



2023 Student Awards

Message from the Chair

This has been another big year for our department with some significant upcoming changes. This summer the Urban and Regional Planning program and faculty will relocate to the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. The Planning program is also being revised to create a new, interdisciplinary Urban Planning and Public Administration program that utilizes the skills and expertise of urban planning and public administration faculty members.



Dr. Camille Holmgren

The Geography, Environmental Geography, and GIS programs and faculty will join with Earth Sciences in a new Department of Geosciences. This will unite much of the campus earth, environmental, climate, and GIS expertise within a single department. Students won't notice much of a change in their degree programs other than a few added courses they can select from. This merger will also facilitate greater collaboration and opportunities for undergraduate student research and support the continued, strong tradition of applied learning and mentoring inside and outside of the classroom.

In addition, this year also marks my last as Chair. After serving for five years, I am ready to pass the torch. I have learned a lot and have especially enjoyed the chance to work with students in my additional capacity as chair and celebrate all their achievements.

Please keep reading to learn about our Geography & Planning award winners, other notable activities and achievements of our students, and the efforts of Dr. Vermette to secure the Golden Snowball Trophy for Buffalo!

2022-2023 Geography & Planning Department Graduates

Environmental Geography B.S.

Krishna Antoine
Andrew Cobb
Zachary Colling
Jacob Morgan
Paul Osmon

Geography B.A.

Nicholas McDougall
Spencer Wiktorowski

Urban & Regional Planning B.S.

Kayla Pugh



Katheryne T. Whittemore Award for Outstanding Student in Geography & Planning — Zachary Colling



Zachary Colling

Named after the founding member of our department, this award is given to the most out-standing senior in either major. This is our most prestigious award. Students must have demonstrated their ability and commitment to the major, above and beyond a good GPA.

Zachary completed the Environmental Geography B.S., the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Certificate, and the Geospatial Techniques Micro-credential while maintaining a very high GPA. He prepared an excellent proposal entitled “Air Pollution Monitoring and Human Health Risk Assessment: The Niagara Falls Landfill” for the capstone Research Methods course. Zachary took advantage of the Great Lakes Environmental Science M.S. 4 + 1 Pathway and is currently working on his graduate degree in that program.

Outside of the classroom, he served a Geography tutor and worked for the Environmental Health and Safety office where he provided support for the campus Municipal Separate Storm Sewer permit. This included conducting campus outreach events, updating GIS maps, monitoring campus construction sites, and checking campus stormwater infrastructure and outfalls. In the Fall of 2021, Zach helped lead a tour of the campus green infrastructure to faculty, staff and students as part of the Applied Geography Bengal Pause series.

Zachary will have his name engraved on the plaque located in the Geography & Planning Department and will receive a \$100 check.

Congratulations, Zachary!

Chair's Discretionary Award — Krishna Antoine



Krishna Antoine

The Chair's Discretionary Award is given at the discretion of the chair, after consultation with faculty. The award is given to a student who has made an outstanding contribution to the department or college, through a particular effort in research, education, or community involvement.

After taking courses at community colleges, Krishna transferred to Buffalo State where he really thrived. He completed both a B.S. in Environmental Geography and a B.A. in Economics. In addition, he began work on his Master of Arts in Geography program at Marshall University while completing his degrees at Buffalo State—quite the accomplishment!

I first had Krishna in my remote GEG 101 World Natural Environments course during the pandemic, where he distinguished himself by his thoughtful questions and contributions to the course. I then had the pleasure of having Krishna in several additional courses where he was an engaged and dedicated student. He was a leader in class discussions and group activities, and I was especially impressed with his ability and confidence giving oral presentations. His wide-ranging curiosity about environmental and human geography will help him go far.

Krishna is starting a new job as a General Planner with the City of Buffalo's Office of Strategic Planning.

Krishna will receive a book chosen for him by the chair, as well as a certificate from the Geography & Planning Department. Well done, Krishna!

