

# SPARTAN GEOGRAPHER

Department of Geography

College of Social Science

Michigan State University



The Geography department continues to contribute to MSU's overseas study effort. As an example, Kirk Goldsberry spent part of his 2010 summer teaching Geography to incoming MSU freshmen abroad in New Zealand. In this photo, the class is posing in front of one of the many beautiful geothermal pools located on New Zealand's north island, near the town of Rotorua.

**MICHIGAN STATE**  

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**U N I V E R S I T Y**



Greetings from East Lansing! We have had another busy and productive year in the Geography Department. A highlight was an external review of the Department by a team of prominent geographers from peer institutions

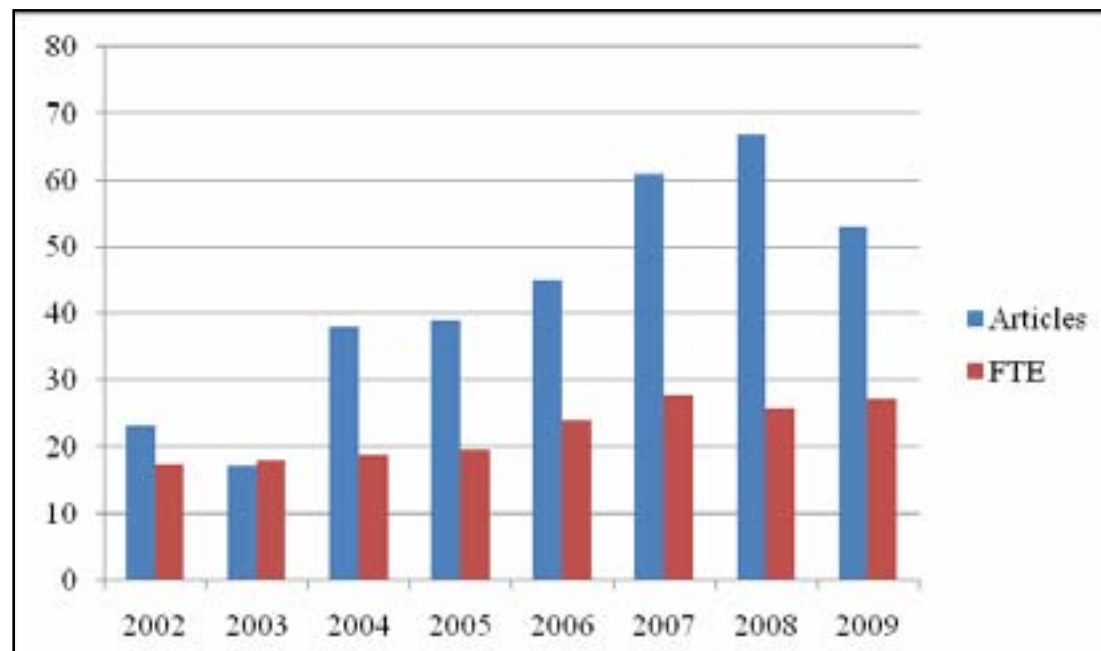
— Sharmistha Bagshi-Sen (Buffalo), James Burt (Wisconsin), and Daniel Sui (Ohio State) visited the Department in April, 2010 and submitted a review document to our Dean, Marietta Baba. Since then, we have been responding to comments and suggestions in the document which will culminate in a new “Strategic Plan” for the Department later this year. In general, the team gave the Department a very positive review and set of recommendations to the Dean. We thank them for their time and support.

The Department, College, and University recommended the reappointment of **Kirk Goldsberry** and **Andrew Finley** as Assistant Professors last spring (Congratulations!) and this year we have five reappointment, promotion, and tenure cases pending.

This edition of the newsletter features two of our many research projects: **Joe Messina’s** work in Kenya on tsetse flies and the environmental conditions they respond to; and **Bob Walker’s** daring survey of the western Transamazon highway. Messina’s research has been featured in news publications by NASA and NIH and on MSU’s news outlets. Walker gained national attention in major newspapers and earned a cover story in the MSU Alumni Magazine. We intend to highlight other prominent Geography Department faculty research projects in coming issues of the Spartan Geographer.

In summary, research and publication is on track (see below), course enrollments have held steady for the past few years and our online courses continue to attract large numbers of students. While the University’s financial outlook is murky, Geography’s research, teaching, and service activities continue to flourish and we look forward to many productive years in the future. ☘

**Richard Groop, Chair**



Refereed journal Article Production per Faculty Member, 2002–2009

**Alan Arbogast:** I enjoyed the heck out of 2010, lots of good stuff. A major change on the professional front was that I took over the role as Graduate Advisor for the Department from **Antoinette WinklerPrins**. Huge shoes to fill, as Antoinette did a fantastic job that left a strong legacy of grad student support. The learning curve is high but it’s a fun job. Otherwise, I spent 5 weeks during the summer teaching my Sports Program in Australia for MSU Study Abroad. My family went with me this year for the first half of the program and we had an awesome time. This upcoming year, I’m handing the reigns of the program off to the capable hands of **Igor Vojnovic** who will do a bang up job talking about urban issues in Sydney to the students. Igor and I have talked about alternating years from here out. I also had a pretty good year publishing, with 4 articles out about sand dunes in the Midwest. A particularly interesting article focused on the geography of sand volume in Lake Michigan coastal dunes. **Ashton Shortridge** collaborated on this research, which indicated that the northwest coast of Lower Michigan contains a LOT more wind-blown sand than previously thought. Ashton has also provided much appreciated insight into the origins of Hoosier basketball for my new Geography of Sport class. On the personal side of the ledger, my kids are a year older and seem to be taking the



right steps forward. My oldest daughter, Hannah is 15 and a sophomore in high school. Rosie is 11 and in 6th grade. My wife, Jenn, has been teaching more at LCC as a reading instructor, which she’s happy about. We managed to personally see our Jayhawks play hoops a couple of times which was a major highlight, especially when they whipped Michigan in Ann Arbor! I had a great fishing trip with my father-in-law, Scott, in August in the Gulf Stream off the coast of North Carolina. I managed to boat some nice barracuda and an awesome amber jack. Who says physical geography can’t be fun!!!

**Guo Chen** has received a teaching award from the Faculty Advisory Committee for the Center for Integrative Studies in Social Science. Her ISS 315 class used an array of innovative methods to engage students in their learning including role playing games and carefully designed activities both in and out of classrooms.

