



American Association of Geographers
Middle States Division
NEWSLETTER

Editor: Joan Welch

Fall 2016 Meeting
JOINT MEETING WITH PGS
HOST PENN STATE ALTOONA
BLAIR COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER

November 4-5, 2016
Abstracts due by October 23, 2016
(See pages 4-7 for meeting information)

President's Message

As the summer season settles in, take a much-needed respite from your demanding academic year, but please remember to put our fall meeting in your calendar. More importantly, note the due date for abstract submission is Friday, October 23. The Saturday lunch is FREE FOR STUDENTS but they must register by October 23. For students participating in the paper and poster competitions, pay close attention to the submission guidelines on pages 2 and 4. The fall meeting is a wonderful opportunity to present research findings in a collegial setting.

Students are invited to participate in the geography bowl and we will find a spot on a team for anyone who wishes to join in the fun. The Fall 2015 MSD Geography Bowl Team competed at the AAG 2016 annual meeting in San Francisco, and all received financial support.

This year we are holding a joint meeting with the Pennsylvania Geographical Society (PGS) at the Blair County Convention Center in the beautiful hills of central Pennsylvania. There will be a field trip to the Railroader Museum and the Horseshoe Curve, an iconic cultural landmark of the Allegheny Plateau, on Saturday afternoon, 11/5. The meeting announcement and information for the Fall 2016 conference is on pages 4-7.
Joan Welch, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

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Additional division information may be found on our website: <http://www.msaag.org/>

World Geography Bowl Competition

Participate this year in the MSD Geography Bowl at the annual meeting in Altoona, Pennsylvania! Besides being barrels of fun, the highest-scoring students will be invited to represent the Division at the World Geography Bowl at the AAG annual meeting (to be held in Boston, Massachusetts Spring 2017) and will receive partial funding to participate. All Division undergraduate and graduate students are invited to compete this fall. You may form a team beforehand (5-6 people) or sign up at the fall meeting to be placed on a team. Information on playing or setting up a team can be found at <http://worldgeobowl.org/about/competition-rules/>. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact our Vice President, Dr. James Kernan, State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo, at kernan@geneseo.edu. The Geography Bowl will take place Saturday morning November 5. Top scorers will be announced at the Saturday lunch (free for students!), and Dr. Sarah Bednarz, past president of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) will speak.

Call for Graduate and Undergraduate Student Papers and Posters

Submit a paper to the AAG Middle States Division's

STUDENT PAPER & POSTER COMPETITION

November 4-5, 2016 Annual Meeting
Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers
Blair County Convention Center, Altoona PA

Middle States Division AAG encourages all graduate and undergraduate students to submit and present research papers to the Student Paper Competition of the MSDAAG annual conference. Both graduate and undergraduate competitions have a First Prize of \$100 and a Second Prize of \$50.

The AAG has just announced the **AAG Council Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Paper at a Regional Meeting**. The First Place Graduate Paper Awardee will receive \$1,000 in funding from the AAG to be used for registration and travel costs to the AAG Annual Meeting.

Student status is as of May 1, 2016. PLEASE NOTE YOUR STATUS (GRAD/UNDERGRAD) on your abstract and paper submission. Registration fees are refunded after the conference for students both submitting the completed paper by the deadline AND presenting the paper at the conference. Completed papers must follow the *Middle States Geographer* guidelines and can be no longer than 8 pages, single spaced, 10 point Times Roman or equivalent font. Further details on the guidelines are specified at the website at www.msaag.org. Entrants should submit abstracts of no more than 200 words at the registration site by October 14, and send electronic copies of completed papers to Dr. Pankaj Lal at lalp@mail.montclair.edu, MSDAAG Student Paper Competition Chair, by October 20.

There is also a Student Poster Competition with graduate and undergraduate divisions with a First Prize of \$100 and a Second Prize of \$50. Submit an abstract of your poster at the registration site by October 20.

PLEASE NOTE YOUR STATUS (GRAD/UNDERGRAD) on your abstract. Registration fees are not refunded for all the poster competition entrants, only the poster competition winners.

Stand Alone Geographer (SAGE) News - Reserved Table at Saturday Luncheon

Are you the sole geographer working in a department among other disciplines like history, political science, or economics? Wouldn't it be valuable to meet other professionals who are experiencing the challenges posed by not working in a geography department? Attend the Middle States Division meeting this fall, and at the Saturday luncheon, sit at a table reserved for Stand Alone Geographers (SAGE), an official affinity group of the AAG. This is a great opportunity to network and strategize about addressing challenges and professional development opportunities. This discussion table is facilitated by Enid Lotstein, SAGE Representative for the Middle States Division of the AAG, and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Bronx Community College/City University of New York.

2017 AAG Annual Meeting

Join the American Association of Geographers (AAG) at the Annual Meeting in **Boston, Massachusetts, April 5-9, 2017**, for the latest in research and applications in geography, sustainability, and GIScience. The AAG Annual Meeting is an interdisciplinary forum open to anyone with an interest in geography and related disciplines. All scholars, researchers, and students are welcome. For more information, visit www.aag.org/annualmeeting.

