

Department of Geography Alumni Newsletter

University of North Dakota

Summer 2001

Chairperson's Corner

Dear Alumni and Friends,

The Geography Department at UND has a thriving program which contributes to the understanding of environmental and human spatial dimensions from the local to global scales. We have developed a strategic plan to guide us to further improve our high standard of teaching, research, and service. This past year we revised the program to better prepare our graduates for new job markets and challenges in the 21st century. Several new technical courses, including an advanced GIS course and Environmental Remote Sensing and Air Photo Interpretation were added and others were extensively altered.

A GIScience certificate program was developed for training UND students and the interested community members for applications of geospatial analysis. At this initial stage, the GIScience certificate consists of courses that are offered as regular geography degree requirements at UND. Beginning with the Fall Semester 2001, applicants who successfully pass at least 15 credits of geography technical courses will be eligible to receive a certificate. Scheduling changes are considered to accommodate those who may have difficulty attending all the courses during the daytime. Weekend and remote site courses will be offered based on the experiences gained during this initial stage. An addition of new hardware, software, and upgrading the existing ones has substantially improved the Geographic Analysis and Remote Sensing Laboratory (GARSL). A halftime graduate student employed as the laboratory assistant has also improved its utility.

The Department was very pleased to receive permission for hiring a tenure-track assistant professor to begin working in January 2002. The new faculty member will contribute to strengthening the economic development component of the program, as well as teach physical global environmental courses. This will broaden the undergraduate

(Continued on Page 2)

Forum for Contemporary Geographic Issues

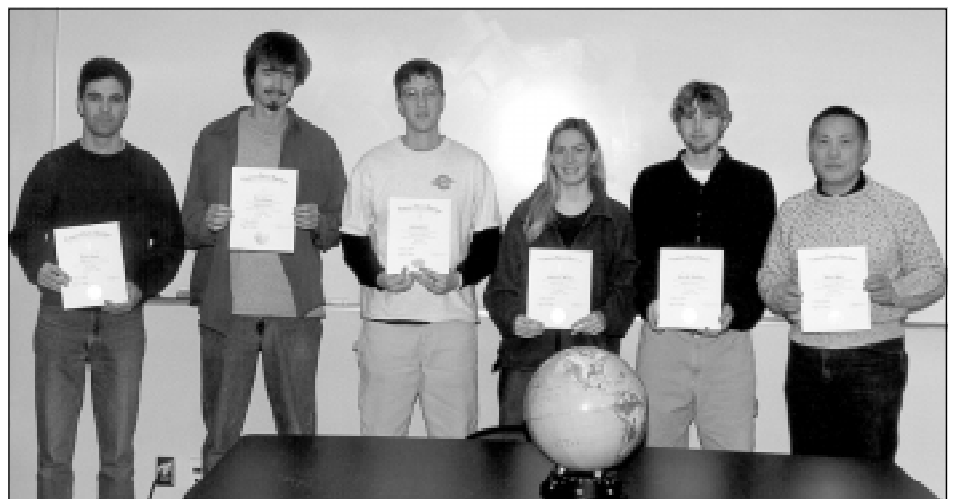
The Forum for Contemporary Geographic Issues is held on a regular basis. Every year the Department invites, among others, some of the past graduates to share their job-related experiences with the university and community members. Chris Ward (BS, 1998), Director of Economic Development and Planning at St. Peter, Minnesota and Grant Carlson (MA, 1998), Administrative Manager, Kenora, Ontario, Canada presented a roundtable discussion on "The Perspectives of Geographers on Economic Development." Robert Hugh, returning from two months of research in Mainland China, presented his "Observations Regarding the Changing Regional Geography of China." Duane B. Pool of Ducks Unlimited, Inc., delivered a very informative lecture titled: "Using GIS to Strategically Plan for Waterfowl Conservation within Ducks Unlimited." John Menzies shared his thesis findings on: "A Change Detection Comparison of Deforestation in Rondonia, Brazil and Southern Bolivia Using Satellite Image Classification (1975-1998)." We wish to continue the Geography Forums with a greater participation of alumni in the future.

