Moving Beyond the Technical: What skills do I need to know to be an effective GIS Manager?

By Tripp Corbin, MCP, CFM, GISP

So how do we get started down the GIS road? Most of us started out as technicians after going to school and getting a degree or certificate. As GIS Technicians and Analysts, we get to refine our GIS skills, growing better and better at what we do. At some point, someone notices how good we are and decides we should be promoted. So we are forced to move beyond our comfortable technical zone and into the next phase of our professional development. This next phase I am talking about is management.

This transition will bring with it a whole new set of challenges and issues that our technical background may not have prepared us for. It is one thing to know how to administer and manage a GIS dataset. It is quite another to administer and manage people, projects, budgets, meetings and so on.

I always say life would be simple without employees or clients. Of course without either of those I would not have a wife, a home, cable TV, food, electricity, car or any of those other things we all like to enjoy. As a manager you must develop a completely new set of skills outside the technical ones you have been focused on up until now. You will now have to handle employee issues, manage projects, write Request for Proposals or Qualifications, write proposals, procure software, equipment and services, manage and renew software licenses, and so on. Let’s take a look at a few of these a bit closer.

Avoid Scope Creep

The first part of managing a project is to know what the project is, or in the official...
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project management lingo, what is the scope. The scope defines all the work required, and only the work required, to complete the project successfully according to the Project Management Institute. While you would think a project scope should be easy to understand, I have seen many projects hit bumps along the way because either the vendor or customer did not share a common view of the scope. This seems to happen a lot when the two are not from the same background or technical level. So it is important to make sure everyone has a complete and identical understanding of the scope. If you are not careful, a project will take on a life of its own, spiraling out of control. Watch out for scope creep! This is where things start getting added or removed from the project scope. In many cases this can increase the cost of the project which can bite you in the backside later on. Consistent communication between the client and team members is one of the best ways to avoid scope creep.

Not all scope creep is bad, as long as it is managed. There are many reasons a project scope needs to change. We may find out new information about the project; find out about a new technology; or the overall project goals may change. All of these are legitimate reasons for the scope of a project to change. You as a project manager must document the when’s, where’s what’s and why’s so that information is available to everyone involved. If costs change, make sure you get the proper approval. If you don’t track the changes, the project will quickly become an eight legged monster which will pull you into the dreaded deep.

Managing People
People management is one of the hardest aspects of being a manager. This can be especially true if you are promoted from the rank and file. It is often very hard to make the adjustment from being a peer to being a boss. The team you now have to lead is made up of your friends and some may have more experience or education than you do. As a result you might be reluctant to take charge. This is normal human nature. We don’t like to boss around our friends and we feel weird telling someone who might have a higher level of experience or education what to do. As a manager you are now a leader. To be successful you must get past these feelings and take charge. That doesn’t mean you have to be a dictator. You can take charge and still show respect to those you manage. They will hopefully return the favor. Remember respect is something earned and it is a two-way street.

In addition to leading, you also have to deal with personalities. You have to keep in mind that everyone is different. As a manager you must learn how to deal with each different personality. Depending on your personality there may just be some types of people you cannot work with successfully. Do not be afraid to admit that. To be a good leader you must be willing to admit your own personal shortcomings.

Public Speaking
Public speaking is a skill you must master if you wish to grow into a true professional and move beyond being a technician. However the very mention of speaking in front of a crowd causes many people to get a wild-eyed look and go running to the bathroom. Being nervous or fearful of public speaking is normal. I am one of the weird few that actually love public speaking but even I get nervous before getting up to speak in front of a crowd. You need to be able to overcome this fear and use it to your advantage. Just getting up and doing it is the best way to conquer this fear. Remember practice makes perfect.

Moving on Up
Those were just a few high-level highlights of some of the skills you will need as you move up the management ladder. Where can you go to learn these skills? Well there are several avenues which will help you develop and improve your skills as a manager. One of the best ways I have found is to become active in a professional organization such as URISA.

Professional organizations offer multiple opportunities for professional development. The networking opportunities I have had as a member of professional organizations have been invaluable in my professional development. I have been able to learn from those who have already been through the transition from technician to manager. Volunteering to serve on a board or committee is also a great way to get a taste of management and to gain some real world experience. If you can lead a group of volunteers you can lead anyone. The phrase ‘herding cats’ comes to mind often with volunteer boards. Professional organizations also offer workshops or publications on management topics. URISA’s Leadership Academy and Pete Croswell’s GIS Management Handbook are great examples. I have a copy of The GIS Management Handbook and refer to it often. I also plan to attend the Leadership Academy very soon.

