

REGIONAL PLANNING ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

In this Issue:

Department News	page 1
Student Awards/Travel	page 2
Student Travel (cont.)	page 3
Student Work	page 4
Alumni Updates	page 5
Senior Seminar	page 6
Henry Wefing Memorial Garden	page 7
Faculty Scholarship	page 8

Message from the Chair

Changing of the Guard: Dr. Bristow steps down as Department Chair

After many years of service to GARP in the capacity as Chair, Dr. Bristow has stepped down to return to his fulltime research and teaching. Under Dr. Bristow's leadership the department hired several important faculty members, expanded our facilities and dedicated classroom space, strengthened our planning curriculum and further consolidated the position of the Regional Planning program here at Westfield State.



I am very pleased to be taking over for Dr. Bristow, and though he leaves big shoes to fill, he also bestowed upon the rest of us a well-oiled, smoothly functioning department. This is a time of great excitement for planners and geographers. We face so many challenges and our ability to meet these challenges hinges on our capacity to work together to envision and plan a future that is ecologically regenerative, economically vibrant, socially just and equitable. Our task here in GPS is to develop the vision, strategies and tools that will enable leadership and action to those ends. I am humbled by the opportunity to play a part in helping to make this happen as department chair.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian W. Conz

Associate Professor and Department Chair

Our Department Name has changed! We are now Geography, Planning, and Sustainability (GPS)

The Geography and Regional Planning Department has changed our name to the Department of Geography, Planning and Sustainability (GPS)! The GARP name grew out of the addition of the Regional Planning major, which was proposed by Geography Department faculty in 1981. Since then the department has grown. We have built strong interdisciplinary partnerships with other departments on campus and contribute numerous courses to the University's common core.

As part of our department name sustainability will help to illuminate geography's historical engagement with the biophysical environment, the transformation of the Earth by humans, and the dynamic economic and socio-cultural processes at work in the world. The name will also help to highlight planning's commitment to addressing the social and economic needs of communities, cities and towns, and the attention planners pay to the ecological contexts of such human needs, the needs of other species, and the planet as a whole.

Coming fall events

- GIS Day in November
(<http://www.gisday.com/>)
- SNEAPA in Hartford CT,
18-19 October 2018.
- NESTVAL at Keene State
12-13 October 2018

Student Awards



Chicopee mayor names soon-to-be Westfield State grad as special projects manager

Nathan Moreau will replace Benjamin Strepka as special projects manager to Mayor Richard J. Kos.

MASSLIVE.COM

Nathan Moreau was recognized for his contributions to the GARP department with the Stephanie Kelley Award AND earned himself the position of Special Projects Manager to Mayor of Chicopee Richard Kos! This position grew out of an internship Moreau undertook through his degree program at Westfield. Nathan also addressed the Massachusetts BHE on behalf of Westfield students and the Regional Planning program on October 31st.

Other students in our program honored for their Academic Excellence included **David Pena, Tiffany Menard** and **Travis Lucia**. Congratulations to all of them and best of luck in the future.

Student Travel



Belize 2019!

This spring break we students enrolled in GPS 311 Regional Geography of Latin America and the Caribbean will travel to Belize for some hardcore exploration and learning. This will be the third time the course to Belize has run and it just gets better every year. The field experience combines first-hand study of tropical ecology and wildlife, community-based conservation, tropical agroforestry and permaculture, and up close

and personal experiences of Belize's unique cultural milieu. The cost of the weeklong trip is \$2,200 which includes all transportation and accommodations, and several meals. Hope you can come along!

Student Travel to West Virginia, Coal River Mountain Watch

PAGE 3

West Virginia Reflection By Rebekah Whittier (Class of 2019)

