Geography & Geographic Information Science

From Paralympian to scholar: GD Kim's marathon journey

by Jake Keister
School of Earth, Society & Environment

Gyudae's gold medal finish in the 800-meter race at the 2013 IPC Athletics World Championships in Lyon, France

Gyudae "GD" Kim never planned on becoming a geographer. Nearly 20 years ago, he was serving his mandatory military service in South Korea when a sudden injury left him paralyzed. At the time, he wasn't considering graduate school, let alone an academic career. He was just trying to figure out how to move forward. That turning point came in a veteran's hospital, where another veteran introduced him to adaptive sports. It was an invitation that shifted his outlook. "I didn't enjoy my life around that time," Kim recalls, "but they showed me what the real world had, such as wheelchair sports." What began as a way to rebuild his body also helped him rebuild his sense of possibility.

Racing toward a new future

Before turning to academia, Kim spent years navigating the complexities of the private military sector, an experience that still informs how he sees space, power, and risk. "Living those experiences made me sensitive to how infrastructures and borders come together," he said. That perspective now underpins his research on political geography and nuclear geopolitics: how technologies and states shape each other through systems, territories, and the everyday lives they touch.

Wheelchair racing offered Kim a way to channel determination into a familiar passion. Before his injury, Kim loved running marathons. Wheelchair racing gave him a way to reclaim that passion. He trained daily, loving "the sunshine and the sweat," working hard to earn a place on the Korean Para National Team, competing at three Paralympic Games: Beijing 2008, London 2012, and Rio 2016, winning four bronze medals along the way. A signature moment came at the 2013 World Para Athletics Championships in Lyon, France, when he surged ahead to capture gold in the 800m. Three years later, a bronze in the Rio marathon proved life-changing. "That was the moment. That was the money," he said. "After that, major marathons began inviting me. I made some money, but I spent it on education."

continued on page 10

Online MS & Certificate Programs Gain Geospatial Accreditation

The United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF) has granted accreditation to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for our department's fully online graduate certificate and master's degree programs in CyberGIS & Geospatial Data Science. 23 colleges and universities offer USGIF-accredited programs, and over 1,600 students have received a USGIF-recognized certificate.

"We are thrilled to have this acknowledgement of our programs. Students can be confident that the skills they are gaining in visualization, AI, data processing, and data-intensive computation will be recognized by the geospatial intelligence community," said professor and department head **Julie Cidell.** For more information on our Online MS and Certificate programs, please visit **gis.illinois.edu.**

From the Department Head

As a geographer, I am often thinking about the meaning of place so it's wonderful to be reminded how much this place — the Urbana campus and surrounding communities — means to our students and alumni.

Gary Molyneaux (PhD, '79) shared this feeling with us when he visited earlier this fall, attending our Friday Colloquium, catching up with PhD advisor John Jakle, and cheering on the Illini at Memorial Stadium. And when Aisling Reynolds-Feighan visited in April to accept her Distinguished Alumni Award, she was delighted to be back and reminisced on how this place was home for several years. I've had a similar experience returning to my own alma mater: a place that was home for a brief but formative time when I was coming into my own as a scholar and as a human being, a place that is still pinned on my map.

One highlight of being department head is meeting with alumni and hearing about how this place is so much more than a classroom or workplace. And it's just as exciting to see our current students learn, grow, and develop a strong attachment to place that will hopefully remain throughout their lives. I'm also glad that several of our Online Master's program graduates have been coming to campus each May, sometimes from great distances, to join the Commencement weekend activities and experience this place in person.

I hope you are all doing well in your current places amid these challenging times. Let us know what you've been up to, and remember we are always glad to welcome alumni back home.

Julie Cidell
jcidell@illinois.edu

Aisling Reynolds-Feighan (PhD '89) Receives Distinguished Alumni Award

By Geoff Hewings, professor emeritus

Aisling Reynolds-Feighan graduated from University College, Dublin (UCD) with a BA in economics and geography in 1985. She earned an MA in economics the following year and then joined our PhD program in Fall 1987. As part of her doctoral research, I traveled to Houston with Aisling to interview Continental Airlines in hopes that they would share data about the aircraft allocated to their origin-destination routes. The staff were so impressed with her presentation that they prioritized the data assembly while we were in the office and Aisling received it within a few days! This data was incorporated into her dissertation: *Measuring the impact of network changes by the airlines in the deregulated environment.*

Aisling began as an assistant professor at UCD in 1989 and rose to Professor of Transport Economics in 2007 (the promotion system is much slower in Ireland; until recently, a vacancy was necessary before someone could be considered for promotion). For three years (2018-21), she also served as Vice Principal for Research Innovation and Impact. Aisling has received many honors and awards: Chairman of the British & Irish Section (RSAI-BIS) of the Regional Science Association International (2013-17), a founding member of the Irish Transportation Network (2009), and is an elected member of the IGU Transport Geography Commission (2021-27). She became a Fellow of the Air Transport Research Society in 2018 and received the Moss Madded Memorial Medal (RSAI-BIS) in 2007. She has been an active consultant for various European governments (including the EU Commission) and is frequently interviewed on radio and television about transport-related projects. Her work has been published in major journals such as *Spatial Economic Analysis, Urban Studies, Journal of Air Transport Management, and Transport Research A.* She has also been actively mentoring younger scholars within professional societies and at UCD.

