



EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Department of Geology & Geography



2019-2020  
Annual Newsletter

# Greetings from the Chair

Hello all of our wonderful alumni!! I hope this year's edition of the department newsletter finds you well and happily exploring all of the nooks and crannies of Earth. This year was my second as Chair of the Geology and Geography Department, and the time has flown by! We have instituted a number of new items to help streamline our programs as well as bolster enrollment. Last Fall was the inaugural semester of the new accelerated Profession Science Masters (PSM) degree, and we immediately attracted three students to sign up for it. What this does is marry the students' undergraduate experience with their anticipated graduate program. Students take graduate courses that fulfill their undergraduate requirements but these also count towards their graduate degree.



In this way, the students are able to shave off about a year's worth of time from doing their PSM, saving them time and tuition money in the process. We have also established approximately fifteen Articulation Agreements with community colleges across the state over the last couple of years, and we saw the first fruit of our efforts this Fall with a student transferring from the College of DuPage to here to pursue his B.S. We hope to keep the lines of communication strong between us and our education partners for many years to come for the mutual benefit of both sides of the arrangement. Currently, we are working to establish another undergrad/grad accelerated agreement, this time between us and Northern IL University's law school. This will pave the way for students to get their B.S. from our department in three years and then send them up to NIU to obtain their law degree. As many firms are clamoring for environmental lawyers, this program should be attractive to incoming majors. All of these endeavors have been a lot of hard work but the payoff is being realized – this Fall, our **overall** number of majors has climbed by **FOURTEEN PERCENT** from last year. Impressive in its own right, but in comparison with the campus growth of 3.7%, it is a pretty stellar achievement. We are making great decisions and headed in the right direction in concert with what is being pursued across campus through the hard work of everyone from the President on down. It is an exciting time of growth and renewal! I extend an open invitation to all of you to visit – either by email or in person – to share your ideas, suggestions, job opportunities or internships for our majors, anecdotes of your time here, etc. We would love to hear from you.

May you have a most wonderful year!  
Diane

# A message from our Dean



Greetings from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to all of our Geologists and Geographers out there! I am delighted to share with you that the current faculty and students in the Department of Geology and Geography continue to be as dynamic and exciting as ever. Let me just focus on the Mineral and Meteorite Collection that was unveiled in the Physical Sciences Building this past spring. It showcases both Geology and Geography and, built in collaboration with the Physics and Art Departments, alumni, and industry, is at once scientifically impressive and aesthetically stunning. The collection functions as an important resource for teaching and learning in our classrooms and also as a permanent exhibit for public edification and enjoyment. I urge

you to check it out on your next visit to campus. The department is dynamic in so many ways – updating curriculum, signing articulation agreements with multiple junior colleges, maintaining impressive levels of research and professional engagement, graduating well-grounded and competitive students – we can all be very proud. Congratulations and thanks to Chair Diane Burns and all the faculty for their outstanding work and achievements! And thank you to all friends and alumni of Geology and Geography for your continuing support.

Best wishes,

Anita

# In Memorium – Walter MacDonald (1921-2019)



GODFREY — Walter H. McDonald, 98, passed away at 6:39 a.m. on Monday, June 24, 2019, at OSF St. Anthony's Hospital.

He was one of the few remaining members of The Greatest Generation. He was born on Feb. 18, 1921, in Richview, Illinois to Willis F. McDonald and Rita Rice McDonald.

He married Martha Dorothea Vaupel on Dec. 24, 1943 in Carbondale, Illinois. They enjoyed nearly 70 years together before her death in 2011. He was also preceded in death by his parents, two brothers Conrad and Frank McDonald and two sisters Elizabeth Knoloff and Dora Margaret McDonald who died in infancy. His survivors include three sons and their wives, Alan (Sandy) in Brighton, John (Vicki) in North Fort Myers, Florida, and Brian (Cathy) in Metamora. Other survivors include three grandsons, Robert, Bradley and Cameron; one granddaughter, Heather, two great-granddaughters, Liliana and Brooklyn; and one great-grandson Quintin.

He was a veteran of World War II, serving with the Army Air Force. He flew 35 missions over Germany from the 8th Air Force in England. He was training to go to the Pacific arena to fly missions over Japan when the war came to a close.

His life's work was in education. He earned a bachelor's and master's degree from SIU in Carbondale, and a master's and PhD at the University of Illinois. He taught two years at the high school in Vandalia, Illinois; six years at Austin Peay University in Clarksville, Tennessee; and 24 years at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston before retiring in 1982.

