

20<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Dear Spatial Sciences Institute Community:

As we close out 2018, I have the pleasure of sharing with you many accomplishments of the Spatial Sciences Institute over the past six months.

May I start by offering hearty congratulations to the following students and alumni:

- **Lourdes Johanna Avelar** (Population, Health and Place Ph.D. candidate) and her team for their poster presentation “LA County Homelessness and the Right to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)” in the USC Graduate School’s Diversity, Inclusion, and Access (DIA) JumpStart summer research program for undergraduates;
- **Benjamin Banet** (Interdisciplinary Studies ’18) for his presentation “From Brighter than the Moon to Dimmer than the Stars: Hemispherical Photography of Nighttime Illumination Across the American West” at the [5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Artificial Light at Night](#) (ALAN 2018), November 13, 2018 in Snowbird, Utah;
- **Christina Brunsvold** (M.S. GIST student) and **Rachel Rodriguez** (M.S. GIST ’14) for being named to the URISA Vanguard Cabinet for 2018-2020, URISA’s program to support the development of young GIS professionals;
- **Yuanbin Cheng** (M.S. Computer Science student on the Spatial Sciences Institute’s Spatial Computing team) for winning the third place in the student research competition at the [26<sup>th</sup> ACM International Conference on Advances in Geographic Information Systems \(ACM SIGSPATIAL\)](#) in Seattle, Washington for his paper “Automatic Extraction Intersection and Building Arrangement from StarCraft II Maps”;
- **Douglas Fleming** (Ph.D. Population, Health and Place candidate) on receiving the [Irving and Jean Glovin Award](#) from the Oskar Schindler Humanities Foundation for his research which promotes “good human conduct” and also for receiving a University Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award for 2018-2019;
- **Benjamin Friedman** (B.S. GeoDesign student) for his presentation “Creating a Sim City for the Real World” at the [2018 GEO|Design + BIM Conference](#), November 2, 2018, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands;



- **Jong Su Kim** (M.S. Human Security and Geospatial Intelligence student) and **Richard Windisch** (B.S. GeoDesign '18 and M.S. GIST student) for being selected by Esri to be student assistants at the [Esri Federal GIS Conference](#) in Washington, D.C. from January 29 – 30, 2019;
- **Zekun Li** (Computer Science Ph.D. student on the Spatial Sciences Institute's Spatial Computing team) for her paper "Weighted Feature Pooling Network in Template-Based Recognition" at the [14th Asian Conference on Computer Vision](#), Perth, Australia, in early December;
- **Carrie Steves** (M.S. GIST '17) on receiving the [2018 Academic Excellence Prize](#) from the UNIGIS International Association (UIA) for her thesis "Trends in the Alaskan Bottom-Trawl Fishery from 1993 – 2015: A GIS-based Spatiotemporal Analysis";
- **Katherine "Kelly" Wright** (M.S. GIST '17) on being appointed as president of the Southwestern Ohio GIS Users Group;
- **Yan Xu** (Population, Health and Place Ph.D. candidate) and her team for their poster presentation "Interdisciplinary Characterization of the Modifiable Temporal Unit Problem (MTUP) in Research: A Systemic Review" in the USC Graduate School's Diversity, Inclusion, and Access (DIA) JumpStart summer research program for undergraduates; and
- **Li Yi** (Population, Health and Place Ph.D. student) for being selected to present a poster at the [2019 ActiveLiving Conference](#) in Charleston, South Carolina during February 17-20, 2019, the premier multi-disciplinary conference for sharing the latest research, policies, and practices that advance activity-friendly communities.

Our warm congratulations also go to the following faculty:

- **Dr. Jennifer M. Bernstein**, lecturer, whose op-ed article "[Yes, GPS apps make you worse at navigating – but that's OK](#)" originally published on November 16, 2018 in *The Conversation* was picked up by The Aspen Institute at one of the "[Five Best Ideas of the Day](#)" for November 19, 2018, the *San Francisco Chronicle* in its SFGate, and the [Washington Post](#). Dr. Bernstein also was interviewed for *The Gender Policy Report* on November 20, 2018 on "[Women, Hunting and the Future of Conservation](#)";
- **Dr. Travis Longcore**, assistant professor of Architecture, Biological Sciences, and Spatial Sciences, on the September 25, 2018 article "[Frogtown Without Frogs: The Changing Ecology of the Bowtie Parcel and the L.A. River](#)" in *KCET Artbound* featuring his analysis of the historical ecology of the Los Angeles River; on being quoted in the *Los Angeles Magazine* November 6, 2018 article "[The Secret Life of Trees](#)" on the consequences of heat to the Los Angeles tree canopy; and his interview on [BBC Radio 5 Live on November 14, 2018](#), addressing the California wildfires;