Aisling is deeply proud of her connection with Illinois and never misses an opportunity to tell people she earned a PhD there. She has made many visits back to campus and holds a sentimental attachment to the community since this is where she met her husband (who was a civil engineering postdoc specializing in highways).

It was a great pleasure and honor to serve as Aisling's advisor and host her Distinguished Alumna Award visit in April. She gave a talk entitled *Dimensions of Global Air Transport Networks* and enjoyed conversations with current faculty and graduate students, especially our strong contingent of transportation geographers!

This newsletter was produced by the College of LAS Office of Communications and Marketing and edited by Matt Cohn. Please visit **uiaa.org** to update your contact information, submit a class note, and check out the latest news and events for and about Illinois alumni.

Congratulations GGIS Class of 2024-2025

Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Summer 2025 Degree and Award Recipients

Bachelor of Arts / Science

Kian Barreiro
Joseph Carr
Katelyn Dodge
Giovanni Giannelli
Yide Guo
Raul Guzman
Yuchen Huang
Jack Lia
Diego Lopez
Qingyang Meng
Giezi Naranjos
Yuan Ochoa
Pratham Patel
Hantang Qin
Amelia Thornton
Rebekah Turner
Shishir Vasanth
Amanda Wang
Kyla Wolski
Gabe Zeller

Bachelor of Science Computer Science + GGIS

Emily Ho
Sebastian Krzysiak
Huiyao Liang
Saket Pochiraju

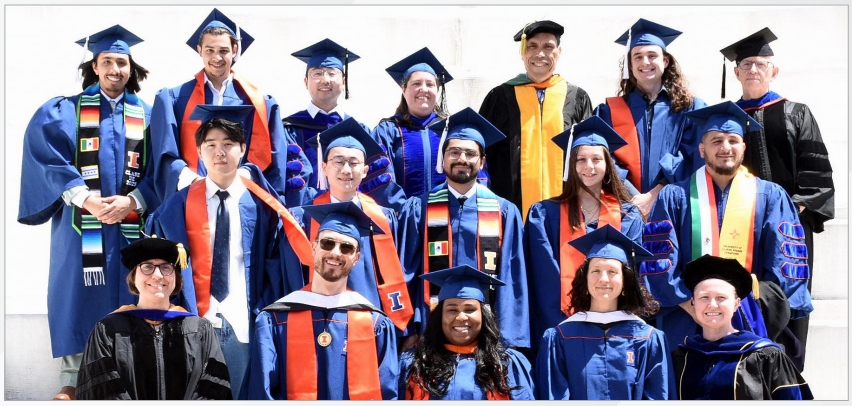
John Thompson Award
Sebastian Krzysiak
Amelia Thornton
Kyla Wolski

The Thompson award honors Geography & GIS graduating seniors who have demonstrated outstanding academic performance and made significant contributions to the department.

Graduate Degrees & Honors

Professional Science Master's
Dian Jin
Yikuan Ye
Jiacheng Zhang
Tianchen Zhang
Wenjie Zhao

Online Master's in CyberGIS & Geospatial Data Science
Candace Cameron
Patrick Johnson
James O'Neil Smith
Audrey Wierda



Front Row, from left: Julie Cidell, Patrick Johnson, Candace Cameron, Audrey Wierda, Raechel Portelli. Middle row: Hantang Qin, Yide Guo, Diego Lopez, Amelia Thornton, José Miguel Acosta-Córdova. Back row: Raul Guzman, Kian Barreiro, Chishan Zhang, Rebecca Vandewalle, Michael Minn, Jack Lia, David Wilson. Photo by GradImages

Master of Arts

Ileana Sanchez is continuing in our PhD program.

Thesis: "I've Got the Power!: A Feminist Take on Slow Justice and Power in Dallas, Texas"

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

José Miguel Acosta-Córdova
Dissertation: "'The Inland Port City': How Regional Economics, Labor Demand, and Uneven Development Shaped the Development of Chicago as the Freight Hub of North America"

Mishel Milagros Melendez Bernardo started last summer as a geomorphologist and river restoration engineer with Wetlands Research Associates (WRA) Inc. in San Rafael, California.
"Lateral Response of Alluvial Rivers to the Downstream Passage of Episodic Sediment Pulses"

Colt Pierce is now a teaching assistant professor of urban studies at the University of Pittsburgh.
"Hearing Like a City: Sonic Gentrification and the Political Economy of Sounds"

Rebecca Vandewalle started this fall as assistant professor in the School of Information at the University of South Florida.
"A CyberGIS-ABM Framework for Scalable Spatial Agent-based Modeling of Emergency Evacuation"

Chishan Zhang is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Boston University Global Development Policy Center.
"A Phenology-guided Deep Learning Framework for Advanced Soybean Prediction in the Americas"

Yilun Zhao joined Virginia Tech's Department of Biological Systems Engineering as a postdoctoral researcher.
"Evaluating the Influence of Biocontrol Program on the Colorado River Biodiversity with Multi-Source Time Series Imagery"

Messina-Stanley Graduate Scholarship in Medical or Environmental Geography

José Miguel Acosta-Córdova

Endowed by Dianne Messina Stanley (née Massock), this annual scholarship provides a $2,000 award to a graduate student whose research focuses on medical or environmental geography. Dianne was born and raised in Champaign and earned an AB from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and an MS from the College of Media at Illinois. Her daughter Jane Messina also attended Illinois, where she earned a Master's degree in geography from our department. Jane's work as a medical geographer and Dianne's own passion for environmental issues prompted her to designate this award for graduate students in these fields of study.

