FALL 2020 ISSUE NO. 1

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:



# PERSPECTIVES

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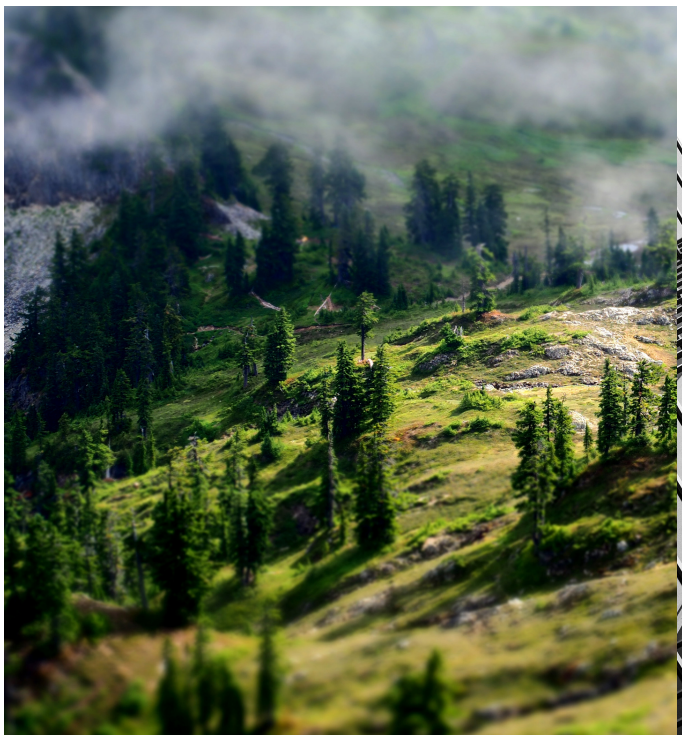
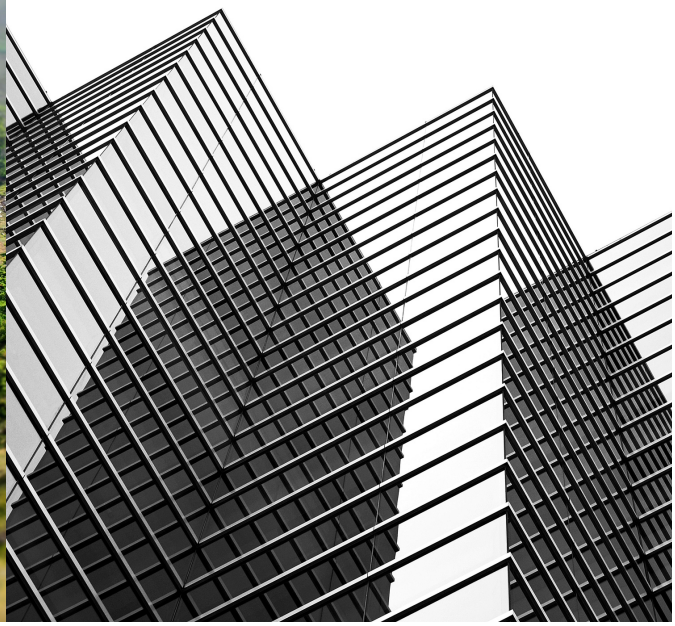
THE SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT





## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

BY STEVE WOLVERTON

The last couple of years have been a time of growth in the department. I am most excited about the additions of new faculty, Dr. Lu Liang in 2018, and Dr. Yuting Li in 2020! The addition of these two new faculty members has bolstered areas of our programs and we are so glad to have them aboard. Other faculty members have retired or entered modified service. It is also exciting that we have created a new degree, new degree concentrations, and several new undergraduate certificates. Our faculty, students, staff, and alumni make big differences in the world! In this inaugural edition of our newsletter, we aim to help you catch up with developments in our department and programs. We look forward to sharing with you and hearing from you in the coming years.

