GEOGRAPHY’S MENTOR-IN-CHIEF:
A Celebration of Ken Foote and the Geography Faculty Development Alliance
GFDA Principles

Ah-ha! moments
Alignment
Balance
Community
Moderation
Name-only badges
Sharing
Think-Pair-Share
And finally, DON’T BINGE!
Building a Community of Support for Early Career Faculty

What qualifies one to be a mentor, let alone a “mentor-in-chief” for an entire academic discipline? In the spirit of sharing that is the hallmark of GFDA, we invited statements and reflections from past leaders and participants who experienced the workshops between 2002-2014. Their words of appreciation for GFDA — visualized on the front cover and presented at length in this book — capture the value of the program and celebrate Ken’s legacy as one of geography’s most esteemed leaders and cherished colleagues.

Thank you, Ken, for the opportunity to work with you and hundreds of early career faculty in our discipline.
- Michael Solem & JW Harrington
Heejung Chang
(2002)

I very much owe my successful career to the GFDA workshop that I participated in 2002. The workshop laid a foundation for my balanced scholarly agenda from curriculum development to publication to grant writing to community service. I was also very pleased to receive a diverse set of knowledge and wisdom from different participants and leaders at the workshop. Now as I mentor junior faculty in my own department, I constantly think about all the good lessons I obtained during the workshop. Thank you Ken for your leadership on this important topic for early career faculty!
Eric Fournier  
(2002)

I served as a GFDA leader for three sessions, and learned many things from both participants and leaders. Ken’s quiet leadership and vision helped make this one of my most important and enduring professional development experiences. Three things Ken taught me stand out:  
1) Have an ecumenical approach to faculty development and worry about people—not their credentials. 2) Emphasize the positive before initiating any criticism—and make sure that criticism is productive. 3) Approach the challenge of faculty development with kindness and humility, and continue the work driven by a willingness to share, learn and grow professionally as a community of teacher-scholars.
Julie Guthman  
(2002)

Since participating in the inaugural GFDA in 2002, I've returned to many of my old ways in teaching. But the one thing that has really stuck with me is giving my undergraduate students a very clear idea of what I expect them to learn and do and coming through with my commitments to them. I know that my students very much appreciate this sort of consistency, and I have been rewarded with strong teaching evaluations - that really do count at my university.

Thank you, Ken.
Hillary Hamann
(2002)

I have had the unique experience and pleasure of being involved with GFDA as a participant (in the very first workshop in 2002) and as a leader (in 2009). In both cases, the thing that struck me most was the very unique sense of community created by the GFDA. I keep up with several folks from my workshops, and when I meet other participants, GFDA provides an instant connection. Ken Foote’s leadership, from the starting introductions to the final dinner has made this program truly exceptional. Taking time to reflect on and develop my teaching and time management has paid off many times over in my career to date.
Mick Healey (2002)

Ken, it seems a long time ago that we planned the first GDFA in 2002 and before that the establishment of the INLT. Those experiences, together with contacts we had through working on GeographyCal, Virtual Geography Department, JGHE, Geography Discipline Network and Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences Subject Centre gave me the foundation and confidence to go independent in 2010. One of the things that impressed me most about the GDFA was how you and Michael linked it to a research project evaluating the experience and impact on the participants. I was less impressed by the student dorms you put us up in!
Janice Monk
(2002)

I participated as a staff member for GFDA for four years from 2002-2005 and for the Departmental Leadership Workshop in 2013. These offered me the chance to work with enthusiastic and talented early career geographers and congenial and supportive leaders. Among these, Ken stands out as modest and effective. The experiences have sustained my sense that service is a key commitment to sustaining personal and professional satisfactions and well-being. And in the early years, we also survived the Kitteridge Dorm!
Karl Offen
(2002)

The GFDA gave me confidence to experiment in the classroom, it gave me strategies to get people thinking about questions before I got them talking about the answers, and it helped me not to fear awkward silences. It also got me thinking about the multiple ways students learn and how they could teach one another in ways that I could not. Above all the GFDA helped me see that multiple approaches to teaching can lead to more comprehensive forms of learning.
Mei-Po Kwan
(2003)

