

Department of Geography & Planning Newsletter



Volume 2: Winter 2006

Another year has passed. Once again, the Geography and Planning Department at Buffalo State College would like to share with you some of the highlights of faculty, staff and student achievements during this time.

A special feature in this year's newsletter is a report by Veryan Vermette on her travels in Poland and Germany this summer. Other newsworthy activities are summarized in:

[Department News](#)

[Faculty News](#)

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Message from the Chair

Welcome to our second volume of the Department of Geography and Planning Newsletter. We had an extremely positive response to our first volume and it was great to hear from alumni old and new, as well as emeritus faculty. This year certainly has been a busy year and a year of change. We said goodbye to Dr. Shreeram Inamdar who held a half time appointment with us and half time in the Great Lakes Center. Dr. Inamdar took on new challenges in the Department of Bioresources Engineering, University of Delaware. We welcomed Dr. Vida Vanchan who has helped us solidify our interests in business and economic geography and meet the growing demand for regional geography courses.

It has been particularly satisfying that the department's effort to attract more majors over the past couple of years appears to be paying off. Both the

Geography (B.A.) and Planning (B.S.) programs progressively have increased in size over the past few years and we welcomed more new majors last year than in any other year since the mid-1980's. We also have more students minoring in Geography, Planning, or Meteorology and Climatology than ever before. To help continue this positive growth trend I ask that you give consideration to supporting our new initiatives to offer scholarships to deserving, incoming students, or to support our growing tradition of place-based learning and service learning courses; these initiatives are described at the end of the newsletter.



Student award presentation ceremony 2006

Department News

Summer Field Course in Cambodia

The Chancellor's Award for Internationalization is a response to SUNY's long-range goal for increased internationalization. The competitive grants provide opportunities for SUNY students to have an academic experience in a country that is less commonly visited. The Department of Geography and Planning obtained a Chancellor's Award and took 10 students on a three week field experience in Cambodia and Thailand in the summer of 2006.

The students were a multidisciplinary group, with majors ranging from Urban Planning to Theatre, but the central theme of the field experience was sustainable development in a developing country.

Students first traveled to Bangkok. Here they visited the Grand Palace/Temple complex, a cultural center, and took in the street life. The first stop in Cambodia was Phnom Penh. In Phnom Penh students took in new experiences including a very somber visit to the S-21 prison and a killing field. Among other activities they spent part of a day with fellow students from the Royal University of Phnom Penh and joined



with some of them to sample water quality along the Mekong River and wetlands.

In Kean Svay and Leavime they learned of sustainable development initiatives, staying in a Khmer village and building a well and rainwater harvesting tank. They then traveled to Sihanoukville to experience an under developed coastal community. The final stop was Siem Reap to experience the ancient Angkor temples. The common thread running through the course was an exploration of both culture and sustainable development. The course text was titled "Cry from the Forest", a Buddhist manual for teaching about building a sustainable environment.

Buffalo State students and faculty in front of Angkor Wat, Cambodia



Planning major Harmony Gugino helps to build a rainwater harvesting tank and Geography major Yen Nguyen explores the Ta Prohm temple.

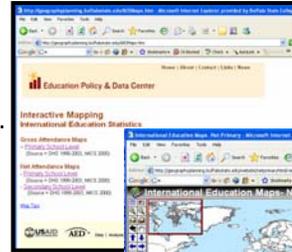
Department Internet Mapping Server

The Research Foundation of SUNY, Buffalo State College has provided the Department of Geography and Planning a new server to be used primarily for demonstrating research and education applications of Internet based Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The server currently hosts three applications; Dr. Stephen Vermette's Weatherlink site (see below) and two applications developed by Dr. Wendé Mix and Mary Perrelli using ESRI's ARCIMS software.

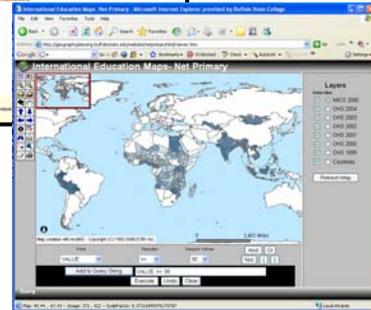
The International Education

Mapping Application was developed for the Education Policy & Data Center (EPDC) of the Academy for Educational Development (AED). Dr. Mix is currently incorporating additional indicators and applications to enhance this web-based mapping tool for EPDC.

