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University of North Dakota
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DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY Alumni Newsletter

University of North Dakota

Summer 2002

Chairperson's Corner

Dear Alumni and Friends,

The academic year 2001-2002 was filled with exciting events for the UND Geography Department. First, the Department succeeded in hiring a very promising faculty member, Mr. Judson Edwards (Ph.D. candidate, University of Southern Mississippi), who along with his family, moved from warm Mississippi to frigid North Dakota during January 2002. The Edwards family successfully passed their test of adaptability by enjoying their first winter on the Northern Great Plains. With an interest in rural economic development, he broadens our community and urban development concentration (see faculty activity section).

Second, the department was fortunate to receive funds from several sources, including the Student Technology Fee committee, the College of Arts and Sciences, and external research funds to expand the Geographic Analysis and Remote Sensing Laboratory (GARSL) in area and range of equipment to a fully functional laboratory. Added to the existing resources were ten new high-end computers, seven GPS units, a high resolution LCD, large scanner, and new and updated software packages.

Third, the final approval of the Geographic Information Sciences Certificate program by various committees was announced. At this stage, the Certificate is a graduate level program that will accept applicants beginning Fall Semester 2003. The Geography Department has all the necessary hardware, software and human resources to offer a top rank educational program in GIS.

Fourth, last year was exceptionally favorable to students who wanted to gain on-the-job experience while receiving some income. A record number of graduate and senior undergraduate geography students participated in cooperative education courses, internships, and as research assistants in the Department, UMAC, AgriData, USGS local Water Resources office, Ducks Unlimited, National Park Service, UND Center for Rural Health, and Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization. These employment opportunities open to geography students is a vote of confidence by the employers in the quality of our program and the competency of future geographers.

Fifth, the faculty excelled in their teach-

ing, research and service to the university, community, and the discipline. As reflected in the individual faculty profile section, they taught courses here and in Norway, lectured in Michigan, reviewed a geography program in Minnesota, and presented research papers in seven professional meetings in the US and Canada. They published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals, reviewed books and manuscripts and received internal and external research grants. Considering the small number of UND geography faculty, in comparison to other similar programs which offer BS and MA/MS degrees, they are doing an excellent job in fulfilling the Department's mission.

Dr. Robert Seidel plans to retire next summer. We hope to convert the current special appointment position, held by Professor Seidel for more than a decade, to a tenure-track faculty member next year.

This is the last year of my three-year chairpersonship service. I am pleased to report that Professor Paul Todhunter was elected as the chair and assumes responsibility from July 1, 2002. Ms. Cindy Purpur was honored at the Founder's Day for her 25 years of service to the University of North Dakota, most of it in the Geography Department. Congratulations Cindy! Keep up the good work!

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Gamma Theta Upsilon Sponsors A Variety of Social Activities

The Psi Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) had a busy year under the supervision of Drs. Seidel and Hansen. GTU sponsored a variety of social activities, including the annual fall picnic (Sept. 7th). Students, faculty, family, and other geography friends enjoyed a beautiful fall evening. 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.

Dr. Glinda Crawford, UND Professor of Sociology, gave a well-received banquet address entitled, "The Earth: No Place Like Home" at the annual Geography Department/GTU Spring Banquet (April 13th). Dr. Floyd Hickok, former UND geography professor and recent retiree from the GF/EGF MPO, was the honored guest. Several geography/GTU alumni attended this year's banquet, as well. Much of the success of this year's GTU activities was due to the efforts of the officers, Chad Shumake, President, and Sherry Grzeskowiak, Vice President. Cindy Purpur, the department secretary, provides invaluable assistance in the planning and carrying out all GTU events.

Feedback for the Alumni Directory

The Department of Geography is developing a directory of the alumni for mailing purpose. Please complete the following form and return to: Department of Geography, UND, Box 9020, Grand Forks, ND 58202 or e-mail us the information at: Cindy_Purpur@und.nodak.edu

Name _____ Graduation Year _____

Major _____ Degree _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone/email _____

NEWS ABOUT YOU for us to share with other alumni in our next issue (information about your current position, significant achievements, family activities, etc)



Enjoying the after-supper conversation during the 2002 GTU Spring Banquet are, clockwise from left, Jim and Marilyn Larimore (master's alumna), Dr. Floyd Hickok, Dr. Mohammad Hemmasi, Dr. Devon Hansen, and Cynthia Kordecki (master's alumna).

News of the Geography Alumni

The following faithful alumni are only a selected number of geography graduates who have been in contact with us during the past year.

Nancy Godon, BS, 1991 and MS, 1995 is a Senior Meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Grand Forks, ND. She just published a monograph entitled: Fargo, North Dakota Climate (Central Region Applied Research Paper 26-01).

Nikki Heyd wrote a detailed account of her impressive activities since her graduation in 1995 with a B.S degree in geography and minor in aviation. She works for Rockwell Collins, a leading manufacturer of avionic solutions, and lives with her husband Paul (BSEE '95, UND) and two sons in Salt Lake City, Utah.

