

Geographical focus



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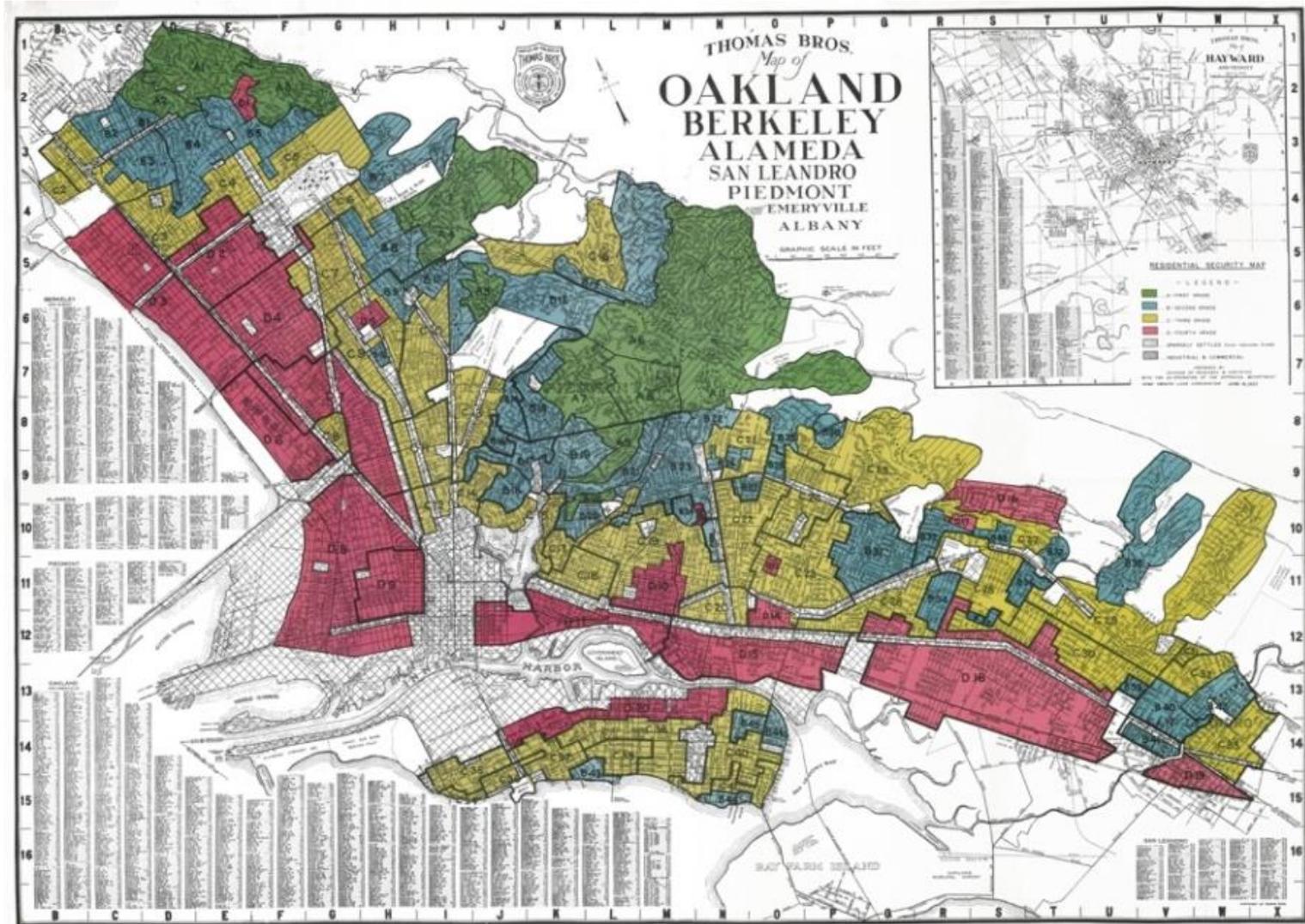
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Geographical Focus is the Newsletter of the Geography Program at California State University, Stanislaus. This newsletter seeks to keep alumni and geography friends up to date with developments in our Geography Program. If you are an Alumni of our program or a geography friend and want to share news, please reach us!

*In this page: Marylou Pulido, Field Research Methods, 2018.
Photo: Victoria Martínez*

*Cover photo: Upper Yosemite Fall, 2016.
Photo: José Díaz-Garayúa*

Editor: José Díaz-Garayúa



Not enough!

It is not enough not being racist because silently implies the acceptance, complacency, and complicity of a racial hierarchical system where the whiter the skin the greater the benefits. Being non-racist tacitly accept a racial *status quo* that endorse a society ruled by, or at least with vestiges of, systemic racism. There is overwhelming evidence that black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOCs) are being hit the hardest by institutionalized violence and there is compelling documentation that the US, similar to that South Africa of the Apartheid, has promoted, at least at times, *de jure* segregation (Rothstein, 2017). (Covid-19 has clearly uncover this issue.) Who have not seen redlining maps as the one above? Stanislaus State President Ellen Junn's [open letter](#) (May 30, 2020), affirms that **"we must recognize that persistent racism, oppression and deeply ingrained prejudicial beliefs have insidious and sometimes deadly consequences. We must reaffirm our commitment to combat racism and find new ways to have more inclusive, authentic, difficult and critical conversations to expand our conscious awareness and to condemn and denounce bigotry and hate and take action to build a better environment."** President Junn adds, **"we will not be silent and simply accept or turn away from the ugliness of racism."** Similarly, the Geography Program supports President Junn's words. We are sure that our Alumni and Geography friends support President Junn's word and our program's actions of being, not just non-racist, but anti-racist.

