

Spring 2005

Geography Newsletter, Spring 2005

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DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2005

Issue No. 11

Editor: Dr. Philip W. Suckling, Professor and Head

[Visit our departmental web page at: <http://fp.uni.edu/geography/>]

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Geography Faculty 2004-05



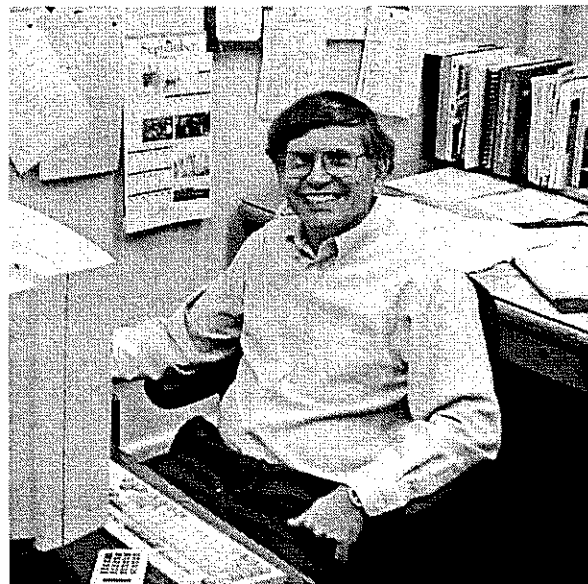
Front (l-r): Kay Weller, Phil Suckling, Dennis Dahms.
Back (l-r): Dave May, Fred Fryman, Tom Fogarty, Ramanathan Sugumaran, Tim Strauss, Henry Owusu.

Dr. Philip W. Suckling Resigns After 14 Years as Geography Head

Dr. Philip W. Suckling has submitted his resignation as Professor and Head of UNI's Department of Geography, effective June 30. On July 1, Suckling will assume the position of Professor and Chair of the Department of Geography at Texas State University-San Marcos.

After serving on the faculty of Brandon University in Manitoba (1977-79) and the University of Georgia (1979-91), Phil joined the UNI faculty in August 1991 as full Professor and Head of the Department of Geography. Under his leadership, the geography faculty grew from 8 to 10 full-time members, undergraduate majors almost doubled and the graduate program flourished rising from just two enrolled students in 1991 to 12-15 in recent semesters. Phil

served on the University's Facilities Planning Committee for 5 years, during which Geography was selected to move into new expanded quarters in the renovated East Gym. Completion of the new facilities is anticipated by January 2006.



At Texas State, Dr. Suckling will assume the leadership of the nation's largest geography program, with 29 full-time faculty, 11 staff positions, more than 450 undergraduate majors and over 150 graduate students. During the 1990s, the Department of Geography initiated the first PhD program on the Texas State campus, and currently Geography has three of the six doctoral programs on campus (although four new doctoral programs will begin later this year).

Phil and Cheryl visited the San Marcos area during Spring Break and are very excited about the area. Only their youngest daughter Deanna (age 12) will move to Texas with them. Joanna, who graduates from high school in May, will attend Iowa State University next Fall. The oldest two daughters are on their own: Karla (a UNI Geography alumnus) lives in Minneapolis where she works for the Minnesota Conservation Corps, and Sonja and her husband will return to Iowa from Hawaii in July upon Dustin's discharge from the army.

Dr. Dave May to Serve as Interim Head

Dean Wallace has selected Dr. David May to serve as Interim Head for 2005-06. It is anticipated that the Department will conduct a nation-wide search for a new permanent Head to join the UNI faculty by August 2006.

Dr. May continues to have a very active scholarly agenda. He was busy during the summer of 2004 on two geoarchaeological projects in the Central Great Plains. He spent 30 days working in the field on an archaeological research project funded by the National Science

Foundation. His involvement as a physical geographer is to reconstruct paleoenvironments at the 9000-year-old archaeological site. The site is located in a canyon in western Nebraska northwest of Ogallala, Nebraska and was discovered in the 1970's after a flood. This project will continue through the summer of 2005 and perhaps into the summer of 2006.

For 21 years, Dave has worked with Steve Holen, an archaeologist, on archaeological projects in Nebraska and northern Kansas. In the summer of 2004 they worked together on an archaeological survey project in the Arikaree River basin in eastern Colorado.

