PRTM-GSA 2018-2019 Election Results

Congratulations to the 2018-2019 GSA officers!

Co-President: Joshua Randall (PhD)
Co-President: Diquan Edmonds (Masters)
Academic and Professional Development: Sara Brune
Communications: Jing Huei
Social and Community Outreach: Maude Dinan
Treasurer: Charmaine Pedroza
Fundraising: Claudia Alberico
USGA Representative: Elke Grether
Online Student Representative: Jennifer Beaman

PRTM-GSA Advisor: Dr. Bethany Cutts
NC State GSA Best Practices Award

The PRTM GSA won the NC State GSA Best Practices Award for 2017-2018! The Best Practices Award is awarded to the GSA who embodies the UGSA’s mission of improving the scholarship and satisfaction of graduate students at NC State University. This year’s team welcomed 7 new officers, 3 returning officers, and 1 new faculty advisor. After being selected for their positions (last Spring) for the 17-18 term, the team worked diligently to maintain the standard of excellence established by previous officers including the Best Practices award winners (PRTM GSA) from 2015.

University GSA Updates

Graduate student needs has been high priority for the graduate school and GSA council. This academic year resulted in a number of changes to better-fit graduate student needs including increased funding opportunities, the hire of an additional funding support staff member, and graduate student representation on Student Government.

While funding continues to endure budget cuts at the state and federal levels, the need to disseminate our research findings at conferences has not. In response to our changing funding climate and increased interest in funding opportunities, the graduate school increased the budget for travel awards by $25,000. In addition to the handful of $1,500 Award for Conferences, a Travel Assistance Award in the amount of $500 was created. The Travel Assistance Award is designed to offset travel costs for 30 to 50 additional students each year. This new award uses a condensed application process similar to the Award for Conferences.

A second response to the increased need for funding, the graduate school has created a university staff position focused on seeking outside funding sources for graduate students including (but not limited to) fellowships and scholarships. In addition to finding and communicating outside funding opportunities, the goal of this position is to provide catered assistance to NCSU graduate students to strengthen applications for such funding. This position is designed to create lasting support for graduate students to be competitive applicants for outside funding opportunities. This position has been approved and posted by the Board of Directors. The Graduate School intends to have this position filled by July 1st of this year.

Other notable happenings with University GSA: Representation at Legislative Action Day in Washington, D.C.; Dissemination of information & call to action for Tax Bill Reforms; Summer Health Care Extension for Research Assistants (RAs); Election of a new GSA Treasurer, Zac Lentz. —Elke Grether
The 97th session of the Student Senate came to an end in March with a variety of legislation, created and debated. Much of the legislation this year was dedicated to promoting and enhancing the rich diversity of our NC State campus. A budget of $442,800 dollars was passed at the end of the session; this funding comes from student fees and goes to a variety of programs and resources including appropriations for student groups. The 98th session recently started at last check the graduate delegation was in need of a few more representatives the fall is a busy time for student senators as the budget for the university passes and these student representatives vote to cast one of the 5 student votes. For this reason, it is imperative that we have a full suite of active graduate senators representing our needs as graduate students.

—Ann Savage

Academic and Professional Development

This past academic year, the GSA has hosted several events to provide information and a forum for professional development. In November, the GSA hosted a Salary Negotiation workshop which was well attended by members of the entire graduate cohort (i.e., new and old members). In early February, a LinkedIn workshop was also held to promote our graduate students’ online presence as it becomes a more important component of being career ready. Also in February, we hosted a QSR Nvivo workshop to provide information for students interested in using this software for the research and class projects. April was also a busy professional development month with both a participatory action research lunch and learn led by our own Bruno Ferreira. The last event for professional development this year was the Annual PRTM GSA Career Panel including panelist Hilary Morris of the South Atlantic Conservation Cooperative, Heather Sanderson with NC State University Recreation, Sam Trogdon, a former PRTM graduate student, who is currently with the City of Cary’s Bond Park Community and Allie McCreary with NC State University for now but soon with Western Kentucky University. These panelist offered insight into the job application process, interview process and important things to consider about the entire process for all of our PRTM students.

—Ann Savage
Social Committee and Outreach Highlights

This year the GSA had some great social and service activities that were well attended by students (and some faculty!).

Activities included a picnic at Dorothea Dix park, a holiday party, a hike in Umstead Park, a clean up at Lake Raleigh, end of year celebrations, and several happy hours that have been really fun and given students the opportunity to spend some time together off the clock. —Elizabeth Oliphant

PRTM Bearodactyls Fly High!