Dr. Mix has also has developed an interactive mapping application that provides access to data used by the Mayor's Anti-Flipping Task Force. Dr. Mix has continued to build a spatial database and conduct analysis for the AFTF throughout the past year. She is currently adding data related to arson fires, demolitions, and building permits to the system.



Example of EPDC/AED Internet mapping application



An American Weather Tradition Becomes a Buffalo State Tradition

by Stephen Vermette

February 2nd marks a pivotal date in the world of meteorology. This is the date that rests half-way between Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox, and it is at this time that America's oldest and most experienced weather prognosticator groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, forecasts the weather for the next six weeks. Will he see his shadow, calling for six more weeks of winter, or will he call for an early spring?

To witness this extraordinary event, and to celebrate the Buffalo State meteorology/climatology program, nine Buffalo State students journeyed to Punxsutawney, PA (first use of the school's new van). These students were of a hearty breed given that they were required to stand outside for hours, in winter weather, to be the first to hear this year's prognostication. At one point the group even included a student from NYPIRG prepared to protest global warming while dressed as a groundhog. Unfortunately, some other organization

had the suit and the student backed out! Not to be deterred, he swore he would be back next year. Decked out with groundhog beads and hats, as well as top hats, the students took in the festivities, including attending a comedy club (we expected more groundhog jokes) and watching the movie "Groundhog Day". At 3:00 a.m. the group marched 1.5 miles up to Gobblers Knob. It was along this walk that the students learned that a knob refers to a rounded hill – yes it was all up hill. Over 14,000 people gathered, waiting through the early morning dark and cold, for the rising sun and the awakening of Punxsutawney Phil. A huge bonfire, dancers, and fireworks worked to keep everyone warm, awake and excited. Reporters were poised to announce the news across the country. Would it be six more weeks of winter or an early spring? At 7:23 a.m., Punxsutawney Phil was taken from his stump by the esteemed members of the Inner Circle (the ones who wear the "official" top hats), and after looking around for a few minutes Phil declared "six more weeks of winter". It was over so quickly! The Buffalo State group then walked down into town to enjoy an early



morning pizza (it wasn't really breakfast as no one ever did sleep) and took in the final event, a visit to the Weather and Folklore Discovery Center. Just as Bill Murray experienced a long Groundhog's Day in the movie, this too was a day that seemed to go on and on for the Buffalo State group. Twenty-four hours after leaving Buffalo we returned home tired, but satisfied that we had witnessed something unique (...or maybe we were just tired!). Until next year...

Kim Irvine, remains department chair and continues his research, education, and capacity building work in Cambodia and Thailand. In addition to co-directing the Cambodia field course in the summer of 2006, he was invited by the International Foundation for Science (IFS)/Swedish International



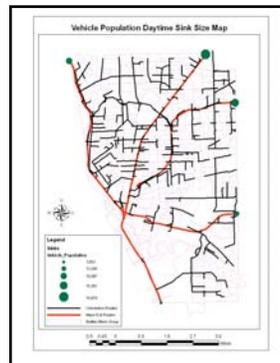
Master's student Kimly Reth sampling water for nutrient and algal toxin analysis, Buffalo River

Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to become the Team Mentor for a funded project entitled *The Role of Phnom Penh's Wetlands in Sustainably Treating Sewage Discharges to the Mekong /Bassac River System*. This two year project involves four faculty from the Royal University of Phnom Penh, one faculty from the Asian Institute of Technology (Bangkok), a Ph. D. student from Chiang Mai University, Thailand, a local NGO, Resource Development International – Cambodia, and staff from the Cambodian Ministry of Environment.

Closer to home, Dr. Irvine is completing a project with Mary Perrelli that maps environmental quality data for the Niagara River watershed, an effort funded by the U.S. EPA. He also obtained funding from Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers for a project to evaluate nutrient and algae levels and eutrophic status of the Buffalo River. Dr. Irvine recently published a paper in the *Urban Water Journal* and a chapter in a book related to his sewer research in North America, as well as a chapter in a book (with Dr. Vermette and Dr. Tang) that provided an overview of water quality issues in Cambodia.

Tao Tang published a paper entitled "GIS Simulation and Visualization of Community Evacuation Vulnerability in a Connected Geographic Network Model" with a former undergraduate student Melissa Wannemacher in the *Journal of MS Geographers*.

Dr. Tang conducted summer field research using ground Lidar remote sensing in collaboration with faculty and graduate students at the GIS and remote sensing laboratory, Capital Normal University, Beijing, China.



