

Smoky sunset over Candelaria Nature Preserve
photograph by Laurel Ladwig

The department is bigger and better than ever!

The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies has had an action-packed couple of years. If you finished your degree prior to 2021, the department looks quite different from when you were a student—though we are maintaining our long-term strengths even as we transform into a bigger, better place to learn.

We had a remarkable year in 2020, and not just because of the pandemic. Seven faculty members joined us last year, bringing our faculty to its largest size ever—19 people. We also opened the R.H. Mallory Center for Community Geography, after having opened the Center for Advancement of Spatial Informatics, Research, and Education (the ASPIRE center) in 2019. In 2020 we also became the administrative home of Sustainability Studies, a longstanding and successful undergraduate program that complements the department's strengths in the broader field of environmental studies. Finally, 2020 also saw the arrival of seven Ph.D. students who were the initial cohort in

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our new doctoral program, which we share with our colleagues in the Department of Geography at New Mexico State. We, like everyone worldwide, had challenges to overcome due the pandemic. Our outstanding faculty, students, and staff enabled these remarkable accomplishments, which have been in the department's aspirations for decades.

All these changes from 2020 have kept us busy in 2021, as we work to build a strong foundation for our expanded department. We've been especially busy as the university has moved out of the limited operations mode brought by the pandemic. Since May, we have had increased access to offices and classrooms on campus. Coming back into Bandelier West and Bandelier East has sometimes felt like re-occupying abandoned buildings. I spent time this spring throwing out very stale teabags and coffee beans, and pulling down flyers from bulletin boards that hadn't been touched since March 2020.

One of the biggest tasks we've had in our return to campus is moving. We've moved our administrative offices from Bandelier West to Bandelier East, so that the second floor of Bandelier West is now entirely filled with faculty offices. Three of our new faculty had to wait months before we were able to assign offices

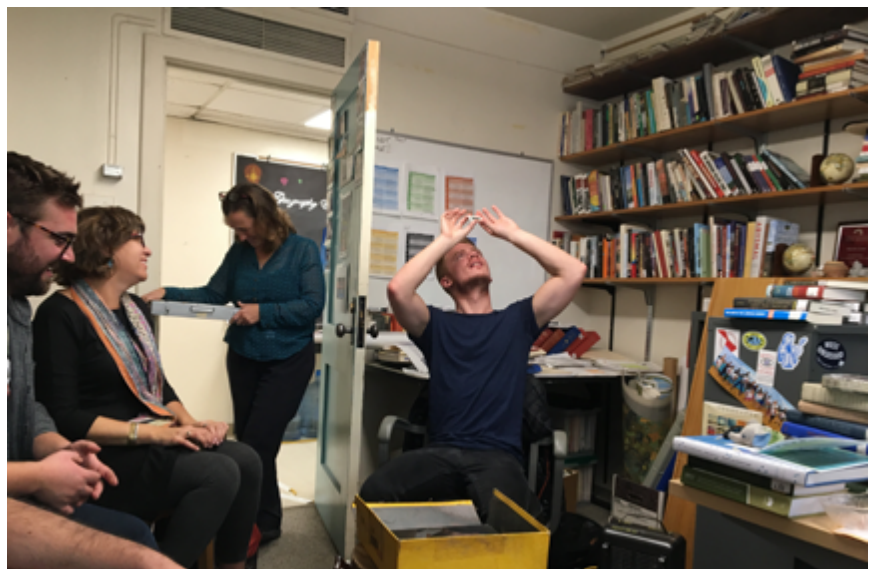
to them. We still have some moving to do. In August, we will gain some additional rooms in Bandelier East, and our administrative staff will move into their permanent offices in that building. Watch for an announcement this fall once all the moving is completed. As with any move, we came across a lot of stuff that we no longer needed—but many office items seemed remarkably outdated after a year of working remotely during the pandemic. Three-ring binders, for instance, now look about as current as typewriter ribbon!