Steve

# PROGRAM NEWS

The 2019-2020 academic year was a busy season that saw many events and quite a few changes to our department! We offered our **Fall 2019 Colloquium Series**, which featured these topics and speakers:

- Smart Cities: Machine Learning and Sensors in Service of Society by David Lary (University of Texas at Dallas)
- Rosewood Networks: Panama, China and Global Illegal Timber Markets by Julie Velasquez Runk (University of Georgia)
- Indigenous Resistance, Planetary Dystopia, and the Politics of Environmental Justice by Jaskiran Dhillon (The New School)
- Native Foods: Agriculture and the Historical Geography of American Indian Activism in the Twentieth Century by Michael Wise (University of North Texas)
- A Global View of Rivers and Streams by George Allen (Texas A&M University)
- Sculpting Connections: Galaxies in Iron and Yellowstone in Sound by Tanya Synar (Texas Woman's University)

In Spring 2020, we finalized **two new undergraduate certificates,** now in effect:

- The Health and Medical Geography Certificate, consisting of four courses that include Medical Geography and GIS in Health.
- The Water Resources Certificate, with 3 required Geography courses (like Surface Water Hydrology and Groundwater Hydrology) and 2 additional UNT courses.

We now have a total of 6 undergraduate certificates that include GeoPhoto, Economic Geography, GIS, and Sustainability. In addition, we are now offering a new major - the Bachelor of Science degree in Geographic Information Systems + Computer Science.

**PERSONNEL CHANGES**

In October 2019 **Tami Deaton** (pictured above on the bottom row, center), our much-loved Administrative Coordinator of more than 30 years, received a promotion to work in the Mayborn School of Journalism. We were very sad to see her go but we were excited for this next stage of Tami's career. While we searched for new office personnel, Keshia Wilkins (our Administrative Specialist) ensured that nothing fell through the cracks. She did the jobs of two people and juggled multiple tasks and projects, all with a smile on her face and a calm demeanor.

In December 2019, we welcomed a new Administrative Coordinator, **Michelle Hurt**, a UNT alum and long-time Denton resident who came to us from the nonprofit world as a grant writer (as well as having been a former UNT employee in the College of Music).

In September 2020, **Dr. Yuting Li** joined our faculty as the new lecturer. She is a sedimentary geologist studying source-to-sink sediment transport. At UNT, she teaches physical geography and geology courses. (See the next few pages for more about Yuting and what our faculty have been up to.)

# DEPARTMENT FACULTY UPDATES

Before joining the Department of Geography and the Environment in Fall 2020, **Dr. Yuting Li** was the visiting assistant professor at Purdue University, where she earned Teaching Honor Roll every semester since 2018. Yuting's research focuses on fingerprinting sedimentary signals transported from source mountains to sink oceans. Particularly she studied marine cores collected along the Indus Submarine Canyon and evaluated the roles played by sea level variations, sediment reworking, and climate in controlling the sediment flux. Yuting's most recent paper was published in early 2020 in *Quaternary Research* and she is currently working on a sedimentology paper about grain size variability and channel geometry.

**Dr. Reid Ferring** was named Professor Emeritus this year and is now on modified service. Travel plans for field research in the Republic of Georgia were scrapped, and probably will not happen in 2021. Reid taught again for the Master Naturalists' program in both Denton and Fannin Counties. He taught a four-lecture class for OLLI, and is serving on the NSF panel for Graduate Research Fellowships. He was co-author of articles on Dmanisi published in the *Journal of Human Evolution* and the *Proceedings of the Georgian Academy of Sciences*.

**Dr. Matthew Fry** spent COVID lockdown advising undergrads, developing on-line courses, and keeping busy in his garden. His new Field Methods course met outside during Fall and students completed field activities around campus. Matthew also hosted PhD candidate Trey Murphy from UNC-Chapel Hill. Their co-authored manuscript on Geo-imaginaries is under review at *Political Geography*. In February, he participated in the Energy Humanities Workshop with faculty from Rice University and UNT. His 2020 report, "What Happened to Mexico's Burgos Basin" is available through the SMU Texas-Mexico Center and is featured regularly. Matthew also began researching DFW landscaping and greening practices.

Members of the Ecosystem Geography Lab, led by **Dr. Alexandra Ponette-González**, had a successful 2020 fall semester. Jennifer Ellis and Thomas Williamson presented their master's research at the National Atmospheric Deposition Program Scientific Symposium. Jennifer discussed her research on urban rock pigeons as potential biomonitors for particulate matter air pollution, while Thomas presented preliminary findings on Texas wildfires during the 2011-2014 drought. Alexandra received a Research Seed Grant. With colleagues from UNT (Lu Liang), Utah State, and the Cary Institute, the team will investigate the effects of the 2020 historic U.S. wildfire season on particulate matter emissions and nutrient loading to downwind ecosystems.