As Interim Head, Dr. May will be very busy planning for Geography's impending move to the newly renovated Innovative Teaching and Technology Center (former East Gym), assisting with the search for a new permanent Head, serving as Graduate Coordinator, and undertaking the full range of administrative duties of the headship. Dave has indicated that he will definitely *not* be a candidate for the permanent position!



**Dr. Ramanathan Sugumaran
Promoted to Associate Professor**

Provost Aaron Podolefsky has approved the promotion of Dr. Ramanathan Sugumaran to Associate professor with tenure. Congratulations to Sugu!

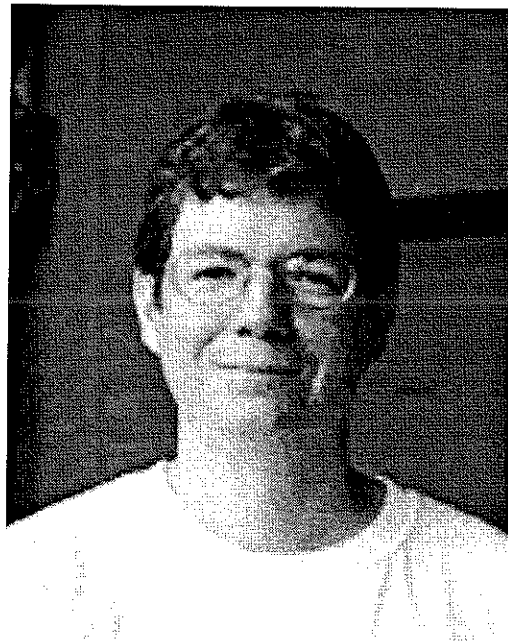
Dr. Sugumaran joined the UNI geography faculty in 2002 after serving in a 3-year post-doctoral position at the University of Missouri. Sugu has an impressive list of scholarly accomplishments with a dozen refereed journal articles, about two dozen conference proceedings and other articles, and numerous papers presented at conferences and elsewhere. His record of grantsmanship amounts to several hundred thousand dollars. Recently, it has been announced that the GeoTREE project with an initial year appropriation of \$750,000 has been funded (see separate article in this Newsletter).

Sugu is indeed an outstanding member of the Geography faculty, and his early promotion with tenure is most deserved.



**Alex Oberle
Appointed to Geography Faculty**

The Department is please to announce the appointment of Alex Oberle to the geography faculty effective August 2005. Dr. Oberle will graduate this May with his Ph.D. degree from the Department of Geography at Arizona State University.



Alex received his B.A. degree in Geography and Spanish from the University of Northern Colorado in 1997 and his M.A. in Geography from the University of Missouri in 1999. The title of his Ph.D. dissertation at Arizona State University is "*Se Venden Aqui: Phoenix's Latino Business Landscape as a Diagnostic of Urban Change*".

Oberle is an urban geographer who will have teaching responsibilities for the North American Cities and Planning courses formerly taught by emeritus professor Dr. Murray Austin. He will also teach the introductory Human Geography and GIS I courses.

