

Spring 2020 AAG Council Meeting Minutes

April 6 – 7
(via Zoom)

Present:

Executive Committee:

David Kaplan, *President*; Amy Lobben, *Vice President*; Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, *Past President*; Deborah Thomas, *Treasurer, GPRM*; Karen Johnson-Webb, *Secretary, East Lakes*; Gary Langham, *Executive Director* (non-voting);

National Councilors: Jennifer Collins, *National Councilor Chair*; Lorraine Dowler; LaToya Eaves; Wendy Jepson; Wei Li; Jamie Winders;

Regional Councilors: Michaela Buenemann, *Southwest and Regional Division Councilor Chair*; Woonsup Choi, *West Lakes*; Rebecca Kelly, *Middle Atlantic*; Richard Kujawa, *New England St. Lawrence Valley*; John Kupfer, *Southeast*; Lindsay Naylor, *Middle States*; Yolonda Youngs, *Pacific Coast*;

Student Councilor: Sarah Stinard-Kiel.

Staff: Candida Mannozi, AAG Director of Operations

Guests, April 6: Emily T. Yeh, *Vice President-elect*; Teri Martin, AAG Director of Finance; Emily Fekete, AAG Social Media and Engagement Coordinator

Guests, April 7: Emily T. Yeh, *Vice President-elect*.

Opening: 10:30 AM EST

1.1 Welcome

President David Kaplan welcomed all and also introduced incoming Vice President Emily T. Yeh, who was visiting with the Council to begin orientation to her upcoming term of service.

1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

Past President Luzzadder-Beach moved to adopt the Agenda, Collins seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1.3 Ratification of the Fall Council Meeting Minutes

Luzzadder-Beach moved to ratify the previously approved Fall 2019 Council Meeting Minutes. Naylor seconded the motion. The Minutes were unanimously ratified.

1.4 Adoption of the Consent Agenda

Secretary Johnson-Webb moved to adopt the Consent Agenda, Youngs seconded the motion. The Consent Agenda was adopted unanimously.

1.5 Regional Division Reports (*see Appendix I for full reports*)

Buenemann summarized the regional division reports and stated that most AAG regions are still planning to hold in-person meetings in the fall of 2020. Kaplan indicated that the AAG might be able to advise regions on virtual meeting planning in the future, given its recent experience with the developments and changes to the 2020

Annual Meeting due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Questions arose regarding the Middle Atlantic Division, which has not scheduled an election, and is experiencing low/weak participation in its meetings.

Kaplan asked Buenemann about any departments that may have been signaling potential vulnerability due to the COVID-19 closures and adaptations. Kupfer mentioned that SEDAAG regularly sends a questionnaire to state representatives to obtain updates from within the region. He stated that the response rate is irregular, and that typically, the departments that are experiencing difficulties are less likely to respond.

Thomas reported that GPRM is experiencing a variety of situations, from mergers to closures to faculty retirements in departments where those lines may not be continued. Kupfer suggested the Council ask Regional Councilors to include an update on the health of departments in their reports to Council.

Naylor suggested sharing SEDAAG's survey, as a possible template for regions to use.

Jepson inquired about the Geography Department in Alaska-Fairbanks. Kaplan indicated having written a letter in support of this department and said he hasn't had a response from them.

Johnson-Webb echoed Kupfer's suggestion of providing Regional Division Councilors with a report-gathering template (incl. awards, healthy depts., name changes, other...). Kupfer agreed to that and asked also for a survey summary. *Buenemann offered to draft a first template of these reports, for Regional Councilors to review.*

Wei Li asked if the AAG has a list of endangered departments. Dave said Alec keeps a list. Li said we want to communicate better with the Healthy Departments Committee.

1.1 President's Comments

Kaplan stated that the current situation worldwide is extremely unusual, and it has resulted in the AAG not holding its in-person meeting for the first time since WWII. He praised the AAG staff for having been able to turn so quickly from cancellation to hosting a virtual meeting. He stated that he's been working on plans with Vice President Lobben and Past President Luzzadder-Beach for the Annual Meeting in Seattle in 2021. He greatly praised the AAG staff for their creativity and proactive attitude in responding to the challenges facing the AAG.

Kaplan mentioned that the current virtual meeting is a great test-run for future, hybrid Annual Meetings.

He said he felt his Regional Division initiative is moving forward very well. He noted that he also hopes next year to continue working on outreach to more geographers outside academia, expanding the AAG's initiatives to welcome non-academic geographers into the AAG.

1.1.1 Vice President's Comments

Lobben echoed and supported Kaplan's statements regarding known and unknown plans for the 2021 Seattle and 2022 New York meetings. She stressed the need for all of us to remain generous, flexible and forgiving, in order to get through these challenges. She stated being excited about the virtual meeting experiment playing out this week, because she had been discussing these sessions with the Disability Specialty Group. The Group plans to review how the virtual meeting went, and whether the virtual meeting allowed more people with disabilities to attend than previously.

1.1.2 Past President's Comments

Luzzadder-Beach echoed Kaplan and Lobben's praise for and gratitude to the AAG staff for getting the AAG ready for the virtual meeting week, but also for their efforts over the past three weeks. She praised their professionalism, the fast work on organizing a late breaking session on COVID-19, and even obtaining an AAAS grant to fund the costs for hosting those sessions. She also thanked her colleagues on the AAG Climate Action Task Force, and the Harassment-Free AAG Task Force and wished them great progress into the future.

1.1.3 Student Councilor Comments

Stinard-Kiel wanted to thank the AAG and staff for how they handled the cancellation of the meeting, the information sharing and offering a full refund to participants. She stated that the COVID-19 virus brought into the forefront inequalities esp. amongst graduate students. Johnson-Webb asked Stinard-Kiel to send her the statement she read for inclusion in the Minutes (see Appendix II.)

Thomas asked whether Stinard-Kiel's statement could be published in the AAG Newsletter.

Jepson mentioned that the actions Stinard-Kiel put before the Council need to be addressed by ***gathering AAG Councilors / Fellows to develop a comprehensive COVID-19 response team to forge a path forward into the new normal.*** Dowler thanked Stinard-Kiel for her meaningful statement and echoed Jepson's suggestions.

Winders stated that Department Chairs will also need help with ideas on how to address cuts or other changes coming their way. Kaplan stated that an AAG response should be formulated this summer, perhaps even via a special Council meeting. He also stated that this is where the Healthy Departments Committee can assist. Winders urged the AAG to act now, as universities are likely to decide about their budgets before June. Jepson stated that some schools are already talking about canceling classes for the fall. ***She stated that the AAG might develop a COVID-19 response team that addresses a variety of areas***

(departments, students, faculty, etc.) that will be affected. KD JW also echoed the suggestion that the AAG move on this as quickly as possible.

Naylor stated being committed to work on this rapid response. SL-B thanked Stinard-Kiel for her words and shared her experience at GMU in response to an economic tsunami (i.e., they closed 17 sections).

Kaplan suggested starting with the Healthy Departments Committee. Langham mentioned the staff is prepared to launch two new Knowledge Communities on COVID-19: one on research and another to share best practices. He suggested that, perhaps, these platforms could serve the task force.

1.1.4 Executive Director - Current State of the AAG

Langham stated that his past seven months at the AAG have been intense and instructive. He praised geographers for how they have responded to the crisis. He stated the AAG staff rallied to the challenge and took on more than may be visible from outside. He stated that staff is working tirelessly to process refunds, having processed 4,467 manually (on the old AAG systems!) to date.

He stated that the AAG is hosting over 180 virtual sessions and that our members are taking note, asking other organizations they belong to how they can emulate us. He stated there are 387 new registrations for the virtual meeting. He mentioned wanting to explore with the virtual platform vendors the AAG has contracted how to accommodate Regional Divisions, or sister organizations using these licenses for free or at a reduced cost.

He stated that the 2020 Denver virtual meeting is a great beta-testing opportunity, to learn from our mistakes and create better online meeting options for the future.

He stated that the AAG is lucky to have strong reserves, but that cuts at universities are concerning. He believes the AAG is among the top 1-2% of membership societies that can rely on their deep reserves to tide them through this downturn. He stated that the AAG's investments are only down 8% for the last quarter, compared to the market's +- 30% drops.

Langham stated that we are doing well with our meeting contracts, even though for Denver we are obligated to minimal guarantees of \$1.2M. He indicated that in order to avail ourselves of the *force majeure* clauses in our contracts and thus be exempted from our minimum guarantees, we needed to show that over 40% of our meeting attendees were unable, unwilling or discouraged from attending the meeting. It was for this reason that the AAG surveyed its members in February with just such a question. Fortunately, the responses to the survey indicated that over 60% of our meeting attendees were unable, unwilling or discouraged from attending the meeting. This response allowed us to apply our *force majeure* clauses. However, Langham indicated that he then asked the staff to work in partnership with our meeting hotels and offer to apply our payments and deposits for a future meeting with them in 2023. The positive response from the hotels

now means that we have partnered well with them, and that we have also not lost much of the prep-work done for Denver so far (i.e., local arrangements committee, field trips, the Denver book, etc.). Langham further explained that the AAG's current exposure from the meeting cancellation is approx. \$800,000, which he hopes to obtain from the event cancellation insurers. Although, at the moment, the insurers are trying to push back on the communicable disease coverage the AAG paid for early in 2020. Resolution of that dispute is still pending. If the outcome of these negotiations breaks our way, the insurance payment could completely cover the AAG's exposure from cancelling the Denver meeting.

Langham then pointed to several bright spots that are prepared for the AAG Virtual Annual Meeting: he shared Jane Goodall's *Welcome to the AAG* video with the Councilors, and he indicated that a second such videotaped welcome is forthcoming from Esri's Jack Dangermond, as well.

Langham stated that the AAG headquarters have been closed, and staff have already been working remotely for the past three weeks. This decision by the AAG anticipated local governments' closure and stay-at-home orders.

Winders asked whether the AAG has considered what to do with "orphaned" members of sister societies which may not be able to weather their challenges as well as the AAG has. Langham stated that he is open to talking with any society that wishes to reach out and encouraged Councilors to reach out to the leadership in these organizations and connect him with them.

9.0 Projects & Programs

9.1 Geography & the Military Committee report and recommendations Kaplan introduced the report and asked Langham for additional comments.

Langham asked the Council to decide a few things regarding this report: how do we wish to share the report with the membership? And how do/if we want to adopt the recommendations? He stated having spoken to the Committee's Chair, Susan Cutter, about the recommendations contained in the report. He specifically mentioned having concerns on recommendations #1 and #8, which appear (from his discussions with Cutter) to be more strictly worded than intended.

"1. The AAG as a professional organization will not initiate, develop, or participate in research collaborations or partnerships with military or intelligence agencies unless the objectives and outcomes of the research and partnership, as determined by the AAG's elected leadership, are in keeping with the AAG's code of ethics and commitment to the well-being of people, places, and environments."

"8. Establish an implementation committee to assist with executing the above recommendations and foster continued dialogue on the ethical implications of engagements between geographers and the military."

Winders asked about #4: best practices on full disclosure on military funding, and whether it should not become a wider practice to disclose all funding sources, not just military? She also asked whether the Minerva project mentioned in the report hasn't been closed? Dowler asked what the AAG's past practices used to be re. military funding for projects or programs, and Mannozi briefly described former Executive Director Richardson's full disclosure practice on past such grants or contracts.

Luzzadder-Beach stated that she would not like the AAG to sign on to something that could unintentionally limit graduate students' potential funding sources.

Naylor asked whether this would apply to AAG committees and how AAG might handle these restrictions.

Luzzadder-Beach pointed to recommendation #4 which applies to AAG journals, etc.

Johnson-Webb asked whether AAG's legal counsel had seen this report and its recommendations? Could the report be released with a period for comment?

Dowler suggested creating a task force report landing page on the AAG website, and to publish there all special committee or task force reports commissioned by the AAG Council (i.e., Harassment-Free, Mental Health, etc.). Langham agreed and suggested creating an email that would allow for questions or feedback such as: taskforce@aag.org

There was a suggestion to create a subcommittee of Council to study the recommendations of the Geography and the Military Committee. Kaplan asked for volunteers: Lobben and Choi volunteered (Mannozi is willing to act as staff liaison), to propose recommendations next Fall for the Council's response/decisions regarding the Committee's recommendations.

Kujawa suggested publishing the report and to state that the recommendations will be further studied, before a Council decision on them is made. This suggestion met with general consensus.

12:24 Break for lunch

12:49 Kaplan reconvened the Council

2.0 Finance Overview

2.1 Update/progress on approved investments and Innovation Fund proposal for 2020

Thomas summarized the AAG's strong financial status. She pointed out that the AAG again earned a clean gold-star audit report, which puts the AAG in the top 1-2% of comparable organizations. Thomas indicated that there are many reporting changes occurring (legal revisions to accounting and reporting practices) that affected the AAG's audit preparations and she commended the AAG's Finance Director Teri Martin for her herculean efforts in adapting to these many and onerous changes. Langham echoed this praise.

