



Data Intelligence & GeoAnalytics

MS DIGA | GIS Certificate | Data Engineering Certificate

Winter 2022 Newsletter

Welcome!

Program alumni, students, and friends - we would like to take a few moments to share a few highlights about what's been happening in the program recently as part of our bi-annual short newsletter series (summer and winter). Alumni and current students, if you have news or exciting things happening, please let us know!

Program/University News

A few exciting updates from campus and the program:

- The [MS.DIGA | GIS](#) and [Data Engineering](#) Certificates will soon be offered **fully online**! Stay tuned!
- Saint Mary's recently celebrated the dedication of **Aquinas Hall** on the Winona campus (photo right).
- The **alumni map** was recently updated. [Check it out](#) and please [add or update your point](#).



Minnesota GIS/LIS Conference

Our alumni made us proud at the MN GIS/LIS Consortium conference last fall! Thanks to all who shared their work (and apologies if we missed anyone)!

- **Mitchell Winiecki** ('12; MPLS) - Keynote presentation on his international mountaineering adventures.
- **Hannah Hutchins** ('16; Winona) - Collaborating with library staff to better serve their county's citizens.
- **Jessica Schuler** ('17; MPLS) and **Kitty Hurley** ('09; Winona/MPLS) - Modernized floodplain web application.
- **Elorm Agbolosoo** ('19; MPLS) - Web mapping applications exploring COVID-19 response.
- **Leanne Knott** ('15; MPLS) - Goodhue County's new high resolution QLO Lidar data.
- **Dan Hamalainen** ('20; MPLS) - Using machine learning to explore autonomous vehicle navigation.

Current Students/Alumni News

As part of our continued stories of 'where are they now,' we are featuring two alumni who were recognized with the [2021 Polaris Leadership award](#). This award was established by the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium to recognize GIS professionals who demonstrate a beacon of energy and creativity that inspires and guides the rest of us. Criteria include significant contributions benefiting Minnesota and its citizens for at least five years, and demonstrated leadership, energy, and creativity within and beyond one's normal job environment for the benefit of the greater GIS community. Congratulations Alison and Kitty!

Alison Wieckowicz ('10; Winona) is a Geospatial Systems Architect for the State of Minnesota IT Services. She has worked in the GIS field since 2005 as a GIS programmer, developer, or architect helping build and support statewide GIS systems including NextGen 911 GIS Portal, the MN Geospatial Data Commons, MN Cultural Resource Portal and MnDOT's Linear Referencing System. Alison enjoys working with a variety of open source and proprietary frameworks, APIs, and cloud technologies. She says her fondest memory of Saint Mary's "has to be spending long hours and late nights in the computer lab with my fellow Master's students. There was such a sense of camaraderie and support among the students in the GIS program. It was a very supportive community that was critical to my success." (photo top right)



Kitty Hurley, GISP ('09; Winona/MPLS) is Senior Product Engineer at Esri focused on the Calcite Design System. She specializes in web accessibility, usability, internationalization, and design. Since graduating, she has worked in many capacities including leveraging her skills to implement and lead coding standards and map accessibility best practices. In addition, she has led teams whose responsibilities included GIS server and database administration, system architecture, analysis, full stack web development, and mobile web development. (photo right)



The following recent graduate candidates successfully defended graduate research (congratulations!):

Alyssa Kuglin: "Using GIS Analytics to Define Risk Factors in High Eviction Census Tracts to Explore County Outreach Support – A Case Study of Hennepin County, Minnesota"

James Loken: "Studying Land Cover Change of Thermokarst Features Across the National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska Using Supervised Classification Methods"

Jeff Wright: "An Examination of the Covid-19 Vaccine Rollout in Minnesota, USA"

Zachary Loechler: "Photogrammetry and Efficacy in the Construction Industry"

Yonis Ali: "The Spatial Distribution of Sidewalk Structural Issues and Complaints Overlaps Slightly With Sidewalk Repair Project Areas in Minneapolis, MN in 2021 – 2022"

Faculty and Staff Tidbits & News

Wesley Tilford is excited to start writing and shooting a film with some friends this spring!

Greta Poser is getting seeds started for the garden - and enjoying teaching in the new Canvas platform.

Dr. John Ebert just spent a winter cutting and splitting a ton of firewood in the countryside and is tired out!

Dr. (Doc) Dave McConville (retired) is enjoying his time in AZ and is excited to return to MN for the summer.



Saint Mary's
University
OF MINNESOTA

Get in touch with us!

Check out our new Master of Science: [Data Intelligence and GeoAnalytics](#)

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