



DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY/GEOGRAPHY  
**ANNUAL NEWSLETTER**  
2014-2015



THE OLD MAIN BUR OAK



The university created a new award in the AY '13/'14 to recognize excellence in advising from both faculty and advising staff. Out of all faculty who advise campus-wide, one member was chosen for this inaugural award, the Geology and Geography Department's Dr. Diane Burns.

**Visit our new website at [www.eiu.edu/geoscience!](http://www.eiu.edu/geoscience!)**

## Message from the Chair



**Mike Cornebise, Ph.D., Professor of Geography, and Chair**

I hope this newsletter finds you all well. We continue to “rock along” in the department and I will provide an overview of a few highlights, recognizing that the faculty will cover others in their individual summaries. While EIU was hit by a slew of retirements at the end of last spring semester due to anticipated changes in pension benefits (indeed, two departments in the College of Sciences lost five faculty members each to retirement), we begin the fall semester with our faculty roster intact. This has lent us stability during a period of change at the university for which we are grateful. Our colleague Dr. Godson Obia retired from his position as Associate Dean of the College of Sciences in June 2014, but we feel as though he has returned to the department since he began teaching online and distance education courses for us in the Chicago area where he presently resides. Indeed, we continue to benefit from the knowledge and experience of our emeritus

faculty, many of whom offer off-campus courses through the Office of Continuing Education. In the past year, Alan Baharlou, Vince Gutowski and Jim Stratton have all offered courses in their areas of expertise.

As noted in the last newsletter, the Physical Science Building is undergoing extensive renovations. The restroom renovations will be completed by the end of fall semester. The renovation of our Surficial Processes Lab (room 1040) was recently completed and we await the start of room 1060’s make-over. We are quite pleased with the quality of the renovations thus far. Next time you’re in the area, stop in and take a look at the revamped facilities. We’ll be happy to show you around.

Unfortunately, we also have some rather sad news to report. The iconic Old Main Bur Oak tree that once marked the Castle’s east entrance was cut down in August after sustaining extensive storm damage. The department is working to secure tree ring samples for research purposes and possibly to create a display in the building. Estimates place the tree’s age at roughly 300 years.



**The Old Main Bur Oak in Happier Times (Photo: S. Malehorn, 2003)**

As you continue to read, you will find excellent news in the following entries that detail the great work being carried out by the faculty, staff and students of the Geology/Geography Department. Our faculty continue to excel in the areas of teaching, research and service and are paving the way to another excellent crop of EIU Geology/Geography alumni.

Let me close with an open invitation for a campus and department visit. We would especially love to see you at EIU Homecoming this year (Oct 24-26, 2014): please stop by the College of Sciences hot dog giveaway at Tent City. If you can't make it then, pop in when you're in the area. Best wishes from all of us in the Geology/Geography Department! If we can assist you in any way, please feel free to contact us.

## Message from the Dean



**Harold Ornes, Ph.D., Dean, College of Sciences**

Although we are only a few weeks into the semester, COS activities are in overdrive. Of course you know that Godson left the Dean's Office and moved to Chicago, and Jim Novak is our new Interim Associate Dean. Angie Rhoads continues as Assistant to the Dean for Administration, Amy Lynch accepted the Registrar's position, and Sherri Arnholt is our new Certification Officer (we lost the position of Academic Advisor that Sherri formerly held). Felicia Magee is our Office Manager, and Jessica Kenton is our student worker. Our CATS employees, Mark Johnson and Jong Kim, continue to serve our technology-related needs. We have made numerous adjustments to jobs and duties and are excited to continue to serve our students, faculty, and

staff to the best of our abilities. Our Office is not unique in reconfiguring and re-assigning staff, and we appreciate the sympathetic and dedicated spirit that make the College of Sciences faculty and staff unique at EIU.

At this writing, the new 10th day enrollment data are out. While our students are low in number they are high in performance and outcomes. The knowledge and skills that your students gain from classroom and field experiences clearly add value to your degree programs and provide evidence of learning that graduate programs and employers value.

As “belt-tightening” continues, our ultimate success will depend on our devotion to the creative management of current resources and bold exploration of new initiatives that will stabilize our enterprises and position us to attract more students to the EIU experience.

Thank you for your collegiality and partnership in so many enterprises and best wishes for the upcoming year.

Harold Ornes



**The officers of the newly established student chapter of the American Institute of Professional Geologists – (l to r) Danny White, Jeremy Wells, Kaitlyn James and John Zearing.**

## Student Spotlight: Kara Baker

This summer, I was an AstroCorps intern at Bryce Canyon National Park. AstroCorps is a division of GeoCorps America, which offers GSA student members internship opportunities in National Parks, National Forests, and BLM lands.

Bryce Canyon is most often noted for its large concentration of hoodoos, but it also has one of the darkest skies on Earth. Sitting atop the Paunsaugunt Plateau at 8-9,000 feet in elevation, the air is thin. Remotely located, the park's skies are free from light and smog pollution. These factors combine to make Bryce Canyon a dark sky sanctuary.

I worked for the Interpretation division of Bryce Canyon. "Dark Rangers" and I hosted astronomy programs three nights per week. These programs included solar viewing, Planet Walks, astronomy-themed multimedia presentations, late-night telescope viewing, and constellation tours, and they reached hundreds of people per day. As the park's summer AstroCorps intern, I participated in all of these activities. My training is in Earth Science education, so I was in my element while interacting with visitors.

