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GSA 2019 ELECTIONS

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Please join us in congratulating and welcoming the PRTM-GSA officers for the 2019-2020 school year.

Thanks to everyone who nominated their peers and voted in the election.
“This summer, I am interning in Yellowstone National Park with the Youth Conservation Corps.”

This summer, I am interning in Yellowstone National Park with the Youth Conservation Corps. My internship is a part of the American Conservation Experience’s National Park Service Academy, which is an innovative program designed to introduce students and young professionals to career opportunities with the National Park Service.

During my internship, I interact with over 60 teenagers who are completing maintenance projects throughout the park. In addition to assisting with the completion of the work projects, I help facilitate recreation experiences to the young enrollees. Through helping to plan and lead outdoor recreation programming and educational experiences, I work to ensure the youth enrollees have appropriate outlets outside of their normal workday. One of my chief responsibilities is to document the enrollees’ summer in the park by maintaining a blog and compiling photos for a year in video.

The internship has been a great experience so far and has further cemented my desire to work with youth in outdoor settings. For more information about how my summer is going, check out our blog at this link.

– Diquan Edmonds, Master student advised by Dr. Michael Edwards and Dr. Myron Floyd
“This internship allowed me to leverage my skills as a PhD student and as a disaster researcher.”

INTERNSHIP WITH AECOM

For my summer internship, I was hired by AECOM to support their technical assistance contract on-site at FEMA’s Headquarters in Washington, DC in the Hazard Mitigation Assistance division. Here, FEMA manages various programs catered to reducing future losses from disasters.

Starting this position, I was unsure what to expect as I had never had any experience working for the federal government. Now, I can easily say there is no other way I would have rather spent my summer. I’ve had the incredible opportunity to be a part of a team working to design a new grant program called Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC).

This internship allowed me to leverage my skills as a PhD student and as a disaster researcher, and my interest in disasters and long-term community recovery. This internship has also been a huge learning experience for me – prior to this summer, I had been slightly intimidated by anything related to policy and governance... but now, I’m a little thrilled by it!

-- Olivia Vila, PhD student advised by Dr. Bethany Cutts
I am Daniela Cajiao, Ecuadorian and Ph.D. student from Universidad Autonoma de Madrid. This is my second visit to NCSU as a Visiting Scholar.

Yes, my second visit! Why? Because I love to be in a place that inspires me to do better and where “Think and Do” makes all sense and is challenging myself every day.

NCSU is not only giving me the opportunity to learn but to meet and network with amazing people- professors, students, and friends, with whom I hope to continue collaborating in the future.

Every mentoring session means a lot to me. My investigation is related to Tourism Management in Antarctica and before getting here my research ideas were as big and unpredictable as the continent! Anything to be proud of! But then, I found strong support from my NCSU professors, who have been more than mentors in helping me not only to refine my research but also to expand my understanding about my future options once I graduate.

Friends’ support and their timely feedback have been also so valuable and refreshing. Many of their ideas are now integrated into my research methods. I still need two additional years before graduating and my expectation will be to continue networking with NCSU professors and classmates trying to match common interests for research and work.

Even though I am not an official NCSU student, I feel myself as part of the pack! Thank you for that! Go Wolfpack!

-- Daniela Cajiao, Visiting Scholar working with Dr. Yu-Fai Leung

“I love to be in a place that inspires me to do better and where “Think and Do” makes all sense and is challenging myself every day.”
This year’s Southeastern Recreation Research Conference (SERR) in Athens, Georgia highlighted our discipline’s variety of inquiry and demonstrated our region’s important role in the discipline both here and globally. I had the pleasure of sharing a poster at SERR from a class project that embraced this local-global nexus.

Dr. Yu-Fai Leung’s course Environmental Impacts of Recreation and Tourism (PRT 555) culminates with the development and implementation of a research project. This class chose to work with Daniela Cajiao, visiting scholar from Ecuador, in the development of visitor monitoring indicators that could be applied both here in North Carolina’s Piedmont as well as in Galapagos National Park.

For the project, we chose three areas of interest based on impacts found in both Galapagos as well as parks in Raleigh. We then determined indicators of those impacts and developed and tested protocols to monitor those indicators. After evaluating and revising the procedures, we summarized our findings to share with others. This included a presentation at the National Park Service’s Office of International Affairs, and Daniela shared findings with colleagues at her university (San Francisco-Quito) as well as Ecuador’s Ministry of the Environment.