# DEPARTMENT FACULTY UPDATES, CONTINUED

**Dr. Paul Hudak** taught the capstone course and groundwater hydrology in Fall 2020, along with an introductory geology lecture and coordinating geology labs. He serves on various university and departmental committees and is an undergraduate advisor. Some of Paul's current research includes constructed wetlands in eastern Denton County and habitat they provide for waterbirds; groundwater monitoring and remediation; and fragmentation of riparian corridors in north-central Texas. Paul presented some of his work with graduate students at the Texas Plant Conservation Conference last summer, with additional work appearing in recent and forthcoming journal articles. Paul has two new family members, collie puppies named Parker and Xena, who are full of energy. His senior collie, Connor, is doing well.

In 2020, **Dr. Murray Rice** has kept busy, serving as Executive Director with Applied Geography Conference, and helping lead the AGC's board in coordinating the annual conference and related activities, especially moving the fall conference from an in-person event to an all-online format. Murray also completed another semester this fall of successful cooperation with the consulting firm Intalytics and one of their clients, the parent corporation for Outback Steakhouse, to provide a rich and challenging semester project for students in GEOG 4220/5220 (Retail). In spring 2021 he is set to work again with KFC on a related semester project in GEOG 4230/5230 (Location Intelligence). Lastly, Murray works with Dr. Tiwari on the Geography Department Advancement Committee. They partner with alumni to increase the department's community involvement and raise its profile and gather support for future ventures.

**Dr. Lisa Nagaoka** is finishing up an NSF-funded project that she was lead PI on with Drs. Pan, Wolverton, and Atkinson (Biology) to evaluate the hydrological context for fluctuations in prehistoric agriculture productivity in the Mesa Verde region of the American Southwest. She and the rest of the Undergraduate Committee (Drs. Fry, Hudak and Ponette-González) developed two new concentrations in the BS (Environmental Studies, Earth Systems). In addition, a new Water Resources Certificate and a revamped Health and Medical Certificate will be added as options alongside the Sustainability Certificate created last year and the long-standing GIS Certificate. She spent much of spring and summer revising the Earth Science labs to be taught online as the labs were shifted to remote offerings.

**Dr. Feifei Pan** taught Earth Science and Environmental Geology this fall. Helping non-science major students learn Earth Science continues to be a challenging yet rewarding task for him. He has been working on a project funded by NSF. He collaborated with Drs. Nagaoka, Wolverton, and Atkinson and developed a constrained stochastic weather generator for producing daily mean air temperature and daily precipitation based on tree-ring reconstructed annual mean air temperature and precipitation. Other ongoing research includes collaborating with scientists from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and he developed a method for remote sensing river stage and discharge using Landsat imagery and digital elevation model (DEM) data. Feifei also works with graduate students and has helped them to conduct their thesis research, with topics ranging from evaluating impacts of climate change on global water vapor transfer between oceans and continents to analyzing spatial and temporal variations of soil moisture in an agroforestry system.

# DEPARTMENT FACULTY UPDATES, CONTINUED

**Dr. Pinliang Dong** received a UNT Global Venture Fund to study a large landslide in a forested area using drone-based LiDAR in southwest China. However, the project was cancelled due to the pandemic. He has been working on some research papers as first author or co-author; so far five papers have been published in 2020, and four more are under review. He is also working as a guest editor along with Dr. Feifei Pan and Dr. Lu Liang on a special issue of *Remote Sensing* (5-year Impact Factor: 5.001). This Fall 2020 semester, he developed and taught a new course "Geography of China" that saw 21 students enroll.

**Dr. Harry Williams** spent most of 2020 preparing fully remote versions of his classes. He submitted a proposal to NSF this fall (a collaborative project between UNT and LSU, which continues work he has been doing on distinguishing between marine and terrestrial sediments in coastal wetlands). He also did some manuscript write-ups, including the XRF discrimination of marine and terrestrial sediments in coastal wetlands. His two graduate students have made great progress: Chelsea is preparing to defend her thesis in the spring and Jackie has been concentrating on required core courses and finalizing a thesis project. Harry has become quite adept at creating Panopto videos for his classes; he now has a virtual field trip for his Historical Geology class, examining Cretaceous- and Pennsylvanian-aged fossils between Denton and Bridgeport, in the form of 29 Panopto videos. While some have noted a Spielbergesque quality to his work, others have complained that he has a bad habit of swaying the camera back and forth, inducing seasickness amongst viewers.