GeoTREE Center to be Established at UNI's Department of Geography

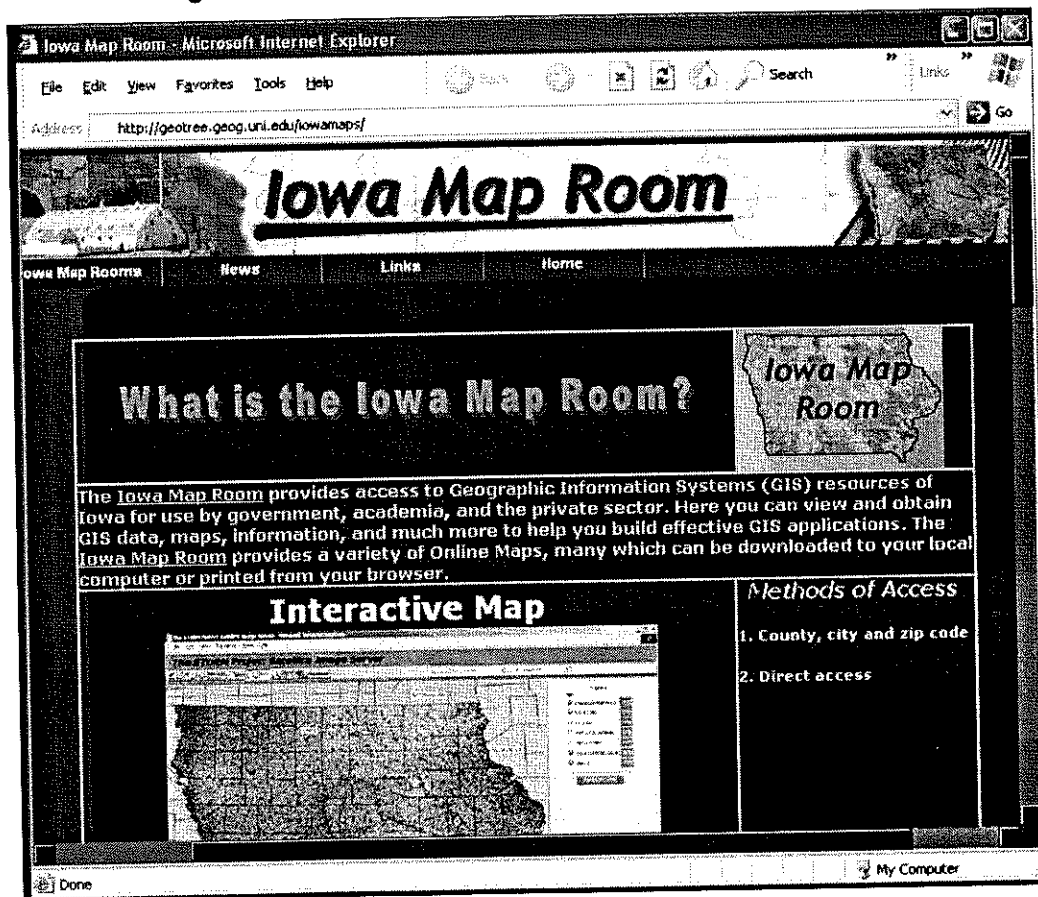
Funding to establish an interdisciplinary GeoTREE project to be housed within UNI's Department of Geography has recently been announced. A federal appropriation, through NASA, will provide the project with \$750,000 for its first year of operation. Additional funding for second and third years has already been requested.

The GeoTREE acronym refers to Center for "GeoInformatics Training, Research, Education and Extension". The primary goal of the Center is to train and educate individuals from federal, state and local government agencies from across the state of Iowa in application areas of GIS and related technologies.

GeoTREE scientists and UNI students will also conduct collaborative research with individuals from these government agencies. Graduate and undergraduate students will have the opportunity to be trained in many areas of geospatial technologies as well as be provided with an opportunity to work with government agencies on real world problems.

GeoTREE and related faculty projects will also provide on-line resources for use by the public. One such resource is the Iowa Map Room webpage illustrated below.

Dr. Ramanathan Sugumaran, Associate Professor of Geography, will serve as Director of the center and principal investigator on many of its research projects.



National Science Foundation Equipment Grant

The Department is pleased to report receipt of a large equipment grant from the National Science Foundation's laboratory equipment program, through the efforts of Dr. Dennis Dahms (Principal Investigator) and Dr. Dave May (Co-Principal Investigator). The proposal was titled "Laboratory Equipment for Modular Design of Undergraduate Environmental Geography Courses".

The grant amounted to \$72,133 from NSF and was partially matched by \$59,784 from the University for a total of \$131,917. Two main pieces of equipment have been purchased which will substantially enhance our physical geography courses especially in the area of soils and geomorphology. These are a Beckman-Coulter laser diffraction particle size analyzer and a Rigaku Miniflex X-ray diffraction system.

Midwest Transportation Center's UNI Transportation Scholars Program

UNI's Transportation Scholars Program, funded by a federal Department of Transportation grant through the Midwest Transportation Center (headquartered at ISU) is now in its sixth year of operation. Directed by Associate Professor Dr. Tim Strauss, the Transportation Scholars program has provided graduate assistantship support for several of our M.A. students over the years. Current transportation scholars include Leonard Bombom, Matthew Kajewski and Charles Pinney.

Geographic Information Science B.A. Major Underway

In Fall 2004, the Department began a new B.A. major titled "Geography Major With Geographic Information Science Emphasis". This new major concentrates on the technical fields within the discipline. Required courses include the courses common to all of our majors (Human Geography, Physical Geography, Maps and Map Interpretation, GIS I, introductory Statistics, Senior Seminar), plus Aerial Photo Interpretation and Photogrammetry, Thematic Cartography, and Remote Sensing of the Environment. Students must also select two courses from Spatial Data Analysis, GPS Field Survey Methods, Satellite Image Processing, and Visual BASIC Programming or Database Systems (the latter two are computer science courses). Students must also take two upper-division systematic courses from a list of nine options.