Alumni Perspective

Sidney Kenyon (BA, ’13) is Transportation Director for the Village of Schaumburg, Illinois.

I started playing Sim City at age six on my parents’ new personal computer, which was my introduction to urban planning and probably led me to become a transportation planner. When I first began studying geography at Illinois, I was most interested in how and why cities function in the various ways that they do. I ended up pursuing a master’s degree in urban planning at UIC after completing my BA but geography was a great primer, acquainting me with the theoretical methods planners and geographers use to understand the spatial forces that drive human settlement.

Geography is arguably the central problem in transportation. I’ve had experience as a transportation planner in a variety of contexts, but ultimately, we as transportation professionals are trying to move people quickly and comfortably across long distances. Schaumburg is a sprawling edge city that is six miles at its widest, hosting a daytime population of over 150,000. I work to identify how to help people travel safely within the village and throughout Cook County by car, bus, train, bicycle, or otherwise. We are now in the planning stages of transforming a 4-way intersection to reduce the high speeds and crashes we have observed in the area and to be more friendly to cyclists and pedestrians.

I often reflect on my days as a geography major at Illinois while considering and solving transportation issues. I still feel incredibly grateful for the professors who encouraged me to pursue a career in the field. **David Wilson** invited researchers from all over the world to visit campus and share their expertise. One time, he invited me and fellow students to his office after class to continue our discussion with the great political geographer Erik Swyngedouw.

I was also honored when **Julie Cidell** invited me back to the department in early 2020 to have lunch and talk about my work with a group of undergraduate majors. It was great to see how thoughtful they were about applying their education to a future career and I was grateful for the opportunity to share some potential career pathways with them. Transportation is my passion but there are many other fields that need geographers and GIS professionals.

