Message from the Chair:
Nathaniel Brusell

Greetings from Lindley Hall! Welcome to our first Department of Geography and Atmospheric Science summer newsletter. The idea of this publication is to highlight the past, present, and future of the department. We have seen a lot of changes over the years, and the more things change, the more they stay the same.

In this inaugural issue we have chosen to highlight a few areas: the recent activities of recipients of our three departmental scholarship funds (past and present), current graduate students and their research activities, to showcase some of the diverse research going on amongst the Geographers and Atmospheric Scientists, and a faculty spotlight to give a faculty member an opportunity to discuss their history in the department. This time we are highlighting the work and life of long time faculty member Bill Johnson.

We have seen some changes around Lindley Hall this year with the new addition of a graduate computer lab and the remodeling of the Atmospheric Science computer lab. In the future, we will continue to use this newsletter to showcase the activities of our department, and how your contributions to our scholarship funds are utilized to help make our department a better and more appealing place for potential, present, and future students of this department.

We thank you for your support and appreciate all that you have done to make us a department with a reputation for distinction and excellence the world over.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Brunsell
Department of Geography and Atmospheric Science

NOTE:
Please don’t forget to update your information at the Alumni Association!
If your email, phone, or address changes please notify them by going to:
http://www.kualumni.org/about/contact-us/
Kollmorgen Scholarship

The Walter Kollmorgen Scholarship goes for a myriad of uses. It can encompass items and projects both large and small. It can be used for student or faculty travel to professional conferences or new equipment. Some of our honorable recipients both past and present are listed below. Their work experiences and background vary widely and exhibit the true breadth of what a degree in this department can do.

DAVE MCDERMOTT
Dave has left Haskell and is now teaching online geography classes at Chadron State College in Nebraska. He is currently working on a set of trail maps for eastern Maine modeled on some hand-drawn British trail guides from the 50s and 60s.

2008

HILARY HUNGERFORD
Hilary is an Assistant Professor of Geography in the Department of Earth Science at Utah Valley University. Her research focuses on political ecologies of water in arid environments, including urban West Africa (Dakar and Niamey) and Utah.

2009

VINCENT ARTMAN
Vincent is currently working as a lecturer in the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. He used his Kollmorgen Scholarship to fund his field research in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2014. He defended his dissertation in May of 2016.

2013

DIANA RESTREPO
Diana is originally from Colombia, South America. She has a masters in Latin American Studies and graduated as a McNair scholar with a Bachelor’s degree in Molecular Biosciences and a minor in Sociology. She is a second year Ph.D student.

Then

Now

RUTH REMMERS
Ruth is an M.A. student in Geography. She used her scholarship to further her study about perceptions of tourism and the environment in the Altai Republic, Western Siberia, Russia. She is pictured next to the Katun River in the Altai Republic, Russia.

2007

JENNIFER GLAUBIUS
Jennifer is a Ph.D student who is currently researching the effects farming decisions have on the landscape. She was a Fulbright Fellow in Greece in 2015-2016 collecting geomorphic data for dissertation research. She is pictured next to a terrace wall during her time in Greece.

2013

Bohnstengel Fund

The Bohnstengel Fund is used for a variety of expenses and equipment in the Atmospheric Science department. It can also be used for student and faculty travel for field work and conferences. Some recipients of the funds are pictured below. Some Bohnstengel Fund recipients have also received other scholarships or awards in the department.

KELLY LOGAN
Kelly studies land-atmosphere coupling in this department. She had 3 majors including Russian. She loves cycling and does the Tour de Bier in Madison each year. She has a senior pug who is nearly 16 years old. She also enjoys brewing beer and cooking.

2007

TRISH JACKSON
During her time at KU Trish worked with Johan Feddema and Bill Johnson on several projects involving soils and climate. She was a PhD student in the NSF IGERT C-CHANGE project under Bill Woods. She now teaches courses at Pratt Community College.

2007

MEGAN METZ
Megan is a senior studying Atmospheric Science and French. She leads Younglife and also enjoys running, swimming and the outdoors. This summer she is doing research with CrESIS. She has visited four of the seven continents.