Matt Voss was the program's first graduate in December 2004.

New Geography Secretary: Mrs. Janette McCulley

Upon Sandra Heller's retirement last summer, the Department welcomed a new staff member in the crucial position of departmental secretary. Mrs. Janette McCulley started work in the department on July 1, 2004. A UNI employee since 1989, Janette comes to Geography with a wealth of experience having served as head secretary for the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education for eight years.

2004 M.A. Geography Graduates

Amber Lee Munson (Spring '04):

Research Paper: "Reviving the CRANDIC: Is there interest in reviving passenger rail service on the CRANDIC route between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, Iowa?"

[Note: Munson's paper won UNI's 2004 Second Place Award for Outstanding Non-thesis Research Paper.]

Andrey Nickolaevich Petrov (Spring '04):

Thesis: "Spatial Population Dynamics in the Resource-Dependent Peripheral Territories of the Canadian North During the 1990s."

James Harken (Summer '04): *Thesis:*

"Mapping Wetlands and Potential Wetland Restoration Areas in Black Hawk County, Iowa Using Object-Oriented Classification and A GIS-Based Model."

[Note: Harken's thesis won UNI's 2004 Second Place Award for Outstanding M.A. Thesis].

Chris T. Simenson (Summer '04):

Thesis: "The John Deere Ceres Program: The Decision to Locate Assembly of a German Tractor in Waterloo, Iowa."

Jess Elder (Fall '04): *Thesis: "Assessing the Applicability of Traditional Urban Transportation Planning Methods for the University Campus: A Case Study of the University of Northern Iowa."*

Tami Huegel (Fall '04): *Research Paper: "Regional Geopolitical Conflicts Stemming from the Southeast Anatolia Project on the Euphrates River."*

Gregory A. Keller (Fall '04): *Research Paper: "Water Resources for the Las Vegas Area."*

2004 B.A. Geography Graduates

Spring '04: *Jeff Fisher*
Nathan Gibson
Joan Gray
Brandi Halverson
Andrew Hoff
David Keffeler
Brittany Latch
Ben Lindsley
Calvin Long
Nushrat (Adina) Nazia
John Powell
Marc Randrianilana
Jennifer Reinhart
Steven Schultz
Sherry Swisher
*Brent Zirkel**

Summer '04: *Brad Burger*
Adam Hart

Fall '04: *Cody Neuendorf*
Corey Phillips
Tim Riley
Matt Voss

* Zirkel was the recipient of Geography's Purple and Old Gold Award for outstanding graduating senior.

The 16 B.A. graduates for Spring '04 was a departmental record for a semester.

Alumni Album

*For future issues of the Newsletter,
please send your alumni news items to:*

*Mrs. Janette McCulley
Department of Geography
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0406*

*[E-mail: janette.mcculley@uni.edu]
[Fax to: 319-273-7103]*



Mark Castenson (B.A. 2000) is the Warren County GIS Coordinator located in Indianola, Iowa. The county is in the process of implementing ArcSDE and revising the enterprise geodatabase. Mark is also actively involved with the Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT) organization, currently chairing the Education and Schools Committee.

Chad Guge (B.A. 1999) teaches geography among other subjects at North Scott High School in Eldridge, Iowa.

James Harken (M.A. 2004) is working for the Federal Aviation Administration located in Silver Springs, Maryland.

Maya Hirsch (B.A. 2002) is attending graduate school at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri where she is working towards an M.S. degree in Geospatial Sciences. For her thesis, she is undertaking field work in north-central Iowa involving a geochemical analysis of second order stream sediments, focusing on sediment phosphorus source and transport.

Kyle Kepler (B.A. 1998) is Head Cross Country Coach and Assistant Track Coach at UNI. He was voted Conference Men's Cross Country Coach of the Year in his first year when the team won the conference title.

George Kuhler (M.A. 2002) teaches at South Tama Middle School in Toledo, Iowa. George received the National Council for Geographic Education Distinguished Teaching Award in 2004.

Jeff Lamphier (B.A. 1993) has worked for the Federal Aviation Administration in Silver Springs, Maryland for over 8 years.

