Dear friends and alumni of SGD,

We hope you and those you care about are safe and healthy. Things have changed so much since our last newsletter. The University of Arizona moved online in early March in response to COVID-19 and we have been working and teaching from home ever since. Faculty and students did their best with the pivot to online classes and SGD staff provided wonderful support. We even had an online graduation ceremony with our graduates and their families around the country and the world. Plans for the fall are still a little uncertain — it looks as though many of us will be teaching hybrid classes with some socially distanced lectures and discussions but a lot of online content too so that everyone can feel as safe as possible.

Despite the challenges of Spring 2020 there has been plenty to celebrate. We have hired amazing new faculty – GIS expert Yoga Korgaonkar and population geographer Jason Jurjevich who started in January, Andrew Curley who joins us this summer and Beth Tellman at the end of the next academic year. Connie Woodhouse earned the title of Regents Professor – the highest honor for faculty at the University of Arizona, Andrea Gerlak was promoted to full professor and Orhon Myadar received tenure and promotion. Many faculty and students have received grants and fellowships. As of July 1st we will become the School of Geography, Development, and the Environment in recognition of our hosting of the BA in Environmental Studies and the significant number of faculty and students doing environmental research. The last few weeks have focused our attention on the long history and present crisis of racism in our country and communities. Many of us are reflecting on what we can do to better understand and address the geographies of race and oppression and committing ourselves to act on anti racism and inclusion. We hope we can all emerge from this difficult time to a better future.

Diana Liverman, Director, School of Geography and Development

WELCOME! Audrey de la Rosa - SGD’s new undergraduate academic advisor

After working in education and tech Audrey returned to Tucson to pursue her passion, helping students achieve academic goals to build a solid foundation for successful and fulfilling lives.

Audrey advises undergraduate students majoring in Geography, Urban & Regional Development and Environmental Studies. Facilitating students' academic and professional success is the most gratifying and rewarding aspect of her work. In her spare time, she enjoys trail running, gardening, cooking, traveling and volunteering.

SGD UNDERGRADS WIN DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE AWARDS!

Every semester SGD honors several majors for their outstanding scholarship and overall contributions to the school and broader community. You can find out more about the awards here. Meet our Spring 2020 Award Winners!

**Environmental Studies Award:**

**Sam Guy**

As an undergrad student in the School of Geography and Development, I have deeply appreciated the mentorship and expertise of my professors and faculty. I have learned so much over the past four semesters, and I feel extraordinarily grateful to be part of this department. With the knowledge, skills, and worldly perspective I have earned thanks to SGD, I feel prepared, challenged, and inspired for the years ahead of me.

**Buttery GIS/Remote Sensing Award:**

**Maggie Banks**

I am so honored to receive this award. Being apart of the SGD community was the best decision I have made. I felt as though my professors, TAs, and advisors were all in it to help me not just achieve my goals, but excel at them. I just want to thank them and my family for their support, without it I am not sure I would have been able to get here.

We want to hear from you SGD Alumini!

The School of Geography and Development is revitalizing its connections to alumni and friends so please send us your news and contact information!

You can leave SGD a message and update here or email our front office by contacting amandab@email.arizona.edu.

This newsletter was edited by undergrad mentor and MA student James Cunningham with the assistance of Diana Liverman and Andrew Comrie
SGD FACULTY NEWS

Diana Liverman elected to both the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences!

UA News: In the span of one week, University of Arizona Regents Professor Diana Liverman has been elected to both the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Membership is considered one of the highest honors that a scientist can receive. This year, the National Academy of Sciences elected 120 new members and 26 international members in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences honors the country’s most accomplished scholars, scientists, artists and leaders. It elected 276 new fellows and 37 new international honorary members.

"It was a lovely surprise to hear about being elected to both academies, especially in these challenging times, and I am very honored," Liverman said. "I have been having trouble focusing on my work during the pandemic, and this was a welcome reminder that research can be rewarding and meaningful. After the NAS (National Academy of Sciences) announcement, it was so moving to receive good wishes from colleagues around the country who had heard the news." (Read more here)

A sampling of books and projects

Associate Professor Andrea Gerlak edited Agency in Earth System Governance (Cambridge University Press, 2020). This volume synthesizes a decade of multidisciplinary research into how diverse actors exercise authority in environmental decision making, and their capacity to deliver effective, legitimate and equitable Earth system governance. Ph.D. students Meg Mills Novoa and Alison Elder also contributed chapters!

