



GISCorps Newsletter

GIS Professionals Volunteering for a Better World

August 2009

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URISA

GISCorps Partner Agencies

EWB

GSDI

MMEX

UNDP

UNHCR

UNJLC

UNOSAT

iMMAP

Volunteers for Prosperity

Relief Agency Links

Relief Web

global hub for time-critical

A Message from the Core Committee

In May's newsletter we mentioned that we had launched a K-12/4H initiative. We did this in the hope that many of our volunteers could be engaged in a mission supporting the requests of the K-12 or 4H communities. We asked all of you to assist us with this activity by spreading this information to any K-12 or 4H communities you thought could use the assistance of GISCorps. It worked! We successfully completed two such missions (see [Featured Projects](#)), and more are underway. But don't stop now. Please keep spreading the information that GISCorps volunteers are available to assist appropriate activities in the K-12 and 4-H communities; this gives our volunteers the opportunity to instill in the younger generation an appreciation for our world and how spatial technologies can contribute to making a better world for everyone.

Once again, the Core Committee will be at the [URISA International Conference](#), and we have a number of GISCorps activities planned. We hope you will be able to attend the conference, and attend the GISCorps sessions. Come hear about Joe Forrest's mission to Thailand, and come hear Core Committee members speak to the missions and activities of GISCorps in the past year. We've been busy, and we want you all to know what has been happening. See you in Anaheim!

GISCorps Core Committee,
Dianne Haley, Ingrid Bruce, Mark Salling, Shoreh Elhami, Allen Ibaugh

P.S. Please email info@giscorps.org if you want to be removed from this list.

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Deployment and Partnership News

Missions in Progress:

- **Mission with Fuquay-Varina Rotary Club/EquipoGIS – Panama:** The [Fuquay-Varina Rotary \(FVR\)](#) club sought GISCorps volunteers' assistance to develop an online questionnaire to conduct a survey in poor neighborhoods of Panama. The objective was to locate and collect detailed information about the staggering number of orphans in Panama City and beyond. The online questionnaire will eventually enable FVR to geo-locate those who will be surveyed. In April 2009, two GISCorps volunteers were deployed to this mission. Jill Hume, a GIS Analyst for the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board and Steve Tsuida, a graphic designer and web developer with Kyros both in Calgary, Canada. Read more [here](#).

Data/Information Links

Earthwatch Institute

Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization that brings science to life for people concerned about the Earth's future.

Service at Sea

Service at Sea is a ship-based technology assistance program that will begin a circumnavigation of the earth in August, 2007, with a goal to assist conservation organizations who are using GIS technology to meet goals of their communities.

Society for Conservation GIS

A non-profit organization supporting individuals using GIS and science for the conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage

GISCorps Core Committee

Dianne Haley, Chair
Ingrid Bruce, Vice Chair
Shoreh Elhami, Co-founder
Mark Salling
Allen Ibaugh

