Department of Geography and Geospatial Sciences
Kansas State University
Annual Newsletter – Spring 2023

From the Department

Head, Chuck Martin

Welcome to the 2022 *K-State Geography Alumni Newsletter*, an opportunity for us to share news and happenings from the past year with alumni and friends of the Department of Geography and Geospatial Sciences! Thank you once again to my colleague Dr. Bimal Paul for putting together the alumni newsletter this year.

After a very challenging previous couple of years during the pandemic, the academic life at the university and in the department returned to "normal" in 2022. Classes were "in person" during the spring and fall semesters and student and faculty absence because of COVID remained at a low level. The mask requirement that had been in place for all KSU buildings and classrooms was lifted in March when masks became "recommended" rather than "required."

The department budget remained tight in 2022, in large part because the College has been running a deficit with steadily declining student enrollment. With the university's new budget model, allocations to Colleges are based primarily on student credit hour production. Unfortunately, the College has seen persistent drops in student credit hours over the last several years, resulting in less revenue flowing to the College and then to departments. The good news for the department is that our student credit hours increased by about 15% over 2021, and are now at a level last seen in calendar year 2020. In fact, in 2022 we recorded the largest percentage gain in student credit hours of any department in the College of Arts and Sciences. The department continues to use a variety of sources to keep the department moving forward, including money generated by faculty who teach intersession and summer courses and indirect costs that the department receives from our faculty who have secured external research grants. We have also relied heavily on the many generous gifts and donations to our Foundation accounts. Those monies allowed us to continue providing extra support to our GTAs this year, thereby reducing the financial burden of the fees they pay each semester to the university. Our GTA allocation was reduced again in August 2022, but fortunately research grants held by several faculty and department funds noted above allowed us to provide financial support to nearly all our graduate students.

As was the case in 2021, there was good news from the department in 2022 to share with you! Our newest faculty members Dr. Vera Smirnova and Dr. Laura Moley continue to make significant contributions to the department through their teaching, research, and service. Dr. Audrey Joslin earned tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor and Dr. Arnaud Temme was promoted to Full Professor in August. The department's Richard A. Marston Earth System Science Research Laboratory in Seaton 0108/0109 continued to see regular use from faculty and students in physical geography. We are seeing increasing interest and growth in the department's new Geographic Information Science & Technology (GIS&T) major, which was launched in August 2020. We continued to upgrade the Geospatial Teaching Lab on the third floor of Seaton Hall, a facility that sees heavy use during the semester from our many geospatial labs and studios. Funding from the College of Arts and Sciences paid for installation of a glass partition that divides the teaching side of the room from the research side, yet maintains the open atmosphere of this large teaching and research space. The College's new BS degree in Environmental Sciences that became available to KSU students in August 2021 has seen phenomenal growth and is generating increased enrollment for the many GEOG courses that focus on environmental change. The members of the faculty and students in the department enjoyed remarkable success in 2022 as you will read in the highlights on subsequent pages. The Steven Kale Scholarship Fund, endowed through the estate of the late Steve Kale, continues to

provide scholarships to geography undergraduate and graduate students to pursue research in the summer and fall. The department's other Foundation funds continue to prosper thanks to the wonderful generosity of our alumni. In 2022, funds from geography Foundation accounts and other sources provided over $40,0000 of scholarship support to our undergraduate and graduate students. In addition to financial support, our alumni generously contribute their time and expertise, whether serving on the Geography Alumni Advisory Board, visiting in the classroom with students, or contacting the department about job and internship opportunities.

Student Highlights: The Geography and Geospatial Sciences Department had a strong and multinational group of graduate students and undergraduate majors in 2022. At the end of 2022, the department counted 18 PhD students, 6 MS students, 20 geography majors, and 10 geography minors. About 1800 students enrolled in Geography classes in academic year 2021/22. In 2022, two students completed the PhD degree, three completed the MS degree, and six completed the BS degree in geography. The very successful GIS certificate programs continue to flourish, and we have four students enrolled in the new GIS&T major.

Our students and alumni are making a positive impact in business, industry, government, and academia. A recent survey by Career and Employment Services at K-State of our graduates indicated that 77% were employed and 23% were enrolled in a graduate or professional school. Those numbers are a testament to the quality of our program.

Staying Connected with You: In addition to our newly revamped department homepage (http://www.k-state.edu/geography/), the K-State Department of Geography and Geospatial Sciences has a Facebook page and a KSU Geography Alumni page. I hope you will check them out on a regular basis to keep up with events in the department and among our alumni. Although these are trying financial times for the College and the department, there are opportunities (e.g., new GIS&T major and new Environmental Sciences major, proposed online GIS Undergraduate Certificate) that stand to benefit the department and strengthen the role it will play in the college and university. On behalf of my colleagues, I want to thank our alumni, parents, students, and friends for the gifts that support our students and help meet the needs of the department. Your generosity contributes substantially to the education of our students. As always, we welcome your comments about the department and K-State. Please stop by Seaton Hall and say "hello". Thanks to all of you for your ongoing and generous support of K-State Geography!

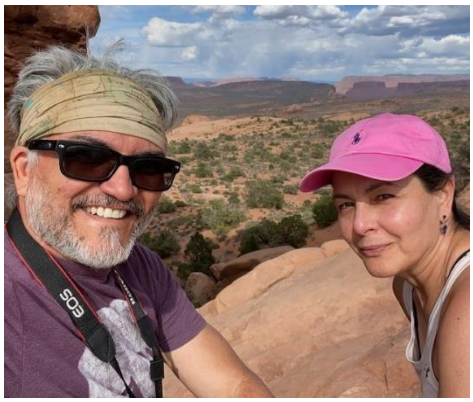
Personal Updates
Faculty

Hélène Avocat

Like many of you, this year flew by very quickly! Lots of changes for us. Our oldest son graduated from high school and is now going to the university! I can hardly believe it! And I am very happy that he chose to do his undergraduate at K-State. He is majoring in Kinesiology and minoring in Biology, and lives in a fraternity (a brand-new world for me as we do not have that in France!).