We appreciate the contribution of all the past presenters and invite you to share your first-hand experiences with students and faculty in the Department's monthly forums next year.

Gamma Theta Upsilon

The Psi Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) was very active under the supervision of Drs. Seidel and Hansen. GTU sponsored a variety of social activities. Several tailgating parties were attended by many of the department's football fans. Fall and spring department picnics in the University Park were wonderful times to come together to enjoy the outdoors and a barbecue. Monthly noon lunches at various Grand Forks' restaurants were organized to provide additional opportunities to socialize as a department, and also to celebrate special occasions, like birthdays and graduation.

(continued on Page 2)



New initiates to the GTU from right to left: Robert Hugh, Jason Danielson, Lindsay Morgan, Chad Shumake, John Menzies, Balint Nangia

Forum for Contemporary Geographic Issues

Continued from Page 1

The annual Christmas gathering was held in the atrium of the Department with many undergraduate and graduate students attending. Invitations were sent to the Dean of Arts and Sciences and members of his staff, as well as other academic departments in Clifford Hall. As part of the festivities, gag gifts were presented to the Department's GTAs and faculty.

On April 7, the Spring Geography Department Banquet was held at the Westward Ho. Dr. James D. Mochoruk of UND's History Department, gave a well-received presentation on "History and Geography." The spring banquet is always a highlight of the GTU yearly activities.

Much of the success of this year's GTU activities was due to the efforts of the officers and Cindy Purpur, the department secretary. The Psi Chapter was pleased to initiate a record number of new members during the past year. GTU is thankful to alumni **Jim Schimer** for his generous donation.

Chairperson's Corner

(Continued from Page 1)

program by offering more courses and diversifying the research topics available to the graduate students.

Faculty and graduate students participated in regional, national, and international professional meetings. The Department organized the joint meeting of the Association of North Dakota Geographers with the Prairie Division of the Association of the Canadian Geographers at Devils Lake, ND. Dr. Munski is the editor of the *Prairie Perspective 2001*, where selected papers presented at the meeting will be published. Dr. Rundquist along with eleven students attended the Annual South Dakota State Geography Convention at Brookings in March 30, 2001.

A total of eight research papers were presented. The faculty received travel and research grants and recognitions for their services to the university and the discipline. During the past academic year, more than 2,200 students enrolled in geography courses. Geography students are also working and gaining invaluable practical experiences in several public institutions and private firms through the cooperative education courses. New avenues are sought for placing more students in contact with future potential employers.

Alumni News

We are always happy to hear from the alumni. These are only a selected number of geography graduates who have been in contact with us during the past year.

After several years of working as the GIS/cartographer and data analyst for two firms in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan areas, **Jeff Ueland (1995)** was accepted to the Ph.D. program at the Florida State University. Jeff wrote "I am getting married this June in Detroit Lakes, Minn."

Ann Asbeck (1986) left Grand Forks in 1993 for Maine where she has been teaching. Ann teaches graduate courses for the Graduate Outreach Program of the College of Education and Human Development at the places needed by the teachers. She wrote "my other love is the curriculum work I do with one of the Passamaquoddy tribal schools. This work reminds me of my North Dakota connections". Ann is often recognized by her North Dakota "accent" and sounding like "folks on Prairie Home Companion!" It is a saying that one can get a person out of North Dakota, but never North Dakota out of her. Ann may be far, but she is still a true North Dakotan.

Chris Atkinson (2000) got married and continues to teach at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls. He enjoys teaching a variety of subjects and is especially enthusiastic about teaching cartography to the undergraduate students.

This past year has been a fantastic year for **Lindsay Morgan** who finished her M.A. degree (2001), moved to Kalispell, Mont.,

We are grateful to the geography alumni who keep in touch and continue to support the Department with their financial contributions. Thanks to those of you who returned the questionnaire included in the 2000 Newsletter. The survey showed that the UND geography alumni are very successful in their careers and thriving in several dynamic Ph.D. programs around the nation.