**Kenneth E. Corey** engaged in and completed two major research projects during 2010. Both projects involved co-author and co-investigator MSU Professor Mark I. Wilson. As part of Singapore’s interest in sharing lessons with other city and regional policy-makers, development practitioners and city-region researchers, Corey and Wilson were invited to join the Developing Living Cities book project. They were asked to benchmark Singapore to other city-regions globally, ones that use information technology (IT) as a significant driver in their development. Based on their research, they wrote: “Benchmarking IT Cities,” in *Developing Living Cities: From Analysis to Action*. Editors, Belinda Yuen and Kallidaikurichi Seetharam. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd, 2010, pages 127–153. The second project was the completion of a nearly two-year long action-research initiative funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce under the leadership

of Dr. Rex LaMore, Director of MSU's Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED). The project was entitled: "The Comprehensive Intelligent Development Strategy Creation Project." The translational research involved the CCED team working with development planning practitioners in three planning regions of Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula and the Northern Lower Peninsula. The principal goal was to enable the development strategies of these regions to plan and act to enhance their competitiveness in the global knowledge economy.



**Joe Darden** was a featured speaker at the Michigan Canadian Studies Roundtable conference at Albion College. The event was co-sponsored by the MSU Canadian Studies Center.

**Harm de Blij:** It is always great to run into Spartans in the most unlikely of places, like a street corner in Rome or a bar in Istanbul, and to be reminded just how populous and dispersed the MSU Nation is. And at the annual Florida Society of Geographers conference (in Tampa) it was wonderful to be able to reminisce about the good old days with several MSU Geography graduates now residing in the Sunshine State. Research-related travel had its high points: I was able to spend some time in Ireland during the financial crisis there, in Iceland during the eruption of the now-famous but still-unpronounceable volcano (my helicopter ride was one for the books), in Portugal during its interesting domestic debate over its future in the euro zone, in Greece during the disorders attending the government's efforts at reform, and in Turkey where rising living standards, economic success and growing regional influence were transforming the state. A week in Ukraine, all of it in Odessa, provided some stark contrasts. And to be able to spend

a week in Italy following Opera Berlusconi was — well, entertaining. In the United States I had wonderful experiences on the public-lecture circuit, about two dozen talks with audiences averaging 400 but ranging from 100 (in Chatham, MA) to 2500 (in Tulsa, OK, where the 4-degree winter morning seemed to discourage no one). Public interest in geography is unquestionably on the rise, making this an ever more pleasant activity. And most pleasant of all is the seemingly-guaranteed presence of MSU grads who come up afterward to chat about their days on campus. As I tell everyone, Michigan State University's Geography Department is among the nation's largest and most successful, and I'm proud to be affiliated with it.

**Kyle Evered** received a course development grant from the MSU Center for Advanced Study of International Development for work on "Geography of Language and Religion," first offered in spring, 2011.



Kyle in Turkey



**Adrienne Domas Goldsberry** was named to the 2010–2011 cohort of Adams Academy Fellows. The Walter and Pauline

Adams Academy recognizes instructional excellence and innovation for approximately 10 MSU teachers each year. Adrienne also received an Honorable Mention in the "AT&T Faculty-Staff Awards in Instructional Education" competition for developing an online version of GEO 221. In the course, students complete labs using Google Earth and other online GIS tools, applying course concepts to solve real world problems in this accessible, fully online course.

**Kirk Goldsberry** had a very busy year of teaching and research, but his biggest accomplishment of 2010 was not academic. On May 29th Kirk married fellow MSU Geographer, **Adrienne Domas**, in Austin, Texas. Later that summer Kirk led his first study abroad trip, touring incoming MSU freshmen around New Zealand's North Island. Back at MSU, Kirk's research on using GIS to identify food deserts in Lansing was featured in the fall issue of ArcUser Magazine. Kirk also finished up his 2009–2010 Lilly teaching fellowship and, along with **Alan Arbogast** and **Antoinette WinklerPrins**, is now considered a "gilded Lilly" on the MSU campus.



**Sue Grady** was selected as a recipient of a "Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health" (BIRCWH) award. BIRCWH is a National Institute of Health K12 training grant that the Department of Human Medicine at MSU received to train early faculty in women's health. Sue's research will focus on perinatal regionalization in Michigan.

**Arika Ligmann-Zielinska:** Over the last year I continued working on investigating computational methods that corroborate the results of simulations of human-natural systems. My research focused on developing new tools for exploration of future land development scenarios. While random events like earthquakes and tornadoes are unavoidable, we can still address large portions of uncertainty in modeling geographic processes by providing tools to explore temporal and spatial dynamics of human-natural interactions. In 2010, I was also invited



to participate in the multidisciplinary MSU Environmental Faculty Fellows Program, funded by the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and organized by Environmental Science and Policy Program. We are now working on a fully integrated GIS-based model that simulates the complex environmental, social, economic, and political interactions that lead to climate change induced migration. We will test the model using the historical Dust Bowl event of the 1930s. I am also participating in a project funded by the MSU Center for Water Sciences, in which I am working on a more comprehensive representation of agricultural decision making in land use modeling applied within the State of Michigan. The approach contrasts farmers' perceptions of nonmonetary benefits related to land conservation with the financial returns from farmland exploitation or conversion to urban use. My graduate teaching agenda concentrated on designing a Modeling Certification Program within the Environmental Science and Policy curriculum. In collaboration with colleagues from the Department of Sociology and the Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation, and Resource Studies, we proposed a track of environmental modeling courses that would expose students to a wide ensemble of cutting-edge modeling techniques that can be applied to solving complex environmental problems.

**Jianguo Qi** led a delegation from MSU Geography to Sichuan University in Chengdu, China to explore the possibility of establishing a "3+x" graduate program for senior students at Sichuan. Included on the trip were **Antoinette WinklerPrins**, **Richard Groop**, **Jenni van Ravensway**, and **Jessica Moy**. The delegation also visited Zhejiang University in Hangzhou where a similar program already exists.

**Julie Winkler, Jeff Andresen, and Joe Messina** were featured in the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station 2010 *Annual Report*. Julie's and Jeff's climate change research was discussed in Director Steve Pueppke's "Message" and Joe had a feature article on his tsetse fly research in Kenya.