Marcellus Caldas

While I write this contribution to our Geography Newsletter, I realized that I completed 15 years in the Department on January 1. These 15 years seemed to have passed in a blink of an eye. I looked back and I tried to reflect what has happened on these period.



No surprisingly, many things have changed. Professionally and personally. Professionally, I think that I realized everything I had "dreamed of", specially working in a great department. Here, I want to thank the support of all my colleagues during these 15 years, colleagues not only in the Department of Geography and Geospatial Sciences, but also at K-State. Without their incentive, support, and more important friendship, none of my dreams could have come true.

Personally, I can tell state that 2022 was a difficult year for our family. We lost someone that we were looking forward to seeing and love. This type of event made me rethink what is important to me. Well, work was always important to me, but it moved down (a little bit) in my priorities. So, I dedicated more time to my family and

friends in many ways. For instance, I had frequently Saturday's dinners with friends, Sunday dinners with my kids, and I had online wine meetings with friends that are living far away from us. These are simple things, but these meetings made me so happy.

Doug Goodin

I'm writing this update in January 2023, which means that I've just completed my 30th year at KSU. Hard to believe. My walk to class this morning took me past Hale Library, and I was particularly struck by how much it and the area around it have changed since that time. Denison Hall, the building where I taught my first-ever class, is no longer there, and the library is much changed, and much improved since 1993. That class I headed for this morning was a descendant of the same class I was teaching that first day. It's good to see things change, and good to see that some things continue in an improved form.

My research into the effect of disease and its associated stress on the spectral response of trees continues. My colleagues and I published our first paper on this topic this part year. Another is in the works. Thanks to a recent involvement with Soil Science Society of America's annual meeting, I've also developed an interested in spectral analysis of soils. I'm interested in using detailed spectral information to infer the properties of soils that are partially obscured by vegetation cover. This is a new thing for me and combines my interests in remote sensing and process modeling of reflectance. We'll see where this goes. I've also continued to work on methods for parameterizing canopy reflectance models, a long-standing "back burner" interest that's now coming to the fore. Again, we'll see where this goes.

Shawn Hutchinson

Another busy year has come and gone. As the years have passed, I've found myself increasingly engaged with interdisciplinary curriculum and program development on campus as evidenced by our new undergraduate degree in Geographic Information Science & Technology and in Environmental Science. I like to think these developments have helped our department achieve recent enrollment increases and it has certainly been rewarding to see how students and administrators alike are better understanding the value of geography! Next on the agenda is advancing geography and geospatial techniques in the field agricultural analytics. I hope to be able to report more on this next year.

On the research side, much effort was expended this past year on grant proposal development for agencies including NSF, USDA NIFA, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The good news is the USFWS proposal was selected for funding, a previous grant with the National Park Service was renewed, and two others remain in the review process. I've was also fortunate to work with three outstanding doctoral students in 2022. Hilda Onuoha graduated in Spring 2022 (hooray!), Amariah Fischer successfully advanced to candidacy, and I welcomed Joel Radunzel to our graduate program.

The Hutchinson family continues to do well and all four of us are K-Staters! Stacy remains serving as the Associate Dean for Research in the College of Engineering. Our son Mitch, now a senior in Computer Science completed an internship with Esri in St. Louis last summer and will be working with them again next summer. He is hoping for a full-time position with Esri after graduation. Our daughter Marleigh is a sophomore in Environmental Engineering and interned with the engineering firm HDR last summer and over Christmas break. She will be studying abroad this spring in Prague and has already accepted an internship with Black & Veatch next summer. We also still have our two crazy labs, Mocha, and Maizy, who remain healthy and happy.

Perhaps our biggest personal news of last year was a rather impulsive purchase of a loft in downtown Kansas City, Missouri. For many years now, Stacy and I have coveted a place in the River Market neighborhood. One came on the market last August and two weeks later we took possession! It is located on the corner of 2nd and Main on the original Town of Kansas site where Kansas City was founded. It has been a fun urban refuge for many weekend trips, and we enjoy riding the KC Streetcar and exploring the many sites, restaurants, breweries, and distilleries the city has to offer. It will also

be a short walk to the KC Current stadium that's under construction and, perhaps, a future downtown ballpark for the Royals.

As I do each year, I want to say a special thank you our alumni who visited or assisted our department and students over the past year. I very much enjoy catching up with former students and learning about the interesting things they are doing. If you happen to be on or near campus in the future, please do stop by for a visit!

Audrey Joslin

Happy New Year! The past year again seems to have gone by quickly, but it was an important one with lots of reasons to celebrate. In Spring 2022, I earned tenure and received a promotion to Associate Professor. I also had a great experience working together with colleagues and the Chapman Center for Rural Studies to push forward research on the intersection of market-oriented conservation and wildfires. In Fall 2022, I welcomed two new master's advisees, Wyatt Cheney, and Chester Hubbard, and enjoyed working with PhD advisee Shreya Ojha to develop her dissertation on the responses of urban water governance to the impacts of wildfire on water supplies. The year 2022 did not entail much travel, but for a good reason. Last fall I took maternity leave and gave birth to a sweet baby girl, Alice J. Tyburski. My spouse Michael and I are overjoyed! She gives us the brightest smiles and lots of sweet snuggles.

Abby Langston

In 2022, I had many highlights both professionally and personally. My students, Clay Robertson, and Olivia Groeber, and I continued our field work on the beautiful Buffalo River in northwest Arkansas. Olivia received her MS in Geography in May 2022, and we are now preparing a manuscript based on her thesis work for publication.

Abby with Caroline and Alex in Great Basin National Park, in White Pine County, NV.