Contact Us

<http://www.giscorps.org>

Email: info@giscorps.org

- **Mission with [South Luangwa Conservation Society](#) – Zambia:** In March 2009, GISCorps received a request from South Luangwa Conservation Society, a NGO in Mfuwe, Zambia, for a GIS Specialist to analyze their historic data and conduct trend analysis and also assist the NGO with their GIS needs on an ongoing basis. The recruitment resulted in deploying Lisa Matthies, a GIS and Geography Instructor at Erie Community College in Williamsville, NY. She has been supporting SLCS in both capacities; analysis of their historic data as well as providing ongoing GIS support. Recently, another volunteer, Ember Crouch, a GIS Specialist with Urban Mapping Inc. in California joined the team to assist in developing a better base map for the project. Read more [here](#).
- **Mission with Ministry of Tourism – Mozambique:** In March 2009, a request for a remote sensing specialist came to GISCorps. The [Ministry of Tourism](#) has several Quick Bird imageries of Chimanimani National Reserve from 2005 and 2008 and is interested in having the volunteer conduct a change detection to identify changes in land use pattern. This is expected to help the reserve management team to locate the areas where more attention is required to control illegal activities currently occurring in the Reserve (e.g. gold panning). Stephanie Lassieur, a remote sensing specialist with the NATO Command Control Consulting Agency in the Hague (Netherlands) has been recruited for this mission. She has provided preliminary results to the Ministry staff. Upon their feedback, she will conduct a full analysis.
- **A new K-12 Project in Chattanooga, Tennessee:** In February 2009, the UT-TSU Extension office in Chattanooga, TN requested a GISCorps volunteer to help them install the ArcView software onto their new computers and facilitate group sessions on registering waypoints, downloading it into the computers, and creating printable maps for display. Andrew Carroll, the GIS Manager at ARCS, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, was selected for this project.
- **Global Spatial Data Infrastructure ([GSDI](#)) Small Grants Program's 2008-2009 Projects:** GISCorps first participated in the review of 2005/2006 Small Grants projects in 2005 and most recently has participated in the 2008/2009 projects. The team has reviewed 31 applications – 19 from Africa and six each from Asia and the Americas. The announcement of awards is expected soon and we are investigating the potential role of GISCorps volunteers for a dozen of those proposals. The 2008/2009 efforts are currently spearheaded by Mark Salling, a GISCorps Core Committee member. Read about the previous projects [here](#).
- **Missions with iMMAP/World Food Program – North Korea:** In late 2007, [iMMAP](#) in partnership with the [World Food Program](#) (WFP), Bureau for Asia sent a request for volunteers to compile features such as settlement points, transportation, rivers and lakes (complete with attributes) from 405 map sheets in North Korea. Following their request, GISCorps posted the information on its website and was then contacted by Karen Payne of University of Georgia who expressed interest in assisting with the project. As the first step, she conducted tests to determine the best options for rectification of scanned maps and forwarded the results to WFP. She then continued the test by investigating various methods for extracting features from those scanned maps. Recently, another

volunteer, Chris Zumwalt, a GIS Manager with WRA Environmental Consultants in CA, joined the team to work towards determining the best methodology to compile these features. At the conclusion of this phase, the exact methodology and the number of volunteers to complete the project will be determined.

Read more about completed projects [here](#).

Read more about projects in progress in [here](#)

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URISA Announcements

Upcoming Conferences

- **URISA/NENA Addressing Conference**
August 4-6, 2009 - Providence
- **47th Annual URISA Conference**
September 29-October 2, 2009 - Anaheim, California
- **GIS in Transit Conference - New Dates**
November 16-18, 2009 - St Petersburg, FL - PROGRAM DETAILS POSTED
- **URISA Leadership Academy - Engage. Learn. Lead.**
December 7-11, 2009 - Seattle, WA
- **14th Annual GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference**
March 8-11, 2010 - Little Rock, AR - CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

What's New

- [Ten Geospatial Organizations Endorse IFTN](#)
- [GIS in Transit Conference Program Details Posted](#)
- [GIS Management Handbook Now Available](#)
- [Register for the next URISA Webinar](#)
- [Check out the Latest Job Listings](#)

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Shop for GISCorps Stuff!!

Do you find yourself in need of a new T-shirt, coffee mug, ball cap or tote bag? Do you want to advertise GISCorps and your association with the organization? Well, you are in luck! You can now find various GISCorps items at our online shop at: <http://www.cafepress.com/giscorps>

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ESRI's 29th User Conference

ESRI's 29th User Conference, San Diego, July 13-17, 2009

The 2009 ESRI User Conference was held in San Diego from July 13-17. As in the past several years, GISCorps had a special exhibit in the Map Gallery where 100's of existing and new volunteers stopped by and visited with the

Core Committee members and other volunteers. Several CC members and volunteers also presented at two sessions on Wednesday. To see the photos taken at those activities, click [here](#).

