

September 2020

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September 2020 Newsletter

Dear NYS GIS Association Member,

Here are a few items of news for this month.

- NYS GIS Association Fall Virtual Event
 - 21 October 2020 | Wednesday | 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
- Meet NYS GIS Association Member: Kelly Montague
- 2020 Awards for the Fight Against COVID
- Call for Nominations
 - Board of Directors & President-Elect
- Membership Renewal
- 2020 Census Reminder
- Upcoming Opportunities & Events

Read on and enjoy,

The NYS GIS Association Communications Committee

Fall 2020 Virtual Event & Annual Meeting | 21 October 2020

The NYS GIS Association has scheduled the **Fall 2020 Virtual Event and Annual Meeting** for **Wednesday, 21 October 2020, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

Stay tuned for the details!

The NYS GIS Association recently debuted a new look. The Communications Committee thought it would be of interest to have the innovative cartographer behind the new look write about the process and her inspiration. Many thanks, again, to Kelly Montague for sharing her expertise.

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?

I have always had an affinity for history and maps and found myself pouring over maps and atlases while I was younger, even lining my bedroom walls floor to ceiling with the supplemental maps from our copies of National Geographic. Then when my father, a biology professor, began using GIS for some ecological work, I begged him to show me how to use it. I subsequently used it for a social studies fair project to do an epidemiological analysis layering graduated symbols for disease prevalence over choropleth maps of various demographics factors to find any correlations. It's also important to note that Florida seems to actually exceed other states in education by requiring students to take Geography for two full years, and I was also able to take AP Human Geography. So with those experiences, it was easy to establish early on in high school that I was going to major in Geography at Syracuse and find a career in which I could use GIS to make maps. Throughout college, my ultimate career goal would evolve, but it was always focused on Geography and GIS.



2. Can you explain your job experience and what you have found yourself doing in your career?

Near the end of undergrad I intended to pursue planning after graduating, but I had also planned on applying for the National Geographic Geographic Internship. Having excelled in my Cartographic Design class and always loving the NG maps and atlases most, I specifically applied for the Map Internship. Getting that directly after graduating definitively established my career path as a Cartographer, and I was able to join the DC OCTO GIS team after my internship and further specify my role as the first Cartographer for the District. While there, I got to work with the amazing GIS team on all the various geospatial projects in addition to designing any map or graphic needed by the District for various meetings and public events. It was my time there that solidified my passion for working in the production side of mapping along with doing comprehensive GIS work. Since moving back to Central NY, I have filled GIS Analyst roles for

3. How did you get involved in the Association?

I first became involved locally with CNYRGIS, and after meeting with that group, I joined the Association. My colleague Paula Cutrone then brought me on to the Communications Committee knowing my skill set could potentially benefit the team. Once there, I was tasked with making event and social media graphics for GeoCon 2019.

4. When did it occur to you that it was time for the Association to update its look?

As I began creating some event graphics for GeoCon, I thought it would be nice to expand upon the new graphics I was making and refresh the entire Association look with this new aesthetic. I mentioned this around the time of GeoCon to the Communications team, and we agreed that this was something we wanted to formalize and propose to the Board.

5. Do you recall when the idea of the apple location pin came to you?

I have been playing around with logo design and brand identity for personal projects and friends, and I really love coming up with great design solutions for branding. The pin is an obvious element that comes to mind for me frequently when thinking about geospatial groups, and as a Syracuse alumna I looked back at some point and thought it would be clever if the GIS division adopted an orange pin in some capacity. Of course, this was in hindsight, as I was never tasked with anything official while there, but I recall thinking that any NYS group could also use a red apple pin. So this idea had sort of popped into my head before even joining NYS GIS, yet I didn't revisit this thought until I began making graphics for the Association. As soon as I thought of what the new Association logo should be, the apple pin immediately popped into my head. This is my favorite pin logo as well since the red pin specifically combined with the red apple immediately denotes two of the most obvious symbols of the GIS community and New York state to almost everyone.

6. How long have you been working on the many new graphics you created for us?

This project has progressed over the past year, beginning in earnest Fall 2019 following GeoCon. Carol Zollweg, Cattyann Campbell, and I have been meeting specifically throughout the winter of 2019 into the Spring of 2020 before updating the site this summer. We are still making updates as they come and always fielding new ideas from Association members on how to keep implementing the new look.

7. What influenced your selection of the color scheme and typefaces?

It was first established that we wanted to keep a cohesive look between the old and new, so having the darker blue and some greens was imperative. Plus, I think we can all agree that blue, green, and brown/orange seem to be the preferred brand colors in the geo community (Geo Awareness week and the National Geographic flag come to mind). I suppose it's obvious us mapmakers

around a friendly yet bold red/orange for the apple, which was based on Pantone's Living Coral and associated greens and blues. Regarding overall aesthetic, I wanted a look that felt both classic and contemporary, since we find ourselves working with everything from cutting-edge GIS applications to historic maps. So the goal was to design something that felt modern yet established to reflect our field. I chose a bold san serif typeface (Open Sans) to match a classic and friendly serif typeface (Libre Baskerville), and we ensured these final typefaces were Google fonts so that everyone can use them.

