

# Department of Geography & Planning Newsletter



Volume 5: Winter 2009

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### *Message from the Chair*

Welcome to the fifth annual department newsletter and my first as department chair. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Kim Irvine for his nine years of exceptional service as chair of the department. I feel fortunate coming into a situation where the department has had years of strong leadership. I'd also like to note what an

outstanding group of faculty and staff we have in the department. Obviously I've been aware of the talent in the department, but getting to read everyone's annual reports documenting their 2008-2009 accomplishments really brought home this fact. I was especially pleased to see a number of new and on-going research projects taking place that involved our majors. Students worked on various projects with department faculty and then some of them presented the results from these projects, as well as from other research studies, at professional conferences. A number of majors presented at the Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting held last fall in Millersville, PA and the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Research and Creativity Day held here on campus in April. I think this shows how dedicated our faculty are to undergraduate research and education and it also speaks volumes about how capable our geography and planning majors are. I'm confident that

we will continue to provide opportunities for fun and exciting learning experiences for our geography and planning majors and I look forward to supporting this type of activity as chair of the department.

Speaking of geography & planning majors participating in fun and exciting things, we welcomed four new majors and two students here on exchange from Manchester University to the department in August during freshmen orientation, also known as FYWOW! Faculty came together to tell the new majors what we do in terms of teaching and research, we all had lunch together, and then the new majors teamed up with some of our veteran majors to do some geocaching on campus. We hope our new majors felt welcomed into the department and we'd like to thank Jessica Bakery, Lindsey Higgins, Jolani McClellan, Joseph Petre, and Jameieka Price for helping with FYWOW. (see pictures in Student News)

## Department News

### *Pumpkin Drop - A New Campus Tradition*

Stephen Vermette

On September 22, 2009 we celebrated the Autumn Equinox by dropping a pumpkin from the roof of the Classroom Building. The celebration included cider, cookies, and an opportunity to sign the pumpkin with your name, good wishes, etc. With permission from the College – even the presence of a police officer to protect the people gathered from pumpkin shrapnel – Dr. Stephen Vermette carried the pumpkin to the roof of the Classroom Building and let go of it at exactly 5:18 p.m.



Thank you Jolani for bringing the pumpkin and Caitlin for planting the seed for this activity (the cookies too). Others from the Meteorology Club took part, and we attracted a good crowd.



**Kim Irvine** continued working on research, education, and capacity-building projects both locally and in Southeast Asia. Locally, a great deal of effort has gone into completing the sampling for Phase II of the Buffalo Sewer Authority's Long Term Control Plan for Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement. This project had a team of students from Buffalo State and U.B. as well as faculty from the Department on call and tracking storm events 7 days a week, 24 hours a day! The sampling focused on the Black Rock Canal, Niagara River, and Scajaquada Creek. An erosion and sediment transport modeling project on Cayuga Creek, Niagara County, was completed for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District, and a hospitality sector pollution prevention project, in collaboration with Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, continued under funding from the U.S. EPA. Dr. Irvine continued his National Science Foundation project, in collaboration with Dr. Vermette and Dr. Doug Graber Neufeld of Eastern Mennonite University, that brings 6 undergraduates to Thailand and Cambodia to conduct a research project for 6 weeks in the summer. He also started a new project

with Dr. Vermette and two local Non-Government Organizations in Cambodia (Resource Development International and Center for Development Oriented Research) on pesticide use.

Dr. Irvine hosted a scientific delegation from Vietnam interested in watershed restoration, August 2-9, 2009, including tours of the Buffalo wastewater treatment plant, brownfields restoration sites, habitat restoration sites, the Buffalo River Area of Concern, state-of-the-art solid waste recycling facility, and meetings with staff from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Conestoga-Rovers & Associates, and Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper. Delegation members were: Ms. Trinh Thi Long, Director, Center for Environment Science and Technology, Southern Institute of Water Resources Research; Dr. Le Manh Hung, Director of Vietnam Academy for Water Resources; Dr. Nguyen Binh Thin, Deputy Chief, Department of Science, Technology and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural



Students sampling on Scajaquada Creek at 4 am!