One of the personal and professional highlights of the year was making a second research visit to the luminescence lab at the Desert Research Institute in Reno, NV along with my family and grad student Clay Robertson. The research trip was made as part of an EPSCoR early career development grant I received to learn luminescence dating techniques. So far, I have used luminescence dating as a compliment to my standard methods of geomorphology research (field work and numerical modeling) in two projects on the Buffalo River, AR and one project in Konza Prairie, here in Manhattan, KS.

My second research trip of the summer was to St. Anthony Falls Laboratory (SAFL) at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN. Clay and I went to SAFL to conduct a set of flume experiments to explore how changes in sediment flux and water discharge affect the development of wide bedrock valleys. The immense data set that Clay and I collected is especially exciting because this set of flume experiments is the first to explore lateral bedrock widening rather than vertical bedrock incision. Clay will be working with the data as part of his PhD dissertation.

Max Lu

Last year seemed to have gone by quickly. I was happy to be able to travel again. In May, I went back to Garden City in Southwest Kansas because of my interest in revisiting some of the issues we looked at when several of us in the department worked on the HERO project, some 20 years ago! Mayor Shannon Dick, who is a K-State alumnus with a master's degree in statistics, filled me in on many of the exciting changes the city had experienced, and K-State extension services' irrigation expert Jonathan Aguilar showed me around, including the irrigation research he was working on. This trip brought back many fond memories.

On the way to and from Garden City, I also stopped by two small towns that were hit by tornadoes, Hoisington (2001) and Greensburg (2007). There were no signs of the tornado damage left in Hoisington though a shopper I talked to at the local grocery store remembered that day vividly. In Greensburg, scattered vacant lots and trees with missing crowns are still reminders of the havoc the EF-5 tornado wreaked, but the city has done a great job rebuilding itself. The city looks very nice. I drove around and stopped many times to take pictures. At one

point, I struck up a conversation with a gentleman walking his dog. He turned out to be the city's mayor, Matt Christenson!

My involvement in Advanced Placement Human Geography took me to Cincinnati, Northfield in Minnesota (Carleton College) and Raleigh, NC (Meredith College). Last year, I mentioned I co-authored a textbook for AP Human Geography. One of the most interesting things that have happened is Ben White recently told me his niece (Eric White's daughter) is taking APHG and that high school is using my book as text

Chuck Martin

This year saw a return of some sense of normality to my professional activities as the university mask requirement was lifted in March and most international travel restrictions were eliminated during the year. This allowed an almost "normal" visit to and field month in Germany this past July. Most of my professional life was again dedicated to serving as department head in geography as we continue working to raise our student enrollment, with some success I might add. Nearly all meetings were held "in person" and the department was able to welcome not one, but two, distinguished alumni to the department in March and October. The department's budget in 2022 was leaner than it had been in 2021, as I noted in my department head summary earlier in this newsletter, which presented challenges for bringing in visiting speakers and providing funds for travel by graduate students and faculty to professional conferences. On the personal side, daughter Christine began working on her MS in Environmental Engineering at the Technical University of Delft (Netherlands) and son Nicholas left Long Island for a new engineering position in the Upper Valley of Vermont (much more to his liking than the traffic and potholes of Long Island). My wife Sabine continues to manage and run her environmental consulting company. My plan is to complete my second 5-year appointment as department head in June 2023. I have offered to continue for one additional year beyond that so a new College dean can work with the department in choosing my replacement. In addition, there has been significant turnover among department heads in the College (I am now the second most senior head), so providing some senior leadership experience to a new dean seemed appropriate. Tentatively I am looking to retire at the end of 2025.

Kate Nelson

As I think back on the past year, I find that most of it has gone by in a blur. Personal milestones include our oldest starting middle school, our youngest starting to talk in complete sentences, middle-child Ella completing a 5K race, and having a much-delayed Thanksgiving family reunion. I also taught the older girls how to make storymaps in ArcGIS Online, where they have started documenting our new family tradition of "cooking around the world" during winter break. The chronic illness that has dogged us since the de-masking that occurred in schools early in the year limited our travels, but also provided an opportunity to explore a little closer to home on a trip to the Lindsborg area. I'm grateful that each illness has been manageable and for the flexibility and security that our work affords us.

Professionally it has been a busy and productive year. I welcomed two new graduate students and started two new funded projects this year. I also continued to work on several existing collaborative projects and papers and developing new collaborations. I'm also very proud to share that my PhD advisee, Jean Francois, was awarded a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (NCR-SARE) graduate research grant this year. On the education front, Dr. Avocat and I spent many hours in front of a camera and "green screen" recording videos for an online version of our GIS 1 class. Our pilot run of a fully online version of GIS 1 during the summer was a success and I plan on continuing to assist with expansion of the department's repertoire of online GIS classes.

Bimal Paul

Last year was one of the most productive years for me. I published four papers in refereed journals, plus one book chapter. After waiting for two years for the COVID-19 pandemic, last Summer I was able to go to Nepal for three months as a Fulbright-Flex Fellow. In Nepal I

conducted field survey on compliance with seismic safety measures in construction of main houses introduced after the 2015 earthquake in the country. The survey was partially financed by a grant provided by the Small University Research Grant (SURG) by the Kansas State University. From Nepal I went to my home country – Bangladesh. I will also go to Nepal this year's Summer for two months to complete my research. On the family from, all our three children have been living and working in Kansas City. Our elder daughter has a dog (Kai) and younger daughter has two dogs (Peanut and Pepper). We visit them at least once in a month.

Jeff Smith

In March (2023) it will have been three years since the CDC declared the COVID pandemic. A lot has changed, and some things have finally returned to "normal." With respect to my research endeavors the pandemic has showcased how fragile our society is and how close many people are to mental/emotional breakdowns. Our society is at an all-time high for mental health disorders. My latest research project is looking at the concept of restorative places (places that promote a health mind, body, and soul). I have learned so much in the process of doing the research. It is probably the first time I have truly loved the research aspect of my career. Likewise, I was able to take a research trip to Chile and Argentina to experience their version of National Parks. With respect to teaching, I still thoroughly love interacting with students and because of COVID vaccines I have been able to offer field trips once again as part of GEOG 790 (Seminar on Place) without fear of severe illness. I wish each of you peace, happiness, and contentment. Please feel free to stop by my office when you find yourself in Seaton Hall.

