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It is hard to believe that summer is already over and soon I'll have to deal with not only cooler weather, but eventually snow. As I write this letter I have just completed putting out instruments in



Downer Woods (on campus) and at my field site in Price County (northern WI) to record changes in light levels, temperature, and humidity under deciduous tree canopies throughout the autumn season, as leaves color and fall. I also have observers monitoring these phenological changes in selected trees every other day (for the next four to six weeks) in both places, which can then be compared to the environmental measurements and satellite imagery. All of this work is part of my overall research program to understand the relationship between environmental changes and plant growth at the beginning (spring) and end (autumn) of the growing season, which is being funded by the National Science Foundation.

So how are things going for the UW-Milwaukee Geography Department in Fall 2010? Given the difficult times we continue to experience, the department remains healthy and moving forward,

though admitted more slowly than we would chose to. Nevertheless, I am pleased to report some of the positive developments since last spring: 1) I humbly accepted the honor of being named a UW-Milwaukee Distinguished Professor in August 2010; 2) Three students finished their doctoral degrees this past spring and summer. They are: Greg Rybarczyk, Christopher Schroeder, and Sandra Zupan; 3) Doctoral student Jonathan Burkham received the Clinton R. Edwards award for \$1,000 to support his field research in Mexico during the summer of 2010. His great work was documented in two opinion pieces he wrote, which were published in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*; 4) Dr. Julio Betancourt, a distinguished Senior Scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey, will deliver the Fall Harold and Florence Mayer lecture on Friday, October 15, 2010.

So as you can see, the department continues to enjoy many noteworthy achievements. We appreciate your continued support, and hope that all of you will contact us and share what you have been doing.

Upcoming Events:

- Geography team for the Run/Walk Panther Prowl on Oct. 10, 2010
- Geography department picnic at Lake Park on Oct. 10, 2010
- Anna Mansson McGinty will give the AGSL Academic Adventurers Lecture on Dec. 3, 2010



Runashimira yachakani: a summer in the Amazon Jungle

By Nicholas L. Padilla

I spent two months this summer studying in the Ecuadorean Amazon after the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at UWM awarded me a summer Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (FLAS). The FLAS is intended to provide students with an opportunity to learn an understudied language and culture. In that spirit, I lived outside of Tena, Ecuador along the headwaters of the Napo River with a Quichua community even though I did not speak a single word of Quichua. I selected the Quichua program because the ability to speak a native language will help me carry out my dissertation research on the coca leaf in the northern Andes. The school immediately immersed my classmates and me in Quichua culture. The community enlisted us to help at a canoe *minga* (work party), which meant that we had to help move a 4.5 meter, 400 lb. wooden canoe out of the jungle and to the Napo River. We hiked back to a site in the jungle where community members had chopped down a tree and the Quichua men told us to grab one of the numerous ropes attached to the canoe and pull on *tres*. One man shouted out the cadence *listos, dos, tres* and our group of a dozen people struggled in unison to pull the canoe out of the jungle while the men joked about the group of tired *rancia* (white people) who struggled to help with a common event. Culture and language combined into one event. The most interesting aspect of the *minga* was the use of Spanish, despite the fact that we all could at least speak basic Quichua. Counting has fallen into the domain of

Spanish because it is the language of business, and, as we see here, has begun to take hold in other daily activities and spaces.

The Quichua knowledge system intrigued me during my stay in the jungle since knowledge is inextricably connected to places and objects. It was impossible to learn Quichua without learning something about the culture because the language has developed from the specific experiences of this community. For example, Napo Quichuas believe that history comes out of the earth and sneaks up behind us. Since no one is able to see the future coming, it is impossible to plan. In Quichua language, therefore, there is a reluctance to use any form of the future tense. Also, plants and animal species that are useful to the Quichuas generally have a creation story, by which a *runa* (Quichua person) moved into a plant or animal and has stayed there ever since. The stories of these plants and animals and their uses are the basis of the indigenous knowledge economy. A chance encounter between two Quichuas in the jungle often leads to a flurry of knowledge exchanges through which individuals share the stories and uses of the plants and animals that surround them. Distinct indigenous groups have different uses and they willingly share them, creating a fluid knowledge base that continues to develop today.



An example of the changing nature of Quichua life – traditional medicines, a leaf for wrapping, and a cell phone.



The Quilatoa Cheese Cooperative founded in 1981 as a means of community development.