During 2020 **Dr. Steve Wolverton** taught or co-taught three classes. In the spring he taught Archaeological Science, which he retooled to consider the discipline through the lens of historical ecology. He was able to more deeply engage social and environmental justice, particularly related to the intersection of North American archaeology and Indigenous American cultures. This fall he co-taught Research Design and Geographic Applications (essentially a thesis research preparation course), with Dr. Tiwari. Steve also co-taught an undergraduate course, Antiracist Thought, with Dr. Samantha Langsdale who studies feminist philosophy. On the research front, he is involved in a collaborative research project on ancient DNA and zooarchaeology in Argentina, with the team finishing a number of papers this year. He was also part of a collaborative paper on mussel ecology in north Texas.

**Dr. Chetan Tiwari** spent the year working on various research initiatives including analysis of data from the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. Dr. Tiwari has also been working with the Denton Police Department to organize data collected as part of the sexual assault kit initiative (SAKI) project. Dr. Tiwari organized two international panels on COVID-19 as part of the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in March and participated in various panels on COVID-19 including ones organized by our department and URISA. In addition, Dr. Tiwari has been advising students interested in the department's newly formed GIS+CS program. He is excited to see that it has generated a lot of interest in UNT students and the larger GIS community.

# FACULTY PROFILE: DR. LU LIANG

**Dr. Lu Liang** is one of our newest faculty members, having come on board in Fall 2018. Prior to UNT, she taught at the University of Arkansas. She was drawn to UNT because of the hospitality she felt from our Geography family, the interdisciplinary research done by the faculty, and the impressive students. She is especially fond of our EESAT building, which she considers a dream working place. Read along to get to know Dr. Liang better!

**What research are you focused on right now?** In general, I am focused on environmental health using geospatial science. The topics are centered on air quality and water conservation in agriculture. For air quality, we are integrating state-of-art low-cost sensors, citizen science efforts, and machine learning to answer the question: what is the dynamic spatio-temporal pattern of urban pollution? What are their drivers? And what are the implications to human health? We had several successful campaigns and almost 100 Denton citizens have volunteered to host a sensor at their home. Another exciting community outreach is that we are partnering with several schools including some in Lewisville ISD and Northwest ISD, Koan School, and Selwyn School to educate the younger generations about air quality and geospatial science.

**What is your favorite class to teach at UNT?** I enjoy all my classes. I have an array of small-size classes (Geog 5510 GIS for Applied Research and Geog 4350 Digital Imaging) to a much bigger service course (Geog 3500 Intro GIS). In the smaller classroom, I get a chance to know each student and design study/research plans to tailor their unique needs. Because of the interactions, we get time to do independent class projects that can give undergraduate students a taste of research and strengthen and supplement graduate students' thesis projects. I have a student Ronan Hart who did three classes with me and finished a series of independent projects. We published his work in a geography journal. For the big classes, although I may not get the chance to know everyone, the diverse background of students is a nice element of variety and adds lots of fun to teaching. Because the large majority of students are not majoring in geography, larger courses also offer an avenue for other departments to know us better and foster collaboration that can, in turn, benefit our research.

**What do you enjoy most about teaching?** Teaching is rewarding and it is a healthy balance to my research. It feels very refreshing to get out of my office for an hour and spend time with students. It is also fulfilling when students accomplish their projects or enjoy the knowledge that they have learned.

**What are your most recent accomplishments (since your arrival at UNT)?** Let me start with students, whose achievements I value more than my own. My master's student Sean Hickey just won third place in the Texas Energy Summit student poster competition. I mentioned Ronan Hart earlier, who has published one peer-reviewed journal article on UNT campus air quality monitoring this year. Two undergraduate students whom I mentored received a TexasView grant and a UNT undergraduate research fellowship. UNT students are amazing and I truly enjoy working with them. My own research also got extended this year. The air quality citizen science project drew much more attention over the summer and our names have been mentioned more often in the DFW area. We also received funding from USGS to support irrigation type mapping research. Everything is going really well and I am looking forward to new accomplishments in 2021.

