opportunity to expand my knowledge of the impact society has on the environment. I am very passionate about geography and I love learning about Earth's interworking systems. Environmental awareness is very important to me and I strive to push my community to a sustainable, carbon neutral reality. We have a responsibility as stewards of this environment to maintain our quality of life for future generations. I believe I can make a difference in this through my studies in geography and I am excited to achieve this here at the University of Utah. I love the outdoors. I have completed several triathlons, including an olympic triathlon in St. George. I also enjoy snowboarding, skiing,

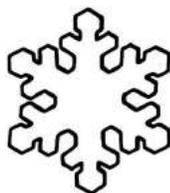
hiking, and backpacking. Another passion of mine is gardening. I grow lemon plants, grapefruit plants, oranges, avocados trees, and more.

We would like to extend a big THANK YOU to Brian Haslam and Azteca Systems, Inc. Your generosity has helped deserving undergraduate and graduate students with a financial awards that allow them to pursue their goals, research, and degree in Geography.

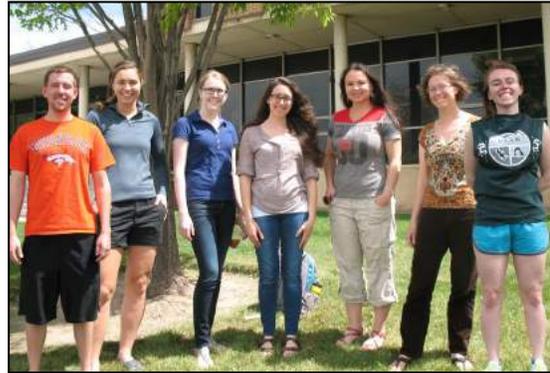
## Merrill Ridd Scholarship 2016-17

**Jacob Simonich:** I have been fortunate enough to be one of those people that school just comes easy to. I was born and raised in Utah and attended Riverton High School where I lettered in football and track, and was on the honor roll every quarter from my sophomore year through my senior year. I graduated with a 3.8 GPA and decided to attend Southern Utah University. I had no idea what I wanted to go into or what I wanted to do, but I knew I had to get my associate degree out of the way first. After earning my associate degree in a year and a half, I realized had to decide what major I was going to pursue. I decided to go into the Agriculture program with an emphasis in Range Management. I still wasn't sure what exactly I wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to be outside. After a semester in that program, I realized that it was a little more farming-based than I would have liked and decided to look at other options for a degree. I had always wanted to go to the University of Utah and, as I was doing research on different programs, I came across the geography department. Once I looked into it a little more, and found out that I could possibly apply it to a career that would let me be outside, I decided that it was what I wanted to do. I'm now going into my second year in the program and have also decided to add a GIS certificate. My goal for the future is to ultimately work for the Forest Service or the BLM. At the moment I don't have a specific career in mind, but I know I want to help with the stewardship of public lands in order for future generations to enjoy them the same way we do today.

We would like to extend a big THANK YOU to Dr. Merrill K. Ridd and the many donors that have contributed to the Merrill K. Ridd Scholarship over the past several years. Your generosity has helped a deserving undergraduate student with a financial award of \$1,000 per year beginning fall semester, 2010.



## Currey Scholarship 2016



**L-R:** Josh Heyer, Logan Frederick, Liz Looby, Kaylee Barket, Maria Groves, Kate Magargal, Alyssa Hynes  
**Not Pictured:** Melanie Cooke

We thank Stan Currey and the many donors that have contributed to the Donald R. Currey Graduate Research Scholarship over the past several years. Your generosity has helped many graduate students with field related expenses necessary to complete their research projects. A great tribute to Donald R. Currey's memory.

Applications for Donald R. Currey Scholarships for 2017 will be accepted and awarded in early 2017.

## GIS Day & Geography Awareness Week

Geography awareness week was held November 14th-18th. Because of our move to temporary housing, we trimmed down our activities. On GIS Day the 16th, we held a career panel discussion with a great turnout. The career panelists included:

Emily LaMunyon, Salt Lake County Surveyor's Office; Andre Coleman, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory; former graduate students, Dr. Rob Baskin, United States Geological Survey; and Emanuel Vasquez, Wild Utah Project. This was followed by our annual open house, with a large turnout. We held a student poster competition led by Dr. Richard Medina. The winners were, 1st - Aaron Pulver, 2nd - Eric Johnson, and 3rd - Joseph Frost. We hope to make the student poster competition a yearly tradition during Geography Awareness Week. December 17 in the evening we held a Geography Bowl Academic Team Competition where one of the undergrad teams took control and won. Unfortunately our guest speaker for Dec. 18 colloquium had to cancel last minute. Even though we had to scale back this year, everything seemed to be quite successful, though the photo contest was missed by many. We hope to continue our Geography Awareness Week celebration next year.