We're excited to return to in-person teaching this fall, and many faculty and students have been able to restart research programs that were halted by social distancing and various closures. Most of our courses will be in face-to-face formats this fall, though we are also offering many online courses in order to meet student demand and to help us understand what college schedules might look like in the post-pandemic period. As with many sectors of society, higher education is facing a range of uncertainties about what the pandemic has changed permanently, and what might return to a pre-2020 normal.

In any case, we are excited to be moving forward in 2021, with a department bigger and better than it's ever been!

Laughter during Dr. Maria Lane's Critical Cartography class when a graduate student sees a photographic slide for the first time.

November 2018



Building the Alumni Chapter

Our Alumni Chapter has continued to thrive and develop over this past year. Our light footprint management concept seems to be helping us make headway while we are all still masked up and socially distancing.

What we have done:

Sagert Sheets (MS '18) did a lot of work sussing out what needs to be done to reactivate the Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) chapter here at UNM. GTU is an international honor society in Geography. A number of Alumni feel that a GTU Chapter at UNM is very important as it is a way to show accomplishment and can be a resume builder. What Sagert found is that a GTU Chapter needs to be run by a department. It needs input from the Dept administrator and from an active faculty member, who acts as the liaison to GTU. With that information we are keeping this task alive, but on a back burner until we can find the appropriate faculty to help us with this. The Alumni Chapter will purchase the graduation cords, and pins when the time comes. We have a line in our budget for this.

Jacob Wolff's (MS '17) concept of a Careers in Geography seminar was delivered via Zoom this past June. His concept was brought to fruition by Rafen Page (BA '20), with Hayley Hajic (MS '18) who did a lot of the heavy lifting. This was a panel discussion which they hosted to discuss ways to find employment or internships in our field. The speakers on the panel were Steve Montiel, Susanna Diller (MS '17), Hayley Hajic and Tammira Taylor (BS '15, MS '21). This was a spectacular effort and executed beautifully.

Laurel Ladwig (MS '20) produced a number of eBlasts throughout the spring and produced a beautiful newsletter in January. She was the one in charge of the formatting and layout of the newsletter and produced a top-notch document that we all are very proud of.

Scott Sanchez who is our liaison to the Alumni Association has continued to be fully engaged and very supportive and helpful throughout the year and provides insights and assistance along the way.

Center staffers observed great monsoon cloudscapes during a late-summer visit to western New Mexico.

photograph by Maria Lane

We have had two management meetings via Zoom, as well as one General Membership Meeting via Zoom which all went as well as can be expected for Zoom. It will be great when we can meet in person as it is always more effective.

Where we are headed:

We are planning a showcase event for November 16th at 6:00pm, hopefully at Hodgin Hall if the virus slows for in-person events and if not, by Zoom. This event will held during Geography Week and will consist of current master's and PhD candidates discussing their research topic in a "Lightning Round" format. These will be 5-minute reports on their research. The hope is that we can make this a networking event and that Advisory Board Members, and prospective employers and intern providers will attend either in-person or virtually. They idea is that by the end of the event, everyone in the room will know everyone else with the hope that this is another building block in our Mission.

We are working with the Alumni Association to massage the existing website into the hub of our operations. Currently it is fairly basic, but by renaming a few of the existing menu items we can make this a very productive site. The thought is to basically take a minimalist approach to this and keep all of our information in one accessible location to avoid duplicated information and provide the clearest picture of our Chapter possible.

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We are also developing the existing Listserve into a useful communication tool. This will allow for two-way communication and hopefully help us develop our network.

Jacob Wolff and his team are working on the next iteration of their Careers in Geography panel discussion for this next spring and there will be many more details to come on that in our winter newsletter.

Sagert Sheets is building a list of professional organizations that are active in New Mexico. This list will be posted on the website and give information on each organization, meeting time/dates/locations and contacts. The vision is that this will be a one-stop location to be able to find all of this information quickly. If you have any organizations to add to his list, please contact any one of us.

You can help as well:

If any of these initiatives is important to you or you feel you have an insight or connection that can help us build, please become involved.

Our mission is:

"To provide a platform for professional development and networking for Geography Professionals in the New Mexico Region."