Many schools offer management training through their continuing studies programs or their business schools. These are great ways to learn general skills and concepts and might also be used to get a degree in business management. There are also several private companies that provide management training.

The road to GIS Management can be filled with many twists and challenges which our technical training does little to prepare us for. If you start looking early in your career for opportunities

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to learn skills and gain management experience, you will be ready when you are given the nod to take a position of leadership.

About the Author:
Tripp Corbin, a GIS Certified Professional and an Esri Certified Trainer, is the Vice President of GIS/IT Services for Keck & Wood, Inc. and has over 20 years of Surveying and GIS related experience. Tripp is an active member of the GIS community. He is a member of several GIS and mapping related organizations including URISA International, multiple local URISA Chapters, the Surveying & Mapping Society of Georgia, GITA, PeeDee Users Group and the Seven Hills Regional Users Group. Tripp is a past president of Georgia URISA and is the current chair of the URISA Chapter Relations Committee.

Speaking of Leadership, the 2011 URISA Leadership Academy just concluded in St. Louis. Again... to rave reviews!

“After taking this Academy I believe that non-technical training is just as important as the technical training in GIS. It was an awesome experience that I would recommend to anyone.”

Carl Alexander, GISP, City of Franklin, TN

The dates/location for the 2012 ULA will be finalized shortly!

Have you talked to anyone about URISA lately? The more members we have, the more knowledge can be shared! Make it a point to talk to your colleagues about the organization and encourage them to join.

Introduce young professionals and students to URISA. Let's expand the URISA Network together!
Inspiring the Next Generation of GIS Leaders

By Rachel Kornak, GISP

The hot Orlando sun shone through the floor-to-ceiling windows, making me squint as I walked down the hallway of the Hilton. I’d been to my fair share of conferences but was nervous because I’d never attended a URISA event before. I stopped to scan for familiar faces in the exhibit hall. I didn’t recognize anyone but felt welcomed by the broad smiles of attendees and exhibitors. I smiled back, unaware that these individuals would be so instrumental in my life. I found an open space at one of the tables and joined a lively conversation about GISP Certification.

I listened awhile, then said naively, “I’m not convinced I should pursue GISP Certification. I already have a GIS management position. I don’t see how I would benefit personally.” My tablemates’ response completely changed my outlook. “What if it isn’t about you as an individual? You have to help create the profession you want to be a part of.” I was stunned... Before that moment, I had never considered myself a part of the GIS profession; let alone a member of an international network of people with similar professional interests, goals, and challenges. How could I have overlooked such an important concept after working in the GIS industry for eight years? If I had missed this, surely others had too.

I left the conference wondering how I could help other young professionals make the leap from GIS practitioners to professionals. I thought about the obstacles I faced along my career path and the questions I receive from students trying to get started in the GIS field. In November 2010, I launched “Emerging GIS Leaders,” a grassroots effort to intersect, empower, and engage aspiring GIS professionals. The efforts center upon a website that contains advice I’ve received from my mentors and peers, resources I’ve found helpful, and lessons learned at GIS conferences and training events. The site also allows members to connect and collaborate via discussion forums and social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Much of the site is still under development but should be available by the end of summer. One feature that’s underway is the “Map Your Journey to Success” section. It will walk users through four easy steps to create a GIS career development plan based on the requirements for GISP Certification and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Geospatial Technology Competency Model. Another is the “Get Inspired” section, for which I am currently seeking volunteers to contribute content. Individuals can contribute by submitting “Tips for Success” related to conferences, networking, and other topics or requesting an interview for the columns “A Day in the Life of...” or “Rookie Success Stories.” “A Day in the Life of...” will feature interviews from experienced GIS professionals commenting on what a typical work day is like in a variety of industries and advice to obtain a similar position. “Rookie Success Stories” will feature advice from peers that successfully landed their first internship or GIS job. For more information about how you can help, go to Emerging GIS Leaders at http://www.emerginggisleaders.org.