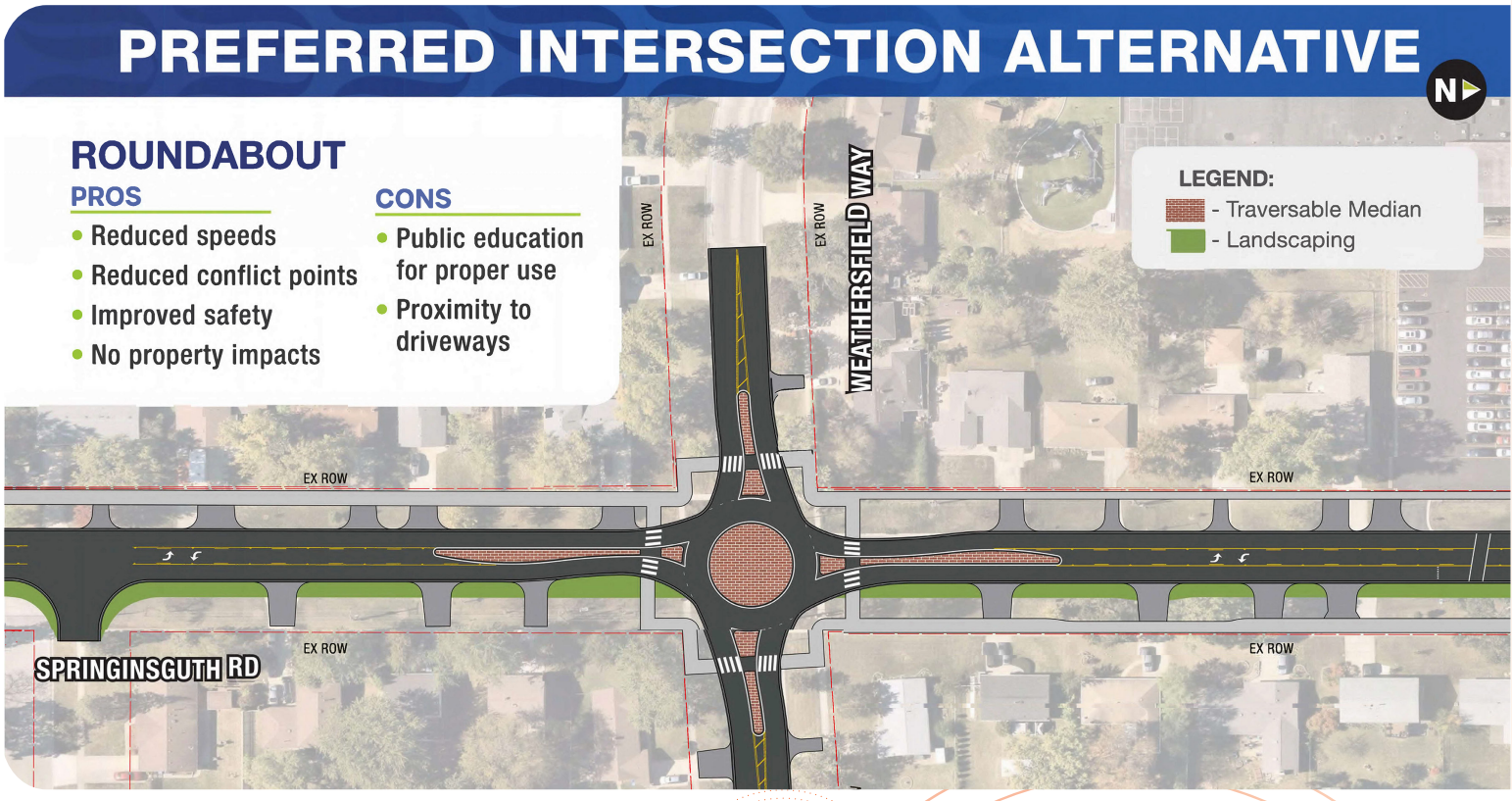


Photo and map courtesy Sidney Kenyon, Village of Schaumburg

New Tenure-Track Faculty

Yue Lin Assistant Professor

How did you decide to become a geographer?

I started off as an environmental science major at Wuhan University in China. During my first year, I took electives in programming and discovered how much I enjoyed it. GIS was our sister program at the time, and I learned that many GIS faculty members were using programming in their work and applying it to study critical social and environmental issues. I was drawn to this intersection of technology and real-world impact and decided later that year to switch to GIS and pursue a path as a quantitative geographer.

What is your most memorable field research experience or discovery so far?

I served a research assistant during my PhD for a project entitled “Undesign the Redline” that used machine learning to digitally reconstruct Hanford Village, a historical Black neighborhood in Columbus, Ohio that was leveled in the 1960s for highway construction. It was a memorable experience to visit the present-day site while working to visualize its past as a vibrant community filled with homes, businesses, and culture. I later brought this methodology to Chicago, where I taught students how to explore historical maps in local and university libraries and museums and use machine learning to recover what Hyde Park and other neighborhoods looked like before the sweeping changes of urban renewal in the city.

What are your current research interests and directions?

My research explores the intersection of data, computation, and human values. I am interested in how emerging geospatial technologies can be designed and used in ways that are ethical, socially responsible, and beneficial to humanity. More broadly, my interests span spatial data science, location privacy, and the societal implications of algorithmic systems. I’m currently investigating the social implications of geospatial artificial intelligence, including issues of social bias, semantic collapse, and loss of diversity. I’m also committed to helping students to engage critically with these technologies by integrating AI literacy and ethical reasoning into their geospatial education.

Above: A redlining map of Columbus, Ohio in the “Undesign the Redline” project and 2023 exhibition at the Columbus YWCA. Courtesy Gerika Logan

Jim Best publishes visual atlas of world's waterways

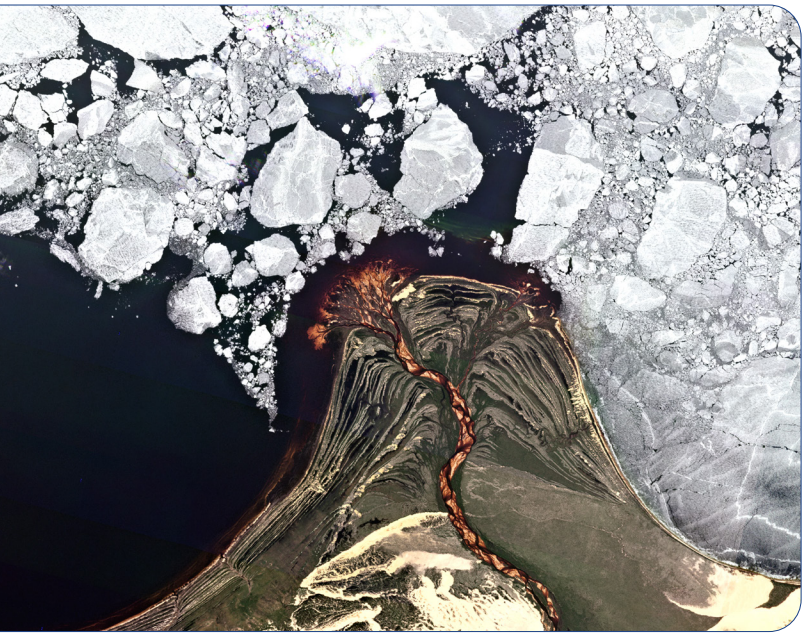
by Lois Yoksoulian, Illinois News Bureau

All photos courtesy ***The World Atlas of Rivers, Estuaries & Deltas,*** *Princeton University Press (2024)*

Water lily harvest, Mekong River, Vietnam

The word "atlas" may conjure images of giant books chock full of maps and a dizzying array of facts and figures. However, the new book "The World Atlas of Rivers, Estuaries, and Deltas" tells the story of these waterways long before human intervention and how they continue to evolve in the presence of — and often at odds with — human civilization. The new atlas is a highly visual guide to the most up-to-date research on the world's river systems, with an emphasis on the mutual relationship between people and these vital landscapes.