The PRTM Bearodactyls (official mascot) fielded teams for four intramural sports for Fall 2017: volleyball, dodgeball, indoor soccer, and basketball. Some teams did better than others... but we all had a great time! —Elizabeth Oliphant
The PRTM department hosted the International PhD school as a part of a 4-year EU funded Carnival Grant. Other schools have taken place in Austria, Germany, UK, and 2 schools in South Africa. The purpose of this event was for knowledge exchange, networking, and the development of research ideas. The 4-day event included faculty and staff from NC State, the University of Coventry, the University of Cologne, Technical University of Munich (TUM), and Clemson University. The PRTM GSA assisted with coordinating the visit through student recruitment for participation in various events including lunches, evening socials, happy hours, and research workshops.

PRTM Spring Banquet

PRTM Spring Banquet: PRTM students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends gathered at the Stateview Hotel on Thursday, April 19 for the PRTM Alumni and Friends Spring Celebration. A silent auction and dinner kicked off the eventful evening which culminated by recognizing departmental and individual achievements throughout the academic year.

PRTM Graduate Student Awards

Graduate students Matthew Jurjonas and Elizabeth Oliphant were presented with the 2017-2018 Outstanding Graduate Student Award. Matthew Carusona was presented the 2017-2018 Outstanding Master of PRTSM Award.

Congratulations!

Justin Cline and his wife welcomed their son, Samuel, to the world in February of 2018 —Justin Cline

Bethany Neely was a member of the 2017 ACC Cross Country Championship Team. The team went on to finish 8th at the NCAA Division I Cross Country National Championship! —Bethany Neely

Congratulations to the PRTM Spring Class of 2018:
Matthew Jurjonas (PhD), Shahab Nazariadli (PhD), Brendali Barrera (MS), Mayra Robledo (MS), and Ann Savage (MS)
**PRTM-GSA Expands to Online Cohort**

This year the PRTM-GSA added an online representative to help better connect the online cohort with the on-campus cohorts. The position was created to represent the needs and voices of the PRTSM Online Masters Degree (MPRTSM) cohort. The student rep worked as part of the PRTM GSA to improve outreach, visibility, engagement, and to incorporate the unique needs of the online cohort. Better connecting the various cohorts allows for conversation and increased opportunities for networking and professional growth for all students. The MPRTSM cohort consists of students from across the state and country, working towards their degree. Like the on-campus cohort, the online cohort is made up of a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Many of the students in the MPRTSM are part or full-time professionals in various fields such as active military, teachers, recreation directors, AmeriCorps, park rangers, event planners, community center directors, social services staff, adventure course managers, campus recreation coordinators, and athletic directors to name a few. The MPRTSM students can offer a wealth of knowledge and experience to the university community and can be great resources for the academic community, as they are often managing parks, trails, sports and entertainment venues, and community centers. The on-campus cohort can also be a great resource for the MPRTSM, as partners and researchers. The position has and will allow for better collaboration between our online and on-campus communities. Thanks to Matt Carusona, who will be graduating in May 2018, for serving as the first rep and for his work on connecting the MPRTSM and welcome Jennifer Beaman who will be taking over the position for 2018/2019 year. This position and the online representatives’ input will be a continued asset to the PRTM-GSA.

—**Matt Carusona**

**Park Break 2017**

Mayra Robledo and Elizabeth Oliphant were selected to join seven other graduate students from across the country at **Park Break 2017 in Zion National Park** this past November. Sponsored by the National Park Service and the George Wright Society, Park Break 2017 focused on the NPS initiative Healthy Parks Healthy People and allowed students and park staff to work together to find potential responses to workplace stress due to increasing visitors and decreasing resources at the park.
**Student Achievements**

Claudia Alberico attended the HULAP Workshop and presented for the PARC project at the Active Living Research Conference in Banff, Canada. She also rescued a puppy named Menina!

Hannah Buschert accepted a position as the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail Coordinator with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, combining her passion and education in natural resources with parks, recreation and tourism management.

Sara Arita presented her research at four conferences/workshops including: Southeast Travel and Tourism research Association Symposium (SETTRA), National Environment and recreation Research Symposium (NERR), Latin America Student Association (LASA) research symposium, and Lake Johnson Environmental Lecture Series

Troy Carlton will be accepting a faculty position at Warner University in Lake Wales, FL beginning August 2018. His title will be Assistant Professor of Sport Management working in the Department of Physical Education.

Brendali Carrillo was an awardee of the Peace Scholarship Fund by the Philanthropic Educational Organization (academic year 2017-2018), published a review of tourism destination in a Peruvian magazine, and became the Communications Chair of the Latin America Graduate Students Association.