In April 2011, URISA joined the grassroots effort as a partner and collaborator in connection with their recently formed “Vanguard Cabinet (VC).” The Cabinet’s mission is to position URISA as a hub for opportunities for creative young professionals who are committed to improving URISA and the geospatial profession via innovation, collaboration, networking, and professional development. Members of the VC were selected in January by a steering committee made up of URISA’s Kathryn Brewer, Clare Brown, Amy Esnard, and Hilary Perkins. Each individual will serve a two-year appointment and five additional members will be selected in 2012. The inaugural members include:

- Rachel Kornak, GISP: GIS & Database Manager, University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment and GIS Instructor, Penn State.
- Ashley Littell, GISP: Manager of GIS...
After developing a mission statement and goals, we began by outlining the needs specific to young GIS professionals based on our own experiences. We found the following trends: lack of clarity about which career goals to prioritize, specific tasks necessary to achieve these outcomes, and where to go for help and advice. For example, many young professionals are not fully aware of the benefits of being involved in a professional organization. Jennifer Weisser commented, “I didn’t even hear about URISA until after I graduated. If I would have known about it when I was a student, I could have been developing relationships much sooner.”

I asked my students and younger colleagues about whether or not they had ever considered attending a GIS themed conference. Most looked at me as if I’d just asked them if I could borrow their VCR. After some prodding, I would usually get the same responses: “A conference – I can’t. I’m trying to get my foot in the door at a company. I need to focus on job searching.” “The cost of registration, airfare, and hotel fees is too expensive. I don’t see the value in spending that much money.” And “It’s intimidating because I don’t know anyone and I don’t know what to say to people I meet.” Their responses made it clear that we need to rethink our approach if we want to engage young professionals.

We need to find creative solutions to make professional development opportunities relevant to a young audience in easily accessible and affordable formats. The Vanguard Cabinet is working to make progress towards this goal by planning events specifically for young GIS professionals. One of our first initiatives is to organize events for the 2011 URISA GIS-Pro Conference in Indianapolis. We are currently developing two ninety-minute panel sessions, one focusing on the benefits of mentoring relationships and another about incorporating social media into GIS workflows. Immediately following the panels, we will hold networking sessions for young professionals to meet their peers and potential mentors.

One of the major challenges for young professionals is that they are not well positioned to get travel money and grants because they are typically in lower positions at their places of employment. In recognition of this issue, we would like to record the sessions and offer them as webinars for those that can’t attend the conference in person. One of the limiting factors is how we can increase accessibility of professional development materials to young professionals without asking URISA to lose money. Potential solutions are to solicit sponsors that can include their logo or advertisements in the videos or to charge a small registration fee to participate in the webinar.

Please contact us at urisa.vc@gmail.com for more information about how you can help young GIS professionals reach their full potential. We eagerly seek volunteers to contribute content to the Emerging GIS Leaders website, suggest leads for potential webinar and event sponsors, and speakers for the mentoring and social media panels at the 2011 URISA GIS-Pro Conference.
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Why is Data Sharing So Difficult?
I don’t know about you, but data sharing is the bane of my existence. And it’s been that way for years and years. Having raised a son, mostly by myself, and managing to survive that experience for 20 years so far, I believe I have more patience than most. But the issues with data sharing have just about pushed me past my limit.

I set up a series of meetings in various parts of Oregon a few years ago to try to find out what was keeping data sharing from happening and figure out what to do about it. There were three reasons that I heard over and over: liability, confidentiality, funding. The only surprising thing about that outcome was that it could be boiled down to just three issues. I was very encouraged. That was five years ago. The data sharing situation in Oregon hasn’t improved much since then.

The case for sharing data, particularly between government agencies, seems to be overwhelming. What I’m about to say may seem like hyperbole or exaggeration…it isn’t. There is undeniable evidence that the lack of data sharing between government agencies, utilities, and others has resulted in loss of life and serious property damage. On that basis, it’s past time to resolve this issue.

Litigation, or the threat of litigation, may achieve one piece of the puzzle at a time, but it will never achieve a complete picture across an entire state...or nation. Resolution of the issue is going to require legislation. Some would say that we need federal legislation. I look at the prospect of accomplishing anything in Congress of this complexity as next to impossible...and extremely time-consuming. In addition, the nuances of the issue from state to state seem to be different enough that it is probably necessary to tackle data sharing at that level. The public records statutes that are often, if not always, part of the problem, are very different from state to state.