Thomas stated that at its February meeting, the Finance Committee noted that membership is intrinsically linked to the AAG's financial health. She pointed to the Finance Committee's recommendation to establish a subcommittee of AAG members (i.e., Rick Bunch and others with big data experience) to advise the AAG staff as it considers various member management systems and embarks upon the transition. Thomas asked the Council to suggest names for this subcommittee with experience in membership, big data, disciplinary health, etc.). Winders also suggested tapping into a few university alumni networks. ***Woonsup Choi and the Membership Committee will be asked to advise this process.***

Winders asked whether the AAG can fundraise with previous grant recipients to create a pool to provide bridging funds to students facing the current crisis. Stinard-Kiel stated that she is willing to help with this. There was a suggestion to task the AAG COVID Response Team to consider this among the other topics that it will advise the AAG on. ***Johnson-Webb suggested reaching out for donations already, rather than waiting for task force advice. Thomas suggested not including student awards in the consideration of what awards to fund for 2021, and to fundraise for the student awards.*** Option to ask all awardees whether they wish to donate their award to a general fund to support students in AAG.

There was general consensus to explore a special fundraising effort to support AAG student members as part of AAG COVID response.

Innovation Fund

Langham reminded Council of the approach behind his proposal for annual recommendations for the amount of funds to be allocated for innovations annually. He stated that given recent developments, he would like to suggest using the proposed innovation funds for 2020 to fund the COVID Response Team initiatives (e.g., \$80,000 is typically the amount the AAG receives in student membership fees, \$120,000 is approx. one year's worth of awards issued by AAG).

He summarized the Finance Committee's recommendation that "...each year, depending on the portfolio performance of the Richardson Endowment Accounts (DFL-181684 and DFL-218442), the Finance Committee will recommend a % of the Richardson Endowment to be invested for pilot initiatives to be presented to and approved by Council."

Langham also reported that "*The Finance Committee also recommends to the AAG Council, based on the funds available and annual portfolio performance in the Richardson Endowment Accounts (DFL-181684 and DFL-218442), that the figure to be used to fund pilot initiatives in 2020 be 3.5% of the Richardson Endowment Accounts.*" ***Jepson seconded the Finance Committee's recommendations for the Innovation Fund as stated above. The motion passed with 18 ayes and one nay.***

Investment Portfolio: The two allocation and rebalancing recommendations from the Finance Committee were discussed.

“The Finance Committee recommends to Council that 20% of the current 40% of funds invested in stocks be allocated to ESG funds.

The Finance Committee recommends that the Council approve the AAG SunTrust Investment Advisor to carry out this investment allocation, and if the performance of these funds (by the time of the 2021 Finance Committee meeting) is positive, the Finance Committee, under advisement from the SunTrust Investment Advisor, will recommend a gradual increase in allocations to ESG funds.”

General discussion resulted in a suggestion to post-pone the Council decision on these two recommendations.

Winders moved for Council NOT to decide on either of the recommendations from the Finance Committee cited above re the portfolio allocations and distributions, but to revisit these recommendations from the Finance Committee in a year’s time. Li seconded the motion. The motion carried with 18 ayes and 1 abstention.

2.1 FYE 2021 Budget

Luzzadder-Beach seconded the Finance Committee’s recommendation to approve the FYE 2021 Budget. The FYE 2021 Budget was approved unanimously.

3.0 Committees and SGs

3.1 Committee on Committees update

3.1.1 Elect new Treasurer

Thomas moved to nominate LaToya Eaves for Treasurer, Li seconded. The motion passed with 18 votes in favor and one abstention.

Council volunteers needed on several AAG Committees. **Li stated she is open to serving on the IRSE or D&I Committees. Kaplan asked Councilors to flag themselves to Johnson-Webb for service on AAG Committees.**

Winders asked about the indefinite terms on the Healthy Departments Committee and whether this committee could benefit from new members and rotating terms of service. ***General consensus to consider revising this Committee’s terms of service and its charge at the Fall meeting.***

3.1.2 Summary of Committee reports and requests for Council

Harm de Blij Committee question re whether the award is for more advanced or for early-career faculty: there was general consensus to encourage the Committee to select in alternation between senior and junior awardees each year, and to remind them that they can go up to 5 years back into the candidate pool.

Meridian Book Award Committee: Mannozi was asked to provide feedback to the Committee on its request re members who had graduated

from same the department (even if decades apart) not serving on same committee.

3.1.3 Diversity & Inclusion Committee letter to Council

Discussion resulted in recommending a staff liaison to work with this Committee (with clear guidelines on the staffer's role) and to ask the Committee to develop timelines for their list of goals. **Langham suggested he would assign 1-3 staffers to develop an action plan from the Committee's stated goals. The AAG could also consider hiring an external contractor to assess and address DEI issues at the AAG and in the discipline.**

Li supported tapping into existing staff, or a member of the Executive Committee could be liaison to the D&I Committee and suggested hiring an external person to work with the Committee.

Luzzadder-Beach supported a long-term plan to appoint a Diversity & Inclusion staffer at the AAG. **Lobben suggested perhaps starting with staff liaison, with an end goal by (X) time to hire on a full-time staffer with expertise in DEI to work with this Committee and across the AAG.**

Dowler suggested working this future staff hire into the Strategic Plan as a priority. **KDJW asked whether the AAG could contract with an expert to help AAG assess the current situation in the discipline and help develop a plan for the future. Langham agreed.**

3.2 SGs and AGs – there was no discussion under this Agenda item.

5.1 Anti-Harassment Initiative: Task Force update (Y2) and plans for Y3

Dowler summarized the progress made for Y2 Harassment-Free initiative rollout. Dowler reported that the task force asked for as transparent as possible an AAG reporting policy.

5.2 Proposed new AAG Policy and Procedures

Suggested edits p. 144: C. Reporting Procedure – Mannozi was asked to expand the language in this section to illustrate the variety of ways in which attendees and AAG members can receive assistance and support from the Advocate, besides help with filing an official complaint.

Johnson-Webb moved to approve the proposed conduct policy and procedures. Dowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5.3 Changes to AAG Constitution and Bylaws – ***The Council unanimously ratified its Fall 2019 approval of these changes to the AAG Constitution and Bylaws.***

5.4 2019 Member Survey results and foreword

Langham stated these documents are ready for rollout to the AAG membership. (This was an informational item only.)

6.0 Publications

6.1 Proposed guidance for *Annals* editors

Naylor and Jepson presented their recommendations for guidance to new AAG editors (*see Appendix III for full text*) and asked for Council feedback. There was general consensus.

Naylor and Jepson moved to approve the guidance for new editors. Li seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Johnson-Webb suggested sharing a flowchart of sequence of decisions with AAG editors and the Publications Director.

6.1.1 David Butler seeks second term

Jepson indicated that the Publications Committee will want to work with any reappointed editors to increase submissions and diversity to each journal. Discussion resulted in most Councilors favoring reappointment. ***Kupfer moved to reappoint David Butler to a second term as Annals Editor. Luzzadder-Beach seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.***

Memorials for Past President in *Annals* – table to Fall Council Meeting. ***Council will suggest names and vote on possible authors via a later online vote.***

Editor Heejun Chang would like to accept research-notes submissions, short essays of about 2,500 words, for peer review and publication in the journal. Winders suggested that editors make very clear to reviewers that these pieces are different from a regular article submission. ***Kupfer moved to approve Chang's suggestion, but asked the AAG to ascertain Taylor & Francis' ability to accommodate this new type of submission without an increase in cost to AAG. Eaves seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.***

Naylor indicated she will reach out to editors to reassure them of the AAG Council's backing in these times of COVID-19.

6.1.2 Review and approve Special Issue Topic on Displacements

Jepson suggested approving the special issue topic.

Kaplan moved to approve the proposed Annals Special Issue topic on Displacements, Naylor seconded the motion. The vote was 15 in favor and two against. The approval carried.

6.1.3 Review and approve revised HG ed. board (Strauss)

Thomas moved to approve Strauss' revised editorial board. Li, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6.1.4. Review and approve revised NS ed. board (Meehan)

Winders moved to approve the revised NS editorial board. Collins seconded the motion. The motion obtained 15 votes in favor, two nays, and two abstentions. The revised NS editorial board was approved.

7.0 Three-Year Strategic Plan and Communications

7.1 Three-Year Strategic Plan

Langham anticipated asking Council for a vote to formally adopt the 3-Year Strategic Plan and invited comments, or questions.

7.2 Sep. 2019 – Feb. 2020 Communications Update – informational item only

7.3 Membership Report Update – informational item only

7.4 Expanding Physical Geography proposal

Langham provided an update on his communication with this group.

7.5 AAG Representation in other Orgs (GISCI Board Rep needed)

Langham asked Councilors for suggestions.

10.0 Annual Meetings

10.1 Denver 2020 (Virtual Meeting)

Langham briefly updated the Council that Day 1 of the Denver Virtual Meeting has kicked off and is progressing without a hitch.

10.2 Climate Action Task Force Update

Jepson reported on the task force having to implement and experiment with proposed online sessions in Denver. She called out Oscar Larson and commended his professionalism and success in pulling together the virtual elements of an AAG Meeting. She indicated the task force's work will continue. She asked the Council to reaffirm the task force's charge. She also stated that AAG is now a leader in this effort to move to online meetings, compared to many sister organizations. Jepson indicated that communicating with start-ups and innovators now, early on, gets our needs and desires out in front of the designers, who then work to accommodate our requests for inclusivity, diversity, etc. (see Appendix III for full report).

10.3 Future Meetings: 2021 Seattle; 2022 NYC; 2023 Denver; 2024 Hawaii

Langham announced that the 2023 Annual Meeting will be in Denver and the 2025 Annual Meeting will take place in Detroit.

11.0 Honors and Awards

11.1 – 11.2.4 Informational Agenda item 12.2 Regional Divisions Task Force update and proposal (see Appendix IV for full text)

Kaplan introduced the topic and the task force's recommendations. He indicated that AAG staff were asked to review the proposals and stated that these were feasible suggestions.

Winders suggested gathering baseline data to compare whether the proposed changes are having the effect desired. Kupfer suggested folding these metrics into the Regional Division reports to Council.

Kujawa stated that the proposed policies and suggestions will act as a morale booster to the Regions and to students.

Youngs asked who might be the potential AAG staffer to liaise and work on/with the Regions. Langham stated that he can work with several staff to serve as part-time liaison, until a full-time staffer can be funded.

Kupfer suggested creating a directory for Regional Division officers, listing who on the AAG staff is responsible for what aspects of operations they might need assistance with (i.e., membership, elections, insurance, etc.).

Kaplan listed the Regional Division Task Force's recommendations:

- *Provide some financial support to Regional leaders by offering free AAG Annual Meeting registration to Regional Presidents/Chairs*
- *Increase Regional subsidy by creating a fund for Regions to apply for up to \$2,500 annually.*
- *Create an undergraduate award analogous to the \$1,000 graduate award for best paper of the meeting.*
- *Development of a \$10,000 fund out of which Regional Divisions can apply for Meeting enhancement monies.*
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Kupfer moved to approve the above-listed proposed additional support to AAG Regional Divisions. Kujawa seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

12.3 International Councilor proposal

Kaplan summarized the suggestions coming from the Subcommittee for launching an Observer International Councilor position on Council for a 2-year non-voting trial period. Li illustrated the reasoning behind asking the Nominating Committee to propose these names. She also specified that the location of these candidates has to be outside the US.

Jepson asked for more clarification on what is intended as “international” – citizenship, affiliation...? Kupfer suggested allowing anyone residing outside established AAG regions to run for this position.

Further discussion resulted in the Council asking the Subcommittee to continue develop further guidelines and parameters on this proposed new position. Youngs also suggested looking at how other organizations handle international representation on their boards.

This item was tabled for the Subcommittee to work on further and present to Council at a later date.

8.0AAG Projects and Programs

8.1 Policy & Outreach

Langham indicated he will bring in staffer Michelle Kinzer as one of the staff liaisons for the Diversity & Inclusion committee.

8.2 Human Rights and Media Campaign: Tashpolat Tiyp case

Langham provided a brief update.

Tuesday, April 7:

9:45 AM President Kaplan reconvened the Council meeting
(Kujawa regrets – he rejoined the meeting at 12:00 noon)

12.4 Possible Regional Division Merger

Kaplan introduced the topic, mentioning that he'd discussed this eventuality with Middle Atlantic and Middle States Councilors Kelly and Naylor. Kelly mentioned noticing in her term of service that the leadership at Middle Atlantic is serving beyond their terms and elections are not being held, despite her requests to do so. With Maryland schools and a few DC-based members, the membership is limited and also hampers healthy operations. Naylor and Kelly are both open to floating the idea of a merger of the Middle Atlantic and Middle States Regions to enrich and revitalize their divisions.

Naylor reviewed AAG Constitutional provision for disbanding inactive Regional Divisions. She also mentioned stagnation in Middle States' leadership (someone holding a board position far beyond their term-end).

Kelly suggested that the Council request that these two divisions consider the possibility of a merger at their 2020 fall meetings. If there is agreement with this, then at Spring 2021 meeting the Council could take formal action on the merger. General consensus.

