

May 2020

[View this email in your browser](#)

May 2020 Newsletter

Dear NYS GIS Association Member,

Here are a few items of news for this month.

- President's Message and Statement of Goals
- Meet Mike Jabot, NYS GIS Association Member
- Upcoming Opportunities & Events

Read on and enjoy,
The NYS GIS Association Communications Committee

President's Message and Statement of Goals

Dear All Association Members,

I'm deeply honored and thrilled to serve as the President of the NYS GIS Association. I have been a long-time Member and believe strongly in our mission and outreach to the collective Membership whom we serve. Over the course of my term, I hope to bring about healthy changes and help us to adapt to the ever-growing GIS technological landscape!



Being new to this Board, I am grateful to work alongside and gain perspective from our Past-President, Rick Reichert, as we together, with the commitment from the Board members, continue to pursue an agenda to support content and growth within the Membership.

As always, I would encourage all members to become involved with the Association as even a small-time commitment can have a lasting impact! Through your efforts, the Association becomes a more impactful resource to us all, our communities, and our profession.

- Providing support to our Regional GIS groups and strengthen partnerships with other non-profit Associations
- Pursuing professional development opportunities including specialized training credits (micro-credentialing)
- Increasing support for Committees
- Growing membership numbers and participation
- Support of a new, fresh Association website

I welcome feedback and ideas from our membership. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me personally. I can be reached by email at info@nysgis.net.

Let's make this a great year for the Association!

Sincerely,
Jonathan Garner
President, NYS GIS Association

Meet Mike Jabot, NYS GIS Association Member

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? What is your educational background?

My background is in engineering physics and, in particular, instrument design. I coupled my love for design with a life experience shaped by the natural world with my decision to become a teacher. So I had the incredible privilege to build up programs around Earth Science, Physics, and Engineering Design while teaching in Central NY. I used the earliest version of ArcMap and other GIS systems in my teaching there. After completing my Ph.D. at Syracuse University I joined the Faculty at SUNY Fredonia in 2001, where I started collaborating with a colleague to strengthen the role of GIS in a wide variety of K-12 and university courses. Most recently, I have been mentoring GIS students in their required practicum experience.



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

My role at SUNY Fredonia is to help shape the preservice teacher candidates that we have to be prepared to bring science into their classrooms. My focus is on place-based science and how we as teachers can see the natural world

I work on a number of projects that look at ways that we can help support teachers in integrating geospatial reasoning and technologies into their classroom practice. We are currently using this work from kindergarten (basic direction and mapping) through a Dual-Credit GIS course that I offer to schools across our region and everywhere in between.

While being a "science guy" what I am most excited about is the number of teachers that are using GIS as their way of looking at the human world as well. So through a partnership with National Geographic we are using GIS in content areas across the curriculum and in helping students make their communities better through service-learning.

I also offer an Earth System Science course that is part of our general education curriculum. This course relies on both using GIS to visualize trends in data as well as to use GIS to help improve the world through the YouthMappers Chapter I established as an Inaugural Chapter.

3. How did you get involved in the Association? Would you describe the many ways you have contributed to the Association over the years?

I was encouraged by a colleague at SUNY Fredonia to look at the great resources that NYSGISA had to offer. This colleague encouraged me to join the Education Committee and I have continued to serve on the Committee ever since.

4. What's the most interesting project that you have worked on and why?

I have been blessed to have been involved in a number of projects with NASA GLOBE. In these projects we are working on bringing GIS and geospatial technologies to play in helping students and communities understand the world around them. Because these projects are international it has been an incredible opportunity to see how GIS can be used in just so many contexts to increase our ability to process these large, often disparate, data sets to learn deeply about the Earth and the impacts of human decisions on our world.

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

I think my favorite experiences have come from NYGeoCon. I'll just use the GeoCon from this past Fall where I was asked to be on a panel to discuss using GIS in the K-12 setting. It was just such a thrill to hear how other members are using GIS in their settings and to learn from their great work. The willingness of our members to help each other is what makes our Association such a special group!

I do not think that there is a more powerful way for us to visualize data and to tell stories through maps. In our current situation, we are seeing a huge amount of people using maps to try to explain and inform. While some of these maps have issues that we wish they didn't have, the acknowledgment of the roles of maps in our understanding is really amazing.

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

I think the one place I would love to visit is Africa. I have a number of chances to visit, the most recent was a planned trip to Tanzania during Summer 2020 to work on ground-truthing of humanitarian outreach projects that I am involved in. Unfortunately it hasn't worked out. I am one of those people that spent their entire school life being fooled by map projections and would love to visit to try to remedy my misconceptions. I am just in awe of the immensity of the scale of Africa both physically and socially.

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

Charlie Fitzpatrick from Esri has reminded me of a huge number of times that we need to be alike a good skier and "keep our knees bent". Just like that skier on slopes, GIS is an incredible ride, and we need to be ready to ride the bumps and make the turns to complete that great run. I have absolutely LOVED my "ride" with GIS and the possibilities and opportunities just seem endless to me.

Upcoming Opportunities & Events

- The [2020 Esri User Conference](#) will be a virtual event: 13 - 15 July 2020
- Stay tuned to save the date for the 2020 New York State Geospatial Summit at the Welch-Allyn Lodge in Skaneateles Falls, New York!