I don’t claim to have a solution to the problem. I’ve tried lots of things in Oregon over the last decade, with only moderate success. My objective in Oregon is to develop a statewide set of framework, or base, data that’s complete for every area of the state and that can be shared with all government agencies. The problem has been that I haven’t been able to get this issue raised to a high enough level of importance to find and implement real solutions to the liability, confidentiality and funding aspects.

There was another issue in Oregon about seven years ago that seemed to be almost equally difficult. That was the issue between surveying and GIS that remains largely unresolved in most parts of the country. We resolved that issue in Oregon by agreeing to change our land surveying statutes to match the revised NCEES Model Law and Rules for Surveying. The revised NCEES model was developed through a collaborative national effort with the appropriate stakeholders.

Perhaps if there was a model law for data sharing, developed in a collaborative way that involves representatives from the appropriate stakeholders, we could use that model law to revise existing statutes and enable comprehensive data sharing. There may be lessons to be learned from Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and others that in some ways are ahead of the United States in data sharing. Perhaps URISA can help develop a model template that can be useful internationally.

I don’t believe we’re going to resolve this issue in a comprehensive way until all the stakeholders have a framework within which they can resolve the liability, confidentiality, and funding aspects of the issue. The solutions to those three aspects exist, but the solutions haven’t been implemented in most places in a way that can be sustained beyond the terms of elected officials. And the elected officials are the ones that have to be convinced in order to implement a real solution to the data sharing issue.
Reflections of a GISCI Past President

David DiBiase, The Pennsylvania State University

My one-year term as president of the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) ended April 27. Overall, I’m proud of what GISCI’s Board of Directors, staff, and many devoted volunteer GIsPs accomplished during 2010-11, and what the 2011-12 Board has already achieved. Important unfinished business remains, however.

Most significant among GISCI’s many accomplishments in 2010-11 was the Core Competency Working Group’s proposal to update and strengthen GISP certification, and the Board’s decisive response to that proposal. (The proposal is linked to GISCI’s home page at http://www.gisci.org.) We subjected the proposal to a month-long public review period in February 2011, and also invited comments during a webinar that attracted nearly 500 participants.

Comments revealed that, at least among those who were paying attention, the GIS community is ambivalent about the proposed changes. In particular, respondents disagreed about the potential of an examination to strengthen GISP certification, and by extension, the GIS profession. Despite this ambivalence, the Board of Directors approved the first of four Working Group recommendations, acknowledging the need “to implement more rigorous certification requirements as soon as possible.”

Under the leadership of incoming president Dave Hansen and executive director Sheila Wilson, the 2011-12 GISCI Board has wasted no time in acting upon remaining Working Group recommendations. Primary among these is the addition of a competency-based examination to existing portfolio-based certification requirements. These recommendations pose difficult decisions. Board members are keenly aware that exam development is expensive and time-consuming, and that a poorly devised exam will not strengthen GISP certification as intended.

Nonetheless, at its May 23 meeting in Denver, the 2011-12 Board voted courageously to “to embark on a methodical, multi-stage process to carefully explore, develop, and implement an examination” … provided that “an exam can be made accessible and fair to GIS practitioners regardless of their specializations or backgrounds.” Though it is not without risks, I believe that this decision is in the best interests of the GIS profession.

Above and beyond the proposed exam, another item of unfinished business is the need for GISCI to speak out more forcefully about the legitimacy of the GIS profession and the value of voluntary certification. GISCI is frequently questioned about these issues, which have been the subjects of direct or indirect challenges in courts, licensure board hearings, and state legislatures in recent years. AAG Executive Director Doug Richardson, a long-time GISCI Board member and champion of GIS professionals, urged the 2010-11 Board to stand up to these challenges. I drafted and circulated the statement below in response to Doug’s call to action. No action has yet been taken. Understandably, the GISCI Board is now focused on other priorities, especially the GISP Certification Update Initiative. I hope that GISCI will return to this matter soon; like Doug, I believe we are duty-bound to stand up to the lobbyists and lawyers who seek to undermine our profession.

I share my draft statement here in the hope that it will spark constructive discussion among GIS professionals. The statement is purely my own and is not endorsed by GISCI or my employer.