# FALL 2020-SPRING 2021 TEACHING ASSISTANTS

In September, we welcomed our invaluable teaching assistants. They tackle their duties with aplomb especially during such an atypical year in this pandemic. For this Fall 2020-Spring 2021 academic year, we have eight new teaching assistants (Anna Baker, Kanan Dave, Richard Kirk, Kevin LeMaire, Ciara Mason, Zach Tabor, Jacqueline Torrecillas, and Kerra Unal) and nine returning teaching assistants (Hilary Ansah, Chelsea Beaubouef, Jennifer Ellis, Sean Hickey, Kate Lester, Rajshree Rege, Farrell Stucky, Samantha Espinoza, and Thomas Williamson). Below we profile a few of our new TAs so that you can get to know them.

**Kerra Unal (TA for GEOG 3500)**
Major professors: Dr. Pinliang Dong & Dr. Lu Liang
Area of Interest: Remote Sensing & GIS
Fun facts: I love traveling when I have free time.

**Kevin LeMaire (TA for GEOG 1710)**
Major professor: Dr. Murray Rice
Area of Interest: The effects of COVID 19 on DFW area businesses
Fun facts: I worked as a reactor propulsion engineer in the Navy, I've lived in 10 different cities in my lifetime, and I have a baby Schnauzer that will say hi to every person he passes.

**Zach Tabor (TA for GEOG 1710)**
Major professor: Dr. Matthew Fry
Area of Interest: Public land and wildlife as a resource in Texas
Fun facts: I love mountain biking and pretty much anything else outdoors.

**Kanan Dave (TA for GEOL 1610)**
Major professor: Dr. Pinliang Dong
Area of Interest: Remote Sensing & GIS, Disaster Management, Environmental Science
Fun facts: I am a foodaholic, chatterbox, an avid trekker and I crack very corny jokes.

# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

In December 2020, **Richard Kirk**, current Geography graduate student and 2020 winner of the Schoolmaster Outstanding Undergraduate Award, published his book review on "The Anti-Capitalist Chronicles in *Human Geography*.

Geography Master's student **Sean Hickey** (pictured right) won the third place in the Malcolm Verdict Memorial Poster Contest of 2020 Texas Energy Summit in November 2020. Sean presented "Developing a community air monitoring network from machine-learning optimized low-cost sensors" as part of his master thesis. Sean's thesis is focused on using machine learning to calibrate the air pollution concentration measured by the low-cost sensors, which are deployed in a citizen science air quality monitoring project led by Dr. Lu Liang. The calibrated readings will be used to inform the detailed spatial-temporal patterns of air pollution in Denton at the block-scale. In February 2020, he received a summer internship as an Air Quality Assistant at Mount Rainier National Park through the National Parks Service's Geoscientists in the Park (GIP) program. He helped the park to collect air quality data, develop educational resources related to air quality issues, and analyze PM2.5 observations to better understand how emissions from surrounding regions and local campfires affect the park's air quality.

Also in November, four current Geography students won awards in the Southwest Division of the American Association of Geographers 2020 Virtual Meeting. **Jack Lineham** won 2nd place and **Nicholas Collins** won 3rd place in the Undergraduate Poster Competition, **Zach Tabor** tied for 1st place in the Graduate Student Poster Competition, and **Thomas Williamson** took home the 3rd place award in the Graduate Student Paper Competition.

Image courtesy of Denton Record Chronicle

July 2020 - **Kate Lester** (pictured left) was featured in the Denton Record Chronicle. In the article, Lester, a doctoral candidate and Geography teaching fellow who regularly works with health data, “guessed she was not alone in her uncertainty about COVID-19 numbers. As she began to collect data to make sense of how the pandemic was gaining a foothold locally, she decided to share what she discovered with others in Denton. Lester established the Facebook groups “COVID by Numbers” and “COVID by Numbers: Denton, Texas” to publish and discuss coronavirus trends both in the city of Denton and across Texas. Lester regularly collects and processes public health data, creating charts to track new cases, hospitalization trends and daily testing rates across the life span of the pandemic.”

# ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

**Cintia Ortiz** (pictured left), who graduated this December with a BS in Geography and the Environment, recently accepted an Environmental Justice Fellowship with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in Washington, D.C.