Spatial simulation of vehicle accumulation in GIS during disaster evacuation



Lidar survey of digital elevation model (DEM)

Dr. Tang also presented a paper: "Coupling land use/land cover in a GIS distributed watershed model" at the Association of American Geographers 2006 Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

He co-taught the Cambodia Field Experience summer course with Dr. Irvine and Dr. Vermette.



Stephen Vermette's

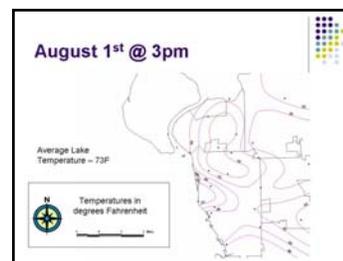
research and travels in Cambodia continue. Last summer Stephen worked with Kim Irvine and Tao Tang in developing and teaching a field course in Cambodia with 10 Buffalo State students (see summer field course in this issue). Additional funding from the Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation allowed Stephen, Kim, Tao, and Mickey Sampson to continue their research on the quality of drinking water sources in Cambodia. The sampling has come to an end, and the four will conduct a workshop in Cambodia (January 2007), training Cambodians to work with large datasets (in this case water quality data). Results from this workshop will be used in the project's final report.

Funding from NOAA (Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab) will allow Stephen, working with Tom Nizio (National Weather Service), to study the amount and intensity of rainfall that leads to high bacterial levels at recreational beaches. The New York Power Authority has funded the continuation and expansion of Buffalo's

Buffalo State students sampling waste water during the summer course in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Lake Breeze project (a network of temperature sensors located across Buffalo and surrounding suburbs). Temperature and relative humidity sensors have also been installed in a Pennsylvania cave and data from these sensors will be used to develop a cave-specific climatology. Stephen recently published a paper (the journal *Natural Hazards*) on the climatology of New York's storms of tropical origin, as well as a chapter in a book (with Kim Irvine and Tao Tang) on water quality issues in Cambodia.

Stephen continues to serve as Co-coordinator of the New York Geographic Alliance (with Ginny Figura). Renewed funding from the National Geographic Society will allow a number of activities to move forward in the upcoming year. Foremost of these activities is a summer institute for teachers along the Erie Canal - ExpERIENCE 2007.



Kelly Frothingham is working on a research project with Heather Lewis, a Geography undergrad participating in the McNair Scholars Program. The McNair Scholars Program is a federally funded program that encourages underrepresented students, including women in science, to study at the doctoral level. Heather is developing a survey to gauge public opinion on watershed issues in the Gott Creek watershed in Clarence, NY. It's anticipated that Heather will administer her survey in the early spring and complete her project by the time she graduates in the spring of 2007.

Dr. Frothingham presented a poster entitled "The Effect of Ice Cover on Stream Channel Morphology in a Reach of Cazenovia Creek, NY" at the Middle States Association of American Geographers annual meeting held at Rutgers University in October. She is submitting an article based on that presentation to the *Middle States Geographer*.

Dr. Frothingham is excited to be working with Dr. Stephen Vermette on the 39th volume of the *Middle States*



Students preparing for winter field work.

Geographer, Journal of the Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers. Drs. Frothingham and Vermette have been editing the *Middle States Geographer* with Dr. Irvine who, after 11 years as lead editor of the journal, has decided to step down and hand over the reins to Dr. Frothingham and Dr. Vermette. They're looking forward to next year when they'll be taking the journal into the 21st century by publishing it on-line.

On the teaching front, Dr. Frothingham started teaching BSC 101 Foundations of Inquiry this semester. BSC 101 is a course for freshman enrolled in the

College's new Intellectual Foundations degree program. BSC 101 is designed to get our freshmen to begin to think critically, learn how to do research, and understand the benefits of a liberal arts education. Lofty goals and teaching this course has been challenging, but enjoyable!

Wende Mix recently returned from the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) annual meeting in Miami, FL where she made a presentation entitled "From Classroom to Community: A Challenge in Urban Planning". This presentation was based on her service learning course on Community Planning.

In addition, she has continued working with the City of Buffalo's Anti-Flipping Task Force developing data sets to investigate fraudulent house flipping activity. Part of her research includes investigating social consequences or impacts on neighborhoods of fraudulent housing market activities. Her most recent analysis demonstrates the relationship between house flipping and neighborhoods in racial transition.

Dr. Mix continues her efforts to enhance Internet mapping capabilities at Buffalo State. In addition to developing web applications for AED and the AFTF, she has been researching alternative strategies for web based delivery of maps, focusing on increased flexibility to accommodate different skill levels of potential users.