Matt Carusona presented a speed session on Marketing and Social Media, and full session on Technology and Project Management at the 2017 National Recreation and Park Association Conference in New Orleans this September; presented at the 2017 BRAND+AID Marketing and Social Media Conference in Arlington Texas; presented at the 2017 Carolinas Joint Recreation and Parks Conference with NCRPA team members and fellow graduate student Diquan Edmonds in Greensboro, NC; presented at the 2018 Maryland Parks and Recreation Conference in Ocean City Maryland; and Served on the communications board for Land for Tomorrow.
Diquan Edmonds presented a session on “Being a Millenial in the Workplace”, at the 2017 NCRPA Joint Conference with NCRPA team members Nicole Miller and Matthew Carusona. In 2017, he founded the NCRPA Wellness Coalition. The group is comprised of 10 recreation and park professionals from around the state of North Carolina who are concerned with wellness efforts in their departments. The group has helped tremendously in the development of health and wellness information to distribute to recreation and park agencies around the state.

Ladan Ghahramani started a researcher manager position with the Oregon Tourism Commission (dba Travel Oregon) in October of 2017.

Jing-Huei Huang had an abstract accepted as an oral presentation, to be presented in 25th International Association People-Environment Studies Conference (IAPS), Rome, Italy, July 8-13, 2018: Huang, J. H., Floyd, M. F., Marquet, O., Alberico, C. O., Mazak, E., Hipp, J. A. Parental preferences for park attributes associated with children’s use of parks in low income and racial and ethnic minority communities. Jing also had an abstract accepted as a poster presentation, to be presented in International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Meeting (ISBNPA), Hong Kong, June 3-6, 2018

Zeynab Jouzi will have a poster presentation in the US-IALE 2018 Annual Meeting, Chicago IL, 8-12 April. This is about “Identifying Conservation Priorities through Participatory Ecosystem Services Mapping in Coastal Zones”.

Matthew Jurjonas was awarded 1st Place in the College of Natural Resources (NC State) Three Minute Thesis Competition. He was a first author on a published article regarding rural coastal community resilience, and was awarded a Fulbright-Garcia Robles US Scholar postdoc award allowing him to study climate justice on communally managed lands. He will soon be moving to Mexico City.

Danielle Lawson led writing for a research team to secure a 120k North Carolina Sea Grant to study the intergenerational transfer of marine debris and water quality based information in coastal NC (Sea Grant Omnibus Funding); won 2nd place at the College of Natural Resources 3 Minute Thesis Competition; and was chosen as a Southeast Climate Science Center Global Change Fellow.
Sonya Shaw completed the PRTM Doctoral program in December of 2017, became an adjunct faculty at North Carolina Central University, was a panel presenter at the Academy of Leisure Sciences Conference, was elected Secretary of the National Recreation and Park Ethnic Minority Society, and had her research featured in the NRPA Magazine - Member Spotlight.

Ray Person received the 2017 NCRPA Fletcher Graduate Scholarship, assisted with data collection for Park Rx and SOPARC projects, had an abstract accepted for the Southeastern Travel and Tourism Research Association (SETTRA) conference, and was recognized by an undergraduate student through NC State University's "Thank a Teacher" program for his contributions as a Teaching Assistant.

Mayra Robledo was accepted to do an oral presentation at the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) conference; was awarded the 2017-2018 Diversity Fellowship; Submitted a grant to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Community Action grant; Serves as an lead advisor for the Juntos Program' and served as the Co-president of Diversity, Inclusion, AdVenture, Experience (DIVE) student organization. She also became a happily married Mrs. Gomez on Dec. 27, and successfully defended her thesis.

Ann Savage gave oral presentations at three conferences, received the Tom and Muriel More Scholarship, was part of a research team (including Mizra Halim and Dr. Carla Barbieri) that won a regional and national award for the Women in Agritourism Project from the National Association of Community Development Extension professionals, and successfully defended her thesis.

Shahab Nazariadli successfully defended his PhD in March, the biggest achievement of his lifetime!

Ray Person received the 2017 NCRPA Fletcher Graduate Scholarship, assisted with data collection for Park Rx and SOPARC projects, had an abstract accepted for the Southeastern Travel and Tourism Research Association (SETTRA) conference, and was recognized by an undergraduate student through NC State University's "Thank a Teacher" program for his contributions as a Teaching Assistant.

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Kyle Smith was awarded the 2017 NCRPA Fletcher Graduate Scholarship, and began working as the Central-West Regional Consultant for Recreation Resources Service.

Congratulations to the Spring 2018 Master of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Sport Management Graduating Class!

