

June 2021

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June 2021 Newsletter

Dear NYS GIS Association Member,

Here are a few items of news.

- Meet Education Committee Chair Paula Kay Lazrus
- StateScoop Honors Frank Winters
- Membership Renewal
- Awards Announcement
- Upcoming Opportunities & Events



Read on and enjoy,

The NYS GIS Association Communications Committee

"Barcelona, NY | 6 June 2021 | 42.342 -79.593

Meet Paula Kay Lazrus, Education Committee Chair

1. What made you interested in taking up GIS/geospatial technology as a career, and how did you end up in the field of GIS?

Technically, I wouldn't say I'm in the field of GIS, rather I'm a GIS user. It goes back a long, long way. When I applied to graduate school in archaeology at Boston University, they had a brand new Center For Remote Sensing. I was all excited about learning about the uses of that technology in archaeology. Then the Shuttle blew up. The school's collaboration with NASA went on ice just before I entered, but I learned all I could, which included digitizing on digitizing tables, learning programs like Grass and Arc Info (with manuals that filled several shelves) on Sparc stations! PCs were a new thing. I did research using

2. What is your educational background?

I am trained in Anthropology with a concentration in Archaeology. My initial interest in the field was pre-history and the transition to agriculture, but things have a way of shifting over the years and I ended up as part of a project that had pre-historian, so I've ended up doing a lot of research on land use in the early 1800s CE in southern Italy. If you skip forward several decades beyond my PhD work trying to map Land-use change from the Neolithic to the Present-day in Sardegna, I found that the world of computers and GIS had changed quite a bit and so, learning piecemeal, I brought those earlier experiences to the work I've been doing for the Bova Marina Archaeological Project.



3. Can you explain your job and what you do there?

I teach undergraduates at St John's University in Jamaica, Queen, NYC. I have a joint appointment to their Institute for Core Studies and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and I also teach in their Environmental Studies program. I've taught students how to use Storymaps in History classes and freshman seminars, and some basic mapping with Arcgis Online + Storymaps for a required science for non-science students course, and I teach AGO skills and Arc Desktop and now Pro (on a very basic level) to the Environmental Studies students. The Intro to GIS class for those students is the only such class at our university. Archaeological fieldwork is relegated to the summers.

4. In addition to chairing the Education Committee, how have you shared your expertise in GIS with others in NYS either formally or informally?

Over the years I have come to NYSGISA meetings and presented posters, and I've done the same at NEARC. I've learned a ton from my colleagues and from attending the 2013 ESRI T3G, which taught me a lot and put me in contact with many new colleagues, and introduced me to Geomentors and the like. I attend GISMO events when I can, and, for a while, I collaborated with folks in the NYU Data Center. I've tried to keep up as best I can.

5. What is the most interesting project that you have worked on and why?

That's not an easy question to answer, but I guess, in general, the most fascinating things for me have been trying to georeference old NYC maps for my freshman seminar (before the Manahatta project was born), and the attempts to find old maps of land-use in southern Italy (hard to come by) and apply to my

6. What is your favorite memory from NYGeoCon or the GeoSpatial Summit?

I could be mistaken (or just confused), but quite a number of years ago now I won a Laser rangefinder for a poster at a GeoCon. That was very exciting, and it's gotten great use in the tree mapping project I've been doing on our campus with freshmen students.

7. What do you like most about mapping?

Although I am not good at it, I am really drawn to the aesthetics of cartography, modern and ancient.

8. What place have you visited that has made the most lasting impression on you and why?

It's a toss-up between Cambodia and Costa Rica. The former because visiting a place I had taught to students for years but only knew from books (the Angkor Region in particular) was amazing. I spent hours blissfully exploring and photographing the most fascinating monuments. With respect to Costa Rica, it was the first time I really explored the tropics, and the profusion of birds, critters, fruits, and colors was fantastic.

9. If you could visit one other place in the world, where would it be and why?

I'm torn....I'd like to visit one of the Artic regions before it disappears.... Same for the Galapagos... but my travel list is really very long, I love meeting people from other places, learning about new cultures and foods.... Give me a good open-air market and I'm a happy camper.

10. Do you have any specific advice or philosophies from working in the GIS world?

I have found the GIS community to be incredibly generous and supportive. Don't be shy... Ask your questions, Ask for help, someone will have a solution or two.

Member Frank Winters Earns Honor

[StateScoop](#), the Scoop News Group (SNG) that reports on the news and events affecting technology decisions in state and local government, has announced the winners of its 2021 StateScoop 50 Awards. And, our very own **Frank**

recognized for his "passion and drive to advance the use of digital technology inside state agencies." For the full story, click here: <https://statescoop.com/list/statescoop-50-awards-honor-2021s-top-government-leaders-projects/>



Membership Renewal

June 30th is the last day of the 2020 membership year. Take a moment to renew your membership now and cross that item off your To-Do list before summer gets busy. You'll be credited right through to June 30, 2021.



Use this link to renew: <https://www.nysgis.net/joinus/join/login>

Know someone who is not a member? Please spread the word. The more members we have, the stronger an organization we can become.

Use this link to join: <https://www.nysgis.net/joinus/>

Awards Announcement

Do you know someone who is passionate about GIS or an individual that has contributed to the betterment of the GIS community here in New York State? Well now's your chance to nominate a colleague or your team to be recognized for their achievements!

[Association Awards Program Instructions and Procedures](#) for details on each award, eligibility requirements, and procedures for submitting a nomination.



- **Lifetime Achievement**
- **Individual Contributions to the Profession**
- **GIS Champion Award**
- **GIS Applications**

The nomination form will be available in early June. The deadline for submissions is 1 September 2021.

Winners will be recognized for their achievements at this year's NYS GIS Association Virtual Event.

Feel free to contact the Awards Committee with any questions.

Thanks!

NYS GIS Association Awards Committee

email: nygis77@gmail.com

website: <https://www.nysgis.net/committees/awards>

Upcoming Opportunities & Events

- **NEARC Identify the Need & Take Action** | 30 June 2021 | Noon - 1 p.m. | [More Information](#)
- **Esri User Conference** | 12 - 16 July 2021 | [More Information](#)
- **NEARC Mappy Hour** | 22 July 2021 | 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. | [More Information](#)
- **NYGeoCon** | Tentatively scheduled for 20 - 21 September 2021
- **URISA GIS-Pro Annual Conference** | Baltimore | 3 - 6 October 2021 | [More Information](#)
- **NEARC Fall Conference** | 17 - 20 October 2021 | New Haven, CT | [More Information](#)
- **GIS-SIG Conference** | 16 November 2021 | RIT Inn & Conference Center | More information to come