My favorite activities were guided hikes. The Planet Walk is a trail that takes visitors through a one-ten billionth scale model of our Solar System, with stops at informative placards along the way. On my guided Planet Walk, I focused on many important Solar System themes: the abundant amount of water, the drastic differences among the planets, the smallness of the planets compared to the Sun, and the vast distance from one object to the next.

I also led a Full Moon Hike. My group of 30 visitors and I traveled for two hours among the hoodoos in the Bryce Amphitheater under the light of the full Moon.



**Kara Baker demonstrating erosion and fluvial processes to the public as part of her internship at Bryce Canyon National Park through the GeoCorps/AstroCorps intership program, Summer, 2014.**

We discussed how the Moon affects Earth, its role in science fiction and pop culture, and myths about the full moon. After the hike, I set up a telescope and we observed the Moon in greater detail.

Rim Walks are 90-minute guided walks along the edge of the Paunsaugunt Plateau, looking down into the Bryce Amphitheater and out nearly 100 miles. My Rim Walk was entitled “Stump an Intern.” I discussed a plethora of aspects about Bryce Canyon National Park: geology, native and invasive plants, wild animals, early settlers, air quality, controlled burns and forest fires, lightning, hiking safety, star-gazing, and climate change. Along the way, visitors would try to stump me with questions about the park. It was tremendous fun!

I tried to incorporate geology into my internship. I gave Geology Talks to visitors. I worked a stream table during the park’s Geology Festival. During my off hours, I visited locations explored by John Wesley Powell and Clarence Dutton. I organized a fossil dig in the nearby Tropic Shale, deposited in the Western Interior Seaway during the Late Cretaceous. I visited seven nearby National Parks and worked hard to explore the Grand Staircase.

From my internship, I gained valuable experience. I learned how to teach outside a classroom. I adopted a stronger appreciation for the National Parks Service, and I developed memories that will last a lifetime.



**Kara Baker giving a talk to the public as part of her internship at Bryce Canyon National Park through the GeoCorps/AstroCorps intership program, Summer, 2014.**

## Student Activities

### Geology Program:

There are now three separate student entities in the Geology Program for students to join – previously, there was the Geoscience Club and Gamma Chi, the student chapter of the national honors society, Sigma Gamma Epsilon. These organizations served two purposes – the club provided social activities to provide some geological fun along with all of the hard work the students do at school, and Gamma Chi sponsored academically-based events. There was, however, a part missing – ties to industry to enable the students to have connections in that realm. This hole was filled this past January with the inauguration of the student chapter of the American Institute of Professional Geologists. Sponsors from the national organization drove in from both Chicago and Indianapolis to welcome the students and set the stage for a positive relationship and many future opportunities.

Although these are three separate student organizations with their own set of officers and criteria, it made sense to hold all meetings concurrently and work as a cohesive whole on projects, events and trips. What a success and difference these changes have made! The students this year took a trip to Indianapolis to visit two museums and attend a rock/mineral show, sponsored a camping trip to Garden of the Gods, created and presented several informative children's programs at the Charleston Public Library, hosted and created several public presentations for Earth Day, held three very successful fundraisers selling items they found and



The dignitaries present for the initiation of the EIU student chapter of the American Institute of Professional Geologists. From left to right – Assistant Dean, Godson Obia, AIPG representative Shane Schmidt, AIPG Section President, Jeff Groncki, Dean Harold Ornes, Chair Mike Corne-bise and AIPG Chapter Sponsor, Craig McCammack.





Geology majors on a field trip to Tishomingo, MS led by Diane Burns in Spring, 2014. From left to right are Dan Curtis, Danny White, Jeremy Wells, John Zearing, Kaitlyn James, Ryne Robertson and Brian Dowd.

crafted themselves, and undertook an amazing project to create six separate “dino boards” that featured a prehistoric animal with questions/answers to aid in discovery for the children of Charleston. These boards were presented to the Charleston Public Library appropriately enough on Earth Day and – from all reports – are heavily used and widely enjoyed.

In recognition of the ongoing efforts and quality of the current students, Gamma Chi has won – for the FOURTH year in a row – the Outstanding Chapter Award from the national office of Sigma Gamma Epsilon. This is an award given once a year, and the competition is national. Among all of the student chapters, Eastern’s Gamma Chi is the ONLY chapter to have won this award four times. Best. In. Nation. With a particular nod towards all of the work for the Charleston Public Library, Gamma Chi also received a Service Award, which is only given to a few chapters each year.

### **Geography Program:**

There are two student organizations in the Geography Program, the Geography Club and Rho Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon. Student members are co-sponsoring (with the Geology clubs) a softball game between the faculty/alumni and students in the coming weeks, with the planned loss of the students almost assured with the creative rules the faculty construct. The bi-annual “Last Supper” events are always well-attended and members are looking forward to another successful year.