## Scholarships/Awards 2016-17

- \* **Donald R. Currey Graduate Award 2016** — Kaylee Barket, Melanie Cooke, Logan Frederick, Maria Groves, Josh Heyer, Alyssa Hynes, Liz Looby, Kate Magargal
  - \* **Merrill Ridd Scholarship** — Jacob Simonich
- \* **Continuing Student Scholarships** — Nicole Proulx, Joseph Frost, James Burton
- \* **H. Bowman Hawkes Entering Student in Geography Scholarship:** Chloe Betts
- \* **Haslam Entering Geography Student Scholarship** — Emma McFee, Baylee Olds, Chloe Betts
  - \* **Brian Haslam Graduate Scholarship** — Emily Nicolosi
- \* **Don and Sue Lewon Scholarship** — Thulasi Seshan (CSBS Undergraduate Honor Roll)  
Truman Carter (CSBS Undergraduate Honor Roll)  
Emily Nicolosi (CSBS Graduate Honor Roll)
  - \* **David & Dorothy Watkiss Scholarship** — Jessie Eng
  - \* **D. Brent Scott Scholarship** — Whitney Miller
  - \* **E. Rich Brewer Scholarship** — Grayson Sullivan
  - \* **Dean's Graduate Scholarship** — Josh Mueller
- \* **Graduate Honorarium (David C. Williams Fellowship Fund)** — Kaylee Barket, Victoria Simmons, Alyssa Hynes
  - \* **USGIF Scholarship**— Emma McFee



## Gifts to the Department 2016

We wish to thank the following individuals for their generous donations!

**Frank Bertrand**  
**Gary E. Christenson**  
**David G. & Caryn L. Clark**  
**Chandler D. & Amy Coleman**  
**Brian Haslam (Azteca Systems, Inc.)**  
**Karen Wells Higgins**  
**Jiajun Liu & Tong Zheng**  
**Michael Morrissey**  
**National Fraternity Supplies**

**Charles G. & Susan E. Oviatt**  
**Paragon Biotech, Inc.**  
**Merrill & Codele Ridd**  
**Kent L. Shelton**  
**James Raymond Smith**  
**Christine L. Tobolski**  
**Corey Unger**  
**Scott & Daphne Minton White**

## Spotlight on the Snow & Ice Lab

The Snow and Ice Lab, within the Geography Department at the University of Utah, houses analytical, field, and computational resources for measuring and modeling snow and ice physical and chemical properties and for quantifying the response of the cryosphere to climatic change. These facilities include equipment and instruments for ice core drilling and analysis, ground penetrating radar surveys, aerial and surficial mapping, sensor installation, remote sensing and in-situ data processing, and numerical modeling. The Snow and Ice lab has a large suite of field instruments and equipment for working on snow and ice. This includes equipment for drilling ice cores (one mechanical and one thermal drill); installing sensors and instruments in snow and ice (Kovacs ice augers and Kovacs thermal borehole drill); snowpit construction and measurements (density cutters, thermometers, field scales, probes); imaging/measuring surface and subsurface properties (3 drones with varying cameras and sensors, ground penetrating radars, a network analyzer-based microwave radar, thermistor strings, pressure transducers, temperature and humidity sensors, and associated loggers). In addition, the lab has safety equipment for working in high altitude and glacial environments. The lab has three Dell Workstations, several laptops, and one multi-core MacPro, dedicated to computationally intensive modeling and data processing. In addition, the lab has significant software resources for numerical modeling and for processing of field and remote sensing data. Finally, the Social and Behavioral Sciences College at the University of Utah provides significant networking storage space and daily automatic backup of network servers. The Snow and Ice Lab has one Picarro stable water isotope analyzer for measuring water isotopes in snow, ice, and water. The lab also has a light table and cameras for imaging ice core and snow properties, saws and density probes for sampling ice cores, microscopes and scales for additional measurements, and a -20 C freezer facility for storing snow and ice samples.

