Letter from the President

URISA is reasserting itself as a leader in the application of information technology in the day-to-day functions of governments and organizations around the world. The association’s ability to adapt to fast-changing technology and needs of organizations can be attributed to the vitality and mix of our membership. URISA is not a single technology or industry group, but a dynamic mix of thinkers and practitioners who are trying to solve problems or improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

Membership overall (international and chapters) numbers more than 8,000. URISA is becoming the largest professional network focused on spatial information technology. We are building the networking infrastructure to support members’ ability to share information with our regional conferences, an always-improving website, Journal, News, and of course Marketplace for job openings.

In May 2003, URISA sponsored a national summit with leaders from the national, state, regional and local government levels. This gathering has been the impetus for a number of developments aimed at improving the interaction among governments. The US Census Bureau has established a high level position to focus on government partnerships. There is a task force that is taking on technology legislation and regulation issues in a new and more effective way. URISA did not do this on our own, but we served as a catalyst for changes that were necessary. URISA members can influence national, state and local government policy. Speaking with one clear voice makes all the difference.

Our annual report reflects the flat but stable state of the business of professional associations—it also reflects the solid source of energy and people that is moving URISA International forward at an increasing pace.

The commitment of URISA to the establishment of an independent organization (GISCI) to oversee the certification of professionals in GIS has resulted in the first class of Certified GIS Professionals (GISP) and a great kickoff in January of 2004. The initiation of GeoCorps to provide a means for professionals to volunteer wherever their skills in information technology are needed is another sign that URISA is embarking on a new era of increased professional cooperation and commitment to making our world better.

All the best to URISA members and friends in 2004—

Dan Parr
URISA President, 2003-2004

Year of Great Accomplishments

URISA reinforced its leadership role in the industry during the past year. The Federal Summit, GIS Certification, and GeoCorps are just a few of the programs that had, and will continue to have, impact on our membership and the industry.

URISA held some outstanding conferences in 2003… the 7th Annual Integrating GIS & CAMA Conference, 5th Annual Street Smart & Address Savvy (GIS in Addressing) Conference, 2nd Annual Public Participation GIS Conference, and the 41st Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Long respected in the industry as comprehensive, unbiased educational offerings, twelve URISA workshops underwent serious reviews and updates in 2003. The Workshop Development Committee will continue this valuable course of action in 2004.

URISA publications continue to serve as an important industry resource. The results of the 2003 IT/GIS Salary Survey showed that overall GIS and IT salaries continue to rise and the biennial publication has become a common sight within GIS offices everywhere. Another top-selling publication release in 2003 was the Primer on Wireless GIS quick-study book.

Even with the economy effecting budgets worldwide, URISA’s membership numbers have remained stable. There were a total of 2,496 URISA members at the end of 2003. More than 5,500 professionals are members of URISA Chapters. Conference attendance at URISA events continued on page 3
Important URISA Dates to Remember

February 25–27, 2004
IT/GIS in Public Works Conference
Charlotte, NC

March 28–31, 2004
Integrating GIS & CAMA Conference
Austin, TX

July 19–20, 2004
Public Participation GIS Conference
Madison, WI

August 29–September 1, 2004
Street Smart & Address Savvy Conference
St. Louis, MO

September 13–17, 2004
Caribbean GIS Conference
Barbados

November 7–10, 2004
URISA’s 42nd Annual Conference
Reno, Nevada

URISA Board

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Daniel Parr, Dan Parr Associates
dan@dannparr.com

President-Elect
Dianne Haley, Alberta Energy and Utilities Board
dianne.haley@gov.ab.ca

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hilary.perkins@jacobs.com

Nigel Roberts, Regional Municipality of Waterloo (ON)
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Fax: 847-824-6363
info@urisa.org
http://www.urisa.org

Wendy Francis
URISA NEWS Production Manager
wfrancis@urisa.org

Article submissions, calendar items and industry news should be sent to the attention of Wendy Francis.

The Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) is the premier professional association for those involved in improving our urban and regional environments through the effective use of information technology. Professionals in planning, economic development, information systems, emergency services, natural resources, public works, transportation, and other departments within state and local government have depended on URISA for professional development and educational needs since 1963. Through its international, national and local chapter operations, URISA serves nearly 8,000 professionals.
Year Ahead

URISA has never rested on its laurels. The URISA Board of Directors, Committees, and Headquarters staff have an ambitious work plan set for 2004.