> *"The overall goal of the book is to drive home the importance of river systems on human civilization and ecosystems, and how these critical environments are at risk, but that it is not too late to make changes," said co-author Jim Best. "We hope this work will reach a much broader audience than we typically engage with as researchers."*



Athabasca River & Delta, Canada, during ice breakup

Best and co-authors Stephen Darby, Luciana Esteves and Carol Wilson take the reader on an adventure far beyond anything facts and figures can offer. They dive headfirst into the cultural, economic, and climate/environmental change aspects of these river basins while providing the latest information from conventional means of study of the physical, chemical, and biological elements of these environments — all done with an emphasis on storytelling through captivating imagery, infographics, maps, and plain language text.

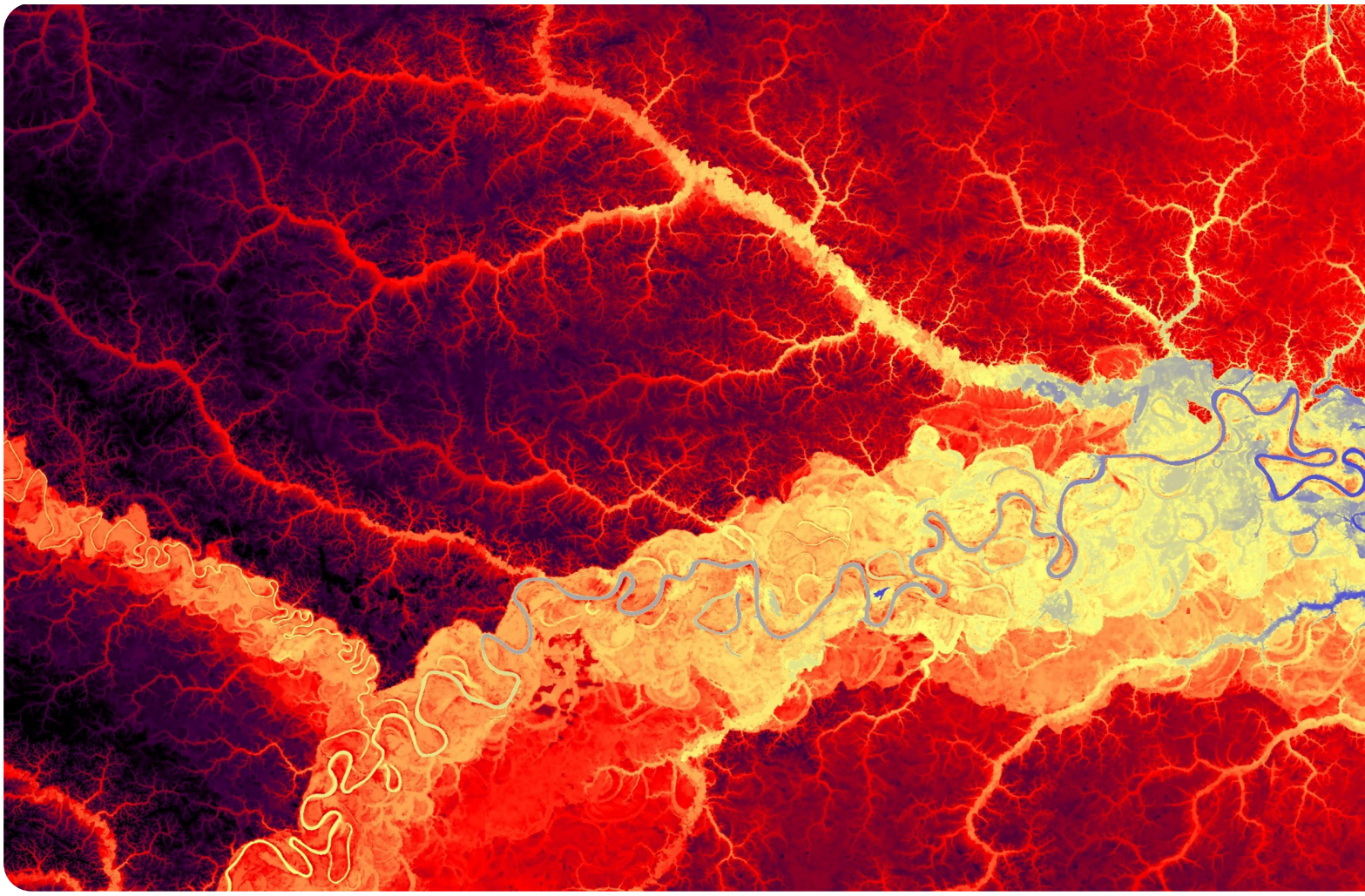
The authors set the scene by discussing rivers' essential role in early exploration, settlement, and mapping, long before we had access to aerial photography and satellite imagery for reference. Fans of historical maps can spend hours deciphering the puzzle that is Italian cartographer Fra Mauro's 1450 map of the world — one can spot the Tigris, Euphrates, Nile and Ganges Rivers and the shapes of several vaguely familiar bodies of water before realizing that the map is oriented with north at the bottom. This mental exercise illustrates how river systems were essential in shaping the trajectory of human exploration and civilization on the planet.