I was one of the nine leaders for the 2003 GFDA workshop. I had very fond memories of the highly fruitful and enriching workshop in which leaders and participants shared invaluable experiences. I learned a lot myself getting to know participants with very diverse backgrounds and aspirations. Through the issues I recognized the importance of mentoring early careers colleagues. It was Ken Foote’s tremendous energy and selfless dedication that these career development workshops were so successful. I think they are pivotal to the participants’ careers and to the vitality of geography as a discipline. I was so grateful to him for such wonderful experience.
Thank you so much for your leadership of the GDFA program. I attended the GFDA in 2003 and have since encouraged others to participate in this valuable workshop. I was a newly minted Ph.D. at the time and it was a great opportunity to be mentored by esteemed faculty as well as build relationships with other junior faculty. The books that we had to purchase should be required readings for all new professors. They have been a tremendous help throughout my career. I wish you well, Ken.
Beth Schlemper  
(2003)

I attended the GFDA workshop in Boulder during Summer 2003, just after I had finished my PhD at UW-Madison and was preparing to start my career as an Assistant Professor. It was an incredible opportunity for me to receive timely professional development and to create lasting connections with other geography professionals. We received numerous practical suggestions and tangibles at the workshop to prepare us for the expected (and unexpected) demands of academia. This experience truly was the launching point of my career and provided an important transition from graduate student to professor. I am grateful for the invaluable mentorship provided at GFDA.
Since the 2004 GFDA, Ken served as a friend and external mentor, whose advice I have greatly appreciated. Ken is one of the kindest and most genuine people I have been fortunate to meet. At the workshop, he introduced me to many aspects of teaching and research which I have been able to incorporate. I now serve as a mentor to others, helping them consider their own teaching philosophy. I recently received the USF graduate teaching and service award. However, I view this as not just my own achievement, but the success of Ken and others who served as a role model and mentor.
J. Michael Daniels
(2004)

I attended GFDA when I was in my second year as an Assistant Professor. The week-long workshop in Boulder was a great opportunity to devote time and careful thought to all the disparate aspects of professional academic life as a geographer. I acquired specific, practical skills as well as a broader, more complete perspective on how to balance teaching, research, and service. I also made friendships and professional contacts that have persisted during the decade since—I certainly include Ken among these and thank him for his support and service.

What did the GFDA do for me? Quite simply, the opportunity was an invaluable way to think about the direction of my career in geography, and beyond it. The substance of the summer workshop was getting to think about pedagogy in a serious way that meant something to me as a practitioner of geography. The workshop, held at CU-Boulder in 2004, also made me realize how sorely I missed the west even if I was happy in a liberal arts college environment. For that, and many more reasons, I'm grateful. I wouldn't be out here in Colorado without GFDA. Thanks, Ken.
Joy Adams  
(2005)

I consider myself incredibly fortunate to have received the benefits of Ken Foote’s wisdom and guidance at key junctures in my academic career. Ken taught the senior seminar in my undergraduate program (where I started planning my career); he was the first professor for whom I was a teaching assistant; and he led the GFDA summer workshop that utterly transformed my approaches to teaching and research. Throughout all of these experiences and beyond, he has never failed to offer his kindness, support, insights and encouragement. On behalf of my peers and the entire discipline: Thank you, Ken, for all you have done and all you continue to do!
Kristen Conway-Gomez (2005)

The workshop was a valuable introduction to university geography teaching. The network of colleagues I met and have benefitted from knowing was worth the week in Boulder. Opportunities to craft a lesson plan and have it critiqued, discussions about assessment, curricula and faculty responsibilities, and the mentoring that was part of GFDA provided a frank and realistic introduction to my career, all the more valuable since this was not part of my geography graduate education. I’m also deeply grateful for the accommodation Ken made for my infant son. Thank you so very much!
Amanda Rees (2005)

