

# Association of American Geographers Council Meeting Minutes

November 2-4, 2012  
Washington, DC

*Present:* Eric Sheppard, *President*; Julie Winkler, *Vice President*, Audrey Kobayashi, *Past President*, Jenny Zorn, *Secretary*; Marilyn Raphael, *Treasurer*; Douglas Richardson, *Executive Director*; Derek Alderman, Ron Hagelman, John Harrington, Jr., Tom Maraffa, Brad Rundquist, Grant Saff, Michael Scott, Laura Smith, Karen Till (via Skype), James Tyner, Elizabeth Wentz, Richard Wright.

*Regrets:* Bryon Middlekauff

*AAG Staff:* Candida Mannozi, Michael Solem, Patricia Solís.

## Opening of the Fall 2012 AAG Council Meeting

President Sheppard convened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. on November 3 with a short welcome, introducing new members to Council. President Sheppard moved to adopt the agenda, which was seconded by Alderman and approved unanimously. Sheppard moved to affirm the approval of the Spring 2012 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Wright and confirmed unanimously.

## Executive Director's Comments

Richardson welcomed the Council, both new and returning members. As new Councillors had attended a detailed orientation session and summary of current AAG activities conducted by Executive Director Richardson at Meridian Place during the previous day, Richardson provided only a brief overview of these items for the full Council.

## President's Comments

Sheppard outlined three main areas of interest that he has been focused on during his term. First, he will be continuing to push on the theme of diversification of the voices that make up the discipline. He referenced his column in the December newsletter, which addresses this topic, and he noted it has resonated with students and attendees at the AAG Regional Division meetings. Second, he will continue to support improvements to communication among AAG office, governance, and members. He has not yet launched a Presidential blog, but much work has been accomplished to take AAG communications online. Third, he sees internationalization in the discipline as an ongoing effort, and shared related plans for his Presidential Plenary at the Los Angeles meeting, titled *Emerging Asias*, which intends to bring attention to this part of the world as well as to the voices from the region. He noted that he had just finished a round of stimulating visits to AAG Regional Division Meetings and was gratified with the energy of the membership.

## Vice President's Comments

Winkler previewed some of the ideas she hoped to engage in her coming term and encouraged input on these evolving themes. She is interested in emphasizing and highlighting the contributions of geographers to climate change research, including leading an AAG effort to launch a knowledge environment on geography and climatology. She also is interested in working towards increasing involvement of non-geographers in the AAG, such as with the atmospheric science community and to leverage her active participation in the American Meteorological Society, which could become a model for outreach with other disciplinary societies. She also emphasized her interest in enhancing participation of geographers in interdisciplinary research, especially with respect to adaptation and mitigation to change. She is also exploring the theme of representation of women in geography.

## Past President's Comments

Kobayashi commented on her plans for the Past President's address to be given at the AAG Annual Meeting in Los Angeles that would feature themes of interest she has pursued during her presidency. Her address will be devoted to the topic of race, exploring Elsworth Huntington's 1924 speculation on environmental determinism, as well as Harold Rose' 1969 *Geographies of Despair*. Ongoing activities that she has supported include the Harold Rose Award for Anti-Racism Research and Practice, which had been approved by Council earlier this year. She also continues to work on special AAG Publications, including the *Encyclopedia of Geography* and the new *AAG Review of Books*, which will be discussed later in the meeting.

## Regional Councillors' Reports

The AAG Regional Councillors provided an overview of activities in their regions, and addressed the following question posed by President Sheppard for their consideration: "How, if at all, are the activities of your regional association and its members changing as a result of events elsewhere in the world (a.k.a. globalization)?"

*East Lakes.* Maraffa reported on a well-attended joint East Lakes / West Lakes meeting hosted by Northern Illinois University. The division supports student participation and emphasizes undergraduate and early graduate

engagement in particular, in part through travel grants and paper competitions. The state of the regional division is healthy, with a current membership of 600 and a strong financial base. Future meeting venues include University of Toledo in 2013, jointly with the Canadian Association of Geographers in Ontario; Western Michigan University in 2014, jointly with West Lakes; and at Kent State University in 2015.

*Great Plains-Rocky Mountains.* Rundquist reported that geography programs in the region have generally increased numbers of undergraduate majors and continue to have strong graduate programs. There is no mention this time of salary freezes or cuts, hiring freezes, or departmental budget cuts. Most current challenges relate to difficulties in finding extra funding to enhance programs or figuring out ways to work with or around competing programs such as sustainability studies, environmental studies, and international affairs. A successful GPRM meeting was held at Brigham Young University in Park City, Utah. Next year's meeting will be at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, and 2014 is scheduled at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. The region is searching for a new Geography Bowl Coordinator.