Development; and Mr. Le Quang Thanh, Deputy Chief, Department of Social and Natural Sciences Management, Ministry of Science and Technology. Dr. Irvine subsequently was invited to Vietnam to make a presentation on river restoration experiences in Buffalo at a workshop that focused on clean up of the Thi Vai River. As part of the workshop he was interviewed by the Dong Nai Radio and Television Station.

Dr. Irvine was an invited keynote speaker at the 3<sup>rd</sup> CALIBRE (Cambodia and Laos Initiative for Building human Resources for the Environment – EU Asialink) Workshop on Field Sampling and Analysis. National University of Laos, Vientiane, Laos, March

30, 2009 where he spoke about the Role of Phnom Penh's wetlands in sustainably treating sewage discharges to the Mekong/Bassac River System. He also gave an invited talk on GIS applications as a decision-making tool for community health at the Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 6, 2009. Finally, Dr. Irvine continued to help teach the ED78.15, Wastewater Design course in the Environmental Engineering program at Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok.

Publications this year included: Irvine, K.N. and T.P. Murphy. 2009. Assessment of eutrophication and phytoplankton community impairment in the Buffalo River Area of Concern. *Journal of Great Lakes Research*, 35:83-93.

Murphy, T.P., K.N. Irvine, M. Sampson, J. Guo, and T. Parr. 2009. Mercury contamination along the Mekong River, Cambodia. *Asian Journal of Water, Environment and Pollution*, 6(1):1-9.

Irvine, K.N., M. Sampson, T. Visoth, M. Yim, K. Veasna, T. Koottatep, and J. Rupp. 2008. Spatial patterns of E. coli and detergents in the Boeng Cheung Ek treatment wetland, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. *The 6<sup>th</sup>*

*International Symposium on Southeast Asia Water Environment*, Bandung, Indonesia, pp. 78-81.

Yim, M., S. Vathna, and K. Irvine. 2008. Storm and dry weather water quality characteristics in the Phnom Penh combined sewer system. *The 6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Southeast Asia Water Environment*, Bandung, Indonesia, pp. 369-377.

Rossi, M.C., T.R. Hersey, K. Irvine, and S. Vermette. 2009. Western New York Stormwater Coalition: Compliance through Collaboration. *Conceptual Modeling of Urban Water Systems, Monograph 17*. W. James, K.N. Irvine, E.A. McBean, R.E. Pitt, and S.J. Wright, eds., Computational Hydraulics International, Guelph, Ontario, Ch. 7.



Students and faculty training for sampling on the Black Rock Canal at the Great Lakes Center Field Station.



CALIBRE workshop in Vientiane, Lao PDR.



Mary Rossi, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning (and Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Planning) providing a tour of Times Beach nature area for visitors from Vietnam.

**Stephen Vermette** worked on a number of projects this past year. In Southeast Asia three projects are noteworthy. He worked with Vida Vanchan to pilot a project developing a 'Geography Kit' for use in Cambodian schools. The kit would provide up-to-date resources for teachers and students who are sorely lacking these resources. The kits were tested during a workshop at Baktouk high school in Phnom Penh. Teacher feedback was positive. According to the teachers, lack of teaching resources and knowledge is mainly responsible for the lack of interests in the classroom and general education as a whole. If funding is found, their plan is to collaborate with the National Institute of Education (NIE) to distribute these kits across Cambodia. Secondly, with Kim Irvine and Suon Seng (CENTDAR – a local NGO) and funding from the Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation, Stephen assessed the knowledge of Cambodian farmers on the use of pesticides. The assessment took the form of workshops and the administration of questionnaires. Their goal is to propose actions needed for the sustainable use of pesticides. Thirdly, The NSF International Research Experience for Students (IRES) project continued into its second year. As is the first year, Stephen helped direct six students on an undergraduate research

experience focusing on sustainable sanitation and water quality in Cambodia and Thailand.