## **Distinguished Geology Alumnus – Colonel Robert Sinkler, '83**

Colonel Robert Sinkler (Geology, 1983) was awarded a Distinguished Alumnus Award last year. We were asked not to reveal this fact in our last newsletter, as the award is granted without the recipient's prior knowledge and was being bestowed upon Colonel Sinkler just after we sent our last issue. As reported by Alumni Services, "Colonel Sinkler retired from the U.S. Army earlier this year after a distinguished 30-year career. Presently, he is The Nature Conservancy's water infrastructure director for their North America freshwater program and a senior advisor at Dawson & Associates. In the Army, he served as the chief of Army environmental programs in the Pentagon where he managed a \$1.5 billion annual worldwide environmental program encompassing 15.6 million acres on more than 150 military installations. He also commanded the Hurricane Protection Office in New Orleans where he led the task force which was responsible for designing and constructing the \$14.4 billion hurricane storm surge system in the areas most severely impacted in 2005 by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This initiative, completed prior to the 2011 hurricane season, was the largest civil works construction project in American history. From 2006 to 2009 Robert commanded the Rock Island district of the US Army Corps of Engineers and in 2003 he commanded the 5th Combat Engineer Battalion (The Fightin' Fifth) supporting the 4th Infantry Division in Iraq. The first US Army Corps of Engineers officer commissioned from the EIU ROTC program, he resides in the Quad Cities with his wife, Brandie."



**Geology Alumnus Colonel Robert Sinkler, '83, one of the recipients of an EIU Distinguished Alumnus Award, 2013.**

## Thirst for Facts on Country's Water Crisis Leads to EIU Documentary



**Aric Pelafas and Darius Holland capture footage of a fresh water canal in Yuma, Arizona for the documentary film, "Expedition Endurance."**

**By Vicki Woodard  
Coordinator of Public Information**

What do you get when you put four college students who barely know one another with an energetic faculty member in a borrowed mini-van and send them off on a nearly 5,000-mile, 11-day journey to explore our country's dwindling water resources?

Obviously, there's going to be those personal memories destined to last a lifetime.

But, more importantly perhaps, is the one-hour documentary that will be produced and aired on WEIU-TV, Eastern Illinois University's public television station, beginning Nov. 5.

According to Cameron Craig, the group explored and documented the dwindling water resources of the Colorado River and its effect on the population of that region for the film, "Expedition Endurance." He, along with students Nathan Page, Darius Holland, Aric Ascot Pelafas and Jay Bushen, set out for the southwest United States in May with the goal of filming the evidence that is needed to convince citizens of the Midwest that water conservation is vital to humanity's future survival.

The team interviewed experts while visiting arid locations such as Oklahoma City, Albuquerque, Tucson, Grand Canyon National Park, Hoover Dam, Arches National Park, Estes Park and various locations in Kansas.

In addition to the documentary, the group is developing classroom audio-visual/worksheet materials that will be used in classrooms throughout the state.

Checkout the group's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/tempestasfilms>.

## Geographers Present Seasonal Show, “Illinois’ Skies”

Who would have ever dreamed that the Department of Geology/Geography would reach out to so many people four times a year...on television! “Illinois’ Skies” has aired every changing season since March of this year. The seasonal magazine show is hosted by geographers, Chris Laingen and Cameron Craig, who helped to create the show with WEIU executive producer, Lori Casey, and general manager, Jack Neal. The show focuses on various topics concerning geography, weather, and climate within 30-minutes, providing viewers with insightful information about on-going research, philosophical points of geography, and weather related stories that range from storm tracks to the predictions of the groundhog.

The show creators recently learned that the show is used in classrooms across the nation as another resource for K-12 teachers.

If you live within the broadcast range of WEIU TV, you can watch upcoming episodes near the changing of the seasons. You can also watch past and upcoming features on the TCPFilms page at <http://vimeo.com/tcpfilms>.

“Illinois’ Skies” is a co-production of *Tempestas et Caelum Productions* and the Department of Geology/Geography.



Chris Laingen (left) and Cameron Craig (right) present weather and geography topics on their new show, “Illinois’ Skies” on WEIU TV every season.

## The Faculty

### **Brett Anderson**

Over the past year I have been teaching large sections of Weather and Climate and World Regional Geography.

On the research front, I attended a symposium last spring at the Center for Great Plains Studies, which is located at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. The focus of the conference was on drought in the Great Plains, and I presented a paper entitled, “The Grapes of Wrath and the Oklahoma Dust Bowl,” which focuses on how John Steinbeck’s novel has impacted the image of Oklahoma in American culture. The title was partly inspired by a test I saw a few years in the Geography Department office that had the question “The Oklahoma Dust Bowl was caused by....” Throughout the remainder of the semester, I worked on an article by the same title that I will submit to Geographical Review when it is completed, hopefully by the midpoint of this fall 2014 semester.

On the personal front I continue to explore the waterways surrounding Charleston via my sea kayak.

### **Diane Burns**

Greetings to all of our alumni family and friends! I hope all are doing well and enjoying the beginning of a beautiful fall. This year has been both hectic and happy, as I am sure yours have been.

I went from a mini-sabbatical last semester in which I only taught 6 students to this semester when I have over 120. It is presenting a challenge, but I have had a lot of support from my chair and fellow faculty. In research, I continue to pursue unraveling the paleotectonism of the Rocky Mountain Region. This year, Kristina Pourtabib worked with me and proved her mettle in producing excellent analyses of the sandstone in the Hermosa Formation, CO. It is adding to and making a much more robust story – not to mention was a pretty stellar piece of work! I am also continuing investigation into the Little Wabash in collaboration with Dave Viertel. We were aided this year by Bill Laveau, who centered his research on the section of the Little Wabash in Clay County. His research was exhibited in the first ever online Sigma Xi conference, and his project took first place in his section! I cannot help but be proud of the caliber of students with whom I have been working.