Dr. Jason Jurjevich, our new Associate Professor of Practice is leading the way in informing Arizonans about the implications of hard-to-count populations in the 2020 Census. Check out his Census presentation, along with media links, on his Census 2020 website

SGD welcomes new faculty

Welcome Andrew Curley

SGD is pleased to announce that Dr. Andrew Curley will be joining us this summer as a tenure track Assistant Professor. Andrew is currently an assistant professor in geography at University of North Carolina and received his PhD in Development Sociology from Cornell University.

Andrew’s research focuses on indigenous geography, political ecology, land, resources, energy, water, tribal sovereignty, and Diné Studies and he has published on water laws, coal and energy transitions on the Navajo Nation, and resource colonialism. His initial teaching includes courses on the politics of nature, political ecology and environment and society. He is a member of the Navajo nation and we welcome him back to the Southwest.

Welcome Elizabeth Tellman

SGD is delighted to announce that Dr. Beth Tellman will be joining us in 2021 as an Assistant Professor. Beth Tellman is a human-environmental geographer, seeking to address the causes and consequences of global environmental change for vulnerable populations, with a focus on illicit activities, flood risk, and land use change.

She is currently a post doctoral fellow at the Earth Institute at Columbia University, where she is working in Bangladesh to improve innovative parametric insurance mechanism to decrease flood impacts on farmer livelihoods and food systems. Beth co-founded Cloud to Street, a public benefit corporation which leverages remote sensing data to build flood mapping and monitoring systems for low and middle income countries. She received her Ph.D. in Geography from Arizona State University, where she leveraged remote sensing data to quantify the role of illicit transactions in urbanization and deforestation in Mexico and Central America.
WHERE ARE OUR BA/BS ALUMNI NOW?

Paige Suvalsky, URD* 2017, Research Analyst CBRE, San Antonio
Sara Mattio, URD 2014, GIS Analyst, City of Philadelphia
Patrick Brewer, EVS** 2015, Energy Fellow, City of San Jose
Stephen Ludwig, BS Geography 2013, Senior GIS Technician, City of Phoenix
Andrew Cunningham, BS Geography 2017, Geological/Environmental Consultant, Mining Company
Jessica McGarey, EVS 2015, Wildlife Intern and Science Communicator, Sonoran Desert Network Desert Research Learning Center
Brianna Zurita, EVS 2016, Project Coordinator, Center for Climate Adaptation Science and Solutions
James Cornish, URD 2012, Commercial Office Broker, CBRE, Phoenix
Kyle Hartfeild, BA Geography 2008, Assistant Research Scientist, Arizona Remote Sensing Center
Melanie Summers, BS Geography 2012, Product Engineer, ESRI
Gary Sumner, URD 2009, Planner and Real Estate Developer, Houston
Kyle Nelson, URD 2016, Transportation Planner, Michigan Department of Transportation
Gregory Christakos, BS Geography 2013, Enterprise Specialist, ESRI
Thomas Lovelis, BS Geography 2017, GIS Technician, TerraSouthwest Systems
Blake Fisher, URD 2017, City Planner, City of Sierra Vista

KEY
*URD BS Urban and Regional Development
**EVS BA Environmental Studies

SGD UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 GRADUATES

The 2020 spring/summer SGD graduation saw 90 students receive a BS in Urban and Regional Development, 31 students receive a BA in Environmental Studies, 8 students receive a BS in Geography, and 6 students receive a BA in Geography. Congrats to all 135 graduates!

SGD held a virtual graduation and awards ceremony on May 15th. A special thank you to all the students and their families for joining us in the celebration.

SGD UNDERGRADS WIN DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE AWARDS!

Buttery GIS/Remote Sensing Award: Mohammed Ali Aldaherli
I enjoyed every single minute in the School of Geography and Development. I was blessed to have such great professors, teachers, and classmates. This award means a lot to me. It simplifies what I’ve been doing for the past four years. I learned a lot, and I will use what I learned in the future.

Urban & Regional Development Award: Nathan Rix
I am very thankful to be recognized for my passion in Urban and Regional Development. I hope to have the opportunity to learn from cities abroad and help positivity shape our urban landscapes, especially in Tucson, my hometown. The courses I have had the opportunity to take here at the University of Arizona have furthered my interest in cities and urban areas and I’m lucky to have Tucson to serve as an example for all I have learned.

Environmental Studies Award: Rachel Juarez
My time as an undergraduate student in the School of Geography and Development has been extraordinary. Each of the professors I had the privilege of learning from have helped me further my education and my passion for the environment, specifically environmental justice. I want to give a special thank you to Dr. Tracey Osbourne who was a great mentor and allowed to explore climate mitigation in a way I never had before and for opening my eyes to a variety of paths I can take to further my education that doesn’t just include being apart of being of a campus, but being a part of a community. I am thankful for the community I have found in the School of Geography and Development and can’t wait to see what is in store for myself in the future.