**Jonathan Dombrosky** (pictured below), MS 2015, published a paper through his Ph.D. studies in the Department of Anthropology at The University of New Mexico, in October 2020. His paper is titled Resource risk and stability in the zooarchaeological record: the case of Pueblo fishing in the Middle Rio Grande, New Mexico and was published in *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences*. Dombrosky examined how a change in climate may have changed the diets of Ancestral Pueblo people. According to an article from the University of New Mexico, where he is studying, this paper is the first “to come out for Dombrosky’s dissertation and is related to a $30,298 National Science Foundation grant he received to further research the impact of a changing environment on the incorporation of new foods into human diets”.

Image courtesy of University of New Mexico

**Jenna Rindy** (MS, 2018), with the 2020 Urban Research Award at Boston University, is Principal Investigator on a new study - Effects of Greenspace Structure on Urban Tree Health and Human Exposure to Fine Particulate Matter: A Biogeochemical Analysis and Exposure Assessment. Along with Co-PIs: Pamela Templer, PhD; Kevin Lane, PhD; and Lucy Hutyra, PhD, the investigators will compare particulate matter concentrations in the atmosphere, rates of atmospheric deposition of particulate matter to leaves, and foliar damage in open fields, forest edges, and forest interiors along an urbanization gradient from Boston to central Massachusetts.

In May 2020, **Sandra Zarzycka** defended her Master's thesis successfully and has taken a job with the US Bureau of Land Management. She will be working for the BLM Field Office in Monticello, Utah as an Archaeological Technician. This office manages Bears Ears National Monument and many of the surrounding lands. This summer Sandra will be working on excavating Ancestral Puebloan sites in this area.

# ALUMNI PROFILE: CHLOE MCKNIGHT

**Chloe McKnight** (née Thomas) graduated from UNT with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography in 2013. As a student, she did undergraduate research with Dr. Lisa Nagaoka focusing on bicycle rack occupancy on the UNT campus. Here's a little bit more about Chloe!

**How did your experience in the Department of Geography and the Environment set you apart from your peers educated at other institutions?** When I was in school, I had the opportunity to work with facilities to learn GPS, conduct research that taught me to analyze data and write about it, and spend hours in the computer lab learning ArcMap. Because of that hands-on experience, I had a strong foundation of knowledge when I started working full time. This Geography Department has dedicated staff that goes out of their way to provide these kinds of opportunities to students and that makes all the difference.

**How did your degree from UNT influence your career path?** My bachelor's degree gave me a focus and direction. Students are commonly told to pick something general, like Business or Computer Science, so they have options when they graduate. But I found it useful to have a niche that set me apart from other candidates.

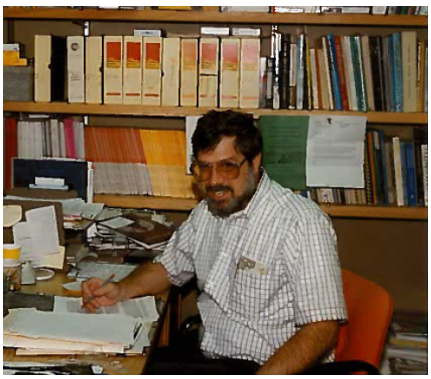
**Where do you currently work and what do you do?** Bluebeam, Inc. I'm a software engineer working on a new product that will give commercial construction professionals the ability to view building plans on a map. I work on the full stack (user interface and underlying services) so I do anything from building out layer toggles to image tiling.

**Do you have a message for our current students?** It can be intimidating to get into the tech side of things, but if you're interested then I highly encourage you to pursue it. Just remember that everyone struggles and doesn't understand things sometimes. Even experienced programmers who have done it for years. You just have to show up and be humble. Trust that you will get better, and celebrate when you realize you have. At the end of the day it's really fun and rewarding.

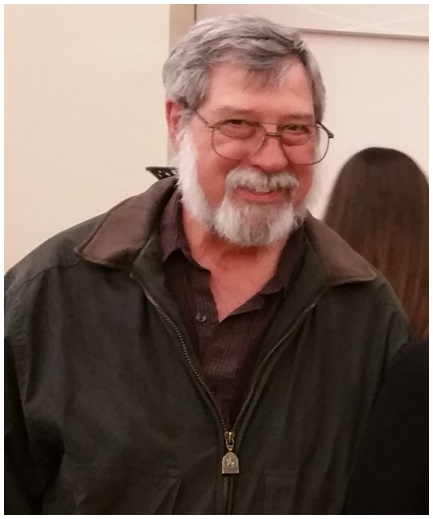
**What are your fondest memories as a student in the Geography Department?** There are so many. Like when Dr. Lyons taught us how to drink scotch during the British Isles Field School. Also when we went to Austin for the SWAAG conference and a big group of us, geographers all, got lost trying to find our way back to the hotel.