On a personal note, I welcomed a new furry friend into my life almost a year ago. His official name is Microcrystalline Quartz, but I call him Jasper...just a little geo nerd humor there. I will be headed out to the national GSA conference in Denver, CO in October, both to keep myself involved in that society as well as to take

along a student interested in graduate school. If you will be going to GSA, let me know, and we can visit.

Best, Diane

### **Craig Chesner**

Hello alumni. I hope you are all doing well and enjoying your geology jobs, careers, and lives. Not too much new with me besides continuation of my long-term efforts to study Toba with the help of EIU Geology majors and alumni. Lately, I have turned my attention to the post-caldera history of Toba and am studying caldera-fill sediments as well as micro-organisms in the distal Toba ashes. Imagine that, me looking at unconsolidated sediments and micro-fossils! I want to share a brief story: after assisting one of our alumni in laboratory analyses at UCLA this past summer I was approached in the LA airport by a woman who asked “didn’t you teach me Field Geology in the Black Hills several years ago?” I guess one never knows where or when an EIU alumnus will appear. Perhaps I’ll run into some of you at an unexpected time and place someday too! As always, I enjoy hearing from you, so please keep me posted!

### **Mike Cornebise**

Greetings, alumni! I have been at EIU since 2000 and am beginning my fifth year as Chair of the Geology/Geography Department. While most of my role is administrative at present, I continue to offer a few courses each year. I enjoyed teaching Population Geography in spring semester again after a four year hiatus. I remain active in the Illinois Geographical Society where I continue to serve on the Executive Council. In my role as co-coordinator of the Professional Science Masters (PSM) in GIS, I have been pleased to see the program grow to thirteen full-time students, including six international students, in the two years since the program received approval from the national PSM board. Our growing kids (Sam, 11) and (Sofia, 9) keep me and Roxanne on our toes!

### **Cameron Craig**

Salutations! It has been a very exciting year in the department and most grateful to be teaching alongside many fine colleagues. I continue to work with my broadcast meteorology students in the department and at WEIU-TV (PBS) preparing them for the professional world. I have a new WEIU show with colleague, Chris Laingen, entitled, “Illinois’ Skies” that airs at the beginning of each season and I continue to provide insight to meteorological occurrences in the local newspaper, “Journal Gazette and Times Courier.” My students and I continue to observe daily weather data for National Weather Service to continue the long tradition set by Dalias Price. Check-out my students films at [vimeo.com/tcpfilms](http://vimeo.com/tcpfilms).

**Jim Davis**

Greetings Alumni! It's been another exciting year in the Geology/Geography department. This past year was my eleventh here at EIU. I'm amazed at how fast time has gone by. It doesn't seem that long ago that I was just arriving on campus for my interview. I continue to stay busy in the classroom teaching cultural geography as well as many of our upper level human geography and regional electives.

A lot of my time these days is also devoted to sports. In addition to teaching sports geography each spring, I also continue to do research in the field. The past two years I have been working on a project that focuses on the spatial changes in Division I wrestling. The results of the study were presented at the AAG meeting in Tampa last April. The AAG conference is in Chicago this April, so hopefully we will see some of you there.

I also continue to co-advise the Geography Club with Chris Laingen. We are getting ready to host our 5th Faculty/Student Softball game. Thanks to some creative rules, the faculty is currently 4-0 against the students. We are always looking for some alumni to play on the faculty team, so hopefully some of you can make it back for the game next year!

My role as the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative for Eastern Illinois University has also kept me very busy multiple search committees for new head coaches and trips to Nashville for OVC meetings. When I am not in the Physical Science Building, I can often be found at the athletics complex.

Finally, all of my time away from work is spent travelling with my two daughters and their sports teams. Amanda turns 13 in a few weeks (so I will now have a teenager in the house) and Emily is 9. Both keep us very busy with Softball, Basketball, Soccer, and Golf.

I hope you all are doing well and look forward to seeing many of you at homecoming!

**Steve Di Naso**

Hello EIU Alumni!

As of August, this is my tenth-year teaching full-time at EIU and I've enjoyed every minute of it! When I look back over the twenty-seven years that I've been associated with Geology & Geography, it is often difficult to imagine just how many of you have passed through this institution. Many of you have reached out over the years to tell us where you're at and what you're doing - and as a fellow EIU alumnus, it is always rewarding to hear of our students' activities and their stories of success. So keep the emails, letters, and occasional phone calls coming!

It's been a great year, and as Co-Director of the GISci Center for the past four years, I've had an opportunity to engage in a number of collaborative, integrative, and interdisciplinary studies with faculty and students in various departments, as well as other academic institutions. Together we brought to fruition several unique research projects. Among the more recognized - a four-year study of the Herrin City Cemetery, which culminated in the discovery of the graves of the 'Herrin Massacre' victims of 1922. Our intercollegiate faculty-student research team won the Illinois State Historical Society's 'Superior Achievement Award' for our efforts, and was featured in numerous publications. I am thankful to the many students who contributed to this ongoing effort in Historical/Forensic GISci. Numerous other GISci initiatives, these with non-GEG faculty, were also recognized this year.

More recently, I was awarded the Illinois State GIS Association's (ILGISA) 'Richard Hilton Distinguished Collaboration Award,' presented to an individual for extraordinary service to the GIS community in the advancement of coordination between GIS professionals. An award which would be untenable without the participation of the many students who have engaged in private-industry and intra and intergovernmental collaborative initiatives over these many, many years - and one which I will accept this October on behalf of all of you who have contributed so graciously to the many faculty-mentored projects in GISci, of which to date, I have lost count!