As a 2005 GFDA graduate I began a new job at a teaching-oriented institution in a department whose title didn’t include the word ‘geography.’ As a SAGE (stand-alone geographer) I wanted to raise geography’s campus profile and maintain my research. Ken’s ‘uber’ mentor qualities made the GFDA a peer-mentoring program. It inspired me to start a weekly research group for early to late female faculty (still running 10 years later). I also recently edited a book of essays on being a successful SAGE. I’m now a full professor with an active research agenda. The GFDA inspired me to mentor.
Aloe Rioux
(2005)

“In Foote We Trust!”

This is the motto on the “currency” issued at one of our 2005 GFDA workshops, a slip of paper I have kept for years as a reminder. While not pursuing a career in geography, GFDA has laid a solid foundation for my educational career in the United States. My initial “Teaching Philosophy” was conceived here, taking a critical part in my teaching portfolio. Time and again the “Teaching Philosophy” and teaching portfolio have served me well in my career after graduating from CU-Boulder where Ken Foote served on my dissertation committee.

In Foote We Trust!
I was a brand-new faculty member when I participated in GFDA in 2005, and overwhelmed. Ken helped demystify teaching, showing me the array of pedagogical techniques at my fingertips and helping me understand more about how students learn. GFDA also helped me see the wider field of geography and the different kinds of institutions where we collectively work. I still remember, and use, things from that workshop, especially the problem of "over-testing" students and the value of clear learning objectives. I was thrilled, and honored, to come back as a leader in 2014, where I continued to learn from Ken.
The GFDA had a huge impact on my career. Beyond the immediate benefit of giving me ideas for how to make my teaching more interactive and how to plan classes in a way that emphasizes student learning rather than content, the GFDA introduced me to the scholarship of teaching and learning. Without the experience in Boulder I probably would not have read so much of the SOTL literature, held workshops for faculty at my institution, or published several articles with teaching ideas that incorporate many of the ideas I was first exposed to at the GFDA.
Maria Fadiman  
(2006)

My week with GFDA was a unique time in which I could be real about being a new professor and created an opportunity to get to know a cohort of people in my position in a new way. I found myself with such a supportive group of people where we encouraged each other, exchanged ways to handle issues and laughed together. The connections I made during that week have stayed with me still. I count myself as lucky to have been able to have that week and to be in the atmosphere that Ken and the others created.
Jia Lu
(2006)

GFDA was a great experience for me, since it was my first organized lesson regarding what takes to be a successful faculty member. In graduate school, I was never taught how to be a faculty member, how to balance teaching with research and other responsibilities, and how to succeed in the high-pressure faculty job. Ken, Fred and others were great mentors for us. The teaching and research techniques I learned from the 1-week training benefited me ever since. I made some friends during the training, and we are still communicating now. Overall, it was a great experience, and I hope more young geographers can enjoy that in the future.
Alec Murphy
(2006)

I went to the 2006 and 2007 GFDA workshops as a faculty leader, and I found the experience incredibly enriching. I surely learned as much from others as I was able to offer. The workshops gave me a wonderful opportunity to share ideas about pedagogical practices and professional development in a warm, mutually supportive environment. The success of the workshops was due in part to the thoughtful engagement of all the participants, but it was Ken’s magic touch that made them truly special. His gentle, thoughtful, yet incisive leadership was an inspiration to one and all.
Rebecca Theobald
(2006)

In 2006, I had the pleasure of supporting the GFDA program in Boulder as part of my graduate work with Ken Foote. He has an extraordinary ability to bring people together, ask insightful questions, and link a variety of disparate views into a coherent thread. I appreciated the opportunity to get to know geographers from across the country, and to learn more about early-career faculty experiences, which was the focus of my dissertation. As Coordinator for the Colorado Geographic Alliance, I am grateful for Ken’s attention to geography education at the university and pre-collegiate levels.
Anneliese Vance-Sherman (2006)