*Mid-Atlantic.* Scott reported that the state of geography in MADAAG is good. Positive replies from programs included news of increased majors, new hires, and new programs, such as the launch of an Earth Science secondary education major at Salisbury and also the new GIS certificate offered at Coppin State, which is an HBCU. The regional division meeting is going on at Salisbury University this weekend, jointly held with the Pennsylvania Geographic Society. The division would like to try to hold more joint meetings to build on great camaraderie and enable bigger and more dynamic meetings that afford students better attention. Next year, the MAD meeting will be held jointly with the Applied Geography Conference in Washington, DC.

*Middle States.* Saff reported a successful transitional year in terms of leadership and outreach. This year's meeting being held this weekend at Shippensburg has turned around last year's unusually low attendance. Two-thirds of attendees are students, and this year larger institutions such as Penn State and Rutgers also sent students in response to the division's outreach efforts. The 2013 meeting will be at Buffalo State, and the 2014 meeting at York University in Pennsylvania. The division's future plans include activities to increase interactivity and communication, such as through blogging and relaying news, job openings, and other information. Programs in the region report various states of health depending on type of institution; state institutions are faring better and some are hiring, but private institutions face increasing pressures and cuts.

*New England-St. Lawrence Valley.* According to the report sent by Middlekauf, the NESTVAL region is strong and healthy despite some continued challenges. Of the departments reporting, all suggest either steady enrollments or significant growth. GIS continues to flourish, new courses are being developed, more sections added, and adjuncts hired to handle the demand. More and more disciplines continue to discover that GIS can help them to solve problems. All programs have experienced challenges as state budgets are cut and the impacts are passed on to the department level. NESTVAL's 2012 meeting was successfully held at the University of Maine at Farmington.

*Pacific Coast.* Zorn reported that the APCG meetings were hosted by Evergreen State College in Olympia this year. The division will meet in 2013 at Lake Tahoe organized by Sacramento State, in 2014 at the University of Arizona and in 2015 at California State University Northridge. The division's new website will soon be launched. University of California Davis' Geography Graduate Group successfully hosted the California Geographical Society meetings with nearly 500 in attendance. CSU Stanislaus has a new Masters of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies- Geospatial Analysis of Human-Environmental Change- currently under review. For the state of California, proposition 30 will influence hiring and the potential for replacing retiring faculty.

*Southeastern.* Alderman reported that SEDAAG continues its tradition of large and vibrant meetings, but that the division struggles with planning estimated attendance and breaking even financially. Strategic discussions are underway to determine how to offset some costs and consider an increase in dues that have not been raised in many years. SEDAAG is in its second year using online election balloting, which has been successful. This year marks the 52nd anniversary of the journal, *The Southeastern Geographer*. The publication contract with UNC Press was renewed for another 5 years, and included development of a website to allow subscribers to pay for membership, submit manuscripts, and register for meetings. AAG was helpful in negotiations. Alderman suggested that Regional Division Councillors might host sessions at the AAG Annual Meeting about the regional divisions, which could engender larger discussions and collaborations across regions.

*Southwest.* Hagelman reported that SWAAG met this fall in Las Cruces at New Mexico State University with excellent attendance and a very friendly and collegial atmosphere. Members have been discussing the importance of regions as prompted by an earlier Council question, and continue to reaffirm a regional identity and the importance of friendships and professional relationships established through the division. SWAAG increased their student awards this year for travel and research grants. The state of programs in the region is very positive and growing, with most departments reporting increased enrollments. The University of New Mexico is close to finalizing a new PhD program, and the 13th volume of the journal *Southwestern Geographer* will be released soon.

*West Lakes.* Smith reported that West Lakes held a very successful joint meeting with East Lakes in DeKalb. She added

that the event represents a great place for student participation and experience. AAG's panel and workshop on Careers in Geography sessions were well attended and received. The meeting included the first Geography Bowl at a West Lakes meeting in several years. Future meetings will be hosted by the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire in 2013 and by Western Michigan University in 2014, jointly with East Lakes. Program updates provided by chairs are positive, owing much to the continued popularity and demand for GIS programming. A recurrent theme of discussion is the changing place of geography within the university, in light of a regional trend to rename departments with "society and environment." Some concern has been raised about a possible loss of critical or analytic thinking when a focus on techniques does not include the conceptual geographic. Smith suggested we might consider sharing best practices for how GIS programs can incorporate core thematic and analytical courses, as well as GIS ethics.