- A new website will be unveiled in 2004 with a robust Members-Only section. In 2003, the URISA website totaled 800,000 external page views by nearly 13,000 unique visitors. The goals for the new website will be to facilitate networking between URISA members and to provide substantial resources for members.
- URISA is organizing Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to allow members with similar interests (such as Planning, Addressing, Transportation, Public Health, etc.) more opportunities for networking and professional involvement.
- The Bob Aangeenbrug Scholarship Fund, established after the passing of one of URISA’s most beloved Presidents (1976-77), will provide financial assistance for travel to some invited speakers.
- GeoCorps will continue to develop with plans to match at least one volunteer with an overseas assignment this year.
- An association “Super Summit” is being planned for this Spring. This meeting of our sister associations and institutions that deal with spatial information will set an agenda that combines the common issues and efforts of all to speed the application of technology to the needs of local, state/provincial, and national government.
- More communication and coordination with URISA Chapters is utmost in the minds of all URISA leaders. Expect good things in the coming year.
- In addition to the specialty conferences held this past year, two additional programs will be held in 2004—IT/GIS in Public Works and the 2nd Caribbean GIS conference.
- Of course, URISA’s 2004 Annual Conference in Reno will again be the exclamation point on another successful year at URISA!

Member Survey Results

An online member survey was conducted in 2003 to ascertain how well URISA is meeting the needs of its membership. Overwhelmingly (95.2%), members felt that URISA membership is a good value. When asked to evaluate each member benefit, again, URISA members seemed to place great value on all benefits from URISA News, Journal, and Marketplace to educational and networking opportunities. Complimentary subscriptions to GeoWorld and Geospatial Solutions and the free distribution of RFP’s were also rated highly.

When asked to indicate member interest in various subject areas, the following subjects garnered the most interest: Planning; Transportation/Engineering/Public Works; Addressing; IS/IT; Environmental Issues; Urban Issues; and Homeland Security.

These areas will most likely be developed into URISA Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

Financial Statements

The graphic on this page is URISA’s Statement of Financial Position. Complete financial statements are available upon request.

Poised for Big Things

With a committed leadership and an active and growing list of volunteers, URISA is poised to meet both the challenges and successes ahead. If you are not already one of the hundreds of members who volunteer time and expertise to their association, consider getting involved in 2004. Be a part of the next “big thing.”

2003-2004 Board of Directors

- Dan Parr, Dan Parr Associates (President)
- Dianne Haley, Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (President-Elect)
What is URISA?
The Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) is a non-profit association of professionals using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other information technologies to solve challenges in all state and local government agencies and departments. URISA promotes the effective and ethical use of spatial information and information technologies for the understanding and management of urban and regional systems.

URISA’s Mission
URISA promotes the effective and ethical use of spatial information and information technologies for the understanding and management of urban and regional systems.

URISA’s Vision
1. To lead and be a key partner in advancing the effective use of spatial information and geographic information technologies (especially geographic information systems) across a wide range of disciplines for the understanding and management of urban and regional systems, and to focus on issues, create policies, and define standards related thereto.
2. To offer opportunities for professional camaraderie, education, exchange, service, advancement, and recognition.
3. To create and disseminate high-quality professional educational materials.
4. To increase URISA’s membership, and to extend URISA’s influence beyond the United States and Canada.
5. To secure URISA’s long-term financial stability.
6. To foster strong chapters, and establish mutually beneficial relationships with allied organizations.
7. To provide for sound, responsive Association management by relying on member volunteers for subject expertise and overall association direction, and professional staff for administrative, business, and conference management expertise.