# FACULTY RETIREMENTS

After many years of service to our department, **Johnny Byers** retired in 2020, leaving for Colorado to be near his son. Johnny earned his MS in geography in our department in 1996, writing a substantial thesis on the geology and archaeology of a site in Parker County. For several years Johnny accompanied Reid Ferring on expeditions to the Republic of Georgia, and continued active field and lab work on projects here in North Texas. He was an adjunct in archaeology and geology labs and for the past 15 years was a popular instructor in both archaeology and geology courses. Johnny's enthusiasm for research and teaching was contagious and he attracted many students to majors in geography and minors in archaeology over the years. His hard work and constantly cheerful presence in our department will be missed. We all wish him the best for a happy retirement in the mountains!



**Kent McGregor** has been a stalwart presence in Geography and the Environment at UNT since 1982. When Kent was hired, UNT was a directional, teaching school with a different name — North Texas State University. We estimate that he has taught over 30,000 students during his career, with nearly half of those in Introduction to Earth Science, which he has taught 109 times. Three fundamental qualities demarcate Kent's career: 1) his care for engaging students in direct learning experiences; 2) his deep, gentle compassion and kindness for everyone he spends time with; and 3) his unmistakable ability to make intelligent, informed choices. The choice that embodies all three qualities has been Kent's dedication to stay true to his original motivation in academia, which has been to enrich the lives of students. Each experience that he provides blends in a feel of mentoring. His approach is to walk side-by-side with students during every encounter. His lectures have always been intellectually demanding, but also personal and engaging. His style has remained kind and interactive, but also with firm, well-reasoned expectations. He has taught many different classes in many different formats. During his career, the world of teaching changed dramatically from chalkboards to overheads and 35 mm slides to PowerPoint projections, Blackboard, and Canvas. Kent never stopped evolving as an educator, all the while pursuing threads of research while maintaining a high teaching load. Kent never flinches, he simply learns the next skillset, blends it with his mix of experience and earnest desire to learn and teach, and moves forward with students and colleagues.



Kent's quiet, calm support has been vital to our department, and as he moved into modified service and then retirement, it has represented a critical change for our geography community. He has always been the first in line to help others, the best at listening, a master at care-taking, but also deeply devoted to principles of honesty, curiosity, and patience. He has been a devoted, proud UNT citizen for nearly four decades. Kent, we congratulate you on your retirement!

# MISCELLANEOUS

A tie for our Most Appreciated Professor - Dr. Lisa Nagaoka and Dr. Matthew Fry


Dr. Ponette-González and her class on a day field trip this Spring 2020 semester

**FALL 2019 AND SPRING 2020 STUDENT AWARDS**

Human Geography Scholarship Award - Sandra Zarzycka
Physical Geography Scholarship Award - Jennifer Ellis
Geospatial Technology Scholarship Award - Sean Hickey

Schoolmaster Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award - Richard Kirk
Schoolmaster Outstanding Graduate Student Award - Sher Khan

**ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE NEWS -** UNT Geography formed an advancement committee to help the department be more proactive in developing a good and ongoing relationship with its community, focusing on its graduates, current and potential employers, other industry partners. Dr. Chetan Tiwari and Dr. Murray Rice are co-chairing the committee, which also consists of members Dr. Ipsita Chatterjee and Dr. Harry Williams, and valued staff members Michelle Hurt and Keshia Wilkins. So far, the committee planned a virtual GIS day event in November 2020 and are planning toward a special event connecting current students and alumni in April 2021.

Keshia, Michelle, and Steve during their weekly staff meeting, physically-distanced!

For more information about our department, please visit our website as well as our social media platforms:

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/UNTGeography
Twitter - https://twitter.com/untgeography
Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/untgeog/

Thank you for reading our inaugural newsletter. We are excited to update you in the months to come regarding what our faculty, students, and alumni are accomplishing and contributing in the world today. Together, we can usher in the next generation of students to explore the world.

**Happy Holidays from**
**the Department of Geography and the Environment!**