The poster at SERR generated quite a bit of positive discussion and left me pondering some big questions about maximizing the utility of our work in an increasingly globalized world, balancing rigor in our methods with ease of replicability, and conducting international research from a post- or neo-colonial angle. I enjoyed discussing these ideas with colleagues at SERR and look forward to more engaging dialogue in the coming year.

-- Andrew Rogers, Master student advised by Dr. Yu-Fai Leung
MAPPING CITIZEN SCIENCE NETWORKS

This past semester, I was honored to have my poster selected as the Best Overall Poster at CitSci 2019, the biannual conference of the Citizen Science Association. During this conference, citizen science researchers, practitioners, and all-around enthusiasts come together to share accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned to move the field of citizen science forward. Citizen science refers to any collaboration between scientists and members of the public to reach a scientific goal, and I am excited about the field because of the capacity to advance scientific goals while authentically engaging members of the public. Through my research, I hope to advance this engagement by determining how people are currently involved in citizen science in order to inform next steps in the field.

Using data from the website SciStarter.org and social network analysis, I am uncovering existing connections between citizen science projects by way of the volunteers that are participating in multiple projects. Understanding engagement across projects, by way of social network analysis, could inform coordination efforts in the field of citizen science by identifying opportunities for collaboration between projects with many shared volunteers, and could inform volunteer management by illustrating current activities across the landscape of projects.

This research is still in its early stages, but I am seeing that volunteers are joining multiple projects, and anecdotally, these seem to be across the potential boundaries of scientific discipline of the project (e.g. health, environment, astronomy, etc.) and mode of participation (online versus offline).

-- Sara Futch, Master student advised by Dr. Lincoln Larson
MINORITY SCHOLARS FROM UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS IN ENGINEERING AND SOCIAL SCIENCE (SURGE) - CAPACITY IN DISASTERS FELLOWSHIP

SURGE is one of the NSF INCLUDES Design and Development Launch Pilots, which brought together disaster scholars from underrepresented groups to learn from and engage with one another. Over the course of the year, I had the amazing opportunity to get to know 20 other students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines who were all studying disasters.

Together we explored Puerto Rico, learning about the island’s recovery from Hurricane Maria, we engaged in “boots on the ground” research and service projects in The U.S. Virgin Islands (my participation was virtual because of another commitment – but it was a huge learning experience nonetheless), and we attended the Natural Hazards Workshop in Colorado, were we presented a group poster based on our participation in the USVI and further grew our knowledge and skills from the many sessions at the workshop.

These experiences were transformational in my experience as a PhD student – not necessarily because of the places we visited or the things we did there, but because of the people I got to know and work with during those adventures. Wrapping up this first year, I feel like I have a disaster-family – composed of people I can turn to for advice and help (and Nigerian dance lessons), and people who will help me grow. Although we’re spread across the country – I look forward to growing together into extraordinary scholars and practitioners, ready to tackle the many local, national, and international issues related to disaster.

-- Olivia Vila, PhD student advised by Dr. Bethany Cutts
“The scholarship selection is based on academic achievement, leadership skills, and contributions to the field of parks and recreation.”

I was awarded the Harold Moses Graduate Scholarship from the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Foundation. I had an awesome time receiving this scholarship with other PRTM award recipients at the annual NCRPA Conference this fall in Winston-Salem.

With a degree in biology and just a few seasons in the National Park Service system, this award demonstrated to me that I was beginning to establish myself in the parks and recreation field. I am excited to continue these efforts with the skills and knowledge I have gained in my Masters. The scholarship was used toward student fees, allowing a heightened focus on my course, research, and campus involvement.

I encourage all students to join the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association as a student member (free through the department) and keep an eye out for the application announcement in late spring. The application requires a cover letter detailing your experience or interest in the parks and recreation field, a resume, and three references.

– Maude Dinan, Master student advised by Dr. Bethany Cutts
After graduating from the department last year, I was accepted as a 2019 Presidential Management Fellowship finalist, a program that provides a pathway into federal service. I started my fellowship with National Park Service’s Denver Service Center in the Planning Division this past April, where I work as a Visitor Use Management Specialist.