From the Chair's Desk

Dear Geographers and Geography Friends,

I'm very proud to report on the Stanislaus State Geography's 2019-20 accomplishments. Despite the disruptions caused by the move to distance education, the Geography program had a very successful year thanks to the commitment of the faculty, students, and community supporters.

I thank the faculty and staff for all of their dedication to the program. **Dr. Austin** is a co-PI on a United States Department of Agriculture Grant and was named a USDA E. Kika De La Garza Science Fellow. **Drs. McNally** and **Díaz-Garayúa** were awarded tenure and promoted to Associate Professors. **Dr. McNally** published an article highlighting water quality testing by our students. **Dr. Díaz-Garayúa** co-authored a book chapter on Urban and Regional Planning.

I especially want to recognize the important work of our lecturers: **Chuck Bowen, Cece Hudelson, Cameron Pallotta, Dr. Catherine Garoupa White, Dr. Rebecca van Stokkum, Dr. Dustin Tsai, Gene Barrera,** and **Kim Anderson**. They bring an essential depth to our course offerings and teach the majority of our students. I appreciate all the work **Cameron Pallotta** does to maintain our GIS on our campus, especially with the re-location of our lab due to the library renovation and the move to virtual instruction. I would like to thank our new Administrative Coordinator, **Christina Afleje-Meyer**. I would also like to thank the 2019 GIS Day Keynote Speakers: **Michelle Aguilar**, documentary filmmaker; **Gene Barrera**, Merced County GIS Manager; **Kevin Butler**, Product Engineer of ESRI's Spatial Statistics; **Michael Contreras**, ESRI Lead Product Engineer of ESRI's 3D Analyst, **Sophia García**, Dolores Huerta Foundation GIS Analyst, **Vanessa López-Asaah**, Health Educator in Stanislaus County Health Services Agency; **Victoria** Martinez, Geography Alumna; and **Analisa** Zamora, Tobacco Prevention Program Coordinator at Stanislaus County Health Services Agency.

Congratulations to our 2020 Graduates and Student Achievers. **Trevor McManis** is the 2020 Outstanding BA Student in Geography. **Emma Denison, Trevor McManis, Nancy Brooks, Kristi Kelechenyi, Jared Cragun, Justin Lemons, Jordan Hoffman, Julian Craddock,** and **Emily Snow** were invited to join Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the Geography Honor Society. **Jacqueline Torrecillas** will be attending a funded graduate program at Texas State University.

I welcome back **Alissa-Monique Bravo** from studying abroad in Taiwan. Thank you to the Office of International Education for providing these opportunities to our students. We appreciate the support of our community in providing internships for many of our students: **James Alexander** (Stan State Facilities), **Justin Lemon** (Merced County), and **Jordan Hoffman** (CCIC). Thank you to the support of the Office of Service Learning and the California Information Center.

This coming year will be interesting as we adjust to long-term distance education. I have confidence in that we will continue to meet the needs of our students and communities. We invite you to attend our virtual **November 2020 GIS Day Celebration** (More Information to Follow). I thank everyone for their contributions to our program.

Best wishes to you and your families,

Peggy Hauselt
Geography Chair

Faculty updates



Dr. Jennifer J. Helzer (Ph.D. Geography, University of Texas, Austin, 1998) joined the Geography Program in 2001. Dr. Helzer is coming back to the Geography Program in Spring 2021, after having led, as Associate Dean, the [Office of International Education](#) of Stanislaus State. Among many other services, Dr. Helzer has served as Chairperson of the Department of Anthropology, Geography, and Ethnic Studies from (2009 – 2012). Her research and teaching interests are cultural and urban geography, ethnicity, migration and settlement, Europe, North America as well as community service learning and international education.



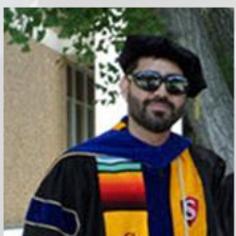
Dr. Peggy Hauselt (Ph.D. Geography, UC Davis, 2007) is currently, the Chairperson of the [Department of Anthropology, Geography, and Ethnic Studies](#) and Director of the Interdisciplinary Studies MA/MS Program. Dr. Hauselt has been spearheading the department in these times of crisis. She has taught courses of Field Methods, GIS, Advanced GIS, Agricultural Geography, and the popular course of Geography of Wine. Her research interest focuses on agricultural effects on environmental and biogeographic landscapes.



Dr. Augustine Awunudiogba (Ph.D. Geography, University of Texas, Austin, 2012) joined the Geography Program in 2007. His area of expertise includes fluvial geomorphology (hydrology and watershed processes), environmental sustainability, and human modification of the natural environment. Dr. Awunudiogba applies geospatial technology into his teaching and research. He is co-PI on a USDA grant. Dr. Awunudiogba is 1 of 4 [USDA 2019 E. Kika De La Garza Science Fellows](#).



Dr. Alison McNally (Ph.D. Geography, UC Davis, 2014) joined the geography program in 2014 as Assistant Professor and won the prestigious [Elizabeth Anne B. Papageorge Faculty Development Award \(2017-2018\)](#). In 2020, Dr. McNally earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Geography. Also this year, Dr. McNally published in *The Teacher Geographer* an article titled [Beyond the Tap: Engaging Students Through a Service Learning, Community-Based Water Quality Testing Exercise](#). Dr. McNally will be on sabbatical leave during fall 2020.