Change has been the one constant in the Napo region and it is what best characterizes what it means to be indigenous in Ecuador today. The everyday technologies that permeate our lives here in the U.S. are taking hold in the Napo region. The Quichua have internet in their homes, use cell phones, and are redefining what a “traditional” lifestyle is today. What this means for the Quichua I cannot say, but their future is creeping up behind them.

Ten Months in Moldova

By Richard Shaker

From the beginning of October 2009 to the end of July 2010, I was a visiting researcher for the Institute of Ecology and Geography at the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM). This international research experience would have not been possible without the gracious funding of the J. William Fulbright Fellowship. As the first American to work as a visiting researcher for the Institute of Ecology and Geography, I had three primary pre-placement goals. My first goal was to learn more about the Russian structure of the Academy of Science through integration into its Moldovan research community. Second, and in spirit of the Fulbright, I wanted to learn about Moldovan culture and teach about American culture through various mediums of "exchange." My third and final goal was to collect the data necessary for completing my PhD dissertation through the Republic of Moldova case study.

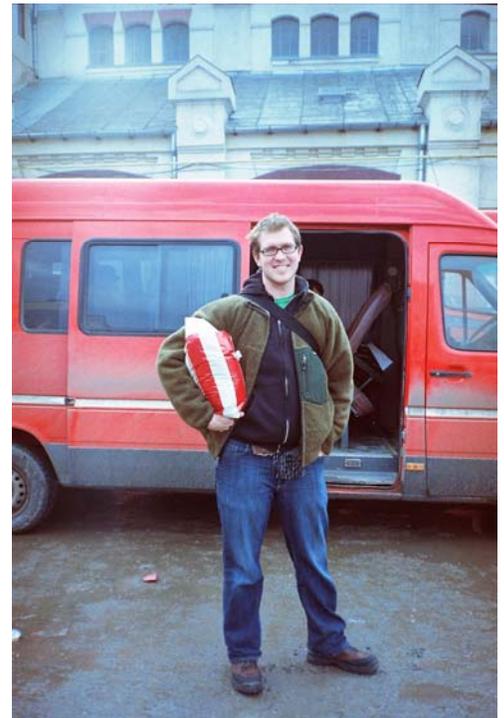
As a visiting researcher for the Institute of Ecology and Geography at the ASM, I was provided the opportunity to work with some of the leading scientists in the Republic of Moldova. To successfully integrate myself into the ASM community, I led research projects and provided a variety of technical training opportunities. In recognition of this, two multi-authored publications are in review at the international level. Specifically, supplementing an ASM long-term project, "Landslide Susceptibility in the Republic of Moldova: A Landscape and Multivariate Approach for Regional Assessment" is currently under review in the journal of *Landslides*. In addition, a paper entitled "Relating Land Cover and Agricultural Patterns to Groundwater Nitrate in the Republic of Moldova: A Geographically Weighted Regression and Artificial Neural Network Approach" is currently under review in the journal of *Water Resources Research*. Furthermore, while working at the Institute of Ecology and Geography, I helped in the creation of a touristic map of the Republic of Moldova for domestic and international purposes.

All opportunities were capitalized on for cultural exchange purposes. Besides working at the ASM, I conducted presentations in the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Russia. By doing so, I was able to learn more about the local and global complexities of Moldovan history from different perspec-

tives, and provide more information about the U.S.A. and American culture to a larger audience. Outside of the academic and research community, I tutored and advised local Moldovans on topics ranging from speaking and writing English to college life in the United States. In every exchange, all participants were allowed to speak freely, interact, and network with each other, and use me as a resource.

For various reasons the Republic of Moldova is seldom found as the focus area in globally recognized international journals. To help promote international scientific exchange, I chose to conduct my PhD research on the entire country of the Republic of Moldova. My PhD dissertation *Sustainability, Landscapes, and Human Behavior: A Case Study of the Republic of Moldova* provides a medium for informing readers about Moldova while advancing science through innovation. In

a country historically overshadowed and negatively effected by numerous regimes, it is hoped that this research will ultimately provide a positive catalyst for the people of Moldova. While at the ASM, staff from the Institute of Ecology and Geography provided me with a plethora of raw data for my dissertation. Repaying the favor, in partnership with agencies and institutions from the United States, data and information was provided to the ASM to support their goal of promoting and developing international research collaborations.