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) profession is the largest of several professions that make up the U.S. geospatial workforce. Because they specialize in transforming geospatial data into useful information and knowledge, GIS professionals perform the geospatial industry’s core work functions.

“The geospatial industry acquires, integrates, manages, analyzes, maps, distributes, and uses geographic, temporal, and spatial information and knowledge. The industry includes basic and applied research, technology development, education, and applications to address the planning, decision-making, and operational needs of people and organizations of all types” (GITA and AAG, 2006).

As of December 2009, the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA) has identified ten geospatial occupations. These include Geospatial Information...
Scientists and Technologists, Geographic Information Systems Technicians, Remote-sensing Scientists and Technologists, Remote-sensing Technicians, Precision Agriculture Technicians, Surveyors, Geodetic Surveyors, Surveying Technicians, Mapping Technicians, and Cartographers and Photogrammetrists.

DOLETA estimates that GIS professionals—including Geographic Information Scientists and GIS Technicians (and individuals with other similar job titles)—account for the largest share of geospatial workers in the U.S. (DOLETA, n.d.).

Some specialized tasks performed by relatively few geospatial workers are regulated through licensure by state governments in the U.S. In most U.S. states, regulated geospatial activities are limited to “the practice of surveying,” which is commonly understood to include measurements of positions on the Earth’s surface as required for the legal delineation of real property and the design and construction of the built environment—tasks that pose risks to public safety if performed improperly. Geospatial professions subject to state licensure in the U.S. include professional surveyors and, in some states, photogrammetrists.

The tasks performed by geospatial workers as a whole are numerous and diverse. The Geographic Information Science and Technology Body of Knowledge (UCGIS 2006) identifies 1,660 distinct competencies that characterize the geospatial field. By comparison, the number of work functions that actually pose risks to public safety, and therefore are properly subject to state licensure, are relatively few. For example, of the 106 Industry-Wide and Industry-Sector Technical Competencies identified in DOLETA’s Geospatial Technology Competency Model (DOLETA 2010), only two are restricted to licensed professionals. Despite this reality, state licensure laws too often define the “practice of surveying” in vague or overly broad terms, which are occasionally interpreted in ways that inaccurately and unfairly call into question the qualifications of GIS professionals. This is particularly unfair for professionals who have earned GIS Professional (GISP) or Certified Mapping Scientist (CMS) certifications voluntarily.

I believe that state regulation of the many and varied tasks performed by GIS Professionals would be counterproductive. Instead of state regulation, I believe that voluntary certification of GIS professionals—with encouragement and support from employers—is the best means to promote high education standards, continuing professional development, and ethical practice in our rapidly growing and evolving field. I believe that the practice of surveying should be defined narrowly, and that associated state regulations should be narrow in scope, reflecting the limited footprint of survey practice within the geospatial field. The projected growth in employment of GIS professionals should not be stifled by unnecessary government regulation. Instead, helpful efforts by government agencies such as the Department of Labor to define the geospatial field, and to identify the full range of competencies required for worker success, help foster the growth and professionalism of the GIS Profession.


There are currently 4,826 GISPs.
The following organizations are members of the GIS Certification Institute:
American Association of Geographers
Geospatial Information & Technology Association
National States Geographic Information Council
University Consortium of Geographic Information Science
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association