We are pleased to share the news of Scott Roper, MA 1993 who just accepted a job as an assistant professor at West Texas A&M University. He joins the history and political science department teaching human and physical geography courses.

It was good to hear from David Olson, BS, 2002 who accepted the demanding position of "Economic Development Director" in Crosby ND. After a month on the job he wrote: "It has been fun and challenging at times and frustrating at other times. I still have much to learn but it is coming together little by little" No doubt David has the needed talent, perseverance, and skills for meeting all the challenges he is facing. We wish him success.

Naim Paris Zeibak, MA, '98 Continues his Ph.D. studies at Indiana Sate University, Terre Haute, IN. He plans "to defend his dissertation around Christmas time." Best of luck to Paris.

Paul Sando, BS, '89 is an assistant professor of geography at Moorhead State University, Moorhead, MN. During the Spring Semester, Paul and a group of his undergraduate students visited the Department. We hope to continue and expand these type of exchanges in the future.

Chairperson's Corner
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Finally, we always welcome your comments, recommendations, and financial contributions/donations in making the UND geography program one of the best in the region. Thanks to the alumni who returned last year's questionnaire and informed the Department about their activities. We urge you to keep us posted about your work and life and make sure to visit us whenever you are in Grand Forks.

Mohammad Hemmasi



Dr. Floyd Hickock (right), of the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and former UND Geography faculty member, accepts an award recognizing his 22 years in support of the UND Geography Program. Presenting the award is Dr. Douglas Munki. Dr. Hickock retired from the MPO in August 2002.

Nathan Smith, BS '00, MS '02 was the luckiest graduate student last year. Early summer he successfully defended his thesis, received his MS degree, married girlfriend Angie, and moved to Oregon. We wish them success in their new life.

Another marriage union was celebrated between Earl Davis (second year graduate student) and Lisa Jo on May 18, 2002. Our congratulations to them as well.

William A. Dando, UND Geography Professor, 1975-1988 and the Chair of the Department of Geography at Indiana State University, since 1989 retired in June 2002 and lives in Terre Haute, IN.

Floyd Hickok taught technical courses here from 1980 to 1993 when the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization hired him as a GIS specialist. He retired in August 2002 and lives in Southern California. Both of them served UND Geography Department extremely well and we wish them all the best.

Wills 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 Ben Ehreth and Toni Peck who received checks and certificates at the Departmental Christmas party and Spring Banquet, respectively. Congratulations to both of them.

Faculty Activities

Mr. Judson Edwards is a new faculty member in the UND Department of Geography. He holds a B.S. in Economics from Troy State University, Troy, Alabama and M.S. in Economic Development from The University of Southern Mississippi (USM), Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Judson is a Ph.D. candidate in International Development at USM with an academic specialization in economic geography. His dissertation focuses upon the use of broadband telecommunications in rural communities as the foundation of a model for rural economic development planning. Before joining our department, Judson served as Managing Editor of the Economic Development Review: The Journal of the American Economic Development Council from 1999 to 2001. Judson and his wife Stacy have a son, Carter (age 5), and are awaiting the birth of a new child in January of 2003.

Dr. Devon Hansen presented papers at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Los Angeles, CA and the Great Plains Migration Symposium at the Center for Great Plains Studies in Lincoln, NE. Her paper, "Refugee Resettlement and Adjustment to American Life: The Case of North Dakota," from the symposium is under review for publication in a special migration issue of the Great Plains Research. Recently, she received funding through the Senate Scholarly Activities Grant (UND) to continue her refugee research with a focus on the Bosnian resettlement in Fargo. Her other grant activities included working with the North Dakota Department of Health. In April, she traveled to Dickinson to attend The Great Plains Population Symposium, which addressed rural communities and population loss issues. During the Spring Semester, Dr. Hansen was a member of a faculty study group to consider students' perspectives on assessment. She continues to serve as co-advisor for the Psi Chapter of the Gamma Theta Upsilon, the International Honor Society in Geography.

Dr. Mohammad Hemmasi, in addition to teaching, was busy with administrative duties of hiring a new faculty, curriculum changes, contributing to the development of the GIS Certificate, and serving on the College TRP committee. It was also involved in many public lectures, TV appearances, radio talks, and newspaper interviews. They included panel discussion at UND, an invited public lecture at the Valley City State University, and speaker/resource person for the Cultural Diversity Week in Northern Michigan University, at Marquette. Dr. Hemmasi presented a research paper at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, in Los Angeles. He also presented research at the Great Plains/Rocky Mountain Division of the AAG held in September at Omaha, NE, and at the Great Plains Migration Sympo-

sium at the Center for Great Plains Studies in Lincoln, NE in March. His paper (with Carol Prorok) on "Women's Migration and Quality of Life in Turkey," was published in the Geoforum journal. Another article is accepted for publication in the African and Asian Studies journal, and one is under review by the Great Plains Research.