- Matthew Barber
- Sharon Barbour
- Hannah Bushert
- Gabriel Button
- Matthew Carusona
- Mary Coe
- Benjamin Collette
- Sean Cramer
- Rachel Harris
- Leanna Jennings
- Michael King
- Jordan Kirk
- Gregory Lane
- Zachary Lee
- Gerald Mclean
- Elizabeth Overman
- Tasha Owens
- Rori Ray
- Jonah Reagle
- Veronica Rodriguez
- Sandra Soriano
- Lauren Stover
- Allison Westfahl
Sonya Shaw, PhD, Garner Parks and Recreation Director

**What is your current position and responsibilities?**
My current position is director of the nationally accredited Garner Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department. I am responsible for oversight management of the department comprised of 5 programming teams: Administration, Cultural Arts and Events, Adult and Seniors, Youth and Athletics and Outdoor and Adventure. The Town of Garner is a growing community who prides itself in its parks system totaling 350 acres of parkland inside town limits which includes 271 acres for active use. Recreational amenities include over four miles of paved trails, 12 playgrounds, 12 picnic shelters, 14 athletic fields, six tennis courts and a boathouse on Lake Benson.

**What do you enjoy most about your current job?**
There are several things I enjoy about my position. I enjoy the variety of experiences my role encompasses. Monday may be a tough night working through policy changes, but Tuesday yields a day of watching Seniors enjoy line dancing. Wednesday might be a challenging day with budgets, but on your way to lunch you notice a family enjoying time fishing together at the boathouse. Thursday afternoon may be a coaching session with staff, while Friday may yield a business luncheon with women leaders. Combining all of these experiences week after week highlight the joys of serving in this position. This type of unpredictability actually adds a level of excitement to this role and keeps you sharp and flexible.

**Why did you decide to pursue a Ph.D. at NC State?**
NC State has a history of being a rigorous program of study with some of the best academicians in the country. With only a few researching topics around people of color, I felt it a privilege to study under one of the best - Dr. Floyd. I knew that transitioning from a practitioner to a Ph.D student would be challenging, but I knew Dr. Floyd would provide me with the guidance and assistance necessary for this transition. Having established relationships over the years with Kathy Gore, Dr. Ed Lindsay, Dr. Annette Moore, Dr. Candace Vick, Dr. Beth Wilson and Dr. Phil Rhea through my work as a practitioner, made it even more rewarding to progress through the program with their encouragement and support.

**How did you balance being the director of a growing parks and recreation department and pursuing your degree?**
I have been blessed to have a supportive husband, family, friends and staff who all played a role in my success. I certainly put the work in as required to complete the Ph.D program, however, the assistance and support provided by my network allowed me to balance being a director and doctoral student. My husband filled in the gaps at home and took the lead on raising our son. My family and friends provided me with outings and breaks away from my regimented schedule of work and study. I am very fortunate to have a self-motivated and driven staff who work tirelessly to meet department goals. The combination of support received allowed me to maintain balance throughout my time as a doctoral student and director.

**What was something valuable you learned while earning a Ph.D. that you have used in your current position?**
Many lessons were learned during my journey. Though the PhD program is designed to increase our knowledge, understanding and critical thinking skills, the most valuable lessons learned were personal in nature and perspective - perseverance and self-knowledge. There were some who thought I would never enter a doctoral program, much less graduate with a doctoral degree. Through this process, I was reminded of the importance of staying focused and persevering through challenging situations. The doubt and lack of confidence others had in me, only renewed my energy and provided me with the wherewithal to dig deeper and work that much harder. Thus, the most valuable lesson I was reminded of during this process was to “let your work speak for you and allow it to precede you”. Following this mindset allows me to remain humble amidst the major accomplishments experienced along this journey.

**Now that you have completed the program and received your Ph.D. what’s next?**
Over the next year, I plan to continue serving as Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Director and adjunct faculty, publish articles and share my research through various forums. This is an exciting time on this journey and very timely with so much of the world focused on the experiences of women in the workplace. My research on the challenges women face along their career pathway examines some of these unique challenges that exist for African American women and I am really looking forward to sharing knowledge gained through my research.

**What is one piece of advice you have for future and current students?**
I would encourage current and future students to work hardest at finding the right balance throughout this program. The PhD program is quite challenging and certainly deserves time and attention. However, I am most grateful that during my experience I made sure to carve out time to spend with family, sorority sisters and friends. I rewarded myself along the way with personal favorites and do not regret any of those choices. Some things only happen once in life with family and friends and those special moments provided me with the balance necessary to complete the program mentally healthy. Mental well-being was my way of finding the right balance and I challenge current and future students to always remember its importance along this journey called life.