After retiring, he taught part time at Eastern for five years, served as an officer of the Annuitants Association at Eastern, as secretary of the Charleston Food Pantry Committee, and also as secretary of the RSVP organization in Coles County. In the summer of 2000, he moved to the United Methodist Village of Godfrey where he wrote a history of UMVG, served four years as president of the Resident Council and five more years as Resident Ambassador.

# Spotlight On – Natalie Toth, ‘08

Our very own Natalie Toth, who is now chief fossil preparator at the Denver Museum of Natural Science, is uncovering the fossils of a large horned dino in Highlands Ranch, CO! Here’s a news article written by Janet Oravetz from May 23<sup>rd</sup>:

## Dinosaur bone discovery turns into unique lesson for students

HIGHLANDS RANCH, Colo. — The [Denver Museum of Nature and Science](#) (DMNS) hosted an interactive lesson for students Thursday morning following the discovery of dinosaur fossils at a construction site in Highlands Ranch.

"It's a paleontologists dream; you always wait for that phone call and when you go out to the site and turns out to actually be a fossil sitting there, it's thrilling," said Natalie Toth, chief fossil preparator at DMNS.

Construction workers near Wind Crest, a continuing care retirement community developed and managed by Maryland-based Erickson Living, stumbled upon the fossils earlier this month.



Thursday morning, Toth and Salvador Bastien, another fossil preparator, took part in a live video chat with students from different schools. They answered questions from them while others worked behind them at the site.

"Some of the bones...are in a little bit better condition than the others," Toth said. "Those are the ones that were not right at the surface and exposed right as the bulldozer was going over the surface of the bone."



One student was curious about the color of the bones and why they're darker than human bones.

"Over time, the white part of the white bone gets replaced by rocks and minerals," Toth said in response. "So as these bones are buried in the sediment that surrounds them, they tend to take on the color and the texture of the rock that's encasing them"

Toth told students the recent wet weather has created challenges, but so far they've found about 20 pieces.

"We have a number of ribs. We have the humerus, or the upper arm bone, one of the lower leg bones called the tibia, and we even we think we have a part of the frill or the big shield on the back of the dinosaurs head," Toth said.

They're searching an area that's about 30 feet wide.

"These dinosaurs have something over 200 bones in their body," Toth said. "So there's a lot left to find."

Everything that's unearthed is wrapped in paper towels and then encased in plaster and burlap for the trip back to the museum. The encasing is then carefully removed so that the real research can begin. That research could lead to a new discovery.

One student wanted to know how they get named.

"People will name fossils based on the location that they're found like Denversaurus," Toth responded. "Other times they've named it after the rock unit they're in, so it really just depends. It's up to the researcher when they're making a new discovery and looking at all the different pieces and parts of the animal they get to make that decision about what they want to call it."

Right now they're not sure exactly what they have other than it's like a horned dinosaur of some kind. The fossils will eventually be at the museum.

One student asked how many fossils end up in museums.

"The folks that own this land, Erickson Living, they don't actually have to give us these bones. They own this land, so the dinosaur bones belong to them," Bastien said. "But they've been incredibly kind and gracious in letting us dig here and sharing these bones with the museum. Certainly, lots of bones all over the place end up in private collections. Not everything does go to museums."

Fossil finds are nothing new in Colorado. A rare fish fossil was discovered in southeastern Colorado -- one of only three of its kind in the world. The world's first Stegosaurus fossil was found in Morrison, and one of the most complete Torosaurus skeletons was found in Thornton.

"We found what we thought was a triceratops in Thornton, and we got it back to the lab and started digging into it a little bit and figured out it was a Torosaurus, which is exciting because that's a little more rare," Bastien said. "And it was a really exciting specimen to have."

## Department Alumni

**Keith Darby** (Geography, 2009), City of Wheaton, Illinois, GIS Specialist

It has been ten years since I graduated from EIU. I earned my Geography degree in the Spring of 2009 with a double minor in Earth Science and GIS. In 2011, I obtained my Masters degree in Geography from Northern Illinois University. After NIU, I did work for some companies that were not affiliated with my major or in GIS. In 2013, I was a part time GIS Intern for the Village of Carol Stream that lasted up to April, 2015.

My career started to involve in August, 2014 when I started off as a part time GIS Technician for the City of Wheaton. As more projects started to come in, I was promoted to full time as a GIS Specialist in May, 2017. I can't believe how time flies by since it is going to be five years that I have worked for the City of Wheaton. My responsibilities creating thematic maps is managing the geodatabases, training staff on using ArcGIS and our rugged GPS device. Also, I have been involved a lot with our asset management system (Lucity). I primarily update their sewer, water, and electrical assets since Wheaton's downtown is undergoing a massive \$30 million renovation. It will be a lot of work since there were be new assets that have to be recorded.