David Bullough Memorial Award for Academic Excellence — Rebecca Giangreco



Rebecca Giangreco

The **David Bullough Memorial Award for Academic Excellence** (named after the son of the late Vern Bullough, former Dean of SNSS) is awarded to the student minoring in Geography, Planning, Meteorology & Climatology, or GIS with the highest minor GPA who will not be receiving another departmental award that semester.

Rebecca is earning a minor in Geography as well her BS in Biology. She earned a high GPA in the Geography minor program, an outstanding accomplishment. After graduation, she will be working full-time as a biologist for the Army Corps of Engineers in Buffalo, NY. As part of this job, she will utilize the skills and GIS work that she learned thanks to the Geography Department.

Rebecca will receive a \$50.00 check and a certificate from the Geography & Planning Department.

Congratulations, Rebecca!

National Center for Geographic Education Excellence of Scholarship Award (Geography) — Jacob Morgan



Jacob Morgan

The **National Center for Geographic Education Excellence of Scholarship Award (Geography)** recognizes outstanding academic achievement of a Geography major. The primary criterion of this award is academic performance. Secondary criteria can include departmental service, dedication, and enthusiasm.

Jacob transferred to Buffalo State in the Fall of 2018 and completed both the B.S. in Environmental Geography and the Undergraduate GIS Certificate while maintaining a very high GPA. He also wrote an excellent research methods proposal on community barriers to composting. While a student at Buffalo State, Jacob participated in department activities such as Applied Geography Bengal Pause.

Jacob will receive an award from the NCGE as well as a certificate from the Geography and Planning Department.

Nicely done, Jacob!

Dean's List Students

Students who have complete at least 12 credit hours and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.5 for a term qualify for the Buffalo State Dean's List. Congratulations to all our Dean's List students.

Spring 2022

- Andrew Cobb
- Kathryn Furtney
- Ralph Garrett
- Austin Gilligan
- Ava LaBelle
- Cameron Murphy
- Allison Panek

Fall 2022

- Jamie Bommer
- Andrew Cobb
- Kathryn Furtney
- Ralph Garrett
- Kelley Hoffman
- Daniel Krieger
- Peter Lukasiewicz
- Patrick McMahon-Eagan
- Cameron Murphy
- Madison Palmatier
- Caitlyn Parsons
- Brennan Postich
- Samuel Semon
- Jonathan Worden

Something Different

Stephen Vermette

The Golden Snowball contest was created after the City of Buffalo experienced its snowiest winter in 1976-77 (199.4 inches). That snow season included the infamous Blizzard of '77. Each year since, the cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and Binghamton have competed for recognition of the highest seasonal snowfall. With that recognition comes the coveted trophy. In 2021-22 Buffalo won the contest but, as in 2018-19, the Mayor's Office did not claim the trophy. With Buffalo's chance of claiming the trophy melting away last summer, I took it upon myself to make the trip to Binghamton, NY (previous winner) and claim the unwanted trophy for Buffalo. With help from the Buffalo News, it worked! For the past year it has been housed here at Buffalo State University, although it is seldom found on my shelf.



The trophy has been on the road ever since it arrived. Stops included Buffalo's wing fest, the Buffalo Museum of Science, Vidler's 5 & 10 store in East Aurora, the BFLOStore, Russell's, Steaks, Chops and more ("Be my guest..."), the Buffalo & Erie County Downtown Central Public Library, and several winter festivals and events. It even took part in 42 North Brewing Company's Brewski at Knox Farm State Park (it is 47 years old, so of age) and made an appearance on Off Beat Cinema with the cool cats.

The trophy has been embraced by the community and I had the opportunity to meet so many good people. Yes, it is about snow and bragging rights but more importantly it is about us. Snow is part of our DNA, so I cannot imagine Buffalo without snow. At the time of writing, the City of Buffalo has a commanding snowfall lead for 2022-23, so the trophy will likely spend another year on tour here in WNY – all is well!

