



Quarterly Newsletter: July 2020

ISSUE: 01

<https://www.orurisa.org/>



**ORURISA:** The Oregon and Southwest Washington Chapter of URISA is the place where GIS professionals can learn, share experiences and connect with others to enhance personal GIS skills and improve our GIS community.

## ORURISA President's Message

*By: Theresa Burcsu, ORURISA President*

Welcome to the new Oregon Chapter of URISA newsletter! This newsletter is designed to be a place for Chapter and Board of Directors members to share our accomplishments, knowledge, events, and opinions.

In this issue, we are pleased to present a variety of topics, including a new Chapter logo. Many thanks to those of you who submitted your logo ideas! The newsletter also calls attention to virtual activities that have been and will be held, including moving the 2020 GIS in Action keynote speaker addresses to webcasts and announcement of a virtual Mappy Hour organized by the Emerging Professionals special interest group on July 9th.



On more serious topics, please take a look at the article on URISA International's statement regarding recent events in Florida. As you know, we are professionals with a code of ethics and an important role to play in this continually evolving world.

To facilitate discourse on ethics and other topics, please consider participating in the new Chapter discussion forum. The forum is meant to be a place for open, respectful, and professional discussion about current events such as the “new normal” created by the pandemic and our nation’s growing awareness of deep-rooted inequities. We have the knowledge and skills to continue to be leaders and to shape the future ahead of us; healthy discourse can only deepen our understanding of what needs to be done and how to successfully implement it.

Please check the ORURISA website for upcoming events and to learn the outcomes of the recent Board of Directors elections. In parting, I want you to know that I deeply appreciate your participation in the Chapter, and I commend you for practicing your craft with the integrity and attention it deserves to yield the best work possible. Thank you and enjoy the newsletter!

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**GIS IN ACTION**

**RESILIENCY AND GIS**

## 2020 GIS in Action Conference and COVID-19

By: Tara Kaur, ORURISA Communications Director/Secretary

In March of this year, ORURISA and the GIS in Action planning committee made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 GIS in Action annual conference amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) health crisis. To maintain an ongoing and open conversation with the GIS community, the conference planning committee organized and delivered two free live webcasts using Zoom in May 2020. Over a hundred and thirty attendees joined each webcast and had the opportunity to engage with the speakers during the live streaming. Skip Newberry, President and CEO of Technology Association of Oregon, presented the first webcast, titled the Proliferation of Sensors and Connected Devices Means more Data than Ever Before. In this presentation, Skip covered the promises and pitfalls of ubiquitous data, including some ways communities of various sizes in Oregon and beyond, are collaborating through shared services, addressing data privacy

issues, and developing innovative programs spanning the public, private, educational and nonprofit sectors.

Nate Sandel, Director of Education, Columbia River Maritime Museum (CRMM), presented webcast 2. He spoke about the CRMM Miniboat Program that provides a global, multidisciplinary STEAM-Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics learning experience for 5th-7th grade students in the Pacific Northwest and Japan by empowering them to cooperatively design, build, launch, and track seaworthy, GPS-equipped boats on a journey across the Pacific Ocean. You can watch these recorded webcasts, through the following link:

<https://orurisa.org/GISinAction-Keynote>.

ORURISA and the GIS in Action planning committee are working towards designing and delivering more webcasts/webinars for the ORURISA members. If you are interested in presenting a webinar or an online workshop to the GIS community, please contact us at [communications@orurisa.org](mailto:communications@orurisa.org)

Follow GIS in Action annual conference:  
<https://www.orurisa.org/GISinAction>



## Statement from The URISA International Board on GIS Code of Ethics

By: Tara Kaur, ORURISA Communications  
Director/Secretary



ORURISA is assisting URISA International in sharing the following message: The URISA International Board approved the following statement on Friday, June 19, 2020, in response to some very concerning events in the State of Florida Department of Health COVID-19 dashboard. As reported in the press, Rebekah Jones, a GIS Professional (GISP) who created and maintained the dashboard, was required to make changes that undermined the dashboard's effectiveness. Her situation highlighted how the GIS Code of Ethics that every GISP agrees to when they earn certification informed her actions. The GIS Code of Ethics is not unlike those of other professionals who are certified or licensed. The public must be confident that these codes guide our work.

Link to the statement:

[https://www.urisa.org/clientuploads/directory/Documents/Advocacy/2020%20Response/URISA\\_Statement\\_Regarding\\_Recent\\_Events\\_in\\_Florida\\_Final\\_06192020.pdf](https://www.urisa.org/clientuploads/directory/Documents/Advocacy/2020%20Response/URISA_Statement_Regarding_Recent_Events_in_Florida_Final_06192020.pdf)





## ORURISA Pilot Mentor Program

By: Shivor Van Allen, ORURISA Board Member, Emerging Professionals Special Interest Group

Last October, the ORURISA Emerging Professionals Special Interest Group (EPs) launched a pilot mentor program with the goal of connecting students and emerging professionals with established GIS professionals in our community. The initial cohort featured 16 members located in the Portland-metro area and Central Oregon. Each mentor and mentee pair were thoughtfully partnered together, and they individually established action plans specific to each person's goals and objectives for the program.