When I look back on my experience as a graduate student, GFDA stands out among the highlights. The pedagogical instruction, time management and general work / life management tips greatly benefitted my teaching and completion of my dissertation, and have supported me in my career. Incidentally, my career took a very different turn … I ended up leaving academia, and am currently working for the state of Washington as a regional economist. Ken, although the focus of the workshop was faculty development, the skills I obtained through GFDA have served me well in my professional development outside academia, and I cannot thank you enough.
Tamara Wall
(2006)

When I attended the GFDA in 2006, I was a PhD student in an interdisciplinary program at the University of Montana, and the only PhD student who “homed” in the Geography Department. What I found at the GFDA was my cohort—a group of colleagues at a similar place in their careers who shared my interests, ambitions, and concerns. This was invaluable lesson—it taught me to always seek out colleagues for collaboration and support, even if they are geographically distant—and how important it is to create that network.
Grady Dixon
(2007)

GFDA helped me understand the value of good mentors that appreciate and support new or young members of the discipline, university, or department. It is not necessary to "sink or swim" as an untenured professor, and receiving constructive help early in your career is likely to lead you to be a great mentor to others later in your career. As I age, I continue to model my teaching and mentoring after folks that led the GFDA in 2007.
I really enjoyed participating in the GFDA when I took part nearly ten years ago. The GFDA gave me not only skills and practical tools for success in academia, but also the confidence to succeed. Plus, of course, I met a group of fantastic colleagues, some of whom have been friends ever since. I wish Ken all the best, and thank him for all the work he has put in on behalf of new faculty.
Sara Beth Keough (2007)

Participation in GFDA was so important building my confidence as a teacher, a scholar, and a colleague. GFDA offered focused segments and posed important questions for me to consider as I tried to manage a high teaching load with an active research agenda. The support of other participants, and the geographers who taught the workshop segments, have been long-lasting. I hate to imagine what my first year as an Assistant Professor would have been like otherwise. Thanks to Ken, and all the geographers who gave weeks of their summers every year to make this program successful!
Kenneth Madsen  
(2007)

GFDA provided great advice on effective and innovative teaching strategies—scratch-off quizzes and syllabus design come to mind—but more importantly it instilled in me a fundamentally student-centered approach to active learning experiences. Furthermore it helped me take a long-term view on student education with a focus on ideas that stick with students years later rather than end-of-semester recollection. An understanding of service as a means of applying scholarship also inspired a more conscious and strategic engagement with campus and community which in turn drives my writing of an annual geography column in a local newspaper. Thanks, Ken!
Rickie Sanders (2007)

I was fortunate to have been chosen as one of the session leaders for two GFDA workshops in 2006 and 2007. I remember preparing for my session and thinking what a great idea – to put senior faculty in a group alongside junior faculty to engage in work that would unearth the “archaeology” of the profession. In all my years, I’d never before taken the step outside of myself to look systematically at the work of the academic geographer; how the seemingly unconnected activities come together to make a whole. Thanks Ken and the whole group for an eye opening experience.
Micheline van Riemsdijk (2007)

The GFDA workshop has made a lasting impact on my work as a scholar, colleague, and mentor. The workshop provided advice on how to juggle research, teaching, and service responsibilities, and I especially valued Ken’s advice on time management. In addition, I appreciated the opportunity to ask questions about difficult issues in a safe and encouraging environment. I share some of the advice from the GFDA workshop with graduate and undergraduate students to help them prepare for the job market. Ken, thank you very much for sharing your time, energy, and wisdom, and for caring about early career faculty!
Melinda Harm Benson (2008)

