SFU’s 50th anniversary year has been busy and successful for the Department of Geography as this newsletter highlights. We moved up one place in the QS World University Rankings, now ranked 6th of all Geography departments in Canada, and 2nd amongst Canadian comprehensive universities. As befitting a vibrant and dynamic department we have had several comings and goings: two faculty (Meg Krawchuk and Anders Knudby) left for other positions, two new colleagues are being hired, and by the end of the year two more (Janet Sturgeon, Roger Hayter) will have retired. In July, we will be welcoming our new Physical Geography lecturer, Dr. Andrew Perkins.

In January 2016, we surveyed our undergraduate majors and minors to understand their experience in our programs and how we might improve Geography at SFU. 95% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with their overall experience. Nevertheless, they identified areas that the department should work to improve. We have translated this feedback into an action plan that we will implement over the next year or so. Thank you to all respondents!

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the Pooni family for their generous gift in support of undergraduate education in Geography. The Department is of course very happy to talk to any of our supporters about gifts that can help us and our students make the most of their time at SFU. Please get in touch if you are considering a gift.

We invite you to (re)connect with Geography through this newsletter, our website and Facebook. And we hope to see many of you at the Speaking Out in Public Spaces event at SFU Harbour Centre next month.

Tracy Brennand, Chair

Upcoming Events

On 6 June, 4:30 – 6:00 pm, the Department is hosting a panel presentation and discussion at the Harbour Centre campus downtown. The event, Speaking Out in Public Places, brings five Vancouver activists to discuss space, place, gender and sexuality. The gathering is open to all, and alumni are particularly encouraged to attend. We hope to see many of you there. To see the poster, click here, and to register to attend, click here.

In October, Professors Eugene McCann and Nick Blomley will be giving a presentation on the key role of the Department in the radical geography of the 1970s. The event will be hosted by SFU’s Institute for the Humanities. The exact date, time and location will be available on the website in the early Autumn.

Tracy Brennand, Chair
In June 2015, Dr. Alex Clapp delivered a plenary address on “Open data and the global temperature record” to the 7th International Conference on Climate Change: Impacts and Responses in Vancouver.

In July 2015, Prof. Nick Blomley was an expert witness providing a written report and testimony to the Chief Justice of BC concerning a constitutional challenge to the City of Abbotsford’s bylaws and policies concerning homelessness.

In July 2015, Dr. Valorie Crooks hosted the 16th biennial International Medical Geography Symposium, with over 200 attendees from more than 15 countries. Dr. Crooks’ research on outbound medical tourism from British Columbia was later featured on a CTV News segment and in other media outlets.

In July 2015, Prof. Eugene McCann was named editor of Geography Compass—Urban, an online, peer-reviewed journal publishing state-of-the-art reviews of urban geography and urban studies. In late February 2016, Dr. McCann gave an invited lecture to the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space in Berlin, and in early March, he gave the opening address to the American University of Beirut’s conference City Debates 2016. His lecture was entitled "Crisis, Policy-Making, and 'Crisis Urbanism': A Policy Mobilities Perspective".

In September 2015, Dr. Kirsten Zickfeld was interviewed on CBC Vancouver regarding extreme weather preparedness in the wake of the destructive windstorm in the Lower Mainland of August 2015. In December 2015, in the midst of the Paris climate conference, she was interviewed on CTV National News about climate change and the requisite policy changes, and later the same month she spoke to Red FM about weather predictability, the super El Nino and the polar vortex, and in April 2016 she was interviewed by ECOreport and Clean Techica about the rise in average global temperatures.

Dr. Paul Kingsbury was awarded a four-year Insight Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, entitled "Situating the Growth of Paranormal Investigation Cultures: A Critical Study of the Lived Spaces of Organizations and Conferences". The project has generated a great deal of public interest and received lots of media attention, from (among others) the Vancouver Sun, Yahoo News Canada, Metro News, and SFU News.

In late October 2015, Dr. Meg Holden published a Vancouver Sun editorial on Metro Vancouver’s urban future.
News & In the News

In March 2016, Prof. Roger Hayter was interviewed by Canada Sailing’s, Canada’s weekly trade and transportation magazine in March 2016 regarding the Canada-US softwood lumber dispute. In April 2016 he gave an invited lecture and participated in the graduate program on resource conflict and governance organized out of the University of Heidelberg, at the University of Santiago, Chile.