I ask you to help us find the best faculty member for the position we are advertising, encourage others to attend the geography program at UND, and keep us informed about yourself and your family. And finally, if you come to the 2001 Homecoming, please join the faculty and students for a continental breakfast in the Atrium, Clifford Hall, on October 20th at 9:00 AM. We look forward to seeing you.

Mohammad Hemmasi, Chair

got a job in the economic development office and married the love of her life **Jason Danielson (2000)**. Congratulations to both of them. We wish them success in all of their adventures!

John Menzies (2001) was accepted to the Ph.D. program at Indiana State University, in Terre Haute with full financial support. He will begin his studies in the fall semester. **Gordon Robertson (2000)** is enjoying his second year of Ph.D. work at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Maria Valeroso (2000) is living in New York City and works for the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) which is a part of Colombia University. She is an information specialist providing technical and reference to users of the Center's data and information products.

Duane Kaul (2000) is still in Grand Forks working as a GIS specialist at the AgriData Inc. He is still the best cook in the entire Grand Forks Metropolitan Region! Please join us in December for tasting Mr. Kaul's cooking — turkey dinner — and other goodies during the Departmental Christmas party.

In Memoriam

Thanks to the kindness of the family of **Verna Mae Kentner (M.A. in Geography, 1995)**, a memorial has been established in her name to benefit the library holdings in geography at the Chester Fritz Library. Verna's husband, Robert, and two of their four sons attended the GEOG DEPT/GTU Spring Banquet to announce the establishment of the account formally with a substantial start-up fund. Contributions to the memorial will help undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members have increased access to materials once the target goal is reached on raising the capital investment; the sooner the threshold is reached, the sooner interest dollars will be available for the purpose of upgrading the geography book collection in the main campus library. Alumni and friends of the Geography Department are encouraged to earmark donations to the department through the UND Alumni Foundation using this memorial as the vehicle. Please indicate that the fund is the Verna Mae Kentner Memorial Book Fund. Your donations are appreciated greatly.

Geography Faculty Profiles

DEVON A HANSEN — It was a busy year for **Dr. Hansen**. She presented a paper (The State of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) at the Dawn of the New Millennium) at the annual meeting of the Prairie Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers and the Association of North Dakota Geographers. The paper from this joint meeting, co-authored with Dr. Hemmasi, was accepted for publication in the *Prairie Perspectives*. Dr. Hansen's paper, "Gender differences in the spatial mobility of the U.S. managerial workforce" is in the revision process for publication in *The Professional Geographer*. This past year she taught courses in World Regional Geography, Local Economic Development, Introduction to GIS, and graduate seminar in Human Geography. She served as co-advisor for the Psi Chapter of the Gamma Theta Upsilon, International Honor Society in Geography. She was also a member of the Geography Department's efforts in developing a GIScience certificate program, to be implemented in 2001. Her current research focuses on the refugee resettlement in North Dakota.

MOHAMMAD HEMMASI — In addition to his teaching and administrative duties, **Dr. Hemmasi** continued to contribute to the GORABS' specialty group of the Association of American Geographers, participated in the Teachers As Scholars program, served on the University Graduate Committee, coordinated the cooperative education courses of the geography program and supervised graduate thesis/independent studies. Dr. Hemmasi was also a member of the team that prepared the Department's Geographic Information Science certificate program. He presented two research papers (one with Dr. Hansen) at the annual meeting of the Prairie Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers and the Association of North Dakota Geographers. These papers will appear in the forthcoming issue of the *Prairie Perspectives*. Dr. Hemmasi also presented a paper at the Association of American Geographers annual meeting at New York City. He published a book review and has two research papers under review by the *Geoforum Journal* and *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. Dr. Hemmasi's current research involves "Core-periphery differentials in development and migrants responses in the Third World" and "International Migration to the United States: The Middle East Connection."