**Antoinette WinklerPrins** is on leave from MSU's Department of Geography for two years while working as a Program Officer at the National Science Foundation, Geography and Spatial Sciences Program. She is living in the DC area with her family, and now works on Wilson Boulevard in Arlington, VA. Coincidentally, her former student, Meleia Egger (MA 2007), moved to the DC area at about the same time after two years in Malawi as a Peace Corps volunteer. She now also works on Wilson Boulevard in Arlington, VA. She is a recruiter for the Peace Corps, Mid-Atlantic Region. Antoinette and Meleia can now easily meet for lunch after being separated by thousands of miles for two years—it's a small world.



**Sharon Zhong** led an effort for MSU's admission to membership in the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research associated with the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, CO. Sharon, Lifeng Luo, and Richard Groop represented MSU at the UCAR annual meeting in Boulder in October. MSU later named Sharon as the faculty representative and Jiaguo Qi as the administrative representative to the organization. ♣

### MSU Online Geography: Past, Present, and Future

When the first Online Geography course launched in 1999, not many in the Department could anticipate what was about to happen. At that time, we were pioneers, packing up our belongings (or maybe I should say lecture material) and heading west into what were mostly unsettled lands. Fast forward 12 years and we are now in what is a booming landscape of online courses and programs. At a recent on-campus faculty seminar titled "Launching an Online Doctoral Program in Education: Lessons from Year One," presenter Patrick Dickson (MSU College of Education), opened with a slide that read, "The shift toward online teaching and learning is irreversible and accelerating." Looking at the online-learning landscape today and at our own program, this statement is undeniable. Since the launch of GEO 206-V (Physical Geography) as a summer course in 1999, Department faculty, in collaboration with Online Geography staff have developed six courses that run at various times throughout the year. Each summer, we instruct more than 1,000 students and to date more than 10,000 students have taken Online Geography courses. In the spring of 2010, the Department assigned **Adrienne Domas Goldsberry** to a half-time appointment working with Online Geography. Adrienne joined, **Beth Weisenborn** and **Juliegh Bookout**, two full-time, academic staff members who make up the Online Geography team. The three are now working with **Sharon Zhong** to develop GEO 203-V (Introduction to Meteorology) to be launched in summer of 2011 and **Kirk Goldsberry** to develop GEO 325-V (Geographic Information Systems) to be launched in spring of 2012.

**Jay R. Harman** had a busy year. He taught Environmental Ethics both spring and fall semesters, with the usual complement of engaged advanced undergraduate students. That course continues to draw a very diverse clientele, which makes the teaching experience particularly rich and rewarding. He also took yet another group of students and faculty to Great Smoky Mountains NP in May in response to repeated requests from a subset of the Department graduate students. The lesson here seems to be that his determination to make each trip his "last" is subject to erosion, like so many other things, but he is quite confident that this time he means it. At the end of fall semester he was part of a general reshuffling of faculty office space and had to downsize his office collection of materials as a result, which for someone who can discard nothing was particularly painful. Finally, after thinking that he had made his last trip to an AAG national meeting a few years ago, he plans (as of this writing) on attending the Seattle meeting in April to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award being conferred by the Climate Specialty Group of the AAG, certainly an unexpected honor. On the personal side, he reports the usual summer gardening and bee-keeping activities sandwiched between travels with his wife and children and looks forward to more of the same in summer 2011. As always, he welcomes updates from former students and wishes them well in 2011.

**Robert Thomas** published *Latin America: An Autobiographical Sketch by a Career Geographer* in December, 2010. The book is a series of vignettes of Bob's adventures in Latin America, most illustrating some geographical concept or method.

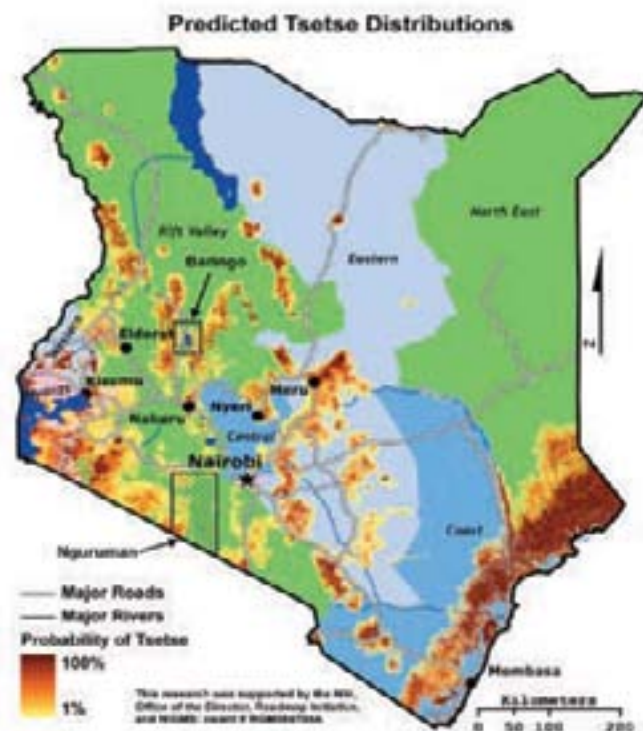


**Jack Williams:** We're well settled into Vancouver, WA now and love it here. The weather is near perfect — beautiful sunshine almost every day, gentle temps (70s, low 80s), no storms, no floods, very benign. We hear that Michigan has had a hot, humid summer so far; glad we got out when we did. We're now getting ready to leave for Hong Kong in two weeks. I'll be teaching at HKU again this fall. We'll return here in December. I still receive some of the notices from the department, and it's nice to read what's happening, but that life seems further and further away. Hope everything is going well for you and the other staff members, who were always such nice people to deal with. ♣

John Hunter  
in Africa,  
1951



**KENYA:** In 2007, the National Institutes of Health awarded Joe Messina and colleagues \$1.2 million to design and build a predictive model of tsetse flies and sleeping sickness across Kenya. Sleeping sickness is a serious, but neglected disease that affects both people and cattle throughout sub-Saharan Africa. For more than 100 years people have tried and failed to control this disease and the tsetse flies that spread it. One large problem has been in identifying where and when the tsetse flies will appear in any particular place. Now in its final year, our project partially solves this problem and has been widely successful. The team, including undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty from Microbiology, Veterinary Medicine, and Communications, has traveled many times to Kenya and is working closely with scientists in Nairobi and local Maasai pastoralists in southern Kenya to better control this terrible disease. Dr. Messina has been interviewed on NPR and the project has recently been highlighted at NIH.