Then

Now

CARISSA ALLEN
Carissa is a junior, double majoring in atmospheric science and psychology. She is a member of the American Meteorological Society. This upcoming school year she plans to get involved with the research lab on campus. She is from Oskaloosa

2007

2013
As temperatures dropped and snow enveloped The University of Kansas, the sun sheened against the modern high-rises of Bangkok, Thailand. Over 8,500 miles from Lindley Hall, my new ‘office’ stood 36 floors above the center of the “City of Angels”. Below, the raging commotion of Bangkok reflected my anticipation as I embarked on my challenging pilot-fieldwork. I arrived in Bangkok in the midst of ongoing discussions of democratic reform and mounting contestation over public space. Within this political paradox, the contested future of Bangkok is bound to questions of the legitimacy of Thai security forces. Increasingly, Thai security forces are deploying technologically sophisticated means to survey, disperse and quell political demonstrations in Bangkok.

Technological developments in security have brought about advanced means of damage and death as well as a means to reduce and minimize casualties. After the violent deaths of 91 protesters in 2010, Thai security forces underwent ‘non-lethal weapons’ training in a concerted effort to minimize civilian deaths and injuries. As such, I designed a pilot study to start to explore the political and geographical consequences of non-lethal weapons use in everyday civil policing in Bangkok, Thailand.

Traversing the same spaces that protesters occupied and even engaging with the Royal Thai Police, I began to understand that non-lethal weapons and their technological aspects are crucial to understanding how violence and security are communicated in Thai politics and society. My pilot fieldwork afforded an opportunity to register the complexities of everyday security in Bangkok as well as examine first hand the processes through which the deployment of non-lethal weapons shape Thai society.
Ukraine: Nathaniel Pickett

This past year I have been in Ukraine on a Fulbright grant doing fieldwork for my dissertation on Chernobyl’s influence on Ukrainian politics and society. I have visited a number of archives and interviewed some very interesting figures including politicians, scientists, NGO workers, and even film producers. Just recently, the 30th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident was commemorated and there was a lot of activity in the area such as conferences, memorials and other events which kept me very busy during that time. The commemorative events introduced me to many new ideas and people. It has been great coming back to Ukraine too, and seeing how it is changed in the almost 10 years that have passed since I had been here previously.

Nathaniel Pickett
Ph.D. Student
n222p488@ku.edu

Atmospheric Science: Hannah Chandler

Hannah is in the Atmospheric Science M.S. program working under advisor David Mechem. Her research focuses on understanding the microphysical precursor conditions of precipitation initiation in marine stratocumulus clouds. Most recently, her research will be presented at the International Conference on Clouds and Precipitation in Manchester, United Kingdom in July. She acts as a student volunteer at the National Weather Service forecast office in Pleasant Hill, Missouri. Along with assisting the meteorologists with the daily operational tasks in the office, she also participates in producing the daily forecast for the office’s forecast region.
Global Influences
Visiting Scholar: Gabriel de Oliveira

Gabriel de Oliveira is a Visiting Scholar from southern Brazil who came to the University of Kansas in March of 2015 after a presentation given by Geography Chair Nathaniel Brunsell at de Oliveira’s school, the Brazilian National Institution for Space Research (INPE). The two struck up a conversation after the presentation which lead to a series of emails back and forth and as they say, the rest is history.

As they continued to communicate with one another they developed a proposal which they submitted to the Brazilian Ministry of Education which gave permission for Gabriel to conduct a part of his PhD at KU under the supervision of Brunsell. The ministry accepted his proposal and from that time on Brunsell and de Oliveira began a series of research projects and collaborations on multiple projects and papers involving Remote Sensing in the Amazonian Rainforest and parts of eastern Brazil combined with information collected in the field via micrometeorological towers.

Oliveira’s background and educational history is as fascinating and stunning as his professional reputation and resume’. He was born in Porto Alegre City, Rio Grande do Sul State in southern Brazil. He has taken more than 20 field trips in Amazonia, not only in the Brazilian part, but also in the Bolivian and Peruvian parts. He loves to travel and has visited large swaths of South America, Europe and more than 36 states in the U.S.

His educational history started with a background in Geography from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). He went on to receive his Masters in Remote Sensing from the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research in Brazil (INPE). He continued on with INPE to work towards his PhD and now is continuing his research for his PhD in the Department of Geography here at KU as a visiting scholar. He also currently serves as an Assistant Lecturer of Environmental Engineering teaching online classes for the Federal University of Sao Carlos in Brazil.