President Sheppard also asked the Regional Division Councillors to consider, "how, if at all, are the activities of your regional association and its members changing as a result of events elsewhere in the world (a.k.a. globalization)?" While the answers varied, in general, programs are responding to globalization by adding international field courses, modifying classes to include a global perspective, and increasing the number of foreign students recruited to campuses. Others reported more faculty exchanges, strategic language initiatives, and the rise of global studies programs, which have mixed impacts on geography programs. Most report that there is increased demand for study abroad, even in the face of current and extended economic downturn. Globalization generally presents entrepreneurial opportunities and offers prospects for interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as openings for online curriculum and technology innovations. On the other hand, globalization may also constrain responses, for example, where difficulties arise for students on field trips, or funding cuts making travel funding scarcer. Globalization initiatives are sometimes in tension with the growing priority of states to use universities to advance economic development goals. Nevertheless, these trends imply more and new geography curriculum and research, which are not limited to regional geographies of Asia, studies of the South, of transnationalization, migration, global environmental change, and other topics familiar to geographers.

### **Review of Topical Developments: National Councillors**

President Sheppard asked the National Councillors to consider, "What major crises of relevance to your area of Geography do you see emerging in the world since 2000? What challenges do these pose, and what opportunities do they create, for US and international geographical scholarship?"

Tyner drew attention to the lack of geographers working explicitly on themes of crisis, such as studying violence on campuses, research on conflict, work about the global arms trade, and other critical topics that represent matters of life and death for many people. He noted the strong contributions of geographers and the potential for geography to contribute to such themes when the opportunity to do so is taken, but lamented the shortage of international geographical scholarship directly addressing these crises.

Raphael spoke specifically to the crisis of climate change and the challenges to policy and science that it presents. She identified how climate change is a physical manifestation of cultural practices and is potentially a catalyst for in-depth study of a range of issues. These studies may be carried out at the level of the individual state and at the international level. She noted that it is not desirable nor is it useful to address this crisis on any other than an interdisciplinary basis, which means that geography is perfectly poised to address climate change crises on a number of fronts.

Wentz discussed how when presented with the question about crises, she imagines how GIS can be a tool to address these issues. However, the incredible growth in teaching and applying GIS seems to be leaving behind the conceptual, spatial and computational analyses that are fundamental to such problem-solving. She raised the concern that the IT world and public at large have grasped internet mapping but without the key functionality of GIS. Meanwhile, GIS education is increasingly focused narrowly on training users to operate desktop systems. She emphasized the corollary concern that users then do not only know too little geography, but that they also lack computer science skills.

Harrington pointed out how many of today's crises relate to environmental change as a whole and that remotely sensed imagery has allowed us to characterize such trends, particularly through land use and land cover analyses. Now, after a period of three decades of small government, there is a growing risk of losing critical satellite data sources, due to a lack of plans for the period beyond Landsat 8. Given the importance of such information for climate change, regional ecological trends, and more, the threat to losing this data is critical to geography and other scholarly fields.

Wright echoed the sentiment of a crisis stemming from smaller government, of measuring less, in particular relating to the collection of Census data. He raised concern about the potential erosion of the quality of race and ethnicity data, already begun with the introduction of an option for individuals to choose two or more races. He also noted a related crisis in the discipline along quantitative / qualitative divides. While some researchers offer numerical and statistical ways of knowing, a decided skepticism towards those valid approaches and about modeling techniques is leading to a lack of training in statistics and quantitative methodologies in the discipline. He noted that geographers need to understand enough to appreciate that these ways of knowing do have value.

Till returned the discussion to studying aspects of violence, including civil wars, drug related conflicts, and other topics

that often are not even considered newsworthy at the international scale. She expressed concern about the role of the media in terms of who decides what should be known. She noted one of the biggest challenges is about how to represent forms of spatial injustice that are not necessarily classified as crises. She advocated for thinking about how to shed light on geographies of civility, responsibility, and care as a means to imagine spatially just futures.

After further discussion among Council at large, Sheppard thanked the National Councillors for their responses to his question.

## **STATUS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **Finances**

AAG Treasurer Raphael and Richardson reviewed the preliminary FYE 2012 financial statements. This fiscal year, AAG is expected to have a change in net assets of approximately \$550,000, according to pre-audit figures. Total assets currently are approximately \$11 million, including cash, investments, and fixed assets. The consistently positive change in net assets over the past several years has led to a substantial cumulative change in net assets of the Association during the period Richardson has served as Executive Director. AAG's fiscal year ends August 31st and the audit begins next week. Final audited FYE 2012 statements will be presented to Council at the Spring 2013 meeting. Last year, auditors noted that the AAG is among the top 1% of non-profits they work with in terms of financial performance and accounting procedures in place.

