

**The Graduate Student Affinity Group
of the Association of American Geographers
2011-2012 Report**

I. Mission Statement:

Supporting the mission of the AAG by increasing participation of graduate students, voicing concerns/needs of graduate students, better preparing graduate students for careers in Geography and providing a forum for inter-university communication (both socially and professionally) among graduate student members of the AAG.

II. 2011 Dues:

The dues are currently \$2.00

III. Board of Directors:

Chair: **Zoe Pearson**, The Ohio State University

Vice Chair: **David Parr**, University of Texas—San Marcos

Secretary/Treasurer: **James Baginski**, The Ohio State University

Director: **Sharon Wilcox Adams**, University of Texas—Austin

Director: **Nacati Anaz**, University of Oklahoma

Director: **Denise Marie Dixon Goerish**, San Diego State University/UC Santa Barbara

Director: **Jeff Olson**, The Ohio State University

Director: **Chris Riley**, The Ohio State University

Director: **Daniel Wilson**, Oklahoma State University

IV. Accomplishments, Activities Scheduled, Future Plans and Directions

The GSAG has accomplished a great deal over the last year:

a) Activities scheduled and b) Future Plans and Directions

Awards and competitions – GSAG Student Paper Competition and GSAG Student Research Award:

We plan to offer more than one award again in the coming year. Call for submissions were distributed in mid-October 2011.

Last year \$1,250 was distributed in total to the four winners of the research award and \$300 was distributed to each of the two winners of the paper competition before the 2011 annual meeting.

Winners of the research award competition include Brian Grabbatin (University of Kentucky), Frank Engel (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), Adrienne Johnson (Clark University), and Emma Gaalaas Mullaney (Penn State University).

Winners of the paper competition include Matthew Anderson (with Carolina Sternberg, second author and also a graduate student GSAG member) (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), and Roberta Hawkins (Clark University).

AAG Annual Meeting 2012 activities planned:

At the AAG meeting in New York, the GSAG has several sessions and activities planned. We will be hosting our first-ever plenary talk to be given by Dr. Kate Swanson, CSU San Diego; we are organizing three other panel sessions on graduate student challenges in doing human geography fieldwork, preparing for the job search, and an orientation panel for newcomers to the annual meeting; in conjunction with AAG staff we drafted a 'newcomers handout' for the annual meeting program; we are sponsoring several sessions organized by graduate students; we are still working on the possibility of hosting a reception for graduate student members of the AAG and possibly assisting AAG staff with a fieldtrip for newcomers to the meeting.

c) Business Meeting at the 2011 AAG Conference in Seattle

Our business meeting was held in conjunction with the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Seattle.

It was reported that, since last year's meeting, the GSAG donated \$1,000 to the AAG Developing Regions Program, and that GSAG has begun collaboration with EDGE.

Our EDGE liaison James Baginski reported back, from his attendance of the EDGE meeting, that EDGE is working to look at the realities of graduate students facing the job market and that partnership with EDGE might create opportunity for two GSAG initiatives: 1) JIG (Jobs in Geography), an event at which GSAG could reach out to potential graduate students to discuss graduate school opportunities and the job search; 2) the promotion of professional development with EDGE monies, available to help department bring in speakers, hold seminars, organize workshops, etc.

Finally, we discussed arranging a GSAG plenary lecture for the 2012 AAG Annual Conference. It was agreed that an ideal speaker would address the diversity of the membership. We also discussed the possibility of a subsequent reception through which we could bring graduate students together and achieve one element of our mission—to

provide a forum for inter-university communication.

d) Student paper awards

See a) and b)

e) Newsletter information

Our newsletter will come out in early February with announcements about award winners, reports on past winners, and GSAG sessions and sponsored sessions.

f) Annual meeting plans for New York

See a) and b)

g) Other

Communication with members:

a) Website

The GSAG website (<http://www.gsagaag.org>) has been updated with the support of our Webmaster Phil Birnie.

b) Newsletter

The GSAG Newsletter is made available, one to two times per year, through the GSAG website and through the GSAG Google group.

c) Google group

During 2008-09, we established and maintained a Google group as part of an effort to streamline communication within the GSAG. The Google group continues to provide our primary means of communication, and is our groups' listserv.

V. Membership and Participation

The GSAG has grown significantly over the last six years from twelve participants at the first meeting in Los Angeles to the 1418 members we have now.

VI. Financial Report

BALANCE 04-30-11: \$811.20

VII. Special Requests or Questions for Council

None at this time.

Submitted by

Zoe Pearson, Chair