In WNY Stephen's research focused on climatology. Working with Tom Niziol (National Weather Service) and Lindsey Higgins (Geography Major), Stephen explored hypotheses explaining the rapid drop in winter nighttime temperatures recorded at the Watertown Airport (location of NWS sensors). One hypothesis is that the sensors are located in depressions where cold air accumulates until reaching the temperature sensor – causing a rapid drop in temperatures. Efforts to correlate soil freezing depth with Freezing Degree Day (FDD) calculations continued from last year with the installation of a number of frost tubes, as did Buffalo's Lake Breeze Project where the city and surrounding suburbs were instrumented with temperature data loggers.

Stephen again took students to the Bahamas as part of the 'Bahamas Field Experience' course and to caves as part of 'Cavern Studies'. In collaboration with Camille Holmgren, Stephen presented a workshop on climate change to educators. The workshop was supported by the New York Geographic Alliance. A soap-box type presentation was also given with Don Paul at Canal Side, debunking the ice boom effects on Buffalo's

spring temperatures.



*Teaching in the Bahamas!*



*Kevin O'Connell shares his experiences during a lunch with our students and faculty.*

**Kelly Frothingham** has been working with the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper organization in the Cayuga Creek watershed in Niagara County for a number of years. As a result of a minigrant awarded through the Buffalo State Office of College and Community Partnerships, she is currently working on a project with Riverkeeper to assess Cayuga Creek watershed landowners' opinions and perceptions of environmental problems in the watershed. A questionnaire was mailed to approximately 250 landowners in the watershed. The purpose of the questionnaire is to increase community involvement in on-going planning efforts aimed at improving environmental conditions in Cayuga Creek. We hope to be able to identify how watershed residents are using the creek, what their concerns are, and what problems need to be addressed. The results of the survey will contribute to and help guide on-going watershed management activities in Cayuga Creek.

Dr. Frothingham was also involved in the Engineering for Stream Ecosystem Restoration: University at Buffalo Summer Workshop Series for the second year in a

row. The three-week workshop is open to environmental practitioners (e.g., engineers, environmental scientists and regulators, ecologists, consultants, and land use planners) and it is part of the required coursework for ERIE IGERT Ph.D. students. She taught with two other colleagues during the River Processes – Fluvial Geomorphology and Channel Processes week and covered topics including the need for stream restoration, the watershed management process, stakeholder participation in watershed management, physical stream assessment, and biotechnical streambank stabilization approaches.

**Tao Tang** presented a paper on object oriented feature capture from remotely sensed imageries into GIS database in the International Conference of Geoinformatics, Washington, DC, with his former graduate student Xiao Wang, Dr. J. Carbonara, and Dr. Z. H. Shi.

Dr. Tang advised an undergraduate student, Mr. Lei Cai, for a National Science Foundation supported undergraduate research fellowship at Buffalo State College.



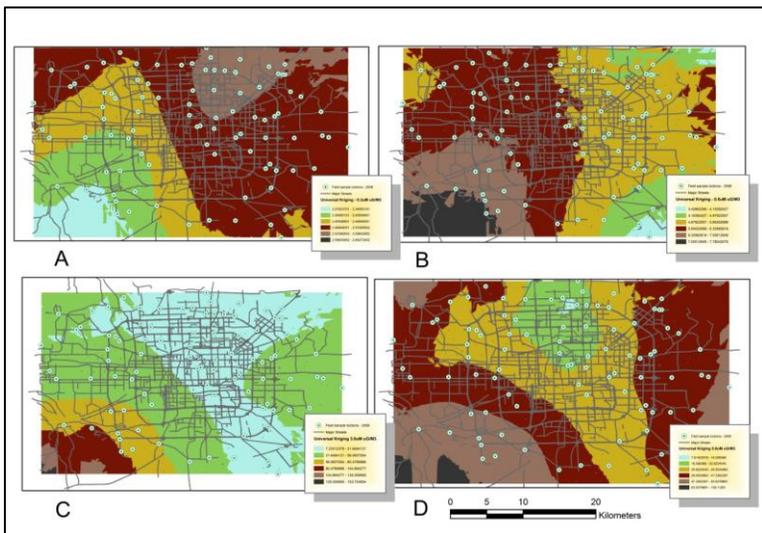
*Buffalo State College undergraduate student, Mr. Lei Cai (on the right) works with graduate students of Capital Normal University of China in the field to collect data.*

With the fellowship support, Mr. Cai traveled internationally with Dr. Tang to conduct field data collections and indoor GIS spatial analyses for his research on the relations of air particle pollution and economic development.