Richardson noted that he has maintained a conservative investment policy. Unlike many organizations, AAG did not lose money at all in the recent economic downturn. Endowments total collectively about \$8 million. This is an important way to build a solid financial foundation to last for the future security of the association, to minimize risk, and ensure long-term viability of the organization. Zorn asked what accounts for the increase in value of the endowments. Richardson explained that increases are a result of any new gifts given to the AAG, gains in net assets of the AAG, and interest earned on endowment investments. Council policy is that investment earnings be reinvested into the fund each year. AAG is in a phase to build up the Endowment to ensure a strong financial foundation for geography and the Association.

Richardson presented the FYE 2013 budget for Council's reference. This is the budget that the AAG is currently operating under, as of September 1st, developed by AAG staff and Richardson, reviewed by the AAG Finance Committee, the Executive Committee, and approved by the AAG Council at the Spring meeting. At the next meeting in Los Angeles, Council will review the proposed FYE 2014 budget.

Richardson noted that plans are underway to develop a new fundraising effort. This future campaign will seek resources to address particular needs, such as supporting public policy efforts, student travel, expansion of AAG research grants, and other specific areas of interest. Richardson hopes to have time to begin this effort in 2014.

### **Membership**

The AAG Membership report showed that member numbers are holding steady despite the recession and economic downturn. Richardson explained that this is likely due to the many services and programs put into place over the past few years. For example, the restructured progressive dues structure, unemployed geographer support, and many other programs account for stable membership, and AAG has been able to build a strong financial base without burdening the membership by keeping dues and meeting fees low. The strong publication agreement negotiated by Richardson with Routledge is another factor. AAG's growth also relies on other revenue streams, such as donations, grants and contracts.

Use of the AAG Knowledge Communities has increased, and the services have been well received, particularly among specialty and affinity groups, who are using them heavily to organize for the annual meeting sessions. Saff asked if the AAG Regional Divisions could have their own Knowledge Communities through the system. Richardson encouraged any regional division that is not already utilizing them in this way to do so. For the 2013 Election, AAG will launch a new online election software. Paper ballots may be requested in lieu of online voting. The new system can be made available to AAG Regional Divisions and Specialty Groups or set up for issue-based referenda. A third party manages voting tallies, consistent with current AAG practice.

The AAG's membership management system, iMIS, was recently upgraded, which represented a large effort and expense for keeping up with new software needs. AAG staff are continuously working to improve the way that people can join, rejoin, and register. Many other internal improvement projects are underway.

### **Publications**

Richardson indicated that the AAG's publications are strong and professional, and are increasingly available online to members. His recent column in the *AAG Newsletter* provides a synopsis of the transition to move additional publications online. Council had approved moving the *AAG Newsletter* to an online format by January 2013, and the

transition is proceeding on schedule. Richardson presented a summary of the AAG strategic communications plan that organizes this process.

The new *AAG Review of Books*, approved in concept at the previous Council meeting, is currently in development. Richardson is conducting the arrangements with the publisher, Routledge. The Executive Committee recommended and Sheppard moved the appointment of Kent Mathewson as Editor-in-Chief of the *AAG Review of Books*. Richardson clarified that Mathewson is currently serving as Book Review Editor for the *AAG Annals*, so this represents a change in position rather than an additional role. Alderman seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Sheppard presented a proposed structure of associate editors and editorial board members for the new publication, along with a list of suggested editorial board names provided by Mathewson. Sheppard moved to accept the structure, along with the recommended names, and also including any previous Honorary Geographers, as pre-approved for the positions, pending their acceptance, for appointments of a period of up to three years. Alderman seconded, and Council approved unanimously.

Executive Committee recommended approval of a request received from the Editors of the *Annals* for a memorial for recently deceased geographer Neil Smith. Sheppard moved, Alderman seconded, and Council passed the motion unanimously to authorize a memorial for Neil Smith in the *AAG Annals*. Saff also suggested that a review of Smith's books be considered for the *AAG Review of Books*.

Richardson reported that the *AAG International Encyclopedia of Geography* has an excellent set of general editors and progress has been made on the identification of section editors. Entries listings are in development, and manuscript central is being prepared for use by the project. Contributors will be commissioned in the next phase, and efforts have been taken to engage international geographers. The *African Geographical Review* is now also online, in publication by Routledge, through an arrangement agreed to by the AAG and the AAG African Specialty Group. The *GIS&T Body of Knowledge*, published by the AAG, will be reprinted. AAG is negotiating with Esri for a grant to make this title available at the cost of shipping only.