*This is a photo of myself in Peru at Machu Picchu this past spring, which was featured in ESRI's ArcNews magazine for their summer issue. Unfortunately, travel was harsh after having to deal with snow storms and travel delays in April.*

I just recently got ESRI certified for understanding and applying the fundamental workflows of ArcGIS Pro. I am currently planning on earning additional certifications with ESRI on ArcGIS Online and ArcGIS Pro depending on how my complex schedule will fit in. Besides my career, I currently still live in the Naperville area. I do enjoy the outdoors without having to battle my allergies! I hope all is well with the department and I wish everyone the very best!

## Recent Graduates

### Fall 2018

Geno Persico (GEG & GEL)  
Geno Persico (GEL)  
Roger Cunningham (PSM)

### Summer 2019

Jeff Etter (GEG)  
Abby Knight (GEG & GEL)  
Bola Oladipupo (PSM)  
Kai Subramanian (PSM)

### Spring 2019

Abigail Degler (GEG)  
Johnathan Jones (GEG)  
Michelle Molitor (GEG)  
Madeline Reiher (GEG)  
Adam Sickels (GEG)  
Jake Watson (GEG)  
Shirley Mensah (GEL)





# Student Organizations

## Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU)

Gamma Theta Upsilon's 2018-19 was a great one. Under the leadership of Madeline Reiher we continued to meet and engage in outreach, service, and general merriment. Whether we were busy helping to clean up Geology's adopt-a-highway section, honoring our graduates with the traditional "Last Supper," initiating new members, or just enjoying dinner at T. Garden, a good time was had by all.

The club once again celebrated a Spring Break "casual learning experience." This time we spent several days down in Memphis. Associate Dean Cornebise was good enough to join us for all the fun. We visited the National Civil Rights Museum, Sun Records, a Memphis Grizzlies game, and (of course) Beale St. In addition, many excellent meals were partaken of. From Southern staples like ribs and catfish to Venezuelan cuisine, we ate our fill. And of course, no trip to Memphis is complete without a visit to the Peabody ducks. A rousing thank you to all who were part of that experience.

The coming year looks great. Under the leadership of President David Frye, Vice-President Dexter Harbison, and Treasurer Alex Kerley we have a busy agenda planned.



## Geology Club & Sigma Gamma Epsilon (SGE)

Geology Student Organizations – Geology Club; Gamma Chi, student chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon; student chapter of American Institute of Professional Geologists

Geology students rock! We had another wonderful year, with many outings to clean up our portion of Hwy 16 to the west of town, volunteering for a variety of organizations ranging from the Urban Butterfly Initiative (<https://www.facebook.com/UrbanButterflyInitiative.USA/>) to the Special Olympics and more. Our own Geno Persico crafted a wonderful design that was made into hoodies for all, and we blew the roof off of fundraising this year at Celebration with selling beautiful minerals such as bismuth, labradorite and quartz sprays – some of these were museum quality! The Gamma Chi chapter earned the Outstanding Chapter and Service Awards for yet another year, keeping this chapter at the forefront of ALL national chapters. We are the only ones who have won the Outstanding Chapter Award \*every\* year that it has been offered – this makes NINE years that we have won this award. A shout out to all former members of these organizations!!



# Programs, Old & New

We have been engaged in all manners of revising, revamping and retooling our various and sundry offerings to provide the best possible educational experience for each student. As many of you graduated before these were implemented, we thought you would like to know what we are currently doing. Here is an outline and description of current options in our majors:

**Geology program:** recently revised to streamline without losing the quality for which it is known, we combined Historical Geology with Paleontology and eliminated Biology as a requirement. Paleontology will still be offered, but it will serve as an elective. Planetary Geology is going to be officially on the books and also included in the Astronomy minor offered through Physics.

**Geography program:** a few years back, this was revised to have a core of four classes and then split off into either a Human Geography or an Environmental/Physical Geography route.

**Profession Science Master's degree – accelerated option:** our PSM has been running for several years now and has graduated some stellar students. Last Fall, we inaugurated an accelerated version – undergraduate students could take courses at the graduate level and have them count for BOTH their undergraduate as well as for the PSM. Once their B.S. is completed, they finish of the additional coursework needed for the PSM and shave off approximately one year from their graduate work.