Lee Larson (B.A. 2000) completed his M.A. degree in geography from the University of Georgia in 2002. He is currently living in Cleveland, Ohio where he has been working as a stock broker and in real estate, as well as serving as a tennis professional.

Benjamin Limmer (B.A. 2001) wrote a lengthy letter to the department in response to the 2003 Newsletter articles about the death of Prof. Roy Chung and the retirement of Dr. Murray Austin. Ben graduated from Cleveland State University in 2003 with a Master of Urban Planning, Design, and Development degree with a specialization in urban economic development. He then obtained a position as an urban planner within the University Circle District in Cleveland.

Amber Lee Munson (M.A. 2004) is a teacher in Cedar Rapids. This summer, she will begin the Geographic Education Ph.D. program offered by Texas State University-San Marcos on campus during summers and via distance learning.

Daniel Olson (B.A. 1988) is the Director of Community Development for the Village of Lake in the Hills, Illinois. He has held this position for five years. Previously, he was a city planner in St. Charles, IL and Chesterfield, MO.

Derek Peck (B.A. 1999) reports that he has been working in the map making division of the GIS Department for the City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Andrey Petrov (M.A. 2004) is a Ph.D. student in geography at the University of Toronto in Canada.

Tim Riley (B.A. 2004) is a teacher at North Scott High School in Eldridge, IA.

Nicole (Rosenmeyer) Breitsprecker (B.A. 2001) is a GIS Specialist with MSA Professional Services, Inc. located in Dubuque, Iowa.

Ted Schmitz (B.A. 2000) moved to California after graduation and found work with Rand McNally/Thomas Brothers Maps. Unfortunately, half of their staff were laid off after 18 months. Ted subsequently became Office Manager at Golden State Foods and was considering going on to graduate school.

Karla Suckling (B.A. 2000; M.A. 2003) works as the Service Activities Specialist for the Minnesota Conservation Corps located in St. Paul, MN.

Antony Thompson (B.A. 1995) is an Army Engineer Officer with the 88th Regional Readiness Command. He serves as the Facility Management Specialist Supervisor for all Army Reserve facilities in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

Foundation Account

The Department of Geography has a discretionary account within the UNI Foundation to fund special field trips, external speakers, and the annual spring banquet. Individuals who wish to contribute to this account should mail their tax-deductible donation to:

UNI Foundation
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0282

Make checks payable to "UNI Foundation - Geography Discretionary Fund".

Thank you!



Edna L. Padovan Geography Endowment Fund Update

In the 1996 Newsletter, the establishment of the Edna L. Padovan Geography Endowment Fund was announced as a deferred gift. We have been informed that Ms Padovan passed away last August at the age of 90. Beginning in 2006, the Department will be able to offer two sizeable scholarships in honor of Ms Padovan. In addition, the endowment includes an education fund to support teacher workshops, faculty outreach, lecture series, student field trips and travel, and other programs to enhance geographic education. The Department is very grateful for Ms Padovan's generosity.

Geography's Move to the Innovative Teaching and Technology Center

As reported in the 2003 Newsletter, the Department of Geography will soon be moving into new quarters. The old East Gym building is being renovated into the Innovative Teaching and Technology Center (ITTC). Assuming no unforeseen construction delays, the Department should be moved into its new facilities in time for Spring 2006 classes.

Geography will be housed on the entire third floor of the four floor main structure. With the floors numbered from 000s to 300s, Geography's rooms will be numbered in the 200s. Geography will also have first scheduling priority on the 60-seat ground-floor classroom located over the south end of the old East Gym pool.

Laboratory facilities on Geography's floor will represent more than a 50% increase in square footage. Labs will include a physical geography/cartography teaching lab with 24-student capacity, a large soils lab room plus a dry-lab soils storage facility, Geography's own 24-station teaching computer lab, a geoinformatics research lab which will house the GeoTREE project, a server room and computer technician's space, a large geographic information research lab which will house graduate students, and a sizeable faculty research room.

Geography's floor will also have an increased number of faculty offices, a 16-seat seminar room, and the new Basheer Nijim Geography Room which will serve as a lounge and student meeting area.

Geographic Alliance of Iowa Activities

The Geographic Alliance of Iowa (GAI) has been in operation for almost a decade and a half. Serving as GAI coordinator since 1996, Dr. Kay Weller keeps the GAI in the limelight with numerous workshops and other activities for Iowa's teachers and students of all ages.