Dr. Tang is hosting and advising a visiting scholar, Ms. Wenhui Zhao, from the Capital Normal University in China this year. Ms. Zhao is a Ph.D. Candidate at CNU specializing in GIS and remote sensing. Dr. Tang is one of her advisors of graduate study.

Dr. Tang was appointed as an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Department of Geography, University at Buffalo. He is now serving as a dissertation committee member for a Ph.D. candidate who works at Erie County as a GIS manager.

*Map overlays of predicted air pollution concentrations to children population distribution.*



**Wende Mix** continued to work with graduate students in biology conducting terrapin research. This year, she assisted Andrew Harrison in the development of 2D and 3D animations of terrapin swimming paths. Andrew collected data from instrumented terrapins on the horizontal and vertical tilt associated continuous movement patterns. Since GPS does not work under water, spatial location was recorded when the

terrapins surfaced during observation. Dr. Mix developed the algorithm for converting measurements into (x,y,z) locations where z is depth. She also assisted Andrew with designing and implementing a lab experiment in one of the biology tanks to validate the algorithm. Andrew presented his study entitled "Determining Behavioral Responses to Boat Traffic and Noise in the Northern Diamondback Terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin*) in Barnegat Bay, New Jersey" at the Student Research and Creativity Celebration, May 1 -2, 2009

Dr. Mix presented her research on spatial analysis of house flipping and neighborhood change in several forums, including the Department of Geography Colloquium, Oct 10, 2008. University at Buffalo, and the IGERT Colloquium, April 24, 2009, University at Buffalo. She also presented "The Geography of Urban Poverty" at the 9th Annual Faculty and Staff Research and Creativity Fall Forum, Oct 30, 2008, Buffalo State College. Dr. Mix Provided data and analysis for Mayor's poverty plan, working with Deputy Mayor Donna M. Brown and Director of Urban Affairs Karen Stanley Fleming. Her work appears in, and is acknowledged in, the "Buffalo Poverty Reduction Blueprint" released by the Mayor's office 4/29/2009.

Dr. Mix organized a teacher training workshop on building wind turbines for KidWind.org, Feb 21, 2009, Classroom Building, Buffalo State College and KidWind.org Wind Turbine Challenge for middle and high school students at the Buffalo Museum of Science, May 16, 2009.

Dr. Mix was the senior thesis advisor for Joseph Pignatora, Chris Liberti, James Frost, Dan Istas, and Bryan Hinterberger. Thesis topics focused on community-identified issues on urban sustainability.



## Vida Vanchan

attended the 2009 Industry Studies Association Annual Conference from May 28 to 29, 2009 in Chicago; and presented a

poster of her recent research results, supported by a Site Visit Grant from the Alfred P. Sloan foundation, on competitive dynamics of U.S. industrial design firms. In addition, she has accepted an invitation to serve on the Early Career Development Committee (ECDC) of the Industry Studies Association for two years. ECDC is dedicated to promoting industry studies scholarship by working to develop the community of early career scholars (nationally and internationally), who pursue industry studies research and further their academic careers. ECDC members' institutions include Penn State University, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Washington, Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Minnesota, and Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna.

conducted a workshop at Baktouk High School in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in January of 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to enhance a geography curriculum and assist teachers in their teaching. The workshop was organized to provide educational and material support as well as to assess the teachers' needs. It was very well received and a success. During their short stay in Cambodia, Drs. Vanchan and Vermette visited several classrooms at the high school and funding agencies. Inquiries have been submitted to several U.S funding agencies in order to find support to further conduct workshops and distribute the kits to all high schools across Cambodia. The proposed project aims to offer a springboard to improve Cambodia's human capital through enhancing part of its education system.