The emphasis on the stories of communities and real people is what first interested me in Dr. Conz's Environmental Analysis II class. I have always been passionate about how environmental problems are affecting communities, but I found myself struggling to connect with the course material and first-hand accounts we read. It wasn't that I didn't care about mountaintop removal; I just had a hard time letting the gravity of the situation sink in with all the busyness of college life. I was hesitant to go on the optional trip portion of the class, but I took a leap of faith and I am so glad I did. Our trip to West Virginia was incredible. I loved getting to spend time with the volunteers of Coal River Mountain Watch and hearing their stories. Not only did they tell us about the devastating impacts of mountaintop coal removal, but they showed us. We went to the memorial site for the 29 miners that lost their lives in the Upper Big Branch mine explosion, and I finally felt it all sink in. I looked at the pictures of each of these miners and thought about how each one of their families is forever broken. The disaster that I had heard about multiple times in the course was finally driving me to tears; I don't think there was a dry eye in our group as we took a moment of silence to remember them. We went to a MTR site where half a mountain had been reduced to rubble and sludge, and I could feel all the mourning and sadness transform into anger and outrage. I felt that same anger that drives the communities of West Virginia to protest and fight for the health and safety of their families and the generations to come. I came back from West Virginia with a fresh perspective and stronger drive to help fight for the health and safety of people being affected by environmental issues.



Environmental Planning Club Activities by Julie Sobon, Club Co-President

One of the accomplishments that the Environmental Planning Club made this past year was setting up three composting bins for the university to utilize. This project was our way of giving back to the Environmental Science and Regional Planning Departments and was accomplished through our club fundraising. Other ways that we involved ourselves in the campus community include supporting and volunteering at the Wild & Scenic film festival, volunteering at the screening of "A Plastic Ocean," organizing the planting of several trees on campus, and helping out harvesting the garden on campus. While the core of this club is to engage with environmental activism, recreation is another main goal for us. Some of the outings this year were stargazing and night sledding (swiss-bobbing) at the Littleville Reservoir, nighttime canoe trip down the Westfield River, and a few local hikes. Our largest excursion was a trip to West Virginia to explore Seneca Rocks, volunteer, and learn about the coal mining industry and the issue of mountaintop removal coal mining.

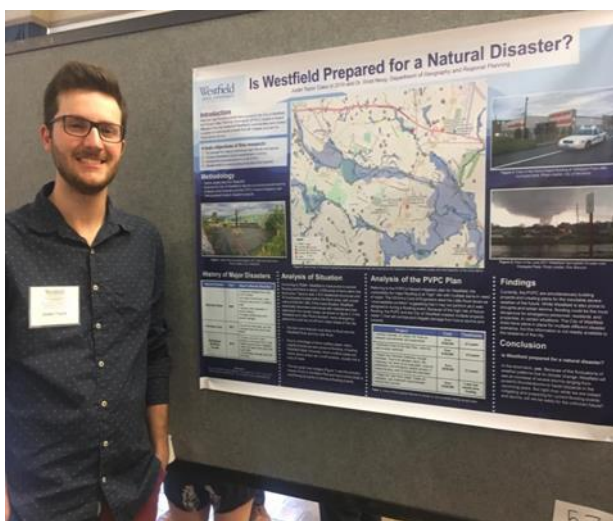


SNEAPA 2017 by Justin Taylor (Class of 2019)

In the field of urban and regional planning, networking is vital to establishing key relationships that can provide possible career opportunities, as well as increasing, or refreshing one's creativity and passion for the field. One method of establishing these relationships is by attending planning conferences like SNEAPA, the Southern New England American Planning Association Conference. Each year, hundreds of professionals and students alike, assemble at a different location in New England to discuss new practices in the field, attend seminars on environmental planning, transportation planning, planning policy reform, building community relationships and finding the best methods for public participation and community feedback.

In 2017, ten Westfield State Planning and Environmental Science students and professors from the GPS department attended the conference at the Dunkin Donuts Center in Providence, RI. Over the two-day convention Westfield students presented original research to fellow students and colleagues in the field. Also at the event were several local planning and engineering agencies that had exhibits showcasing examples of their current or previous work. Mobile workshops were held throughout the downtown area to discuss current and upcoming planning projects.

It was important for me, as an undergrad, to attend the conference because I got to witness what professional planners do at work and had the chance to ask them personal questions about the field. This year the SNEAPA conference is being held in Hartford, CT and I definitely plan to attend!



ALUMNI NEWS AND UPDATES

Ted Dobek (2015) After working his butt off as a barista to learn the trade, Ted opened Circuit Coffee, Westfield's premier café in September 2017!



Connor Murphy (2017) recently accepted a position as a Staff Planner for the Department of Planning and Community Development in Braintree, MA, putting to work the skills and knowledge from his four years here at Westfield.