Dr. José R. Díaz-Garayúa (Ph.D. Geography, Kent State University, 2008) joined the Geography Program in 2016 as Assistant Professor. In 2020, he accomplished early tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Geography. During 2020, he joined the [California Geographer](#) as Co-Editor. Dr. Díaz-Garayúa published a book chapter that he co-authored with his undergraduate mentor [Dr. Carlos Guilbe López](#). *Confronting Styles and Scales in Puerto Rico: Comprehensive versus Participative Planning under a Colonial Estate* is a chapter in [Urban and Regional Planning and Development: 20th Century Forms and 21st Century Transformations](#).

Staff & Adjunct Faculty

Christina Aflejer-Meyer joined us in 2019 as the Department's Program Assistant.

Kimberly Anderson (MPA, CSU, Stanislaus, 2009) is Senior Advisor at the Regional Government Services Authority in Carmel Valley. She also worked for San Joaquín Council Governments.

Gene Barrera (MCPR, UC Berkeley, 2005) is a GIS Manager at Merced County. He joined Stanislaus State in 2017 as Lecturer for Planning Issues. He has taught Planning Issues and GIS.

Charles Bowen (M.S. Geography, University of Georgia, 1967) teaches courses in physical geography and human ecology. Chuck also enjoy and join field trips such as Geographical Processes at Death Valley.

Cece Hudelson (M.S. Geography, London School of Economics, 1990) teaches Cultural Geography. Ms. Hudelson also has a Master degree in economic development.

Cameron Pallotta (MSIS, CSU, Stanislaus, 2018) joined Stanislaus State in 2003 as Computer Lab Manager for Modern Languages, Music, and Geography. As adjunct professor, Mr. Pallotta teaches physical geography lab courses and also have taught introduction to GIS.

Rebecca van Stokkum (Ph.D. Geography, UC Davis, 2019) joined the Geography Program in 2019. Her research interests are Information flows regarding resources management and the political ecology of participatory frameworks at the local government scale and the political cultural of urban slums. Her international focus is Venezuela.

Dr. Catherine Garoupa White (Ph.D. Geography, UC Davis, 2016) joined the Geography Program in 2016. Currently, Dr. Garoupa White is Coalition Coordinator at the California Against Fracking & Dangerous Drilling. She is also a Steering Committee Member for the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition.

Dr. Dustin Tsai (Ph.D. Geography, UC Davis, 2020) is Associate Professor at San Joaquín Delta College.

2020 Alumni List

The 2020 commencement ceremony was postponed due to SARS-Cov-19 (Coronavirus). Hundreds of students in Stanislaus State did not walked to the stage to receive their diplomas. However, the Geography Program wants to recognize our Geography graduates and now 2020 Alumni. Below, our 2020 Alumni (in alphabetical order):

Alexander, James

Ávalos García, Cynthia

Blades, Brock

Bomben, Justin – *Cum Laude*

Brooks, Nancy – *Magna Cum Laude*

Castrejón, Makeyla

Guerrero García, Alma

Howard, Sarah

McManis, Trevor – *Magna Cum Laude*

Self, Mary

Torrecillas, Jacqueline

Study Abroad Program

Did you know that the Office of Extended and International Education has 127 study abroad or study away options for Geography majors? Students can choose to study abroad through one of our 4 approved Study Abroad providers (CSU IP, USAC, Exchange and the National Student Exchange). Students can choose between winter, summer, semester or yearlong options and are able to use state and/or federal financial aid depending on the term or the provider. The first step to participate in one of these programs is to attend one of our information sessions. We have scheduled information sessions via zoom or a pre-recorded one on [this link](#). If you do the pre-recorded one, you must [complete the form](#). If you have any questions about study abroad, please feel free to contact us at studyabroad@csustan.edu.

Below a list of universities and countries where you, as a geography major, can choose to study abroad:

Program	Country/State	Provider	Program	Country/State	Provider
University of Toledo	Ohio	NSE	West Virginia University	West Virginia	NSE
Western Oregon University	Oregon	NSE	University of Wyoming	Wyoming	NSE
California University of Pennsylvania (PA)	Pennsylvania	NSE	Prairie View A&M University (TX)	Texas	NSE
Indiana University of Pennsylvania (PA)	Pennsylvania	NSE	Sam Houston State University (TX)	Texas	NSE
West Chester University of Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	NSE	Fort Hays State University (KS)	Kansas	NSE
University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras (PR)	Puerto Rico	NSE	Texas State University	Texas	NSE
Rhode Island College (RI)	Rhode Island	NSE	South Dakota State University	South Dakota	NSE
University of Rhode Island	Rhode Island	NSE	University of Georgia	Georgia	NSE
University of South Carolina - Columbia	South Carolina	NSE	University of Arizona	Arizona	NSE
Winthrop University	South Carolina	NSE	Alabama State University	Alabama	NSE
University of Memphis (TN)	Tennessee	NSE	University of Alabama (AL)	Alabama	NSE
University of Montevallo (AL)	Alabama	NSE	University of Alaska Fairbanks (AK)	Alaska	NSE
University of Idaho (ID)	Idaho	NSE	Northern Arizona University (AZ)	Arizona	NSE
University of Kentucky (KY)	Kentucky	NSE	Brock University (ON)	Canada	NSE
Western Kentucky University	Kentucky	NSE	University of Regina	Canada	NSE
Louisiana State University (LA)	Louisiana	NSE	Colorado Mesa University (CO)	Colorado	NSE
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities (MN)	Minnesota	NSE	University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (CO)	Colorado	NSE
Mississippi State University (MS)	Mississippi	NSE	Florida International University (FL)	Florida	NSE
Montana State University (MT)	Montana	NSE	University of Guam (GU)	Guam	NSE
New Mexico State University (NM)	New Mexico	NSE	University of Hawaii at Manoa (HI)	Hawaii	NSE
North Dakota State University (ND)	North Dakota	NSE	University of Northern Iowa (IA)	Iowa	NSE
Oklahoma State University (OK)	Oklahoma	NSE	Wichita State University	Kansas	NSE
Southern Utah University (UT)	Utah	NSE	Towson University (MD)	Maryland	NSE