Middle States Geographer

The Middle States Geographer is the official academic journal of the Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers. The journal is published annually and includes papers from external submissions and the division Annual Meeting. The Middle States Geographer contains papers authored by both faculty and students (with peer-review by at least two reviewers) and covers a wide range of topics.

We invite all who present papers at the upcoming Fall 2016 MSDAAG meeting to submit a manuscript for publication in the next issue of the Middle States Geographer, although manuscripts from all researchers are welcome. Paper submission guidelines are available on the journal's website at: www.msaag.org. You may also contact the editors: Adam Kalkstein at the USMA West Point, Adam.Kalkstein@usma.edu or Paul Marr at Shippensburg University, pgmarr@ship.edu if you have questions about submitting a manuscript or if you are interested in serving as a reviewer. Students presenting papers (faculty co-authors may be included after the student award competition has occurred) should consider submitting their paper for publication in the journal.

The Middle States Geographer is entirely an online journal. Articles from 1968 (Volume 8) through 2014 (Volume 47) may be viewed at the journal website. The 2015 issue (Volume 48) will be available soon. The online format of the journal widely increases accessibility to readers and exposure for authors, while reducing printing costs. Furthermore, color graphics are now possible at no cost to authors.

AAG Award for Program Excellence

The AAG has instituted a new "Award for Program Excellence," honoring non-Ph. D. granting geography departments and Geography Programs within blended departments. They honor four-year and Master's programs in alternate years. In 2017 they will honor a Master's program and in 2018 an undergraduate program. Each Regional division is to nominate up to two programs for the 2017 award. For a complete description of the award, eligibility, and nomination guidelines, please see <http://www.aag.org/programexcellence>.

The MSD has developed a procedure for the nomination process.

1. The MSD Executive Board receives nominations in spring, and votes on which to forward to the AAG.

2. A volunteer Executive Board member edits/rewrites 2 page recommendation as required by the AAG.

3. The Regional Councillor (or President) forwards nomination(s) to AAG by the deadline.

This spring the MSD Executive Board voted to nominate two Master's programs from the region: State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton, and West Chester University, Pennsylvania. Thanks to the work of Jo Margaret Mano and Rob Mason, the nominations have been forwarded to the AAG.

Call for Nominations for MSD Officers

Please consider joining the leadership of MSDAAG. We are currently soliciting nominations for Secretary for 2017. Voting will take place in October 2016. The newly elected position will be announced at the Fall 2016 Meeting.

The term runs from January 2017 – December 2017. The Secretary is in charge of keeping the meeting minutes from board meetings and judging the student paper competition. The board has two meetings a year, one a conference call in the spring and one at the annual fall meeting.

Normally, the President serves first one year as Secretary, then as Vice-President, and in the third year the position of President. The Vice President is responsible for the Geography Bowl. The President hosts the annual meeting, chairs board meetings, and puts out the newsletter. The Executive Board has proposed changes to the Bylaws that will revise these positions and duties that will take effect in 2017 if adopted. Please see <http://www.msaag.org/> for details.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD WILL PROVIDE ALL THE GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES YOU NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL. PLEASE CONSIDER THESE REWARDING OPPORTUNITIES. YOU MAY CONTACT JOAN WELCH (jwelch@wcupa.edu) OR ANY CURRENT BOARD MEMBER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

Please submit nominations to Joan Welch (jwelch@wcupa.edu) by September 1.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT: Fall 2016, Altoona, Pennsylvania

The 2016 Middle States Division AAG Meeting will be held at the Blair County Convention Center, Altoona, PA on Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5.

The fall 2016 meeting will consist of two days of paper and poster sessions. Friday will include paper and poster sessions, buffet lunch and Pennsylvania Geographical Society (PGS) business meeting, and the PGS Awards buffet dinner. On Saturday, a morning of paper presentations and the Geography Bowl will be followed by a buffet luncheon (FREE for STUDENTS) that will include a brief MSD business meeting, student paper and geography bowl awards, and presentation by Dr. Sarah Bednarz, immediate past president of the AAG. There will be a Saturday afternoon field trip to the Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark and Railroaders Museum. Please join us!

CALL FOR PAPERS, POSTERS, AND PANELS

Paper Sessions

Paper sessions are 60-80 minutes long and consist of three to four presentations of 15-20 minutes. Papers on all topics of a geographic nature are welcome. Concurrent paper sessions will be held on Friday, November 4 and Saturday morning, November 5. Each room is equipped with a computer, digital projector and screen. We urge participants to use PowerPoint software for their presentations and to have your presentation on a flash drive.

Poster Sessions

The poster session will be held on Friday November 4. Poster dimensions must be at least 36 inches in height and 48 inches in width but cannot exceed 60 inches in width and 48 inches in height. The poster needs to be attached to a hard-

backed material in such a way that it can be displayed on an easel. There will be easels available to display the poster boards. Posters and maps will be on display all day on Friday, and presenters must be at the poster to answer questions from 2:30-3:30pm.