Melvin E. Hecht Award: Lucy Atherton
I have always loved learning about the world as a whole; the environment, climate, civilizations, and people in general. The School of Geography and Development has allowed me to pursue all of these interests and even introduced me to new areas of study, such as GIS, that I am excited to learn more about and carry into a future career. The professors and advisors I have had in this school have been some of the most supportive and encouraging people I have met any the University of Arizona and continue to inspire me to pursue a career in geography.

Other winners: Urban and Regional Development Award: Will Wisner
Melvin E. Hecht Award: Phoenix Eskridge-Aldama
Julie Edwards, MA Student: Summer Plans

Over the summer I’ll be publishing my research on how the 1783 Laki volcanic eruption affected climate in Alaska. I’m also analyzing additional data from Sweden to understand the climate response over high latitudes in general. A better understanding of the climate impacts following volcanic eruptions allows us to prepare for the consequences of future eruptions and to evaluate the ability of climate models to simulate the earth system.

Eden Kinkaid, PhD Student: Summer Plans

This summer, Jill Williams, Lauren Fritzsche and I are doing a research project on graduate training in geography. This project will explore how the history and present of the discipline are taught to graduate students and how graduate curriculum reproduces, revises, or challenges dominant histories and identities in the field. We will be analyzing syllabi from “introduction to geography” courses and using other qualitative research methods.

Özlem Ayse Özgür, PhD Candidate: Grad Student Spotlight

Özlem uses qualitative, participatory and visual ethnography methods to study the socioeconomic wellbeing of refugee women as they participate in market and community economies—a kind of economy where the purpose is to sustain the collective wellbeing of community via “a set of practices that explicitly foregrounds community and environmental wellbeing” (Morrow et al. 2019, 56). In this sense, community gardens are part of community economies. Özlem’s research focuses on the dialectic relationship between community gardening, market and community economy and self and place through the case of Sub-Saharan-African refugee women in the US. Refugee women have limited access to cultural capital. This limited access constrains their capacity to sustain themselves, therefore they live in what Özlem calls a “wellbeing gap,” the yawning gap between their situation and the way wellbeing is usually described in the US. These pictures show Özlem’s field sites across various community gardens, urban farms and backyards in Tucson.

Besides being a PhD candidate, Özlem is a filmmaker and an artist. Her film, “Taste Bud Memories,” was screened at the Loft cinema as well as at national and international film festivals and received various awards and an Emmy Nomination in the fall of 2019 by the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of NATAS. You can see her art here.

Some Grad Student Awards:

- **Julie Edwards**: Aslie French & Edmund Schulman Memorial Scholarship, Graduate & Professional Student Council Travel Grant
- **Meg Mills-Nova**: NSF: Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (DDRI); College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Summer Dissertation Writing Fellowship
- **Eden Kinkaid**: P.E.O. Scholar Award
- **Talia Anderson**: Galileo Circle Scholarship
- **Özlem Ayse Özgür**: Society of Women Geographers Evelyn Pruitt National Dissertation Fellowship, PEO Scholars Award, University of Arizona-SBSRI, Dissertation Research University of Arizona-GPSC- Research Grant, Winner of Human Geography Art Contest 2020
- **Yesenia Andrade**: University of Arizona Hispanic Alumni Graduate Scholarship (UAHA)
- **Will Tintor**: Andrew Ellicot Douglass Memorial Scholarship
- **Lauren Fritzsche**: American Geographical Society Council Fellowship
- **Ava Obrecht, Fiona Gladstone**: SBSRI awards

WHERE ARE OUR PHD ALUMNI NOW?

- PhD (2017), Jacob Miller, Lecturer, Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK
- PhD (2018) Sarah Kelly, Postdoctoral Researcher, Dartmouth College
- PhD 2019, Casey Lynch, Assistant Professor, University of Nevada Reno
- PhD (2017) Lily House-Peters, Assistant Professor, California State University-Long Beach
- PhD (2017) Katharine Sammler, Assistant Professor, California State University-Maritime Academy
- PhD (2017) Miriam Gay-Antaki, Assistant Professor, University of New Mexico
- PhD (2017) Marissa Isak, Assistant Professor, Central New Mexico Community College, Albuquerque
- PhD (2016) Zachary Sugg, Program Manager, Rabb's Center for Land and Water Policy, Lincoln Institute for Land Policy, Phoenix
- PhD (2015) Melinda Butterworth, Assistant Professor, Willamette University, OR
- PhD (2015) Melanie M. Colavito, Human Dimensions Specialist, Ecological Restoration Institute, Northern Arizona University
- PhD (2015) Jeremy Slack, Assistant Professor, University of Texas-El Paso
- PhD (2014) Manuel Prieto-Montt, Instituto de Investigaciones Arqueológicas y Museo, Chile
- PhD (2013) Jamie McEvoy, Assistant Professor, Montana State University
- PhD (2020) Sofia Borgias, Assistant Professor, Boise State University
SGD has been the home for a Masters in Development Practice for several years: We share their news in this newsletter!