In April 2016, Prof. Tracy Brennand was awarded a five-year Discovery Grant from the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council, entitled “Meltwater systems of past ice sheets: implications for ice sheet dynamics, meltwater routing and landscape change”.

Recently arrived on the bookshelf is Prof. Eugene McCann's new textbook, Urban Geography: A Critical Introduction (Wiley-Blackwell), co-authored with Andy Jonas (University of Hull) and Mary Thomas (Ohio State University), and Pror. Peter Hall’s The Proposal Economy: Neoliberal Citizenship in "Ontario’s Most Historic Town (UBC Press), co-authored with Pamela Stern (SFU). In addition, the second edition of Prof. Roger Hayter’s economic geography textbook, Economic Geography: An Institutional Approach (Oxford University Press), co-authored with alumnus Jerry Patchell (PhD 1992), has just appeared.

Goings-on Around the Department

The 2015 annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers held in June 2015 at SFU Harbour Centre, coordinated by a committee led by Professor Roger Hayter, was a resounding success. 450 attendees participated in 120 panel and poster sessions. One of the highlights was eminent climate scientist Andrew Weaver’s John Wiley Lecture, “Intergenerational Equity and the Challenge of Global Warming”.

Goings-on Around the Department

In September 2015 the Department hosted a seminar and public talk by distinguished climate scientist Michael Mann.

In November 2015 we co-hosted SFU’s annual GIS Day.

In December 2015 and March 2016, the Geography Graduate Student Association hosted the inaugural events in an already-very-popular series called "Travelogues: Misadventures in the Field". These engaging and informal talks are doing a lot to help connect grads, undergrads, staff and faculty in a fun way, while showcasing research-related stories and challenges.

In February 2016, Prof. Cindi Katz, of the City University of New York's program in Earth and Environmental Sciences, visited the Department for two days to deliver Geography's 5th annual Distinguished Lecture, "Crisis and the Cultural Politics of Childhood". The Lecture and reception were well attended by faculty, grads and alumni. The event is announced early each year via email and on the Department's website and Facebook pages.

In March 2016, alumnus Peter Ojamaa (BA 1970), an experienced earth and environmental scientist from Calgary, Alberta, visited the Department and spoke to a class about careers in geography and environmental science. The visit was a highlight of the semester for those students.

In March 2016, the Department of Geography participated in the Amazing Race #SFU50 Edition. Approximately 150 Amazing Race participants visited the Department of Geography station of the event. The Department's station was organized and staffed by an enthusiastic crew of graduate students, and involved a soil classification exercise that asked participants to get their hands dirty in the interests of learning and fun.

In April 2016, the Geography Student Union hosted their popular 7th annual experiential learning trip to the north Okanagan with resounding success.
Kudos

Prof. Eugene McCann was appointed University Professor in the Department of Geography for a 5-year term from 2015 to 2020. This award recognizes his stellar contributions as a senior scholar of distinction.

Prof. Alison Gill was recognized by the American Association of Geographers for her enormous impact upon the study of tourism with the 2016 John Rooney Award for "outstanding contributions to the field and discipline of applied recreation, tourism and sport geography".

Prof. Suzana Dragićević has been presented with the 2016 Dean of Graduate Studies Award for Excellence in Supervision. SFU presents the Award annually to recognize excellence in the supervision of graduate students.

Alumnus Prof. David Mark (PhD 1977), an internationally-respected geographic information and cognitive scientist and Distinguished Professor of Geography at the University of Buffalo, received an Outstanding Alumni award from SFU, at a gala in Vancouver in March 2016.

Alumnus Dr. Mark Kear, who in July 2015 defended his PhD dissertation "Governing Homo Subprimicus: The financial regulation of poverty after the subprime crisis" (supervised by Geoff Mann), accepted a tenure-track position in the University of Arizona’s School of Geography and Development starting in September 2015.