I get to work with interdisciplinary teams made up of natural and cultural resource specialists, facilities planners, and landscape architects to support and guide national park units across the country in various planning processes. Some of the projects I am involved with now include Backcountry Management Plans for Glacier Bay National park in Alaska and Wupatki National Monument in Arizona, an Overnight Camping Management Plan for Joshua Tree, visitor use surveys for the National Capitol Region and Redwoods National and State Parks, among many others. I get to travel to parks to facilitate planning workshops and to assist parks in the planning process, which includes relying heavily on the new Interagency Visitor Use Management Framework. My PMF fellowship will last for two years, after which I will convert into my position permanently. Living in Denver is a blast and I love being within a few hours’ drive of so many awesome parks and rec opportunities. My time in the PRTM department, working with my committee, Drs. Edwards, Hipp, and Leung, as well as learning from other faculty and staff in the department helped set me up for success (at least so far!) in my new position. Thanks PRTM and go pack!

-- Elizabeth Oliphant, 2018 summer graduate with a master’s degree in PRTM, advised by Dr. Aaron Hipp
MY LIFE AFTER GRADUATE SCHOOL

A year ago, I came back to Peru, proudly carrying my diploma as a M.Sc. in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. As soon as I set foot in Peru, I realized that my new degree was so powerful as to open doors that were never available to me before.

I entered a public contest and obtained the position of Tourism Specialist in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism. I was responsible for developing creative campaigns to motivate Peruvians to travel to the central region. I was happy with my job but everyone who knew me at NC State knows that I loved teaching and doing research, so I took a part-time job as a professor at Universidad de Ciencias Aplicadas – UPC university. It was really hard for me to deal with two jobs, but totally worth it.

Then the unexpected happened. I was invited to participate in a tourism project called The Sacred Glaciers Ecovillage, located in Cusco. The project consists on building self-sustainable houses with local materials, solar panels, and water recycling systems, to offer them as accommodation. All the participants of the project are ecology and sustainability advocates. I decided to join this group and we are determined to set the example of a tourism business that is truly eco-friendly.

Currently, I am in Cusco, supervising the construction of my house and working remotely for an American travel agency and for UPC university. Cusco is a beautiful pre-Columbian town surrounded by mountains, with archaeological sites in every corner. I constantly feel inspired to study every tourism phenomenon I see since I got here. I encourage current graduate students to study hard because doors will open for you, but you will also gain the confidence to open your own doors and create your own path. Greetings and thankfulness to all my professors and friends.

-- Brendali Carrillo, 2018 summer graduate with a master’s degree in PRTM, advised by Dr. Carla Barbieri
BECOMING AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR: A FEW GOOD PEOPLE

My first faculty appointment after graduate school was as an Assistant Professor of Sport Management at Warner University, a small college in central Florida. I was responsible for the sport management degree program, taught all core sport management classes, and advised the 40+ undergraduate degree majors. Warner is a teaching institution, so my annual review was predominantly based on student and peer evaluations and curriculum development. While research and other forms of scholarship were things I continued to do, they were not expected outcomes of the college.

My advice for graduate students wanting to make a career in academia is; (1) begin with the end in mind, (2) be flexible, and (3) find good people. One of my long-term goals was to pursue a tenure track position somewhere in North Carolina, the state where both my wife and I call home. Once my graduate studies came to a close, we agreed that we were willing to move anywhere in the country for the first job, knowing that it wouldn’t be forever. We landed in Florida, but it only took a year before a perfect opportunity opened up at Catawba College (my current employer) in Salisbury, NC. You will be amazed at how many doors open when you geographically expand your job search, particularly when you have mapped out your end goal and how you will get there.

“Make it your mission to find people you would love to work with every day, and success will surely follow”

Lastly, one of the aspects I focused on during the interview process was my pursuit of working for a department with good people. Encouragingly enough, I found that most employers are essentially looking for the same thing! While in PRTM, I witnessed the departmental faculty, and my committee members specifically, go beyond collegiality and into actually caring about each other’s lives. I wanted that. I think we take for granted how awesome the PRTM faculty are because, let me tell you, not all departments are like that! You can teach and research your butt off but if you’re driving to work every day dreading the idea of conversing with your colleagues, then that’s a life nobody wants. Thus, my biggest piece of advice is make it your mission to find people you would love to work with every day, and success will surely follow.

– Dr. Troy Carlton, 2019 spring graduate with a PhD degree in PRTM (Sports Management) advised by Dr. Michael Kanters
“Think seriously (and discuss with others) about what it is you love about our field and stay connected with those you are currently working with.”