*Drs. Vida Vanchan and Stephen Vermette and students in the classroom at Baktouk High School*

With the funding support from the Research Foundation at Buffalo State College, Dr. Vida Vanchan and Dr. Stephen Vermette



*K-12 Teachers' Workshop: Wind turbines*

Dr. Vanchan is teaching a newly revised course "Industrial Geography," which was formerly known as "Geography of Manufacturing" this fall semester. She will be teaching a brand new course entitled "Globalization, Technology, Competition, and Service Economies" in the spring of 2010. This course is designed to broaden an area of human geography by offering students a better understanding of its subdiscipline, economic geography, and the interdisciplinary nature of geography. It is a combination of studies from various disciplines which address globalization issues; technological development and innovation; service economies and competition. This course will expose students to recent studies in economic geography, information technology, and business and management. Dr. Vanchan has also been busy developing another new course, "Geography of Development."

Recent publications include:

**Book Publication:**

Vanchan, V. 2009. THE COMPETITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF U.S. INDUSTRIAL DESIGN FIRMS. VDM Publishing Company,

Germany. ISBN# 978-3-639-16086-4.

**Journal Publication:**

MacPherson, A. and Vanchan, V. 2009. The outsourcing of industrial design by large U.S. manufacturing companies: an exploratory study. *International Regional Science Review* (available online at <http://irx.sagepub.com/>).

Dr. Vanchan also serves as co-editor of a book with Dr. Kim Irvine and Dr. Stephen Vermette on "Water Resources and Development in Southeast Asia."



*Drs. Vida Vanchan and Stephen Vermette officially presented the kit to the assistant principal.*

**Veryan Vermette** For our third time, Kyrie and I spent the month of July volunteering at a UNESCO-Kosciuszko Foundation English Language Camp in Poland: Kyrie was a class teacher and I assumed the role of Assistant Director. The global economic downturn required that the number of camps be reduced from six to one, and that one consisted of only 50 (instead of the usual 100) Polish children.

It quickly became apparent that our camp schedule was organized around eating...almost as if we 'squeezed' everything else in between the consumption of delicious food ... breakfast, lunch, supper, and frequently kielbasa in the evenings! One of the more unusual foods presented to us this year was an entire pork roast cooked inside a loaf of bread...which we quickly dubbed 'meat bread' ...and eaten with the hands around the campfire!

Our days were filled with classes, special events such as 'Halloween', 'Camp Baptism', 'American Day' and 'Polish Day', sports, and arts and crafts. Thanks to everyone who donated ties, one of the new and popular activities this year was the creation of 'tie

snakes'. Evenings were devoted to social activities such as disco dances, karaoke, and campfires complete with singing, skits, and s'mores. Weekends included day trips to religious and cultural landscapes. One 'stave church' we entered was more than 1000 years old!!.

Weather at camp remained generally benign though very much a 'mixed bag'. One American teacher aptly described it as 'a la carte weather' since we had rapidly changing conditions from sunny and warm to cold and threatening to gentle sun showers to sudden short-lived thunderstorms. Other regions of Poland were not as fortunate and due to severe flooding (fortunately, not where we were!) our camp numbers swelled by ~100 teen-aged evacuated 'flood victims' during the final two weeks of the program. We were the first North Americans these evacuees had ever spoken to and they were eager to make our acquaintance!

For our final few days in Poland, our teachers' group traveled to Krakow and Zakopane; the former a beautiful and ancient city, the latter a quaint, small city nestled in the Tatra Mountains near the border of Slovakia. Our final night, in



*Tie Snakes - Poland*

Warsaw, was celebrated at a 'traditional' restaurant where we were overwhelmed with a 5-course, 4-hour meal ending after midnight!! A fitting end to a food-filled month!