We are also trying to build "The Alumni Chapter of the Future." That might sound corny, but that is exactly what we are doing. The Alumni Chapter of the future is one that truly helps graduates navigate throughout their careers by offering opportunities for connections and networking in our field of expertise.

One of the issues with Geography, in general, is how diverse we are professionally. Most organizations who employ us have no idea they are hiring a Geographer. There are not many job listing for "Geographer." So by building a strong network, hopefully we can provide a framework for internship and job opportunities.

So, help us build.

What we need:

We need ideas on what and how we can help execute our Mission.

We also need someone to work with Social Media. There have been suggestions on developing a Linked-In Group, or Facebook Group. These accounts would be held by The Alumni Association, but need to be monitored and moderated by a Geographer. I am very proud to say that I have no expertise with social media and do not plan to in the near future. That is one of the great things about being an alum from the 1980's.

Contribute to our winter newsletter!

As we finish up newsletter #2, we are working to design newsletter #3, which will go out the 3rd week of January 2022.

We would really like to hear from you. We are asking UNM Geography Alumni to write a short couple of paragraphs (100 - 200 words or so) on the following couple of themes or on a topic concerning your degree.

"How your geography degree has served you?"

And/or

"What your geography degree has enabled you to accomplish?"

We'd also love to showcase your photographs in our newsletter. You can send a photo related to your text, GES faculty or alumni in action, or anything that says "geography" to you.

Please provide your submission by mid-November for inclusion in our January Newsletter.

Email your text and/or photographs (with credit line & caption) to unmGESalumni@gmail.com

Sustainability Studies Welcomes a Growing Faculty

Andreas Hernandez, PhD, Joins UNM from Marymount Manhattan College

By: Andreas Hernandez

I am thrilled to join the Sustainability Studies faculty at UNM! For the past decade I have been between New York City and an ecovillage in the South of Brazil. In NYC I chaired the Department of International Studies at Marymount Manhattan College and directed the United Nations Program. My research, filmmaking and teaching examines just transitions to sustainability and regeneration. I focus on social movements and ecovillages in Brazil, and their construction of agroecological systems and emergent politics and worldviews. I have also published on how social movement activity can be translated and implemented into social policy and may engage with the United Nations System.

Recently, I have focused on documentary and experimental filmmaking. My documentary "Soil, Struggle and Justice: Agroecology in the Brazilian Landless Movement" won festival awards and is used by the UN System and social movements around the world as a tool for agroecological transition. This past summer my experimental film "Solar Revolutions" was on display at the CICA Museum for Contemporary Art in South Korea. Before becoming a professor, I was a social worker and musician.

I am excited to engage with SSP students! Please stop by my office hours and let's talk about and share our interests (I will soon have an office). I have been so impressed to learn about recent projects coming out of SSP classes. There are so many innovative pathways to take today to contribute to just transition to sustainability and regeneration – and I would enjoy hearing about and supporting your pathway.



Andreas Hernandez, PhD



"Soil, Struggle and Justice: Agroecology in the Brazilian Landless Movement"

Alumni Chapter Hosts Roundtable on Careers for Geographers

Recent Graduates Share Strategies to Help Students Secure Internships, Jobs, and Promotions in Geospatial and Environmental Professions

There are a record number of job openings and for the first time in a decade the labor market is swinging in favor of early-career professionals.

To help current students navigate this exciting transition from the classroom into careers, Rafen Page (BA '20) organized a virtual roundtable of recent Geography and Environmental Studies graduates.

"I was incredibly fortunate to land a full-time offer from the Mid-Region Council of Governments following my senior year internship with their GIS team," notes Page, "so I wanted to bring together more alumni who could share their tips and tricks before the Class of 2021 entered the job market."

Hayley Hajic (MS '18), a research scientist at the Southwest Environmental Finance Center, moderated the conversation with alumni working in GISystems, regional planning, data science, and environmental conservation.

"This roundtable got me in touch with people I hadn't seen since graduate school," said Hajic.

Panelists stressed the importance of negotiating your salary upon an initial job offer; reaching out directly about potential internships, even if your skills don't match perfectly with the job description;

and exploring graduate education, either full-time coursework or while balancing a full-time job.