Scott Grams, Certification and Education Manager
Verlanda McBride, Database Manager
Michele Meng, Membership Manager
Katie Morehead, Administrative & Publications Assistant
Patricia Francis, Meetings Assistant

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PJN Consulting Inc
Spatial Focus Inc
System Development/Integration, Inc
Systems Design Inc

Get it while it’s hot!
URISA’s new Salary Survey publication has been flying off the shelves at URISA HQ!
The results included in the 2003 survey include the following average salaries according to Job Title:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Average Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of Information Systems/ Chief Information Officer (CIO)</td>
<td>$85,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Geographic Information Systems/ Geographic Information Officer (GIO)</td>
<td>$72,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>$71,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/IS Manager</td>
<td>$64,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>$61,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Manager</td>
<td>$59,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/IS Systems Software Analyst/Programmer</td>
<td>$59,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Systems Software Analyst/Programmer</td>
<td>$53,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS User (light)</td>
<td>$52,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/IS Coordinator</td>
<td>$50,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public or Elected Official</td>
<td>$50,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Coordinator</td>
<td>$50,181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/IS Specialist</td>
<td>$49,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS User (heavy)</td>
<td>$46,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Specialist</td>
<td>$46,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Data Analyst</td>
<td>$43,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>$40,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/IS Technician</td>
<td>$40,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/IS Data Analyst</td>
<td>$39,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS Technician</td>
<td>$33,604</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of course, salaries vary based upon employer type, region, professional and GIS experience. Numerous cross-tabulations of the salary data are included in this publication. Buy a copy for your office today at www.urisa.org
Welcome New URISA Members

Charles Absher, Integrated Science & Engineering
William Allender, Colorado Springs Utilities
Daniel Antonson, Otak Inc
Peter Armstrong, Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators
Clay Atcheson, PCI Geomatics
Adam Aull, City of Danville, IL
Adam Balsley, City of Newport News, VA
Terri Bayard, Town of Palm Beach, FL
Tim Bechler, Central County Emergency 911, Ellisville, MO
Andrea Beck, American Transmission Company
Phil J Belin, City of San Ramon, CA
Dario T Brannon, City of Greensboro, NC
Mike Broten, Titan Systems Corp
Brian J Buckley, Hubbell, Roth & Clark Inc
Clark Burdick, C&G Engineers Inc
Donna Camp, University of Illinois
Deborah Caraway, City of Mandeville, LA
Neal Carpenier, The Sidwell Company
Mark Carrel, San Diego Community College District
Kevin R. Beaudry Casaus, URS Corporation
Martin Casel-Gintz, University of Berne, Switzerland
Matthew Cieri, City of Kissimmee, FL
Natalie Cormier, Fleming College, QC
Dan Craver, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Bruce Cullen, City of Calgary, AB Canada
Lynn Dupont, Regional Planning Commission, New Orleans, LA
Adam Evans, PCI Geomatics
Charl Everson, Cambridge Systematics
Melissa Freeman, Scott County, VA
Aleda Freeman, State of Massachusetts
Brian Gebhardt, SSMA, East Hazel Crest, IL
Mike Gritz, City of Las Vegas, NV
Thor Gulsvig, State of Washington, Military Dept
Erik Hakanson, University of Montana
Robert M Hench, GRW Aerial Surveys
Cory Hines, Linn County Auditor Office, Cedar Rapids, IA
Mark Hollingshead, ESRI-St Louis
Jason Houck, Dyer, Riddle, Mills & Precourt Inc
Bruce Irwin, Niagara Region, ON Canada
Brent Johnson, Sarasota County, FL
Mark Johnston, University of Illinois at Chicago
Rick Johnston, Pulaski County, Assessor Office, Little Rock, AR
Jeff Kapellas, California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Steve Kaster, Surdex Corporation
Dohyung Kim, University of Florida
Jin Chang Kim, Bestin Trading Company Ltd
Rick Kren, Laidlaw Transit
Jaroslaw Kowalczyk, Ekkoprekt, Poland
Phil Kraus, Surdex Corporation
Vyas Kuman Krishnamurthy, Ohio State University
Robert Kull, Planergy LLC
Brian Laird, Rick Engineering Company
Clark Lawlor, PCI Geomatics
Yotam Levine, ZyXEL
Songmei Li, University of Louisville
William Lopez, Colorado Springs Utilities
Catherine Lobeck, Washoe County, Reno, NV
Tom Mayo, ECSMarin
Christopher Mc Garry, WinGIS, Rockford, IL
Kathleen Meyers, City of Dover, NH
Brett Milburn, Langan Engineering & Environmental Services Inc
Elizabeth Miller, State of Minnesota
David Moore, Booz Allen Hamilton
Jan Murray, Capital Consultants Inc
Esra Ozdenerol, University of Memphis
Anita Pathak, Sacramento County Assessors Office, CA
Martin Pinnau, Northern Illinois University
Vital Pradith, San Francisco State University
Mike Preston, Lamp Rynearson & Associates
Frank Prisciandaro, Browne Management Inc
Emilia Ramirez, Turner Collie & Braden
Tammy Riggs, Manatron Inc
Henry Roberts, National Grid
David Ross, PCI Geomatics
Brett Runge, Kadrmas, Lee, & Jackson
Greg A Rybarczyk, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Pamela Schlutt, City of Keller, TX
Zachary Schroeder, University of Nebraska
Lisa Schweizter, University of California LA
Cameron Shankland, Victoria, BC Canada
Robert Shottz, Navigation Technologies
Earl William Smith, Georgetown-Scott County Planning Commission, KY
Brady Stroh, Penn State Harrisburg, ISRA
Jason Teaster, City of Greensboro, NC
Doug Terry, Dover Municipal Utilities Authority, Toms River, NJ
Mark Toalson, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, IL
Stephanie Uribe, Riverside County Fire Dept, CA
Diane Weshemeyer, Charlotte County Sheriff Office, FL
Dave Blake Williams, Urbantrans Consultants
Kim Wilson, University of Phoenix
Stella Wolterspoon, San Jose State University
Tolga Yilmaz, University of IL at Urbana Champaign