Joe Messina  
& his  
GPS unit



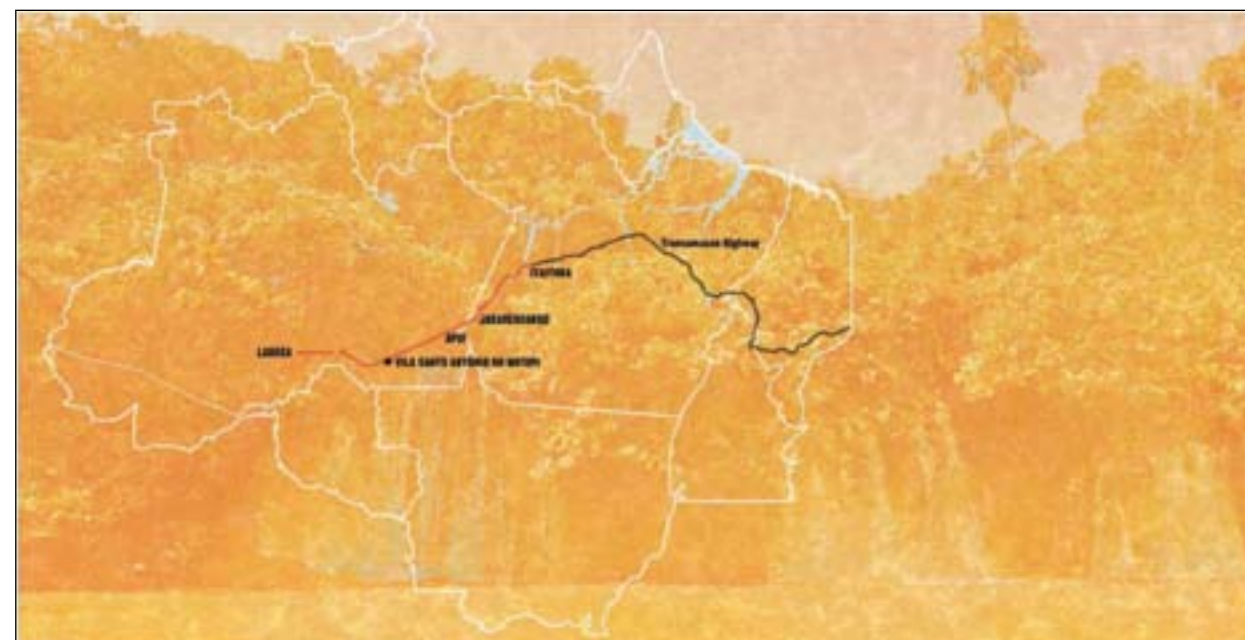
Grad student  
Mark  
DeVisser



African  
colleagues  
inspecting  
a weather  
station



**BRAZIL:** During his unprecedented expedition into the heart of the Amazon, Michigan State University geographer **Bob Walker** discovered surprising evidence that many of the Brazilian government's efforts to protect the environment are working. As expected, Walker and two fellow scientists — the first research team to travel a 700-mile stretch of the so-called Transamazon Highway in the western Amazon basin — confirmed the existence of illegal logging and gold-mining operations that threaten further damage to the world's largest rainforest. But the researchers also found massive areas of undisturbed forest in the form of nationally protected areas and indigenous reserves — as well as examples of where the government had halted unofficial road building, Walker said. “We were kind of amazed by the number of good stories we actually saw,” said Walker whose work is funded by the National Science Foundation. “The environmental enforcement agencies in Brazil often do seem to be doing what they're supposed to do.”



An estimated 17 percent of the Brazilian rainforest has been destroyed, much of it in the more developed eastern Amazon basin. Due to a government crackdown on illegal logging, Walker suspected loggers were moving such illegal operations westward — deep into the Amazon — but he needed to confirm it. In late June, he made the 10-day trip along the western Transamazon Highway, by truck, with Brazilian colleagues **Eugenio Arima**, assistant professor at the University of Texas and former MSU graduate student, and **Ritaumaria Pereira**, MSU doctoral candidate. That section of the highway, from Itaituba to Labrea, is unpaved and unchartered — a wild stretch of jungle that Walker had assumed was becoming the new logging frontier. The researchers witnessed fairly sizable logging operations, including sawmills and semi-trucks hauling out sawn wood. This is particularly significant, Walker said, because the western Amazon basin may very well represent the rainforest's best hope to survive. Many experts believe too much deforestation could trigger a catastrophic change — or tipping point — that changes the Amazon from tropical forest to dry scrubland. “The western Transamazon Highway has become the battleground for that tipping point,” Walker said.

Mining is another environmental threat to the region. A gold rush several years ago attracted thousands of people and tore up a section of rainforest. Walker and colleagues documented a gold mine in Apui where the mining machines had stopped due to a protracted court battle, although 200 to 300 people were still panning for gold by hand. “If you get another huge gold rush into that region you could set up this tidal wave of demand for land,” Walker said. “That’s something to be concerned about.”

Gold mine vs. forest—mine wins



Anaconda Falls



But the biggest surprise of the trip was witnessing multiple examples of how the government’s conservation efforts are working, Walker said. Driving through the Amazon National Park, he said he encountered dense, plush jungle — refuting critics’ claims that protected areas in the Amazon are nothing but “paper parks,” or parks only on paper. The researchers also were encouraged by the existence of indigenous reserves — land set aside for native peoples, as opposed to potentially harmful development. “There were Indian villages along significant stretches of the Transamazon Highway,” Walker said. And then there was the instance of a village mayor

allowing loggers to come in and start building a road that would have connected the western Amazon basin to developed areas to the south, potentially creating an environmentally-devastating corridor of growth. But the federal government shut the road down before that could happen, Walker said.

The research supports a recent scientific study led by Walker that contends Brazil’s conservation efforts — even with the prevalence of illegal logging — are extensive enough to ultimately protect the Amazon. That study, funded by NASA, was based on three years of atmospheric computer modeling. Walker said he’s no “apologist for development” and that he “doesn’t want to glad-hand the private sector and say the pathway to a brilliant future is the absence of regulation. We saw what can happen there with the British Petroleum oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.” Ultimately, he said, the answer lies somewhere in the middle — that is, sustainable growth that protects

Eugenio (left), Bob (ball cap)



both the environment and the livelihoods and culture of Brazil’s citizens. “There seems to be an emerging Brazilian will to fulfill the intentions of protected areas,” Walker said. “There are still many environmental concerns, and we certainly can’t say the battle’s won and we can all go home and pat ourselves on the back. But one thing they’re not doing is giving people a complete license to deforest the Amazon.”