8. What do you like most about mapping? Are there any cartographers that you admire and draw inspiration from?

I really love taking a complex set of layers and factors and being able to wrangle them into a cohesive and well-designed graphic hierarchy. It's so satisfying to create something that not only conveys the message clearly but catches the eye aesthetically. This is true for any form of design, and that same satisfaction was felt as I designed the new brand. Mapping is, however, a unique form of design in that much of the layout and composition is set in stone. I can't for instance change the shape of a boundary or the spread of physical features or data points, so it presents a unique set of design challenges at times, but I love the complex problems map makers have to solve with their designs, and it is so satisfying coming up with the best solution. I specifically love all of the content by John Nelson from Esri. His blog posts on the Esri site do a great job of summarizing the latest in map design and he is always coming up with fun and creative design ideas to inspire you.

9. Are there any resources you recommend for geospatial professionals who are not as graphically inclined but still want to make an effective map?

First and foremost, and perhaps almost everyone knows this by now, Color Brewer (www.colorbrewer2.org) from Cynthia Brewer is great when selecting colors for a map. All the major news agencies seem to use these color ramps now, and I find her multi-hue ramps especially helpful for setting complex choropleth schemes with many classes. Another color resource to set up harmonious schemes for those who don't have access to the Color Guide in Adobe is Paletton (www.paletton.com). Lastly, I would recommend folks looking to improve their type choices to use Typewolf (www.typewolf.com) to find the best fonts, pairings, and alternatives for a given project, just as I did with this brand redesign!

10. Given all the time you have put in to create this new look for the Association, are there other endeavors you make time for?

I am fortunate that map design is my main passion and hobby in addition to being my career, so I have always created personal reference maps for loved ones and fulfilled freelance requests as they came. These opportunities allow for much more creativity and I have a lot of ideas that would never come to fruition unless I took the time to make them on my own. Currently, I am working

2020 Awards for the Fight Against COVID

We have all endured the most extraordinary circumstances over the past few months. Every aspect of our lives has been affected. In response to these trying times, let's showcase some of the outstanding GIS work that you or your colleagues have been doing to help combat COVID.



Do you know someone who has stepped up to support GIS, an individual that has contributed to the betterment of the GIS community, or a person or team that developed an application or dashboard to aid in the fight against COVID here in New York State during the pandemic? Well now's your chance to nominate a colleague or your team to be recognized among your NYS GIS peers for their achievements!

***The deadline, *September 25th, 2020*, for nomination is just a month away!**

Submissions are now being accepted in two award categories related to how GIS has helped in the fight against COVID.

- **COVID-19 GIS Champion Award**
- **COVID-19 GIS Application/ Dashboard Award**

*Nomination forms should be emailed to nysgis77@gmail.com. ***The deadline for submissions is September 25th, 2020.***

- [Awards Program Details](#)
- [Awards Nomination Form](#)

Winners will be recognized virtually at the NYS GIS Association Fall Virtual Event in October!

Please contact the [Awards Committee](#) with any questions.

Call for Nominations

Seeking Nominations for NYS GIS Association Board and President-



The NYS GIS Association is looking for member nominations and candidates for soon to be vacated Board of Directors and President-Elect positions. The Association relies on the committed volunteer efforts and leadership from its membership to be successful and will look to fill two open Board of Directors positions this fall. Directors serve for two years and are eligible to run for a second term if they desire. If you've ever wanted to give back now is a great time to contribute as our membership grows. Previous Board Directors are eligible to run again if it has been two years since their last term ended.

Additionally, the Board will be looking for a new President-Elect as the current one transitions into the role of President. The President-Elect serves a three-year term as President-Elect, President, and Past-President with evolving responsibility for that term.

If you think these positions might be right for you and/or have questions, please email the Nominating Committee Chair, Chris Badurek, at: info@nysgis.net. Letters of intent, biographies, resumes, and other relevant materials should also be submitted through the above email. All nominations should be submitted by **September 25, 2020**.

You must be a member in good standing to run for any of the Board positions so please verify or renew your membership. The membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. Election results will be announced to the NYSGISA Community in late October 2020.

Renew Your Membership

June 30th was 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. 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/>

- NYS GIS Association Fall 2020 Virtual Event & Annual Meeting | 21 October 2020 (Wednesday) | 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
- Middle States AAG Fall 2020 Virtual Meeting | 16 - 17 October 2020 (Friday and Saturday) | [More Information](#)
- Fall NEARC Conference | Sunday, 15 November 2020 to Wednesday, 18 November 2020 | [More Information](#)



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