AAG Members in Each Regional Division (as of April 2020):

Pacific Coast – 1,201

Great Plains, Rocky Mountains - 446

East Lakes - 405

West Lakes - 647

Middle States - 874

Middle Atlantic - 452

Southeastern – 1,158

New England/St. Lawrence Valley - 577

Southwest - 522

Kupfer suggested perhaps forming a Healthy Regions Committee comprised of Regional Councilors, Regional Chairs, etc. to advise and support regions on how to be effective and useful to their memberships.

Discussion resulted in a recommendation to further explore a merger and additional outreach to members in both regions, with a report back to the Council at a later date.

11.3 Request from Program Excellence Award Committee to rotate Associates award every 5 years (as opposed to every 3 years)

Mannozi gave a brief overview of the request from the Committee and the history of this AAG Award. Discussion revealed that the award process may be too onerous for the nominated departments to handle. Johnson-Webb recommended asking Jacquie Housel to serve on this Award Committee.

A subcommittee was formed to look into this question and advise the Council on potential changes to this award's cycle: Thomas, Buenemann, Youngs, Jacqueline Housel (TB invited), Mannozi as staff liaison.

6.2 AAGRB Editorial interviews and selection

Council discussed the two candidates. *Eric Carter was selected.*

10.1.2 AM (cont.): Accessibility Task Force Update – Lobben indicated that she is postponing this update by a month, to allow for an assessment of the accessibility of the Denver Virtual Meeting and some discussions to take place first.

12.0 Council & Resolutions

12.5 Council Meeting Fall 2020: select location – this decision was postponed to a later date.

Conclude pending items: West Lakes Bylaws approval (*see Appendix V for full text*).

Choi moved to approve the amended West Lakes Bylaws. Youngs seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Langham suggested holding a Council meeting in the summer; in order to continue addressing the evolving COVID-19 outbreak and its effects in a timely fashion. There was general consensus on this.

Langham further suggested he would chair an *AAG Steering Committee for the COVID-19 response* and asked for Council volunteers. He indicated this Steering Committee would discuss innovation funds, new ways to engage members, collaborate across existing committees, member and student support, future meetings, and more. *Council volunteers: Naylor, Jepson, Li, Kaplan, Lobben, and Eaves.*

Winders moved to approve the proposed AAG Strategic Three-Year plan, Kupfer seconded the motion. The motion passed with 15 votes in favor and one abstention. (Note: some Councilors were obliged to leave the meeting early, due to scheduling conflicts.)

Meridian Place renovations: Langham indicated that construction is currently not possible in Washington, DC, so approval from Council on the renovation options are not urgent and can be discussed at the future Council summer meeting. General consensus.

13.0 New Business

Johnson-Webb asked why the Council meetings are so long, even if Exec. Committee meets monthly to triage any urgency. Langham suggested perhaps exploring creating subcommittees on Council to address certain topics, vote on them, and report back to the full Council. To explore the feasibility of this new format, he and staff will check the AAG's governance documents and obtain input from legal counsel.

13.1 Resolutions

Kaplan read the 2020 Resolutions to all remaining Councilors in attendance:

Whereas, Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, as Vice President, President, and Past President of the American Association of Geographers has ably guided and served the Association to address the challenges facing the discipline of Geography, particularly by promoting wider engagement of geography with science and human rights initiatives; supporting the development of a harassment-free initiative at the AAG meetings; encouraging a greening of the AAG Annual Meeting; and championing the right of everyone to benefit from science; and whereas she has thus contributed considerable efforts to advance the AAG's mission, goals, and activities;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the American Association of Geographers, assembled in an online meeting in lieu of the canceled 116th Annual Meeting, heartily thanks Sheryl for her leadership of the Association during the past three years, especially for her efforts to promote engagement with science and human rights; sustain a harassment-free AAG initiative; and promoting the public benefits of science.

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Whereas, Councilors of The American Association of Geographers expend substantial time and effort advancing the causes of the Association and the discipline; and

Whereas, the Council of The American Association of Geographers has confronted numerous challenges and responded to many opportunities during the last three years;

Therefore Be It Resolved that The American Association of Geographers, assembled in an online meeting in lieu of the canceled 116th Annual Meeting, extends warm appreciation to Past President Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, Great Plains Rocky Mountains Division Regional Councilor and Treasurer Deborah Thomas, National Councilor Lorraine Dowler, National Councilor Jamie Winders, Middle Atlantic Division Councilor Rebecca Kelly, Southeastern Division Councilor John Kupfer and Student Councilor Sarah Stinard-Kiel, for the energy,

time, and talent they have contributed to the Association during their terms on the AAG Council.

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Whereas, Members of The American Association of Geographers offer their talents, time, and ideas to support the activities of the Association as Chairs and Members of various Association committees appointed by the AAG Council;

Therefore Be It Resolved that The American Association of Geographers, assembled in an online meeting in lieu of the canceled 116th Annual Meeting, thanks the outgoing Chairs and Members of the AAG Committees for their service to the Association, the discipline and the profession during their committee terms.

Adjourn

Collins moved to adjourn the Spring 2020 Council Meeting. Eaves seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Council meeting was adjourned at 12:21 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen D. Johnson-Webb, AAG Secretary and
Candida Mannozi, AAG Director of Operations

Appendix I: Spring 2020 Regional Division Councilor Reports

East Lakes

Dr. Karen D. Johnson-Webb, ELDAAG Regional Councilor

- ELDAAG 2020 will be hosted by Bowling Green State University on Oct 29 and 30.
- Lakeland Community College, which is in ELDAAG, won a Two-Year College or Program AAG Program of Excellence Award for 2019. Grand Valley Community College received an Honorable Mention.
- Dan Warshawsky (Wright State University) was the 2020 recipient of the Helen Ruth Aspaas SAGE Innovator Award. This award is given by the Stand-Alone Geographers Affinity Group and comes with a cash award of \$250.

Bowling Green State University, Dr. Karen Johnson-Webb, Geography Program

The BGSU Geography department has become a program within the School of Earth, Environment and Society (SEES). This formalized a union of the faculty of the Departments of Environment & Sustainability; Geography; and Geology. All faculty are now considered SEES faculty.

Geography recently had two new specializations approved by the College of Art & Sciences. These are in Geographic Information Systems and Human Dimensions of Climate Change.

BGSU alumnus Jason Butke '03, senior director and meteorologist at Travelers Insurance Companies, presented "Meteorology and Insurance: How Insurance Companies Manage Natural Catastrophe Risk" as part of Geography Awareness Week, Nov. 10-16.

Calvin University, Dr. Mark D. Bjelland, Co-Chair, Department of Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies

Challenges and Opportunities

Our challenges are largely related to major structural changes at our university. Michigan has projected declines in the number of graduating high school seniors for the next 15 years. That challenges tuition-dependent institutions like ours. Our institution has responded by going to a university model with multiple schools and reducing general education requirements. I will speak to each of these changes and how it impacts geography at Calvin University.

Calvin University is moving from a college with porous boundaries between divisions to a university with nine separate schools, each with their own dean. Our department was recommended for placement in the new "School of Sciences and Engineering." There was no other appropriate place since we have a strong geology component in our department. However, this separates the three human geographers from the School of Social Sciences. We are concerned about human geographers missing out on new collaborations and initiatives within the social sciences. We argued against the new university structure, pointing out that key societal issues crossed the boundaries of natural and social sciences and that it was be unwise to separate the social and natural sciences in a university of under 4,000 students.

Calvin University is creating a new school for online, continuing, and graduate education. Our department is moving ahead with an online Master of Geographic Information Science. We are hiring a full-time faculty position to assist with delivery of that program.

Calvin University has committed to reducing the size of the college-wide general education program. The current general education curriculum includes many courses from our department. Four of the current general education requirements (Global Studies, Persons in Community, Physical World, and Visual Rhetoric) can be met by geography courses. General education courses help expose students to academic geography. Next year Calvin University will have a new, smaller general education curriculum and the effects on geography will be closely watched.

That's the news from our neck of the woods. We're doing 100% online teaching through the end of the semester.

Ohio Wesleyan University, Dr. Nathan Amador Rowley, ELDAAG Secretary Treasurer, Department of Geology and Geography

At Ohio Wesleyan, we continue to grow our Geography program which, at OWU, strongly collaborates with our new Environment and Sustainability program. We currently have two tenured faculty, Dr. John Krygier and newly tenured Dr. Nathan Rowley. In addition, we have a part-time human geographer, Dr. Ashley Allen. We currently have 19 majors and minors in geography, of the 1480 students currently enrolled at OWU! We have recently gotten faculty approval on a revamped Geography major that we aim to have in place in the fall semester 2020 -- this major capitalizes on our strong theory-to-practice opportunities at OWU, and we expect this to draw more and stronger students to Geography at the institution. In terms of the Geography program, we are strong and stable at the University; however, overall enrollment numbers have been challenging like many of our peer East Lakes institutions.

University of Toledo, Dr. Patrick Lawrence, Chair, Department of Geography and Planning

UToledo continues to pursue proposal for a new BS degree in Geospatial Science, while launching new graduate certificate in urban and regional planning approved for Fall 2020, enrollment of majors and graduate students remain stable but efforts continue to increase numbers with rollout of new promotional materials for degrees and associated recruitment efforts.

Western Michigan University, Dr. Benjamin Ofori-Amoah, Chair, Department of Geography

A lot of things that we were planning on have been put on hold including our alumni reunion to celebrate our 115 year anniversary. So for now the only news to report from Western Michigan here are:

1. Last year I reported that as a result of potential "turf" wars, we voted to change our name from the Department of Geography to "Department of Geography, Environment, and Tourism" The name will be effective this fall.
2. We were in the midst of Academic Program Review but that is been postponed till next year. In spite of that we took an active preemptive decision to develop a strategic mission and vision document for the next five years before the beginning of the academic program review. This action has received much appreciation from the Dean of College of Arts & Sciences.
3. In view of our impending name change, we have also been instrumental and active in collaborating with the two other environmental units in Arts and Sciences - the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability and the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences to develop joint programs in Environmental Sciences. We have faculty spearheading a potential BS Environmental Sciences degree program.
4. We were prominently featured in the College of Arts & Sciences fall magazine highlighting our AAG award, our new program and consultancy UAV/UAS Certificate, our W. E. Upjohn Center for the Study of Geographic Change, our GIS expertise, faculty publications, and student work
5. One of our faculty members, Chansheng He, was awarded WMU Distinguished Professorship for his scholarly achievement. We are one of the few departments with two WMU Distinguished Professorship - the other one is Joseph Stoltman.
6. Chansheng was also inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences early this year for a lifetime scholarly achievement. He and WMU President Dr. Edward B. Montgomery, were the two from WMU that were inducted this year.
7. We have gone through a complete changeover of our general degree requirements and it is going to be implemented this fall, at the same time WMU will be running a pilot of its new budget model. So we are bracing for both.

Wright State University, Dr. Daniel N. Warshawsky, Geography Program

In the past year, Gamma Theta Upsilon inducted one student into its honors society. In addition, the student organization in geography was activated on Wright State's campus. The WSU geography program also participated in GIS Day, along with other regional universities and leading GIS related

organizations in the region. Since we graduated seven geography majors last year, the number of geography majors currently stands at 11 and the number of GIS certificate students stands at 11 as well. One student attended the 2019 East Lakes Division of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting held at Saginaw State University in October 2019. Daniel Warshawsky, faculty member in geography, was awarded the Helen Ruth Aspaas SAGE Innovator Award. This award recognizes outstanding educators as part of the Stand Alone Geographers Specialty Group in the American Association of Geographers.

Respectfully submitted by Karen D. Johnson-Webb

Great Plains Rocky Mountains

- Fall 2020 meeting will be hosted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Lincoln, NE on Oct 23-24 with Dr. Becky Buller organizing the meeting as the GP-RM Division Chair.
- Fall 2019 meeting in Lawrence, KS hosted by the University of Kansas and organized by Dr. Barney Warf was a relatively well attended meeting with high quality papers
 - number of attendees: 141
 - number of papers 60
 - posters: 15
 - number of students presenting papers: 28
- The incoming regional councilor is Dr. Shannon O'Lear from the University of Kansas.
- Regionally, geospatial courses/programs, as well as environmental courses, continue to enroll well and are sustaining, and sometimes expanding, programs.
- Many programs are healthy (as examples, University of Denver, University of Colorado Boulder, University of Colorado Denver, University of Colorado Colorado Springs, University of Utah, University of Kansas, Kansas State University) particularly in the urban centers, and others are maintaining a presence with fewer faculty and resources (South Dakota State, North Dakota, University of Nebraska-Kearney). The University of Wyoming's Department of Geography was dissolved as of July 1, 2019. Thus, extremes in terms of the health of departments exist in the region.
- Several programs have had a number of retirements, affecting demographics in both positive and challenging ways. For example, many programs are uncertain if they will be able to retain faculty lines in light of current budget uncertainties. In other instances, the programs are able to vision for the future and hire for the future.
- There is continued needed attention to create strategic initiatives for increasing faculty and student (undergraduate and graduate) diversity across most geography programs.
- The creation of interdisciplinary programs related to geography can bolster or diminish enrollments, depending how geography is positioned. In particular, several programs continue to note that when an interdisciplinary major related to geography and emphasizing human-environment interaction is established, the numbers of geography majors decreases. When geography can strategically infuse itself into these programs the outcome is healthier.
- Like all institutions and departments beyond geography, the transition to online learning has been tough in the face of COVID19; this has presented both challenges (e.g. maintaining community) and opportunities (e.g. opportunities for online learning).