Alumnus Dr. Cristina Temenos (PhD 2014, supervised by Eugene McCann) won a three-year post-doctoral fellowship from the Urban Studies Foundation, which she has taken up at the University of Manchester, where she will work with SFU Geography Adjunct Professor, Dr. Kevin Ward.

Alumnus Dr. Sai Latt, who in January 2016 defended his PhD dissertation, "Depoliticization, Securitization and Violent Accumulation in the Integration of the Greater Mekong Sub-region" (supervised by Janet Sturgeon), is Research Director at the Pyidaungsu Institute for Peace and Dialogue, an NGO supporting the ceasefire agreements between the Burmese government and ethnic armies in Burma. Dr. Latt’s and the Institute’s efforts contributed to the historic agreement of October 2015, at which all parties consented to a ceasefire and the commencement of negotiations to end decades of civil war. Dr. Latt is a member of one of the national committees helping non-state parties negotiate and implement the peace process.
Kudos

Alumnus Dr. Gretchen Hernandez, who in March 2016 defended her PhD dissertation “From Spaces of Marginalization to Places of Participation: Indigenous Articulations of the Social Economy in the Bolivian Highlands” (supervised by the late John Brohman and Sean Markey of REM), helped train 4,000 municipal officials, non-governmental organizations, development professionals and indigenous leaders in Community Economic Development over the course of doctoral research in Bolivia between 2007 and 2013.

Alumnus Dr. Andrew Perkins, who in September 2015 defended his PhD dissertation “Refining the Pattern and Style of Deglaciation on the Southern Fraser Plateau and Environ” (supervised by Tracy Brennand) has won the 2016 Faculty of Environment's Dean's Convocation Medal. The Convocation Medals recognize graduating students from each faculty whose cumulative grade-point-average places them in the top five per cent of their class. Dr. Perkins also won the Canadian Association of Geography's 2016 Starkey-Robinson Award in recognition of high quality graduate research that furthers understanding of the geography of Canada. We are delighted that he will be re-joining is in July 2016 as our new Physical Geography lecturer.

In June 2015, PhD student Mileva Samardzić-Petrović (supervised by Suzana Dragićević) won the Best Paper Award at the 10th International Conference on the Geographical Analysis, Urban Modeling, Spatial Statistics) in Banff, Alberta.

PhD student Jonathan Cripps (supervised by Tracy Brennand) won the Canadian Quaternary Association's (CANQUA) 2015 Dreimanis Doctoral Scholarship for "demonstrating excellence in Quaternary science". He also won the Canadian Geomorphology Research Group’s Olav Slaymaker award for best student talk at CANQUA 2015 in St. John's, Newfoundland.

MSc student Olympia Koziatek (supervised by Suzana Dragićević) and BA student Anthony Lee won the graduate and undergraduate 2016 SFU Esri Canada GIS Scholarship Awards. The awards recognize excellent achievement in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) through the design and implementation of an original and individual project related to the advancement of methods or application in the discipline. Ms. Koziatek also won the Master's award at Canada's 2016 Esri Young Scholar awards, for developing a 3D approach for modeling potential urban vertical development.

Geography undergraduates Mansoureh Rameshk and Franz Schug won the top two prizes in the 2015 SFU GIS Day map competition, organized in October 2015 by the Bennett Library Research Commons and the Esri Canada Center of Excellence. Ms. Rameshk's first place map showed the impact of climate-induced flooding in Surrey, BC. Mr. Schug's second place map showed deforestation and poverty in Brazil.
Kudos

David Swanlund, who will graduate with a BA in June 2016, won the 2015 Warren Gill Memorial Award that recognizes leadership and service within the community by a Human Geography student. Mr. Swanlund is also an accomplished young scholar, and is lead author on an article based on his honours thesis forthcoming in the Annals of the Association of American Geographers. He will be re-joining us in September, to begin his MSc with Prof. Nadine Schuurman.

Gabriel Boothroyd-Roberts, who will graduate with a BA (Honours) in June 2016, has won the 2016 Canadian Association of Geographers Undergraduate Award. Mr. Boothroyd-Roberts' undergraduate work included an honours thesis on the impact of the BC provincial government's "Blueprint for Jobs" on SFU, which won the 2016 Student Essay Award from the Progressive Economics Forum. In September, he will begin Law School at UBC.