**Camille Holmgren**

had a busy year in the laboratory working on her investigation of how vegetation and climate have changed in the Sierra San Pedro Martir

in northern Baja California over the past ~30,000 years. Part of this project involved training two students in paleoecological techniques as they worked for her sorting and identifying plant fossils from packrat middens. The initial results from this work indicate a distinct shift in vegetative communities from pinyon-juniper-oak woodlands during the last ice age to desert scrub vegetation today. Dr. Holmgren also worked on preparation of a grant to the National Geographic Society's Committee for Research and Exploration. If funded, this grant will provide support for continued work in Baja California.

Dr. Holmgren also published two articles during the past year. She was lead author on a paper covering her recent work in Joshua Tree National Park: Holmgren, C.A., Betancourt, J.L., and K.A. Rylander. (2009). A long-term vegetation history of the Mojave/Colorado Desert ecotone at Joshua Tree National Park. *Journal of Quaternary Science* (Published online in advance of print). She was also a co-author on an invited article for an issue of the Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden: Placzek, C., Quade, J., Betancourt, J.L., Patchett, P.J.,

Rech, J.A., Latorre, C., Matmon, A., Holmgren, C.A., English, N.B. (2009). Climate in the dry, central Andes over geologic, millennial, and interannual timescales. *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Gardens* 96 (3) 386-397. This article synthesizes paleoclimatic proxy records from the western Andean flank to elucidate the drivers of climate variability in the dry, central Andes of Peru, Chile, and Bolivia.

In addition, Dr. Holmgren gave a presentation at Buffalo State College as part of the Ninth Annual Faculty/Staff Research and Creativity Fall Forum and an invited talk as part of the Pegrum Lecture Series at the University at Buffalo.

Over the past year, Dr. Holmgren taught courses in Paleoclimatology, Global Change, and World Natural Environments. Both Paleoclimatology and Global Change are new courses developed by Dr. Holmgren that are now part of the Meteorology and Climatology minor. This fall she is teaching BSC 101: Foundations of Inquiry. Her section of this freshman-only course has climate change as its theme and focuses on critical thinking and research skills. Camille also worked with Dr. Stephen Vermette over



Jolani McClellan sorting and indentifying plant fossils from packrat middens collected in the Sierra San Pedro Martir, northern Baja California.

the summer to help convene the New York State Climate Change Education Workshop sponsored by the New York Geographic Alliance.

**Charlotte Roehm** has spent the year discovering the potential of Buffalo State College and of New York State.

As part of her research in Buffalo, Dr. Roehm has been working on a project looking at coastal wetland degradation and the influence of nutrient dynamics on algal bloom formation. This work has been in conjunction with an URM Undergraduate student from the Chemistry Department. She has been also looking at defining indicators of success of

wetland restoration based on wetland function and quality. A Master's student is currently involved in this work. Recently, she has begun a 2 year NYSDEC funded project aimed at re-mapping a section of NY State wetlands through a combination of GIS and field based delineations. Dr. Roehm mentored a Geography and Planning majors student who undertook a study looking at the chlorine levels in household water and its potential health risks due to exposure. The student presented her results at the Student Research and Creativity Forum in May. On the international scene, Dr. Roehm has continued her collaborative research program in Northern Sweden, where she spent a month this summer studying metabolic nutrient limitation in Arctic streams as a function of vegetation and altitudinal gradients.



Dr. Roehm attended the *40th Lunar and Planetary Science Conference*, March 23-28, The Woodlands, Texas, where she presented a poster discussing the hypothesis of the role of hydrology in the periglacial origin of crater-rim gully formation in Utopia Planitia, Mars. Dr. Roehm also attended the *American Geophysical Union (AGU) Joint Assembly*, May 22-27, Toronto, Canada, where she orally presented her work from Sweden on carbon cycling in Alpine and Arctic watersheds affected by permafrost degradation. In addition, Dr. Roehm recently presented her research at the fall Faculty Research and Creativity Forum held at Buffalo State.