Vera Smirnova

Wow, 2022 was, at the same time, exciting, exhausting, and heartbreaking. In good news, Zak and I had our first baby! Zoya is a wonderful and, frankly, super hilarious little girl. She already got to enjoy hikes in the New Mexican desert, as well as a busy trip to Chicago. Of course, it was a challenge combining baby care with teaching and research, but we somehow managed. Despite this, there is also a massive and violent war that Russia launched in Ukraine, which resulted in thousands of people displaced while others are suffering at their homes. My family, half Ukrainian, and half Russian felt this burden, despite residing in the Western part of the country. One only hopes for this to be over soon. As a silver lining, my research on Russia's denial of its neighbors' territorial integrity felt urgent more than ever. The war brought our extensive community of Slavists and Russianists together, as many researchers left the country to escape prosecution. At the same time, it prompted the field to respond to recent challenges of pervasive imperialist thinking in the Russian academy. Much has changed, and much more work is still needed. So here is to a peaceful 2023!

Vera, Zoya, and Zak in Konza prairie

Arnaud Temme

When I look back professionally, this was the year where I was promoted to full professor, did fieldwork with K-State undergraduate students in the Italian Alps and spent 14 weeks in Germany for a sabbatical. The promotion was a very proud moment, that I shared with colleague Audrey Joslin, department head Chuck Martin and a few dozen colleagues during a reception with the university president.

The fieldwork in Italy, organized with two K-State undergraduate students, a Dutch MS student, and a German colleague, focused on soils that develop where glaciers retreat. The longer ago a glacier has retreated, the more developed a soil is – and I want to know if we can predict that. Showing our Geography students aspects of life in Europe, high-mountain tourist culture, and especially a lot of soils and landscapes, was an amazing experience for me. The main innovation that we pioneered this year was measuring CO2 fluxes from these developing soils so that we can quantify rates of carbon uptake from the atmosphere.

K-State students and the rest of the dream-team working on our CO2 flux sensors in front of the glacier

The highlight of the year though, was the time spent in Germany, in the state of Bavaria. My host is a geomorphologist at the Catholic University of Eichstaett, about two hours north of Munich by train. Eichstaett has an amazingly rich history dating back to the Roman empire but is famous as a baroque town because it was rebuilt in the Baroque period after being burned to the ground by Swedish armies in 1634. It sometimes felt as if I walked around in a museum, with the town's cathedral, 16 churches and 10 monasteries. Did I mention the seminary and the bishop's castle? Despite this strong religious influence (it's still an episcopal seat), the university is academically independent, and the geography department has a great reputation. K-State PhD student Nicholas McCarroll visited me in Eichstaett and together, we made a field visit with Polish colleagues in their study area near the Czech border.

My host and I worked together on mountain geomorphology topics, partially as a continuation of the fieldwork since my host works in the same region in the Italian Alps on different topics.

Three more items of note:

- The famous Oktoberfest in Munich is mostly in September. For the real thing, instead go to the smaller Oktoberfests in surrounding towns (also in September).
- The train-app on my phone asked for academic status, and afterward consistently addressed me as Herr Professor Dr. Temme. Trains rule.
- One morning, I took the train to Budapest, ran 25 km around all major landmarks once I got there, then took the train back to Vienna in the evening while getting some work in with the train's power outlet and free internet. Trains rule.

Jida Wang

This was another wonderful year full of life-enriching memories and experience. Career-wise, our research group continued to make solid contributions, and my research continued to be cited every day. Life-wise, Jordan and I traveled to more Central and South American countries, and it was our first time to hike in the Andes, snorkel in the Caribbean, and see the Mayan ruins. The picture on the right shows us being distracted by a family of cute coatis on a Costa Rican highway. As one of the highlights, I had my first ever sabbatical leave. I spent a few months of inspiring time at the University of Tokyo.

A casual selfie of colleagues at the University of Tokyo, Japan (06/22/2022).

With the supports of my host colleague, Prof. Dai Yamazaki (third from the left in the picture below), I was able to visit and broaden my networks in several amazing universities across Japan. The year of 2022 concluded splendidly with the launch of the SWOT satellite mission (of which I am a Science Team member), marking the start of a new era of surface hydrology. As we are moving beyond COVID-19's shadow, I remain optimistic and wish all of us a wonderful, healthy, and productive year ahead!

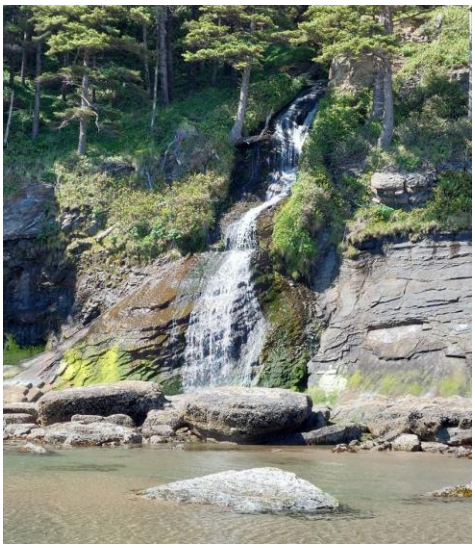
Emeritus Faculty

John Harrington

My passion/obsession for hiking to see waterfalls continued in 2022. Trips to the Olympics, the San Juan Islands/Bellingham area, and the Oregon North Coast got me to a number of new features and some old friends. The most unusual ones were the two that are approached with a beach hike at low tide because the stream water drops directly into the Pacific at high tide. The accompanying picture is Blumenthal Falls near Arch Cape, OR.