*"This program is great because it offers you a framework for building a relationship, but you and your*

*mentor/mentee get to decide what that looks like."*

- Claire Brumbaugh-Smith, Cohort Mentee

The program spanned six months, and participants were asked to meet (virtual or in-person) with their mentor/mentee at least once a month. The EPs coordinated several all-cohort events during the program to provide networking and skill building opportunities. At each meeting, participants provided progress updates on their goals set at the beginning of the program.

*"I felt like it was a good time frame, and the parameters helped keep us motivated and on task."*

- Tiffany Turo, Cohort Mentor



While the program was intended to end with participants sharing their experiences at GIS in Action in April, due to COVID-19 the work accomplished by

the cohort is now anticipated to be presented at the conference in 2021. Despite being unable to publicly showcase everyone's hard work, the cohort members accomplished great things during the pilot program, including skill sharing between mentors and mentees, learning the fundamentals of coding, job coaching for performance reviews, and two mentees accepting job offers.

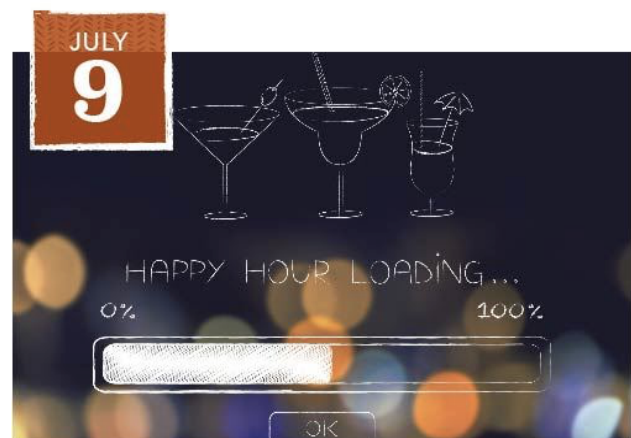
Building these lasting connections and relationships is more important than ever as many currently work remotely. In a post-program survey, all responses indicated that participants intend to stay in contact with their mentor/mentee in the future. Participants also expressed that they valued the opportunities provided by the program to connect with others mentor/mentee pairs in the cohort. For mentors, the program offered a space to talk with professional peers outside of their organizations, which provided fresh perspectives and insights on the industry.

*“Overall the experience exceeded my expectations... [I]t created a solid blueprint to carry into the future.”*

- Micah Babinski, Cohort Mentor

When cohort members were asked if they would recommend the program to others,

the answer was unanimous: Yes! For those looking for ways to connect with other professionals, build new skills, and grow your professional experience, the 2020-2021 mentor cohort applications will open in early fall.



**Link to Mappy Hour July 9, 5pm-7pm:**  
<https://pdx.zoom.us/j/95456299626>

## ORURISA's Winner Logo

By: Tara Kaur, ORURISA Communications Director/Secretary

This year the ORURISA board invited all ORURISA members to participate in the 2020 logo competition. This competition provided an opportunity for the ORURISA members to get involved in ORURISA's rebranding project. We had 8 participants sign up for the competition and make a significant contribution to the ORURISA brand by creating and submitting elegant logos. We want to thank the participants and hundreds of ORURISA members who cast their votes to select the ORURISA logo.



The winner of the 2020 logo competition is Adrian Gonzalez from Lane Council of Governments Oregon. The new logo will be implemented as the ORURISA's brand logo from July 17, 2020.

## About our logo competition winner: Adrian Gonzalez



My name is Adrian Gonzalez, and I am a GIS Assistant working at the Lane Council of Governments. Here at LCOG, we strive to serve the various communities in Lane County using the latest GIS development tools and database technology as well as the best available data to provide clients with professional custom maps, web applications, data extracts, analytical models, and spatial analysis. As a University of Oregon graduate with a background in GIS, visual design, and marketing, my various experiences allow me to wear several different hats when needed. My role involves structure footprint digitization, property easement mapping, and digitization. I create reports to help maintain drinking water quality and engage in both marketing and support for <https://rlid.org/>: the Regional Land Information Database of

Lane County. Our system comprises a data warehouse of regional land information from city, county & state government agencies and other service districts. A suite of web-based applications allows users to view, query, analyze & map data and print customized reports. Our team works hard every day to provide the highest quality of service for our clients and communities.

## ORURISA's new Discussion Forum

By: Tara Kaur, ORURISA Communications Director/Secretary

ORURISA has launched a new discussion forum at <https://www.orurisa.org/Discussion-Forum>. ORURISA's objective is to increase near real-time discourse and

resource-sharing about COVID-19, its effect on GIS jobs, current discontent related to race and inequities, as well as any other issues affecting the GIS community. We welcome all members to initiate a topic for discussion. ORURISA members need their ORURISA login credentials to log in and contribute to the discussion topic. If you haven't already, please take a moment to update your contact information at [orurisa.org](https://www.orurisa.org).