Program	Country/State	Provider	Program	Country/State	Provider
Bridgewater State University (MA)	Massachusetts	NSE	Western Colorado University	Colorado	NSE
Gustavus Adolphus College (MN)	Minnesota	NSE	Indiana University-Purdue University (IN)	Indiana	NSE
Minnesota State University, Mankato (MN)	Minnesota	NSE	Univ. ty of Massachusetts, Amherst	Massachusetts	NSE
Missouri Southern State University (MO)	Missouri	NSE	Worcester State University	Massachusetts	NSE
University of Montana (MT)	Montana	NSE	Université de Montréal	Canada	NSE
Montclair State University (NJ)	New Jersey	NSE	University of New Hampshire	New Hampshire	NSE
University of New Mexico (NM)	New Mexico	NSE	Universities of Baden-Württemberg	Germany	CSU IP
Binghamton University (NY)	New York	NSE	University of Ghana	Ghana	CSU IP
Cleveland State University (OH)	Ohio	NSE	University of Queensland	Australia	CSU IP
Utah Valley University	Utah	NSE	Western Sydney University	Australia	CSU IP
Eastern Washington University (WA)	Washington	NSE	Macquarie University	Australia	CSU IP
Marshall University (WV)	West Virginia	NSE	Concordia University	Canada	CSU IP
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse	Wisconsin	NSE	National Taiwan University	Taiwan	CSU IP
Bishop's University (QC)	Canada	NSE	Nelson Mandela University	South Africa	CSU IP
Universite du Quebec a Montreal (QC)	Canada	NSE	Peking University	China	CSU IP
Eastern Illinois University (IL)	Illinois	NSE	Pontificia Univ. Católica de Chile	Chile	CSU IP
Bowie State University (MD)	Maryland	NSE	Universities of Paris	France	CSU IP
Frostburg State University (MD)	Maryland	NSE	University of Bristol	UK: England	CSU IP
Salem State University (MA)	Massachusetts	NSE	Griffith University	Australia	CSU IP
University of Nebraska at Kearney (NE)	Nebraska	NSE	University of Birmingham	UK: England	CSU IP
North Carolina Central University (NC)	North Carolina	NSE	Kingston University	UK: England	CSU IP
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire	Wisconsin	NSE	Swansea University	UK: England	CSU IP
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay	Wisconsin	NSE	Accra	Ghana	USAC
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point	Wisconsin	NSE	Auckland/Palmerston North/Wellington	New Zealand	USAC
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater	Wisconsin	NSE	Stellenbosch	South Africa	USAC
University of Calgary	Canada	NSE	Florianópolis	Brazil	USAC
University of Hawaii at Hilo (HI)	Hawaii	NSE	Montevideo	Uruguay	USAC
University of Maine at Farmington	Maine	NSE	Prague	Czech Republic	USAC
Kenee State College	New Hampshire	NSE	Reading	UK: England	USAC
SUNY College at Buffalo	New York	NSE	Cork	Ireland	USAC
University of Wisconsin-Stout	Wisconsin	NSE	Gold Coast	Australia	USAC
Iowa State University (IA)	Iowa	NSE	Bristol	UK: England	USAC
University of Alaska Southeast (Juneau) (AK)	Alaska	NSE	Chiang Mai	Thailand	USAC
Brandon University (MB)	Canada	NSE	Chiang Mai	Thailand	USAC
Lakehead University (On)	Canada	NSE	Heredia	Costa Rica	USAC

Program	Country/State	Provider	Key	Financial Aid
Khon Kaen	Thailand	USAC	AY Academic Year (August to June)	Yes
Khon Kaen	Thailand	USAC	CY Calendar Year (January to November)	Yes
London	UK: England	USAC	Fall Fall semester	Yes
St. Andrews	UK: Scotland	USAC	Spring Spring Semester	Yes
Viterbo	Italy	USAC	Summer Summer session (June or July or both)	Yes
Brighton	UK: England	USAC	Winter Winter session (Dec. 26th to January 20 th)	No
London	UK: England	USAC	NSE National Student Exchange	State and/or Federal Aid
Melbourne	Australia	USAC	CSU IP CSU, International Programs	State and Federal Aid
Wellington	New Zealand	USAC	USAC University Studies Abroad Consortium	Federal Aid
			Exchange Stan State Exchange	State and Federal Aid

Brittany Fentress, M.A. is Director of Education Abroad. Originally from Paducah, Kentucky, Brittany studied abroad 3 times during her undergraduate degree with all of her courses counting towards her degree. She loved her experiences so much that she ended up obtaining her master's degree from the University of York in England as an international student. She is a firm believer that EVERYONE should study abroad at least once!



Arc GIS Pro is Available to Students, Faculty, and Staff!!!



Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology has been an integral part of Geography instruction for many years at CSU Stanislaus. These courses have traditionally been taught in person in our GIS computer lab on campus. With the COVID-19 outbreak and the move to online teaching, student access to GIS software has been problematic. In early 2020, a new licensing agreement was entered into between ESRI (the maker of the ArcGIS software) and the California State University system. As part of this agreement, each CSU was given the ability to add a large number of new users to their organizational account, which has significant benefits for students, staff and faculty.