Respectfully submitted by Deb Thomas

Middle Atlantic

MAD-AAG held its annual meeting on November 15, 2019, at the USGS Water Science Center in Catonsville, MD. Thirteen talks and one poster were presented, and there were 32 attendees plus additional students attending the GeoBowl competition. Four students submitted papers to the student paper competition. Kelly Jean of the University of Maryland College Park received the AAG Council Award for best Graduate Student Paper, and Tiffany Deboer of Towson University received the MAD-AAG MAGMA award. Sidney Losey of Towson University received honorable mention. Winning GeoBowl team members include: Alexander Donley of Frostburg State University; Rachel Fryer Dommel, Noah Rothstein, and Brian Sachs of George Washington University; Amanda Hoffman-Hall of the University of Maryland College Park; and Kirk Saylor of the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Sara Hughes of Frostburg State University was selected as the alternate.

The fall 2020 meeting dates and location are still to be determined, but efforts are being made to coordinate with the conveners of the Race, Ethnicity, and Place Conference in Baltimore, October 21-24, 2020.

Elections are being organized for every leadership position in the division, the terms of which have all expired already or are due to finish on July 1, 2020. Open positions include Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary/Webmaster, and Regional Councilor. Volunteers are also being solicited to form a GeoBowl Committee, Conference Organizing Committee, K-12 Outreach Committee, Membership Committee, and Awards Committee, none of which have functioned in at least the last three years. Disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 situation are expected to delay the timing of the elections, which are already long overdue.

Because of difficulties in maintaining consistent participation in MAD leadership and events, officers are open to consideration of a merger with the Middle States Division, provided that the question be put to the larger membership for discussion and voting.

Respectfully submitted by

Rebecca Kelly, MAD Regional Councilor

Middle States

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it has been difficult to garner responses to requests from updates, and many universities have moved classes into virtual space and banned all travel, dramatically interrupting scholarly activities in our region and the globally. As a result, this report will be short.

The MSAAG reported in the fall regarding its meeting: The Annual Meeting of the MSAAG was held October 17-18 at Kutztown University, more than 100 people were in attendance.

The Geography bowl will be postponed and funds for compensation to the team members will be carried over into 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Lindsay Naylor, Middle States Regional Division Councilor

New England St. Lawrence Valley

COVID-19 has interfered with the usual transmission of information for this report. If all goes well, a more comprehensive report on activities by NESTVAL institutions will be provided at the Fall Council meeting. NESTVAL held its annual meeting in October 2019 at Framingham State University in Massachusetts. AAG Executive Director Gary Langham was our guest and engaged NESTVAL members in a productive discussion of AAG collaboration and support for the regions including conference logistics support, website and membership management, and other services. There were than 94 registrants for the meeting with twenty-six students as part of

that total. The conference offered a wide variety of paper sessions as well as a poster session. Dr. Jacqueline M. Vadjunec, National Science Foundation (NSF) Program Director for Geography and Spatial Sciences, offered a workshop on Writing Effective National Science Foundation Proposals in Geography and Related Fields. Our plenary speaker this year was Dr. Kerry Emmanuel, Professor of Atmospheric Science at MIT. In a well-attended event, Dr. Emmanuel delivered a provocative lecture on energy policies and climate change futures. Dr. Judith Otto, from Framingham State, received the NESTVAL Distinguished Service Award. Six teams participated in the GeoBowl with Salem State emerging as the winner. Two student awards were made at the conference: Anna Therien, from Westfield State University in the graduate student category; and Laura Abreu, from Southern Connecticut State University in the undergraduate category. The 2020 NESTVAL conference will be hosted at Salem State University. Discussions have continued on whether this would be a virtual meeting.

Pacific Coast

The Pacific regional division councilor Yolonda Youngs reports that the **Association of Pacific Coast Geographers** (Pacific Division of AAG) is planning to hold its 83rd annual meeting in San Marcos, California (North County, San Diego), hosted by the California State University – San Marcos's Department of Geography & Liberal Studies. Meeting dates are October 21st to the 24th, 2020 (Wednesday through Saturday). The meeting will include field trips, an Awards Banquet, and Presidential Address along with paper and poster sessions. There are multiple scholarships, paper and poster awards, and travel awards to support undergraduate and graduate presentations and travel. APCG's annual fall conference is a lively and collegial venue for undergraduate, graduate, and faculty presentations. Our conferences encourage networking opportunities and feature social gatherings through evening events, meals, and fieldtrips to local and regional sites. APCG's website at <http://apcgweb.org/> features links to more information about our annual conference, student awards and travel grants, history, governance, and links to our publications including an annual peer-reviewed journal "The Yearbook" and a twice a year newsletter.

Respectfully submitted by Yolonda Youngs, Pacific Coast Regional Division Councilor

Southeastern

Held in Wilmington, NC and hosted by the University of North Carolina – Wilmington, the 2019 SEDAAG Annual Meeting was a success, with approx. 279 attending, more than half of whom were students. The meeting featured 27 paper sessions and nearly 90 posters in five different sessions, as well as panels on "Public Writing and Media Engagement in Geography" and "Involving Undergraduates in Geoscience Research". AAG President David Kaplan was the invited banquet speaker, and AAG staff members Emily Fekete and Coline Dony conducted a workshop on "AAG Geography Student Recruitment and Career Resources". New editors of the *Southeastern Geographer* also hosted a reception to kick off the transition to their editorship. The upcoming 2020 annual meeting is scheduled for Nov 22-23 in Florence, Alabama, with the Department of Geography at the Univ. of North Alabama hosting and Michael Pretes serving as chair of the local arrangements committee. SEDAAG membership currently stands at roughly 350, which is down significantly from a decade ago, but still large in comparison to other regions.

At the annual Business Meeting, SEDAAG President Joann Mossa announced that Lynn Resler and Amy Potter were elected as new SEDAAG President and Treasurer, respectively. Drs. Resler and Potter assumed their positions following the annual meeting. She then welcomed Paul Knapp and Selima Sultana as new editors of the *Southeastern Geographer*. Dr. Mossa also announced the reactivation of SEDAAG's Endowment Committee and charged it with examining and improving the state of SEDAAG

finances. Members of the committee are John Kupfer (Committee Chair), Amy Potter (SEDAAG Treasurer), Deb Thomas (current AAG Councilor and Treasurer), and Kathy Sherman-Morris. AAG President Kaplan next gave a brief update on the state of AAG and his priorities for his term as President. Of particular relevance to SEDAAG was his formation of an AAG taskforce on the state of AAG's regions. SEDAAG will be represented on that taskforce by Dr. Kupfer, the SEDAAG Regional Councilor. In his Councilor's report, Dr. Kupfer reported on the selection of AAG's new Executive Director Gary Langham, providing his perspective as a member of the search committee. Drs. Mossa and Kupfer also discussed the new procedures for electing the next SEDAAG Regional Councilor and made a call for nominations.

The *Southeastern Geographer*, the official journal of SEDAAG, has been published since 1962 and has been distributed by the University of North Carolina Press since 2004. Published quarterly in both online and traditional hard copy formats, the journal emphasizes geographic research that engages with conditions and events in "the south", broadly construed, as they relate to conditions and events that extend over broader geographical reaches. In 2019, *Southeastern Geographer* included a Special Issue on Wild Foods edited by Nancy O'Hare.

Around the region, the health of departments continues to be variable but many reports from state representatives were fairly positive. In North Carolina, nearly all institutions in the UNC system as well as three private institutions offer at least a minor in geography. Reports from NC departments generally stated that enrollment and majors were stable or growing. Competition between Geography and Environmental Studies/Environmental Science was highlighted, with a seeming desire to forge bonds between these disciplines rather than have them compete against each other. Similarly, in Georgia, there are ca. nine universities that offer geography courses, eight of which offer at least a major or minor in some field related to Geography. The Georgia state report noted that the number of majors at both the undergraduate and graduate level as well as enrollment in Geography courses were generally stable, particularly in core classes, or even growing in some institutions (e.g., Georgia State, Georgia Southern). Reports from universities in Virginia were also generally very optimistic, with the Virginia Tech reporter noting that: "Geography is arguably at its strongest point in history. Faculty numbers are at the highest in history and majors have grown 84% from fall 2008 to fall 2017. Enrollment has increased significantly since 2007." Other states reporting generally stable enrollments and numbers of majors included Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama.

Two caveats to these statewide comments are that: 1) most state reports noted institution-by-institution variability in those findings, and 2) nearly all states reported a poor response rate from departments that were surveyed, meaning that state-level observations were not always based on a representative sample of units and universities. In Kentucky, for example: 1) Murray State reported strong enrollments and growth in interest across campus, 2) the University of Louisville reported that the environmental and geospatial technologies side of the field are doing well, but the urban component of the department is not, 3) Northern Kentucky reports "barely holding on" and using adjuncts for ¼ of course offerings, and 4) the department at the flagship university (the University of Kentucky) declined to participate in the survey. The state of Geography in Mississippi likewise seems mixed. The program at Mississippi State, which is part of a larger program in Geosciences, is healthy, with a new hire in human geography related to MSU's research priorities on "disparity". The program at Southern Miss, which was recently integrated into a new School of Biological, Environmental and Earth Sciences, is maintaining itself but has seen a slight decline in the numbers of faculty. Programs that focus on geospatial technologies and techniques, such as Delta State's GIT Center and Alcorn's Department of Advanced Technologies, appear to be growing in popularity. In general, many departments across the region are feeling positive about the impact that GIS opportunities have on their department as a whole.

The months following the annual meeting have been extremely busy. In January 2020, we received 3 nominations to succeed Dr. Kupfer as Regional Councilor. Selima Sultana was selected in the subsequent election and will assume the role effective July 1, 2020. Under the leadership of new SEDAAG President Resler, the SEDAAG Executive Committee has been actively working to: 1) improve communications with and take better advantage of services offered by AAG National, 2) better document current and past SEDAAG actions as there is currently no stable organizational archive, 3) examine approaches for increasing membership and attendance at the annual meeting, both of which have slipped somewhat in recent years, and 4) identify new ways of better serving and connecting with our members and other geographers in the Southeast, particularly students who remain the lifeblood of our organization. We have, for example, begun to recognize a “Highlighted SEDAAG Student Member” each month through our social media platforms (*see graphic to the right*).

To close, I noted in last year’s report that a common issue raised in the state reports was a potential disinterest or disconnect between SEDAAG and members and member departments. We thus asked state representatives to query their university contacts about the “State of SEDAAG”, both generally and with respect to their departments. Here are some representative responses:

From Georgia: “Geography programs in the state of Georgia are generally supportive of SEDAAG and see the conference as an important opportunity to engage undergraduate students.... As SEDAAG is such an important venue for exposing undergraduate students to the discipline, Georgia universities would like to see even more support for them to attend the annual meeting. Several schools expressed frustration with the timing of the annual meetings as it falls on Thanksgiving Break. This is becoming an increasing barrier for faculty/student participation.”

From North Carolina: “The ‘State of SEDAAG’ is near-universally reported as strong. Departments, at least from the institutions that responded, are usually well-represented at SEDAAG (*note: UNC- Chapel Hill did not respond*). Suggestions include increased communication to departments regarding the meeting, as well as a potential HBCU scholarship for students to attend SEDAAG as these institutions are generally under-represented.”

From South Carolina: “Of those who are familiar with SEDAAG, most seem satisfied with current efforts, but it appears that many of the smaller programs are unaware, unaffiliated, or simply not connected with SEDAAG.”

From Tennessee: “SEDAAG attendance by some departments is highly dependent on the location of the meeting. People who attend the meeting and read *Southeastern Geographer* are proud to be a part of SEDAAG. Tennessee departments would like to see more R1s participate in the conference.”

From Individual West Virginia respondents: “I am very enthusiastic about the state of SEDAAG in general. Throughout my career, I have seen SEDAAG as an affordable opportunity for professional presentations and academic growth. The quality of conference presentations is usually quite high. The support provided to academics and professionals through opportunities for networking and publication (*SEG*) are extremely beneficial.” “SEDAAG continues to be one of the better AAG Divisions in terms of annual meeting and journal. Five of our undergraduates will be presenting posters at the meeting this

Highlighted Student Member





Polina Prokof'Yeva presenting her work at the SEDAAG 2019 Annual Meeting

POLINA PROKOF'YEVA
SENIOR, DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY,
CONCORD UNIVERSITY, WV

Research Title: Enerhodar: From A Bare Steppe to Powering Eastern Europe
Description: I have been studying a small town located in the southeastern part of Ukraine that is one of the biggest energy producers in Europe. Enerhodar was founded in 1970 when the Soviet government decided to build a nuclear power plant and a coal-fired power plant in an area in the steppe that had little biodiversity and no human activity. Since its founding, the population of the town has been growing steadily and even the collapse of the Soviet Union did not diminish the growth. The primary purpose of the project is to explore the evolution of the town from nothing to a thriving energy hub in Europe through surveys, detailed interviews and archival data. Content analysis and descriptive statistics are used to analyze and visualize data and ArcGIS is used to create maps.
Advisor: Shemantini Shome
Why she is a SEDAAG member: “Being a SEDAAG Member provides me with various opportunities to learn about the ongoing research in the Geography field as well as it allows me to participate in the SEDAAG Annual Meeting where I am able to present my research and meet other geographers.”

year. For the *Southeastern Geographer*, shortening the submission-to-publication time period and publishing articles online once accepted could make the journal a more attractive option for researchers.” “The *Southeastern Geographer* is strong and helps to elevate SEDAAGs reputation as the best regional division of the AAG.”