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Data provided by the National Geographic Society.
Welcome New Business & Corporate Members

**GENIVAR**
5355 Boulevard des Gradins
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(418) 623-3354
www.xeos.ca

GENIVAR provides specialized XEOSTM high resolution aerial imagery services, image processing and image integration into Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

XEOSTM is true-digital aerial imagery. Images are in color and their ground resolution can be up to 3 cm (1 ¼ inch). XEOSTM technology has been developed to simplify the management of linear infrastructures (corridors) and save costs by reducing traveling time to go on site. Roads, pipelines, power lines, rivers, coastlines and railroads are among infrastructures whose management is simplified through the use of XEOSTM high-resolution aerial imagery.

The simplicity of the XEOS™ system means it can be used even by people with little or no computer experience. XEOSTM technology has won the 2003 Canadian Consulting Engineering Awards.

**PCI Geomatics**
50 West Wilmot Street
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(905) 764-0614
www.pcigeomatics.com

PCI Geomatics is a leader in the development of innovative software for the remote sensing, digital photogrammetry, and data visualization markets. PCI Geomatics designs software that provides the broadest range of functionality, and operates on the most extensive list of computer platforms in the industry. Its software is primarily used by professionals and scientists for resource analysis and mapping applications in operations responsible for monitoring the earth and its resources. PCI Geomatics recently developed the next generation of geomatics software. Geomatica™ is a complete geomatics solution providing affordable geospatial software that is feature-rich and easy to use. Essential elements from PCI Geomatics’ world-renowned products have been assembled into a highly integrated package and infused with new technologies needed to meet the growing challenges in remote sensing, spatial analysis, GIS, photogrammetry, and cartography.

**Juniper GIS Services, Inc.**
61677 Thunder Road
Bend, OR 97702
(541) 389-6225
www.junipergis.com

Juniper GIS offers training, consulting and technical services to help organizations succeed with GIS. We offer a wide range of training solutions, including custom classes and ESRI-authored classes. Our portable computer lab allows us to take hands-on training to your site anywhere in the U.S. Consulting and technical services include data creation and conversion, project planning and implementation, needs assessment studies, database design, VBA programming, CAD to GIS conversion, and geodatabase development. Juniper GIS has experience using GIS to support local government, emergency services, water resource management, wildfire mapping, irrigation companies, business, and engineers.

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Be sure to register for the 8th Annual Integrating GIS & CAMA Conference (March 28-31 in Austin, Texas) by March 3 for early registration discounts!

The deadline for abstract submissions for URISA 2004 in Reno is April 5, 2004. Share your knowledge with your fellow URISA members at the conference this year.