Students who have appropriate computer hardware available now have the opportunity to install the latest GIS software, ArcGIS Pro for no charge! This gives them the ability to complete GIS exercises using the most up-to-date software without the need for high-speed Internet, complex VPN connections, or the use of short-term student versions. Students will continue to have access to this software as long as they are enrolled at CSU Stanislaus!

Additionally, students also have enhanced access to ArcGIS Online. While anyone can create a public account, students will be able to join the CSU Stanislaus organization which gives them analysis tools that would not otherwise be available. They also have greater storage capacity and other tools not available to public users. While this product is not as powerful as the desktop version, it does give students the ability to create and publish maps, applications and story maps on the Internet using data available online or data they have created in ArcGIS Pro.

As part of this new licensing agreement, ArcGIS Pro is also available to staff and faculty for installation on their university computers, as well as their personal computers! Staff and faculty may use this software for research or educational purposes but not to create and sell products for profit. They also have access to ArcGIS Online with the same enhanced capabilities students have. GIS maps are a great way to enhance research papers or provide spatial analysis of data for virtually any subject and are being used more often in many professions.

Hopefully we will all be back on campus soon! In the meantime, students will be able to keep up with GIS education with their own copy of ArcGIS Pro and ArcGIS Online!

Cameron Pallotta, M.S.I.S. is computer lab manager and lecturer in the Geography Program at Stanislaus State.

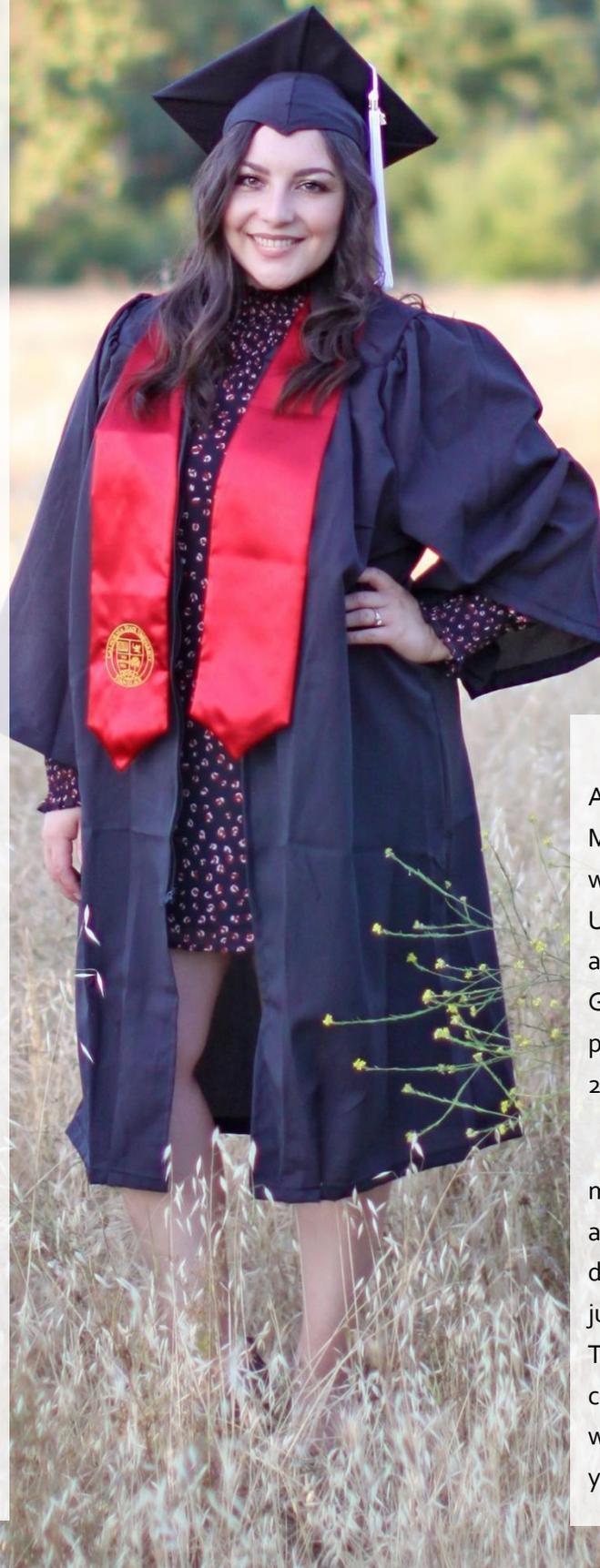


Words from a Geography Alumna: Jaqueline Torrecillas

My time at CSU Stanislaus was short but so rewarding. As a transfer student from Modesto Junior College, the only thing I wanted to do was to get in and get out as quickly as possible. But my sentiments quickly changed when I joined the Geography Department at Stanislaus in 2019. My teachers and classmates made me feel like I never wanted this experience to end.

When I first joined the program, I was a bit confused as to what I wanted to do with my Geography degree. With the encouragement of my teachers, I went on to apply to various internships and was hired by TID as a GIS intern, where I found that although I liked learning GIS, I didn't like the idea of working an office job after college. I began looking into other possibilities for careers and was drawn to the world of research and teaching.

Towards the end of the Summer of 2019, I approached Dr. Austin Avwunudiogba, asking for help getting started on a research project that I wanted to present at the following 2020 CGS Conference. He quickly offered his help and guidance and helped me develop my very own project. I researched the Tuolumne River Floodplain, analyzing the sedimentary characteristics that make this floodplain so unique. With this research experience, I felt that this was something I could see myself doing for years to come. I enjoyed having control and direction of a project that was not required for credit, but rather for me was a passion project.