The book's layout is straightforward and intuitive, with sections covering each unique landscape rivers, estuaries, and deltas. Each section uses plain language to engage the reader and help them understand waterway anatomy, sediment transfer, ecology, aquaculture, natural and humanmade disasters, pollution, and biodiversity — and how these topics influence human culture.

> *"This book is for anyone who is curious about the natural environment and how it is rapidly changing," Best said. "Readers can dip into bits of the book without having to read in a linear fashion."*

There are plenty of opportunities for deeper dives, too, Best said. Topics such as numerical modeling, river management and restoration techniques, citizen science, and river-based renewable energy are just a few examples of how the reader can tuck into more in-depth scientific analysis with this atlas. The final chapter, which Best said might be his favorite, guides readers through what decades of research suggest is in store for river systems.

> *"There are a lot of gloom and doom stories about river-related human disasters and a lot of dire predictions about what's to come in the future, but we think this book provides positive insight into how we can help better sustain these environments."*



Dendritic networks feed water and sediment into meandering rivers and their floodplains, Amazon River Basin, Brazil.

Faculty News & Honors

Nikolai Alvarado presented a paper entitled *Urban Informality, Migration, and Waste: Spatio-Corporeal Cartographies of Environmental Oppression* at the second annual UIC Encounter on Migration and Indigenous People last fall. He was also awarded a Humanities Research Institute (HRI) 2025 Faculty Summer Fellowship for his proposal entitled: *Counter-Cartographies of Migration and Urban Informality: Rap Music as Living Archives of Radical Place-Making in Costa Rica.*

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) and Lemann Center for Brazilian Studies hosted a special seminar last November to celebrate the lasting contributions emeritus professors **Geoffrey Hewings** and Werner Baer (economics) to the Center's legacy. Through their work with CLACS, the Lemann Center, and the Regional Economics Applications Laboratory (REAL), professors Hewings and Baer trained multiple generations of scholars and equipped them to tackle the social, environmental, and macroeconomic challenges facing the region. The conference brought together 30 participants from diverse fields, offering insightful discussions on current and emerging issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Marynia Kolak was a co-author on a study published last year in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) entitled *Factors Associated with the Availability of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder in US Jails.* The National Institutes of Health later published a press release and many news outlets covered the story, including the Minnesota Star Tribune, USA Today, and The Hill. Marynia also presented *Environmental Inequality Formation and Participatory Design: Developing ChiVes, a Mapping & Data Collaborative for Chicago Climate Resilience* at the Center for Health Informatics (CHI) Spring 2025 Speaker Series, which brings together and encourages discussion and collaboration among Illinois researchers whose work examines environmental impacts on health.

Bruce Rhoads gave a keynote address entitled *Dynamics of River Systems in Intensively Managed Landscapes: Lessons from the Midwestern United States* for the Geomorphology and Society Distinguished Lecture, sponsored by the Geomorphology and Water Resources Specialty Groups at the 2025 AAG Annual Meeting in Detroit.

Jida Wang was among 15 Illinois faculty members selected for the 2024-25 Emerging Research Leaders Academy (ERLA) by the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Institute (IHSI). Designed for mid-career faculty to achieve research success, the ERLA program provides vital leadership and team science training to pursue large, multi-PI grants, lead campus research initiatives, enhance their own research programs, and ultimately position the University of Illinois for research excellence. Jida's work focuses on surface water abundance and dynamics, particularly in lakes, reservoirs, and wetlands.

David Wilson delivered the 35th Annual Space and Polity Plenary Lecture, entitled *The New Immigration Politics in Cities of the Global North* at the 2024 International Geographical Congress Meeting in Dublin, Ireland last August.

Sofía Zaragocín received honorable mention for the AAG Feminist Geography Specialty Group's Rickie Sanders Junior Faculty Award, which recognizes outstanding intersectional and anti-racist contributions to geography and the public. The awards committee noted that Sofía's "ongoing activist-research deeply complicates our understanding of extraction and indigeneity in Latin America. Beyond this setting, her work is truly transformative in pushing for decolonial indigenous feminist geographies in and beyond the Americas." The committee also noted her important activism as amicus curia in the case against the Furukawa Plantaciones company for modern-day slavery in Ecuador.

STAFF UPDATE

Welcome Jodi McDuffee!

Jodi started last October as office manager in a dual role that supports Geography & GIS and the School of Earth, Society & Environment (SESE). She coordinates travel and other expenses for GGIS and ESEC (Geology) faculty, students, and colloquium speakers, assists the SESE Business Office with grants and accounting, and facilitates our undergraduate Roepke Scholarship program. Jodi is a University of Illinois alumna with a degree in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism and her professional career has focused on community work, where she has enjoyed working with individuals of all ages and backgrounds. When not at work, Jodi can be found in the bleachers cheering on her two children at their various sporting events or taking hikes with Griswold, the family Goldendoodle.