Know of an outstanding government application of information technology? Maybe it was a project you managed? Apply for URISA’s 2004 Exemplary Systems in Government (ESIG) Awards. The ESIG Awards Committee decided to recognize more winners this year (because so many systems deserve recognition). The application information is included on an insert in this issue of URISA News and is also available on the URISA website.
Industry News

Manatron has received Gold Certification from the Microsoft Corporation for its property software applications.

Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions announced the Advanced Geospatial Laboratory of Northern Illinois University, an Intergraph Registered Research Laboratory, has completed development of a Web-based Virtual GIS Notebook that promotes GIS studies. The online notebook contains all the information needed to assist those with an interest in learning more about GIS.

Sanborn has purchased a state-of-the-art lidar (light detection and ranging) system with a pulse rate of 50kHz.

Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions has a new online geospatial infrastructure management solutions demo designed for public works professionals. The demo addresses crisis situations and what can be done to resolve infrastructure problems in addition to creating, validating, maintaining and analyzing network data in real-time. To view the demo, visit http://imgs.intergraph.com/freebies/demos.asp.

The American Association of Code Enforcement (AACE) has named ESRI as its Corporate Entity of the Year for 2003. The award was presented at the association's 41st Annual Business Meeting and Education Conference in San Antonio, Texas. AACE is the only nationwide association of code enforcement officials in existence.

The Sidwell Company announced the opening of a new regional sales office in Herndon, Virginia.

PCI Geomatics has completed and is now shipping Geomatica 9 Version 9.1. Additions found in the latest version build upon the software’s remote sensing processing, GIS capabilities, hyperspectral tools, and user productivity practices.

People News

John Copple, CEO of Sanborn, announced the promotion of Anthony Thorpe to Chief Technical Officer. He will have responsibility for the technology strategy and direction of the company. He will also be responsible for analyzing and developing new and emerging technologies.

Lynn Hand has joined AirPhotoUSA as Director of Product Management.

Project Awards

GeoDecisions was selected by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (OKDOT) to provide GIS and information technology consulting services to maintain and improve the Geographical Resource Intranet Portal (GRIP) application for the next three years. GeoDecisions worked with OKDOT to plan, design, develop, and implement the GRIP solution. GeoDecisions was also selected by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) to complete the Decision Support Environment (DSE) project.

Merrick & Company was selected to perform base mapping in Bozeman, Montana and Jackson Hole, Wyoming for the ICON/G&O Joint Venture. Merrick will deliver 1.5-foot digital black and white orthophotography, 2-foot contours, and a Digital Terrain Model (DTM) for each area.

NovaLIS Technologies and business partner ESRI Canada will provide the City of Toronto with a parcel maintenance solution, as part of its integrated geospatial environment. The City’s land information business unit will implement the solution, and ESRI Canada will provide training support.

Geographic Technologies Group has recently been awarded numerous contracts including Emergency GIS Dispatch Software contracts: City of Broken Arrow, OK; City of Calumet, IL; Town of Cary, NC; Charter Van Buren Township, MI; City of Dothan, AL; Douglas County, KS; Harrison PD, NY; City of Kearney, NE; City of Laredo, TX; Spalding County, GA; Village of Westmont, IL; Wisconsin DOT, WI; Wisconsin State Police, WI; GIS Browser Software contracts: City of Boca Raton, FL; City of Camarillo, CA; Cucamonga County Water District, CA; City of Dallas, OR; City of Dothan, AL; City of Duplin, OH; City of Gillette, WY; City of North Richland Hills, TX; City of Oxnard, CA; Sugarland, TX; City of Temple, TX; Carroll County Assessor’s Office, VA; Lincoln County Property Appraiser, NC; and McDuffie County, GA. GTG has also recently been awarded many new GIS Web Solutions, Crimes Mapping and Analysis Software, Address Management, Touch-Screen GIS Kiosk Software, and Consulting contracts.

PJN Consulting, Inc. has been retained by the City of Charlotte, NC to support the continued implementation of a digital submittal program for subdivision plan review.

The Sidwell Company has been awarded a contract by Henderson County, Illinois for development of a comprehensive countywide GIS. The contract includes the creation of digital orthophotography and development of a brand new cadastral database. Also included in the contract are full GIS implementation and software training, map maintenance software and training, and integration of the GIS with the county’s tax system.