Rebecca Talamini (2015) has been happily employed at Applied Geographics, a private GIS consulting company, for three years now. She started off as an intern, then was hired as an analyst, and is now a project manager.

Patrick Deschenes (2014) finished his Master's Degree in Public Administration at Clark University while working as a GIS technician for the City of Worcester. He now works as an Assistant Town Planner in Norwood, MA.

Sarah LaValley (2005) had a professional fellowship in Indonesia as part of her work with The City of Northampton's Planning department.

Shayne Trimbell (2004) took the position of Director of Transit Planning for the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority in New Bedford, MA in January of 2018. The position is a first for SRTA, and he is proud to serve as the first staff planner. His responsibilities include service planning, ridership analysis, and transit data management. Shayne says, 'We need more planners in the field!'

Kerrie Carnes Salwa (1997) recently joined the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission as a Principal Planner in the Regional Collaboration and Community Development Team specializing in Economic Development initiatives. Having taken some time out of her field to earn her Master's Degree in Public Administration, she is happy to be back in the Planning arena.

Cliff Galante (1993) spent many years as a transportation planner administering public transportation systems in Lawrence, Kansas and overseeing the expansion of bus rapid transit and other infrastructure for the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, which includes Las Vegas before starting a business with his wife in the medical equipment field.

Nicholas A. Armata (2013) is working as a Preservation Planner for the city of Boston. He is responsible for coordinating and managing all development within three of the nine national historic districts in the city. He is also linked to the environmental department, who he works closely with to incorporate climate change adaptation initiatives into the design guidelines.



2018 Senior Seminar Presenters

Liam Anderson - *How Western, MA Planners Can Aid in the Opioid Epidemic*

Connor Aubuchont – *The Feasibility of Becoming a Renewable Community: A Case Study of Auburn, MA*

Carly Camossi – *Breaking the Stigma: Public Participation in Municipalities*

Brian DeMars – *Methods to Capitalize on Rail Trail Tourism*

Daniel Hartmann – *Industry Standards Versus Craft Beer*

Stephanie Ladas – *The Relevance of USDA Agricultural Practices as Applied to a Small-Scale Farm in Western, MA*

Travis Lucia – *Designing the Cross Street Inclusive Playground*

Ryan Malakie – *Plumbing Fixture Upgrade Feasibility Study: New Residence Hall*

Tiffany Menard - *How to Implement a Bottled Water Ban at Westfield State*

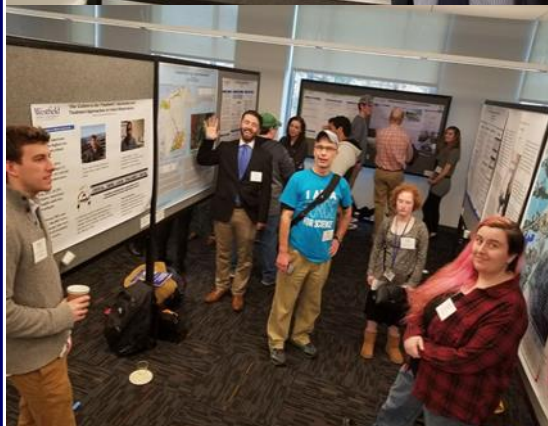
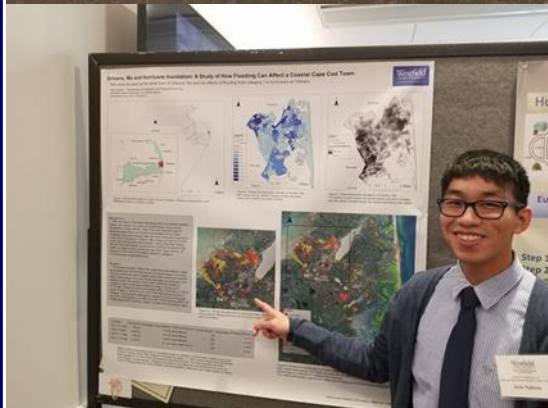
Nathan Moreau – *Chicopee Hazard Mitigation Plan: An Analysis of the City's Dams*