We appreciate the useful feedback and are looking to address these (and other) comments and concerns in the upcoming year, particularly given insights from the forthcoming report of the AAG Regions Taskforce.

Respectfully submitted by-

John Kupfer, SEDAAG Councilor

Southwestern

- The Fall 2020 meeting will be hosted jointly by the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University at the Sheraton Oklahoma City in Downtown Oklahoma City, OK, 15-17 November 2020. The keynote speaker will be Hans Butzer, Dean of the OU College of Architecture and Co-designer (with Torrey Butzer) of the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial. He will be talking about that project and others that have shaped the landscape of Oklahoma City.
- The Fall 2019 meeting was held 10-12 October 2019 in Fort Worth, TX and hosted by Texas Christian University. The meeting had about 200 attendees, 76 papers presented, 45 poster presentations, and a field trip in downtown Fort Worth. SWAAG ran successful student paper and poster competitions at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as a GeoBowl competition. Andy Schoolmaster, Dean of TCU’s AddRan College of Liberal Arts was a keynote speaker at the welcome luncheon, and AAG President David Kaplan gave a keynote address during the dinner and awards presentations. SWAAG raised \$15,490 in registration tickets, and \$1,850 in sponsors/exhibitor tables.
- Undergraduate Student Poster Competition Winners
 - 1st- Madeline Wade, University of Oklahoma: “Public Perceptions of Water Reuse in Norman, Oklahoma”
 - 2nd- Madison Wilson, University of Oklahoma: “Spatial and temporal patterns of fallow/idle cropland”
 - 3rd – Sentell Dickson, University of North Texas: “Understanding American Kestrel Distribution in North Texas”
 - 3rd – Addison Van Zandbergen, Oklahoma State University: “Former Lake Texcoco, Mexico City”
- Graduate Student Poster Competition Winners
 - 1st- Ria Mukerji, Louisiana State University: “Changing Geographies of Flood Mitigation Policies”
 - 2nd- Zhuoming Liu, University of New Mexico: “Classifying livestock grazing behavior and GIS-modeling potential for exposure to Abandoned Uranium Mine Waste”
 - 3rd- Kathleen Benedetto, Louisiana State University: “Climatology and Spatiotemporal Analysis of North Atlantic Rapidly Intensifying Hurricanes”
- Graduate Student Paper Competition Winners
 - 1st- Katherina Kang, University of North Texas: “Vegetation and land use effects on the spatial distribution and accumulation of soil black carbon in an urban ecosystem”
 - 2nd- Laurel Ladwig, University of New Mexico: “Backyard Wildlife Refuges in Albuquerque, NM”
 - 2nd- Joshua Hodge, Texas State University, “Hurricane storm surge sedimentation on east Texas Gulf Coast Marshes”
- Undergraduate Student Paper Competition Winners
 - 1st-Alejandra Acuña Balbuena, University of Oklahoma: “Reproductive Rights and Development in Peru”

- 2nd-Justin Guerra, UTSA: “Changes in Urban Land Use Throughout the Edwards Aquifer”
- No third place award
- Geobowl Winners
 - Jessie Andrews, Oklahoma State University
 - Joshua Hodge, Texas State University
 - Zach Taylor, University of North Texas
- Research Awards
 - 1. Katherina A. Kang, University of North Texas, Vegetation and land use effects on the spatial distribution and accumulation of soil black carbon in an urban ecosystem
 - 2. Brett Spencer LSU Fire Down Below: Urban Environments of the Miskitu Coast of Honduras
 - 3. Christina W. Lopez Texas State The geographies and characteristics of intentional communities in the United States: a national-level descriptive analysis
- The outgoing Chair is Matt Fry, University of North Texas. The outgoing secretary is Maria Lane, University of New Mexico. The new officers are:
 - Chair: Erik Prout, Texas A&M University
 - Secretary: Kory Konsoer, Louisiana State University
 - Treasurer: Jennifer Koch, University of Oklahoma
 - Student Representative: Walter Furness, Texas State University
 - Student Representative: Amelia Eisenhart, University of Texas
- 2019 SWAAG news from before the 2019 SWAAG Meeting and 2019 Fall AAG Council Meeting can be found in [SWAAG's 2019 newsletter](#).

Respectfully submitted by-Michaela Buenemann, SWAAG Regional Division Councilor

West Lakes

The 2019 West Lakes divisional meeting organizers partnered with International Journal of Geospatial and Environmental Research (<https://dc.uwm.edu/ijger/vol7/iss2/>) to publish a special issue consisting of papers presented in the 2019 meeting. The call for paper was posted on the conference Web site, and five manuscripts have been submitted. The first-round review is complete, and the manuscripts will be published online as soon as they are accepted for publication.

Respectfully submitted by Woonsep Choi, West Lakes Regional Division Councilor

Stinard-Kiel Student Councilor Remarks

Spring 2020

I'm certainly not the first nor will I be the last to point out that the coronavirus has shown just how fragile and inadequate the institutions built to serve capital really are – the university being one such institution. A month before the virus took hold in our country, the University of California fired graduate students for striking. These students, fighting for a cost of living adjustment, pointed to the impossibility of being a graduate student without class privilege. Even in “normal” times graduate students are asked to sacrifice, to go into debt, to live in a constant state of anxiety, for what exactly? We've known for a long time that there are two classes of academics – those with job security and those without. We somehow convince ourselves that we'll be the lucky one – the one that gets the tenured track job and even as we socialize, build friendships, create alliances, we think “I'll be the one who gets the job, not you”. We are so busy publishing, attending conferences, padding our CV that solidarity and collective care become secondary and are often discouraged. Of course, some senior faculty make gestures to these things – care, community, slow scholarship, etc. Publish articles to put in their promotion packet about it. But how many come to the picket line? How many are willing to risk their own job or standing at the university? How many try to convince us that they can make more change staying in good graces and climbing the ranks? How many say we are naïve in our tactics that we don't understand how the system works, even though we know more about the material consequences of the system than most?

But barely scraping by on poverty wages and glimmers of hope is no longer an option. This system is no longer an option. Hiring freezes are only the beginning. Lecturers will lose their contracts. Graduate funding will be pulled. Who knows what new kind of precarious position universities will create for online only content? Right now, for the majority of us there is no foreseeable future in the academy. Even my brilliant friends who managed to earn jobs are scared. A return to normal is both impossible and undesirable, so now is the time to act. To do whatever you can to make sure people keep their jobs, their insurance, their stipends. Those with the most security must put themselves on the line for others because doing the alternative has turned out disastrously.

And it's not just graduate students who will feel the full force of unrestrained capitalist restructuring in the wake of disaster. The most vulnerable K-12 students and undergrads are going to suffer greatly. I know this from my dissertation research in New Orleans. While the city was still finding dead bodies after Katrina, the New Orleans school system was privatized and deregulated. Charter organizations, unfettered by local and federal regulations, pushed out students with disabilities and behavioral and mental health disorders. It took a decade of fighting by the ACLU & SPLC to get students access to classrooms and not just holding centers. As DeVos uses the stimulus package to push through mechanisms that would allow education systems to bypass the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, it's imperative that the AAG create a legislative agenda to protect students against these measures.

And what of undergraduates? How many of you were asked to transition to online in less than a week's time? How are we supposed to transition our courses into an entirely new format while also accommodating students with disabilities and those who lack of access to technology, or perhaps even a safe place to learn from? The worst are those underpaid and unsecured teachers who get no more

compensation for the added labor of transitioning online and their students who could suffer loss of learning or loss of grade. How fragile our institutions are when there is almost zero backup for teachers, no support, and no mechanisms to help students learn to succeed in the new online terrain. Because so much of the AAG is made up of graduate TAs & instructors, adjuncts, and non-tenure track faculty the organization should provide support for online learning, particularly since we are facing an uncertain Fall semester. Resources, websites, learning tools for geography and environmental science education online are what educators are compiling and sharing amongst themselves. There's no reason this couldn't be more centralized through the AAG. Even having a pedagogy point person or a pedagogy task force would materially serve the membership and enhance undergraduate and K-12 education at this moment and beyond. I've already started discussing these suggestions with the incoming representative and how we can work on moving forward together.

I don't have many other concrete recommendations because what we need is free and equal education, Medicare for all, and an end to resource hoarding & nationalism. I know in the coming months things will get much, much worse. There is already so much grief over lost income, lost job opportunities, lost future plans, and we are only just beginning to see loss of life in this country. We all share a kind of collective anticipatory grief for when the virus will surely touch our lives if it has not already. My herbal mentor reminded me last week that in traditional Chinese medicine grief is associated with the lungs. While social distancing has meant that the best way to care for our loved ones and care for our communities is to stay home, I've been thinking of just waking up and breathing as a kind of revolutionary act. Right now, it is enough to just wake up and breathe. However, soon this will not be enough. When the time comes when this is not enough, when we must act so that others may breathe as well, what we do to ensure that a world that can never be the same again is a world worth living will be what defines us.

Appendix II: Guidance for Annals Editors

The Editorial Board

1. Selection of Board Members
 - a. Board members should represent the diversity of institutions where geography is present, with attention to expectations for service and publishing at those institutions in both the U.S. and abroad, e.g. government agencies; R1 & R2 universities; non-doctoral granting colleges; and under-represented institutions, such as HBCUs, tribal colleges and universities, etc.
 - b. At all times Editors should seek a diverse board, and create systems for inclusion; this includes, but is not limited to: gender and racial diversity, and sub-disciplinary/specialization diversity as it relates to the Annals section
 - c. Board member selection may also include a history of publishing in the Annals, but this should not be an exclusionary factor.
2. Role of the Editorial Board

The AAG Publications Committee agrees that the role of the Editorial Board should not be passive. We suggest that Annals editors employ their board members in the following tasks:

 - a. At least one meeting to discuss the direction and vision for their sub-section of the Annals
 - b. increase possibilities for board engagement
 - c. use the board as a source for recruiting diverse candidates for the board

Council, Publications Director and Editor Accountability Measures

1. Quarterly check-in remote meetings with Annals Editors, Publications Director, and Publications Committee Co-Chairs
2. Attendance of Publications Committee Co-chairs at face-to-face meeting at the Annual Conference
3. Inclusion of Publications Committee co-chairs on weekly email report updates from the Publications Director
4. Mid-appointment check-in with each editor individually
5. Agreement that regardless of the decision made on a paper ALL papers received by the Editor will receive some form of review and comments that explain the decision as it relates to the paper specifically.

Appendix III:

AAG Climate Action Task Force Report March 2020

Submitted by Dr. Wendy Jepson, Task Force Chair

INTRODUCTION

In response to the current climate crisis, last spring Pam Martin and Joe Nevins circulated a petition among various geography listservs requesting that the AAG Council take significant action “to reduce CO₂ emissions related to the Annual Meeting.” The petition asked that the “Council do so in a manner commensurate with what the recent (October 2018) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report asserts is needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C: about a 45 percent cut (from 2010 levels) by 2030, and ‘net zero’ emissions by 2050.” In light of the strong support that the petition received, the AAG Council responded in April with the creation of a task force charged with redesigning the Annual Meeting so that it is a low-CO₂-emitting endeavor. The task force is mandated to transform the Annual Meetings in a manner that is effective in meeting the needs of AAG members and that is also socio-spatially and environmentally just.

Since that time, the Annual Meeting Climate Action Task Force (CATF) recruited a diverse group of geographers from across the United States and Canada to serve as members. Through various working groups, task force members are currently focused on three areas:

1. conducting research into qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the carbon regime that underpins the AAG’s conference model;
2. exploring how information and communication technologies can be best mobilized to offer rewarding virtual experiences for conference participants; and
3. organizing a first round of special initiatives at the AAG annual meeting in Denver (2020).

We understand that changing our professional practices is difficult. Our discipline and our careers are often based in large part on in-person connections with physically distant places and people throughout the world. In our professional and personal lives we are immersed in social practices in which air travel is profoundly normalized, and viewed as both a necessity and an unquestioned right. Yet we also know that climate disruption is already here and that air travel is a significant source of CO₂ emissions. If we take seriously the gravity of a situation so clearly spelled out by climate science, then we must collectively create new ways of being in the world, which means weaving new kinds of relationships between individuals and communities, both near and far. In this sense, rethinking the dominant modes of academic conferencing presents the possibility of creating new forms of academic relationships and exchange that remain fully engaged in the world. There are trade-offs and choices. In this sense, the goal of the Annual Meeting Climate Action Task Force is in no way to undo the AAG Annual Meeting or question its

relevance, but rather position both our discipline and our association at the forefront of progressive change.