Geography Faculty News

Dr. Michael J. Day was on sabbatical leave during Spring 2010, carrying out research on protected karst areas in the Caribbean and Central America.



His recent publications include: 1) Day, M.J. Human interaction with Caribbean karst landscapes: past, present and future. *Acta Carsologica* 39(1): 137-146.; 2) Day, M.J. Challenges to sustainability of the Caribbean karst. *Geologia Croatica* 63(2): 63-68.; 3) Day, M.J. A speleological origin for the Leland Natural Bridge, Wisconsin? *The Wisconsin Geographer* 23: 50-66.; 4) Day, M.J. and Huang, W. Reflections on fengcong and fenglin. *Cave and Karst Science* 36(2): 49-51; 5) Day, M.J. and Waltham, A.W. The pinnacle karrenfields of Mulu. In: *Karst Rock Features: Karren Sculpturing*, ed. A. Gines, M. Knez, T. Slabe and W. Dreybrodt. ZRC Publishing, Ljubljana, Slovenia: 423-432.; and 6) Mavel, S. and Day, M.J. Real-time delimitation of southwestern Wisconsin's karst boundaries using soils data, GIS and GPS. *The Wisconsin Geographer* 23: 67-86.

graphica, *International Journal of E-Planning Research*, *Geography Compass*, *Dialogues in Human Geography*, and *Open Journal for Urban Studies*. Finally, she has also been elected as the Secretary of the GIS specialty group of the Association of American Geographers.

Dr. Changshan Wu has several papers forthcoming as follows. 1) Jose L. Silvan-Cardenas, Le Wang, Peter Rogerson, Changshan Wu, Tiantian Feng, and Benjamin D. Kamphaus, Assessing fine spatial resolution remote sensing for small area population estimation, *International Journal of Remote Sensing*; 2) Rama P. Mohapatra and Changshan Wu, High Resolution Impervious Surface Estimation: an Integration of IKONOS and Landsat-7 ETM+ Imagery, *Photogrammetric Engineering and Remote Sensing*; and 3) Chengbing Deng, Changshan Wu, and Le Wang, Improving Housing Unit Method for Small Area Population Estimation Using Remote Sensing and GIS Information, *International Journal of Remote Sensing*.



Dr. Rina Ghose has been involved in several research projects concerning "race," poverty, and social inequity. In a project funded by the UWM Graduate School, she has explored the shadow-state thesis among several neoliberal "collaborative" planning programs implemented in the inner-city by both public and private sectors, in which the

participation of marginalized citizens is complex and contradictory. In another project, she has explored community gardening in inner-city as a mechanism for building community and contesting food insecurity. In addition, she has been invited to serve in the editorial boards of a number of journals such as *Carto-*

Dr. Woonsup Choi gave a poster presentation at the Meeting of the Americas 2010 of American Geographical Union held in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil in August 2010. The poster is entitled "Geographical and Temporal Variability of Temperature over Minnesota and Wisconsin Identified from North American Regional Reanalysis



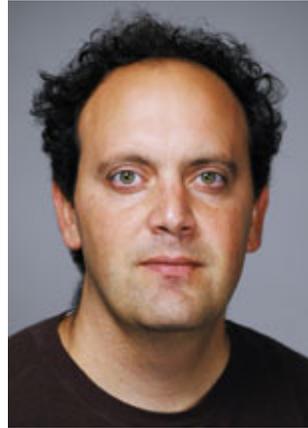
Data" and was co-authored by our own Anke Keuser. The research was made possible with funding from the UWM Graduate School and the Office of Undergraduate Research, and the Center for Interna-

Geography Faculty News (cont'd..)

tional Education provided some financial support for the travel.

Dr. Choi traveled to Korea from late May to early June using the fund from the Faculty/Academic Staff Travel Awards to Develop/Implement Overseas Field Research Experiences for Undergraduates from the Center for International Education. He met several colleagues in Korea to discuss future collaboration, gave an expert lecture at Korea Research Institute for Human Settlement about climate change and spatial response, and gave a presentation at the annual meeting of the Korean Geographical Society.

Dr. Choi co-organized two consecutive paper sessions entitled "Climate Change and Water Resources: From Impact Assessment to Adaptation" at the 2010 AAG annual meeting with Dr. Heejun Chang at Portland State University. He also presented a paper at the AAG meeting entitled "Temperature Trend in North and Central Illinois from Weather Stations and North American Regional Reanalysis," co-authored by Anke Keuser.