MDP students undertake summer practicums in Africa, Asia, and US Southwest

In summer 2019, MDP first year students conducted their field practicums in sites including Kenya, Ethiopia, and Nepal, as well as closer to home in Arizona and on the Fort Yuma-Quechan Native American Reservation. The practicum is a key element of MDP students’ preparation to become development practitioners. Practicum partners included the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), TANGO International, RTI International, and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona.

Several students have posted their key research findings to the MDP Blog. These include: Avery Julian Baker (pictured at left, top) on climate change in high-altitude agriculture in Nepal; Robert Hartwell (pictured at left, bottom) on vocational training for out-of-school youth in Kenya; Abdul Sigal on sustainable land management practices in Ethiopia; and Samantha Turner on program integration at the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona.

Other summer practicum topics included Natalia Cachora on environmental justice on the Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Reservation; Amata Insbuti on resilience in the Sahel countries in northern Africa; Mary Ngugi on the refugee crisis in Malaysia; Laura McCann on manufactured housing in Tucson; Jake Meyers on sociocultural aspects of climate change adaptation in Kenya and Chris Mazzarella and Abbey Fluckiger on best practices in community food banking in Southern Arizona. (For more by Natalia, Jake, and Samantha, see next page.)

Research in Development Practice by graduating MDP students

Ten students were awarded the MDP degree in 2019, having completed at least 48 credits of graduate work, including an intensive field practicum. The links below will bring you to each student’s posters about their MDP practicum projects. More about their work can also be read on the MDP Blog.

Amanda Hixson: “The Missing Piece of World Food Program’s Strategic Plan: Cambodia as Illustration of WFP’s Need to Lead and Collaborate in Addressing the World Obesity Epidemic” Practicum partner: TANGO International and the World Food Program (WFP)

Anna Jackson: “Benefits and Barriers to Sustainable Land Management: Farmer Perceptions in Western Kenya” Practicum partner: International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)

Philana A. Jeremiah: “Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Environmental Sustainability in Eleuthera, Bahamas” Practicum partner: One Eleuthera Foundation, and Bahamas Plastics Movement


Denisse Ortega Lorona: “The Development Impacts of Fair Trade: Empalme Valley, Sonora, Mexico” Practicum partner: Covilli Brand Organics

Michelle Schatz: “The Role of Housing Partnerships in Refugee Resettlement” Practicum partner: International Rescue Committee (Arizona)

Joseph Stewart: “Small-scale Aquaculture in Sierra Leone, West Africa” Practicum partner: WorldFish

Sandra Wiebe: “The Integration of More Plant-based Foods in our Diet: Reformulating our Assumptions about Consumption” Practicum partner: Humane Society of America

Kelli Williams: “Climate Change Resilience among the Maasai of Narok, Kenya” Practicum partner: Maasai Education, Research and Conservation Center (MERC)

Post graduation news:
• Michelle Schatz is a Case Manager for the Refugee Youth Mentoring Program (RYMP) with Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest in Tucson.
• Amanda Hixson is Food Program Director at Del Norte and Tribal Lands Community Food Council in Crescent City, California.
• Anna Jackson is a Technical Assistance and Outreach Coordinator of Community Development at Habitat for Humanity Tucson.
• Kelli Williams (MDP 2019) is an Environmental Protection Specialist at the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in San Francisco.
• Amel Lebatt (MDP 2019) is an Individual Employment Specialist with the International Rescue Committee in Phoenix.
• Philana A. Jeremiah (MDP 2019) is a Ph.D. candidate in Geography at UA.
• Karina Martinez (MDP 2019) is Ph.D. candidate in Arid Lands Resource Sciences at UA.
• Denisse Ortega Lorona (MDP 2019) is Education Director with the Borderlands Restoration Network in Patagonia, Arizona.
Commentaries on urban farming, air quality needs, and food banks during COVID

MDP students have recently published in the media on themes relating to their MDP work, including their summer 2019 practicum projects.

- **Jake Meyers** won a national award for digital storytelling as a correspondent for the website Planet Forward. Jake produced a video on the potential role of urban farming in Kenya to enhance food security amidst increasing urbanization. He has also produced Tucson-focused videos on the 2019 Climate March and the use of public green space.