For more information about GISCI, visit www.gisci.org
Welcome New URISA Members

Felicia Akinyemi, GISP - National University of Rwanda, Kigali, Rwanda
Aisha Al Midfah - Ministry of Public Works, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Saif Al Qaydi - UAE University, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates
Yousif Alghamdi, GISP - Saudi Aramco, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia
Ibtesam Alghoweis Alsuwaidi - Ministry of Public Works, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Mohammad Al-Hamdan - NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL
Khuala Alkaabi - UAE University, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates
Esaa Almoor - Dubai Municipality, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Manal AlShamlan - Dubai Municipality, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Jesse Alton - Puget Sound Regional Council, Seattle, WA
Mohammed Alzaffin - Dubai Municipality, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Eric Anderson - Monmouth County, Freehold, NJ
Roqaya Anoohi - Ministry of Health, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Margarita Apostolova - Arden, NC
Teresa Baldwin - Ottawa, On Canada
Mansoor Baloch - Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA
Amy Barker - Edmonton, AB Canada
Samantha Barnes - City of O’Fallon, O’Fallon, IL
Jim Barry - Yucaipa, CA
Lissa Bayang - California Department of Public Health, Sacramento, CA
Shriram Bhutada - University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
Michael Billings - CDM, Cambridge, MA
Kevin Bingham - Town of Collierville, Lakeland, TN
Terri Birth, GISP - City of Durham, Durham, NC
Jason Blackburn - California State University-Fullerton, Fullerton, CA
Amy Barber - City of Health, Dublin, United Arab Emirates
Margarita Apostolova - Arden, NC
Samantha Barnes - City of O’Fallon, O’Fallon, IL
Jim Barry - Yucaipa, CA
Lissa Bayang - California Department of Public Health, Sacramento, CA
Shriram Bhutada - University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
Michael Billings - CDM, Cambridge, MA
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Laura Brent - Dearborn, MI
Stephen Brown - St John River Water Management District, Alachua, FL
Julia Bryant - Decatur, GA
Sherri Campbell - City of Deltona, Deltona, FL
Bryan Carlisle, GISP - Forsyth County, Cumming, GA
Michael Carson - Newhall, CA
Jami Carter - Bellevue, WA
DeBasish Chaudhuri - CDM, Philadelphia, PA
Santosh Chittamuru - Akron, OH
K. Jason Clofelter - Forsyth County, Winston Salem, NC
Jeff Coate - University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
Jarret Colorado - Narcoss, GA
Justin Connelly - Smithfield, VA
Gericke Cook - USDA APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), Fort Collins, CO
Heather Cowley - Cowley GIS, Vancouver, WA
Bryan Daniel - Atlantic Group, Huntsville, AL
Joseph Di Gianni - Montclair State University, Rutherford, NJ
Emanuele Di Tullio - Chicago, IL
James Dorough - Department of Defense, Kansas City, MO
Brian Dudek - Connected Nation, Bowling Green, KY
Michael England - Stafford, VA
Rebecca Farmer - Culpeper, VA
Amy Faulkner - City of Montgomery, Montgomery, AL
Sarah Finne - Connected Nation, Bowling Green, KY
Jonathan Fleming - Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS
William Flynn, GISP - Yuma County, Yuma, AZ
Joseph Forrest - Resource Geoservices LLC, Efland, NC
Stephanie Foster - Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA
Domenico Frate - Forsyth County, Winston-Salem, NC
Ali Ghafan - Dubai Municipality, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Alexander Gray - Frederick County, Winchester, VA
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Rayner Howard, GISP - Earthwork, LLC, Chattanooga, TN
Eric Howenstine - Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL
Lawrence Hurst - Southern California Edison, Rosemead, CA
Eric Ingbar - Gnomon Inc, Carson City, NV
Andrew Johnson - Southern Illinois University, Seattle, WA
Ruth Jones - NCSC US Postal Service, Memphis, TN
Paula Kaczmarek - Detroit Public Library, Detroit, MI
Harkeeraat Kang - King County, Renton, WA
Scott Keith - Asset Inventory Mapping LLC, Land O Lakes, FL
Brian King - Austin, TX
Russell Kirby, PhD, MS, FACE - University of South Florida, Tampa, FL
William Kirkham - Sacramento, CA
Rachel Kornak, MS., BS. - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
David Kraiker - US Census Bureau, New York, NY
Tal Kritzer - Ypsilanti, MI
Angiea Lands - Douglasville, GA
C. Virginia Lee, MD, MPH, MA - Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA
Paula Lindgren - MN Department of Health, St. Paul, MN
Jessica Lister - Environmental Concern Inc., St. Michaels, MD
Krischelle Love - San Jose Water Company, San Jose, CA
Matt Luck - IScience L.L.C, Burlington, VT
Huilan Luo - URS Corporation, Tampa, FL
Geoffrey Maas - Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, Minneapolis, MN
Liliana Marin - Harold Washington College, Chicago, IL
Robert Marros - Chicago, IL
Cory Martin - Frisco, TX
Evanilde Martins - Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais Brazil
Jeff Mc Cann - American Structurepoint Inc, Indianapolis, IN
Beth McCartney - Beth McCartney & Associates, Naples, FL
George McLeod, GISP - Tidewater Community College, Virginia Beach, VA
Anurag Mehta - Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Washington, DC
Sakshi Mehta - Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Washington, DC
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Hovi Nguyen - Cincinnati, OH
Michael O’Brien - Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
John Owens - Oak Park, IL
Shilpam Pandey, MSc - SUNY at Buffalo, Amherst, NY
Mark Pearson - Fresenius Medical Care NA, Lexington, MA
Fernando Pizzuti - Municipality of Abu Dhabi, Dubai United Arab Emirates
Todd Pollard - Riverview, FL
James Potts - Chevron Corporation, San Ramon, CA
Charles Pruitt - NCSC US Postal Service, Memphis, TN
Helvia Quinones - City of Houston, Kingwood, TX
Winston Regis - St. George’s, Grenada
Allyn Reid - TerraGo Technologies, Atlanta, CA
Liora Sahar, GISP - Northrop Grumman, Atlanta, GA
Cynthia Saine Gaines, GISP - Worcester, MA
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News from the CRC