FROM PHD TO A TENURE-TRACK POSITION

Just about a year ago I was packing my belongings and checking items off my Raleigh bucket list in anticipation of moving to Bowling Green, KY where I’d accepted a tenure-track position with the School of Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport at Western Kentucky University. Now, with nearly a full academic year behind me, the invitation to write a bit about my position was a great opportunity to reflect on what I wish I had known going into this. The following is my (unsolicited) advice as you prepare for what’s next.

1. Think seriously (and discuss with others) about what it is you love about our field. PRTM is inherently interdisciplinary – this means you could end up in a position with an organization/department/agency with a natural resource focus, a community health focus, a sport focus, etc. My position is in the College of Health and Human Services, and while this opens many doors to collaborating with others focused on health issues, it has limited my immediate interactions with other natural resource scholars. This means I’ve had to seek out colleagues across campus with interests in climate change, nature-based tourism, sustainability, etc. So, my advice would be to think critically about what you love about our field and find a position after graduation that aligns with your main interests.

2. On a similar note...taking stock of what you love about our discipline can be a helpful reality check when you’re feeling discouraged, jaded, or ready to walk away from it all and eat, pray, and/or love. We study intriguing issues that can have a direct impact on the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and the environment. Keep coming back to why you chose this field and hopefully it will bring perspective when you’re grading the zillionth exam or revising and resubmitting a paper for the umpteenth time.

3. Stay connected with those you are currently working with at NC State (and other entities if you’re on a multi-institutional project) and those you have met at conferences. These networks will become valuable as you grow professionally, allowing you access to diverse co-authors, project collaborators, course guest speakers, mentors and general question-answerers as you navigate the next steps of your career.

These are the big picture items that came to mind. However, if you’d like to hear more about the nuts & bolts of assistant professor life (the parking situation gets way better!) reach out anytime at mailto:allie.mccreary@wku.edu.

-- Dr. Allie McCreary, 2017 spring graduate with a PhD degree in PRTM, advised by Dr. Erin Seekamp
FROM PHD TO ORISE POSTDOC AT EPA

I am currently working under the EnviroAtlas team, which develops tools, metrics, and interactive maps to provide information on the linkages between ecosystem services and human communities, at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). I have been enjoying my work at EPA, since I get to apply my skillsets to the research areas of my interest. Before I started this position, I experienced some difficulty finding a job. I would like to share a couple of things that I wish I could have known and done better while I was in school and hope they will help you prepare for the next step.

Expand your network and explore the possibilities. The fact that PRTM is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, it makes PRTM a great place to expand your network and explore the possibilities. Try to get a chance to learn what kinds of careers may exist in different sectors. When you attend a meeting/conference, don't be afraid of talking to people. Similarly, take advantage of being in the research triangle area by engaging in activities or taking classes in other universities and organizations. Also, remember to maintain the network -- stay in contact with your colleagues and people you met in professional settings. These connections may become your future collaborators.

Know where your passions are and identify your strengths and weaknesses. It is important to know what you can do and what you are interested in, because it is hard to stay in a position without either of them. PRTM provides great resources for students to explore their interest, build up professional skills, and learn what you are good at and what is lacking in various aspects. After learning what kind of career, you may want to move into, reflect on what are your strengths and weaknesses for this career path. Being in school, in general, is a huge advantage for improving skills.

Finally, talk (more) to your advisor(s), colleagues, or career advisors (https://careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/). One of the things I appreciate the most about being in our department is all the help from this great family. I would be happy to talk if you need help or have any questions about the work at EPA. Please feel free to contact me at wtsai@ncsu.edu

"Expand your network and explore the possibilities. Know where your passions are and identify your strengths and weaknesses."

-- Dr. Wei-Lun Tsai, 2015 spring graduate with a PhD degree in PRTM, advised by Dr. Yu-Fai Leung
“We value interaction among fellow students, faculty members, and professionals in the field.”

CONTACT THE PRTM GSA

The mission of the PRTM GSA is to support Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management graduate students in their course of study and enhance each student’s overall NC State graduate experience by promoting professional development, encouraging scholarly pursuits, and facilitating networking and social endeavors.

For more information, visit https://cnr.ncsu.edu/prtm/future-graduate/graduate-student-association/

For questions or comments about the newsletter, please contact PRTM GSA 2018-2019 Communications Chair Jing Huang, at jhuang32@ncsu.edu

If you are interested in participating in next year’s PRTM GSA newsletter, please contact the 2019-2020 communication chair Zeynab Jouzi at zjouzi@ncsu.edu