- **Natalia Cachora** wrote on op-ed for The Yuma Sun about the need for air quality monitoring on lands of the Ft. Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe, where she conducted her MDP practicum and is an enrolled tribal member.

- **Samantha Turner** wrote an op-ed for the Arizona Daily Star on the role of food banks during the COVID crisis, particularly the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, where she works and where she completed her MDP practicum.

MDP students engage locally throughout Tucson, Southern Arizona, and US-Mexico Border

MDP students regularly undertake internships, assistantships, and summer practicums with organizations from throughout Southern Arizona. These have included the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, Habitat for Humanity Tucson, Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona, International Rescue Committee, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Southern Arizona, Pima County SmartScape, Literacy Connects, the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, the Pasqua Yaqui Tribe, the Ft. Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe, and Tucson public schools. They've also worked with regional branches of national institutions such as the US Department of Labor, the National Park Service, and the USA National Phenology Network.

In addition, students have often engaged locally through their studies at the University of Arizona, including working with the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA), studies with professors within the School of Geography and Development, and programs operated in collaboration with Native American nations in the region. You can [read more](#) about how MDP students have engaged locally this year.

In fall 2019, MDP students were also able to take a new course on “Natural Resource Management: Applications in Tucson, Southern Arizona and the Border,” taught by Prof. Stephanie Buechler with a focus on environmental management and policy. The course was awarded competitive funds from the UA Office of Student Affairs’ Student/Faculty Interaction grant program and also the School of Behavioral and Social Science (SBS) Support Fund. The photo above was taken from one of several field visits from the course, one to an agricultural site in Sonora, Mexico.

Fellowships and Awards

This academic year, MDP students earned a number of awards and other accomplishments, including the following:

**Fellowships and Scholarships**
- Mary Ngugi – FLAS (Foreign Language & Area Studies) Fellowship in Latin American Studies; Natalia Cachora – UA Native American Student Affairs Scholarship; Samantha Turner – W. Wright Foundation Scholarship; Amata Inshuti – World Conservation Society (WCS) Fellowship; Jake Meyers – Esther Chepchumba Machibya Memorial Scholarship, Southern Arizona Environmental Management Society Scholarship; Jack DeBoer, Sehdia Mansaray, Robert Hartwell, Jake Meyers, and Abdul Sigal – Coverdell Peace Corps Fellowships

**UA Graduate Assistantships**
- Natalia Cachora – Native American Science and Engineering Program (NASEP); Avery Julian Baker – Think Tank; Mary Ngugi – Global Studies; Laura McCann, Amata Inshuti, and Heather Altherr – School of Geography and Development

**UA Local Outreach Assistantships**
- Sehdia Mansaray – National Phenology Network (NPN); Jack DeBoer – Pima County SmartScape; Abdul Sigal – Literacy Connects of Tucson; Robert Hartwell – Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Arizona; Jake Meyers – Community Foundation for Southern Arizona; Summer 2019

**Practicum Funding for Research related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals**
- Robert Hartwell; Jake Meyers; Avery Julian Baker
- Abdul Sigal

**Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) or Coverdell Travel/Research Awards**
- Abdul Sigal; Avery Julian Baker; Jake Meyers; Robert Hartwell

You can read more awards and accomplishments on the [MDP News page](#).
Both faculty and grad students are prolific in their publications. Here are just a few from spring 2020!


**Mills-Novoa, M (2020) "Making agro-export entrepreneurs out of Campesinos: the role of water policy reform, agricultural development initiatives, and the specter of climate change in reshaping agricultural systems in Piura, Peru" in Agriculture and Human Values.**

**Meko D., I. Panyushkina, L. Agafonov, J. Edwards, Impact of high flows of an Arctic river on ring widths of floodplain trees, The Holocene, 2020**


**Scott, Christopher A., Alice F. Hill, and Alana M. Wilson. "Pursuing water security in socio-agricultural systems in Piura, Peru" in Agriculture and Human Values.**


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**STAY IN TOUCH WITH SGD!**

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**HOW TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY AND DEVELOPMENT**

We work very hard to support our students, secure research grants, and connect to the community. We are always grateful for any contribution to support deserving students, invest in faculty research, encourage our outreach activities, or fund lectures, fieldwork and internships. For more information and to donate please go to: https://geography.arizona.edu/donate. Thank You!

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This newsletter was edited by James Cunningham (james45@email.arizona.edu) with assistance from Andrew Comrie and Diana Liverman. Please be in touch with any comments or corrections. Thank you to everyone that submitted photos or a written segment!