Dr. Douglas Munki continued to focus his activities on extensive teaching duties in human geography, geography of North America, and geographic education courses with high enrollments plus engaged in substantial service both on-campus and off-campus with limited research being conducted this past year. Dr. Munki served on a number of different college and university committees but particularly performed a variety of service tasks as a board member of the North Dakota Geographic Alliance and a board member of the Canadian Association of Geographers Prairie Division. He was the external evaluator for the Geography Program for Bemidji State University. His research activities focused upon being part of a campuswide, four-year longitudinal study of general education sponsored by the Bush Foundation. Dr. Munki also was named a Bush Teaching Scholar and produced two papers on geographic education that were read at the North Dakota Academy of Science. He was named interim director for the ND EdPARC, a teacher education outreach services program associated with the Upper Midwest Aerospace Consortium. During the summer of 2002, he spent six weeks as a faculty academic advisor for Getting Started, UND's orientation, advising, and registration program for incoming first-year students. Finally, Dr. Munki recently was named book review editor for Pioneer America Society's Journal of Material Culture, so congratulations are in order.

Dr. Bradley Rundquist. The highlight of the past year for Dr. Rundquist and his wife Kristen was the December birth of their daughter Ella Noel. Related to work at UND, Dr. Rundquist was pleased to have two of his graduate advisees, Heith Dokken and Nathan Smith, successfully defend their master's theses. Dr. Rundquist also had articles reach print in two peer-reviewed journals: Remote Sensing of Environment and Geocarto International, with a third in press with Photogrammetric Engineering & Remote Sensing. He presented research at the Great Plains/Rocky Mountain Division of the AAG held in September at Omaha, NE, attended the March meeting of the Center for Great Plains Studies at Lincoln, NE, and, in April, organized a student trip to the EROS Data Center, Sioux Falls, SD, and the annual South Dakota State Geography Conference in Brookings, SD. Grant and contract activity led by Dr. Rundquist included work for the National Park Service (\$10,000); Ducks Unlimited (\$6,500); and the North Dakota Department of

Health (\$45,000). His teaching activities included Advanced Techniques in GIS, a new course offering taught in the Spring, and development of the GIS Certificate.

Dr. Robert Seidel, as he prepares to retire in the spring of 2003, continues in his primary duty of teaching undergraduate courses and advising undergraduate students. He also continues in his role of providing encouragement to graduate students in the department. For over a decade he has served as a teacher/advisor for the Bridge Program, a unit of the TRIO Program at the University of North Dakota. In the summer of 2002, he lectured in the Global Physical Environment course for the Bridge students, and co-led with various staff members of the TRIO Program, a field trip for all the Upward Bound students to Yellowstone National Park. During the academic year 2001-2002, he served as co-advisor with Dr. Hansen for Psi Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon, an International Honor Society in Geography.

Dr. Paul Todhunter spent the spring semester with his family in Moss, Norway where he taught Introduction to Global Climate/Lab and Conservation of Resources at the American College of Norway. He took Norwegian 101 during the fall semester prior to leaving, hopes to continue to develop his language skills in order to keep future professional and personal options involving Norway open. He traveled to Oslo, Trondheim, Bergen, Stockholm, London, Paris, Amsterdam and Belgium during the time there, and took several hundred digital pictures that he hopes will find some use in his classes. Two papers on the 1997 Grand Forks flood appeared in the Journal of the American Water Resources Association and the International Association of Hydrological Sciences Publication No. 271. A revision of his microclimatology text will shortly be in print. He has also

completed some work with Dr. Rundquist on the flooding problems associated with Stump Lake and rural Nelson County that they plan to write up and present at meetings this year. He recently assumed Chair responsibilities this summer and hopes to help the faculty continue to build upon the progress that the department has made in recent years.

Dr. Santhosh K. Seelan, Associate Research Professor, Upper Midwest Aerospace Consortium, Ph.D. 1994, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, joined the Department as an adjunct professor. Dr. Seelan is specialized in remote sensing, developing countries, and geospatial techniques.

Geography Forums:

The Forum for Contemporary Geographic Issues is held on a regular basis. Every year, the Department invites experts in various fields and the past graduates to share their practical job-related experiences with the university students and community members. Last year's contributors include: Mr. Robert Nutsch, GIS Coordinator, State of North Dakota; Dr. Rob Arthur, Department of Geosciences, NDSU; Mr. Judson Edwards, International Development, University of Southern Mississippi; Mr. Chris Atkinson, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Dr. Ralph Root, Physical Scientist, USGS-Rocky Mountain Mapping Center, Lakewood, CO; Mr. Steve Hager, National Park Service - Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Medora, ND; Ms. Ann Fritz, GIS analyst, ND Department of Health; Mr. Duane Pool, GIS Manager, Ducks Unlimited, Bismarck. We are grateful to all of them for their informative and stimulating presentations.



UND Geography students competing in the GeoBowl competition at the 2001 Great Plains/Rocky Mountain AAG meeting held in Omaha, NE, are, from left, Lindsay Nowling, Ben Ehreth, Earl Davis, Matt Gerike, Sharon Grzeskowiak, and Chad Shumake.