As a GIS planner II with Albuquerque Public Schools' capital master plan, Tammira Taylor (BS '15, MS '21) aligned her master's project with employer interests. Her project leveraged drone technology to more efficiently assess the condition of APS facilities and prioritize maintenance -- and Tammira passed her master's project defense with distinction.

Professor and Department Chair Chris Duvall expressed that "collaborations between alumni and the department are beneficial for students. Engagement beyond the classroom ensures geography graduates are ready to serve the communities of New Mexico, and beyond."

Hajic added, "It's a great way to meet the next generation of professionals who might be interested in careers like mine."

Our GES Alumni Chapter is already planning for another alumni roundtable, potentially in-person, for the Spring 2022 semester. Details will be announced later this year.

-Jacob R. Wolff (MS '17)

UNM Geographers participated in the City of Albuquerque's campaign to map urban heat inequities on one of the hottest days of the year. Some wisely chose the sunrise starting time while others braved the 101°F afternoon shift.

Photograph by Maria Lane



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY GEOGRAPHY LAUNCHES SUCCESSFULLY, AWARDS FUNDING

Despite COVID's impact on UNM this past year, the R.H. Mallory Center for Community Geography had a successful launch and has made a noticeable impact at UNM. "I had no idea we would be so busy in Year One!" said Center Director and GES Professor Maria Lane. "We hit the ground running and made a lot of connections this year, even though we had to do most of it through virtual communication."

In its first year of operation, the Center added staff, hosted a national speaker, supported a semester-long course in critical cartography, led a campus citizen science project, and helped initiate numerous partnerships between GES personnel and organizations across Albuquerque and New Mexico.

Lane said the Center achieved its goal of letting community members know that GES is now supporting more community engagement. "We received inquiries and project ideas from non-profits, from local schools, and from government agencies at the city, county, state, and federal level," she said. "It was almost more than we could keep up with!" Information about ongoing projects is available at <http://communitygeography.unm.edu>, and interested community partners are encouraged to contact communitygeography@unm.edu.

In addition, the Center for Community Geography held its first-ever funding competitions, awarding \$5,000 to students and faculty to explore community-engaged research and teaching. Three graduate students received \$1,000 Graduate Fellowships for Community Engagement for 2021-2022:

- Lia Griesser's project "Valley of the Mills" will work with Visiones Collaborativas/The Mora Empowerment Project, to consider the viability of traditional land management practices along the upper Rio Mora, New Mexico, to equitably restore the soil through an agro-ecological framework that can regenerate bio-cultural and financial viability.

- Stefany Olivas' project "Soil microbial health at urban agroecology community farm in ABQ, NM" will work with Project Feed the Hood (PFTH) to gather data on effectiveness of their soil health practices over time to help improve the community farm use of soil tillage systems as they plant over 150 edible perennial trees, shrubs, and herbs to establish a food forest.

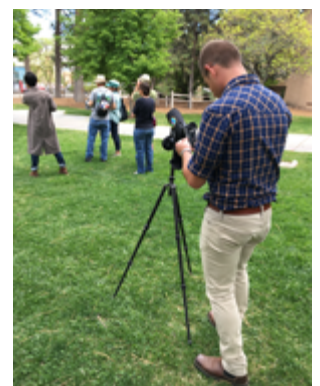
- Joseph Scala's project "Developing a GIS (Geographic Information Systems) model for prioritization of urban community forestry initiatives for the State of New Mexico" will work with the New Mexico State Forestry Division and The Nature Conservancy to develop a GIS model for urban community forestry to increase tree canopy in populated areas to provide cooling shade, clean and protect water, increase people's access to nature's health benefits, and support local economies.

Two GES faculty members received \$1,000 each in Seed Funding for Community Engaged Classrooms in 2021-2022:

- Dr. Yolanda C. Lin received a \$1,000 award for community engagement in "Information Design for Science and Society" (GEOG 2115), a new course at UNM in the university's general education curriculum (communications area). Dr. Lin will use the award to collaborate with the City Nature Challenge Albuquerque team and help promote their annual spring citizen science event on the iNaturalist platform. In spring 2022, Dr. Lin's classroom will design promotional infographics aimed at diverse audiences and organize an outreach event during the competition.