The Bellingham trip was primarily for attending the annual APCG meeting where I gave a presentation on ideas that Dr. Lisa Tabor and I have developed related to teaching about climate change. Western Washington University has a very nice campus lots of trees and covered bike racks (an indication of rain frequency). The keynote presentations provided a good scholarly overview of the importance of the Salish Sea.

My efforts to donate blood approximately every 8 weeks came to an end in the spring when I was diagnosed with and then successfully treated for a melanoma (stage zero). After treatment and according to Red Cross rules, I need to wait a year before donating again.



Walking the dog almost every day and trying to limit myself to two meals a day are likely reasons for my otherwise continued good health. Lisa and I celebrated our 35th anniversary with a luncheon at Jake's in Portland (where we went to celebrate our engagement in 1987) and a visit to the local Japanese Garden.

Four co-authored, peer-reviewed publications were added to the C.V. for 2022; two journal articles and two book chapters. I continue to enjoy the challenges associated with collaborating with several of my former students. During the upcoming AAG in Denver, my 50-years of AAG membership will be acknowledged. I hope to see my K-State geography friends at the meetings. In addition, I will be a panelist in a session addressing the history of AAG specialty groups. Those I communicated with, to better understand the AAG decision to start the specialty groups, suggested that enabling the collaborative specialist communities was one of the best decisions the organization has ever made. Also, for the Denver AAG, I have helped organize a couple of panels on Advances in Climatology. It has been over 30 years since a session at the AAG in Toronto resulted in a special issue of Physical Geography on the history of climatology. I will be a guest editor for articles derived from the Advances in Climatology panelist presentations in Denver.

Those who know my weather and/or climate teaching recall my preparing and presenting a daily weather briefing. I still spend each morning reading the professional forecaster discussions and checking out the weather charts. A relatively new "big thing" is ensemble forecasting, which is a way to get a better handle on how much the forecast uncertainty grows (or not) over time in the model runs. Communicating that uncertainty remains a challenge because the public generally expects scientists to provide a single correct answer. A bomb cyclone that provided a significant snow event and power outages on April 11th and an atmospheric river that produced 5.49 inches of rain at our Kelso home on Nov 4th were the two local extreme weather events of the past 12 months.

Lisa MB Harrington

I've been learning and improving artistically. I'm involved with two local groups of artists and have been invited to be featured artist at a local gallery next November—later in the year provides more time to prepare work and mental state. It was interesting to learn that another emeritus geography prof living in Washington and with the Harrington surname (J.W. Harrington) also is an artist in post-academic life.

Other post-academia activities have included gardening and landscaping (I've added a lot of trees--especially Japanese maples, but even a giant sequoia--and shrubs to our yard). Although I haven't been involved in any dog competitions for a while, I am also the secretary for the local kennel club. We had to get a new vehicle at the end of 2022.

I do have a forthcoming book chapter (March 2023), with Chris Laingen: Chapter 1, Changes Across Rural America: Agricultural Landscapes, in *The Routledge Companion to the American Landscape* (Chris W. Post, Alyson L. Greiner, and Geoffrey L. Buckley, eds).

We went to the regional geographers meeting in Bellingham in October. Western Washington (WWU) has a beautiful campus, and I liked visiting the site of my first post-PhD job, as well as the trips up and back. Both of us will be participating in the national geographers' meeting in March 2023 (Denver) after three years of no in-person meeting. I'm honored to be receiving the lifetime achievement award from the Rural Geography specialty group. Hope to be seeing folks in Denver, for the first time in quite a while.

Dr. Richard A. Marston

Nancy and I enjoyed some travels in 2022: to Scottsdale, AZ (for hiking and spring training baseball), Big Sur and the Redwoods of NW California, Yellowstone, and Grand Teton national Parks, plus a trip to Dublin & Belfast, London, and the Ouche Valley of France. For the latter adventure, we joined three other couples (friends and relatives) on a barge for six wonderful days and nights on the Burgundy Canal. I am serving on the alumni advisory board for UCLA Geography and finishing a coedited geomorphology textbook for Cambridge University Press. We also spend some time in our trailer along Big Bear Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains.

I am in contact with most of my former graduate students, all of whom are prospering in the private sector, government, or academia...about whom I am very proud. I hope to visit the K-State campus for the October 2023 Binghamton Geomorphology Symposia, which the department is hosting. Wishing all K-Staters a happy and healthy 2023!

Current Graduate Students

Meng Ding

My life in 2022 is full of memories. In summer, I moved from Manhattan to Novi, MI. I am so glad that my sweet baby Kumi has been there for me during the process of adapting to the new environment. He has been teaching me to love unconditionally and to treat our lives with care and made me more peaceful and grateful. Despite being away from campus, I kept regular online meetings and research progress updates with Dr. Wang and my collaborators and made progress on two first-authored articles (one is under review, and one will be submitted soon). I presented my current work to a research group at the University of Tokyo in the summer, attended the 2022 International Graduate Workshop on Geo-Informatics, and gave an oral presentation at 2022 American Geophysical Union meeting in Chicago, and I was happy to meet with Dr. Wang at that time. I also continued to actively operate the public platform Hydro90 with friends. Look forward to some breakthroughs in research in 2023, and best wishes to everyone.

Amariah Fischer

This past year has been exciting for so many reasons. First and foremost, I left my home of many years and

moved from Manhattan back to Nebraska to finish my degree out of residence. While I am from Lincoln, Nebraska, my home is now with my partner, Marc, in the small town of Wahoo, Nebraska (yes, that is actually the name of our town). Leaving Manhattan was bittersweet, but finally living in the same place as my partner has certainly helped tipped the scales toward the sweet side. The best thing to come out of the past year, though, was getting married to my absolute best friend in the entire world. Marc and I were married on September 18th, 2022, at a pumpkin patch south of Lincoln, Nebraska. It was a balmy 92°F for our outdoor ceremony, but how's the saying go again? Friends who sweat together, stay together? Needless to say, Marc and I felt so loved and supported being surrounded by our friends and family on our wedding day, especially considering many walked away a little sunburnt.