Ken Foote was an invaluable source of mentorship early in my career. I met Ken in 2008 at the GDFA. I was nervous, having just accepted a faculty position at the University of New Mexico’s geography department without any formal training in the discipline itself. Ken made me feel welcome, praised my “interdisciplinary” background and helped me to understand that I actually belong in a geography department. When I received the Luten Award at AAG a few years later, Ken presented me with the award in his capacity as president —and he was as excited for me as I was! His encouragement and support have been instrumental to my professional development.
Thanks a million for everything you gave to us. It has been incredible to be in touch with you throughout these years. I learned so much about teaching in that 2008 GFDA in Boulder. But I am late. I am late in paying this honour to you. In Brazil we say pagar uma homenagem when we want to give attributes to a honourable human being such as you. You and JW have been role models to me. Ken is my man, Ken is the man, Ken is fantastic. We remember from the 2008 GFDA how kind you guys were in receiving us in your house for that dinner which was the final celebration of that version of the alliance. The GFDA is our alliance and patrimonium.
Jeremy Tasch (2008)

I participated in the GFDA while still un-jaded and untenured. I left the experience inspired, convinced my department would continue to send new hires—if not the chair herself. Now tenured and hopefully still un-jaded, I continue to practice lessons learned and to share by example the philosophy of the GFDA. I remain the only GFDA Alumnus from our department: our chair maintains experienced faculty need not attend. I would like to think that our two approaches—my chair’s and mine—show the value of GFDA but how much work still needs to be done. Thank you for everything!
Stephen Aldrich
(2009)

The start-of-career mentoring that the GFDA provided was instrumental in starting me off on the right path. It helped me be reflexive about what I was doing, provided incredibly useful tips and strategies for being a better faculty member, and reinforced what I already knew about the quality of people our discipline attracts (with Ken being one of the best!). Without the leg up the GFDA provided, I would have struggled much more to earn tenure.
Jamison Conley (2009)

The biggest lesson from the GFDA workshop went beyond any individual strategy for teaching or research. The main lesson I took from the GFDA workshop is the recognition that the challenges and issues I was facing as a new faculty member, like getting a post-dissertation research agenda up and running and trying to become an effective teacher, were not unique to me. Instead, they are challenges everyone faced, and because of that, we should not feel alone in facing those challenges. It doesn’t make addressing those challenges easier, but at least I know others share those experiences.
Wen Lin
(2009)

The week-long GFDA workshop was a rewarding (although quite intense as well!) experience, not only because of the materials we might learn, but also for the supporting environment Ken and other workshop leaders had nurtured. At the end of the workshop, Ken kindly invited us all to his house for food and drinks. The sun was setting, and we were busy taking photos of it. Ken suggested, ‘how about going upstairs for a better view for your photos?’ This perhaps could be one of the examples of reflecting GFDA’s roles in helping us to reach a higher level.
Anna Versluis
(2009)

I thank Ken for his vision and enactment of the GFDA workshop. I am very grateful for all I learned and the people I met. Six years later, I continue to rely on these lessons, among others: Ken reviewing my course syllabi and providing concrete ways to improve them. J.W. discussing how to be a valued colleague through sympathetic understandings of others’ back-stories. Mona reflecting on how writing does not get easier with time, but the discipline of writing may increase one’s confidence in the process. And being introduced to Fink’s ideas for designing a course and Boice’s ideas of mindful writing.
Pablo Bose
(2010)

The GFDA has been tremendously helpful for me in building networks and establishing long-lasting personal and professional connections. This was especially useful for someone who came into the discipline as a non-geographer by training and helped to orient me to many of its cultures and traditions. I have stayed in touch with many of the people I met and learned from at the GFDA and have collaborated with some on research projects, invited others to my campus to give talks, and been influenced by the teaching and research of others still. The GFDA and Ken’s guidance in particular were especially important as I embarked on a career as a professional geographer.
Karen Culcasi and Brenden McNeil (2010)

Ken’s sincere commitment to work/life should serve as an example for all. Ken went out of his way not only to make this topic a priority that we all need to be proactive about, but he also went out of his way to support Brenden and I with our 8 month old daughter at the conference itself. The first time I met Ken, he had a double-stroller parked nearby to lend to Brenden and I while in Boulder. Additionally, GFDA was akin to rehab from the stupor that was getting a PhD and landing an academic job. Ken has been essential in keeping a generation of geographers on the path to balance and success in the best definition of that word.
Debarchana Ghosh  
(2010)