## The Faculty

### Diane Burns

Greetings to all! It's been a full but fun year...I am getting more comfortable in my role as Chair, diving into all kinds of projects now that I am not drowning at the steep end of the learning curve. One that is fresh onto my plate is working with Northern Illinois University on creating an accelerated Geology B.S. to J.D. so that our students have a streamlined pathway to becoming Environmental Lawyers. Working with ITS, we have completely upgraded our GIS lab to all new computers, about half of which are thin clients. I have been working with many IL community colleges to establish and strengthen partnerships with them to help bolster enrollments one both sides and just sent off a field trip guide of the Charleston area to be published in Sigma Gamma Epsilon's *The Compass*. On a more personal note, I have finally gotten a vegetable garden established. Ever since moving to my 'new' place in Charleston four years ago, I have wanted to get one going but have found little time to do so. This year I managed to make a 15' x 4' raised bed and had tomato, pepper and green bean plants growing. I had forgotten how lovely home-grown tastes compared to market! I acquired a wonderful deck set made of heavy (and I do

mean heavy!) cast iron and wood, two large chairs and a table. While they looked nice in their rustic/plain way, I am taking apart and refinishing it all to give it a “pop” of color as well as protect the wood and metal from the elements. Last, Jasper the Red One is doing well and enjoying all of the many squirrels, birds and occasional snake in my yard. May you all have a most wonderful year!

## Craig Chesner (emeritus)

Since “retiring” 3 years ago, I continue to do research on Toba, serve on graduate student thesis committees, write papers, and travel. In 2018, I saw the Pu’u O’o lava flows in Hawaii for the last time, shortly before the spectacular culminating event of that 35 year old eruption. I also went to Toba twice to continue my field work on the post-climactic eruption history of that most special geologic wonder. And of course, I have been to the Keweenaw countless times to enjoy its geology, and many other splendors. I hope you are all getting out into the field now and then too, even if it’s just to sightsee!

## Mike Cornebise

Greetings, esteemed alumni! As I reflect on the past 19+ years since I arrived at EIU, one of the constants year in and year out is the excitement the new EIU students bring to campus every fall. This year was no exception and we were particularly excited to welcome larger freshmen, transfer, international and graduate classes than last year. The energy on campus and in the department is definitely on the increase! As a case in point, I was pleased and pleasantly surprised to find 77 students on my World Regional Geography roster this semester, the highest fall enrollment for that course since 2011. On other fronts, I continue to serve as Interim Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as we move into year two of the new college. A particular highlight for me last year was traveling with Dr. Viertel and nine students to Memphis on a Gamma Theta Upsilon-sponsored spring break “Urban Excursion.” We had a great time and learned a lot about the city’s evolving geographic patterns: Memphis has changed significantly since my last visit there 20 years ago. At home, our two high schoolers keep Roxanne and me on our toes! Best wishes to everyone!



## Cameron Craig

Salutations! All is well and in great spirits for another year to serve my university, department, and students! I continue to teach Weather & Climate, Spaceship Earth, Broadcast Meteorology, Cultural Geography, and World Regional Geography. I also

continue to work closely with my broadcast meteorology students at WEIU's EMMY award winning news program, "NewsWatch." We have a new weather crew this year and all three students, Everett Lau, Phil Collins, and Kyler Houser are doing very well on-air. Of course we have a new batch of students moving into the program this semester and we continue to attract prospective students to the program out of high school year after year!

## Jake Crandall

Hello alumni! My first year at EIU flew by, and my second year with the department is already well underway. My research group and I are wrapping up our final preparations before we head into the field again at the end of September. We're headed back to our sites in Utah, investigating analogs for in situ analyses on Mars. The number of samples we typically collect are more than enough to keep us all busy, and I do not expect this trip to be an exception. In addition to the core courses I taught last year, I am excited to offer a volcanology course this coming spring. In this course, students will explore the distribution, morphology, composition, eruptive forms, and potential hazards of volcanoes. Our second-floor mineral display has been completed, the meteorite count is now up to eight unique specimens, and a story on the grand opening even made the front page of the DEN! Well, the bottom of the front page, anyway... Thanks again to all of our donors and friends who helped bring the display to life.

## Jay Gatrell

I am a professor of geography, and this year is my third year as a Panther. I arrived on campus to assume the duties of Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs in summer, 2017. Over this past year, I continue to teach (when I can) as well as write. In addition to two forthcoming chapters, I co-authored a 2018 article on "The Institutional Determinants of Internationalization: The Cases of Study Abroad Participation and International Student Enrollment" (pp. 1591-1612) in the *Journal of International Students with Marks, Yeager, & Bennett*. I anticipate teaching in 2020-2021 – possibly a majors course like Economic Geography.

## Belayet Khan (emeritus)

More than three years into retirement, I am pleased to reflect on my delightful experience as a faculty member in the Department of Geology and Geography at Eastern Illinois University. Over the course of 33 years, I had the wondrous opportunity to interact with colleagues and students who made for a truly special career. Throughout the years, my fellow faculty members provided immense encouragement and support. I learned so much from others in the University, beginning when I was a newcomer and extending throughout my tenure. My involvements on various committees allowed me to strive for a positive impact on campus, and this meant a lot to me as someone deeply invested in EIU. Collaboration was key to our success on many fronts over the course of three decades. The chairs

of the department were great leaders from whom I felt endless support and comfort. These factors made for a joyous work environment that I will always cherish. Eastern is a great place!

