The big news for 2017 is our imminent move to the new Carolyn and Kem Gardner Building. We are scheduled to start moving in to the new building mid-summer and the building will be open for classes in August! The labs will move in October over the break, so we’ll be fully moved in and operational by the end of 2018.

The Society, Water and Climate Transformative Excellence searches were completed last spring with our fifth and final hire. Geography was lucky enough to hire Dr. McKenzie Skiles to our department and add to our incredible cryogeography research group. Both SWC hires, Dr. Skiles and Dr. Rupper, have hit the ground running with successful grants, high levels of publication and phenomenal graduate student recruitment. The Society, Water and Climate research group is active not only in our department but across campus, check out our webpage at climate.utah.edu. We also hired two tenure-track human geographers this year. We are pleased to welcome Dr. Andrew Linke to the tenure track ranks as well as Dr. Tim Collins. We were able to promote Andrew from a career line position and are pleased to have Tim and his family here to enjoy a productive spring semester.

We have a strong, productive and enthusiastic department that continues to grow and improve! Check in with us (www.geog.utah.edu), we’d love to hear how everyone is doing and what everyone is up to. Thanks for your continued support!
**Philip Dennison** contributed to a Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences paper on how the Western US can adapt to a warmer future with more wildfires. The paper describes an “adaptive resilience” approach, under which fuel treatments and fire management would be better targeted and communities would be developed to be better adapted to fire. One of the impacts of the strategies described in this paper is making fire expenditures more sustainable. 2017 was the most expensive year on record for federal fire suppression costs, with over $2 billion being spent by the Forest Service alone.

Kenneth Petersen’s paper *A Warm and Wet Little Climatic Optimum and a Cold and Dry Little Ice Age in the Southern Rocky Mountains, U.S.A.* was highlighted at a symposium, *The Coldest Centuries in 8000 Years: The Little Ice Age Causes and Human Consequences*, at the University of Colorado, November 3 – 4, 2017.

This year we sadly said good-bye to one of our great instructors. **Genevieve Atwood** retired from the department and was honored at the Annual Spring Reception. She was a great asset to the department and the students. We wish her the best of luck and lots of fun in her new found freedom. We already miss her and her great smile.

**NEW FACULTY**

We would like to welcome our new faculty members

**Tim Collins**
Professor (Ph.D. Arizona State University, 2005)
Research Interests: human-environment interactions; vulnerability; hazards and disasters; environmental justice; health disparities; climate change, water, wildfire, and air pollution

**McKenzie Skiles**
Assistant Professor (Ph.D. University of California - Los Angeles, 2014)
Research Interests: Mountain hydrology, snow optics and remote sensing, radiative forcing by light absorbing particles in snow and ice, cryosphere-climate interaction.
In January 2017 Robert Baskin received the 2016 State of Utah Governor’s Medal for Science and Technology in the Government Individual category. Since 1987, the Medals have been awarded to residents and companies who have provided distinguished service or made significant contributions to Utah’s advanced scientific and technological knowledge, education and industry. The Award was presented to him by Spencer Cox, Lieutenant Governor of Utah. Robert works as a Supervisory Hydrologist for the USGS and received his MS and Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Utah.

PhD student Mickey Campbell gained some notoriety from his recent research on firefighter escape routes. Mickey used lidar data to assess vegetation density, terrain slope, and surface roughness for the Levan Wildlife Management Area in central Utah. Mickey’s study, done with advisor Phil Dennison, was published in International Journal of Wildland Fire and a story describing the research was recently featured by Smithsonian magazine. Mickey successfully defended his dissertation in November, and starts as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geosciences at Fort Lewis College in January.
This year’s celebration of Geography Awareness Week and GIS day was a little laid back. Due to constraints on space with our new building going up, we were not able to have all of the events we love to share. We did man an information table most of the week. Visitors were able to learn about the Geography program and spin the wheel of prizes, with the help of our peer advisors, Emma McFee and Tucker Smith, advisor, Stacy Morris, Geography Club President, Mike Mason and grad students, Steven Lizotte, Kaylee Jones, and Sandra Miller. Friday we hosted 5 alumni students in a panel discussion about their careers and how to get there. Guest panelists consisted of: Rachel Manko, Salt Lake County Surveyor’s Office, Sumer Ellis, Utah Transit Authority, Kolt Wright, Ogden City, Sam Hall, Utah DNR, Wildlife Resources, and Josh Reynolds, Red Castle Resources. We are very grateful for their presentations. The panel discussion was followed by a pizza lunch, where we successfully went through 30 pizzas. Geography Awareness Week will be back in full force next year in the new building.