I attended the GFDA workshop in 2010. At that time I had just completed my first year as a tenure-track assistant professor position and needed help! The GFDA played a significant role during this critical time by providing valuable suggestions for balancing research and teaching, preparing effective syllabi, disciplined writing (not binge writing), targeting appropriate venues for publications, integrating research with teaching, and overall systematic management of activities (teaching, research, service) for the tenure application. I feel extremely lucky to have Ken as my department chair and mentor in the University of Connecticut.
Ken Foote and the GFDA set me on the path for success. At least once a month now as a faculty member at Georgia State I am reminded of the lessons learned in the summer workshop. It changed my life. It made me believe that I could manage the multiple roles expected of us as geography faculty members. Ken didn’t talk at us about his experience as a respected scholar. He talked with us as a friend and colleague. I am so pleased to have been a part of Ken’s program. I wish him the best in his new path!
Jung Eun Hong
(2010)

I participated in the 2010 GFDA as Ken’s student assistant. Because I was only the 2nd year PhD student at that time, some of the content covered by the GFDA workshop was very much new to me and something I did not think about. Since I have become a faculty member, I have kept thinking about and kept in mind some of the lessons learned from the GFDA workshop, such as balance of life and time management. I am so glad that I had an opportunity to take the GFDA workshop. Thank you so much Ken!
Carl Legleiter
(2010)

Participating in the Geography Faculty Development Alliance workshop after my first year as an Assistant Professor gave me some great ideas to improve my instruction and guide my approach to research and an academic life in general. The lessons I learned during that week in Boulder continue to influence my teaching in particular and I’m grateful to have had such a positive, nurturing experience. Now, several years later and approaching tenure, I still value the interactions with other young faculty and the outstanding mentors who organized the workshop, most notably Ken Foote.
The GDFA helped greatly in improving my understanding of many aspects of the tenure-track process and provided a platform to improve and reflect upon my teaching and scholarship. I also met many great fellow junior and several senior colleagues, whom I have kept in touch throughout the years. Thanks Ken for your leadership in offering a platform to help so many generations of geographers navigate academic life, and for your camaraderie and advice.
Antoinette
WinklerPrins (2011)

“The Zen of Ken” - Ken’s outstanding mentoring of faculty at a variety of stages in their career has and will continue to leave a deep legacy on the profession. In working with Ken as a facilitator at GFDA and also having been mentored and supported by him, what stands out most in my mind is his ability to slow down time and everyone’s heart rate, and to calmly assess the situation. Everything in moderation, including the speed of decision-making. Thank you Ken!
Preston Cumming  
(2012)

The GFDA workshop meant a lot to me at the time not only as an affirmation of my love of teaching, but the opportunity as a PhD student to meet faculty and department heads that I wouldn’t have met otherwise. Through this I gained invaluable advice on my teaching, preparing for the job market, and ultimately helping me obtain a faculty position at the type of institution that I feel my full skill set will be utilized. The caring attitude that Ken and JW bring to the GFDA made it the best experience I could have ever hoped for.
Kara Dempsey (2012)

GFDA has served me both as a visiting professor and prepared me for my tenure-track position. The information regarding grant writing, publication, and teaching have proven invaluable. I applied what I learned regarding teaching and was awarded with a college-wide teaching award the following year. Similarly, my publication and grant acceptance rate has doubled since GFDA. I am grateful for all the insight, contacts, friends, and experience that I gained from GFDA. Ken, I am particularly grateful for all your advice for creating new geography courses, preparing for interviews, and manuscript publication. Many thanks for everything that you do!
Liang Liang
(2012)

The greatest benefit I received from the GFDA was not any techniques about teaching and research, but a sense of identification with a group of people who are so bright, open, inclusive, and loving. It is the people that give a community its meaning. I cannot forget our trainers (Ken, JW, Antoinette, George, and others), who called themselves facilitators, being full of professional experiences of the highest kind, coming to us as friends rather than instructors, valuing every young geographer as being most promising, and offering unreserved advice, support, and encouragement. Ken and his colleagues remain dear to my heart.
Rama Mohapatra  
(2012)

