

Graduate Student Affinity Group
of the Association of American Geographers
2007-2008 Report

I. Mission Statement:

Support the mission of the AAG by increasing participation of graduate students in the life of the profession and by better preparing graduate students for careers in Geography.

II. 2007 Dues:

The dues are currently \$1.00. We have approved an increase in dues to \$2.00 for the coming year.

III. Board of Directors:

Tim Hawthorne, Ohio State University, Chair
Nick Crane, Ohio State University, Vice Chair
Janis Schubert, University of Texas at Dallas, Treasurer

Stephanie Deitrick, Arizona State University, Director
Kevin Grove, Ohio State University, Director
Joe Lewis, Ohio State University, Director
Michael Niedzielski, Ohio State University, Director
Jennifer Rice, University of Arizona, Director
Chris Underwood, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Website/Listserve Director

IV. Accomplishments, Activities Scheduled, Future Plans and Directions

The GSAG has accomplished a great deal over the last year:

1) 2008 GSAG Graduate Student Paper Competition Winners

Evan Larson, University of Minnesota, 1st Place, "Regeneration in whitebark pine forests of southwest Montana and eastern Oregon: A reason for hope"

Debarchana Ghosh, University of Minnesota, 2nd Place "Novel approaches to delineate West Nile virus transmission cycles on a micro-scale using Geographic Information Science technologies"

Po-Yi Hung, University of Wisconsin, 3rd Place "Articulated Identities with Neoliberal Landscapes: Agricultural Transformation in Fataan, Taiwan"

Shiguo Jiang, Ohio State University, Runner Up, "Beijing Metropolitan Area: its fractal form and spatial expansion"

Thanks to strong participation, the GSAG was able to offer a cash award to the finalists. First Place received \$150.00, Second Place \$100.00, Third Place \$75.00, and the Runner Up received a donated prize at the 2008 GSAG business meeting in Boston.

2) Inaugural GSAG Research Award Granted at Boston AAG

Nicholas Crane, Masters Student at the Ohio State University, was awarded the first ever GSAG research award of \$400.00 for his research project entitled, "Are the punks really doing it themselves? On negotiating contradictions, and articulating alter-globalization through a local punk scene."

Two runner-ups were also selected and awarded \$50.00, including **Phil Birge-Liberman**, Syracuse University, for his project, "The Ghost of Olmsted: Reclaiming Nature and Heritage in Boston's Public Parks" and **Bailiang Li**, Texas A&M University, for his project "Evaluating the von Kármán Constant in Sediment-Laden Air Flow."

We plan on offering this award again in the coming year. Information will be posted on the GSAG website and listserv.

Thanks to all graduate student and faculty reviewers that helped the GSAG award both the 2008 paper and research awards.

3) Business Meeting at the 2008 AAG Conference in Boston

The GSAG business meeting was held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Boston on Friday April 18 at 8:15pm. The agenda for the meeting included discussion and approval of amending the constitution to automatically make the outgoing GSAG Chair a Board member for the following year, updating and improving the GSAG website and listserv, discussion of budget and ability to increase GSAG awards offered to its members, the possibility of holding some type of social event at the 2009 AAG meeting in Las Vegas, paper competition and research award results, review of old business, and the election of new officers.

4) Communication with members

a) Website

The GSAG website has been transitioned to the domain <http://www.gsagaag.org>. The site continues to evolve to better support the membership, and a new webmaster will soon be taking over the website.

b) Newsletter

The GSAG Newsletter is made available quarterly through the GSAG website and through the GSAG eCommunities document archive.

d) eCommunities

The AAG GSAG eCommunities has been used since it was set up in 2005. The news, discussion, and document archives have been used to great success to date.

5) GSAG and the EDGE (Enhancing Department and Graduate Education)

GSAG will continue to work with the other existing AAG affinity groups to support the growth of geography students, including creating stronger ties to the EDGE program with the incoming Chair of the GSAG joining the Enhancing Departments and Graduate Education (EDGE) in Geography committee.

V. Membership and Participation

The GSAG has quickly grown in membership over the last five years from twelve participants at the first meeting in Los Angeles to 1185 members of the GSAG by June 2008. We continue to be one of the largest specialty/affinity groups in the AAG

VI. Financial Report

Balance, 2-29-08:* \$2246.19

**Note, this balance in prior to the issuing of all 2008 award winners checks (total checks issued in May 2008 is equal to \$825.00)*

VII. Special Requests or Questions for Council

None at this time.

Submitted by
Jennifer Rice, Chair