This collaboration will support the City Nature Challenge's priorities of promoting citizen science and documenting urban biodiversity by increasing participation in the 2022 Albuquerque City Nature Challenge.

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Geography & Environmental Studies students document campus wildlife during Albuquerque's 2019 inaugural participation in the worldwide City Nature Challenge

- Dr. Marygold Walsh-Dilley received \$1,000 to support community engagement in her class on “Food, Environment, and Society” (GEOG 464). During the spring 2021 semester, students engaged with the Lobo Food Pantry, the Lobo Garden, the Santa Fe Food Depot, and the UNM Basic Needs project to examine food security of UNM students. Students developed proposals for how to improve food security of students, and Dr. Walsh-Dilley will use the \$1,000 award to put one of those ideas into action. The Center will fund a student proposal to create a public map that identifies food security resources in the university area. This map will help address food insecurity among UNM students, using technology and expertise available in GES.

As the Center looks ahead to its second year in operation, alumni are encourage to get in touch and send us your project ideas.

Why I Support A Strong Geography Alumni Chapter at UNM

I read an article this week which amplified the Climate Crisis alarm. I remember in the early 1980's, Dr. Iven Bennett and Dr. Ellinore Barrett discussing climate change very clearly and back then, I had a hunch they were right. And, guess what, THEY WERE RIGHT. They hit it right on the money, almost to the day. Dr. Bennett explained what would happen—slow sea level rise, strange heat domes, droughts, weird temperature distributions, ice-free passage in the arctic, and forest fires. Dr. Barrett explained human displacement, relocation and immigration issues due to the effects of climate change.

So, 40 years later, here we are, and it is rapidly becoming an emergency that no one can deny. To face this will require an “all hands on deck” action from all of us. And, it will be geographers who contribute a significant amount to the effort.

I see a need for Geography Departments worldwide to expand to meet the need for more geographers. This expansion will be similar to the post World War II expansion of Physics Departments at universities that occurred in the 1940's and 1950's.

It may be engineers and scientists who actually invent methodologies to mitigate the crisis, but it will be geographers who chronicle and analyze the data that will fuel the effort. Geography is the only course of study that teaches the big

picture, how all of the data are related and how the data interact. The big picture, cause-and-effect analysis is the realm of the geographer.

Like wartime field reporters, we will be providing data as this catastrophe unfolds. The reporting and analysis of data from the field will be the basis of development for a world-wide strategy and geographers are right in the thick of things. If you think back to your coursework, every Geography course is applicable to this issue and it is the aggregate of all of that coursework which will provide perspective and robust analysis.

Our Alumni Chapter is helping locally by working to create a network of Geography professionals. Our logic is that, with the jobs that are going to become available, we need a local network to help graduates and recent graduates find them. With national laboratories, Sandia and Los Alamos, and our Universities, New Mexico is poised to be right in the thick of things, as well and it is exciting.

Please help us to create a vibrant and productive Alumni Chapter.

Let us know your views on things by contributing to our newsletter. We would love to hear your thoughts on UNM Geography.

-Robert H. Mallory (BA '90), Geography Alumni Chapter Manager

UNM Alumni Association Update

Dear GES Alumni,

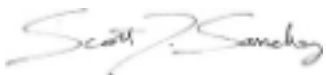
The UNM Alumni Association has been gearing up for fall since mid-summer. We have hosted 9 Green Chile Roasts throughout the U.S. since August 14th and will wrap them up with roasts in Los Angeles, CA and Washington D.C. on September 11th and 12th. We were also excited to participate in the Universities "Welcome Back Days" and partnered with the Albuquerque Alumni Chapter to serve cookies and coffee to the many of our students as they navigated UNM in person for the first time. We also gave a virtual (and in-person) tour of the newly renovated Johnson Center as part of our ongoing Lobo Living Room series, and we look forward to more amazing events this fall.