Manatron, Inc. has been selected to implement its new property tax and appraisal systems in Delaware County, Ohio, Mahoning County, Ohio, Kenai, Alaska, and Union County, Pennsylvania. In addition, Baltimore, Maryland, has signed up for phase II of their property tax project.

Fort Myers, Florida has selected Accela, Inc. to implement a new enterprise land information system in the Community Development Department. The system will provide a centralized approach to resource, land, and permit management for four key divisions—Building Permitting & Inspections, Code Enforcement, Planning, and Development Services. Minneapolis, Minnesota is adding Accela’s KivaCitizen™ to the City’s existing land management system. KivaCitizen will allow the City to offer many of its government services via the Internet. In the near future, citizens and business will be able to apply for permits, schedule inspections, check project status, pay fees, or submit comments on-line.

Prince Edward Island’s Department of Provincial Treasury selected Govern Software and Systems Design to build its next generation Property Assessment and Tax System (PATS). The new system will be phased into production during the March through May 2004 timeframe. Product technologies to be incorporated include Govern for Windows, Marshall & Swift and SSPP. Implementation will include development of new Residential Regression Market Models.

Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions announced the Public Works Department of the City of Redmond, Wash., has chosen Intergraph’s Geospatial Resource Management (GRM) solutions to improve delivery of its public services—water and sewer—to residents. The City of Redmond serves a population of 46,000, but with the daily influx of commuters, handles demand for more than 90,000 customers.

Send announcements to wfrancis@urisa.org
Chapter News

The New England URISA Chapter is cosponsoring the 4th NEGIS conference May 12-13. Along with partners GITA and ACSM, the event hopes to draw over 600 attendees. Keynote speakers include Barbara Ryan, Carl Reed, and Jim Geringer. Adena Schutzberg is leading a technology panel, and over 50 vendors are anticipated. Details can be found at www.negis.org.

NCURISA is proud to host a one day workshop called “Connecting to NC OneMap” in the City of Salisbury’s training room. The site has 12 PC’s, to comfortably hold 24 participants. This free workshop is offered to members (URISA & NCURISA) in good standing on a “first come, first serve” basis. It will be held March 11, 2004 from 8:30–5:00. Those attending the workshop should have metadata for the data layers they want to share. If you would like to participate, contact Cathy Cole (704-920-2837, ccole@co.cabarrus.nc.us)

The largest URISA meeting in Canada will take place May 11, 2004, when the Ontario Chapter will hold its annual meeting, conference and exposition. The event, called Be Spatial 2004, will draw GIS professionals from throughout Ontario and beyond to the Toronto Congress Centre. It will be the 17th annual meeting for URISA Ontario Chapter, the largest of five Canadian chapters and winner of the 2003 Outstanding Chapter Award from URISA International. The event will feature keynote speakers, several concurrent workshop sessions, a technology leaders panel, a Map Gallery and an exposition featuring displays of GIS implementations by municipalities, along with products and services by major suppliers in the Canadian market. Information about Be Spatial 2004 is available at: www.urisaoc.ca/subPage.asp?id=2

In other Ontario Chapter news, Neil Malcolm, a planner with the Region of Peel in south-central Ontario and a director of the Ontario Chapter, is serving as the chapter’s liaison officer for the GiSCI certification program and GeoCorps.

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of URISA is holding its 2004 Biennial Conference Event on March 17-18 at Rutgers University, Busch Campus Center in Piscataway, NJ. The conference theme, “GIS Connecting Communities” is intended to emphasize how our common interests and varied pursuits with GIS technologies interact to help people from all walks of life understand and address vital issues throughout our region.

The event features five workshops, a keynote address from Karen Siderelis, GIO from the USGS, concurrent sessions, posters, exhibitors, an Interactive Expo, and a closing plenary session and reception featuring Hopeworks ‘N Camden, a youth mentoring organization that has successfully guided at-risk youth to more prosperous futures by learning and applying GIS to projects in their own community. Additional details regarding this event are available online at...http://quantifactus.wcupa.edu/macurisa

The Oregon URISA Chapter and the Columbia Region chapter of ASPRS are hosting a conference titled: GIS in Action 2004, the 8th Annual NW Regional GIS conference, in Portland, Oregon, May 11-13, 2004.