Ritumaria Pereira



**GEO GTU RECEPTION — APRIL 30, 2010**



**GTU initiates, 2010:** Jaimie Joseph, Helen Enander, Shelley Hoover, Kristie Socia, Ritaumaria de Jesus Pereira, Courtney Gallaher, Shaun Langley, Xue (Michelle) Li, Emma Rahme, Jieun Lee, Daniel Kowalski, Zeenat Kotval-Karamchandani, Minting Ye, Gary Schnakenberg, Perdinan



Daniel Kowalski received the 2010-2011 College of Social Science Undergraduate Distinguished Scholarship and the Daniel Jacobson Scholarship Award



Distinguished Professor Harm de Blij and Assistant Professor Sue Grady presented the Graduate Student of the year award to Ivan Ramirez and the Undergraduate Student of the year award to Nicholas Swartz.



Graduating seniors (who attended the reception): Nicholas Swartz, Emily Arbour, Karl Schrantz, Matt Gleason, Emyas Birru,

**GEOCAMP**



In past years, GEOCAMP, the 3-day orientation for new graduate students, has been held at Kellogg Biological Station near Kalamazoo, and other rural settings. Last year we tried a different experience with GEOCAMP in Detroit. Joe Darden, Dave Lusch, Alan Arbogast, and TA Tim LeDoux led a group of 16 new graduate students on tours of a variety of landscapes in the city. As in past years, the students gave the camp excellent reviews. We look forward to many more of these experiences in the future.

**Jia Feng** received a pre-dissertation fellowship from the MSU Graduate School.

**Courtney Gallaher** completed her comps, defended her dissertation proposal and received dissertation research support from the AAG, Society of Women Geographers (a Pruitt Fellowship), and an NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement grant.

**Yankuic Galvan Miyoshi** was awarded a University Fellowship from the MSU Graduate School.

**Sarah L. Hession** recently gave a presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) on her dissertation and the overall context of her dissertation titled, "Improvements in fine-scale estimation and evaluation of Geographic variables using climate data in East Africa." SETAC is a large organization of researchers/professionals working in the environmental field, and this year was their first for creating a platform session on climate change.

**Jordan Howell** has received a teaching assistant award from the Faculty Advisory Committee for the Center for Integrative Studies in Social Science. Students and faculty commented on his tremendous care and excitement about his teaching as well as his initiatives developing helpful course materials. He also received a Rasmussen Award from the MSU Graduate School to continue with a PhD at MSU.

**Mike Luehmann** was awarded a scholarship from the Soil Classifiers Association of Michigan.

**Paul McCord** was awarded a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship from MSU to study Swahilli.

**Rita Pereira** completed her comprehensive exam and received a dissertation grant from the Inter-American Foundation.

**Iván Ramírez:** This past Spring 2010 Iván was awarded a King-Chávez-Parks (KCP) Future Faculty Fellowship. The award is funded by the State of Michigan and The Graduate School at Michigan State University (MSU) to promote future faculty in the areas of social science, humanities or education. As a KCP Future Faculty Fellow, Iván will commit to 3 years of teaching at a postsecondary institution upon completing his Ph.D. Iván participated in the Institute for Integration of Research on Climate Change and Hazards in the Americas in Panama City, Panama, organized by the Association of American Geographers (AAG) and international partners. There, he contributed to a white paper entitled "Climate Change and Hazards: Building Local Resilience." At the upcoming AAG in Seattle Iván was invited to participate in the panel entitled "Si se puede! Recruiting and Retaining Hispanic/Latino Students in Geography at Hispanic Serving Institutions." Iván will be discussing his experiences as a graduate student at a private university and land grant university and why diversity is important.

**Pete Richards,** Geography PhD student, was featured in the Fall, 2010 newsletter of the Center for Advanced Study of International Development. The article described Pete's work on soy bean production in the Amazon Basin.

## GRADUATE STUDENT DEGREES COMPLETED IN 2010

**Bigsby, Michael,** MS (Randall Schaetzl), "The Characterization and Possible Origins of Two Loess Deposits in the Upper Great Lakes Region, USA."

**Borland, Kimberley,** MS-GIS (Ellen White)

**Chu, Yu-Ying,** MS (Sue Grady), "Maternal and Infant Health of Immigrants in the Capital Tri-County Area in Michigan."

**Fish, Carolyn,** MS (Kirk Goldsberry), "Change Detection in Animated Choropleth Maps."

**Howell, Jordan,** MS (Kyle Evered), "An Historical Geography of Michigan's Electricity Landscape."

**MacDonald, Trilby,** MA (Antoinette WinklerPrins), "Urban-rural Migration, Livelihood Change and Cultural Identity among Smallholder Populations in Western Pará Brazil."

**Naizghi, Almaz,** MS (Kirk Goldsberry), "An Alternative Approach to Ancillary Data in Dasymeric Mapping Techniques."

**O'Neil, Glenn,** MS (Ashton Shortridge), "Quantifying and Predicting Error in DEM-Derived Flow-Direction."

**Romero, Boleslo,** MS (Ashton Shortridge), "Toward the Detection of Landscape Features: Clustering 3D Points Using Spatial and Thematic Characteristics."

**Varnakovida, Pariwate,** PhD (Joseph Messina), "Human-Environment and Sustainable Urban Development: Spatial Modeling and Landscape Prediction: The Case Study of Nang Rong, Thailand."

**Watkins, Joshua,** MS (Kenneth Corey), "Shaping the Future of Northeast Michigan: Utilizing the Delphi Method to Inform Planning Scenario Construction."