Dr. Mix currently is a member of the College's Grant St. Task Force, organized by the College and Community Partnerships program. This group is working with the neighboring community to identify partnership opportunities and foster collaboration between the college and the community.



Vida Vanchan

joined the faculty in the spring of 2006. She recently completed her doctorate degree in International Economic and Business

Geographies from the University of Buffalo. Dr. Vanchan's research interests include industrial competitiveness and competitive characteristics of firms within the service industry sector; technology and innovation; economic, social, and regional development; foreign direct investment, free trade agreements; regional, industrial, and

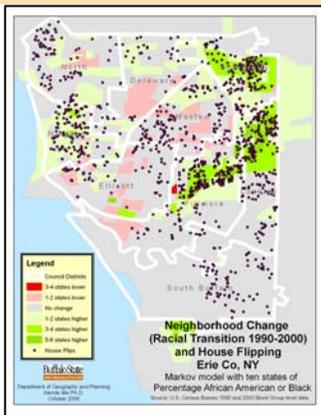
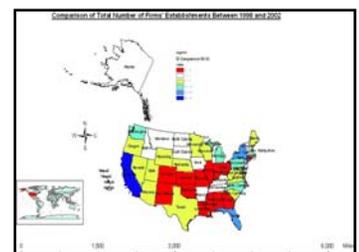
political effects of international trade and trade development; multicultural management and negotiation; and economies of Southeast Asian and less-developed countries.

Dr. Vanchan teaches courses in world regional geography, geography of Asia, urban geography, and corporate applications in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).



(Above) Top ten metropolitan areas of industrial design firms' establishments from 1998 to 2002.

(Below) Locational changes of industrial design firms between 1998 and 2002



Dr. Mix has also conducted research on annual urban residential mobility data provided in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. This research stems from efforts made for the AFTF. Unfortunately, the Oct 13th storm prevented her from presenting her work on this topic at the Middle States AAG conference at Rutgers.



My Street Oct 13, 2006

Polska – piękny! Germany - Großartig

Professor Veryan Vermette

During the summer of 2006, I had the privilege and pleasure of volunteering with UNESCO through the Kosciuszko Foundation's "Teaching English in Poland" (TEIP) program. The Kosciuszko Foundation is headquartered in NYC; Buffalo serves as one of three regional centers. I was among the 36 national teacher applicants chosen to travel to one of four "English Language Camps" scattered across Poland for the month of July. At the Nadwarciański Gród Scout Camp near the village of Załęcze Wielkie, my group of nine teachers and nine teaching assistants taught conversational English to 100 Polish children aged 11-15 years. My daughter, Kyrie, acted as my very able and very supportive teaching assistant.

The National Park setting of the camp was *piękny* (meaning 'beautiful, wonderful' – my new favorite word!). Stands of silver birch and fir trees were surrounded by the gently rolling fields of waving wheat and green meadows typical of the North European Plain, miles of hiking and cycling trails, small sand beaches edging the flat-bottomed,

shallow Warta River, and skies free of everything but bugs, birds, clouds, and sun. Endless sun. *Relentless sun.*



Nadwarciański Gród Camp

Poland, like much of Europe in 2006, experienced an "extremely" hot and dry July, and I use "extreme" in the climatological sense. Poland shares the Dfb Köppen climate classification with Western New York. Expecting the variability of summer weather 'typical' of the Buffalo region, I was unprepared for daily temperatures in the 90-100° F range. Bottled water was at a premium (untreated natural sources are not potable) and all physical activities were cancelled twice on doctor's orders as campers suffered from heat exhaustion

and dehydration. Only two afternoons of the four weeks were punctuated by short thunderstorms and these brought out the children *and* the frogs...hundreds... thousands...of fingernail-sized peepers to hand-sized beasts.

Despite the heat, the Program retained its busy pace. Former TEIP teachers had warned that days were full and fast-paced from sunrise to sunset. Though the day's scheduled activities began several hours after sunrise (~3:30 am in early July) they often continued well beyond sunset (~11:00 pm).



My outdoor 'classroom' (aka 'the picnic shelter')

At least in one sense, the hot and dry conditions were greatly appreciated. Due to a shortage of indoor space, my classroom was a large, open-sided, hexagonal wooden 'picnic' shelter festooned with maps, weather posters, pictures, and patriotic decorations. This delightful outdoor setting did have some minor distractions: mosquitoes, bees, ants (which lived up to their reputation of being "in the pants" more than once!), dirt, wind, sun, camp noises, and the music of the ice cream truck parked across the river. For classes, I sat or stood surrounded by 12-15 students seated on woven mats on the floor. My physical and human geography lessons about American cultural groups progressed via displays, storytelling, question-and-answer, and hands-on activities – or "feet-on" in the case of the square dancing and hula lessons. To address the wide disparity of English-speaking ability among the students, playacting was quickly added to the curriculum!