Visit www.orurisa.org for more information.

The Nominations Committee presented its slate of candidates to the URISA Board of Directors during their meeting in Chicago the weekend of January 31-February 1. The approved slate for the 2004-2005 election is as follows:

For President:
Cindy Domenico, Assessor, Boulder County, Colorado

For Board of Directors (3 positions will be available):
Eric Bohard, GIS Manager, Clackamas County, Oregon
Shoreh Elhami, GIS Director, Delaware County Auditor’s Office, Ohio
Sanjiv Gandhi, Technology Business Analyst, City of Orlando, Florida
Allen Ibaugh, Corporate Urban & Regional Solutions Manager, Space Imaging, Orlando, Florida
Al Little, Manager of GIS Services, City of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

The 3-year terms for these Board members will conclude at the end of URISA’s 2004 Annual Conference in Reno this November: Martha Lombard (Past-President), Susan Johnson, Anne Payne, and Hilary Perkins.

URISA will be instituting online voting this year. Candidate statements and ballots will be distributed electronically this Spring.

If you are going to a local conference or user group meeting, be sure to contact Michele Meng (mmeng@urisa.org) at URISA Headquarters for some URISA materials to distribute. Talk to other attendees about URISA and encourage them to join!
On October 13th, 2003, the first group of GIS professionals became certified by the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) during URISA’s Annual Conference in Atlanta. This historic event culminated the multi-year effort to develop an industry-wide GIS Certification Program. The idea of GIS certification was the subject of intense discussion and debate for many years. Since the GISCI program was unveiled, the discussion has shifted from “Why certify?” to “How do I get certified?”.

The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI)
GISCI is the third party organization that was created to manage the GIS Certification Program. The establishment of a separate certification entity is common practice in credentialing, primarily for legal and financial reasons. Also, as the program continues to expand, GISCI would like to include GIS sister organizations at the leadership level to ensure that the broad interests of the GIS community are being addressed.

Portfolio-based Program
It is important to note that the GISCI program is a portfolio-based system and does not include nor require an examination. The committee, with ample feedback and public comment, decided against using a qualifying exam on the basis that it would be extremely difficult to design a single examination that could fairly evaluate skills. Instead, a Certified GIS Professional must meet requirements in these three areas: (1) education, (2) professional experience, and (3) contributions to the profession.

What is a Certified GIS Professional (GISP)?
GISCI recognizes that many GIS professionals come into the discipline from other fields and have varied educational and professional backgrounds. Therefore, a typical GIS professional will have a Bachelor’s degree with some GIS courses, a minimum of four years in GIS application or data development and modest participation in organizations, events, and activities that benefit the GIS professional community. A key component of the GISCI Program is the transferability between the three achievement areas. Points may be distributed from one category to satisfy a deficiency in another category as long as minimum point totals are met.

Code of Ethics
A Code of Ethics for GIS Professionals was formulated by URISA at the same time the GISCI Certification Program was being developed. All GIS Professionals, regardless of whether they apply for certification should try to follow the guidelines listed in the Code. No applicant will be certified by GISCI without signing the Code, the complete text of which is available online.

The Certification Program
The Certification Process involves earning and documenting points in the three achievement categories. Within each category there are minimum point total requirements. After the minimum point totals are met, additional points must be earned in order to meet the overall minimum for GISCI certification. These additional points can come from one area or any combination of the three achievement areas.

Education points are earned by a combination of formal degree, GIS-related coursework and conference and workshop attendance. Points earned for having a degree do not require the degree to be in GIS. Formal degrees may be in any field from Geography to Spanish to Marine Biology. All course points will need to be GIS-related and fall under the guidelines set by UCGIS Model Curricula. Proper documentation including transcripts, certificates, and conference attendance verification materials should accompany the portfolio.

Experience points are earned in three categories depending on what level of GIS work was being completed. Points may be scattered across two or all three categories. For instance, if a candidate spent half of his time programming and the other half training others on using a GIS, he would receive half credit in both point categories. There is also a bonus point section for supervisory experience. If the applicant supervises GIS professionals, she will earn additional experience points for each year in a supervisory role. A résumé and a signed letter from the applicant’s current employer or client will need to accompany the portfolio.