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47th URISA International Conference

47th URISA Conference, Anaheim, CA, September 28-October 2nd, 2009

Since 2003, GISCorps has been holding several events at the URISA International Conference. We hope that you can join us in Anaheim, CA (from September 28 to October 2nd). This year's events are:

- Wednesday September 30, 4 to 5 PM – Joe Forrest, a GISCorps volunteer who recently traveled to Thailand, will talk about his experience. GISCorps Core Committee members will also give an overview on 2008-2009 projects and activities.
- GISCorps' business meeting is held on Wednesday September 30th from 12:15 to 1:15 pm.
- Thursday October 1st, 8:30 to 10 AM – GISCorps volunteers are recognized for their service at URISA's Annual Breakfast Award Ceremony. **Note: If you are a deployed GISCorps volunteer and plan to attend the Annual Conference, please let us know by sending an email to: info@giscorps.org.**

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Featured Projects

Four GISCorps Volunteers Assist a 4-H Club in Grant County, Washington

By Beth Carpenter, Crystal Murphy, JJ Bach, Kelly Stancel, GISCorps Volunteers

Our GISCorps volunteer team assisted WSU Extension 4H Youth Development and Grant County Emergency Management in conducting several events during their 2009 GPS/GIS Day event held on June 6, 2009 at the Grant County Fairgrounds in Moses Lake, Washington (GIS = Geographic Information Systems, GPS = Global Positioning System). Students ranging in age from 6 to 17 participated in exercises using GPS and GIS tools. GISCorps volunteers Kelly Stancel, J.J. Bach, Crystal Murphy and Beth Carpenter assisted the two agencies in basic GPS training, geo-caching activities, intro to GIS and fairgrounds facility mapping.

Students were introduced to handheld GPS receivers and educated in satellite locations and their relevance to coordinate accuracy. The students (and many parents) had fun utilizing their skills to locate geo-cached items for prizes on the fairgrounds site. As the GPS and intro to GIS activities took place, behind the scenes the fairgrounds facilities data set was developed in GIS. Utilizing simple heads-up digitizing from orthophotography volunteers

created a representation of all facilities on the fairgrounds and field verified for further accuracy. The Grant County Emergency Management staff can further build upon this geodatabase to add other features or attributes supporting their emergency planning and response efforts.



Figure 1: Hands-on GPS/Geocaching Field Exercise - GISCorps Volunteer, Kelly Stancel, working with students on a variety of handheld recreational and vehicle navigation GPS receivers.

"Community engagement is pivotal in informing and educating others about the GIS field."