DOUGLAS MUNSKI continues to emphasize undergraduate education and service commitments but manages to slip in a little research and writing, too. Highlights of Dr. Munski's AY 2000-01 included: 1) an apparent record enrollment in GEOG 151 (Human Geography) while at the same time he introduced increased usage of Blackboard.com as a teaching tool; 2) a new teacher education course in geography, GEOG 419 (Methods and Materials for Geographic Education), in Spring of 2001; 3) Interactive Video Network (IVN) GEOG 262 (North America) added Mayville State University with UND and NDSU this past spring semester; 4) two of his UND Division of Continuing Education Correspondence Division Courses went on-line 1 July 2001; 5) chairing a highly successful Canadian Association of Geographers Prairie Division and Association of North Dakota Geographers combined annual meeting in Devils Lake, North Dakota, at the end of September of 2000; 6) being named a Bush Teaching Scholar in the middle of Spring of 2001; 7) reworking the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article on North Dakota as well as the *World Book Encyclopedia* entries for Fargo and for Bismarck; and 8) having the featured article in the most recent issue of the *C&EI Flyer*, the official journal of the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railway Historical Society.

BRADLEY RUNDQUIST — During the past year, **Dr. Rundquist** had an article reach print in a peer-reviewed journal (The Effects of Climatic Factors on Vegetation Dynamics of Tallgrass and Shortgrass Cover, *Geocarto International* 15(3):31-36). He presented the results of various other research projects at the Applied Geography Conference in Tampa, the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in New York City, and the annual meeting of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) in St. Louis. Dr. Rundquist also led the Geography Department's efforts in developing a Geographic Information Science certificate program, which will be implemented in the Fall 2001, organized a student trip by van to the annual South Dakota State University Geography Conference in Brookings, and developed a lab manual for Environmental Remote Sensing and Air Photo Interpretation. Dr. Rundquist was also involved in revising the geography technical course offerings.

PAUL TODHUNTER spent the spring semester of 2000 on developmental leave. Most of the time since then Dr. Todhunter has spent revising and developing new courses. A more significant technological component has been added to each course, all courses have been substantially revised, and two new courses were developed: Human Impact on the Environment (Geog 421) and Conservation of Resources (Geog 354). He presented a paper on the Grand Forks flood of 1997 at an international symposium on extra-ordinary flooding in Reykjavik, Iceland in July 2001. A paper on the flood is forthcoming in *Journal of the American Water Resources Association*. He has also initiated a study of flood damage and flood mitigation efforts at Stump Lake, North Dakota in collaboration with Dr. Rundquist. He is scheduled to teach two courses at the American College of Norway in Moss, Norway during the spring semester 2002. In anticipation of this experience he took French 101 during the spring semester and will take Norwegian 101 during the fall semester 2001.

ROBERT SEIDEL continues in his primary duty of leading undergraduate courses and advising undergraduate students, as well as providing occasional encouragement for graduate students. This past summer marked the tenth year Dr. Seidel has been involved as a teacher/advisor for the Bridge program, a unit of the Trio Program at the University of North Dakota. In conjunction with the Global Physical Environment course, lecture and lab, that he has taught the Bridge students, he has co-led, with staff members of the Trio Program, field trips to various locations in Minnesota and Wisconsin. He continues as faculty advisor to Gamma Theta Upsilon. His hobbies include reading, acting in community theater and preparing for retirement.

2000-2001 Student Scholarship Award

The Wills Scholarship Award is usually given to a high achieving undergraduate student who contributes to the excellence of the Department, not only by her/his outstanding academic performance, but also by being exemplary among her/his peers. This year's recipients were **Sharon Grzeskowiak** and **Steven Moe** who received checks and certificates at the Departmental Christmas party and Spring Banquet, respectively.

Department of Geography
University of North Dakota
P.O. Box 9020
Grand Forks, ND 58202-9020

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Grand Forks, ND
58201
PERMIT NO. 10

ALUMNI ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE SURVEY

We hope that your experience in the Department of Geography at University of North Dakota was one that you will always value. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions to help us to improve the Geography Program.

	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>
Your academic experience				
Your entire experience				
Advising				
Computer facilities				

ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Marital Status _____

Home Address _____ Children (Name, age) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Current Position _____

Company Name _____

Bus. Address _____

Bus. Phone _____

Degree(s), Discipline(s), Date(s), Awarded and Universities _____

Is there any personal information that you would like to share? _____