Certainly, the highlight of my time at Eastern was the privilege of teaching our incredible students. I sincerely looked forward to teaching every one of my classes. Each semester, I was thrilled to teach students who greeted me with genuine curiosity and enthusiasm for the material. I found myself thriving off of their engagement, and this made me feel a strong sense of purpose in my role as a teacher. For years, I looked forward to weekends for a reason different than most: I was excited to teach off-campus classes through the School of Extended Learning (Continuing Education). Teaching has always been a passion of mine, but it was over the years at Eastern that it became my calling. I am so honored now to be able to consider it my life's work.

Beyond the classroom, I am eternally grateful to God for the blessed life I have had in Charleston with my wife and three children. It was undoubtedly a challenge for us as immigrants from across the world to settle in a new place. It is amazing to think that Charleston is now a beloved home to all five of us.

By the grace of the God, our three children are doing well and remain busy with their academic and professional responsibilities. Our older daughter serves as a Financial Advisor for Edward Jones Investments with her office in Indiana. The younger daughter is an Emergency Medicine doctor at the Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. She graduated from the University of Chicago and Rush Medical College in Chicago. Our son, after graduating from Northwestern University and Rush Medical College in Chicago is currently a Resident Medical doctor at University of Illinois Medical School, Chicago. I must say, the Charleston schools provided excellent education for our kids, and we found a strong sense of community here that we know is unique to our charming small town. As we each pursue our respective endeavors, my wife devotes her efforts to caring for our family, and we would certainly be lost without her support.

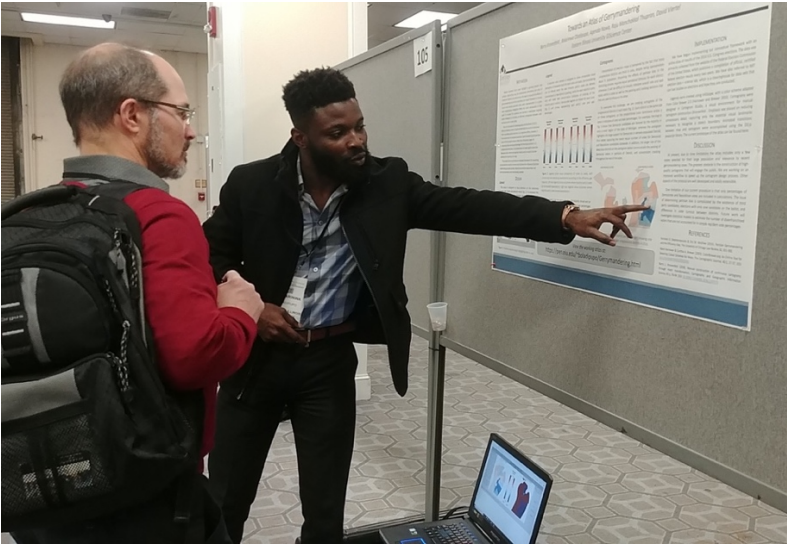
With our lifelong love for traveling, my wife and I have already made some trips since my retirement. In recent years, we ventured east to visit Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and Bangladesh. We have recently traveled to Sweden, Finland, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh and Morocco. Last year we went to Sweden to attend a wedding. We also traveled to Tunisia and Czech Republic to see historical places. In 2019, we went to Ecuador and was thrilled to visit the Equatorial Landmark in Quito. Although we are always seeking new adventures, we love coming home to Charleston, and our children know that home is the best place for all of us to converge whenever possible.

The gratifications of my career at EIU will forever stay with me. Although I am retired, I periodically teach a class or two for our department. Having spent an extended period at the institution, I have been present for Eastern's successes and

its struggles at times. I can say without hesitation that despite occasional hardships, EIU is now stronger than ever. Eastern's community at large has always remained positive and confident. I am confident that EIU will continue to prosper moving forward as it always has in the past. Early in my career I have hoped for an academic position where I would feel a sense of belonging and Eastern has been that place for me. I imagined myself sharing my love for geography and earth science with new students each semester. I must say, I had no premonition of the tremendous passion and fulfillment I would find at Eastern. I humbly want to state that by God's grace, my vision has come to fruition, and I remain optimistic that the future will continue to provide treasured adventures.