Brian Miles – *The Implementation of Open Space and Recreation Plans: A Case Study of the Town of Amherst, MA*

Jack Nghiem – *Understanding Consumer Behavior to Attract Customers*

David Pena – *An Analysis and Critique of Projecting Ridership for High-speed Rail*

Alex Ziter – *Communal Adaptation of Recreational Cannabis*



GPS Efforts Continue in the Henry Wefing Memorial Garden

For many years, Communications Professor Dr. Henry Wefing maintained a large garden behind the Horace Mann Center, donating all produce to the Westfield Food Pantry. Sadly, Henry became ill in 2014 and passed away the following year. Professors LeDoux and Conz of GPS, gardening and sustainable food system enthusiasts, had become friends and students of Henry's prior to his passing and were honored with the work of carrying on his legacy, together with members of the Communications Department. Over the past four years the garden has continued to produce hundreds of pounds of veggies for the Food Pantry. Potatoes, beets, greens, chard, onions, garlic, tomatoes, asparagus, strawberries, sweet potatoes, blueberries, squashes and green beans are some of the many foods the garden yields. Feel free to stop by anytime!



All the best for the new academic year!
Department of Geography, Planning & Sustainability WSU

Prof. Neog Awarded STARS

Dr. Dristi Neog was selected to present a talk on her research entitled Presented research on 'The Effect of Light Rail Systems on Urban Form: A Spatio-Temporal Analysis of Selected Light Rail Systems on Urban Density' at the University's Faculty Scholarship showcase in April. Additionally, Dr. Neog has been awarded a Semester Time Allowance for Research and Scholarship (STARS) to pursue her project entitled on 'Public Transit in a Non-Traditional Market: The Case of Westfield, MA'. This is a highly competitive award selection process so we are very proud of Dr. Neog for this recognition!

Book Publication

Professor Emeritus Marijoan Bull and new faculty member Alina Gross published a text book entitled *Housing in America* with Routledge (2018)!

Articles

Bristow, R. (in press). Altruistic Adventure Volunteerism: help manage the park you visit. Chapter in Jenkins, I. Adventure Tourism. Cabi.

Bristow, R. and D. Keenan (2018). Fright Tourism: a Study of Fear. e-Review of Tourism Research (eRTR). 15(1): 63-78.

Bristow, R. and I. Jenkins. (2018). Travel behavior substitution for a white-water canoe race influenced by climate induced stream flow. Leisure/Loisir. 42(1): 25-46.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2017.1403861>

Bristow, R. and I. Jenkins. (2017). Restaurant assessment of local food and the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria. European Journal of Tourism Research. Vol 18 pp 120-132.

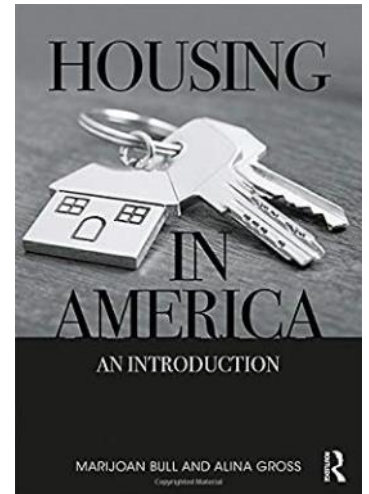
Conference Presentations

Bristow, R. and K. Baldiga. (2018). Industrial Archaeology: Protection of Heritage Sites in Parks and Protected Areas. Paper delivered at the National Environment and Recreation Research Symposium, Annapolis, MD. April 2018.

Conz, B. 2018. 'Permaculture Demonstration Sites in Central America: Contributions to Agroecology and Implications for Educators.' Paper presented at the 35th Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers, May 21, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Conz, B. 2017. 'Permaculture Demonstration Sites in the Northeast: Innovations and Implications for Sustainability at the edges of Agrarian Social Movements.' Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Northeast/St. Lawrence River Valley Geographical Society, October 21, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT.

Neog, D. (2018). 'The Effect of Light Rail Systems on Urban Form: A Spatio-Temporal Analysis of Selected Light Rail Systems on Urban Density' at the 57th Annual Conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Denver, Colorado: October 2017.



Contribute to our scholarship fund at
www.westfieldalumni.org
Be sure to specify GARP Fund!



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