Faculty Highlights

Dr. Wende Mix to retire in August of 2024

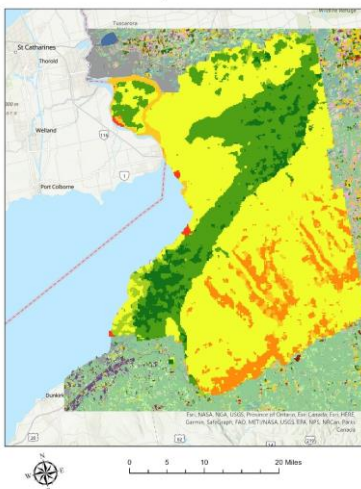
Dr. Mix will retire at the end of August 2024 after 20 years of teaching and service to the Geography and Planning Department. As a member of the faculty, Wende helped to develop the GIS minor and GIS certificate programs, developed the web mapping course and transportation planning courses, mentored many students from various departments through independent studies and secured municipal tree mapping grants that employed many students over the years. Most recently, Dr. Mix has served as the Associate Chair of the Data Science and Analytics Interdisciplinary unit where she teach Geospatial Programming.

In her free time, she plans to spend summers at her house on Lake Ontario, falls camping in the National Parks in the US and Canada and winters on the slopes in Park City, Utah and the Canadian Rockies. She is also planning several trips to Europe, SE Asia, a trip to Mach Picchu, Patagonia and Antarctica. Next year she will be teaching the web mapping course remotely for the department and other data science courses. Best of all, she will be able to babysit her (soon-to-be) four grandchildren and take them off on adventures with her husband and dogs! And, she will be free to visit her kids living across the country.

Congratulations Wende!

Dr. Tang completes draft of a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) textbook

Assessment of breeding habitat of the red-winged blackbird in Erie County, NY



Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a popular utility for data analyses in both science, social science, and engineering analysis and applications. Dr. Tang secured a sabbatical during the Fall 2022 semester to write a GIS textbook that attempts to combine both the theoretical and conceptual approaches and hands-on practices in ArcGIS Pro software environment. The first draft of this textbook was accomplished and contains discussions of concepts and theories, instructor lead hands-on tutorials, and student hands-on exercise projects. First part of this textbook has been used for teaching GEG425/525 class this semester (Spring of 2023). The latter part of the textbook will be used for teaching GEG428/528 class. The following is a map generated by one of the hands-on tutorials.

Alumni, we want to hear from you! Where are you? What are you doing? Please contact the department so you can be featured in our next newsletter. Email: Mary Perrelli at perrelmf@buffalostate.edu

Student Highlights

Mykayla Williams (EVG) – Mykayla is the recipient of the Bengal Internship Award. She will be interning this summer with the Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Kathryn Furtney (EVG) – Katie spent the spring 2023 semester studying abroad at the Sienna University in Italy and had a great experience. She says, “I recommend everyone study abroad during their time in college. It was such a transformative experience for me! “

Madison Palmatier (EVG) – Madison will participate in an Ecology and Conservation program in Kenya from July 2-29. The course is split between an eco-campus in Limuru and the Pardamat Conservation Area in Maasai Mara. Madison will learn both in the classroom and in the field about indigenous vegetation, wetland health and the impacts of global climate change.

Kelley Hoffman (EVG) – Attended the ESRI Developer Summit in Palm Springs, California from March 7-10, 2023. She will also be completing a summer GIS internship with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

Cameron Murphy (PLN) – presented his poster titled “Exclusionary Zoning in Erie County, NY” at the annual Student Research and Creativity Conference on May 5, 2023.

Brittany Fiore (EVG) – Is completing a summer internship with 3rd Rock, LLC where she will be performing testing and analysis of soil, rock, concrete and geosynthetic materials for the construction industry.

Watershed Analysis Field Trips

Standing on a point bar on a beautiful Autumn day, students taking Watershed Analysis (GEG 421) spent the day walking along Sprague Brook (Sprague Brook Park) identifying and noting stream-related features. The class again gathered along Scajaquada Creek (Forest Lawn Cemetery) to monitor water quality and examine a reconstructed wetland. The field trips were led by Dr. Vermette and Prof. Perrelli.