On the written front, Dr. Roehm was lead author on two publications: Roehm, C.L., R. Giesler & J. Karlsson, Bioavailability of terrestrial organic carbon to lake bacteria: the case of a degrading sub-arctic permafrost mire complex. *Journal of Geophysical Research*, looking at the impact of climate change in Arctic regions with relevance to the movement of energy and nutrients from terrestrial to aquatic environments and the consequent impact on watershed based greenhouse gas emission inventories. Roehm, C. L., Y. T. Prairie, and P. A. del Giorgio,  $pCO_2$  dynamics in lakes in the boreal region of northern Quebec, Canada in *Global*



*Biogeochemical Cycles*, a study looking at identifying and defining the driving variables for predictive models of  $CO_2$  evasion from boreal lakes. In addition, she was co-author on Prairie YT, PA del Giorgio, C.L. Roehm and A Tremblay. Insights on riverine metabolism from continuous measurements of CDOM Fluorescence in Eastmain-1 Reservoir, Quebec. in *Verh. Internat. Verein. Limnol.*, a study looking at diel and seasonal metabolic dynamics of a river both upstream and downstream of a newly created hydroelectric reservoir.

Dr. Roehm became an adjunct Professor at University of Buffalo where she is part of the ERIE IGERT initiative. She has also been involved in numerous committees and other service based and professional development activities. Dr. Roehm taught Grad/Undergrad courses in Wetland Hydrology and Ecology, Watershed Pollution and the Honors program

course in Conservation and Resource Management.

**William Wiczorek** During this past year, Dr. Wiczorek, Director of the Center for Health and Social Research and Professor of Geography and Planning, was highly involved with numerous research projects, paper presentations, and publications. In addition to his reviews for the NIH Behavioral Genetics and Epidemiology Review Committee, Dr. Wiczorek was a peer reviewer for the NIH National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Clinical, Treatment and Health Services Research Review Subcommittee and NIH Research Challenge grant applications funded by the economic. He also reviewed for such journals as *Prevention Science*, *Addictive Behaviors*, and *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*.

The strong funding record of Dr. Wiczorek and the Center continued this past year. Dr. Wiczorek is PI or Co-PI on six NIH funded grants, including being a Co-PI on a "Problem Gambling - A Decade of Change" which was recently awarded to John Welte (PI) at the University at Buffalo. This project includes an analysis of geographic access to casinos and

## Faculty News

other forms of gambling as a risk factor for developing problem/pathological gambling. Other funded projects include evaluations of community-based services, data management and program development for a workplace safety project, and a project with West Side Community Services titled "Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives," funded by the Buffalo State Office of Community Partnerships.

Dr. Wieczorek led the planning process with the Erie County Department of Mental Health and local prevention services providers to develop the "Comprehensive Prevention Plan: Erie County Department of Mental Health." This plan is currently being used to drive mental health and substance abuse prevention activities through 2012. The process, which was data driven, utilized maps and spatial analysis of population risk factors, service locations, and gaps analysis to guide the planning group's decisions. This also led to a presentation titled "Using GIS for Planning Behavioral Health Preventive Services" in September 2009 at the ESRI Health GIS Conference. In October 2009, an expanded presentation titled "Using GIS for Planning Mental Health Services" was

presented as part of the University at Buffalo Department of Geography's Fall 2009 Colloquium Series.

A notable publication this past year by Dr. Wieczorek and Alan Delmerico is an overview article titled "Geographic Information Systems" in [Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Computational Statistics](#) (2009, vol. 1, 167-186). This article provides a general introduction to GIS as well as presenting case studies from the Buffalo area.

### Middle States Division, Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting

Seven hours down the road, a contingent of 10 from Buffalo State arrived in New Paltz, NY to attend the AAG Middle States Division Annual Conference. Stephen Vermette and Tao Tang brought seven students, three from Buffalo State (Lea Cai, Lindsey Higgins, and Joseph Petre), and four exchange students from Manchester Metropolitan (Lauren Cross, Steven Eddleston, Suzanne Shapiro, and Rachael Taylor). Zhao Wenhui, a Chinese scholar from Capital Normal University, rounded out the group of ten. A total of seven papers/posters were given at the



Middle States AAG Attendees

conference by the group from Buffalo State.