**Wilson, Sigismund,** PhD (Assefa Mehretu), "Diamonds: A Resource Curse? The Case of Kono District in Sierra Leone."

## SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL 2010 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

Al-Saleh, Abdulaziz  
Forgacs, Claire  
Grant, Joseph  
Hess, Joel  
Malykh, Aleksandr  
Schrantz, Karl  
Steigmeyer, Mark  
Wang, Chi-Woei

Crawford, Jessica  
Gleason, Matthew  
Greene, Matthew  
Katarsky, Joseph  
Rosas-Garcia, Elena  
Shackleton, Alex  
Swartz, Nicholas  
Wiggins, Gregory



**Alex Shackleton,** a Geography major and a four-year starter as the long snapper on the MSU Big Ten Championship football team,

is shown here presenting his research to a group of faculty and students. Alex did an Independent Study project with Professor Randy Schaetzl in the Fall, 2010 semester. They examined wind-blown, silty deposits (loess) on top of a recently discovered glacial delta in extreme SW Lower Michigan, near Berrien Springs. Alex sampled these deposits, did the labwork on them, and produced a number of maps showing the character of the loess across the delta. Alex graduated in December and is anticipating a career in the NFL. ♣

**Eugenio Arima** (PhD 2005) has accepted a faculty position at the University of Texas-Austin.

**Brian Becker** (PhD 2002) is Associate Professor of Geography at Central Michigan University. He recently received a \$392,000 research grant to contribute to the federal research initiative “The National Map: Imagery and Elevation Maps.” The 16-month project, co-led by CMU geography faculty member Tao Zheng, will create for the U.S. government a highly accurate elevation database of Michigan’s Arenac, Bay and Iosco counties via LiDAR technologies. The umbilical cord seems to reach from CMU to MSU, for Becker continues to work with Dave Lusch and others at RS&GIS on a variety of projects.



**Bob Brown** (PhD 1967): I joined the Geography department at the then two year old Simon Fraser University in 1967 and retired, Professor Emeritus, in 2000. At SFU, I was the founding Dean of the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies (1974) and then served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts from 1976 through 1991. I closed my career at SFU by becoming the founding President of the “UniverCity” project (1997–2000). In that position I led in the planning for the development of the university’s endowment lands. This activity led to the development of a beautiful residential and service business community around a formerly isolated institution perched on a mountain top in suburban Vancouver. In 2005, at the 40 year celebration, I was named one of the 40 most influential contributors to the development of the University. After retiring, I relocated to Lac Le Jeune, a beautiful lake property outside of Kamloops, British Columbia. There, I divide my time between consulting for Canada’s Department of Fisheries and Oceans, The Fraser River First Nations Fisheries Secretariat, and contributing to the development of other new Provincial Universities. For that later service, I was

awarded an Honorary Degree by Kwantlen Technical University in 2007. I also spend a lot of time trout fishing and playing a little golf. I have very fond memories of my time at MSU and of the many friends I made there. Bob Brown, brown@sfu.ca, PO Box 5037, Lac Le Jeune, BC V1S 1Y8.

**Bilal Butt** (PhD 2007) has accepted a faculty position in the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan. His expertise in human-environment interactions in East Africa will contribute to the research cluster at the University on Environment, Information, Sustainability and Development program with respect to Asia and Africa.



**Tim Caywood** (BS Social Science, 1978): My career path was not in Geography but I will always have a warm spot in my heart for the department at MSU. I have been a financial planner with Ameriprise for 23 years. On January 1, 2011 I became a partner in H&S Companies, a growing West Michigan accounting firm, where I have leadership responsibilities for the wealth management division. I merged my practice with the existing business of H&S Wealth Management to form HS&C Wealth Management. This was the first in the country for an Ameriprise franchisee to buy into an accounting firm. Currently 80 other partnerships are in the process of developing across the country. I am always proud to say that I have a degree from the Geography department and how the education I received at MSU allowed me to move in many directions and be successful.

**Shawn Farrell Chambers** (MA 1984): I am retiring from my job as the State Transportation Improvement Program Manager for the Minnesota Department of Transportation the end of June 2011 and look forward to splitting my time between St Paul, MN and Marquette, MI.

**Dan Cole** (MA 1979): I am currently past-president of the Canadian Cartographic Association. It’s a wonderful organization and we will be holding this year’s conference jointly with the CAG at the University of Calgary. The book that I mentioned in last year’s Spartan Geographer (Mapping Native America, co-editing with Imre Sutton) has yet to be published but we are hoping for the end of 2011. And, I will be heading to western Mongolia this June and July to supervise the mapping of a bunch of archeological sites, which should be fun. Email: coled@si.edu.

**Chad Cunningham** (BS 2007): After graduation from MSU I moved to Orlando Florida and worked with an environmental engineering firm called Ardaman & Associates, as a GIS Specialist in the watershed management program and FEMA flood mapping program throughout the state of Florida. I worked there from January 2008 until February 2010 where I learned a great deal of engineering aspects pertaining to watersheds and floodplain management. In those two years I also learned more than I ever thought possible about the capabilities of ESRI’s ArcGIS software, from all the possibilities with the tools, model builder and VB coding! I also did a great deal of map production. In February of 2010 I left the environmental field and hopped into the 3D simulation environment for a company called CAE, Inc, where I currently hold the position of GIS Analyst – Production Lead. I oversee a team of 10 GIS Analysts, where we do vector editing and manipulation of various source data in order to build a foundation of information to be used in a 3D simulation environment. In October of 2010 I earned the “Certified GIS/LIS Technologist” certification from the American Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing Society. In my free time I enjoy the warm weather, beaches and being outdoors in the many natural areas of Florida as well as the downtown life of Orlando (not to be confused with downtown Disney!). I hope all is well in the geography world at MSU and SPARTY ON!

**Monroe Davids** (MA 1969): I loved the Spartan Geographer. It was so well done that I really wanted to read it. I wanted to give you an up-date on what I am doing with my life. I retired from 30 years of teaching GEOGRAPHY for Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery Junior College Maryland in 1969. Since my retirement, I have been more than busy. I currently work as a tour manager for Julian Tours in Alexandria, Virginia taking groups of students and adults on educational travel experiences throughout the United States and Canada. I also work for Teach by Travel in East Brookfield, Massachusetts. I serve as their staff photographer, and it is an organization that works mainly with schools across the country offering educational trips all over the world. Finally, I volunteer for Tourism Cares. I am officially their staff photographer. It is a foundation that benefits society by preserving the travel experience for future generations through awarding grants to natural, cultural, and historic sites worldwide, by presenting academic and service-focused scholarships to hospitality and tourism students at the university level, and finally by organizing volunteer efforts to restore tourism related sites in need of care and rejuvenation. I did the photography at many of the volunteer sites where 400 tour and travel professionals from all over the world come for a several day event. Some of the places include the George Washington Memorial Forest at Mt. Vernon, VA, Armstrong Park in New Orleans, LA, Virginia City, NV, The Philadelphia Zoo in Philadelphia, PA, Ellis Island in New York City, Spangler Farm in Gettysburg, PA and three events coming up this spring and summer. I will be traveling to the south rim of the Grand Canyon for a rejuvenation project May 1, 2010, to San Francisco, CA to Angel Island on June 1, 2010, and to Washington D.C. to work on The National Mall along with the National Park Service. I have always thought it was important to give back, and Tourism Cares is an awesome organization for which I enjoy giving my heart and soul. Michigan State University and the Geography Department under Larry Sommers, my



advisor Harold Winters, and my master professor Clark Akatiff, now living in CA, instilled most of my teaching values and knowledge which I needed for my 30 years of teaching as well as the various adventures I take part in today. I would not have been able to do any of that which I do today without MSU and especially GEOGRAPHY! Thank you.