### **Meridian Place Operations**

Richardson offered an overview of staff and facilities. He noted that the AAG has an excellent and diverse group of personnel who are intelligent, have integrity, care about doing a good job, and care about the discipline. They have skills that are relevant to the mission of the AAG. He commented that among the most important decisions an Executive Director makes are the hiring decisions. New on staff since the last meeting is Becky Pendergast, Director of Design and Digital Products, who previously worked in a senior position at the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. AAG has a strong internship program. Many of the staff who are key personnel today began working at AAG as interns.

Sheppard mentioned that the Executive Committee discussed comments from the prior Council meeting regarding the need to update the AAG's Long Range Plan. Executive Committee recommended that an eight (8) member committee be appointed for a one-year period to review and update the current long range plan. Council discussed the composition of the committee, which should include senior geographers with significant perspectives, members of diverse backgrounds, including younger generation geographers, and from a balance of institutions. Scott added the need for presence of nonacademic geographers, Saff mentioned K-12 educators and Maraffa suggested including geographers who have strategic planning experience. Wright recommended including those who have served on Council, and Richardson also suggested Past Presidents who had served on the prior Long Range Planning Committee who could help build on the existing plan. Scott moved to delegate to Executive Committee the process of establishing a Long Range Planning Committee charged to review and update the current AAG Long Range Plan. Harrington seconded, and Council passed unanimously. Sheppard encouraged Council to recommend names of individuals to serve.

### **Research, Education and Outreach**

Richardson, Solem, Solis, and Mannozi summarized the numerous and broad set of AAG current projects in research, education and outreach that collectively advance the AAG's strategic areas of work for the association and the discipline. These externally funded and internally organized activities involve virtually all of the AAG staff in direct and substantive ways, and often also engage the talent of AAG members as contributors, co-authors, or instructors. The most salient information from these programs and projects follows in abbreviated form.

The NSF Program for Building Community and Capacity for Data-Intensive Research in the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences recently awarded a grant for a project entitled, "Addressing Challenges for Geospatial Data-Intensive Research Communities: Research on Unique Confidentiality Risks & Geospatial Data Sharing within a Virtual Data Enclave." The project (Richardson PI) is a research collaboration between AAG and the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan that aims to discover viable ways to manipulate and share data and their geovisualizations to protect confidentiality and privacy, and to reduce disclosure risks in maps and other research derived from locationally identifiable data through the development and use of a Virtual Data Enclave. Other ongoing AAG projects include the Geospatial Frontiers in Health and Social Environments Project funded by the National Institutes of Health (Richardson PI), which has resulted in a proposed article, planned

for submission to *Science*. Richardson also updated the Council on the ongoing Geography and Human Rights activities, including the AAAS Coalition on Science and Human Rights. He highlighted a number of other internal projects that are strategic to the support of research within the AAG, the geographic research community, and beyond, such as AAG's disciplinary data efforts to collect department level data and information, and the digitization of the AAG's historical archive of Geographers on Film, among many others. He also noted that the AAG has developed strong research grant accounting and grants management capabilities, which are necessary to support the AAG federal contract projects.

Solem reported on the AAG's "Enhancing Departments and Graduate Education in Geography" (EDGE) project, currently in its second phase of funding by NSF's REESE program (Solem PI, Solís CoPI, McKendry CoPI), focused on geography graduate education for STEM careers in business, government, and nonprofit organizations. The EDGE team is finalizing research publications including 75 case studies of employers in business, government, non-profit (BGN). Jan Monk (CoPI) is leading a research component on Master's degrees and certificate programs. The outreach activities included a small grants program where 24 departments are applying EDGE findings and using the materials and resources that have been developed through EDGE over the past few years in response to needs of programs in various kinds of institutions. These findings are being disseminated at AAG Annual Meetings through about two dozen sessions organized by EDGE, also leveraging new careers resources supported by this and other external grants, and have helped to reinvigorate Jobs in Geography activities (Seattle, New York, and next in Los Angeles 2013 spearheaded by Adams, SP). Solem reported continuing to work closely with Ken Foote (CoPI) at annual workshops, the Department Leadership Workshops, and increasingly at AAG Regional Division Meetings. The team is looking ahead to a phase 3 focused on broadening participation research. AAG is also partnering on an NSF funded project led by the American Geophysical Institute (Solem PI) looking at learning outcomes and workforce competencies in terminal Master's programs.

Alderman requested that the long-range planning committee be asked to consider GIS certification issues for GIS. Council asked Scott, Alderman, Wentz, Zorn, to explore GIS accreditation and certification matters and return to the Spring 2013 meeting with input for Council discussion.