In addition to the four hours of formal morning classes, the TEIP staff interacted with campers during afternoon and evening sports, crafts, and games activities and special events such as campfires, Halloween, America

Day, and a talent show. Camp activities even included kayaking and caving. My appreciation and understanding of the Polish culture was enhanced through participation in Polish language ("dzień dobry" – "hello"), dance (RAZ, dwa, trzy... – ONE, two, three...), and craft lessons, and through touring with the Polish staff (Warsaw, the Black Madonna at Czestochova, Krakow, Wielichka Salt Mine, and Zakopane were among the sites visited).

Polish Day, presented by the Polish staff and students, revealed to us the unique, deeply-treasured Polska culture through song, dance, art, and food. And, Oh! The food! On Polish Day I discovered that the large stone chimney centered in my 'classroom' was actually the much-revered wood-burning bread oven. Many of us participated in the mixing, baking, and distribution of the bread. One lovely tradition was that the bread, taken fragrant and hot from the oven, was wrapped in linen cloths and cradled in the hands of well-wishers as guests tore pieces from it. These delectable pieces were then dipped into pork lard, garlic butter, topped with soft white farmer's cheese and consumed with huge dill pickles and small, buttered potatoes. Pastries, cookies, and chocolate

provided the sweet to complement the savory, and all was washed down with soured milk or blackcurrant juice. Truly *piękny!* Traditional dancing, singing, and storytelling around the campfire rounded out a memorable day.



Preparing the bread oven (in my outdoor 'classroom')



The presentation of the bread was a feast for the eyes, as well as the palate

Faculty News

At the end of the month-long camp, the American staff presented the Polish campers with gifts. Thanks to the generous contributions of several Buffalo State College departments and organizations (*listed below), I was able to gift the students with t-shirts, tote bags, hats, pocket tool kits, and sundry BSC paraphernalia, among other items.

Seemingly too soon, we said "do widzenia" to Poland...but "Guten Tag" to Germany. Having lived so simply and quietly for the month in Poland, I suffered culture shock upon entering the popular culture mentality of our two-week 'guided-tour-of-Deutschland' experience. For example, I was taken aback by advertisements printed on the hotel toilet paper and by the rotating, self-cleaning toilet seats in the German "Sani-fare" (= sanitary + pay to use) comfort stations!

Our tour began and ended in **Frankfurt**



A view across the North European Plain in central Poland.

Despite it being rather narrow in this region (near its headwaters), and decidedly brown in color, I was greatly excited to have seen it. (By this time, it was well-known by my touring companions that I became excited by 'odd' things due to my being a geographer!) As we neared **Munich**, we exchanged the flatness of the North European Plain for the rolling Alpine foothills of the Central Uplands region. Munich is the 'capital' of Bavaria and sports the traditional timber-on-wattle houses many of us associate with the entire country. Continuing on, a chilling visit to **Dachau** was eased by one to **Oberammergau**, an Alpine village displaying beautiful scenic artwork on nearly every building and the site of the world's largest Passion Play, performed every tenth year by a troupe composed of the entire village!

Perhaps my favorite part of this two-week excursion was the day spent in



(L) Central Uplands Region (R) Bavaria, Germany

and took us through Germany's highly distinctive culture regions, making each stop seem like a different country. Different dialects, traditions, foods, clothing, and handicrafts (ie: 'souvenirs'). And very different weather than the month in Poland! The pendulum swung back *past* the Dfb 'normal' and provided chilly day after chilly day of precipitation.

Our first day included a short **Rhine River Cruise** – I was chortling with delight to be on the river I speak of so frequently in lectures!! From Frankfurt we journeyed to **Cologne** (we scaled the ~400 stairs to the heights of the cathedral tower), **Dusseldorf** and **Bremen**. In **Hamburg** I was amazed by the port facilities seen during our harbor tour - and those container ships are *huge*. Our next major stop was **Berlin**. Peering through holes in the Wall from old East to West Germany was a sobering and heart-wrenching experience. Only ~1.5 miles of the wall remain in the original location, and even these are not officially protected. Also in Berlin, I was *thrilled* to visit Humboldt University – founded by Alexander von Humboldt, the "Father of Modern Geography". We continued on to **Potsdam**, **Dresden**, **Modlareuth** (aka 'Little Berlin' when, overnight, the Berlin Wall bisected the village and its

and around Salzburg, Austria. The city itself is beautiful and historical – we even had a few hours of sun! – but the ultimate highlight was leaving the city behind and getting up into and *onto* the Alps! These magnificent mountains are breathtaking, awe-inspiring, and invigorating. I was *giddy* with excitement (or was it altitude?).