**Bio/About:** Dr. Sonya Shaw received her doctorate of philosophy in parks, recreation and tourism management from North Carolina State University at the Dec. 15 commencement exercises. She is the first African American female to earn a doctorate degree from the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management Program at North Carolina State University. Dr. Shaw’s dissertation focuses on the career experiences of African American women leaders in parks and recreation, specifically examining the challenges women face in the profession and negotiation strategies women used to gain upward mobility. She previously earned master's degrees in public administration and agency counseling from North Carolina Central University and a bachelor of arts degree in recreation administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Shaw is the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Director for the Town of Garner. In addition to being department director, Dr. Shaw serves as adjunct faculty at North Carolina Central University and teaches in the Physical Education and Recreation Administration Department. She has also taught in the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management Program at North Carolina State University. - Compiled by Matt Carusona
New Post-Doc Interview

Xiao Xiao, PhD

What is your current position and responsibilities?
I work with Dr. Erin Seekamp, developing a decision support tool which can aid the National Park Service with their climate change adaptation plan for cultural and environmental resources, especially in coastal parks which are more vulnerable to climate change such as sea level rise, erosion, and flooding.

This project is exciting because it is rooted in qualitative research, based on frameworks previously developed, and uses decision models to run different strategies under different budget scenarios. Using my programming and statistical analysis skills to develop cost effective strategies for addressing climate change adaptation plans can contribute to management principles in the National Park Service.

What was your first impression of PRTM at NC State?
I was really excited about the large and diverse department, with knowledgeable students and faculty working together to create a positive working environment.

What is the most challenging part of the transition from PhD student to post-doc?
The most challenging part of the transition to a post-doc is finding what your career goal is after graduating with a Ph. D. Academic jobs are becoming very competitive, so you really need to focus on extending the platform for your research interests, which NC State has allowed me to do.

What is the one thing you are most passionate about?
I like to work with different conservation agencies and faculty for research about park management. My ideal career goal is to promote the National Park idea in China, as I come from China, to provide visitation opportunities to the natural resource for the general public. Using knowledge and research to help China promote the management frameworks used in the United States National Park Service in a similar capacity in China in the near future is my passion.

What is the next step after this post-doc?
I would like to pursue academia positions in the United States or China that can use my knowledge of park management frameworks. I am optimistic about finding opportunities to continue my research and am happy about the project I am currently working on.

What is one piece of advice you have for future and current students?
If you decide to start a Ph.D program, really think about what is your career goal? If you want to pursue an academic path, it is very challenging, and you must obtain a significant amount of knowledge on research methods and analysis skills in order to have the foundation for relevant and numerous publications. But if you are interested in non-profit work, that path could look very different, so knowing what your career goal is from the beginning of the program is so important. —Compiled by Kyle Smith
**Special Thank You**

On behalf of the Co-Presidents, Danielle Lawson and Ray Person, we would like to thank the current 2017-2018 PRTM GSA Officers. We have had a fantastic year, and without the work and dedication of you all, we would not have been able to accomplish everything that we have over the course of this year.

On behalf of the PRTM GSA Officer Board we would like to extend a thank you to the PRTM Faculty and Staff for always supporting us as a GSA and our mission. We would like to extend thanks in particular to:

- **Dr. Bethany Cutts** for being our faculty advisor this year. Your guidance is appreciated and has made a difference in our success!
- **Dr. Jason Bocarro** for including the GSA in the International Ph.D school opportunities this past year
- **Dr. Kim Bush** for allowing us to help with the PRTM Career Day
- **Dr. Whitney Knollenberg** for including us in multiple opportunities including the new lecturer hire
- **Dr. Erin Seekamp** for helping us find a way to starting merging the gap between industry and academia through the Individual Development Plan
- **Dr. Yu-Fai Leung** for always guiding us on what the membership needs to know from the department, and allowing us to play a role in the Visitation Day
- **Mrs. Anju Singh** for always getting us answers when needed, and guiding us on what students needs to know from the department
- **Ms. Erin Adair** for working with us to help establish the Online Student Representative Chair
- **Dr. Annette Moore** for providing graduate students with the opportunity to help guide the planning of the Spring Banquet
- **Dr. Myron Floyd** for always making the PRTM GSA a priority

Find out more about [PRTM-GSA](#) online. Current students can join the [PRTM-GSA Facebook Group](#). Also, check out the [Alumni Facebook Group](#) and [NC State Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management](#) group on [LinkedIn](#)

This Newsletter is also available [online](#)!