URISA’s Chapter Relations Committee, under the leadership of Tripp Corbin and Amy Esnard, has begun planning the 2011 URISA Chapter Leaders’ Forum, which will take place Monday, October 31 in Indianapolis. The CRC is also working on updating the Chapter Leaders’ Manual and compiling the annual chapter assessments which provides the basis for the Outstanding Chapter of the Year Award.

Chapter Leaders make sure to complete your chapter’s Annual Maturity Assessment by the end of June and submit to the CRC via your Chapter Liaison. If you are not sure who your liaison is or what the Chapter Maturity Assessment is please contact Tripp Corbin, Chair Chapter Relations Committee at tcorbin@keckwood.com.

Are you in Kentucky or Tennessee? Contact Kim McDonough and/or Randy Hale if you’re interested in a local chapter! Also, join the LinkedIn group for discussions.

The Ohio URISA Chapter just presented a URISA Certified Workshop, Field Automation Options for Local Government, and is planning the 2011 Ohio GIS Conference with the County Engineers Association of Ohio and OGRIP. The conference will take place in Columbus, September 29-30.

The New England Chapter (NEURISA) will host its annual conference on Monday, October 3rd at the Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, Massachusetts. This one day annual conference will include keynote sessions, vendor demonstrations, and presentations from our colleagues in the geospatial and information technology community. The call for presentations has gone out and abstracts are due by July 1st! This is the first year NEURISA is introducing the Special Achievement Award at the annual conference. The nomination is open!

NEURISA is also organizing a couple of quarterly events: Ignite Spatial Hartford at 260 Constitution Plaza Conference Room, Downtown Hartford, CT on June 22 at 10AM; and Ignite Spatial Burlington, at Burlington VT on September 22nd.

The 4th quarter event will be announced soon! Please visit our website at www.neurisa.org for updates.

URISA’s BAAMA Chapter is hosting a meeting on Remote Sensing/Image Analysis/Processing/LiDAR on July 21 at Microsoft.

The Chicagoland Chapter of URISA held its Spring Quarterly meeting on June 3 at the downtown Chicago campus of DePaul University. The meeting featured a workshop on web mapping lead by Darren Mackiewicz, Principal MCD East Spatial Applications Group Leader/Project Manager. The Chapter will also co-host the URISA Certified Workshop, Cartography and Map Design, at URISA HQ on August 4.

Georgia URISA is focusing on outreach and has taken advantage of social media opportunities with a LinkedIn group page, Facebook, and Twitter.

URISA’s Rocky Mountain Chapter is hosting a URISA Certified Workshop, An Overview of Open Source GIS Software, in Denver on August 4. They are also preparing for the 2011 GIS in the Rockies Conference, August 31-September 1 in Denver. For details, click here.

URISA Alberta just completed GeoAlberta 2011, which is presented in partnership with GITA Alberta, AGG and GeoEdmonton. Congratulations!

URISA Alabama members have connected via their LinkedIn Group.

The Chesapeake Chapter recently announced its new officers: President: Kathryn Kulbicki Vice President: Koren Melfi Treasurer: Chenglin Gan Secretary: Gretta Luedeke Outreach Chair: Xiao Wang To join the chapter’s discussion: http://groups.google.com/group/urisa-chesapeake

The Washington Chapter of URISA presented the 2011 Washington GIS Conference in Lynnwood, May 9 - 11. With over 300 attendees, the event surpassed attendance expectations. The keynote address was given by Jack Dangermond of Esri. A $500 contribution to GISCorps was made by WAURISA on Jack’s behalf.