## Barry Kronenfeld

Greetings EIU geology/geography alum! I'm writing this from tropical Singapore where I'm spending the first half of my year-long sabbatical. But before absconding to the hazy tropics (more on that later), I had the pleasure of working with so many outstanding PSM students this past year. Spring was research project season: three PSM students (Bola, Agenda and Raju) worked with me on an experimental project to explore the use of cartograms to visualize political gerrymandering. This culminated in a poster presentation at the AAG annual meeting in Washington D.C., presented with competence and flair by Bola (pic below)! In another project, Jiaxin Deng (a biology MS student) volunteered an entire year of effort to help solve some difficult topology problems in a project to develop line generalization techniques and quality control metrics for U.S. Geological Survey. Her help was indispensable. Thanks to all my students for your ongoing effort and spirit!





Summer was internship season, and our PSM students found work across Illinois and beyond: Allison at Coles County Regional Planning, Dre at the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Shirley at Stanford University, and Kai successfully completed our first online internship with UI Water. Let me say there was some really positive feedback from their internship supervisors. Great job PSM-ers!

Back to Singapore (I told you we'd come back), which is currently shrouded in haze from fires set to clear land for palm plantations in Indonesia, plantations that probably supply oil to your local fast food restaurant. A first-hand lesson in geography and the global connections of our modern world. So, cut back on fast food and help Singaporeans breathe clean air again! I'm teaching at National University of Singapore for a semester, but don't worry, I'll be back... and in the meantime the PSM is in good hands with Dr. David Viertel (so please send your complaints to him).

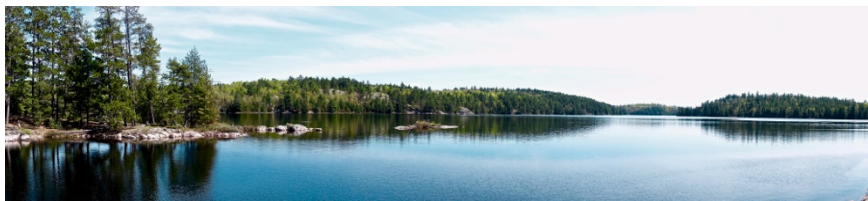
## Christopher Laingen

This fall marks the beginning of my eleventh year at EIU, and – with any luck – by the end of the academic year I'll have earned a promotion to Full Professor. My research interests and writing projects continue to be focused on rural and agricultural land use change in the U.S. Midwest and Great Plains.

The last couple of years have been memorable. The summer after my Spring 2018 sabbatical, I spent nearly two weeks hiking in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. As I've since told many of my friends, that experience – away from work, away from “society”, and away from any form of communication – reset my life in some profound ways. It really helped me re-frame how I view this job within the broader scale of how I live my life.

Sayre's Law (named for Wallace Sayre, a professor of political science at Columbia University) states that, “*Academic politics is the most vicious and bitter form of politics, because the stakes are so low*” and I couldn't agree more. Life, and to a lesser extent, careers, are a series of games; and the more successful you are at winning the most games (not winning arguments or getting your way, but having a solid moral stance that leads to success) is the best way life should be played. The past year (AY2018-19) was one of the most enjoyable years I've had at EIU because of this improved outlook on both my personal and professional life – ignoring negativity and embracing positivity, optimism, and responsibility.

Over the summer my family took their first trip to the Boundary Water Canoe Area in northern Minnesota, and my hiking partner from California and I tackled the Centennial Trail in the Black Hills of South Dakota during one of the wettest years on record for that part of the country.



*A view from our campsite on Slim Lake, BWCA.*



*Sydney, Australia.*

I hope that the 2019-20 academic year marks the beginning of another ten years that are even better than my first at EIU. I'm currently planning to hike the 211-mile John Muir Trail in California next summer with my wife, Sam (who, by the way, started a new job back at EIU as the pre-health advisor) and I hope that I can come back from that experience with a renewed (and even greater) positive outlook on life.

## Katie Lewandowski

Greetings Alumni! After a lovely, relaxing summer spent traveling, seeing family, and doing fun stuff with my dogs, I'm back to work at EIU. I continue to teach general education classes, the science methods class for pre-service science teachers, and classes within the geology major. We have seen some growth in both students majoring in Geology and students majoring in Earth Science Teacher Licensure. Good news!

I've done a bunch of outreach involving both kids and adults. I worked with Martinsville Elementary School last year, running an after-school program centering around STEM projects, mostly design challenges. The kids were in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades. I had help from three EIU students throughout the year (Katrina Osick, Brandon Bergee, and McClain Homann). It was quite a successful program, but just too much for me to carry on year after year. I ran a 10-week session last fall and then again in the spring. It was a blast, but also very time consuming, especially in terms of planning. I also ran two programs at the Charleston Public Library. I was asked to talk to adults about Dinosaurs in Illinois, which I did, but was a challenge, since no dinosaur fossils have been found in the state. I also did put together a program on dinosaur trackways for elementary school children, which I did in June. I'll be participating in Oakland Elementary School's Family Fun Night in November. The theme for this year is Dinosaurs, so I decided EIU would do something with

trackways. We will cut out footprints and talk to the kids about what sorts of information trackways can give us.