We have also been planning for the first in-person homecoming week in two years November 2nd through November 6th as we celebrate the return of UNM Lobo Football to New Mexico. We are partnering with UNM Athletics to host tailgate events and we are excited about a full slate of (mostly) in-person events during that week. Culminating in our Homecoming Tailgate bash on November 6th, 2021 as we watch the Lobos take on the UNLV Runnin' Rebels in a Mountain West Conference matchup.

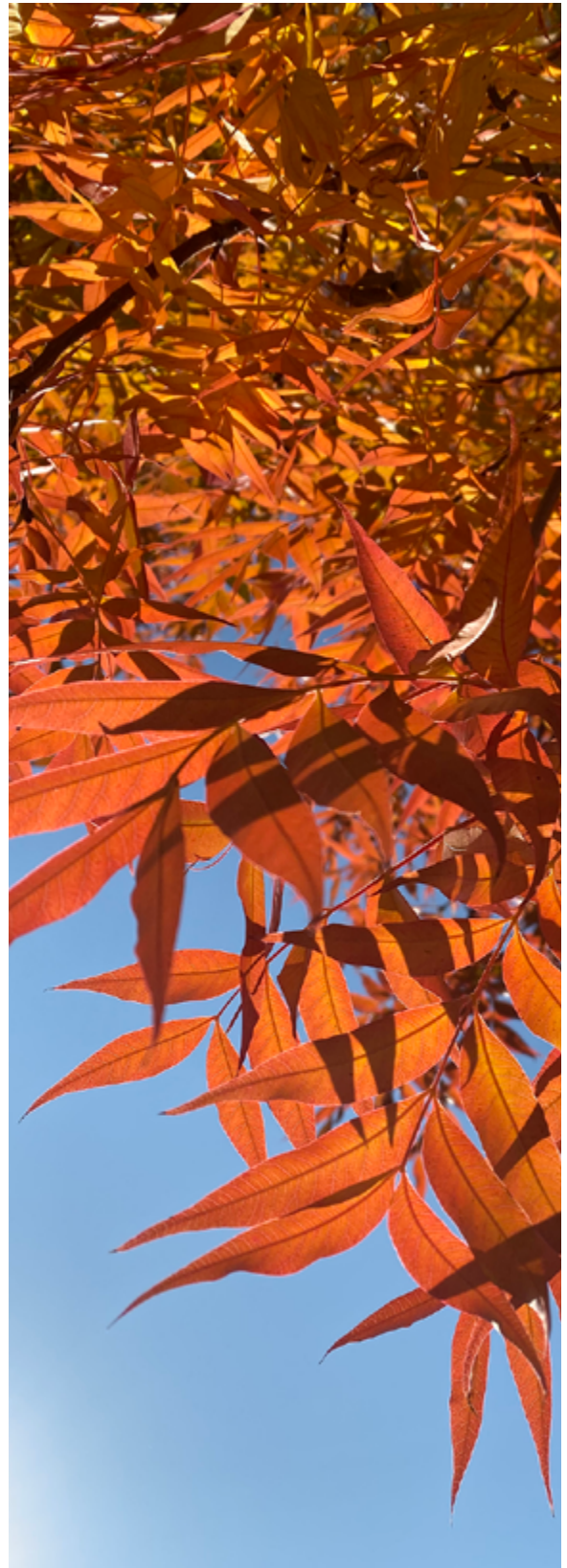
The Alumni Association is also mindful of the role that Covid-19 might play in changing the nature of gatherings this fall, so we are also planning to have alternate virtual events available during these same timeframes so that we can still connect with our Alumni and community if the situation changes.

We look forward to seeing you sooner than later, and we are excited to see what the Geography and Environmental Sciences Alumni Chapter has in store for the Fall and Spring. Go Lobos!

Sincerely,



Scott Sanchez
Alumni Relations Officer
UNM Alumni Association



Fall colors at UNM
photograph by Laurel Ladwig

Alumni Communications

Listservs you might be interested in:

On the Geography Department's website there are three Listservs of interest.

At the Department's website geography.unmn.edu under the "Keep in Touch" pull down menu there is a list of three Listservs which you might find interesting.

The first is: **publicgeo-L@unm.edu** its purpose is to announce department events such as colloquia and lectures, etc.