GFDA was an important milestone in my academic journey. The workshop has definitely helped me become a better teacher and researcher. It reminds me of many fun things such as meeting old friends, making new friends, learning about digital text books, recording (nerve racking) our 3 minute videos, etc. I will never forget about the personal letter we wrote to ourselves and giving it to Ken. I remember Ken saying he would send us our personal letters in the mail after a year and I was really amazed when I received my handwritten letter. Thanks for the memories.
I can still remember Robert Boice’s Advice for New Faculty Members and thinking that his Zen advice for academic productivity ran against the grain, in a good way! Similarly, Prof. Ken Foote’s teaching style and gentle demeanor departed from the authoritarian, ego-driven face of academia. I admired Prof. Foote’s adept ability to see the strengths and weaknesses of his students (even us temporary ones!), and personalize his teaching accordingly. I try to emulate that sensitivity, and appreciation of human individuality in my own career, inside academia and out.
Erika Trigoso
(2012)

The GFDA gave me the chance to shape the needs and expectations that come with a dream academic job. It was an amazing experience to communicate and collaborate with colleagues around the country who were sharing the same hopes. Our mentors were incredible and I am forever grateful for their thoughtful academic, career, and personal feedback. Ken was beyond a great mentor and leader as he invested himself into knowing each one of us. The GFDA under Ken’s leadership will forever influence the way I approach my students, colleagues and our broader geography world.
Jordan Hill
(2013)

Ken: I am not a geographer by training so my path to the AAG GFDA is owed, it its entirety, to you. I reached out to you years ago because your own research on memory sites related to violence and tragedy was integral to my interdisciplinary dissertation research. In 2013, you extended an offer for me to join that year’s GFDA cohort, and that week was the most in depth look at the job search that I am currently undertaking. Your selfless assistance to me and countless others over the years has left an indelible legacy of service to the next generation of scholars, and we will all seek to emulate your example of selflessness, leadership and mentorship.
Stephen McElroy  
(2013)

The GDFA provided practical, foundational knowledge that allowed me to begin to understand the linkages among diverse teaching practices, effective course design principles, and various learning styles. I learned the importance of implementing best practices in online education, working in a collaborative team environment, and focusing on continuous improvement processes. I was also encouraged to think holistically and to apply my core value system in professional practice while maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
Tang Yong
(2013)

When I look back to my GFDA experience, I think it is a tipping point to my professional career. Two years ago, I was puzzled with the question of how to balance work, family and personal interests, and professional responsibility. Thanks to the timely support from leaders like Ken, JW, and JJ, they shared with me their experience in teaching and research, and this helps me create a professional development plan important to the success in my academic career. I am proud of being alumni of 2013 GFDA. I hope, young teachers and scientists will continue to benefit from it.
Tim Garceau
(2014)

I am honored to have participated in the 2014 workshop and am inspired by the tremendous experience of GFDA in bringing together enthusiastic geographers from all career stages: some “veterans” to formally lead the way as well as new faculty and graduate students. I think this dynamic is essential to GFDA’s success as we are able to learn from each other’s experiences, ideas and shared passion for teaching. I look forward to continued involvement with GFDA and am appreciative of Dr. Foote for his significant role in GFDA over the years and for sponsoring my participation in this amazing program.
Francis Koti  
(2014)

I attended the department chairs’ training component of the GFDA workshop at the University of Colorado, Boulder in summer 2013. Ken invited me back as a workshop leader at the GFDA workshop at the University of Connecticut, Storrs in summer 2014. As a new department chair, GFDA workshops have helped me understand more effective strategies for implementing programs. While I have made many friends at these workshops, Ken has become not just a colleague and friend but also a mentor. I have since invited him to my University to speak at a conference to which he graciously agreed.
Acknowledgements

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