



2019

Mark Serre

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Bi! Travis: Message "om the Department Chair

At the end of each Fall and Spring semester the department hosts a commencement ceremony for our graduates. In May we are often on the Quad in front of Guggenheim, amid glorious spring weather. In December (when I write this note, with snow still piled up from a Thanksgiving storm) we squeeze graduates, families, friends, faculty, and all into "cozy" Guggenheim. Both are joyous events, fueled by the high spirits of our graduates. Commencement is a moment to recognize accomplishment. During the festivities, the speeches all reflect that, but they also note the transition underway, so it's no surprise that most commencement speakers take a moment to admonish graduates to look ahead, to go out and do good things with the skills they've learned in the classrooms, the GIS lab, and the field; to fix the world's problems. Another commencement message is that while our grads are out there we'd like to hear back from them, and this newsletter carries some of what we hear. Send

us your updates and news notes. Commencement is also a great time to visit the department, to sit on the Quad (if it's spring) or get coffee on the "The Hill" (if it's winter).

Another good time to visit the department will come this spring, on April 5, 2020, when we host a gathering of CUers attending the Association of American Geographers' annual meeting in Denver. Watch our website for details!#

Editor's Comments

In this edition of the newsletter, we are pleased to introduce new faculty members, assistant professor [Morteza Karimzadeh](#) and instructor [Heide Bruckner](#). Please see their articles starting on page 8. Assistant professor [Azita Ranjbar](#) also recently joined our department. Her article of introduction will be published in our Spring 2020 newsletter!

It's been wonderful to hear from our alumni and other friends this past year. Please keep in touch with us, including with any suggestions and comments you may have. Alumni news articles provide a good way for current students to understand the possibilities ahead. Additionally, faculty and other alumni enjoy hearing of the progress of our graduates. If you are an alumnus, please consider filling out the easy-to-use [alumni updates tool](#)!

Department of Geography

Mark Serreze Named Distinguished Professor

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Mark Serreze

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What does being named Distinguished Professor mean to you?

What made you decide to pursue a degree in Geography?

Did you have any mentors or role models along the way?
How did they help you?

Can you tell us an impactful story that inspired your career?

What was the department like when you started compared to now?

What makes you hopeful for the future?!

What advice can you give to students about their careers and the study of Geography?

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The Boulder Affordable Housing Research Initiative

[BAHRI website](#)

Introducing Morteza Karimzadeh, Assistant Professor



Department News

George Charisoulis

George Charisoulis was awarded the GIS-in-the-Rockies (GISITR) Graduate Fellowship. GISITR is a professional society of geospatial science, commerce and industry members in the Rocky Mountain West (Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico). His award recognizes his doctoral research on location modeling of renewable energy sites using simulation and intelligent spatial search. As part of his award, George presented his work at the GISITR annual conference held in Denver in September.

Professor Seth Spielman appointed chief data strategy and analytics officer

Carla Ho-a, associate vice chancellor for finance and business strategy and deputy chief financial officer, named Seth Spielman as chief data strategy and analytics officer.

Seth joined the CU Boulder community in 2010 as an associate professor of geography, and also holds affiliations with CU Boulder's [Institute of Behavioral Science \(IBS\)](#) and [Information Science](#).

From 2015 through 2019, Seth worked at Apple Maps, where his work included building systems that used machine learning to improve map-based navigation and search, and coordinating international data collection projects. Throughout his career, Seth's work has focused on the intersection of data science and maps. He's published over thirty articles, co-authored a book on urban analytics, led over \$1.5 million in National Science Foundation awards, and received awards from American Association of Geographers, the American Statistical Association and the Breheny Prize for work in urban science.

Xiaoling Chen

The study [Barriers to Achieving Economic Self-Sufficiency: The Structural Vulnerability Experienced by Refugee Families in Denver, Colorado](#) was recently published in!

Graduate Scholarship Programs
Mable B. Duncan Scholarship Fund