As an authorized Esri CTP in my twelfth year, I continue to offer our Instructor-Led Esri Desktop courses as a supplement to my GIS I and GIS II classes here on campus. The courses are unique to EIU and we've obtained certificates for hundreds of students over the years. So if you need a 'refresher course,' by all means come back and see us for one of our workshops! As you likely know, Esri is big on the 'Cloud' these days, so I'm presently reworking my GIS II course to include 'GIS in the Cloud,' and am working on a new course proposal for cloud-based GIS technologies which will include ArcGIS Server, ArcGIS Mobile, and ArcGIS Online, to mention a few. Well, I hope his newsletter finds all of you smiling and in good spirit; I look forward to seeing you at Homecoming! Come see us!!!

### **Vince Gutowski**

Hello to all alumni, friends and families. This past year has been a continuation of the transition from full time faculty member to full time retired guy. I have maintained a connection to the department where I spent nearly 30 years as a faculty member. Steve Di Naso and I have maintained a tradition of bringing resources into the department, while at the same time helping students gain an understanding of how to become adept at various aspects of GISci. We also have worked with recent graduates to help them gain valuable experience that will allow them to enter the workplace at more than an entry level employee. This



past summer we conducted another class stressing Field Experience in GISci and the Pre-history of the Colorado Plateau. Again we worked with Dave Dove, an archeologist living in Cortez Colorado, setting up precise survey grids, and defining several structure types that had not been mapped in our previous visits to the site. Once again, the students were presented with the challenges of reconnaissance, planning, site selection and instrument set up in areas without existing monumentation, establish the needed permanent monuments and carry out the various surveys with and extremely high degree of precision. Once again, all students came away happy to have been a part of a class where the end results were enhanced knowledge of GISci, while being part of a valuable contribution to the archaeology of the Four Corners region.

Steve and I, with several students, were a valuable part of a team of investigators that were involved with a research project that was concerned with finding the burial location of the victims of the Herrin Massacre. The event centered on the killing of approximately two dozen non-union miners and other people, during a coal mine strike in 1922. There were 16 victims interred in the Potters Field of the Herrin Cemetery, and because the townspeople of Herrin wanted to disassociate themselves from the event, it was rarely discussed and the exact grave site was unmarked and the location unknown. With the help of the research team using GISci methodology and field work, we were able to determine the exact location by finding the vaults, coffins and hardware. The City of Herrin is planning to erect a monument marking the site. Once again, we were able to bring students into the research endeavor illustrating how to employ various research tools and methodologies. We made the front page of the Chicago Tribune this August...woo hoo!! Unexpectedly, our core team received an Award for Superior Achievement from the Illinois State Historical Society. Lunch was good!!

On the home front, I have been busy with home remodeling, maintaining the trees on the CRP ground along Kickapoo Creek, staying physically active (just to stay alive), and most importantly, cutting a few strokes off the golf score each year. I love whacking the ball around the course. Pam and I have some trips planned for the Fall – a trip to Pittsburgh to my brother's wedding, New Orleans for a Navy reunion, and Minnesota to visit Pam's relatives.

I hope all my past students live long and prosper, and if you are in the area you are quite welcome to stop by.

### **Belayet Khan**

The fall 2014 semester has begun, and I am teaching my regular courses. In addition, I am also teaching classes for the off-campus program. I greatly enjoy teaching, and it is always a pleasure for me to interact with students inside and outside of the classroom. My current research concentrates on climate variability and weather anomalies with special emphasis on South Asia, and I am planning to

present my research findings at the next annual meeting of the Association of the American Geographers (AAG). My service involvement continues, and this year I am serving on a number of committees. I have given several invited guest lectures on campus in the past year and plan for some more in the current year. I continue to serve as the co-advisor of the GTU honor society and looking forward to another great year. Currently, I am in the process of organizing the National Geography Awareness Week for November 2014 and intend to invite outside speakers to the department.

Our family enjoys travelling, and we have visited several countries in recent years. By the grace of the God, our three children are doing well, and they remain busy with their academic and professional activities. Our older daughter is employed as a financial advisor in Indiana. The younger daughter is serving her residency as a medical doctor at Emory University. She is specializing in Emergency Medicine. Our twenty year old son is now a senior at Northwestern University concentrating on biological sciences. On a sad note, my youngest brother passed away this summer, and he will be missed by family, relatives, and friends. While we are in pursuit of our own work, my wife puts her efforts to take care of us, and we would certainly be lost without her support.

### **Barry Kronenfeld**

Hello! It's that time of year already... a new schoolyear, new students to keep us on our toes. The world of GIS is changing fast, so our students need to stay on their toes, too. To help them stay competitive, this past summer I taught a new course in GIS Programming. The course introduced Python scripts, arcpy, spatial data algorithms, navigating geodatabase relationships and even a bit of hydrologic modeling. The students pulled together for a final group project to automate mapping portions of the General Land Office surveys in Illinois (see picture, left). Their code ran without a hitch. Kudos!

In the spring, I presented my own project at the Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting in Tampa, FL. The objective of this project is to develop software that can be used by undergraduate students to construct cartograms, a type of map that accentuates patterns in human geography – such as health, voting and demographics – that are related to the human population. Cartograms are relatively difficult to produce, but I'm hoping that this project will give our students an edge and allow them to construct maps that stand out a bit from the crowd.