The annual Richard “Dick” Thomas Memorial Student Presentation Competi-
Poster competitions are an excellent means of illustrating and testing how well students are able to demonstrate both research skills and communication skills. Many geography and GIS degree and certificate programs sponsor student poster competitions, particularly as part of their GIS Day events. GIS Day 2011 is Wednesday, November 16, 2011 and URISA is pleased to announce its support of GIS Day student poster competitions.

Recognition of GIS Day achievements is important to URISA. We look forward to receiving two types of contributions to support GIS Day Student Poster Competitions. First, we welcome receipt of GIS Day poster competition guidelines. There will no doubt be similarities and differences among the guidelines, and we look forward to presenting an informative and comprehensive display of the kinds of criteria which professors use to give directions to students, and to the judges who are evaluating the posters. We also welcome receipt of the posters that are selected as winning entries to promote the accomplishments of both the students and institutions.

It is expected that URISA’s GIS Day Student Poster Competition page will quickly become a very valuable GIS teaching and research resource, and we look forward to assisting professors, students, and competition judges as they plan their GIS Day activities. For further details, please visit http://www.urisa.org/gisday_posters.

In further recognition of the winning posters, URISA is pleased to provide one-year student memberships for the best poster in each category.

“By posting the guidelines behind GIS Day poster competitions, and also posting the outstanding student posters, URISA is promoting advances in GIS research methods and techniques, communications, and achievements. This is a very significant contribution to GIS education, training, and apps. Congratulations to URISA for this exceptional initiative.” - Barry Wellar, GISP, PhD, Wellar Consulting and (ret.) Professor of Geography, University of Ottawa
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The company’s mission is to provide reliable 24GIS services related to consulting, analytics and data acquisition in the creation and use of spatial information systems for public institutions, business and academics.

**GIS Innovations Ltd.**
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GIS Innovations Ltd. was incorporated in July of 1993 with a mission statement: to help customers succeed with GIS technology. The principal, Bob Janowicz, has been working in GIS since 1985. In fact, most of our team has been involved with GIS related technologies since before 1990. GIS Innovations Ltd flagship product is the Road Atlas of BC. GIS Innovations has wealth of skill and expertise at integrating and validating GIS data, especially address and street related data. GIS Innovations also works with a collection of local consultants in projects related to land and/or environmental planning studies.

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H. Davis Cole & Associates, LLC (HDCA) was founded in 2006 on the principle of providing exceptional client service through performance, quality and teamwork. HDCA is a full-service civil and environmental engineering consulting firm providing a wide array of services to both public and private sector clients. In addition, HDCA offers project and community planning through the gulf coast region. Through project and community planning, HDCA provides GIS consulting services including data collection, data conversion, mapping, spatial analysis, cartographic development, and photogrammetric services.

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Spatial Focus, Inc. is an independent consulting firm, specializing in planning, design, implementation and technical services in the field of geographic information systems. Spatial Focus, Inc. was formed to offer a new standard for vendor-independent technical and consulting services in geographic information of all kinds. Any enterprise, public or private, connects to its resources using geographic information. Addresses name places, and land records describe areas. Census and electoral geographies, postal zones, sales territories and delivery routes are all geographic information. Management of that information is the key to leveraging resources with spatial focus. Organized in 1998 as an Alabama corporation, Spatial Focus, Inc. specializes in integrating geographic information throughout public and private enterprises, giving them spatial focus.

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Esri User Conference
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August 4, 2011
Cartography and Map Design – URISA Certified Workshop
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August 4, 2011
An Overview of Open Source GIS Software – URISA Certified Workshop
Rocky Mountain URISA
Denver, Colorado

August 15-18, 2011
URISA/NENA Addressing Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana

September 13-15, 2011
GIS in Public Transportation Conference
St Petersburg, Florida

November 1-4, 2011
GIS-Pro 2011: URISA’s 49th Annual Conference for GIS Professionals
Indianapolis, Indiana

November 16, 2011
GIS Day 2011

March 12-15, 2012
GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference
San Antonio, Texas

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