Following our wedding, Marc and I honeymooned in Europe, spending one week in Italy (my pick) and one week in England (Marc's pick). Nearly all our pictures from Italy are of us eating food, specifically pizza and gelato, and I have absolutely no regrets about that. We stayed in Naples but took the ferry to visit Positano and the island of Ischia. In England we spent most of our time in Newcastle, the home of Marc's favorite football club (NUFC) who we got to see play against Brentford in an exciting 5-1 win. Lastly, we wouldn't be the nerdy geographers we are without stopping at the John Snow Public House for a pint and of course a quick picture with the infamous pump.

Jean Ribert Francois

Over the last year, I made notable progress in my Ph.D. program at K-State. I started my second year, Spring 2022, and I am blessed to be the protégé of Dr. Nelson. I was awarded a North Central SARE student grant for my research on community well-being and the management of agricultural systems. I managed to progress on my research, having a paper near completion. I am excited to start my third year this Spring, 2023, and get ready to receive all academic blessings. Regarding family news, we have been blessed with the birth of our second daughter, Grayce, during Thanksgiving week. It is a great joy to have her in our family.

Jean with her new baby girl, Grayce

Nicholas McCarroll

Over the last year I have done quite a bit of traveling around the country going to three conferences so far. During the summer I drove from my parents' house in Pennsylvania to Flat Rock, North Carolina to attend the Penrose Geomorphology Conference. While I was there, I got to see some awesome landscapes in Appalachia and was able to tick off Great Smokey Mountains National Park off my list of national parks. I even got to see a female elk with her calf while visiting! I have also been busy with research. Computer modeling of layered landscapes, like the Flint Hills, has occupied my focus for several months. It can be both rewarding and frustrating waiting for models to run and checking and re-checking lines and lines of code. More interestingly, I have recently received preliminary results on how long the large limestone boulders and blocks in Konza Prairie have been sitting on the surface of the hills. The boulders seem to be exposed at the surface and placed on the hillslope some 20-30 thousand years ago! This is a lot older than I initially thought! I was sure that these would come back between 10 and 13 thousand years in age. That age range would correspond to when North America was transitioning out of the last ice age and so there would be a lot of activity on the landscape because of the big change in climate. But instead, we find that the hills here in Konza were more active during the height of the glacial period, when it was a lot cooler! This is interesting! I can't wait to dig into this more in the coming months! So next time someone tells you that Kansas is a boring landscape, you now know that it is a dynamic and interesting place. You just need to look around a little bit to find it.

Shreya Ojha

The past year has been very eventful for me. On the professional front, I was able to successfully publish my master's research as a book chapter in the "Water Resources Management and Sustainability" Book published by Springer and a research paper with Dr. Nelson, Dr. Nguyen and my colleague, Jean. I also received the Geography Graduate research grant from the department which helped me conduct preliminary dissertation research work in Colorado. I also got the chance to explore the Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park and various other places in Colorado with Dr. Smith and my classmates as a part of coursework for our 'Geography of Place'. On the personal front, in the past 16 months of my stay in America, I was finally able to go and meet a family member (my sister) in Paris. My sister and I explored Paris, Milan, Pisa, and Rome. I also got engaged this year to my partner. Overall, 2022 was a good mix of lots of work, travels, and exploration!

Joel Radunzel

My research focuses on the intersection of war, environmental impacts, and military cartography. My main project endeavors to create a heuristic tool that helps other researchers synthesize and communicate a holistic picture of the environmental costs of armed conflict. This work brings together research from across disciplines, including military geography, environmental history militarized landscapes, and warfare ecology, to understand how the environmental impacts of war can reach spatially and beyond the limits of the battlefield and temporally beyond the end of direct violence. Supporting this effort, I am also conducting research to understand the evolution of modern military cartography through the lens of the tactical maps produced by the US Army during the Great War. This project led me to the National Archives to study and photograph these maps and their supporting documents and provides key insight into how contemporary military forces have come to view and understand the landscapes in which they operate.

Clay Robertson

I started in my third year as a PhD student at KSU working with Dr. Langston on the evolution of wide bedrock valleys. Last spring, I spent several weeks at the Optically Stimulated Luminescence Laboratory at the Desert Research Institute in Reno, NV processing rock samples for dating. Samples were collected from talus piles on the Buffalo National River in Arkansas. After DRI, I spent 9 weeks at the St. Anthony Falls Laboratory in Minneapolis, MN conducting flume experiments that investigated the controls on lateral erosion and valley widening in a bedrock-like material. With both of these data sets we hope to constrain timelines of valley widening and better understand the various controls that impact valley widening rates. The most exciting development of the year was the birth of my daughter, Lillian Hazel Robertson, this last fall.

Lillian is doing very well, and Megan and I feel extremely blessed to have her in our lives.

Harsimran Singh Sodhi

I am a first year Ph.D. Geography student (KSU) new to the United States. I was born and raised in a city called "Patiala" which is in state of Punjab (India). Travelling and hiking is my passion, and it has taken me to many hill stations in Himalayas. Also, I did my master's at Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, India, a valley on the foothills of Himalayas. There I enjoyed trekking, interaction with people living in the forests, and studying the beautiful landscape of the Himalayas. After completing my M.Sc., I came to the United States, which is my first time to travel abroad. Here, I am enjoying life in Manhattan, and I think that people here are very nice and helpful. The faculty in Geography department is like my family and the graduate students are really kind and helpful. My research interests are primarily in the areas of applications of Remote Sensing and GIS in soils, geomorphology, and Climate. Most of the time I am occupied in research, and teaching.