Speaking of education, I've joined the Education Committee of the Illinois GIS Association and am now Co-Director of the GIScience Center here at EIU. Through these activities (and with the help of many other people) I'm working to increase opportunities for EIU students to gain experience using GIS in research and in the community. If you know anybody who needs help on a community

mapping project, or a business that could use a talented student intern, I'd love to hear from you.

On a personal note, my wife and I enjoyed a long overdue trip to China this past May. In addition to seeing her family, we took a boat down the Three Gorges Dam, a beautiful region that I've wanted to visit since before the dam went up in the late 1990s. The juxtaposition between booming construction in the big cities and small, isolated villages on the mountain slopes overlooking the Yangtze was a study in contrast, and reminded me of the intrinsic value of geographical study.

### **Chris Laingen**

Greetings! Fall 2014 marks the beginning of my sixth year at EIU. The past year has been extremely productive and enjoyable, filled with conference presentations (in Annapolis, MD), a GIS workshop (in New York City), five peer-reviewed publications, and a newly signed book contract. I've continued researching the rural and agricultural landscapes of the U.S., and Cameron Craig and I began a new endeavor this past year – a half-hour television show for WEIU-TV entitled, "Illinois' Skies," which airs four times a year that coincides with the passage of the solstices (June/December) and equinoxes (March/September).

Personally, it's also been a great year. We welcomed a daughter – Edy Elizabeth – on Mother's Day this past May. Our son, Kenny, is now nearly 3 years old, and he's enjoying very much being a big brother. My wife continues to enjoy her job at the University of Illinois as the head athletic trainer for the U of I women's basketball team. We were able to travel this past year to Minnesota to see my side of the family, took multiple trips to Ohio to see my wife's family, and were able to wrap up the summer by spending a few days in Door County, Wisconsin.

Here's to another memorable and productive year!

### **Katherine Lewandowski**

Greetings Alumni! Not much new to report. I continue to have students working with me on research projects. Brandon Bobal finished up his project investigating deformed corals from the Lingle (St. Laurent Formation) using core from the Illinois Geological Survey last year by presenting a poster at North-Central GSA in Lincoln, NE. Nydra Harvey-Costello continues to work with me. We are learning to make our own limestone thin sections. She's thin sectioning rocks from both the Devonian of the Iowa Basin and from the Paleocene of the Western Interior Seaway. Can't wait to see what's in them! Jeremy Wells and Danny White are just starting a project with me this year. They will do some field work in Central Ohio and bring back rocks (Columbus and Delaware Limestone) to thin section. This past summer, Sara Hughes, who was in the M.S.N.S. program finished up and defended her thesis on Pleistocene benthic forams from off the

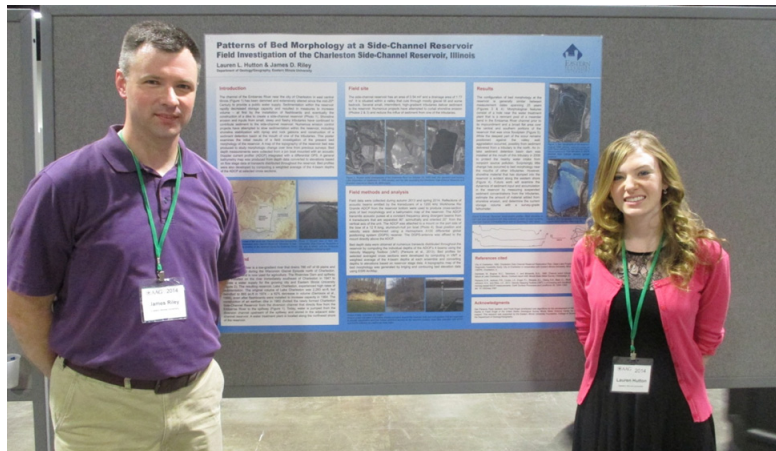
coast of Tasmania. She did a fantastic job! Sara is a teacher in the Chicago Public School System. I hope that she'll be able to present her research findings at the North-Central GSA meeting in May 2015 in Madison, WI.

The science teacher certification program has decreased in numbers recently. That is a trend we are seeing across all teacher education programs at EIU (and I suspect through Illinois) these days. As a result of this, for the first semester since I began teaching here in 2009, PHS/BIO 3400, the science teaching methods class is not being offered this semester. Unfortunately, I think the increasing cost and difficulty of obtaining licensure is negatively impacting our programs. Don't fear though, methods will be offered again next semester. The program, in general, is going through some revisions, due to evaluation of the curricular sequence of the education classes and changes in requirements. While the numbers of students in the science teacher certification program are relatively small, I believe our graduates are doing a good job of landing jobs and making a difference once they graduate.

On the personal front, my husband and I are happy living out in the country with our two dogs and cat. For our big summer vacation this year we took a big trip out west and visited a number of National Parks: Zion, Bryce, and the Grand Canyon. The weather was lovely, and we had a wonderful time.