1. Task Force Charge

The American Association of Geographers (AAG) and its members have collectively and consistently raised concerns regarding climate change, environmental justice, and the need to cut radically carbon dioxide emissions. Motivated by such concerns and by the need to practice and model changes that need to take place across the world, the AAG has modified its organizational practices to adjust how it invests its funds and some aspects related to the running of the Annual Meeting. Yet, in a time of intensifying climate disruption, there is an urgent need to redesign the Annual Meeting in far more significant and transformative ways--ones commensurate with emissions reductions at a depth and scale suggested by climate science and bodies such as the International Panel on Climate Change. The AAG Council has created the Annual Meeting Climate Action Task Force to do so. The Task Force is charged with measuring the CO₂ footprint of Annual Meetings, assessing best climate-sensitive practices for the Annual Meetings, and promoting low-CO₂-emitting activities. In doing so, the Task Force seeks to develop various pathways to transition the AAG into a leader and model of how large organizations can leverage technology, member-ingenuity and participation to respond to climate change. It endeavors this transition in a manner that is effective in meeting the needs of AAG members and that is also socio-spatially and environmentally just.

2. Task Force Members

Last Name	First Name	Email	Title	Institution
Attoh	Kafui	Kafui.Attah@slu.cuny.edu	Associate Professor	CUNY
Bedford	Daniel	dbedford@weber.edu	Professor	Weber State University
Bruno	Tianna	tianna.bruno@gmail.com	Graduate student	University of Oregon
Hayes	John	john.hayes@salemstate.edu	Associate Professor	Salem State University
Jepson	Wendy	wjepson@tamu.edu	University Professor	Texas A&M University
Larson	Oscar	olarson@aag.org	Director, AAG Meetings	AAG
Martin	Pam	patricia.martin@umontreal.ca	Associate Professor/Chair	University of Montreal
Nevins	Joe	jonevins@vassar.edu	Professor	Vassar College
Olson	Betsy	eaolson@email.unc.edu	Professor	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Parikh	Aparna	aparna.parikh@gmail.com	Post-doctoral Fellow	Dartmouth College
Robbins	Paul	director@nelson.wisc.edu	Prof/Dean Nelson Institute	UW Madison

Ruddick	Sue	Sue.ruddick@utoronto.ca	Professor	University of Toronto
Sneegas	Gretchen	gsneegas@tamu.edu	Post-Doctoral Scholar	Texas A&M University
Stinard-Kiel	Sarah	sarah.sk@temple.edu	Student Rep; AAG Council	Temple University
Thorlund	Elin	ethorlund@aag.org	AAG Meeting Specialist	AAG
Walenta	Jayme	jwalenta@utexas.edu	Lecturer	University of Texas

ACTIVITIES

Smaller academic associations have already experimented with low carbon conferencing (e.g. the Society of Cultural Anthropology's 2018 Conference, Displacements, a hybrid of a virtual conference and in-person gatherings at sites across the world linked via the internet). However, no large learned society has directly engaged with an attempt to transition to a low-carbon conference model. Thus, this initiative has the potential to place the AAG at the cutting edge in the struggle against climate change.

Our work was organized across several activities that include all-hands meetings via Zoom (approximately six meetings) and many ad-hoc working group meetings. Our three working groups are Denver AAG, Research, and Technology. Each group had certain tasks, but as we learned by organizing Denver activities that the research and technology components had to be simultaneously engaged. We also need to acknowledge the tremendous work of the AAG Staff, led by Oscar Larson, to make the task force's vision materialize within the AAG framework. Below is a summary of the CATF work between July 2019, when we hosted our first all-hands meeting, and March 2020.

1. Carbon Baseline Study

Dr. Jayme Walenta and her students at the University of Texas at Austin evaluated our capacity to calculate a carbon dioxide footprint for the meetings' travel related emissions. We believe this baseline data is critical to develop plans and targets for low-carbon conference goals. The first task was to use basic data, however imperfect, to calculate the crude travel-based GHG footprint (measured in metric tons) for the Washington DC Meeting. This was accomplished in fall 2019 by a small group of undergraduate students trained in GHG accounting. Working with Oscar Larson, Dr. Walenta obtained the data the students required to calculate the Meeting's emissions. The students then conducted the calculations using a series of assumptions about travel mode. Following past academic conference travel studies such as Nevins (2014), calculations were made both with and without Radiative Forcing Index (RFI). For reference, RFI represents a multiplier that considers the warming impacts associated with high altitude air travel that are not CO₂ emissions. Using RFI acknowledges the wider impacts on Earth's energy balance and considers human caused pollutants such as water vapor. The results from the student's work are below, indicated as Castro et. al.

Author	Conference	W/O RFI	With RFI	Attendees	Total Emissions (MT) w/o RFI	Total emissions (MT) with RFI
Nevins	Seattle 2011	0.73	2.2	7300	5351	16,053
Castro et al	Washington DC 2019	0.55	1.34	8181	4489	10,964
Walenta & Castro	Denver 2020 (cancelled)					

* RFI is the factor used to multiply the carbon emissions generated by a flight in order to account for a range of factors that can increase the footprint of a flight

Working with the AAG team, Dr. Walenta and others on the task force also added three questions to the on-site registration process on travel behavior and travel pathways. The original plan was to use the travel data gathered at the meeting to run a more accurate travel carbon footprint analysis post meeting (from April 15 - May 15). Following this, Dr. Walenta was to write a peer-reviewed article using the combined dataset, the bibliography, and her analysis. In light of the cancellation, this is postponed until Seattle 2021, and thus our recommendations for any carbon target is also postponed.

2. New Modalities: Virtual Experiments for AAG DENVER

To ensure the wellbeing of the AAG, while seeking to provide a stimulating and inclusive environment for the diverse community of geographers, we organized a series of initiatives aimed at implementing change in an incremental way over the next five years. These initiatives include a virtual plenary session with Kevin Anderson, professor of energy and climate change at the University of Manchester and the former Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. We organized a series of “blended” sessions related to the Task Force’s major themes, in which there will be a combination of virtual and on-site participation. These panels and paper sessions were to explore a range of issues, including emerging models for academic conferences, the promises and pitfalls of carbon offsetting, and the dilemmas of knowledge production in an era of climate disruption. They also were to report on ongoing practices in the field to measure emissions, impacts and develop strategies around resilience and mitigation.

We also organized a variety of virtual experiments that will bridge research, activism and performance to highlight the importance of this initiative. For example, CATF members organized virtual “meet ups” that matched senior geographers with emerging scholars in a virtual “conversation over coffee.” We had plans to organize a special poster session with the purpose of helping us to reimagine the AAG annual conference in 2025. Through these diverse initiatives, we wanted to understand the impact virtual conferencing might have on participants’ experiences, while testing the limits and possibilities of different technological infrastructures that could be mobilized to support low-CO₂ conferencing.

AAG 2020 CATF-organized Sessions and Events

- Plenary with Kevin Anderson
- Academic knowledge production in age of climate disruption: relevance, inclusion, connection
- Low-carbon conferences
- Should the AAG Consider Carbon Offsets as Part of Its Transition to Low-Emissions Annual Meetings?
- Voices from the Field- Research on the Climate Crisis 1 and 2
- Coffee with... [virtual meet-ups]

In addition to the CATF-organized sessions, we also sponsored:

- “Slow” Geographies and Ecological-Ethical Dilemmas of International Research
- New Water and Urban Water Security (1, 2, 3) (Hybrid paper and panel sessions)
- University of British Columbia as an experiment to facilitate a new model of academic conferencing

3. Experiments to Scale: Virtualizing AAG 2020

The format and discussions the CATF had during the last several months served to support the AAG Annual Meeting to “virtualize” the conference in light of the COVID-19 emergency. We have over 95 volunteers willing to host and manage more than 100 sessions. These experiments have quickly moved to scale with the direct involvement of the AAG staff and Meeting Director. As of this report, the AAG Virtual Meeting is still in the planning stages, but we have worked with the team to consider all aspects of roll out, including synchronous versus asynchronous delivery (“flipped sessions”), platforms (Zoom, GoToMeeting), protection and safety, IP, week-long schedule, etc. We are also prioritizing the sessions with students and ones that confer student awards so that they are able to still benefit.

4. Assessment

Our assessment strategy included survey and on-site focus groups and interviews. With the cancellation of the AAG this year, assessment of the virtual sessions will be adapted to the current online format. As many of our task force members are adapting to major institutional disruption, the assessment will be brief so as to minimally demand more work at this difficult time.

5. Task Force Work, 2020-2021

We will continue our work on the Carbon Footprint, which will allow us to provide an informed baseline to inform future recommendations. Our experience with the AAG Virtual Meeting 2020 will allow us to evaluate fully the capacity to evaluate alternative conference modalities and pathways for Seattle 2021 and beyond. We want to develop nodes, perhaps in coordination with the regions or individual institutions, offer headlining online keynotes that can be shared publicly to advance the AAG’s prominence, and demonstrate how new technologies can only enhance the AAG Annual Meeting experience for those who choose to participate and for those who may not be able to attend the in-person meeting. Moreover, we envision that the node model may allow for expanding the

international participation in ways that are meaningful, reliable, and affordable to our colleagues around the world.

REQUESTS TO COUNCIL

Moving into the second year of the task force, we request the following to be resolutions for Council to consider at the Spring 2020 meeting:

1. **Reaffirm** the Climate Action Task Force's charge and continue our work so that the AAG 2025 carbon footprint will be significantly lower than 2019.
2. **Request** Annual Meeting Organizers to include a virtual option at the time of session registration for Seattle 2021
3. **Request** the the AAG highlight curated elements of the AAG 2020 Virtual Meeting on the website and in Geograms
4. **Engage and request** input of the Climate Action Task Force **before** deciding on the 2026 AAG meeting venue and beyond.

The Climate Action Task Force will have further recommendations and requests for Council for the Fall 2020 meeting. We anticipate that they will include evidence-based recommendations related to AAG Annual Meeting carbon benchmarking, low-carbon modalities and new pathways for conferencing, opportunities for broadening participation in the AAG Annual Meeting, and carbon offsets.

SELECTED RESOURCES

Julien Arsenault, Julie Talbot, Lama Boustani, Rodolphe Gonzalès and Kevin Manaugh, "The environmental footprint of academic and student mobility in a large research-oriented university," *Environmental Research Letters*, Vol. 14, No. 9, 2019

Joseph Nevins, "Academic Jet-Setting in a Time of Climate Destabilization: Ecological Privilege and Professional Geographic Travel," *The Professional Geographer*, Vol. 66(2), 2014, 298-210.

Seth Wynes, Simon D. Donner, Steuart Tannason, Noni Nabors, "Academic air travel has a limited influence on professional success," *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 226, No. 20, 2019: 959-967

Other resources are listed at: www.flyingless.org

Appendix IV: Regional Divisions Taskforce Report and Proposed Actions



Task Force Members

Michaela Buenemann
Emily Fekete
Shawn Hutchinson
John Kelly
Rebecca Kelly
John Kupfer
Patrick Lawrence
Cathleen McAnneny
Lindsay Naylor
Cynthia Pope
Michael Pretes
Erik Prout
Yolonda Youngs

Introduction

The Regional Divisions Taskforce was established by AAG Council in November 2018 in order to explore ways to increase the health of the AAG Regional Divisions and to improve the vitality of the AAG Regional Division Meetings for the benefit of AAG Members. The taskforce is composed of representatives of each Regional Division. The taskforce has had one in-person in Washington, DC during the Spring 2019 AAG Annual Meeting. The taskforce has also had two Zoom meetings, one in September 2019 and one in February 2020.

Purpose, Value, and Challenges of Regional Divisions

The AAG Regional Divisions—mostly within the United States but also including some Canadian provinces—developed as an intrinsic part of the overall AAG organization. The Pacific Coast Division was formed in 1938 and the other Regional Divisions were established in the 1940s and 1950s. Preston James and Geoffrey Martin credit the Regions with much of the AAG’s growth during the 1960s.

Each Regional Division is unique. Each has distinct governance structures and membership that encompasses both AAG members and nonmembers. Several Regions run their own journals; while others have comprehensive websites and newsletters. Every Region hosts a substantial one- or two-day meeting in the Fall with field trips, keynotes, sessions, posters, and awards. The following table, based on feedback from Regional Division officers, articulates these differences:

Region	Membership	Election Process	Eligibility	Extra Dues	Web site	News letter	Journal
MAD	452	as needed	AAG member	no	yes	no	N/A
Middle States	874	annual for VP, Sec Councilor in Fall	AAG member	no	yes	Twice a year	<i>Middle States Geographer</i> , annual online
NESTVAL	577	biennial for VP, Sec, Treasurer	academic, dues paying, must reside in region	\$35/ \$15	yes	no	<i>Northeastern Geographer</i> , annual both
East Lakes	405	3 year terms	AAG members must reside in region	no	yes	no	N/A
West Lakes	647	annual for chair	AAG members must reside in region	no	no	no	N/A
GP/RM	446	at business meeting; changing in 2019	Must reside in region	no	not any more	no	N/A
SWAAG	522	by ballot	AAG members must reside in region	no	yes	yes	<i>Southwestern Geographer</i> annual online
SEDAAG	1,158	staggered 2 year	Dues paying	\$50,	yes	no	<i>Southeastern</i>

		terms in Fall		\$25			<i>Geographer</i> 4 times a year
APCG	1,201	VP and Pres for one year, Secretary and Treasurer for 2 years, regional councilor 3 years	Dues paying	\$25 reg, \$15 student	yes	twice a year	<i>Yearbook of the Assoc of Pacific Coast Geographers</i> , annual, print/online

Based on the results of a survey of the AAG membership of the US and Canada, which we present later in this report, Regional Divisions are highly prized by a segment of the AAG membership. Participation in Regional Divisions is often institutionally diverse and may be the only interaction that some AAG members have with the AAG. For those Regions that have them, journals are a great way of presenting information and research unique to the region. Advantages of Regional Division Meetings include a more intimate venue than the national meeting, more opportunities to highlight geography to the local community, the ability to show off geography to administrators, better interaction opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students, great opportunities for local field trips, much lower costs, institutional and attendee diversity, and much less distance for attendees to travel to get to the meetings. The Regional Divisions Taskforce has found that with fewer outside distractions, most sessions at Regional Division Meetings are quite well attended with ample questions and an opportunity for presenters to get their ideas across. And in this day of concern about carbon impacts of attending far-away conferences, Regional Division Meetings provide an option much closer to home.