Rundquist suggested additional careers outreach potential with high school guidance counselors. Saff made a request for AAG to work with departments to distribute project findings, resources, and presentations. Solís responded that new AAG proposals currently in review include travel support, as well as funding to develop webinars. Sheppard commented on the synergy of diversity activities with research on careers and program offerings. Wright noted that the flexibility that education in geography provides could represent a way to promote the discipline in terms of skills for a labor force that demands flexibility.

The AAG's ALIGNED Project, "Addressing Locally-tailored Information Infrastructure & Geoscience Needs for Enhancing Diversity", funded by NSF (Solís PI) is wrapping up this year-end with the 12 pilot departments now deploying the suite of resources they helped co-develop. 71 departments have data and access to a toolkit that combines a spatial information system and online clearinghouse of materials for increasing the participation of members of underrepresented groups in geography/geosciences. Supplemental funding from an NSF RAPID grant (Solís PI) enabled production this past summer of a set of videos that feature AAG Diversity Ambassadors on careers and departmental climate. A special FOCUS section in the PG, accepted for publication in 2013, documents findings and best practices. New proposals for a second phase to extend the work have been submitted to NSF. The related project, Catalyzing Research on Geographies of Broadening Participation, funded by NSF's Geography and Spatial Sciences Program (Solís PI, McKendry CoPI) held a retreat at Temple University in April 2012 with 19 scholars focused on publishing articles on the contributions of geography and the spatial sciences to research on broadening participation in higher education.

Solem reported progress on the AAG's subaward (Heffron CoPI) under the National Geographic Society Education and Children's Programs NSF project, "Establishing a Roadmap for Large-Scale Improvement of K-12 Education in the Geographical Sciences." Sarah Bednarz (PI) leads the committee producing a research agenda for geographic sciences education in the next decade. The final report is scheduled for release in late 2012 along with the reports on Assessment and Professional Development and Instructional Materials. Also being released early winter 2012-13 is *Geography for Life*, the revised national geography standards report (led by Heffron). The endorsements for the AAG Resolution Supporting K-12 Geography Education (led by Wertman, Richardson) continue to grow. The importance of having these distinguished signatories on hand when the funding decisions will be made cannot be underestimated, and will be critical to garner significant resources for geography research, and for academic departments to use to show the support for geography by leading figures in government, business, and NGOs.

A major new international project has been awarded to AAG by NASA and USAID through the MyCOE / SERVIR Global Fellowship Program (Solís PI, Heffron CoPI). The two-year program will help develop long-term local capacity to use geography and geographic technologies for sustainable development in Africa and Asia for 120 undergraduate or graduate student fellows with their mentors from the region. Themes relate to climate change, food security, women and gender, education. Also under the umbrella of the My Community, Our Earth (MyCOE) partnership, the AAG's Global Connections and Exchange Program, funded by the Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (Solís PI) is developing virtual learning collaborations and classroom sustainable development projects on

climate change, food security, and green economy with secondary students of 178 teachers in the US and Nicaragua, Bolivia, Ghana, and the Philippines. MyCOE also recently was present at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 in Brazil, June 2012, to showcase a decade of activity on geographic learning for sustainable development, with attendance support from USDA (Richardson PI, Solís CoPI).

AAG's "Development of Fundamental Geospatial Datasets in Africa" program (Richardson PI, Mannozi CoPI) was awarded a new cooperative agreement from the US Department of State to provide access to geospatial datasets and capacity-building in the Lake Victoria region with UNEP, UN Habitat, Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), and in partnership with EIS-Africa. Another workshop and planning meeting is scheduled for December 2012 in Rwanda. Other AAG workshops in developing regions this year included two events led by the AAG Center for Global Geography Education (Solem PI) in Bangalore, India in March, with 28 teachers and professors from the US and India, and in Tokyo, Japan in September where AP human geography teachers worked collaboratively with local teachers on development of geographic case studies about the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. AAG also received support from NSF for US scholars to participate in IGU events from 2012 to 2016 (Richardson PI, Solís CoPI). The next deadline is in March 2013 for applications to attend the Kyoto, Japan IGU meeting.

Richardson gave an overview of AAG's very extensive outreach to federal agencies and other external organizations. He also noted that he has nominated David Harvey to deliver the 2014 American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Haskins Lecture, the theme of which each year is "A Life of Learning." A decision should be made by ACLS in the summer of 2013.