With the encouragement from Drs. Augustin Avwunudiogba and Alison McNally, I decided that graduate school was the next step for me. I applied to the University of North Texas in Spring 2020 and was admitted to their Masters of Geography and Applied Geomorphology program, where I will begin in August of 2020.

My ultimate goal is to continue with my education to earn a Ph.D. and teach at the university level where maybe one day I'll have an impact on my students just as my professors have had on me. Thanks to them, I was able to see that I can do anything I set my mind to, and with a little perseverance and hard work, your dreams can come true.

2019 GIS Day | Geography meets Humanities: A Focus on Social Justice

The American Association of Geographers (AAG) has always been supportive of transdisciplinary research. Ten years ago, the AAG held a Symposium on Geography and Humanities and, in 2015, a new journal – *GeoHumanities* – was launched providing a new venue for interdisciplinary scholarship. The exposition of geography as a discipline with key concepts such as space, place, landscape, mapping, geographic information systems (GIS), and others, have captured the popular imagination and have boosted research in academia. The Geography Program at California State University, Stanislaus (Stanislaus State) is committed to contributing to the dissemination of transdisciplinary work, specifically the relationship between the humanities and geography. It is for that reason the geography program worked on the event Geography meets Humanities during the GIS Day.

This event, with support from [California Humanities](#), brought a series of speakers during Geography Awareness Week, specifically during the GIS Day, who shared their work on how geography meets the humanities, having *social justice* as a central theme. Speakers talked about a wide range of topics including film, fair trade, the role of big data and GIS in activism and social justice in disadvantaged communities, and health and inequalities among others. The public had the opportunity to learn about historical development of social, economic, and political disparities of the presented cases and ask questions and reflect on the importance of the humanities and geography.

This event exposed the public to the value of transdisciplinary work — in this case, the humanities and geography — as well as its application not just in academia but also in everyday life. People had the opportunity to experience shared history of civic participation. This event invited the audience to think about the importance of the humanities, geography, and social justice in the everyday life.

The first activity in the morning was a GIS workshop introducing ArcGIS Pro and a demo of 3D modeling. Michael Contreras from ESRI led this workshop and demonstration that inspired several users to get to know more about ArcGIS Pro. Michael Contreras is a geographer and Product Engineer on ESRI's 3D Analysis.

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After the workshop, CASA, the Center for Applied Spatial Analysis, had its open house. CASA offers geospatial consulting services to the campus and regional community. In this capacity, it also serves as a conduit for outreach to our larger community. CASA coordinates internships, facilitates grant development, and conducts projects in partnership with campus and community members. These projects improve student learning by providing applied experiential learning and professional development opportunities (more information of CASA in page 15).

The program brought 8 speakers: **Michelle Aguilar** a documentary filmmaker, committed to social equality and fair representation of marginalized populations, **Gene Barrera** a GIS Manager for the County of Merced and lecturer at Stanislaus State, **Dr. Kevin Butler** a Product Engineer on ESRI's Spatial Statistics, **Michael Contreras** a geographer and Lead Product Engineer on ESRI's 3D Analysis, **Sophia Garcia** a GIS Analyst for the Dolores Huerta Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the pursuit of social justice in disadvantaged communities, **Vanessa Lopez-Asaah** a therapist that provides home-based services to mothers who are pregnant or parenting babies less than 2 year of age, **Victoria Martinez** a Data and System Analyst at Colonized Media, Inc and geography Alumna of Stanislaus State, and **Analisa Zamora** a health educator that help to empower communities for health equity. The Project Director for this event was **Dr. José Díaz-Garayúa** and the Humanities Experts were **Dr. Shannon Stevens** (English) and **Dr. Brenda Ortiz Loyola** (Spanish). Go to www.csustan.edu/geography-meets-humanities to reach the presentations and interviews (in English and Spanish).

José Díaz-Garayúa, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Human Geography and GIS and Board Member of the CSU GIS Specialty Group. He co-directs CASA, the Center for Applied Spatial Analysis at Stanislaus State.



Words from a Geography Alumna: Amanda Leung

My two years at Stanislaus were more than what I could have hoped for. I transferred from Stockton Delta College and entered Stan as a Biology major, little did I know, that was going to change. I switched to Geography after a short but a life changing conversation with one of the amazing professors from that department, Dr. McNally. Just from that brief, lucky encounter, I was opened up to a whole new world of possibilities that I never knew existed.

My first Geography class was the Water and Power course taught by Dr. McNally. That is when I found my passion for education I was missing, something I didn't have when I was a Biology major. I wanted to know more and expand my knowledge about what Geography really is and what it all entails. Geography is more than just knowing where the states and countries are at, there is so much more than that!

So as semesters went by, I took as many Geography courses of different varieties I could to obtain my degree, such as GIS, Remote Sensing, and Geography of Wine. All my professors were extremely helpful in my path for success and wanting to see me succeed. They always gave us students opportunities for experiences and growing our knowledge and if there weren't any opportunities, the professors created them. I was able to assist one of professors, Dr. Díaz-Garayúa, research study. I conducted surveys, digitized information, and constructed a map to aid in his research study. I was able to obtain an internship with the Modesto Public Works in the survey division through a fellow peer who works there and also graduated with me. Through this internship, I was able to learn more about different types maps, expand my GIS knowledge, and widen my network. These types of experiences and connections would later help me in my future career.

I am currently working for the Modesto Fire Department as a GIS Technician. I digitally draw their detail pages on ArcGIS Pro for firemen to use when they get a call. For the maps I create, I draw the floor plans of the site; add symbols such as alarms, hydrants, risers, etc., and whatever else a fireman would need to know before arriving to the scene. I absolutely love what I do and my job is incredibly important because firemen rely on my maps to help navigate a building when there is a fire. What helped me land this job was because my supervisor knows my peer who helped me get an internship with Public Works. Make connections and friendships, you never know where they may lead!