The second is: **GEOG-JOBS-L@LIST.UNM.EDU** its purpose is for job announcements. There are a lot of jobs which get posted to this serve, so if you are looking, this is a good place to start your search.

The third is: **GEOG_ALUMNI-L@LIST.UNM.EDU** this is our listserv and will be the venue for sending out eBlasts and Newsletters and other communications from the Alumni Chapter.

These Listservs are a great way to stay in contact with current events and goings on at the Dept.

To sign up, follow these steps:

Send an email to listserv@list.unm.edu

Leave the subject line blank

In the body of the email type: "subscribe (name of the listserv) and your first name and last name" ONLY.

You will receive a confirmation email right back. These listservs are very easy to unsubscribe from and instructions for that are listed on the "Keep in Touch" page as well.

In addition to this newsletter, you can sign up for our eBlast which will keep you abreast of goings-on in the department and community in addition to future virtual alumni events. Please post to the GES alumni listserv whenever you have news or events that might be of interest to fellow alumni. The alumni listserv is an expedient way to get timely information to our community. This newsletter will be published a few times a year and we look forward to this being a forum for sharing articles about both academic and professional work. Please contribute articles about your

professional and community projects or applications of geographic research. You can send contributions for either forum to UNMgesAlumni@gmail.com. We'd also like to expand our collection of "executives" who can take on different projects. A great addition to the communications team would be someone who would like to take on our social media presence. We are working to keep our alumni connected, especially during this pandemic, and want more alumni to join us in this effort!

Chapter Business

Help us keep your contact information accurate:

On the UNM Alumni Association Website:
www.UNMALUMNI.COM

Under "Chapter & Groups" navigate to: "UNM Geography & Environmental Studies Alumni Chapter"

About half way down on the page you will see at red bottom marked "Membership Form"

Please click on that and fill in your information. This will provide the most accurate information to the Association for distribution of The Mirage, our newsletter and any other alumni-related information.

Plan Now to Leave a Legacy for GES

Thank you to all who generously support the Geography & Environmental Studies department. For many of us, there is a strong desire to make a difference in our world. The search for significance and a desire to plan for the future leads us to ponder our legacy. Many who have been touched by their UNM experience have chosen to make a gift through their estate that honors the university and people who have positively impacted their lives. If you would like more information on how to include UNM in your estate plan through a will or trust, beneficiary designation of a retirement or other financial account, or another type of gift, contact Diana Martinez at Diana.Martinez@unmfund.org / (505) 277-0817 or visit <https://unmfund.giftplans.org>.

Our Mission:

"To provide a platform for professional development and networking for Geography Professionals in the New Mexico Region."

How do we fulfill our Mission?

Create a professional network that is welcoming to GES students during their academic program and job search.

Host/facilitate networking events for GES students and alumni, by whatever means appropriate.

Notify the geography department of job openings in your specific field.

Work with the geography department to identify or provide internship opportunities for students.

How do we do that?

We communicate and we network.

Our members can do things like:

Ask a Student to Dinner (when COVID-19 allows)

Take a Student to Lunch (when COVID-19 allows).

If you have an interesting career, share it. Ask a student or small group of students to tour your facility (when COVID-19 allows), speak to geography classes about what you do, and, most importantly, be a Mentor.

A Mentor can be an email buddy, phone buddy, or any interaction and support, basically.

Volunteer to be a Mentor and talk about Geography and help us build the Geography Alumni Chapter of the UNM Alumni Association of the future and innovate ways forward toward a better earth-focused future.

Become an Executive and help us build by managing an activity, task or project. We use the word Executive for these positions because an Executive has the autonomy to make day-to-day decisions without approval. This reduces administrative drag on projects and initiatives.

How do you become a Mentor or an Executive?

Contact us at: UNMgesAlumni@gmail.com or through our Alumni Relations Officer, Scott Sanchez at: scottsanchez@unm.edu

One last thought. If you like this newsletter and dialogue with the chapter, please forward this newsletter, or our sporadic eBlasts, to others you know who would enjoy and benefit from it. Help us build.