Roepke Research Scholar

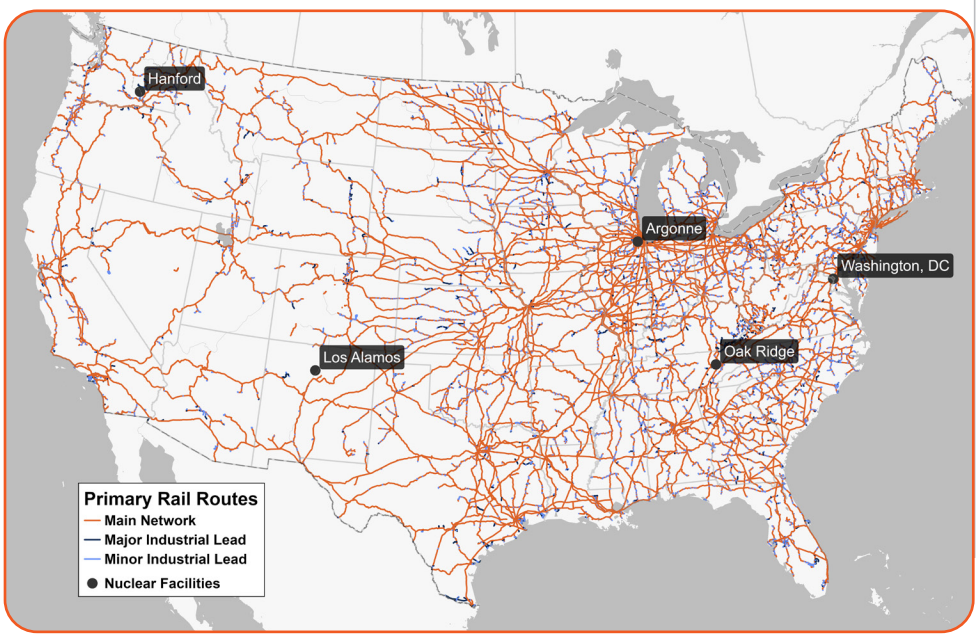
by Rachel Loftus, senior

As a Roepke Research Scholar last fall, I helped **Dr. Julie Cidell** investigate railyard redevelopment in Chicago. Starting from a 1915 Chicago Association of Commerce report, I used Google Maps and basic georeferencing strategies to locate and gather modern-day imagery of railyards detailed in the report and determine their current usage. Had a particular railyard been decommissioned and redeveloped, abandoned entirely, or intensified as an intermodal transportation hub? For each yard that had undergone these structural changes, I dug deep into newspaper archives, tax records, and even rail enthusiast web forums for information on when those shifts occurred.

This experience laid the track (so to speak) for me to conduct additional transportation research in the spring semester, when I joined the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP) and worked with mentor/geography PhD student **Gyudae Kim** to track the development of nuclear weapon transportation methods from 1945 to the present day.

From reviewing the Manhattan Project archive, declassified government documents, and international relations papers, we found that the vehicles of transportation shifted from "white" trains to semitrailer trucks, which allowed for greater secrecy and security during the Cold War. We then gathered historical railroad data from the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics, and used GIS software to compare it to modern highway route data from the US Census Bureau to illustrate how much vaster and more complex the interstate network has become relative to the railroads. I created a poster to illustrate our findings and presented it at the Undergraduate Research Symposium at the Illini Union in April.

The Roepke Research Scholarship and URAP were both excellent opportunities to work with GGIS faculty and graduate students and learn how to research primary documents, model transportation networks, and appreciate the geography of movement. After graduation, I plan to pursue a career using GIS technology for public safety. I would also like to continue conducting research, as these experiences have given me both the enthusiasm to ask a research question and the skills to answer it.



US Rail Routes and nuclear enrichment facilities circa 1980. Map by Rachel Loftus

Inspire Future Scholars

Professor Howard Roepke *was a Geography faculty member from 1955-1985 and his estate provided a generous gift to the University of Illinois Foundation to our undergraduate majors with unique academic and research opportunities. To make a gift, please visit* ***ggis.illinois.edu/giving*** *or contact the U of I Foundation at* ***uif.uillinois.edu***

GYUDAE KIM, continued

Finding a new home at Illinois

Reinvesting in himself led Kim to Illinois, where he could balance elite training and serious scholarship. “Before I came to Illinois, my life was all about wheelchair racing,” he said. “I’d met some student-athletes from the University of Illinois. They said that if you come to the university, you could study and race.” He joined the Illinois Wheelchair Track and Road Racing team, a powerhouse program that has trained multiple Paralympians and marathon champions.

Once he settled in Champaign in 2013, Kim’s academic focus began to sharpen. He has since earned degrees in environmental economics and geographic information science and is now pursuing a PhD in geography. At the core of his research is a belief that nuclear technology didn’t just alter geopolitics. It transformed the very structures of states.

“We often think of the atomic bomb as a weapon, but I’m interested in what happened behind the scenes,” he explained. “The bomb didn’t just emerge out of the state; it shaped the state itself in many ways.”