I absolutely loved and truly enjoyed my time with the Geography department. I wish I could have taken every Geography class Stan offered. Coming out of that department with all my knowledge and experiences, I felt prepared for the real world and career field. The professors there are very supportive, they care tremendously for their students and would fight to give their students the best chance for their future. With them in your corner, you're in good hands and there's nothing you can't do! Take chances, make mistakes, and most importantly, have fun while doing it!



The [Center for Applied Spatial Analysis \(CASA\)](#) opened its door last year (August 2019) having its official open house during the activity **Geography meets Humanities** supported by [California Humanities](#). The open house was held on November 13, 2019 – GIS Day. CASA was made possible to a generous donation of the Cordova Family, the work of Dr. Alison McNally, and other members of the Geography Program as well as the unconditional support of Dr. James Tuedio, Dean of the College of the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Provost Kimberly Greer, and President Ellen Junn.

CASA offers an alternative space, with the potential for self-sustainability, to foster applied spatial analysis in the Central Valley and beyond. CASA supports transdisciplinary and collaborative geospatial research among faculty members, as well as professional experience for undergraduate and graduate students. CASA is a venue to attract external funding from contracts, grants, and others, which can lead to self-sustainability but also support to the community. Simultaneously, these experiences of grant writing are fundamental in developing competitive students.

CASA is equipped with a meeting area with LCD projector and four workstations (three for interns and one for the director) with the possibility to one add one more workstation. Cameron Pallotta, CAHSS Keck Computer Labs Manager and Geography Instructor, has been key in allocating resources to start up CASA. More important, Mr. Pallotta has been instrumental in providing CASA with technical support from hardware to software including the development of web applications that are available in our website: www.csustan.edu/casa.

Within its first year, CASA has worked on several projects including the submission of a federal grant proposal and a project with community members. This is the case of a web-mapping tool, accessible through [CASA's website](#), that uncovers residential areas in Modesto that were subjected to **Racially Restrictive Covenants (RRCs)**. This work has been made possible by the tremendously support of David and Sharon Froba who not just has sponsored the project but also done the painstakingly archival work of digging out part of Modesto's racial past. There are no doubts, this is a superb exercise of urban, economic, social, political, historical geography, and GIS.

José Díaz-Garayúa, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Human Geography and GIS and Board Member of the CSU GIS Specialty Group. He co-directs CASA, the Center for Applied Spatial Analysis at Stanislaus State.

Words from a Geography Alumna: Heather L. Benson



Heather Benson is bound to change the way we think about Northern Nevada. More broadly, how we think about xenophobia and what it does to socio-spatialities in the American West. Benson is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Geography at the University of Nevada-Reno (UNR). She has expertise in transnationalism and diaspora studies, spaces of religious identity, and ethnic geography of the American West. Before attending UNR, Benson obtained a B.A. in geography with a minor in global issues and development from California State University-Stanislaus. She also completed a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies with a focus on geospatial analysis from the same institution.

Benson fell in love with geography at CSU Stanislaus as an undergraduate student after working with professors in the Department of Anthropology, Geography, and Ethnic Studies, like Jennifer Helzer, Peggy Hauselt, Augustine Avwunudiogba, Alison McNally, Steve Arounsack, and support staff member Cameron Pallotta. They sparked her interest in the world and the relationship that humans have with the environment. Through their teachings, she learned about the numerous issues that plagued the globe and discovered that geographers were the solution to those problems. It was at CSU Stanislaus that she decided she wanted to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Her education prepared her both academically and professionally for the road that lay ahead. While enrolled in the M.S. interdisciplinary studies program at Stanislaus State, she maintained a job as a cartographer and drafter for a private land surveying company in the Mariposa area. Upon graduating in 2016, she was immediately accepted into the doctoral program at UNR.

Benson's doctoral work focuses on geographies of inclusion/exclusion for migrants and transnationals with a specific focus on Punjabi-Sikhs in Northern Nevada. After the tragic events of September 11th, 2001, more people have expressed their discomfort, dislike, or fear of people from other countries whom they perceive to be outsiders. Those considered to be outsiders may be socially and spatially excluded because of who they are, where they are from, how they look, or what they do and think. Therefore, they are deemed 'out of place' in a range of mainstream spaces that they either choose to vacate to avoid hostility or because they are compelled to do so by stigmatizing acts (Cresswell, 1996). An exploration of Punjabi-Sikh geographies of inclusion/exclusion will provide a better understanding of how migrants, transnationals, and religious minorities experience and react to xenophobia, and how the broader political climate operates in everyday spaces. Benson believes this is meaningful work that will help both people and the social landscape of the American West.

"Through geography, I can help make a positive impact on people's lives, teach others about the human relationship with the environment, and increase cross-cultural understanding. I couldn't have gotten to where I am today had it not been for the strong geographic foundation that I developed at CSU Stanislaus. I am a well-rounded geographer with skills in both physical and human geography, and I have the technological know-how needed for GIS," said Benson. "I am very proud to be a Stanislaus alumna."

Words from a Geography Alumnus: Michael Machado

My name is Michael Machado and I am currently the GIS Coordinator for the City of Merced. I am an alumnus of the geography program graduating in 2013. During my time as a student I was involved in the Geography Club and was one of the charter members of the Gamma Theta Upsilon Chapter at CSU Stanislaus.