He has participated in the scientific committee of national and international conferences and serves as a reviewer for seven professional journals. He has presented his research in international conferences including annual meetings of the American Geophysical Union and the American and European Meteorological Societies. He has published more than thirty papers in journals and conference proceedings. He has also been awarded several grants from the Ministry of Science and Technology and Brazilian Ministry of Education through the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development and Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel. He used those grants to develop his master and doctoral studies and conduct field works in the Amazon region.

From a personal standpoint he really likes Lawrence and KU. He said about Lawrence, “It is a beautiful place to live with a lot of options to do even being a small town,” de Oliveira said. “KU is a very good university and the people who work here, including the staff and faculty members, are so nice. I am learning a lot with Nate (Nathaniel Brunsell) and this time here has been very important for me to grow both personally and professionally. Also, KU campus is beautiful and I really like to walk on it!”

In the future he would like to expand his research to include the use of remote sensing to retrieve biophysical parameters in places such as boreal forests, prairies, various biomes, the tundra and more. After he defends his PhD in July in Brazil he intends to do postdoc. After his postdoc he would like to work as a professor at a university either in the US or Brazil. His enthusiasm for Nate Brunsell, Chris Brown, Dave Mecham and other faculty members is infectious. His high regard for the department and faculty as well as the town is a testament to the outstanding and diverse opportunities offered here at KU.

Field Work
The Land Institute: Maged Nosshi

Maged Nosshi, a Ph.D. student in Physical Geography, is engaged in variety of activities and stellar research. His activities and research have served as vehicles that has lead to several awards and honors making him a student of excellence.

In the past two years he has received the Mari F. Pesek Geographical Survey, a Summer Research Fellowship from the Office of Graduate Studies, and a Kollmorgen Scholarship.

His initial research at the Institute eventually led to a wider area of study that now explores issues related to ecosystem rainfall seasonality in water-limited savanna in Southern Africa through the use of satellite data. This data will help Nosshi determine how ecosystem structure might affect the ability of ecosystems to respond and recover from variability in resource availability.

Last December he presented a poster at the American Geophysical Union’s (AGU) annual meeting which showed his preliminary findings from the Savanna and rainfall seasonality study. He found his time at the AGU annual meeting to be very productive as he got the opportunity to learn about other people’s work both inside and outside his areas of study.

This summer he will potentially be presenting a portion of his findings from his two research projects at the Ecological Society of America’s annual meeting in August.

The Kollmorgen Scholarship and the other scholarships in our department, assist fine students like him, and others, to perform valuable research in the field and on campus.

Nosshi served two seasons at the Institute focusing his research in the area of agroecology. He was assisted in his research endeavors with his advisor and Department Chair, Nathaniel Brunsell. His research explored the functional diversity in ecosystem resource use and acquisition. Nosshi found his time at the Land Institute very enjoyable and uncovered some preliminary interesting results from his research.

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Some Things Change.....

Renovations of Mach Lab

New Faculty/Student Research Lab

Faculty Additions

Welcome Justin Stachnik who is joining us from UCLA!

Changes on the KU Campus

The new EEEC rises by Lindley

Construction at old Burge Union

The new Capitol Federal Hall

But....Some Things Never Change.....

Lindley Hall
Yesterday and Today

Lindley Hall 1942
Lindley Hall with EEEC Construction

Welcome Justin Stachnik who is joining us from UCLA!
Profile on Faculty
Bill Johnson

NEVER MISSING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVENTURE

Bill has traveled to all 50 states in the U.S. and every province in Canada. He has been to most Caribbean Islands, the UK, all Central American countries, Columbia, Venezuela, Switzerland, Jordan, and Israel, as well as transiting through multiple European countries. He currently has trips planned to the South Pacific Islands and Australia and others are planned to Brazil and Antarctica. His favorite state is Alaska followed closely by California. His favorite country is Israel because of the fascinating blend of religion and culture he has found there. One of his favorite trips was to Jordan where he got to visit the ancient city of Petra and the landforms of Wadi-Rum where many famous movies have been filmed.

Bill Johnson was born in a small town near Peoria, Illinois but grew up in Princeton, a not-quite-so-small county seat town located about a hundred miles west/southwest of Chicago. During his earliest years his World War II veteran father managed the local movie theater and looked after him by sticking him in a chair at an empty projector portal. One of the earliest movies he recalls watching from his perch at the portal was the “Creature of the Black Lagoon.”