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Alumni

Johnny Coomansingh, Ph.D. (2005)
Prose and Poetry, a group of writers and poets from Trinidad and Tobago who are affiliated with the National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS) named me as the "Author of the Month" for December 2022. One of my books published in 2019, "Fifteen Christmas Poems and Some…" was celebrated on a two-hour long program on Zoom with readings and performances of my works from several writers and poets. Most of my poems and short stories in the book were centered on Christmas, for example: "Too Hurry," Christmas Migration," and "The Lighthouse."
." Here are some excerpts from my selections above:

"Too Hurry"
And there she was, sitting on the last treader in the stairwell I descended,
With hands outstretched begging; begging without looking me in the eye,
Hoping that I will drop in her hand a few coins; coins that I may never spend,
Yes, her harrowed face stained with worry…her hair unkempt;
Sitting there pleading with the public, with me, perhaps for a morsel of bread
And I passed; I just passed her as though she did not exist,
I managed a glance, the thought came to investigate her need; her sore need,
But I was too hurry; too hurry to care,
And now I jog my mind to the very moment, the very scene…
The nuance that expired at the instance,
My conscience plagues me now like a nasty curse,
Will I ever see her again?

"**Christmas Migration**"
And yet the Living Word
Escaped…On a donkey
In his mother's arms
By night he fled…
For he, our Lord
Was not to be murdered
By a power hungry freak
For sure all of us will
Must one day lie still
The monarch faded…gone!
"For out of Egypt have I called my son!"
And then we turn our gaze
To modern pages
We see children locked in cages
Defenseless, yet hoping
Crying for freedom
By the *Rock of Ages*.
O the horror…
While "*The Lady*" weeps in the harbor.

"The Lighthouse"
Upon a rock one chilly day
I gazed amidst the misty haze
At a lighthouse firmly built.

In its magnificence it stood so proud
Above the lake through storm and cloud
For many a ship a beacon of salvation.

Penetrating the mists in the years gone by
Hope and gladness for a sailor's eye
Now lightless in its beauty, a place defunct.

In the recently published book, *Tourism as a Pathway to Hope and Happiness* (2023) I was featured as one of the authors for the chapter: *The Trinidad Carnival and the Promotion of Joie de Vivre*. In the concluding remarks on the chapter some questions were asked. But what really is carnival? Is carnival a moment in time where celebrants turn out in their droves to go against the rules of law and order? Is it a time when people decide to misbehave in their towns and villages? Is it an occasion on which to become sensuous and sexually liberated? Is it a moment to celebrate wat the status quo describes as indecency? Is it a chance to express hidden desires and tastes, to give release to pent up feelings harbored all year? Could carnival with all its rebellion be described as a latent landscape in the mind of celebrants? Does the building of a metaphysical landscape spring into joie de vivre—the exuberant enjoyment of life—to become a literal, physical landscape in motion when the actual moment of celebration arrives? I am of the view that carnival, the pre-Lenten Trinidad Carnival is just that. Even from *Ash Wednesday*, people will begin to plan how they will dress, how they will look, and how they will

behave, how drunk they will get, how much they will wine, and on whom they will wine. Carnival occupies the minds of many Trinidadians as nothing else! According to one researcher, "…in some countries carnival is a diversion from the troubles of life; in Trinidad it sometimes seems as if life is a diversion from carnival. (The Trinidad Carnival will be staged on Monday 20 to Tuesday 21 February 2023).

Apart from my chapter writing "exploits," I am now the President of the only free monthly online literary magazine in the Caribbean, "*My Trinidad Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*." The magazine is available at *myTrinidad.net.* So far, I have researched, written and published the following chapters:

Coomansingh, J., 2023: The Trinidad Carnival and the promotion of joie de vivre. **In**: *Tourism as a Pathway to Hope and Happiness*, (eds), Tej Vir Singh, Richard Butler, David A. Fennell. Channel View Publications.

Coomansingh, J., 2022: Parang Music as an Attraction for Rural Development: an Example from the Village of Lopinot, Trinidad. **In**: *Festival and Event Tourism: Building Resilience and Promoting Sustainability*, (eds) Anukrati Sharma, Jeetesh Kumar, Bakhodir, Turaev, Priyakrushna Mohanty. CAB International (CABI), United Kingdom.

Coomansingh, J., 2020: Saving the Leatherback Turtle in Grande Riviere, Trinidad: Community Engagement at Work. **In**: *The Routledge Handbook of Community Based Tourism Management: Concepts, Issues and Implications*, (eds) Sandeep Kumar Walia. Routledge (Taylor and Francis Group).

Coomansingh, J., 2018: Authenticity of a National Icon: The Trinidad Steelpan as a Tourism Resource. **In**: *Authenticity and Tourism: Productive Debates, Creative Discourses*, (eds) J. M. Rickly and E. S. Vidon. Emerald Publishing.

Coomansingh, J., 2011: Social Sustainability of Tourism in a Culture of Sensuality, Sexual Freedom and Violence: Trinidad and Tobago. **In**: *Island Tourism—Journeys toward Sustainability* (eds) J. Carlsen and R. Butler. CAB International (CABI), United Kingdom.

Dr. Jason Holcomb, M.A. (1994) and Ph.D. (2001)

The year at MSU began without the hassle of the masks and most other pandemic restrictions on campus, a big breath of fresh air compared to the previous two years. I had taught my first GIS class in the fall of 2021 to only geology majors, a reflection of the myriad dysfunctions here regarding GIS. This past fall I taught a different GIS class and am working with a colleague to make changes in the GIS curriculum. There would be less dysfunction had they not ended the geography bachelor's degree about a decade ago.

Soon after our article "A Visual Typology of Abandonment in Rural America: From End-of-Life to Treading Water, Recycling, Renaissance, and Revival" was published in *Land* (DOI: 10.3390/land9030094), the coronavirus pandemic hit and Dr. Stan Brunn turned to a new project, an edited book about the pandemic. He invited me to submit a chapter about custom harvesting's labor issues during the pandemic and that book was published last year. The title is *COVID-19 and a World of Ad Hoc Geographies*, and my chapter is titled "Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the U.S. Custom Grain and Forage Harvesting Labor Supply and 2020 Harvest" (DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-94350-9_88). The pandemic did indeed cause major problems for the custom harvesting industry because so much of the labor comes from South Africa, numerous European countries, New Zealand, Australia, and a selection of other countries one would not expect. Dr. Brunn is a University of Kentucky professor emeritus and was friends with Dr. Stephen White, my doctoral advisor, and they co-authored an article long ago about return migration to eastern Kentucky. The book contains chapters by authors both domestic and abroad, and I was amazed at how quickly he put this enormous project together.