There is also a Grandfathering Provision for candidates whose experience predates many existing GIS jobs. Eligible candidates for this Provision will be judged on their experience only and their credential will not differ from a standard certification.

Contributions to the Profession points document activities that add to the professional body of knowledge for the benefit of the profession as a whole and not just the employer and client. Contributions points can be earned in dozens of areas from publishing a book to presenting a paper to organizing a GIS Day activity. You even receive points for being a...
Portfolio Review Process

Once a portfolio has been received at the GISCI office, administrative staff will provide a quantitative review and the GISCI Review Committee will provide a qualitative review. The staff review will check that documentation has been provided and the point claims were calculated correctly. The Review Committee, consisting of Certified GIS Professionals, will determine if the point claims are accurate and meet the guidelines of the certification program. Review Committee decisions on points and point adjustments are final. Both the GISCI Staff and Review Committee will operate under strict confidentiality guidelines. No one outside of GISCI will be allowed to view an applicant’s portfolio. GISCI allows for applicants to remove sensitive information from official documentation (e.g. social security number, maiden name, etc.).

It is estimated that a properly organized portfolio will take 2-3 months to be reviewed from the date it is received at GISCI Headquarters. If there is a discrepancy or the application was filled out incorrectly the process may be seriously delayed. If the discrepancy is found to be especially egregious it may result in a rejection. Applicants will be notified when their application has been received and when a final decision has been made by the Review Committee.

Once successfully reviewed, a Certified GIS Professional may begin to use the GISP designation.

State of Oregon Officially Endorses GIS Professional Certification

The Oregon Geographic Information Council, at its December 17, 2003 quarterly meeting, officially endorsed a plan for an Oregon GIS Professional Certification. That plan adopts the GISCI Certification as the Oregon Certification, and calls for any agency or organization in Oregon that shares geospatial data with other organizations or the public to have a certified individual in responsible charge of sharing that data, following best practices as set forth by the profession.

Certification Fee and GISCI Membership

Portfolios and applications must be submitted along with a $250 fee. This fee will cover a successful applicant for five years of membership as a Certified GIS Professional within GISCI.

Staying Relevant Through Recertification

In order for GISCI Certification to remain current and relevant, a recertification requirement was included, and is an important component of the program. Every five years, a GISP will be expected to submit a shortened portfolio that will primarily document professional experience and contributions to the profession since the individual was last certified. The recertification will be valid for another five years.

For more information, be sure to visit the GISCI website at www.gisci.org for application materials and procedures for filling out the forms. If you have any questions, contact Scott Grams, Certification Manager, at 847-824-7768, sgrams@gisci.org.

GISPs to Receive Educational Support from ESRI

Graduates from the GIS Certification Institute’s (GISCI) new GIS Professional Certification Program will receive free materials and training from ESRI. The first 1,000 professionals to obtain certification will receive core professional GIS training and educational materials worth $335,000. These resources will enable the professionals to continue developing their skills and support their contributions in their respected fields.

Each graduate will receive the Planning for a GIS Virtual Campus class by Roger Tomlinson, Ph.D., GISP, and the books Thinking About GIS: Geographic Information Systems Planning for Managers by Tomlinson, Beyond Maps: GIS and Decision Making in Local Government by John O’Looney, and GIS in Public Policy by R.W. Greene.

“The GIS Professional Certification Program, especially its recertification requirement, calls for GIS professionals to maintain currency in their field on a continual basis,” says Bill Huxhold, GISP, chairman of URISA’s GIS Certification Committee, which developed the program. “This donation by ESRI is a very important contribution to that goal, and it acknowledges the value of improving the skills of GIS professionals as they progress in their careers.”

“The GIS Professional Certification Program furthers GIS technology by recognizing the experience, education, and contributions of professionals from numerous disciplines to the continued professional use of this important technology,” says Jack Dangermond, ESRI president. “The program’s code of ethics will help guide the GIS professional community to make appropriate ethical choices and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation.”

For more information, visit www.gisci.org.

- 98% of GISCI applicants found the process to be “very clear” or “clear”
- 75% said it took “less than two weeks” to secure adequate documentation and complete the application
Business Directory

Your business card advertisement can be seen here for $50 per issue.

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