For Kim, the link between his past and present is clear. “As a Navy veteran, a wheelchair user, and now a researcher, I think living these experiences made me sensitive to many things,” he said. “It motivates both my teaching and my research. I want to show how geography can address big global issues like nuclear power or even conflicts, but also speak to everyday struggles with a disability. It’s about connecting the globe with the person.”

Teaching as a calling

Even with his accomplishments as an athlete, Kim, now retired from competitive racing, lights up when he talks about teaching. He has earned a place on the List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent twice (Fall 2023, Fall 2024), and this year received both the LAS and Campus Awards for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, two of the highest honors available to graduate instructors at Illinois. However, for Kim, recognition isn’t what matters most.

“Teaching has been the highlight of the past couple of years. I was really honored to be listed and receive the campus and college awards, but what I remember most was the small moments,” he said. “When a student tells me they see the world differently after class, or when a discussion takes off and students challenge each other.”

He works hard to ensure students know he’s available, both in and outside the classroom. “Graduate school can feel isolating; it’s so important to reach out to mentorship and build community with your peers,” he says.

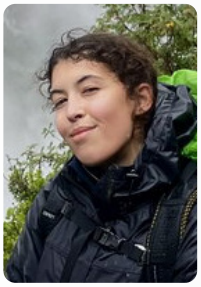
What’s next

Kim is excited about the next stage of his dissertation, digging into how nuclear technology transformed state power. He also hopes to create new courses at Illinois on geopolitics and technology.

His advice to those navigating challenges is hard-earned but straightforward: “It’s easy to get lost in the workload, but pacing yourself for the long run, making time for rest, just being human. It will make you stronger as a student and a scholar. Balance matters.”

For Kim, though, the heart of his work always comes back to the classroom. “I love to learn alongside my students,” he said. “I learn from them every semester, because I’m still a student too.”

Doctoral Student News & Awards



Vicky Brown Varela received a Conference of Latin American Geography Field Study Award ($1,000) and a Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies Whitten Fellowship ($5,000) for her project entitled *La Exclusividad Tiene Nuevo Apartamento”: San José’s Green Mirage of Urban Exclusivity.*

Célio Rocha Moura received a Tinker Foundation Field Collaborative Fellowship to conduct dissertation research for his project entitled *The meaning of being “formal”: institutionalization of artisanal fishing and its territorial impacts in Recife, Brazil.*

New Graduate Students

Alonso Bueno earned a BA in geography with a concentration in Urban Planning from DePaul University. He is interested in environmental justice, zoning, and transportation planning, and plans to focus on these areas during his MA studies.
Advisor: Julie Cidell

Lark Cummings earned degrees in anthropology and geography from Eastern Washington University. His PhD research will explore migrant labor markets and contemporary urban development in the United States and elsewhere.
Advisor: David Wilson

Erin Hermann has a BS in Earth, Society, and Environmental Sustainability from Illinois. Their MS research interests include fluvial geomorphology and river management.
Advisor: Bruce Rhoads

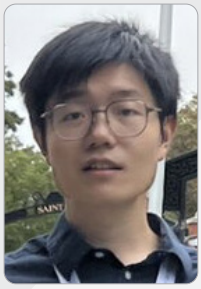
Ömer Emre Kuşcu is from Istanbul, Türkiye and holds both undergraduate and master's degrees in geography from Istanbul University. He aims to continue his studies on political and military geography, military intelligence/history, and contemporary geopolitics.
Advisor: Brian Jordan Jefferson

Liam Llewellyn has a BS in geographic information science from the University of Oklahoma with a minor in meteorology. His master's research will focus on GIS, meteorology, social science, and interface development.
Advisor: Raechel Portelli

Saket Pochiraju has a BS in Computer Science + Geography & GIS and economics from Illinois. He is interested in applying remote sensing and GeoAI at the intersections of climate science and public health during his master's studies.
Advisor: Marynia Kolak

Yuankun Wang earned a master's of engineering in photogrammetry and remote sensing from Wuhan University. Her doctoral research will focus on advancing large-scale crop mapping to support sustainable agriculture and food security planning.
Advisor: Chunyuan Diao

Kei Yamato was awarded a Spring 2025 Graduate College Dissertation Travel Grant ($5,000) to support his research trip to the remote Brazilian Amazon with advisors **Jim Best** and **Jida Wang.** The grant "allowed me to share and exchange ideas for future research projects with members of the Mamiraua institute, and we were able to get in-situ water surface elevation (WSE) data and bathymetry data of Lake Tefé to help validate our measurements from the Surface Water Ocean Topography (SWOT) satellite mission," said Yamato.



ZJ Zhou received an American Geophysical Union (AGU) Outstanding Student Poster Award for his presentation *CropSight-US: An Object-Based Crop Type Ground Truth Dataset Using Street View and Sentinel-2 Satellite Imagery across the Contiguous United States* at the 2024 AGU Fall Meeting in Washington, D.C. He presented at the session entitled "What's Next for Global Crop Mapping and Modeling in Its Applications to Food Security Analysis?"

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