During his teen and high school years his father became a service and parts manager at a Chrysler-Plymouth-Desoto dealership. He began to work at the dealership (Moline Motors) after school and on weekends doing clean-up work, usually the greasy service areas. Although it is not exactly clear when this occurred, this may be the time when by necessity Bill developed his unique sense of humor. Due to his sense of humor, his charm, or any number of other possibilities, Johnson began to date the class secretary after he was elected class president. His graduating class numbered less than 200.

Upon graduation he initially considered an automotive career but opted instead for a college degree and applied to Northern Illinois University and was accepted. He first majored in English literature, then sociology, then biology and then settled on earth sciences.

After earning his B.S. degree in Earth Sciences (meteorology/climatology, geology) he planned to attend John Hopkins to work on a Ph.D. with a preeminent geomorphologist, Reds Wolman. Unfortunately, the Vietnam conflict was raging and so was the military draft. Under those circumstances Johnson decided it best to stay at Northern Illinois University to start earning his M.S. degree. During the course of the graduate program he joined the military, beating his draft notice by only a matter of days. The fortunate part was that he was able to serve stateside in a reserve capacity, going through a series of Military Occupational specialties (MOS) and ended up in an U.S. Army Aviation unit (assault helicopters). Johnson then completed his M.S. and went on to earn his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison under the tutelage of Jim Knox.

While he was writing his dissertation, Johnson commuted three days a week from Madison to UW-Milwaukee, where he taught introductory physical geography and conservation of natural resources. Following degree completion, he was offered a full-time position at Milwaukee but applied successfully for a tenure-track position at the University of Oklahoma (Department of Geography) in Norman. Johnson perceived what he felt to be a lack of program depth and institutional support at OU therefore he decided to apply for an open position at the University of Kansas during his second year at Oklahoma. Despite substantial competition for the position in the Department of Geography he was fortunate enough to be offered the job.

Johnson has been a mainstay of the department ever since, using his legendary humor, wit and charm to mentor his students with both rigor and compassion. These are rare traits that he shares with all students, both past and present. It is also these memorable qualities that they enjoy the most. At the recent alumni reunion numerous former students sent anecdotes and messages for Bill to let them know just how much he meant to them. He is a legend in his own right following in the steps of the great Walter Kollmorgen.

A PERSONAL BIO FOR BILL

Bill has a daughter, Ellen, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Art and a custom print artist, who lives in Boston with her husband Conor, a mechanical engineer from Dublin, Ireland; and a son Ben, a graduate of Humboldt State University (northern California) who is a trail development and firefighting specialist with the National Park Service. Bill’s spouse is Claudia Mayberry, who recently retired after a long career as a research attorney with the Kansas Judicial Branch and is now a local realtor. He has two step children: Cara, a Kansas State University graduate (M.S.) and librarian at Luther College and Staci a graduate of KU and a GIS remote sensing professional with C-STARS at the University of Miami.

Student Focused Teaching with a flair for humor
Faculty Members
a Legacy of Quality and Mentoring
Present and Past

Lindley Forever:
Home away from Home for our Faculty

Looking out from Lindley onto the campus

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Home away from Home for our Faculty

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Lindley Forever:
Home away from Home for our Faculty
Jayhawk Boulevard Then and Now

Mount Oread, University of Kansas 1867

University of Kansas campus 2016

Memories Past and Present

Cripple Creek Field Camp - Canon City, CO 80s

Bev Koerner - 2016

Left to right: Pamela Sullivan and David Rahn - 2016

Kollmorgen trip - 1957

Walter Kollmorgen at a holiday party with staff and faculty early 80s

University of Kansas Then and Now

Mount Oread, University of Kansas 1867

University of Kansas campus 2016
Scholarships - Fellowships - Awards
Past and Present:

A spirit of excellence resides within this department. Our students travel the world, use breakthrough technologies, and make our world a better and easier place to navigate. We are proud of their accomplishments and wanted to list a few of their achievements during their time here at KU. We salute them here.

Kollmorgen Graduate Research Scholarship:

Pierre A. Stouse Award:

Bohnstengel Fund:

Tinker Foundation Field Research Grant:

 Fulbright Scholars:

Summer Research Fellowship:
Maged Nooshi (2016)

AAG-NSF Travel Travel Grant:
Matthew Fahrenbruch (2016)

Center for Latin American Studies:

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship:

National Security Education Fellowship:
Matthew Koeppe

NASA Global Climate Change Fellow
Mark Jakubauskas (PhD 1994)

*The years listed indicate the year the award/scholarship was received*