Dr. Christopher De Sousa published papers in the *Carolina Planning journal* and in *Urban Studies* in 2010. He had the great pleasure of leading another study abroad class to Vancouver over the summer. The Sustainable Cities course focuses on measures undertaken by public, private, and non-profit institutions to improve the social, economic

and environmental sustainability of Vancouver, which has been consistently rated among the top 3 cities in the world. It is also a blast!

Chris would also like to congratulate Richard Shaker (Fulbright, see p. 3) and Jessica Helgesen (EPA GRO, see p. 7) for successfully identifying, applying for, and being awarded prestigious fellowships. These are both highly competitive fellowships and we thank them for the honor this has brought our program.

Critical Geography Mini-Conference at UWM

By Kristin M. Sziarto

This fall the Geography Department is hosting the 17th Annual Mini-Conference on Critical Geography. This two-day conference aims to provide an inclusive venue for the broad discussion of themes in critical geography, such as gentrification, the right to the city, political ecology, GIS and society, critical geopolitics, post-colonialism, and social movements and dissent. The conference will begin on Friday, November 5, 2010. The opening evening will feature a keynote address at the AGS Library by **Mona Domosh**, the Joan P. and Edward J. Foley, Jr. Professor of Geography at Dartmouth College. We also invite conference participants who can arrive earlier in the day to attend a Friday afternoon guest lecture, co-sponsored by the UW-Milwaukee Center for 21st Century Studies and Department of Geography, by Professor **Arun Saldanha** of the Department of Geography at the University of Minnesota. The program on Saturday, November 6 will consist of paper sessions, panels, and round table discussions on topics in critical geography.

We are also excited to be able to offer two field trips in Milwaukee to 'bookend' the conference. On Friday **Michael Carriere** of the Milwaukee School of Engineering will lead a trip on recent economic development in Milwaukee entitled *Retooling the Machine Shop*. On Sunday morning **Jeff Zimmerman** of UW-Whitewater (and a UWM Geography alum) and our own **Judith Kenny** will lead a trip entitled *New Urbanism in the Neoliberal City*.

We welcome all alumni and friends of UWM Geography to attend. There is no conference fee, and the entire conference is open to the public.

For more information on the Mini-Conference on Critical Geography, visit the conference website at <http://www4.uwm.edu/letsai/conferences/criticalgeography/> or e-mail critgeogmilwaukee@gmail.com.

Graduate Student News

Jonathan Burkham



I'm happy to be back in Milwaukee after six months of fieldwork in a small village in west-central Mexico. Atonilco El Bajo, Mexico is a *transnational* community with unusually strong ties to Milwaukee. I spent the second half of my fieldwork doing door-to-door surveys

in which I found that about 90 percent of my interviewees had at least one brother, sister, daughter, son, aunt, uncle, or cousin in Milwaukee. Everyone was incredibly hospitable and I was in gastronomic heaven, but by mid-June the weather started heating up down there, just while summer's blossoming in Milwaukee; and so back to Milwaukee for another epic summer. I did find time between visits to Bradford Beach to publish two articles on my research community in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and work on my dissertation. Now, it's time for the academic publications!

Chengbin Deng

Selected among 300 candidates, I received a studentship award for the 30th Annual ESRI International User Conference, an informa-



conference in the GIS industry attended by above 13,000 users in San Diego, California in mid-July. I assisted ESRI staff with the "behind the scenes" activities from scratch, such as network setup. Also, I attended the plenary session and several technical workshops during the conference. Since I have been

back to my normal hectic academic life, San Diego has become a fading memory.

Wenliang Li

I am a new PhD student here, from northeast of China and acquired my Master's degree in July 2010 from Harbin Normal University, majoring in physical geography. My research interests include land use and land cover change, urban expansion, and meteorological disaster risk assessment. Prof. Changshan Wu is my advisor. I am also one of three TAs for GEOG 120 (Our Physical Environment).



Jeff Sponcia

I am a second-year Master's Student in the Department focusing on refugee studies. I had a busy summer interning at Lutheran Social Services in Milwaukee in their Refugee Resettlement department. Also, for two weeks in August, my wife and I traveled with six others to Gabon, Africa on a mission trip! We were able to meet many people from all over Africa and experience the life of a typical Gabonese villager.