In June 2005, Dr. Weller will lead a group of educators on an educational cruise of Alaska's Inside Passage. Later in June, a workshop titled "Geography of the Civil Rights Movement in the Cedar Valley" will be conducted in Waterloo. Another workshop involving considerable field work will operate out of Council Bluffs in July titled "Reliving the Travels of Lewis and Clark in Iowa" led by Steve Wymore and UNI alumnus/Geography adjunct instructor Don Peterson.

Dr. Kay Weller Wins National Teaching Award

The Department wishes to acknowledge Dr. Kay Weller on winning the 2004 Distinguished Teaching Award (University-level) from the National Council for Geographic Education. This prestigious award is in recognition for Kay's outstanding work in the classroom, but also for her many other contributions to geographic education through the activities of the GAI and through her scholarly publications and presentations.

Kay's colleagues and students extend congratulations to Kay on this most deserving award!

Geography's 2005 Outstanding Alumnus Award: Jon McNamee

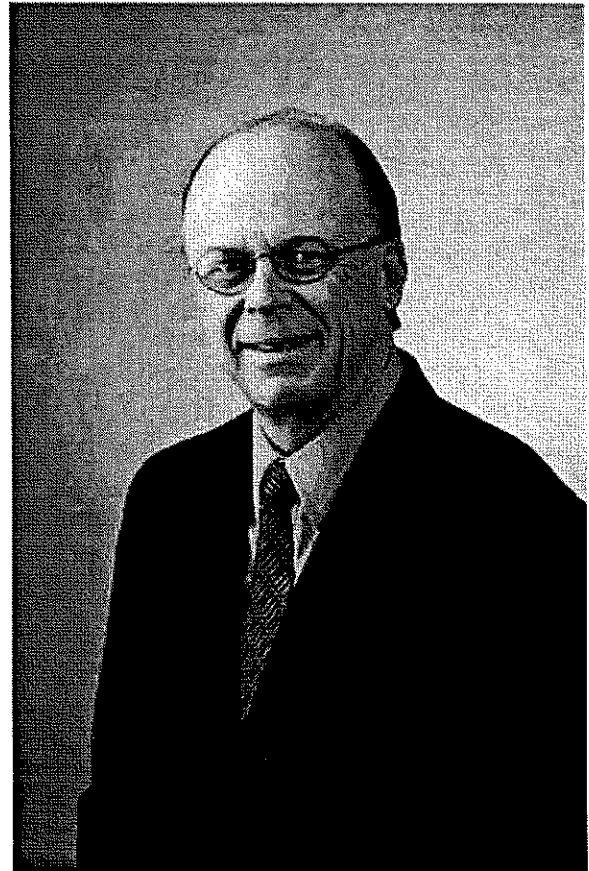
Jon McNamee (B.A., 1982) is the 2005 recipient of Geography's Outstanding Alumnus Award. The award will officially be presented at this spring's annual banquet.

McNamee served in the U.S. Navy from 1969 to 1973. He then worked as an operating room technician at St. Francis Hospital and then for the John Deere Tractor Works. In 1977, he became a student at UNI graduating with Honors in 1982. He was awarded the National Council for Geographic Education's Gildea Scholarship that year and served as UNI's 1982 student commencement speaker.

While a student, Jon served as the Geography Club/GTU president in 1981 and helped to organize the first departmental Awards Banquet. His alumnus award will therefore correspond to the 25th anniversary of the annual banquet.

From 1975-1986, McNamee held several positions with the Twin City Testing and Engineering Laboratory. In 1986, Jon joined his current employer - the Black Hawk County Health Department. He works in the Environmental Health Division as a Health Officer.

Jon has just completed a one-year term as the elected President of the Iowa Environmental Health Association. One of the highlights of his year as President was to attend the National Environmental Health Association Conference in Anchorage, Alaska.



The Department congratulates Jon McNamee on his outstanding career as an environmental geographer.

Spring Awards Banquet: Friday, April 22, 2005

The 25th Annual Geography Awards Banquet will be held during the evening of Friday, April 22, 2005 at the Holiday Inn in Cedar Falls. In addition to our traditional student honors, Jon McNamee will be honored as the 2005 recipient of the *Geography Outstanding Alumnus Award*. Students, faculty, staff and alumni are strongly encouraged to attend this gala event. For further information about the banquet, contact Janette McCulley at 319-273-2772 or send e-mail to:

janette.mcculley@uni.edu

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