## **CONTINUING AND NEW BUSINESS**

### **Annual Meetings**

Richardson reviewed some of the plans underway for the 2013 meeting in Los Angeles, scheduled for April 9-13, 2013. Early indications point to yet another meeting with high attendance, potentially well beyond 7,000 attendees. He mentioned that the AAG Regional Division meetings are complementary to the annual meeting; together, the events form an important member benefit and opportunity for participation in the association. Richardson also noted the exciting variety of field trips and local speakers of interest that AAG staff, the Local Annual Meeting Support Committee, and other members have been organizing. Numerous articles of interest that have been published in the AAG Newsletter and online about the LA region. Council members suggested making a co-authored book, *A People's Guide to Los Angeles*, by geographers Laura Pulido, Laura Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng (University of California Press) available for sale online or at the meeting.

Future AAG meetings will occur in Tampa (2014), Chicago (2015), San Francisco (2016), and Boston (2017).

Vice President Winkler presented an overview of the current AAG Child Care Subsidy program, including a request letter from members and the positive results of a user survey conducted a few years ago. After a discussion of the program design and usage, and in consideration of potential needs of members, Winkler moved to increase the maximum limit of the subsidy for child care at AAG annual meetings to \$400. As is the current practice, only AAG members and registered conference attendees can apply for the subsidy, which is limited to child care from licensed providers located within the city where the annual meeting is held. Raphael seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Council also offered the following recommendations: 1) Advertise broadly the availability of the annual meeting child care subsidy; 2) publicize the existence of the "AAG Annual Meeting Parents Exchange" knowledge community; 3) continue to request that the Local Arrangements Committee prepare a listing of nearby family friendly activities -- including this information as part of the annual meeting electronic program, if possible; 4) ask the AAG Committee on the Status of Women to evaluate the potential need for dependent care assistance that would facilitate the attendance at AAG annual meetings by AAG members who are the primary care givers to elders or children with disabilities; and 5) consider extending the child care subsidy to regional meetings, although with a smaller maximum limit of \$150. If accepted by divisions, the subsidy would be paid for from AAG central funds rather than regional division funds. As with the annual meeting, only AAG members who are registered conference attendees would be eligible for the subsidy, which would only cover licensed day care within the city where the regional meeting is held. This idea will be explored further with the AAG Regional Divisions to assess interest in such an extension of the existing program. It is also recommended that local organizing communities for the regional meetings prepare a listing of local family friendly activities to distribute to meeting attendees like that which is done for national meetings.

The conversation raised a larger question that Council discussed, namely, the apparent erosion of support in governments and universities presently to provide for issues of family, community, and social interest, and the increasing demands on non-profit civil society groups such as the AAG, to take up the slack. Wright volunteered to author an Op Ed piece on the subject in a future AAG Newsletter Update as part of the Council's ongoing interest in contributing opinion articles on themes relevant to members.

## Honors and Awards

The Honors Committee forwarded its nominations for AAG Honors to Council for 2013. These are as follows: *Lifetime Achievement Honors*: Sallie Marston and Edward Soja; *Distinguished Scholarship Honors*: Judy Carney and John O'Loughlin; *Ronald F. Abler Distinguished Service Honors*: Ruth Shirey; *Gilbert Grosvenor Geographic Education Honors*: Gwenda Rice; *Gilbert White Public Service Honors*: Thelma Glass (noting the exception of a posthumous award in her special case); and *Distinguished Teaching Honors*: Dawn Wright. The Honors Committee also nominated William Moseley for the AAG Media Achievement Award. Wright moved to accept the nominations, Alderman seconded, and the Council passed the motion unanimously. Sheppard thanked the AAG Honors Committee and Chair Susan Hardwick for forwarding this distinguished group of honorees.

Sheppard reminded the Council that the 2013 Honorary Geographer, approved by the Executive Committee, is Maya Lin. Kobayashi noted that Executive Committee also approved the 2013 Presidential Achievement Award to Bobby Wilson. She presented the nomination from the AAG Enhancing Diversity Committee for the 2013 Enhancing Diversity Award, to be given to Clyde Woods and Laura Pulido. Alderman moved, Wright seconded, and Council unanimously approved the nominees. Kobayashi also updated Council on the progress of the Harold M. Rose Award for Anti-Racism Research and Practice that had been approved as a new AAG award at the Spring 2012 meeting. Nominations will be received through an extended deadline of December 17 with the inaugural awardee to be announced at the Los Angeles meeting in 2013.