Kelly Stancel, GIS Analyst, Seattle Public Schools

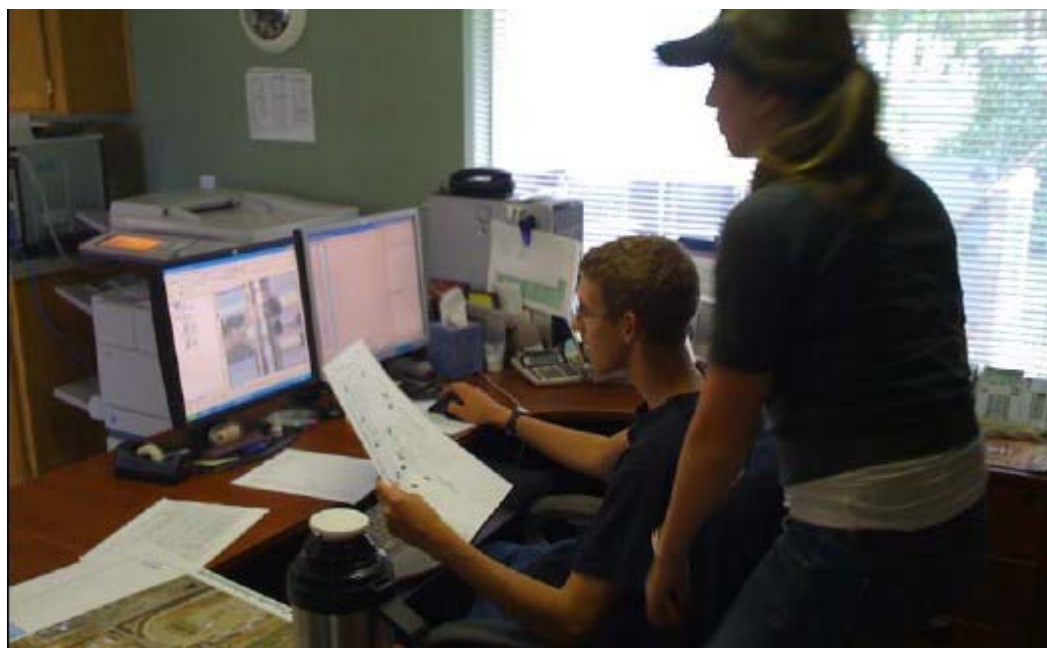


Figure 2: Fairgrounds Facility Mapping – Student digitizing building footprints from aerial imagery, GISCorps team member Crystal Murphy assists.

"Opportunities like this to share my expert GIS advice, offer all party's

involved a new perspective of the GIS technology. The usability that ESRI products provide for many areas of research and design are infinite.”

Crystal Murphy, GIS Analyst; King County Wastewater Treatment Division



Figure 3: ArcGIS Exercise, Intro to GIS – Students learning GIS on laptops inside Grant County Emergency Mgmt. office. J.J. Bach/GISCorps (standing) and Jennifer Merrill/WSU Extension 4H Youth Development (near whiteboard).

“I am glad that I decided to volunteer for this opportunity because it was a great experience to be able to work hands on in the field with the GIS/GPS technologies and at the same time teach others to use the technology.”

J.J. Bach, GIS Analyst, Seattle Public Schools



Figure 4: Fairground Facilities Mapping – GISCorps team members Crystal Murphy

(left) and Beth Carpenter (right) after field verification of building locations on fairgrounds.

"I enjoyed donating my time and talent – especially for a project that will help the community and become a basis for county emergency management datasets. Having the current software and equipment made this project run smoothly. Our team was able to quickly apply our skills toward the project work immediately. The organizing staff on this project were so great to work with, very helpful and supportive of our ideas."

Beth Carpenter, GISP - GIS Coordinator/City of Sammamish, WA



Figure 5: A map of building locations within the Fairground

".....We had a great time with approx. 25 learners present.The volunteers were excellent, very knowledgeable and capable of really helping make a difference. Thanks again...."

Diane Russo, WSU Extension 4H Youth Development

You can read an article written about the event by Diane Russo from [HERE](#).

K-12 Project: GISCorps Volunteer Helps Critique Maps Created by Youth in Ames, Iowa

By Jane Runneals, Leader, Central Area 4-H Tech Team

The Central Iowa Area 4-H Tech Team recently had their club Achievement Show on June 13th, 2009 in preparation for the Story County Fair. Brenda Swaim, GISCorps volunteer and an employee with the City of Ames, assisted the club with helping the youth members by critiquing their maps and giving them valuable input as they readied their mapping projects for the fair.



Brenda Swaim, GISCorps Volunteer, assisting David Runneals, a 4-H Tech Team Member

Brenda was impressed with the youth's maps – particularly since this was the club's first year working with GIS mapping. They received a mapping software grant for '08-'09 through ESRI. The projects Brenda helped critique ranged from a map of biking trails at a state park to a map of historical sites in Ames and prairie remnants in Boone County, along with a manure management plan map for Story County. She enjoyed the opportunity to work with the youth and give them feedback and ideas on how to improve their maps for display and judging. The scoring rubric she used for the members was developed by the National 4-H GIS team and Sarah Coffey with Oregon State 4-H, and can be found at:

<http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/science-engineering-and-technology> (under Geospatial Science Exhibit materials).

Central Iowa Area 4-H Tech Team member maps can be found at their website at: www.centralareatechteam.org.



Central Iowa Area 4-H Tech Team Website (Sample Maps)

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