Back in Germany, more gleeful chortling (on my part) ensued as we traversed the **Schwartzwald** (or Black Forest - another *oft-mentioned* location in my classes). This included a stop at the ancient spa of **Baden Baden**. The mineral waters may be restorative but I would have preferred to bath in than drink them (grimace!). Our last stop, before returning to Frankfurt, was at the university town of **Heidelberg** where we learned that truant students in the previous century were *imprisoned* for missing classes (hmmmm.....)!



families), **Bayreuth**, **Nuremberg** and **Rothenburg** (a quaint though tourist-infested village and the best preserved Medieval town in Germany).

Enroute to Munich, we crossed the world-famous "**Blue Danube**" River.



Container ships in the port of Hamburg



Oberammergau, Southern Germany

Having seen too much to report here (and too much to internalize while there), suffice it to say that Germany is Großartig (grand). Every city had magnificent architecture and statuary, castles, quaint markets, and local foods which must be tried (in the Black Forest the tort was *liberally* 'liquored!') Of the many, many, *many* castles seen (in both Poland and Germany), the most impressive was **Neuschwanstein** in southern Bavaria (being *far more impressive* than the Disney rendition of it). And it was VERY interesting to hear the same (?) historical events recounted from both the Polish and German perspectives. I said "Auf Wiedersehen" to Germany (via one last night in Poland) the morning after the terrorist threat to bomb ten US-bound planes was uncovered, making the return trip an adventure in itself. (Continued)



Neuschwanstein Castle Southern Germany

Views of the Berlin Wall

I have returned home culturally enriched and ready to share my experiences with my students, and anyone else willing to listen (or read). These experiences will enhance my classes for many years. The volunteer work in Poland will have a lasting impact on me. In fact, I hope to do it again next year (followed by a "side trip" to Scandinavia and Iceland!). I strongly encourage everyone to consider donating their time and talents – and/or their money and goods! – to the very worthy TEIP program. I also encourage you to travel, travel, travel because, as St. Augustine said,



Office. I hope to go again next summer so anyone wishing to make contributions (of gifts, supplies, or money for the purchase thereof) for the 2007 program may contact me at

vermetvg@buffalostate.edu. If you would like to donate to the Foundation directly, or get more information about it and the TEIP program, please visit <http://www.kosciuszkofoundation.org/>.

Scott Pickard published a paper in *Bulletin of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology* entitled "Bioavailability of Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) from Surficial Lake Erie Sediments". The paper was co-authored with J. Clarke and G. Lotufo of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and it showed that there is a wide range of PAH bioavailability in Lake Erie sediments, including reduced bioavailability in sediments from the Dunkirk area due to binding from soot originating with the coal-fired power plant. Scott teaches courses in Environmental Impact Assessment and Conservation and Environmental Management for the department and holds a full time position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District.

"The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page."

*Many thanks to the Buffalo State College departments and organizations making contributions to the Kosciuszko Foundation's 2006 "Teaching English in Poland" (TEIP) program: the Department of Geography and Planning, Barnes and Noble Bookstore, Math and Science Center Upward Bound Program, the Orientation Office, Residence Life Office, and Undergraduate Research

William Wieczorek is a Professor in the Department of Geography and Planning who is the Director of the Center for Health and Social Research (<http://www.buffalostate.edu/centers/chsr/>) at Buffalo State. Dr. Wieczorek is actively involved with the department in such roles as the liaison for human subject ethics, chair of the personnel committee, and offering a graduate-level program evaluation course.

During the past year, Dr. Wieczorek has presented a number of papers at national and international conferences, worked with local mental health agencies, and collaborated with colleagues at various universities. He also directs the Scholarship Support Program (SSP), which provides conceptual and technical assistance to faculty and staff at Buffalo State. Of particular note relating to the SSP, Dr. Wieczorek was the primary author of a grant supported through this program that led to an award from the Department of Justice to fund a project to prevent violence against women on campus.