Despite the benefits of Regional Divisions, there are several challenges that have been articulated to the Regional Divisions Taskforce. Membership numbers vary by a factor of three to one. The geographical area of these Regions ranges from MAD which contains Maryland, DC, and northern Virginia to several Regions that span over 1,000 miles. Some Regions are relatively prosperous whereas others have few resources. Some have communications outlets such as journals and active websites/newsletters, whereas some have little communication outside of the meetings. Some Regions have strongly articulated governance structures with active committees and plenty of leadership opportunities, whereas others struggle to find willing participants. Regions do not have professional staff and so governance and conference planning falls on the shoulders of volunteers. Moreover, Regional leaders often feel that recognition – from their universities or other employers – is not at all commensurate with the demands of this vital service.

Within the Regional Division meetings, there are also challenges that affect every Region but some more than others. These often come in the form of varied attendance and engagement by members. Some schools are highly involved in Regional activities whereas some significant programs are virtually absent. Most Regional leaders bemoan the lack of attendance from the larger, research-oriented programs within their Regions. A lack of attendance renders the Regional Meeting less valuable, as it cuts down on networking opportunities, something that was identified as one of the primary benefits of the AAG

Regional Divisions in the AAG membership survey (see below). For faculty, many do not feel as if they have enough of their peers in attendance to justify travel costs to a Regional Meeting as opposed to other smaller conferences. For graduate students looking to make contacts with scholars in their area of interest, or for undergraduate looking for information about different programs, such absences can be frustrating. Smaller attendance can also lead to more and more geographers deciding to abandon the Regional Meeting altogether and focus solely on the national meeting and on other opportunities outside of AAG and the geographic discipline.

Proposals

The taskforce was most interested in what the AAG could do to improve the position of the Regional Divisions. Based on our own discussions, reaching out to Regional stakeholders, and the results of three surveys sent to different populations of people, we developed a few categories and arrived at the following sets of improvements. **Items in italics require Council action.**

Improvement 1: Governance and Leadership

- The AAG President can provide more recognition of Regional leaders in the form of a letter to include in tenure and promotion files recognizing importance of service to the discipline. In discussions with Regional personnel and the Regional Divisions Taskforce, the lack of recognition came up time and again. This was particularly true for those who wanted their service to the Region to be valued for credit. This is an easy to accomplish goal and would only require a little bit of staff time.
- Create a president's cabinet made up of Regional Presidents. This elevates the regular AAG meeting to something that primarily features the head of the Region, allowing them a greater voice in how the national AAG responds to the needs of the Regions. This has already been implemented, beginning with the Denver meeting.
- *Provide some financial support to Regional leaders by offering free AAG Annual Meeting registration to Regional Presidents.* Discussion with Regional leadership and task force members indicated a need for Regional Division leaders to attend the national AAG meeting for the purposes of communication and full integration of the Regional Divisions into the AAG structure. Yet, unlike Regional councilors, Regional Presidents/Chairs are not reimbursed for this essential travel. One small way to rectify this is through the reimbursement of registration fees. This would still be a fraction of what is provided to Regional Councilors but would constitute a good first step. (Regional Councilors are elected for 3-year terms and receive travel assistance funding from AAG to attend the annual AAG meeting each spring and a fall meeting.)
- Greater communication between AAG central and all Regions regarding when things need to be done by creating a yearly timeline. In discussions with members of the Regional Divisions Taskforce and on the various surveys that were sent out, a lack of communication between the central AAG office, national leaders, and Regional Division leaders became apparent. The Regional Councilors do a great job of reporting on Regional activities, but the Taskforce feels that there needs to be more direct coordination with the central office.
- AAG can coordinate the development of resources on best practices for planning a Regional Meeting for Regional Divisions to use. In discussions with Regional Taskforce members and

from some of the open-ended responses in the surveys, the lack of coordination between Regions came up. Many Regional meeting organizers have little guidance or experience in the way of organizing a conference and so providing a clearinghouse for best practices would help assist in organizing meetings. The best practices would not mandate any specific actions but could provide a number of options and assistance.

- AAG can call upon the World Geography Bowl Executive Committee to develop best practices for Regional Geography Bowls. The same logic as for Regional meetings best practices also applies to this case.

Improvement 2: Financial positions of Regions

- *Increase Regional subsidy by creating a fund for Regions to apply for up to \$2,500 annually.* Our discussions with the Regional taskforce and with leaders of the various Regions have often boiled down to financial need. Three Regions assess separate dues and are fairly well off financially whereas other Regions show financial need. As part of the survey of AAG members, the taskforce asked what the AAG could do to help Regions. Of those who offered a response, 26% said more funding and a further 14% said more AAG support. That said, it may not be prudent to simply increase the Regional subsidy across the board. One idea would be to develop a pool of funds that Regional Divisions could apply for to bolster internal activities such as building a new website, further communication, develop a new award, improve publicity, and other ideas that come to mind. This pool could be fixed or could depend on how many Regions apply per year. It would allow Regional Divisions to act on some of their ideas.
- Better communicate services the AAG provides to Regions. Appendix 1 shows the services that the AAG currently provides and how many Regions use them. Getting more communication to the Regions about these services can be an ongoing project and perhaps can be part of revitalizing the Regional Division Chairs Knowledge Community (see Improvement 3).
- Consider adding/identifying an AAG staff-member who explicitly serves the Regions, coordinates timelines and communication, and communicates services the AAG provides to Regions. Many of the non-financial items mentioned in this proposal would be enhanced by the identification of an AAG staffer whose responsibility was to liaison with the Regional Presidents, Regional Councilor, and Regional governance.

Improvement 3: Increase communications and publicity for the Regions and Regional meetings

- Have publicity available at the AAG Annual Meeting. This is an effort the taskforce has already begun by making the Regions part of the AAG booth space with including posters, flyers, journal samples, etc. In the Taskforce's survey, 76% of respondents attended the AAG Annual Meeting either every year or every other year. Only 40% of this group also attended Regional Meetings regularly, about as many who attended rarely or never. One of the reasons people cite for not going to Regional Meetings is lack of communication. The Taskforce hopes that this publicity provides a strong message that the Regional Divisions are a vital part of the AAG organization and community of members.
- Add additional Regional Meeting info into AAG publicity efforts through the year such as newsletter, website, and social media. This will serve the same purpose as the above.

- Revitalize the Regional Division Chairs Knowledge Community.

Improvement 4: Increase attractiveness of the Regional meetings for students, faculty, and the public

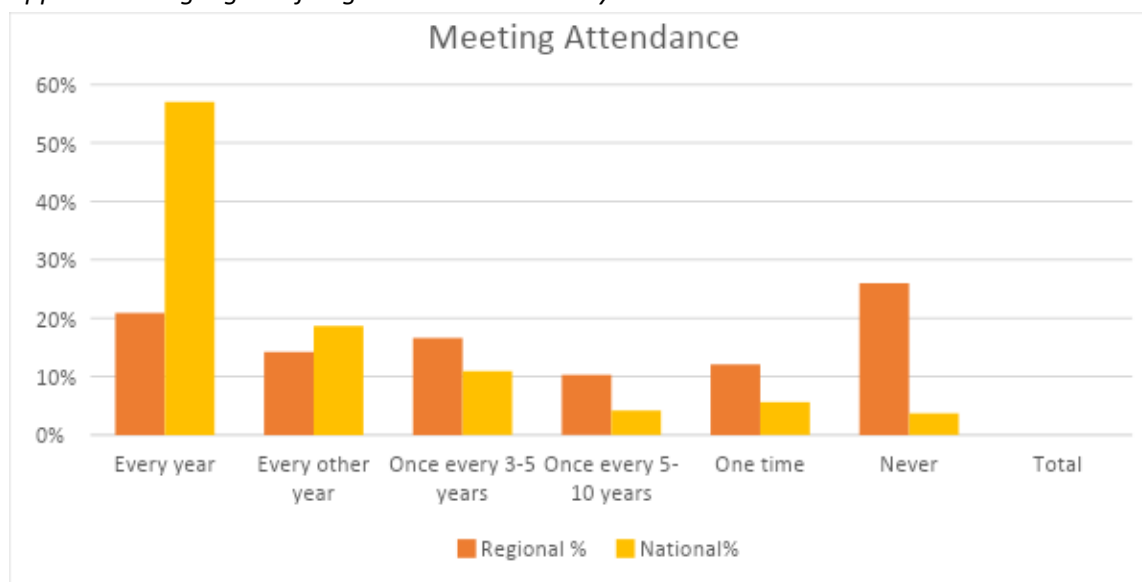
- *Create an undergraduate award analogous to the \$1000 graduate award for best paper of the meeting.* Members mentioned in person and in the surveys how they value the student focus of the Regional Division Meetings. One of the most striking things about the Regional Meetings is the attendance of undergraduate students, often led by a dedicated faculty member. Given the success of the graduate award for best paper, we believe that it would be a good idea to have an undergraduate award as well. Encouraging Regional membership among younger people early in their career could have the added benefit of continued membership after graduation in the Regional Divisions or in the national AAG, thus having the long-term effect of expanding the geography community to a broader audience.
- *Development of a \$10,000 fund out of which Regional Divisions can apply for Meeting enhancement monies.* Regional conference organizers have to tap into limited funds just to put on a basic meeting. The Taskforce believes that the provision of extra money to try out some new things, perhaps trying a new venue, bringing in a renowned speaker, provide a common experience, or other options. This money would require an application from meeting organizers. Money for a well-known speaker could also be used to open this keynote up to the general public and for advertising the keynote to the general public. This would increase the awareness of geography in local areas and among non-geographers. Local press could be invited.
- *Increase AAG presence at each Regional Meeting.* Traditionally the AAG President or other executive attends each Regional Meeting. This provides some connectivity but not as much as having a dedicated staffer at a table at each Regional meeting. This person can advertise the AAG, offer workshops, offer jobs and careers materials, etc. This has already been tried at several of the 2019 Regional Meetings and the Taskforce feels it could be a good practice going forward. The person could coordinate with the Regional President and Regional Councilor to facilitate their attendance and highlight their activities at the regional meeting.

Appendix I: Use of Services Provided by the AAG

AAG Service	No. using them	
Meeting insurance coverage	17	may be used by all regions, but 4 “nos”
Bookkeeping of region’s finances	13	used by about 7 regions
Use of AAG Eventbrite license	7	used by 3, maybe 4 regions
Use of AAG PayPal license	4	used by 2 regions
AAG election system for Councilor	15	not used by at least 2 regions
Use of AAG ZOOM accounts	4	used only by 3 regions
Childcare subsidy at regional meetings	9	used by 3 maybe 4 regions
Current list of AAG members in region	19	1 person from 2 regions
Current \$1,500 annual subsidy	17	most seem aware
\$500-\$1,000 for participants in geography bowl	21	Everyone
\$1,000 for best student paper at regional meeting	19	1 person from 2 regions
Website hosting by the AAG	13	one yes from every region

*Based on a survey sent to 21 leaders of the nine regions

Appendix II: Highlights of Regional Divisions Survey sent to All AAG Members in the U.S. and Canada



How frequently do you attend your Regional meeting? By employment status

	Every year	Every other year	Every 3-5 years	Every 5-10 years	One time	Never
Adjunct Faculty	13%	0%	38%	25%	13%	13%
Graduate Student or Post Doc	21%	15%	9%	1%	13%	42%
Non-Tenure Track Faculty	21%	15%	18%	8%	8%	31%
Post-Tenure Faculty	25%	15%	17%	18%	9%	16%
Pre-Tenure Faculty	20%	21%	22%	1%	13%	23%
Professional	3%	6%	11%	10%	17%	52%
Retired	21%	12%	30%	14%	11%	12%
Undergraduate Student	22%	0%	0%	0%	67%	11%
Students	21%	13%	8%	1%	17%	40%

How frequently do you attend your Regional meeting? By Regional affiliation

To which AAG Regional Division do you currently belong?	Every year	Every other year	Every 3-5 years	Every 5-10 years	One time	Never
APCG (Pacific Coast)	21%	17%	21%	9%	7%	26%
ELDAAG (East Lakes)	22%	24%	11%	13%	20%	11%
GPRM (Great Plains/Rocky)	16%	10%	24%	13%	13%	24%