**Mike Graff** (1976) relocated to Kirkland, Washington after retiring from government service and is engaged in building ship models, taking photos, and researching an obscure 1860s event in northeast Asia.

**David A. Hawley** (BA 1977) of Ludington, Michigan is currently Adjunct Professor of Geography at West Shore Community College in Scottville, Michigan, where he has been instructing for the past 22 years. In 2007, Hawley was the recipient of the Faculty Excellence Award for Adjunct Faculty at West Shore. Hawley also serves as the Workforce Development Specialist for the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians tribal government's Commerce Department in Manistee, Michigan.

**Debby Joy** (BA): In my retirement I started a non-profit organization called The Appalachian Book Project shortly after the tragedy of 9/11. In that time we have sent out over 50,000 books to rural poor areas, not only in Appalachia, but expanding to other areas of the country. We do not have a website, but hopefully we will be starting a blog to keep our many donors apprised of what we are doing. We send board books and books for pre-kindergarten to the Central Mississippi Head Start headquarters for their 14 centers. They have developed lending libraries in the centers to get the little children interested in reading. We also send parenting books, which the parents asked for! We support, with books, a Catholic school in rural Mississippi, sending them the Newbery, Caldecott and Coretta Scott King award books each year. The Native American school in Shannon County, South Dakota also gets books for their classroom libraries, and for some of the schools'

main libraries. Besides books, we now send used clothing in excellent condition to 5 Native American reservations in South Dakota. The people are nearly destitute and endure the fierce winters with little money for life's necessities. My husband, Hap Joy (HRIM-MSU '62) and I also volunteer with the Mennonite Disaster Service working as their kitchen consultants and as cooks for work teams. Since selling our bed and breakfast in 2000, we have been on more than 13 teams, done two cooking seminars, designed kitchen trailers and helped design MDS's brand new kitchen in their new office/warehouse facility.

**David Kromm** (MA 1964; PhD 1967) retired as Professor of Geography at Kansas State in 2002. He taught mostly regional and environmental courses to more than 16,000 students. In 1972, he was named University Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher and he won Stamey Teaching awards in 1990, 1995, and 1996. He was also named an AAG Teacher-Scholar and received an NCGE Distinguished Teaching Award. Dave and his wife of 50 years, Bobbie, have three sons and six grandchildren. Since retirement, they have traveled extensively in the U.S. to visit family and on excursions such as the Lewis and Clark Trail. Dave has written three books on his family's genealogy tracing his ancestry to the early 1700s in Germany.



Dave & Bobbie Kromm

**Eraldo Matricardi** (PhD 2007): In 2009 I got a teaching and research position at University of Brasilia (UnB) in the capital of Brazil. I am teaching GIS, RS, and Research Design for Foresters and Geographers. Jessica Moy's, Dr. Qi's, Dr. Shortridge's, and Dr. Groop's classes have been precious to me. Also, I am conducting research on land use and land cover change in the Brazilian Savannah and Amazon

regions. I am really enjoying my new job and missing a lot of Spartans and MSU Geographers. PS.: I am not missing the cold weather in Michigan. Attached



Eraldo (blue strip shirt) & students

is a field trip with undergraduate students from UnB. All the best and, please, say hi to everyone in the Department.

**Jim Mulvihill** (PhD 1976): I was invited to present a paper titled: "Intensified Corridor Development in a National Central Metropolis." I was invited by the Chongqing Municipal People's Government and the Chongqing Planning Bureau to the conference: "International Conference of Western Development and Planning Towards a National Central Metropolis," held in Chongqing September 7, 2009. I have been Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies here at Cal State University, San Bernardino since 2007. I look forward to an MSU gathering in Seattle next year.

**Suzanne Hetmanski Picken** (BA 1970): Wow, it's been 40 years since graduation. As you can see by my signature I'm not a Geographer, but a librarian for the Washington Research Library Consortium, a consortium of 8 libraries in the DC area. I doubt anyone there would remember me, but I remember many of the fine professors in the department –Prof. Winters is one. My husband got his MS in Geology from MSU in 1975. I later went on to Western Michigan U for my MLS in Librarianship. A happy new year to the Geography Dept at MSU. Go Green. E-mail [picken@wrlc.org](mailto:picken@wrlc.org).

**Rob Pierce** (PhD 1974): I am in my third year of retirement after completing a 34 year career in the Geography Department of SUNY Cortland. I currently reside in Madison, WI where my wife Sally

is Director of the Language Institute at the University of Wisconsin. Retirement has meant the welcome end of many years of commuting between Madison and Syracuse (try doing that twice a week!) and the opportunity to build a new home in the Northwoods region of Wisconsin and the UP. Sally and I will make our lakefront home our year-round residence when she retires in August. While we enjoy the amenities of Madison greatly, including symphony concerts in the Overture Center and football at Camp Randall Stadium, we have fallen in love with life in the hardwood forests of lake country. The Northwoods offers me the opportunity to pursue my passion for landscape photography while enjoying the beauty and serenity of one of the most pristine environments in the United States.

**Charlie (and Nancy) Rader** (PhD 1995): I am currently in my 17th year of teaching at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. After 11 years of serving as chair (9 for Geography and 2 for International Studies), I am back in the classroom full time (GIS, Digital Image Processing, Human Geography, Europe, and Introduction to International Studies). This past year had me on the road for International Studies, traveling to Taiwan and Korea to work on student-faculty exchanges, and then spending Fall semester teaching in a campus-run program in Scotland. Nancy is a GIS Data Specialist with the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office in St. Paul. We celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary with a week-long canoe trip in Wabakimi Provincial Park. A challenging trip through beautiful country that involved flying in on a floatplane and taking the Canadian Rail back out.