### **James Riley**

Res Firma Mitescere Nescit



**Dr. James Riley and Lauren Hutton presenting their research, "Patterns of bed morphology at a side-channel reservoir," at the Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting in Tampa, FL in April, 2014.**

**Betty E. Smith**

This past year has been full and satisfying both professionally and personally. I continue to present papers at conferences, most recently the Midwest Association of Latin American Studies (MALAS), where I received a lifetime service award, and the Association of American Geographers (AAG), where I continue to collaborate with a Brazilian geographer to organize research paper sessions on the urban regions of Latin America. We decided for the upcoming AAG meeting in Tampa to make our sessions more hemispheric, including urban regions of the Americas. I continue in my position representing Education in Geography at the US section of the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), a part of the Organization of American States (OAS). In terms of curriculum I was happy to offer for the first time a Geography of Wine class. We studied many aspects of grape and wine production as it pertains to geographic regions in the USA and abroad. A new hobby the past three years has been amateur winemaking. I entered the five wines I have produced into the Illinois State Fair and was pleased and surprised to receive a Gold medal for my 2010 Portuguese Douro Tinto, a Silver medal for my 2012 Argentine Malbec, and a Bronze for the 2010 Spanish Tempranillo. I buy my internationally sourced grape juice online through a store in New York. It is great fun and very geographic! There is never enough time for everything one wants to do. While I could retire, I am having too much fun with reinventing my classes and advancing my research projects, so I hope to stay on a little longer here at Eastern.

**Dave Viertel**

The 2013-14 academic year was my seventh at EIU, and life in the department continues to be busy. In the Spring I premiered a new course offering focused on Lidar remote sensing. It was well-received by students and I hope to run it again in the near future. I continue to teach Remote Sensing courses and Cartography, as well as Senior Seminars. I serve as co-advisor to GTU with Dr. Khan. I also continue in my role as internship coordinator. When not in the office, you'll find me spending quality time with my wife Julie and my 4-year-old daughter Ella (likely at T. Garden Thai!). We spent a great deal of time in Texas over the summer with family, but it is fantastic to be back in the swing of the Fall semester.

## Recent Graduates & Award Recipients

The department wishes to extend a hearty congratulations to graduates from this past academic year. Welcome to our wonderful alumni family. The graduates are:

### Fall 2013 Graduates

Kyle Bakke  
Daniel Conrad  
Christopher Formosa  
Andrew Goetsch  
Luke Gourley  
Michael Murphy  
Nicholas Patrick  
Anthony Piecuch  
William Rice  
Andrew Santillo  
Tyler Shanks  
Elijash Slifer  
Grant Woods

### Spring 2014 Graduates

Kyle Alleman  
Sabrina Bly  
Jay Bushen  
Andrew Gonzalez  
David Hopkins  
Lauren Hutton  
Meghan James  
Emily Jestis  
James Louise  
Avery Smith  
Eric Torgerson  
Jacob Vesper  
Eric Wood

### Summer 2014 Graduate

Ethan Curry

### Student Research

Students in the department completed a very active year in the area of research. Here is a list of their accomplishments:

#### Fall 2013 / Spring 2014 Department Research

Brandon Bobal, "All Washed Up,"

Dr. Katie Lewandowski research mentor

Devin Clark, "Building a Spectral Library for Fossil Sources,"

Dr. Dave Viertel research mentor

Ethan Curry, "Drainage Map of EIU Campus using LIDAR data,"

Dr. Dave Viertel research mentor

Brian Dowd, "Little Wabash Flume Study,"

Dr. Diane Burns research mentor

Nydra Harvey-Costello, "Investigating Devonian Limestones from the Iowa Basin through thin sections"

Dr. Katie Lewandowski research mentor

Lauren Hutton, "Sedimentation in Lake Charleston,"  
Dr. Jim Riley research mentor

Kaitlyn James, "Characterizing Sediment from Lake Toba, Indonesia"  
Dr. Craig Chesner research mentor

Jacob Vesper, "Bothmytric Mapping of Embarras River Near Lake Charleston,"  
Dr. Jim Riley research mentor

Daniel White, "Provenance Study in Rocky Mountain Areas,"  
Dr. Diane Burns research mentor

John Zearing, "Little Wabash Flume Study,"  
Dr. Diane Burns research mentor

### **Student Awards**

Errett/Mazie Warner Geology/Geography Award Devin Clark  
Lauren Hutton  
Dewey H. Amos Scholarship  
Jon and Diana Giffin Geology Scholarship  
Geology Alumni Award  
Walter H. & Dorothea V. McDonald Scholarship John Schield

Brian Dowd  
Daniel Stadler  
John Zearing  
Jeremy Wells  
Jordan Knuth  
Wm. and Anna  
Crystal

Markwell Meier Memorial

Eric Torgerson  
Jacob Vesper  
Amanda Lupardus  
Karl Horn  
Dominic Delucia  
Rhonda Purcell  
Ethan Curry  
George Jones  
Lacey Clifton  
John Sarvela

Ruby M. Harris Scholarship  
Troyt York Memorial Scholarship  
Annie Weller Memorial Scholarship  
Robert G. Buzzard Memorial Scholarship  
Vincent & Pamela Gutowski Award  
Richard Wise – Lester Stoner  
Geography Alumni Award  
John George Wozencraft, Jr. Memorial Award

Brandon Bobal, Scholars in Undergraduate Research at Eastern (SURE) Award

George Cernetig, Distinguished Graduate Student Award

Ethan Curry, Illinois Geographical Society Outstanding Senior Award

Jacob Vesper, Illinois State Academy of Science Outstanding Student Poster Award: Earth Sciences Division

Graduate School Acceptance / Awards

Ethan Curry, Northern Illinois University, Masters in Geography, awarded full Research Assistantship

David Hopkins, Eastern Illinois University, PSM in GISci

## What's Happening With You?

### **Chris Smith, '12**

Nothing too exciting on my end. I started working for Nomac Drilling, LLC (Chesapeake Energy) around Sept. 2013 as a Field Geologist (mud logger haha). I took my GRE around May 2014, did well on it, and plan to go to grad school Fall, 2015. I started a computer business in Louisville, IL with the family, and we bought an office in May 2014.