## ORURISA Board Elections

By: Tara Kaur, ORURISA Communications Director/Secretary

ORURISA recently held the board elections. The results are being finalized and will be listed on the ORURISA website: <https://www.orurisa.org/>. ORURISA will introduce the new President-elect and At Large Board member to its members via email as well as on the webpage later in the month of July 2020.

## Share your story in The ORURISA's Quarterly Newsletter

Share how you or your organization is applying GIS for innovative solutions and to save money, time, respond to social and health challenges, i.e., COVID-19, community engagement and other projects.

Please submit your story by September 10, 2020 at [communications@orurisa.org](mailto:communications@orurisa.org).

## Thank you note to ORURISA's recently retired Board members and volunteers

*By: Cy Smith, Former ORURISA President & Board Member, and Theresa Burcsu, ORURISA President*

This year brought the retirement of ORURISA Board members Dean Anderson and John Bragg, and the departure of two key volunteers, website administrator Star Sharp, and GIS in Action Conference Chair, Rich l'Esperance.

Dean has been a leader in the GIS community in Oregon for more than two decades, including serving many terms on the ORURISA Board as a member, officer, and President. He has also served on the Oregon Geographic Information Council for nearly 20 years, where he has represented the local government and the non-profit sectors. His work on both of these representative bodies has been exemplary, influential, and significant. Dean also led the effort to improve cadastral mapping and data management statewide, and he was one of the first to promote making geospatial data publicly available and widely shared. Dean's retirement from Polk County and from the volunteer work he has tirelessly pursued leaves a huge hole, but he has pointed the way for the community to continue to make valuable progress for the people of Oregon.

John has been a bright and enthusiastic light in his time on the ORURISA Board. He has made tremendous contributions with his good ideas and hard work. Of particular note is his idea for a Symposium by the Sea and his hard work to make that vision a reality, bringing much needed geospatial education and information sharing to the community on the southern Oregon coast. John's input and labor on the Board will be greatly missed at regular meetings, but happily we look forward to his continuing work with Symposium by the Sea.

Star has performed pivotal behind-the-scenes work for ORURISA since 2018. Her efforts to convert the Chapter's online resources into a well-managed system have enabled ORURISA to modernize the Chapter website over a short time frame, grow our online presence, and lay the foundation for sustained online resource management.

Rich brought his own brand of warmth, humor, and thoughtfulness to the role of GIS in Action Conference Chair. As a long time GIS in Action committee member and former At Large ORURISA Board member, Rich was extremely knowledgeable about the ins and outs required to deliver a successful conference experience for all involved.

The ORURISA Board wishes these exemplary individuals the best of luck in their next adventures and expresses the highest appreciation for their contributions to the Chapter. Many thanks to Dean, John, Star, and Rich!



## Volunteer with ORURISA

By: Tara Kaur, ORURISA Communications  
Director/Secretary

ORURISA training events, workshops, webinars, and the GIS in Action annual conference are all possible due to our exceptionally driven volunteers. Our volunteers contribute to the GIS community every year through their relentless efforts and valuable time by helping us organize the event venues, promotional material, vendors, and speakers. The on-site volunteers help set up the audio/visual presentation equipment, register guests, set-up posters, and workshop rooms. We are looking for volunteers with photography, video, and media interest to record the 2-days annual conference next year. ORURISA and the GIS in Action annual conference committee will post more volunteer opportunities closer to the events later this year. To show your interest in ORURISA and GIS in Action annual conference volunteer program, please email us at [communications@orurisa.org](mailto:communications@orurisa.org).



## Women in GIS

ORURISA would like to celebrate Women in GIS in our quarterly edition. Share your experiences, achievements, and challenges, while working in the GIS profession.

Please submit your story by September 10, 2020 at  
[communications@orurisa.org](mailto:communications@orurisa.org).



## ORURISA Contacts

### Officers

Theresa Burcsu	President	president@orurisa.org
Molly Vogt	Past President	
Matthew Freid	Treasurer	
Tara Kaur	Communications Director/Secretary	communications@ourisa.org

### Section Board Members

Robb Kirkman	Portland Area GIS Users Group
Amy Esnard	Gorge Area GIS Users Group
Mark Scott	Columbia Pacific GIS Users Group
Colleen Miller	Central Oregon GIS Users Group
Laura Gabel	Central Coast GIS Users Group
Lesley Hegewald	Willamette Valley GIS Users Group
Keith Massie	Umpqua Basin Users Group
Karim Naguib	Southern Oregon GIS Users Group
Keary Howley	South Coast Users Group
Chris Wayne	Klamath Basin Users Group

### Special Interest Group Board Members

Shivon Van Allen, Emerging Professionals	emergingprofessionals@orurisa.org
Dean Anderson, Oregon GIS Association	
David Percy, Portland Open Source Geospatial User Group	

### At Large Board Members

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Michael McDaniel  
Sean Carroll  
Jen Zumbado-Hannibal

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Founded in 1992