The Geospatial Job Market

A panel discussion sponsored by the EDGE Project and the Applied Geography Specialty Group
2012 Annual Meeting of the AAG

About the EDGE Project

Enhancing Departments and Graduate Education in Geography (EDGE) is an NSF-funded research and action project led by the Association of American Geographers to enhance the career preparation of professional geographers. EDGE-Phase 2 (2009-2012) focuses on employment opportunities for geographers in business, government, and nonprofit (BGN) organizations. Researchers are collecting a variety of data from professional geographers, employer organizations, and graduate programs to examine workforce development, industry trends, and the career paths of master’s and doctoral students. Project deliverables include paper and panel sessions at regional and national professional meetings, updates and additions to the Jobs and Careers area of the AAG’s website (www.aag.org/careers), expanded activities within the Jobs in Geography Center at the AAG’s Annual Meeting, journal articles, and books, including Practicing Geography: Careers for Enhancing Society and the Environment (Pearson 2012).

About the panelists

David DiBiase [moderator and session co-organizer] leads the Education Team within Esri’s Industry Solutions group. The team promotes and supports GIS use to enrich teaching and learning in formal and informal settings, domestically and internationally. Before joining Esri, Dr. DiBiase founded and led the Penn State online GIS certificate and master’s degree programs. He served as lead editor of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Geospatial Technology Competency Model and UCGIS’s GIS&T Body of Knowledge. From 1998-2003, as a member of URISA’s Certification Committee, Dr. DiBiase helped design the criteria by which the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) has awarded its “GIS Professional” credential to nearly 5,000 practitioners. He served as GISCI president from 2010-11.

Max Baber is Director of Academic Programs at the United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF), stewarding accreditation of university geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) certificate programs and supporting related academic initiatives. Dr. Baber received a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Georgia in 1999 and an M.A. in geography from Georgia State University in 1993. He has served in faculty appointments with the Master of Science in Geographic Information Systems program at the University of Redlands and the Departments of Geography at Samford University and the University of Northern Colorado. He has developed and implemented a number of funded projects focused on pedagogical aspects of geographic information science projects, including support from the National Science Foundation. He serves on the board of directors for the Cartography and Geographic Information Society, is a member of the U.S. National Committee to the International Cartographic Association, and is a Fellow of the British Cartographic Society.

Judy Colby-George formed Spatial Alternatives ten years ago with the goal of helping communities use GIS technology to enhance public participation in planning issues. She has extensive experience working with municipal and environmental GIS applications. Ms. Colby-George has specialized in using GIS to communicate land use planning issues in a variety of forums. Spatial Alternatives provides full-service GIS consulting, from data creation and maintenance to designing public participation processes with clients, to
training and software customization. Ms. Colby-George is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Maine, working with the Sustainability Solutions Initiative. She is writing a dissertation focused on the impacts of geospatial tools on stakeholder understanding of social ecological systems. She holds an M.S. and a B.S. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in land resources management and geography.

Richard Serby is founder and president of GeoSearch, Inc., a personnel recruitment firm specializing in the geospatial sciences. A native of Illinois, Mr. Serby and his family moved to Colorado Springs in 1979. He started the recruitment business in 1988 after a 16-year career in education at the college and secondary levels. Mr. Serby has a special interest in geospatial education and serves on an advisory board for Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado Springs and the National Visiting Committee (NVC) for the GeoTech Center in Corpus Christi, Texas, which serves as an important resource to community colleges nationally. He has assisted in many secondary and college career fairs and is often asked to speak to student groups and employers at various conferences throughout the year. Mr. Serby also offers career coaching and job search services to new college graduates.

Ashok Wadwani is the founder and president of Applied Field Data Systems, Inc., a Houston-based company that offers GIS and GPS mapping hardware and software to clients all over the world. He has over 40 years of experience in designing and recommending GPS/GIS systems to clients in various sectors. He has written several articles and conducted GPS workshops worldwide. Mr. Wadwani is very active in volunteering his time to promote GPS/GIS technology to the general public and students. He serves on the boards of several educational institutions for GIS curricula. He was awarded the GITA Distinguished Service Award in 2006 and the NCGE President's Award in 2011 for promoting GIS technology in schools. He has a master's degree in physics from the University of Lucknow and a master's degree in business from Northwestern University.

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