I continue to be involved in service to revise the Framework for the Earth and Space Science Content Test for pre-service teachers. Development of the new test began this spring. The new content test will soon be piloted. If any of our Earth Science Teacher alums are interested in taking the test to help them hone it before it is given to new candidates, please contact me (kjlewandowski@eiu.edu) and I will give you information about how to do that.

As far as research is concerned, I continue to be interested in the history of women in geology. I will present talks on this topic at both the Geological Society of America Meeting in Phoenix this September and at a Women in Antarctica Symposium to be held at Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center in Columbus, OH in October. GSA has also invited me to speak at the Women in Geology Reception about Imposter Syndrome. I am very honored to be offered this opportunity to speak to students and early career professionals about this topic.

Life is good!

Cheers,  
Katie Lewandowski

## James Riley

Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da



*Geology & Geography students continue to gain experience conducting field investigations on the Embarras River. Abby Knight and Troy Schmitt see the river while one of the Department's UAS is used to capture video for large-scale particle image velocimetry to discern spatial patterns of surface flow.*

## Betty Smith (emerita)

Having arrived at Eastern Illinois University in August 1995 at the age of 45, it was with joy and some reluctance that I retired July 1, 2019. I thought, “it is time!” I am now part of the department as Geography Professor Emerita and retain an office on the second floor. I hope to teach in the future by offering internet delivered classes on Latin America, human impacts on the environment, urban geography and land use planning. I plan to continue my research on Ponderosa Way in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California (a former firebreak and CCC truck trail) and on urban Latin America.

I share my home between Charleston, Illinois and Cottonwood, California, where I have a house on 25 acres on the South Fork of Cottonwood Creek, west of the Sacramento River in the northern part of the Sacramento Valley. The climate is Mediterranean with hot dry summers, cool evenings, rainy winters, and occasional snow. The very gently sloping oak studded land is ideal for dry farmed oat hay on the front 12 acres and pastures behind the house along the creek. I am raising heritage Jacob sheep for breeding, meat, and wool. My two year old dog is named Lucky Zeke, half Appenzeller Swiss Mountain dog and half Border Collie. Hopefully he will become a good sheepdog, right now he just barks at the sheep and wants to chase them! I feel safe from wildfire in my stucco house surrounded by open fields. Nevertheless, there were two terrible wind-driven wildfires not far from Cottonwood last year, the Redding Carr fire to the north where many lost homes and the deadly Magalia Camp fire near Chico to the southwest.

I reflect upon a satisfying and exciting geography career at Eastern Illinois University that included opportunities for not only interesting classroom interactions but also student collaboration on research projects, travel for field work to South America and California, study abroad trips to Ecuador, inter-departmental committee work on campus, professional conferences in US cities and international locations, and publication of over twenty scholarly journal articles. I continue on the Board of Directors of the Midwest Association for Latin American Studies (MALAS), planning to attend the meeting in Springfield, Illinois in October. I also represent Geographic Education in the US National Section of the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), a part of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Highlights of the past year include collaborating with a Brazilian geographer to organize a paper session on the City in Latin America for the American Association of Geographers (AAG) meeting in Washington, D.C. and judging the student paper competition for the MALAS meeting in El Paso, Texas. EIU Geography majors Madeline Reiner, Jake Watson, and Tanner Jones were indispensable in advancing cartographic and GIS work on the Ponderosa Way project, conducting cross-section analysis, field work and mapping locations of former Civilian Conservation Corp camps in the northern region of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. In part this work was made possible by the Student Impact Grant (SIG) I received from EIU during the

2018-2019 academic year. I wish our graduating seniors and alumni all the best in their future lives and careers!

Best wishes,  
Dr. Smith



*Top: Geography field work during Spring Break. Dr. Smith and geography major Tanner Jones March 12, 2019 at Buckhorn Summit near where historic Ponderosa Way crosses California Highway 299 west of Redding. Lower left: Several students in Dr. Smith's Geography and Culture of South America class April 26, 2019. Students left to right: Seth Ethington (Geography), Kirk Whitaker (History), Perry Cozatt (Geography), Brook Prehoda (Biology), Farouk Olaitan (Geography). Lower right: Retirement is great! Dr. Smith relaxes in California.*

## James Stratton

As most of you know, I retired in 2010; however, apparently that was an afterthought! Since 2010 I have been active in the Department, teaching online, filling in for sabbatical leaves, and replacing retiring faculty. It has been a hoot! I have enjoyed every minute of my career in higher education of 48 years, counting my 3 years at Shippensburg State University in Pennsylvania. I think my 45 years of service to the Department is the longest of any departmental faculty member,

starting in 1975 as the youngest member in the Department, and now the oldest member.