Nicholas L. Padilla

I spent June and July living with a Quichua community in eastern Ecuador. My time there involved attempting to speak Quichua, focusing on indigenous plant knowledge, and learning a different worldview. My dissertation work is progressing. This semester I hope to finish my dissertation proposal and begin working on my preliminary exams.



Graduate Student News (cont'd..)

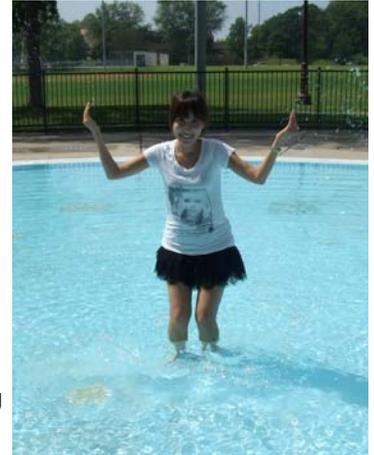
Rama Mohapatra

As a PhD candidate, I have accepted a pre-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Geography, Minnesota State University at Mankato. I teach a GIS course this semester, and conduct the dissertation research at the same time.

I-Hui Lin

I made a trip to Minneapolis, MN this summer. It was a great trip. I visited more than 40 parks, and love all of them. When I traveled from one park to another, the GPS always showed the arriving destination in a few minutes. They are really working hard on providing parks in a short distance! Well, at least

in the areas that I visited. In almost all neighborhood parks, especially after school hours, you can find kids playing at the play ground and wading in the pools and teenagers and adults playing basketball or tennis. Everyone looks so happy in parks. Look, how happy I was playing in the pool!!



Pursuing Dreams of Environmental Sustainability

By Jessica Helgesen

All my life I have yearned to help those that are less fortunate, and in high school I was inspired to specifically help the environment due to massive destruction of open green space, unsustainable practices, and poor planning in my hometown of Bellevue, Wisconsin.



Throughout high school and onto college I have strived to help the

environment through legal action through the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, where I have come to understand grassroots organizations as I encouraged communities to pass practical and environmentally-friendly regulations. I also have worked as a Parkee leader for the Green Pay Parks Department, which provides a free service for neighborhood children to play in the park without parents. In addition, I have interned through Wisconsin's TOPJobs internship program at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection as an Environmental Analyst and Review Specialist regarding Christmas tree pest management. In this program I created and analyzed an integrated pest manage-

ment survey, presented my findings at a growers' convention, and attended the strategic plan meeting. Currently, I am studying abroad in Santiago, Chile at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile taking Urban Studies courses on environmental theory and thought, consumption, and the geography of Chile... all in Spanish! I plan to volunteer with the organization Techo Para Chile to help build homes for earthquake victims and other homeless families.

As a senior at UW-Milwaukee, double majoring in Environmental Geography and Urban Studies with a minor in Spanish, I plan to continue to grow by either joining the Peace Corps or attending graduate school to pursue a degree in Urban Planning. I recently was awarded an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Fellowship, in the category of Environmental Science and Interdisciplinary. The fellowship includes the opportunity to intern for the EPA in the summer of 2011. Through my degree programs and fellowship I will have a better understanding of city designs, with an overall goal to reduce poverty and environmental destruction by transforming cities and metropolitan regions into sustainable and livable areas for all organisms in our biosphere. As a future urban planner, with my visions, education, and this fellowship opportunity I plan to mend previous destruction and prevent future devastation of our earth by determining practical methods to allow sustainable human habitation.

Alumni News

Greg Rybarczyk (PhD, Summer 2010)

I am an assistant professor at the University of Michigan - Flint. I teach GIS and spatial analysis courses, and am working on a paper examining the influence of urban morphological factors on bicycling mode choice.

Rashi Sharma (PhD, Fall 2009)

I have started a new company - Trusanga Educational Services Pvt. Ltd in India. I am developing an intelligent learning algorithm which can assess one's ability and develop learning paths. Right now the company is in product development phase with a team size of 9 people.

Dr. Julio Rivera Appointed as Provost of Carthage

Dr. Julio Rivera, one of our PhDs, is the new Provost for Carthage College. Carthage is a private college of the liberal arts and sciences, affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Julio is a professor of geography and earth science. The appointment took effect on Aug. 1.

Congratulations, Julio!



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