In personal news, we sold our farmhouse and acreage in Iowa in 2021 after Heather's family retired from farming and we were left without farm income and an old house and acreage to maintain. I knew it was the right thing to do, but Ian and I did not want to give it up. Last year I serendipitously discovered an opportunity to rent a brand-new Airbnb in my hometown and we spent about five weeks in Correctionville, Iowa, last summer, which was the most time I had spent there since moving away in 1987.

The photo is of Heather, Ian, and I at the coffee shop in Storm Lake, Iowa, where Heather and I met in person for the first time after meeting online. I made two trips to Kansas last summer, the first to attend the funeral of Margie Schmidt, co-owner of the custom harvesting crew I worked for almost every year between 1988 and 2004. We went out of our way to visit Kansas again on our way back to Kentucky.

Leonard Blanc

Len has reissued his novels AIR BASE and THAILAND, military detective mystery novels set in Thailand at the end of the Vietnam War and released THE PERFECT U.S. "DEEP STATE" OPERATION! a non-fiction book about the real reason why the U.S. invaded Iraq during Gulf War!!

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Selected Faculty Accomplishments

Helene Avocat

- Significant progresses on my book about thematic mapping, and I can't wait to share the final version!
- The start of research collaboration with fantastic colleagues on environmental and public health topics.
- Receiving a NSF grant to study aquifer water quality in southwestern Kansas by sampling private wells. PI is my colleague Matt Kirk from the Geology department. This project will take place over the next three years, and we will have students from K-State partnering with local community college for field and lab work. An exciting year ahead!

Marcellus Caldas

- Elected Fellow of the American Association for Advancement of Science
- Received the ENLACES Award from the Conference of Latin American Geographers
- 4 grant proposals were submitted and 2 were funded -- Global Food Systems and Department of Energy.

Doug Goodin

- Submitted proposal: Targeted Toolkit for Effective Detection of Tree Stress from Emerging Pests and Pathogens Using Open-Access Spectral Analysis and Field Technology, US Forest Service
- Published manuscript: Leaf-Level Spectroscopy for Analysis of Invasive Pest Impact on Trees in a Stressed Environment.
- Invited Presentation: High Spectral Resolution Data for Wetland Soil Characterization: An Overview, Annual Meeting, Soil Science Society of America.

Shawn Hutchinson

- Recent publications in Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics.
- Renewed research grant with the National Park Service and new grant awarded by US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Attended a Colorado Avalanche playoff game in St. Louis with my son Mitch…then watched Avs win the Stanley Cup!

Audrey Joslin

- Welcomed two new graduate advisees in Fall 2022
- Presented research at the AAG annual meeting
- Continued research work on the Wildfire and Conservation project

Abigail Langston

- My second graduate student, Olivia Groeber, defended her master's thesis titled "The role of talus size distribution & the frequency of transport in wide and narrow valleys on bedrock valley widening: Buffalo National River, Arkansas".
- I went on a 7-week research visit to the luminescence lab at the Desert Research Institute in Reno, NV to learn luminescence dating techniques.
- My graduate student Clay Robertson and I ran the first set of flume experiments exploring bedrock valley widening at the St. Anthony Falls Laboratory in Minneapolis, MN.

Max Lu

- Coauthored a paper on migration with my colleague Bimal and two other scholars.
- Taught invited Advanced Placement Human Geography workshops at Carleton College, Meredith College, and the University of Texas at Austin.
- My son, Alex, graduated from K-State with a mechanical engineering degree and landed a job in Kansas City! There will be a nice break before my youngest child goes to college.

Chuck Martin

- Served as member of the Editorial Board for the journal Geomorphology
- Was able to return to Germany for field work in July 2022
- Served a ninth year as department head (or eleventh year if the two years prior to it as interim head are counted).

Kate Nelson

- Recent publications in Environmental Research Letters, Sustainable Development, and the Journal of Rural Studies.
- PhD advisee Jean Ribert Francois selected to Receive Sustainable Agriculture Grant from NCR-SARE in the amount of $14,510 for the project, "Does Community Well-Being Matter in Landscape Management of U.S. Farming Systems?"

Bimal Paul

- Started research on earthquake recovery through Fulbright program in Nepal
- Selected AAG Fellow for 2023
- Signed a book contract with Routledge to edit, *The Routledge Handbook of Disaster Response and Recovery*.

Vera Smirnova

- My paper on Russia's perceptions of territory in political and geographic thought was accepted at the Annals of the American Association of Geographers.
- Parts from this research were also presented at a conference in Leipzig, Germany, at the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies convention in Chicago, and at the CREES center at KU.
- I also mentored two outstanding undergraduate projects on the fractures in Russian federalism and issues with territorial integrity in the post-Soviet region, conducted by two wonderful students who will now pursue their Masters with a focus on geopolitics of the region in leading schools.

Jeff Smith

- Field Trip and data gathering trip with my students to National Parks in Colorado & Utah.
- Field research in Chile and Argentina
- Sabbatical leave to work on Restorative Places book.

Arnaud Temme

- Promotion to professor in August
- Giving our undergraduate students a great field experience in August
- Doing long challenging mountain hikes with a broken meniscus

Jida Wang

- Took my first sabbatical leave (at the University of Tokyo, Japan)
- Celebrated the successful launch of the SWOT satellite mission
- Continued to achieve milestones in research projects (special thanks to my postdoc Safat Sikder, my graduate students, and my coauthors)

Editor: Dr. Bimal Paul (bkp@ksu.edu)