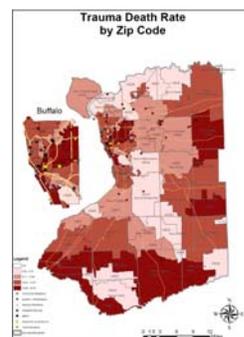
Dr. Wieczorek and Alan Delmerico (research analyst at the Center and part-time instructor in the department) were selected to participate in a symposium on geography and drug addiction sponsored by the National

Institute on Drug Abuse and the Association of American Geographers (AAG). The symposium was a special event held in conjunction with the annual AAG conference in Chicago. Their paper reported on the identification of spatial clusters of illicit drug use and the association of these clusters with neighborhood risk factors.

In July, Dr. Wieczorek presented an invited paper at the 26th International Congress on Applied Psychology held in Athens, Greece. This paper reported on his research that examined predictors of aggressive driving among a sample of DWI offenders. In another invited paper at the Interface Society of North America (interface between computer science and statistics) held in collaboration with the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, he discussed issues associated with using data mining techniques to examine large epidemiological data sets on drug and alcohol abuse.

The Risk Indicator Database (RIDB) was developed for a project with local community-based service providers and the Erie County Mental Health Department. The RIDB is a web-based software application that is utilized to assist in the planning of services and for conducting needs assessments. The RIDB provides reports that identify key

social indicators and includes zip-code level maps for these indicators.



Among collaborative efforts with colleagues at other institutions, Dr. Wieczorek is the co-mentor (with Dr. Edward Wegman, Chair of the National Academies of Science Committee on Applied and Theoretical Statistics) for Dr. Yasmin Said on her postdoctoral award from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. This project is developing advanced statistical simulations of the alcohol ecological system, which can be used to examine potential interventions and policies to reduce the massive health burden caused by alcohol misuse. Also, Dr. Wieczorek was recognized by the SUNY Research Foundation at Buffalo State with a "Million Dollar Club" award for his success in obtaining external funding over the past five years.

Katheryne Whittemore Memorial Fund

The department would like to thank the Katheryne Whittemore family for their generous support of the Katheryne Whittemore Memorial Fund. The department established the Kathryn T. Whittemore Award for the Outstanding Graduate in Geography and Planning in 1982, through the support of the Fund. These students have gone on to successful careers with private consulting firms and planning departments throughout western New York, as well as with GIS companies. And, of course, our own Kelly Frothingham (Monahan) (1994 recipient) who obtained her Ph.D. at the University of Illinois has been on faculty with us since 2000.

The founding member of the Geography Department at Buffalo State in 1926, Dr. Whittemore had a distinguished career, serving as the President of the National Council of Geographic Education (NCGE) in 1946 and receiving the NCGE Distinguished Service Award in 1959. Dr. Whittemore also received the Susan B. Anthony award from the Interclub Council of Western New York in 1968 in

recognition of her outstanding professional achievements and service to the community. She did a great deal of traveling in pursuing her research interests and we still maintain a collection of her slides in the department. Coincidentally, her research and travels included a focus on the Buffalo Harbor and Asia – themes that are prominent in the department now.

Our department continues the tradition of travel and research and we very much encourage our undergraduate students to make presentations of their research at professional conferences. The Katheryne Whittemore Memorial Fund recently has helped to support travel related to the research and presentation of results at professional conferences in Thailand for Ms. Amy Krueger (newsletter volume 1) and Ms. Harmony Gugino (current volume of newsletter), as well as for our first Cambodian graduate student, Ms. Kimly Reth.

Harmony Gugino and Ngoen Klan Ratchadawan, Ph.D. student at Chiang Mai University, sample water in the Mae Kha canal, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Harmony Gugino obtained a summer research fellowship from the Office of Under-graduate Research at Buffalo State and under the mentorship of Dr. Kim Irvine, spent two weeks in Chiang Mai, Thailand conducting field work in support of her project. With the help of Chiang Mai faculty and students, she studied the impacts of the urban environment on water quality in the Mae Kha canal and the implications for planning the urban environment. The city negatively impacted water quality, but the management of water quality does not necessarily lend itself to simple end-of-pipe solutions. In particular, the existence of informal settlements along the canal presents some difficult social issues. She will present the results of her work at the 4th International Symposium on Southeast Asia Water Environment in Bangkok on Dec 6-8 and at Chaing Mai University Research Day Dec 10.



Middle States AAG Several students presented posters at the Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers' conference at Rutgers this October then enjoyed some R&R with faculty and friends.