### **Brandon Hargrave, '02**

For the previous ten and a half years I have been working as the staff geologist at CSD Environmental Services, Inc., a private environmental engineering firm in Springfield, Illinois. I have recently been hired on with the state of Illinois. As of June 1st, I will be working in Springfield for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in the Bureau Of Land. My new job title will be "Environmental Protection Geologist." I was chosen for this position from a pool of 45 qualified candidates. Needless to say, I'm incredibly excited to get started at my new position.

I just thought you might like to hear from a former Panther, especially one with good news. I hope this letter finds you all doing well.

Let us know what is happening with you! If you send us these news bits by August, 2015, we will put them in our next newsletter. You can either send them via postal mail to the department or via email to [dmburns@eiu.edu](mailto:dmburns@eiu.edu).

## Broadcast Meteorology Alumni in Your Area

**Nick Patrick** ('13), WXXV, Gulfport, Mississippi

**Lauren Jerkovitz** ('13), Peoria, Illinois

**Joseph Dames** ('12), WTHI, Terre Haute, Indiana

**Caitlin Napoleoni** ('12), KJTV, Lubbock, Texas

**Darren Leeds** ('11), KEVN, Rapid City, South Dakota

**Mike Gismondi** ('11), WCJB, Gainesville, Florida

**Cameron Hopman** ('11), WLFI, Lafayette, Indiana

**Kevin Jeanes** ('10), KOLD, Chief Meteorologist, Tucson, Arizona

**Brittney Sager** ('09), WITI, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**J.C. Fultz** ('08), WAND, Chief Meteorologist, Decatur, Illinois



## Support the Department

Would you like to help the Department in its mission of helping students learn about, and prepare for, a career in geology, geography, and the earth sciences?

A variety of opportunities exist. These range from simple donations to providing advice, datasets, or job opportunities for students. We are particularly seeking to increase the funds available for student support. Gifts to the Geology/Geography Gift Account allow us to:

- Purchase equipment for faculty/student research;
- Develop an undergraduate research fund;
- Support undergraduates presenting research at scientific conferences;
- Support innovative, inquiry-based laboratory exercises for class.

If you would like to make a contribution, several options are available. The simplest way is to send a check to the Department of Geology/Geography. Online donations with a credit card can be done via the University web pages at [www.eiu.edu/~develop/gift.php](http://www.eiu.edu/~develop/gift.php).

Please remember to direct the gift to the Department of Geology/Geography. Other options for contributions are listed at the Office of Development's page, [www.eiu.edu/~develop/gift.php](http://www.eiu.edu/~develop/gift.php). These gifts are usually tax deductible.

If you wish to support a particular scholarship or area in our department, that is also possible. In general, unless specified otherwise, we allocate most of our gifts towards student support and we have several pre-existing funds.

### ***Existing scholarships and funds***

- General gift account – unrestricted use towards student support or equipment purchases
- Geography Alumni Award – sophomore or junior in Geography
- Geography of Ecuador and Latin America Enhancement Fund -geography majors.
- Geology Alumni Award – sophomore or junior in Geology
- Dewey H. Amos Scholarship – outstanding junior in Geology or Earth Science
- Jon and Diana Giffin Geologist Scholarship – at least sophomore Geology major with plans to continue in geology
- Ruby M. Harris Award – senior in Geology, Geography, or Earth Science
- Walter H. and Dorothea V. McDonald Scholarship – junior in Geography or

## Earth Science

- Grace Markwell Meier Award – outstanding member of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU)
- Errett and Mazie Warner Presidential Award – juniors or seniors in Geology, Geography, or Earth Sciences
- John George Wozencraft, Jr. Memorial Award – either mathematics (even years) or Geography (odd years)
- Vincent P. & Pamela R. Gutowski Scholarship – given to students majoring in Geography who show outstanding scholarship and dedication to the field of Geography.
- Dalias and Lillian Price Memorial Endowment – supports student observers in observing daily climate data for National Weather Service.
- Geology in the Schools Outreach Program - funds for this program go towards supplies and models used in the classroom demonstrations as well as support for the students who are doing the presentations.
- Other – such as establishment of your own scholarship or memorial fund.

We would especially like to encourage alumni to check for the possibility of matching funds from their employer, as any donation will be multiplied. For example, some large petroleum companies offer a 3:1 match.

Gifts-in-kind of equipment or specimens are also appreciated but must be prearranged with the department beforehand to ensure optimal use (and for conformance to University regulations). If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to email or call me.

Michael Cornebise, Chair  
Email: [mwcornebise@eiu.edu](mailto:mwcornebise@eiu.edu)  
Phone: (217) 581-2626



**Chris Laingen's young son, Kenny, frolics in the water during a recent trip in Doors County.**



**Former Geography major and KOLD Chief Meteorologist, Kevin Jeanes, demonstrates the station's weather system with mentor, Cameron Craig, while Craig visited Tucson, Arizona for the documentary film, Expedition Endurance.**



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