- **Dr. Darren M. Ruddell**, associate professor (teaching), who was elected to a three-year term on the board of directors of the [UNIGIS International Association](#), the worldwide network of universities cooperating in the design and delivery of distance learning in geographical information systems and science;
- **Dr. Emily Smith-Greenaway**, assistant professor of Sociology and Spatial Sciences, who has been selected by USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences as its 2018 Raubenheimer Award Winner for Outstanding Junior Faculty Member in the Social Sciences; and
- **Dr. An-Min Wu**, lecturer, who presented a research poster on “Spatial Distribution of Soil Lead Pollution” at the 21<sup>st</sup> World Congress of Soil Science in August, 2018 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil); was re-elected as a member of the USC Dornsife Faculty Council (2018-2020); and was elected as Vice Chair/Chair-Elect of the [California Geographic Information Association \(CGIA\)](#) for 2018-2019.

Other highlights from the Fall 2018 semester include:

- 14 presentations by [USC Spatial faculty, staff, student, and alumni at the 2018 URISA GIS-Pro and CalGIS Conference](#) in Palm Springs, California, October 10 – 11, 2018. The SSI representatives were **Dr. Laura Loyola**, lecturer; **Dr. Katsuhiko Oda**, assistant professor (teaching); **Dr. Jennifer Swift**, associate professor (teaching); **Susan Kamei**, managing director; **Ken Watson**, academic programs director; **Beau MacDonald**, GIS Project Specialist; **Mallory Graves** (M.S. GIST '15); **Isaiah Mack** (GIST Graduate Certificate '02); **Rachel Rodriguez** (M.S. GIST '14); and **Richard Windisch** (B.S. GeoDesign '18 and M.S. GIST student);
- A multi-faceted celebration of **GIS Day** and the launch of our new [GIS and Sustainability Science minor](#). Under the leadership of **Dr. Laura Loyola**, our director of undergraduate studies, on Tuesday, November 13, students observed a drone flight over Brittingham Field to capture imagery which was used to render a 3D model as part of course exercises and heard a faculty presentation on remote imaging research and its application in humanitarian, ecological, and planning/development work from **Dr. Andrew Marx**, associate professor of the practice, and **Dr. Jason Knowles**, lecturer, both of whom specialize in remote sensing and GIS.

Then on Wednesday, November 14, the team of USC SSI and USC Libraries faculty, staff, and students narrowly prevailed for the second year in a year against geography-minded Bruins at UCLA in the **2018 GIS Day Mapathon “Battle of the Maps.”** The two teams combined to make more than 10,000 map entries in Humanitarian OpenStreetMap in support of priority areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Philippines, India, and Niger;

- The launch of the [Human Security and Geospatial Intelligence Lab](#) under the direction of **Dr. Andrew Marx** and **Dr. Steven D. Fleming**, COL[R] and professor of the practice. Learn more about how Dr. Marx's student team is [documenting human rights violations](#) using satellite imagery; and
- A visit by a [delegation of GIS leaders from Zhejiang Province, China](#), hosted by **Dr. Steven D. Fleming** and **Susan Kamei**.

This fall, we also welcomed [Dr. Leilei Duan](#), post-doctoral teaching fellow, to our faculty teaching in our undergraduate programs. As of the Spring 2019, we are pleased to have [Dr. Christopher Verlinden](#), lecturer, also join our faculty; Dr. Verlinden will be teaching in our online GIST Graduate Programs.

Looking ahead into the new year:

- Please [register now](#) for our annual **Geospatial Summit** on **Friday, February 22, 2019** at the USC Hotel (formerly the Radisson Hotel at USC), which will feature trends in the use of geospatial data in intelligent enterprise, artificial intelligence and machine learning in geospatial technologies, student presentations and posters, and lunchtime networking at Knowledge Network tables;
- For those who anticipate finishing their degrees, please plan to participate in the USC [Commencement events on Friday, May 10, 2019](#), including the SSI reception for your guests in honor of your achievements; and
- Please save the date for [our annual reception](#) at the **Esri User Conference** in San Diego on **Tuesday, July 9, 2019, 6 – 9 p.m.**, at **Roy's San Diego Waterfront** in the Marriott Marquis Hotel.

On behalf of our administrative team – **Susan Kamei, Ken Watson, Beau MacDonald, Richard Tsung, Helen Jeon, Andrea Macko**, and **Stephanie Tran** – and our faculty, we wish you and your families a very happy, healthy, and prosperous new year. We look forward to using each day in 2019 towards making the world a better place with the power of spatial sciences.

With kind regards,



John P. Wilson  
Professor and Founding Director  
Spatial Sciences Institute