I'm still living in the woods south of Charleston and remember the many great times (e.g., parties) we had out here. Great times with wine tasting parties, Monterey Oceanography trip parties, Geology club picnics with students "camping out" on the floor of the living room, and rescuing students missing the turn and finding themselves stuck in the corn field. I still travel quite a bit to Monterey, Texas, New York, and Ohio. Still competing when I can with the Porsche 911 in road courses in Illinois.

If you are ever in Charleston, be sure to stop by if you have time. It has been a great adventure at Eastern Illinois University! Thank you!!!!

## Dave Viertel

Hello alumni and friends! I hope this new academic year finds you well. It's hard to believe another year has passed already. This year finds me picking up duties as Graduate Coordinator for our department's Professional Science Master's degree in GIS. Dr. Kronenfeld is off on a well-earned sabbatical, so I will endeavor to fill in for the year.

The PSM is doing well, with a stable enrollment. We are looking for ways to reach out and deliver it to a wider group of students with more online options coming soon. In the meantime, the quality and diversity of our students and faculty continues to grow.

Even as I learn the ropes in a new job, I've been lucky enough to be able to offer my Lidar seminar once again this Fall, this time with an eye to turning it into a permanent class. We have a bumper crop of 27 students in that class, so it is a tight fit in the GIS lab this year. That said, you won't find me complaining about full classrooms!

My family continues to do well. My daughter is in fourth grade this year. My wife has recently joined the staff at EIU as an academic advisor in the Education department. Beyond work, you will find us out camping on Fall weekends.

Please stay in touch. I'd love to hear from any and all of you. Here's wishing you and yours all the best!

# Support the Department, Support the Students!

If you are interested in a monetary contribution to our department, please visit <https://www.ciu.edu/giving.php>. Once you have pulled up that page, you will see the first part where you enter the amount you will be given and a drop down menu to the right of that to direct your gift to Geology and Geography. It is on the second page of the menu under the “College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,” about one third of the way down on that second page. The Foundation has reworked the website and made it a little more difficult to navigate. If you are directing it to a specific scholarship/fund, please make note of it at the bottom where it asks if it is in memory of someone. As always, checks made payable and sent to the department will be processed exactly as you direct.

Existing scholarships and funds:

- General gift account – unrestricted use towards student support or equipment purchases
- Geography Alumni Award – sophomore or junior in Geography
- Geology Alumni Award – sophomore or junior in Geology
- Dewey H. Amos Scholarship – outstanding junior in Geology or Earth Science
- Jon and Diana Giffin Geologist Scholarship – at least sophomore Geology major with plans to continue in geology
- Belayet Khan Geography Scholarship - junior or senior Geography student.
- Vincent P. & Pamela R. Gutowski Scholarship – any student majoring in Geography.
- Ruby M. Harris Award – senior in Geology, Geography, or Earth Science
- Walter H. and Dorothea V. McDonald Scholarship – junior in Geography or Earth Science
- Grace Markwell Meier Award – outstanding member of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU)
- John Popp Field Geology Scholarship – seniors in Geology attending field camp
- Dalias and Lillian Price Memorial Endowment – supports student observers in observing daily climate data for National Weather Service.
- Errett and Mazie Warner Presidential Award – juniors or seniors in Geology, Geography, or Earth Sciences
- John George Wozencraft, Jr. Memorial Award – either mathematics (even years) or Geography (odd years)
- Troyt York Memorial Scholarship – junior or senior in geography
- Annie L. Weller Scholarship – junior or senior in geography

- Robert G. Buzzard Scholarship in Geography – junior or senior in geography
- Wise & Stoner Undergraduate Scholarship in Geography – junior or senior in geography
- Other – such as establishment of your own scholarship or memorial fund.

We would especially like to encourage alumni to check for the possibility of matching funds from their employer, as any donation will be multiplied. For example, some large petroleum companies offer a 3:1 match. Gifts-in-kind of equipment or specimens are also appreciated but must be prearranged with the department beforehand to ensure optimal use (and for conformance to University regulations). If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to email or call me. Thanks so much!

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Join our FaceBook page! We share many stories and connections as well as job opportunities. Email Diane at [dmburns@eiu.edu](mailto:dmburns@eiu.edu) to get invited to this exclusive group or ask fellow alumni who already are involved to get you involved.

More information on the department, faculty, and student opportunities can be found on our website:

[eiu.edu/geoscience](http://eiu.edu/geoscience)