IN MEMORIAM

This year we said a sorrowful goodbye to an amazing friend and colleague, Adam Naisbitt. Adam earned his B.S. in Geography in 2003 and his M.S. in 2008 studying “Avalanche frequency and magnitude: Using power-law exponents to investigate snow avalanche size proportions through time and space.”
The Geography Department and The DIGIT Lab had the honor of working with Adam for over 10 years. During his graduate studies Adam worked as a GIS Analyst in the DIGIT Lab and later became a GIS Project Manager until he left to pursue his passions in the mountains in 2014.
We all mourn the loss of his friendship, his easy sense of humor, and his extreme talent. He was one of the few who could create maps that just seemed to come to life on the page and make people stop and take a second look.
In honor of Adam we created the William Adam Naisbitt Excellence in Cartography Award which will be awarded annually to the student that best exemplifies Adam’s outstanding cartographic abilities.
“To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.” – Thomas Campbell
SCHOLARSHIPS / AWARDS 2017–2018

Department of Geography – Continuing Student Awards (T-53)
- Shiona Howard
- Emma McFee

H. Bowman Hawkes Entering Student in Geography (T-53)
- Connor Peterson

Merrill K. Ridd Scholarship
- Shiona Howard

Don and Sue Lewon Fellowship
- Sandra Miller

Brian Haslam Graduate Scholarship
- Chelsea Ackroyd

President’s Scholarship
- Thulasi Seshan

USGIF (GEOINT) Scholarship
- Emma McFee

David C. Williams Fellowship
- Kaylee Barket Jones

GIFTS TO THE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Your donations have a meaningful impact on our students and our programs. Your contributions truly make the difference between a good department and a great one!

We wish to thank the following individuals for their generous donations from December 2016 – December 2017.

- Michael L. Barnhardt
- William H. Birch
- Daniel Robert Bogan
- Dane R. Boggs, Jr.
- Lloyd A. Burton
- Timothy E. Bryant
- Richard C. Campany, Jr.
- Don Harvey Card
- Gary E. Christenson
- David G. and Caryn L. Clark
- Philip E. Dennison
- Brian Haslam, Azteca Systems, LLC
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- Merrill K. and Codele C. Ridd
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- Scott and Daphne White
- David and Margie Wilkins
SUPPORTING THE DEPARTMENT

Invest in your degree for the future!
You can help make your degree worth more. These are difficult times for a state university. Here are some ways you can take a more active role in supporting our department:

- If you have specific knowledge of employment opportunities for our graduates;
- If you can use the department or DIGIT lab for funded research/service projects;
- If you have ideas and time to devote to improving our department;
- If you have a desire to support the department and the students financially;
- If you want to support financially and participate in our Fall picnic or Spring awards activities

Contact andrea.brunelle@geog.utah.edu if you have any questions about Geography Donations

ALUMNI INFO UPDATE / DONATIONS

We have appreciated your generous donations in the past. Please consider taking this opportunity to donate to our scholarship funds. Be sure to indicate which fund you would like your donation directed to. All contributions are tax deductible. We look forward to hearing from you!

### Alumni Info Update

Name: _________________________________________________
Home Address: __________________________________________
City: ________________ State: _________ Zip:________________
Home Phone: ___________________________________________
E-mail Address: _________________________________________
Year of Graduation (alumni): ______________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

### Scholarships and Funds

- Department of Geography Development Fund (Unrestricted Gifts) $ ______
- Chung-Myun Lee Scholarship for Undergraduates $ ______
- Merrill Ridd Scholarship Fund for Undergraduates $ ______
- Donald Currey Scholarship Fund for Graduate Students $ ______
- Roger McCoy Student Assistance Endowment Fund $ ______
- Other (please specify) _______________________________________

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