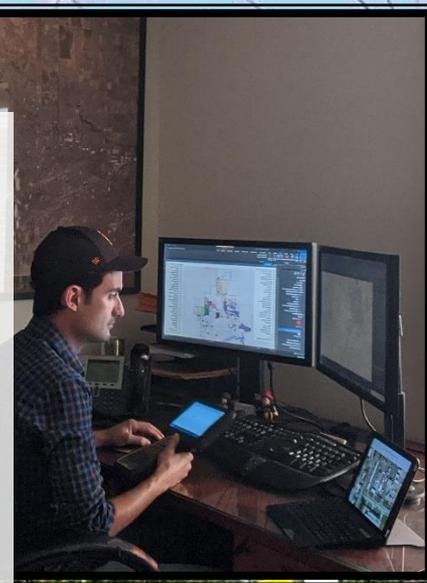
In my current position at the City of Merced, I manage and develop the GIS environment and advise on how the environment will develop and grow in the coming years. This requires a deep understanding of GIS and an ability to collaborate with various departments that have a vested interest in the city's GIS environment. These are skills I was able to develop during my time as a student in the Geography program.

As an undergraduate I had the opportunity to be guided by amazing professors and faculty. They challenged myself and my fellow peers not only in the classroom, but outside of the classroom as well in order to help us develop and achieve our professional goals after we graduated.

Professors and faculty gave many opportunities for professional development in the form of internships, conferences presentations, on campus GIS projects, and various collaborative projects. These allowed for us to sharpen our skills and prepared us for life after we had graduated.

As a student I was given the opportunity by my professors to be an intern at both Gallo Winery and for the USDA. Both internships were different, the latter being more research focused while the former was more traditional GIS technical work. Both allowed me to grow as a professional and helped me get a full-time position at Merced County.

The professors and faculty always were there for us. They were always quick to drop whatever they were doing to meet and give guidance or work with you on a project for a conference. Never once did I feel unsupported during my time as a student during my four years. I am proud to consider myself an alumnus of the Geography Program at CSU Stanislaus.





June 17, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

On June 13, 2020, following its public statement of commitment to antiracism a week earlier, the governing board of the California Geographical Society (CGS) held a special meeting, open to public, to begin an ongoing process of examining who we are as an organization and begin identifying concrete action we can undertake to match our stated commitment to action.

With most of the board in attendance, along with members of the broader CGS community, we held what we think was an open, honest discussion about our organization and discipline, in particularly asking the question of why we – as a membership body and more pointedly as a governing body – so poorly reflect the diversity found more broadly in California.

In previous public communication, we promised that our words would be paired with action. Coming out this Saturday's meeting, first we agreed that this is only the start of an ongoing process – a portion of each board meeting will be devoted to reflection and assessment of our commitment to antiracism.

Second, we identify several points of action with synergistic ties to our annual conference, including the following:

- Being more intentional in selecting conference cities/sites in a manner that expands our scope to be more inclusive of people and groups who traditionally have not been made to feel welcome to geographic and other professional conferences. This step includes active community outreach and fostering local partnerships.

- Creating of a formal mentorship/cohort program for undergraduate students of color,
- Forming a new conference award for “Research in Social and Environmental Justice”
- Devoting travel awards for undergraduate students of color.
- Organizing a panel discussion on social justice and equity in California geography.
- Holding a book club (via Zoom), inviting the full CGS membership to collectively examine antiracist scholarship, culminating in a panel presentation/discussion at the spring conference.

Third, we identified the following action items to take place outside our annual meeting:

- Conducting a census on diversity of CGS membership, learning, authorship in *California Geographer*, who we are inviting to speak at conferences, etc.
- Forming a committee on equity in California Geography.
- Developing a communication structure to coordinate with geography faculty at the community college, CSU, and UC levels on addressing issues related to social justice and antiracism within our discipline.

These are among the action items we intend to pursue moving forward. We invite your feedback and continued involvement with the CGS as we move forward with action to match our stated commitment to antiracism.

Sincerely,

Matthew Derrick

Matthew Derrick
CGS president
CGS governing board members

This letter has been previously released in social media

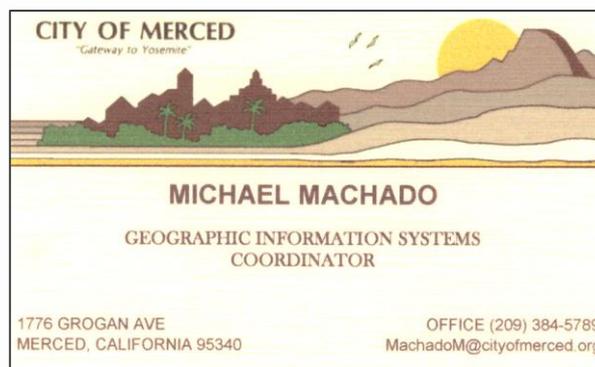
The Geography Program is looking for alumni's business card as part of an ongoing project. We are tracking where in the world are you? Alumni from our Geography Program at Stan State.

We encourage you, to send your business card. We want our current students, and those who might want to join our discipline, to realize the wide range of career options our geography graduates have taken. In saying this, don't think your job has to be "geographical enough" to send it. Actually, we want those as well. The skills of a geographer are handy everywhere from managing variations across agricultural regions to those variations across a store!

You can send your business card by email to: jdiazgarayua@csustan.edu a color scan or by mail to:

**Geography Program
One University Circle
Turlock, CA 95382**

In doing so, the next time you open the newsletter, you might see your business card and people will know about you!



*Do you live near
Stanislaus State?
Keep in touch!
we are always
looking for
potential guest
speakers who wants
to share their work
experiences as
professional
geographers.*

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS

GEOGRAPHY

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