## No Student Left Inside!



### Water in Utah Class Field Trip to Provo Falls, UT

One of our physical geography courses, GEOG 3290/5290: Water in Utah, was offered this Fall 2016 semester. The class is taught by Dr. Kathleen Nicoll and is part of our “No Student Left Inside!” program. The course also counts as an Applied Science general education requirement. It is currently taught alternating fall semesters with GEOG 3000: Geo-excursions in Utah taught in the interim. Both undergraduate and graduate students can take this course. The course description is as follows: In this course we will study different aspects of how and where water occurs in Utah, and how it is used. We will start by examining climate systems and how precipitation and temperature vary across the region. We will evaluate rainfall and snowmelt runoff events, long-term trends in stream discharge and examine where, when, and how often floods occur. Next we will see how river processes operate to create unique landforms, and examine how these landforms change over time. We will also examine how humans have altered the flow of natural channels by constructing dams and flood control structures. Additional topics may include ground water flow and storage, pollution, water development, and water conservation.



## URSA Lab Update

The URSA lab welcomed one new Masters student this fall, Sandra Miller. Sandra will be working on a new project mapping helicopter landing zones using lidar data. Many of the students in the lab helped out with an experiment PhD student Mickey Campbell conducted this fall. Mickey timed participants walking along transects through different vegetation densities. The results will help Mickey model firefighter evacuation times using vegetation density measured by lidar data. PhD student Brent Lloyd has continued his research using remote sensing to examine productivity of water harvest farms in Burkina Faso. Both Erika Wenrich and Tim Berggren are using remote sensing to examine the impacts of the recent severe drought in California on vegetation in the Sierra Nevada. Josh Reynolds is nearing completion of a Masters thesis on urban forest cover and land surface temperature in the Salt Lake Valley, and Master student Lawrence Kellum is mapping changes in volume resulting from mining using photogrammetry and lidar.

## New OSH: Carolyn & Kem Gardner Building



A Groundbreaking Celebration for the new Carolyn and Kem Gardner Building was held on Friday, October 28th, 2016. President David W. Pershing of the University of Utah started the celebration welcoming everyone with a short talk. Remarks by Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Ruth Watkins; CEO of Chartwells Higher Education, Lisa McEuen; Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Science, Cynthia Berg; Former Vice President of ASUU, Madison Black-Ebert; and Current Student majoring in Political Science and History, Christopher Coombs followed. There was then a beautiful performance by Barlow Bradford and the University Chamber Choir singing “The Walls of Jericho”. The tribute was spoken by Jesselie Anderson of the Utah State Board of Regents and remarks were then given by Carolyn and Kem Gardner. During the celebration, several donors, including the Gardner’s, were present; as well as several alumni, current faculty, staff, and students. A lovely food buffet was served by Chartwells throughout the celebration. An unveiling of an artist’s depiction of the new building ended the celebration. Other major donors included: Chartwells Higher Education, Emma Eccles Jones Foundation, Rocco C. Siciliano, Meldrum Foundation, Jeffrey K. and Sarah S. Scott, and Richard and Leslie Haskell Family Foundation. The building is planned to open by Fall, 2018.

If you would like to contribute to the new building with specialized furniture, lab materials and other furnishings not provided in the university budget for the building or would like to contribute to the Geography Department, please see the form provided on the next page. Photo courtesy: CSBS.

# Invest in Your Degree For the Future

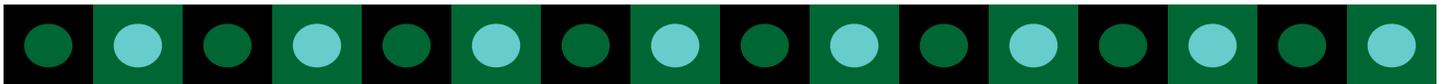
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**We need all of our alumni to take a more active role in supporting our department.**

- If you have specific knowledge of employment opportunities for our graduates;
- If you can use the department or DIGIT lab for funded research/service projects;
- If you have ideas and time to devote to improving our department;
- If you have a desire to support the department and the students financially;
- If you want to support financially and participate in our Fall picnic or Spring awards activities

Contact [andrea.brunelle@geog.utah.edu](mailto:andrea.brunelle@geog.utah.edu) if you have any questions about Geography Donations



We have appreciated your generous donations in the past. Please consider taking this opportunity to donate to our scholarship funds. Be sure to indicate which fund you would like your donation directed to.

All contributions are tax deductible.  
We look forward to hearing from you!

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## Alumni Info Update | Donations

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### Scholarships and Funds

Department of Geography Development Fund (Unrestricted Gifts)	\$ _____
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Donald Currey Scholarship Fund for Graduate Students	\$ _____
Roger McCoy Student Assistance Endowment Fund	\$ _____
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