Mountain)						
MAD (Mid-Atlantic Division)	10%	13%	10%	17%	15%	35%
MSAAG (Middle States)	14%	7%	20%	20%	14%	25%
NESTVAL (New England St. Lawrence Valley)	22%	16%	5%	11%	14%	32%
SEDAAG (Southeast Division)	34%	16%	18%	8%	6%	18%
SWAAG (Southwest)	27%	16%	19%	9%	13%	17%
WLDAAG (West Lakes)	21%	18%	22%	7%	16%	16%
Sum	22%	15%	18%	11%	12%	22%

How frequently do you attend the National Meeting? By employment status

	Every year	Every other year	Every 3-5 years	Every 5-10 years	One time	Never
Adjunct Faculty	38%	25%	13%	25%	0%	0%
Graduate Student or Post Doc	56%	13%	6%	0%	18%	8%
Non-Tenure Track Faculty	49%	21%	18%	3%	5%	5%
Post-Tenure Faculty	61%	23%	10%	4%	0%	1%
Pre-Tenure Faculty	85%	11%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Professional	37%	21%	13%	10%	11%	10%
Retired	35%	21%	28%	12%	2%	2%
Undergraduate Student	33%	0%	0%	0%	44%	22%
Students	54%	12%	6%	0%	20%	9%

Frequency of Regional Meeting Attendance as Percent of National Attendance

	How frequently do you attend your Regional meeting? (as a % of national attendance)					
How frequently attend national AAG annual meeting?	Every year	Every other year	Every 3-5 years	Every 5-10 years	One time	Never
Every year	25%	16%	16%	7%	11%	25%
Every other year	19%	16%	16%	18%	11%	20%
Once every 3-5 years	16%	9%	34%	18%	7%	16%

Once every 5-10 years	8%	12%	19%	23%	12%	27%
One time	3%	6%	3%	0%	46%	43%
Never	13%	4%	0%	0%	4%	78%
Sum	21%	14%	17%	10%	12%	26%

Value of Regional Division offerings by Frequency of Attendance

What do you value most about Regional Divisions by How frequently do you attend your Regional meeting?	Journals	Regional Meetings	Grants & Awards	Leadership	Geography Bowl
Every year	46%	98%	39%	27%	27%
Every other year	31%	93%	32%	14%	17%
Once every 3-5 years	22%	89%	23%	13%	10%
Once every 5-10 years	25%	65%	25%	6%	11%
One time	16%	58%	30%	4%	9%
Never	19%	26%	21%	4%	4%
Blank	13%	35%	22%	4%	17%
Total	27%	67%	28%	12%	13%

Reasons for attending Regional Meetings by Frequency of Attendance

Why do you go to your Regional Meeting? by How frequently do you attend your Regional meeting?	Present Research	Networking	Mentoring	Geography Bowl	Learning from Presentations	Learning about AAG
Every year	79%	92%	59%	12%	67%	11%
Every other year	77%	92%	42%	8%	54%	10%
Once every 3-5 years	70%	80%	50%	6%	30%	7%
Once every 5-10 years	45%	45%	46%	2%	40%	6%
One time	47%	55%	18%	4%	28%	7%
Never	10%	14%	2%	0%	12%	3%
Total	50%	58%	33%	5%	36%	7%

Why do you choose not to attend your regional meeting? By Region

Regional Division	No Interest	Not relevant audience	Timing of meeting	Distance/ accessibility	Cost/funding availability	Prioritizing other meetings	No Communication	Too small
APCG (Pacific Coast)	2%	8%	37%	35%	51%	38%	5%	0%
ELDAAG (East Lakes)	6%	13%	25%	42%	38%	48%	2%	2%
GPRM (Great Plains/Rocky Mountain)	1%	16%	30%	52%	51%	48%	0%	1%
MAD (Mid-Atlantic Division)	10%	18%	28%	16%	18%	46%	6%	0%
MSAAG (Middle States)	9%	27%	42%	33%	36%	58%	9%	0%
NESTVAL (New England St. Lawrence Valley)	5%	11%	34%	13%	21%	58%	3%	0%
SEDAAG (Southeast Division)	3%	4%	31%	43%	51%	39%	2%	0%
SWAAG (Southwest)	8%	8%	29%	44%	39%	47%	3%	2%
WLDAAG (West Lakes)	3%	13%	33%	39%	39%	49%	3%	0%

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Sum	6%	12%	31%	36%	40%	45%	4%	0%
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How do you find out about Regional Meetings? By Region

	AAG Website	AAG Knowledge Community Emails	Regional Division Listservs	Regional Division Social Media	Regional Division Website	Word of Mouth	AAG Social Media
APCG (Pacific Coast)	19%	6%	37%	1%	30%	2%	0%
ELDAAG (East Lakes)	33%	8%	25%	2%	17%	13%	2%
GPRM (Great Plains/Rocky Mountain)	48%	8%	23%	0%	10%	10%	1%
MAD (Mid-Atlantic Division)	20%	20%	42%	0%	8%	6%	0%
MSAAG (Middle States)	27%	9%	18%	2%	36%	9%	0%
NESTVAL (New England St. Lawrence Valley)	21%	8%	39%	0%	11%	16%	0%
SEDAAG (Southeast Division)	12%	13%	17%	9%	38%	7%	1%
SWAAG (Southwest)	14%	11%	33%	0%	36%	5%	2%
WLDAAG (West Lakes)	37%	13%	20%	0%	12%	13%	4%
Total	25%	11%	27%	2%	24%	8%	1%

Value of Regions and Meetings

Regional Division	Value Most About Regions					Why Go to Regional Meetings					
	Journals	Meetings	Grants & Awards	Leadership	Geog Bowl	Present Research	Net-working	Mentor-ing	Geog Bowl	Learn-ing from Present ations	Learn-ing about AAG
APCG (journal)	31%	67%	36%	18%	10%	54%	64%	35%	4%	44%	4%
ELDAAG (no journal)	19%	73%	38%	4%	17%	56%	69%	33%	4%	35%	10%
GPRM (no journal)	10%	70%	26%	8%	12%	56%	58%	38%	5%	40%	7%
MAD (no journal)	14%	54%	16%	14%	18%	26%	52%	14%	4%	32%	6%
MSAAG (journal)	36%	71%	20%	16%	22%	42%	44%	38%	4%	27%	4%

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NESTVAL (journal)	29%	58%	16%	13%	18%	37%	55%	37%	13%	21%	5%
SEDAAG (journal)	54%	79%	34%	16%	16%	64%	70%	35%	9%	47%	7%
SWAAG (journal)	27%	76%	29%	14%	17%	64%	67%	39%	3%	33%	11%
WLDAAG (no journal)	4%	79%	27%	8%	4%	51%	64%	47%	3%	43%	9%
Total	27%	71%	28%	13%	14%	53%	62%	36%	6%	38%	7%

What would enhance the value of the Regions to members?

	Count	% of responses
More Institutions Involved	49	18%
Better Communication	32	11%
Student focus	27	10%
Networking Opportunities	21	8%
Professional development	15	5%
Change division boundaries/ Joint Meetings	14	5%
Specialty group collaboration	12	4%
Timing	10	4%
Improve quality	10	4%
More alt-ac programming	9	3%
Regional journal	9	3%
Lower fee	8	3%
AAG support	8	3%
Alternate with National	7	3%
Organization	4	1%
Governance	4	1%
Restrict annual meeting	3	1%
Job assistance	3	1%
Distance	3	1%
AAG presence	3	1%
More local meetings	2	1%
Field trips	2	1%

Employment opportunities	2	1%
Disband	2	1%
Community	2	1%
Attitude	2	1%
Total Responses	279	

What can AAG do to enhance the value of Regions to members?

	Count	% of responses
More Funding	62	26%
More Publicity and Outreach	36	15%
Greater AAG support	33	14%
Greater AAG presence	12	5%
Change regional boundaries	10	4%
Promote consistency across regions	9	4%
Journal	8	3%
More Institutions Participate	7	3%
Restrict participation in annual meeting	7	3%
Discount costs for attendance	6	2%
Alternate with National	5	2%
Specialty group collaboration	5	2%
Governance	4	2%
professional development	4	2%
Supply experts/speakers	4	2%
More local events	3	1%
Timing	3	1%
coordination with regional leaders	2	1%
Disband	2	1%
Networking	2	1%
virtual presentations	2	1%
Total Responses	241	

Appendix V: West Lakes Division Bylaws

WEST LAKES DIVISION – BYLAWS (Adopted October 29, 1965, amended November 3, 1967, amended November 1984, amended October 1990, amended November 2, 2018, amended October 26, 2019)

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the West Lakes Division, American Association of Geographers (AAG).

Section 2: Authority

This Division is organized in accordance with Article VI of the Constitution of the AAG. Nothing herein contained shall be construed in contradiction to that constitution, and in case of conflict the Constitution and Council of the AAG shall be considered the final authority.

Section 3: Membership

The membership of this Division shall consist of all those members of the AAG whose Association mailing address lies within the bounded area of the West Lakes Division.

Section 4: Officers

The officers of the Division shall be 1) the chair and 2) the vice-chair, both of whom shall be members of the Division and the Association. The immediate past chair of the Division shall be considered available to the incumbent chair as counselor, and in this capacity will serve in the absence of the chair. In the event of a vacancy in the office of chair the immediate past chair shall resume that office, serving until the next annual meeting of the Division. The Division shall be represented on the Council of the AAG by an elected Councilor, as authorized by the National Constitution and Bylaws.

4a: Term of Office

The chair and vice-chair of the Division shall serve for a term of one year, holding office from approximately one week after the close of one annual meeting of the Division until approximately one week after the close of the following annual meeting. The councilor shall be elected for a term of three years, holding office from July 1 of the election year to June 30 three years thereafter.

4b: Method of Nomination and Election of Officers

Nomination of candidates for the offices of chair and vice-chair shall be made by members from the floor at the annual business meeting. Election shall follow immediately and be by majority ballot vote of members present. The elevation of the vice-chair to the office of chair shall be expected.

Section 5: Duties of Officers & Councilor

Chair

- Serve as presiding officer at the annual meeting of the Division and the annual business meeting.
- Oversee all aspects of organizing the region's annual meeting, *e.g.*: publicity, financial arrangements at the host institution, calls for participation, recruitment, as necessary, of field trip, Geo-bowl, student award coordinators, and so forth.

- Coordinate with the AAG's financial agent all aspects of budgeting for the region's annual meeting and oversee all financial aspects of the region, in consultation with the region's vice chair and councilor.
- Coordinate with and delegate responsibilities of meeting organization to the vice-chair as appropriate.
- Appoint an interim vice-chair when a vacancy occurs in that office between annual meetings of the Division.
- Appoint members and chair of such standing committees as may be established by Division action and appoint such ad hoc committees as he/she considers necessary.
- Act on behalf of the Division in circumstances not otherwise covered by the Bylaws.

Vice-chair

- In coordination with and as directed by the Chair, assist the Chair in the organization of the region's annual meeting.
- Take and maintain minutes of the business meetings of the Division.
- File such reports as are required by the AAG and its publications.
- Maintain close contact with the archives and the treasurer on matters relating to records and finances, respectively.
- Maintain and pass on to his/her successor, in good order, the Division's webpage and records of the Division.
- Prior to the region's annual meeting, request from the AAG the region's financial information and report transactions and balances at the business meeting.

Councilor

- The duties of the Councilor are as provided in the National Constitution.
- The Councilor shall maintain a close liaison with the Chair, and Vice-chair of the Division, and represent the membership of the Division in Council.
- The Councilor shall be reimbursed by the Division for his/her expenses not otherwise provided for, in an amount not to exceed two hundred dollars, in order to attend Council meetings.
- All AAG members residing in an AAG region should be allowed to elect that Region's Councilmember. The current/outgoing Regional Councilor should contact the AAG the Fall prior to the end of their term to initialize the upcoming election process.
- It is the responsibility of the outgoing Councilor to advertise, accept nominations for, and execute the election of their successor. The election of the incoming Councilor shall be completed prior to the springtime annual meeting of the AAG.

Section 6: Division Meetings

6a. Annual Meeting

At least one meeting of the Division shall be held annually, normally in the autumn. The time and place of the meeting shall be determined as follows: the chair shall receive prior to the annual meeting, written invitations to host future meetings to be voted upon by the members present. Meeting sites shall be determined at least two years in advance, whenever possible. Participation in the annual meeting, except for the business section, shall in no way be restricted.

6b. Annual Business Meeting

The Division shall conduct an annual business meeting, as an integral part of the annual meeting. At this time the business of the Division, including, but not restricted to, election of officers and acceptance of invitations for future meeting sites shall be transacted.

Section 7: Publication and Research

The Division may establish, subject to the approval of the AAG Council, research projects and/or publications.

Section 8: Quorum and Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members attending, who shall be considered a quorum, any annual business meeting of the Division.

Section 9: Adoption

These Bylaws shall be considered to have been adopted when they have been approved by a two-thirds majority vote of those members attending an annual business meeting of the Division and have been accepted by the Council of the AAG.