A first for Buffalo State, Steven Eddleston joined an ad hoc team to compete in the Geography Bowl. Thinking that questions asked during the bowl would be of a general nature, he commented at the number of geography questions and was glad that he was a Geography major. We are glad too – good job Steven. It turns out that Steven answered enough questions correctly to be recognized as an alternate for the Geography Bowl team that will represent the Middle

## Student News

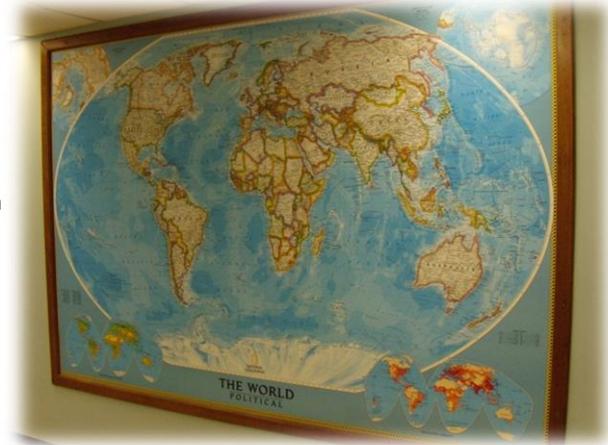
States Division at the Annual AAG meeting in Washington D.C.

Our appreciation to Mark Severson (Dean, School of Natural and Social Sciences) and Kelly Frothingham (Chair, Geography and Planning) for finding the financial resources to support the student costs, thus continuing our long tradition of faculty/student representation at the Middle States Conference.

### FYWOW 2009

Current students welcome new majors during new campus-wide orientation program.

The wall map that has been studied by students and used as a back drop for so many group photos has been replaced with one that is current. The map is a gift from the New York Geographic Alliance. With the recent purchase of new atlases and globes we truly have entered the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.





**Student Awards** The 2009 student award winners were:

- Katheryne T. Whittemore Award – Jim Frost and Jason Pantano
- Western NY APA Award – Brent LaSpada
- NCGE Award in Geography – Jessica Bakert
- NCGE Award in Planning – Bryan Hinterberger
- David Bullough Memorial Award – Jessica Li

Please visit our [web site](#) for more information.

**Jessica Li**, our 2009 David Bullough Award winner has returned home to Hong Kong and is working for Regal Printing Ltd., who print a wide range of textbooks, children’s books, and magazines.

**Brent LaSpada**, our 2009 Western New York American Planning Association Award winner has begun working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District.

**James Manzione** wrote:

*To me, the Geography Department at Buffalo State College is a unique and special place. It was there that I was able to come into my*

Thanks to all Alumni who responded to our newsletters. Here is a sample of what you have told us about your

careers and lives.

*own and see education as a door to opportunity instead of a stepping stone to a career.*

*In 2007, I graduated from the Urban and Regional Planning and Analysis program. Since then I have had plenty of time to reflect on my educational experiences and compare them to other geographers. There is no doubt in my mind that upon graduation I was already a step above the rest. With a resume filled with working experiences provided by department connections, I found it relatively easy to gain employment with a nationally recognized engineering firm and enrollment with my top choice graduate program.*

*I would say the majority of my accomplishments are due to the fact that the professors in the Geography Department truly do offer each student the resources needed for success. Whether it involved research projects around the world or in our own*

*backyard, each professor took the time to make sure I was prepared to get involved and ultimately succeed. Their guidance allowed me to spearhead my own campaigns and endeavors, as I focused my efforts towards positive career building goals.*

*Today I am a graduate student at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon, and an employee at Clough Harbour & Associates. With doors constantly opening I see an exciting new future for myself, and can’t help but be enthusiastic for what comes next.*

- James Manzione  
Buffalo State Alumni, 2007

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

Please feel free to send any comments or questions to our Newsletter Editor, Dr. Wende Mix, at [mixwa@buffalostate.edu](mailto:mixwa@buffalostate.edu)

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