**Richard Santer** (PhD 1970): The diversity of content in the Spartan Geographer is always enjoyable to read, especially entries related to past faculty and alumni peers. Maybe now it is time for some reflection. It has been over forty years since I had the good fortune to be able to study under such talented, caring and nurturing professors as: Sommers, Jacobson, and

Vinge. Financially, the Cold War-Vietnam Era GI Bill® grant was most helpful. The summer physical field experience held at Gull Lake Biological Station under the leadership of Dieter Brunschweiler educationally stands out. I have never forgotten the intense professor banging on our apartment doors at about 2 AM to lead us to a hillside to observe and talk about the awesome Perseid Meteor Shower. Duke Winters' field exercises proved most helpful when I served

on township and county planning commissions. Ironically, even though he awarded me a "C" in his Michigan course, he and Jacobson firmly supported me in my Michigan Academy work. Sommers and Jacobson encouraged my Michigan writings and the creation of the successful Geography of Michigan course at Ferris State. After twenty-seven and a half years of teaching and special project work at Ferris State, I retired in 1997. Since then my wife of fifty years and I have enjoyed national and international travel, especially Exploritas (Elderhostel) programs. Family history and genealogy has led to membership in the Sons of the American Revolution. This spring for the 125th anniversary of the founding of FSU, I was again asked to reenact Woodbridge N. Ferris, founder, Michigan governor, and U.S. Senator. Previously in 1984, I chaired the FSU Centennial observances, co-edited the *Sayings of W. N. Ferris* and in 1995 co-edited *The Autobiography of W. N. Ferris*. When I retired, the twenty-two acre main campus Nature Preserve was named in my honor. I am still, since 1974, working on gaining general use of the correct boundaries of Michigan in graphics.

**Kurt Schulz** (BA 1982): I have very fond memories of my days with the MSU Geography Department. I have been with NGA since 1982. Other MSU geographers at NGA are Laura Moore and Dave Berg. NGA was kind enough to send me to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville to study GIS and Remote Sensing. As a result I was able to get my M.S. in Geo-graphic Studies in 2003. Two years ago I was made supervisor of the Coordinate Systems Analysis Branch. <http://earth-info.nga.mil/GandG/coordsys/> Our branch

establishes and maintains standards for applying coordinate systems to maps, charts and other geospatial products. The official definition of UTM resides with us. Lately we have been promoting the US National Grid to support disaster management. Here is a link to an article I wrote about it: <http://www.directionsmag.com/articles/us-national-grid-simplifies-mapping/122630>. I live with my wife (BS Geography, Univ of Washington, 1980) of 26 years and two children, Brett, age 26 and Heidi, age 24. Both kids have poor geospatial judgement and are totally dependent on their GPS units to find their way around.

**Mark D. Schwartz** (BA 1980; MA 1982) has been named Distinguished Professor by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Board of Regents. Mark joined the UWM faculty in 1992 after earning his PhD from the University of Kansas in 1985.



**Kristy (Sanderson) Watson** (BA 1992): My life is kind of like camp. I play clarinet, drive a carriage for a local resort, walk my llamas, ride my horses, oil paint, and volunteer at the Agricultural Heritage Museum. I also manage a local vintage baseball team, work as a graphic designer, and am the inventor of a urethane horseshoe.

**Anthony V. Williams** (PhD 1968) of State College, PA died at home on August 24, 2010 following a courageous struggle with cancer. After two years of training as an engineer, he became a geographer, receiving his bachelor's degree from Wayne State, his masters from Ohio State, and his PhD from Michigan State. He also did graduate work at the University of Washington and at Penn State. He joined the faculty at Penn State as Assistant Professor of Geography and Computer Science in 1966 and later served as chair of the University's graduate program in Operations Research. During his career, he held various visiting appointments in Nigeria, Cameroon, and the Netherlands. 🍎

Thanks to all of you who contributed to the various Geography Department funds and scholarships. We are making continued efforts to increase our departmental contributions to enhance our programs and benefit students. Please consider donating to one of the Geography Department funds listed below.

Make checks payable to: **Michigan State University** and please specify desired fund.

Mail to: Department of Geography  
Michigan State University  
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#### **Ian Matley Memorial Fund**

Established to bring guest speakers to campus to enrich the geographic education of students and faculty.

#### **Marjorie and Lawrence Sommers Geography Graduate Fellowship for International Research and Travel**

A graduate fellowship to be awarded yearly for Masters or PhD students to support international research and travel.

#### **GTU/Geography Endowment Fund**

Established in 1999 by Robert and Dorothy Thomas to fund geography-related student activities.

#### **Harold A. "Duke" Winters Scholarship**

To support graduate study in Geography at MSU.

#### **Jay R. Harman Undergraduate Scholarship in Geography**

To support undergraduate study in Geography at MSU.

#### **Geography at MSU Fund**

Established in 2001 to promote the MSU Department of Geography, including related advertising, fundraising, travel, and similar expenses.

#### **Geographic Field Experience Fund**

Established in 2001 to fund student field experiences, including field trips, primary data collection, course related field experience, and transportation and lodging expenses.

#### **Geographic Literacy Fund**

Sponsored by Harm de Blij, this fund promotes the field of Geography to students.

#### **E. James Potchen Awards in Geography for Graduate and Undergraduate Students**

Established in 2008 by Harm de Blij to fund yearly cash awards for outstanding graduate and undergraduate students based on GPA, progress towards degrees, and other quality indicators such as field work and research.

### **International Medical Symposium (IMGS)**

The Department will host the International Medical Geography Symposium (IMGS) on July 8-12, 2013 at the MSU Kellogg Center. The symposium is held every two years rotating locations (2011 Durham, England; 2009 Hamilton, Ontario; 2007 Bonn, Germany). About 350 health and medical geographers from around the world will attend. The IMGS 2013 overall theme is yet to be decided and suggestions are welcome. A special session will be held in honor of MSU Distinguished Professor Emeritus John Hunter hosted by his former students. Registration will open mid-2012. Sue Grady is chairing the planning committee. Please feel free to contact Sue ([gradys@msu.edu](mailto:gradys@msu.edu) or 517-432-9998) if you would like to provide planning input and/or participate as a volunteer.

## **Spartan Geographer**

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We also encourage you to keep in touch and provide your contact information. We have been working very hard to update and correct our e-mail and mailing lists. Please notify us whenever you have a change of mailing or e-mail address. This and past newsletters can be viewed on-line at our website, [\*\*http://www.geo.msu.edu/aboutus/newsletters.html\*\*](http://www.geo.msu.edu/aboutus/newsletters.html)

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