Richardson presented a letter and materials for the establishment of a new AAG award, which was proposed by Stan Brunn, along with an offer to fund the award with a donation of \$25,000 to provide for annual prizes of \$1,000. The award will be presented to those who have made innovative contributions to the discipline of geography. Such contributions could be based on field or laboratory research efforts and qualitative or quantitative methods; contributions to the arts, literary, scientific, technological or conceptual/theoretical breakthroughs that advance our thinking and make an impact on our discipline. Tyner suggested that the name of the award be the *AAG Stanley Brunn Award for Creativity in Geography*. Tyner moved to establish the award, Alderman seconded, and Council unanimously approved. A deadline in January will be publicized, with the Executive Committee to serve as the selection committee, with the intention of naming the inaugural recipient at the Los Angeles meeting in 2013.

Richardson noted that the AAG has budgeted an increase in the size of the AAG grants available for this year under the AAG Dissertation and Research Grants programs to \$8,000 each, to be distributed in early 2013 according to the usual application procedures. Sheppard mentioned that beginning with the 2013 AAG Awards Luncheon, the names of geographers deceased in the past year will be read in tribute.

Alderman suggested, and sparked a discussion about the potential for, an AAG award to recognize outstanding departments. Council encouraged Alderman to develop the idea further for consideration at the Spring 2013 meeting.

## AAG Committees

The Council chose the following to stand for election on the ballot for Honors and Nominating Committees: *Honors A*: Kenneth Foote and Audrey Kobayashi; *Honors B*: Christina Dando, Jennifer Helzer, Mary Henry, and Joni Palmer; *Nominating Committee*: Thomas Baerwald, Wei Li, Kamlesh Lulla, Darrell Napton, Bimal Paul, and Dorothy Sack.

Zorn announced the names of the members who will be placed on the ballot as received in final form by the AAG Nominating Committee for the 2013 Election, as follows: *Vice President*: David Butler and Mona Domosh; *National Council*: Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Melissa Gilbert, George Malanson, and David Wilson.

Zorn moved that the following Councillors be added as representatives of the AAG Council on the respective committees: Committee on the Status of Women in Geography: John A. Harrington, Jr.; Constitution & Bylaws Committee: Elizabeth Wentz; Enhancing Diversity Committee: Ron Hagelman; and Scientific Freedom & Responsibility Committee: Audrey Kobayashi. Wright seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Richardson noted that the AAG Healthy Departments Committee had not received any requests during the past six months.

## AAG Specialty and Affinity Groups

Till reviewed the proposal to create the AAG Polar Geography Specialty Group, an action which had been tabled last Spring in the interest of obtaining additional information. Till noted that the organizers had adequately addressed the Council's questions for clarification. Scott moved to accept the proposal to create the AAG Polar Geography Specialty Group. Hagelman seconded, and Council approved unanimously.

Till provided an update from the AAG Specialty and Affinity Groups on the basis of their reports and responses to individual queries. Among the discussion items, Harrington volunteered to serve as a liaison with the Stand Alone Geographers Affinity Group. Till encouraged continuation of the Specialty Group Chairs sessions over lunch in an interactive way, to facilitate sharing of best practices among groups. Also, she noted interest by some specialty groups



to voluntarily work whenever mutually beneficial with regional division meeting organizers to help enrich those meetings. She also encouraged Council members to attend specialty group business meetings when possible.

As suggested by the History of Geography Specialty Group of the AAG Specialty Groups, Richardson noted that the AAG Enrichment Fund Program will set aside funds to support registration fees for up to five (5) distinguished non-geographers invited by specialty groups to attend the annual meeting without any specific role or obligation. The individuals will be competitively selected from among special requests by Specialty Group Chairs made through the current application mechanism.

### **AAG Council Meetings**

Council discussed the calendar for upcoming Executive Committee and Council meetings for 2013 as well as the information received thus far about 2013 AAG Regional Division meetings and locations. The next AAG Council meeting will be held in Los Angeles in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, from April 7-9, 2013.

Returning to an idea raised at the previous Council meeting, and reiterated by communication from the Graduate Student Affinity Group, Council discussed the possibility of student participation in the AAG Council meetings. Alderman proposed a number of options for how such participation could be arranged, which Councillors discussed. Scott emphasized that complex mechanisms do not need to be formalized at once, since having student voices is what matters most. Raphael similarly noted that student representation could be phased in. Sheppard requested that Alderman revise and elaborate the proposal given the discussion and any additional feedback to come from Councillors, which will be considered at the Spring 2013 meeting for implementation in Fall 2013. In the meantime, the current chairs of the Graduate Student Affinity Group will be invited to visit the Council meeting in April.

### **Closed Session**

Council met in closed session to review personnel items.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, President Sheppard adjourned the Council meeting at 12:15 p.m. on Sunday, November 4, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenny Zorn  
AAG Secretary