Amy Krueger (above) and Katherine Winkler (below) at MSAAG conference



Student Awards Please visit our [web site](#) to see a summary of awards presented last Spring to students in the Geography and Urban Planning Dept.



Place – based learning experience

Buffalo State students built a rainwater harvest tank for an elementary school in Cambodia and drinking water well for several families during the summer course.



Thanks to all Alumni who responded to our first newsletter. Here is a sample of

what you have told us about your careers and lives.

E. Daniel Walther IV ('01) writes:

I accepted a full time position with the New York Army National Guard about 3.5 years ago. I was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in 2004 returning in late 2005. It was very interesting to experience the various weather phenomenon of the Middle East. I experienced temperatures as low as 29°F in December and highs in the mid 130s°F in August. Sand, the consistency of talcum powder that when the wind blows, gets into EVERYTHING. The mountain formations in the northern part of the country brought memories of Ray Waxmonsky's GEG-101 class lectures. In March, the mountains in the north (old Kurdistan) were snow covered. My sincere thanks to my fellow alumni and instructors who kept in contact with me. The updates from the home front helped the time pass by.

Steven Rubenstein ('84 Urban and Regional Planning) writes:

I took a job teaching math with the New York City Board of Education. I am completing my 20th year with the Board, currently serving as an assistant principle supervising the mathematics department at Murry Bergtraum High School in Manhattan. I have been urging my counterpart in the social studies department to offer the Advanced Placement exam in Human Geography. I do this for selfish reasons since I would want to teach the class. At least then I can say that I have been able to put my degree to good use. Although it has been over twenty years since I was at Buffalo State, please send my regards to Drs. Waxmonsky and Beaudet.

Gregory Stone ('00) writes:

I have been working as an analyst in the Analysis and Production Directorate of Analysis and Production Directorate of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in Washington DC. This follows 3+ years as a Geographer at the US Census Bureau in Suitland, MD. My experience at Buffalo State provided

many skills that prove useful even today. For example, I took Dr. Tang's Map and Air Photo Interpretation course, Prof. King's Corporate Applications in GIS, and Dr. Waxmonsky's course in economic geography. In addition, two internships with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning and Malcolm Pirnie provided practical insights. All of this experience at Buffalo State built my confidence and skill. I just wanted to thank the Geography Department once again.

Jacob Pastwik ('03) writes:

I recently graduated from the University of Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning. I now have a M.U.P. with a specialization in urban design. Throughout my studies I have worked at Menne Nursery in Amherst, since 1998, and have found it a great place to work. I'm currently in job search mode and am looking both in and out of state, although I hope to stay within a 4-5 hour drive of Buffalo, my hometown.

Gregory Keyser ('06, Urban-Regional Analysis & Planning) writes:

I am currently employed at Conestoga, Rovers & Associates in Buffalo as an Environmental Planner.

My role and responsibilities are focused in water and wastewater infrastructure planning. I am currently assisting in the development of our Municipal Asset Management business initiative. Some of the recent projects I have worked on include GIS needs assessments and implementation, unaccounted for water studies, utility cost of service analysis, regional utility systems planning and water system master planning.

I recently presented my senior thesis project at the New York State GIS conference in Lake Placid, N.Y.

Keith Harding ('04) worked as a consultant for Verdi & Co. (GIS Consulting Firm) upon his graduation from Buffalo State. Keith has now decided to work part-time for Verdi and continue his education in the U.B. Master's program in Management Information Systems.

Mark Glofka ('96) is a cartographic researcher with Rochester based Map Works, Inc.

Department Support

The department is establishing two new initiatives, in addition to the Katherine Whittemore Memorial Fund that we hope you will support. First, in our effort to attract outstanding new majors, we are establishing a scholarship fund that will assist these students during their first two years at Buffalo State. Second, we are establishing a fund that will help to support student participation in our place-based (e.g. Cambodia, Bahamas, Canadian Arctic, Caving) and service-learning courses (particularly urban planning experiences with community planning groups). For more information regarding these initiatives and how to support them, please contact Dr. Kim Irvine by email at irvinekn@buffalostate.edu or by telephone, 716-878-6204.

Alumni: We want to hear from YOU. Please send us a note or email to let us know what you are doing.



Kevin Kloesz receives the National Council for Geographic Education Award 2006

Please feel free to send any comments or questions to our Newsletter Editor, Dr. Wende Mix, at mixwa@buffalostate.edu

Buffalo State SUNY
Geography and Planning Department
Classroom Building A213
1300 Elmwood Ave
Buffalo, NY 14222-1095

Mailing label