Panel- Roundtable Sessions

Panel discussions and roundtables are also welcome. Panel discussion sessions typically consist of three to four panelists, and are organized around a theme. Roundtable discussion sessions are 'open format' where the chair of the roundtable facilitates a discussion among all attendees focusing on a theme or issue. Students are welcome to organize both panel and roundtable sessions. If you are interested in organizing either a panel or a roundtable session please contact Joan Welch at jwelch@wcupa.edu or 610-436-2940 before October 14, 2016.

Student Competitions

Students are encouraged to enter the paper contest, sponsored by MSD-AAG or the Elaine F. Bosowski map/poster contest sponsored by PGS. Cash awards are presented to the best graduate and undergraduate student papers, maps or posters displayed at the annual meeting. Any graduate or undergraduate student who is registered and presenting at the meeting is eligible to compete in the student competitions if they choose. Separate competitions will be held for graduate and undergraduate students. Students may enter the paper (see page 2 for more information) or map/poster contest simply by checking the appropriate box on the online registration form when registering for the conference. For more information about the poster competition, visit the PGS website <http://www.thepgs.org/studentawards>.

Child Care

The American Association of Geographers (AAG) will reimburse attendees up to \$150 in child-care costs. If anyone is interested in taking advantage of this support, please contact Joan Welch at jwelch@wcupa.edu or 610-436-2940. The child-care provider must be certified and contracted by the MSD, and reimbursement managed through the MSD.

Program

The program will be available online at the Pennsylvania Geographical Society website http://www.thepgs.org/Annual_Meeting and the MSD website <http://msaag.org/annual-meetings/2016-annual-meeting/> in late October, 2016 and will be sent out to MSD members soon afterwards. Maps of the area and campus can be found in the front section of the program.

Registration

Registration is different this year and will be online through the Pennsylvania Geographical Society (PGS) website. Registration will open on August 29 online through the Pennsylvania Geographical Society website: <http://www.thepgs.org/event-2260105>. There is a base registration fee and then a price for each meal. Note that the lunch on Saturday, 11/5 is FREE FOR STUDENTS, but students must select the meal during online registration in order to be able to attend, and register by October 23.

Papers and posters on all geographic topics are accepted. Participants who register by October 14th will receive a \$10 discount on the registration fees.

Early Bird PGS members by October 14

Students \$10 registration, Regular \$50 registration

Early Bird non PGS members by October 14 (PGS membership is \$10 for students, \$20 for Regular

<http://www.thepgs.org/membership>)

Students \$20 registration, Regular \$60 registration

Late PGS members after October 14
Students \$20 registration, Regular \$60 registration

Late non PGS members after October 14
Students \$30 registration, Regular \$70

Registration Prices for Meals – deadline for registering for meals is OCTOBER 23
\$25 Fri lunch, \$30 Fri dinner, \$25 Sat Lunch (FREE for Students)

Paper presentations are limited to 15 minutes; paper and poster abstracts of a maximum of 200 words should be submitted online with registration. Abstract submissions for papers and posters will not be accepted after October 23rd! No exceptions! You will be required to submit your abstract information on-line through the PGS web site, and payment online is available through PayPal, or personal Credit Card. There is also the option of mailing a check along with a print up of the registration page to Brent Zaprowski, PGS Executive Director.
There are no refunds after October 23, 2016.

DIRECTIONS TO THE BLAIR COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER

One Convention Center Drive
Altoona, PA 16602
814-943-5392
1-877-447-5621

From Interstate 99, Take exit 31 for Plank Road. Go south on W. Plank Road about 1 mile.
Use the left lane to turn left onto Convention Center Blvd and turn left at the 1st cross street onto Convention Center Drive. Follow the signs to the Blair County Convention Center at the end of the drive on the left.

There is plenty of convenient parking at the convention center with over 250 surface level parking spaces as well as a multi-level parking garage connected to the facility.

MAKE YOUR LODGING RESERVATIONS (see maps after the listing for locations – thank you Tim Dolney)

A. Courtyard by Marriott (Conference Hotel)

2 Convention Center Drive
Altoona Pennsylvania 16602
[Hotel Website](#)

Conference Rates: Thursday 11/3 - **\$139.00***; Friday 11/4 - **\$169.00** (Expires **Oct 3rd**)

Rate DOES NOT include breakfast.

Group Rate Name: **“PA Geographical Society”** (includes Middle States attendees)

*If booking a room for **Thursday night**, the Courtyard Marriott must manually override the system to provide you with the **\$139.00** rate (rather than the normal \$169.00). Be sure to mention or check on this when booking your room for **Thursday night only**.

Online Reservations: [Book the Marriott group rate for PGS and MSAAG](#)

B. Holiday Inn Express & Suites Altoona

115 Convention Center Drive
Duncansville, PA 16635
Phone: 814-693-1004
[Hotel Website](#)

Conference Rates: Thursday 11/3 and Friday 11/4 - **\$142.00/night** (Rate Expires **Oct 3rd**)

Rate includes Free Breakfast!!

Group Rate Name: **"PGS & MSAAG"**

Online Reservations: [Book the Holiday Inn Express Group Rate for PGS and MSAAG](#)

C. Altoona Grand Hotel

1 Sheraton Drive

Altoona, PA 16601

Phone: 814-946-1631

[Hotel Website](#)

Conference Rates: Thursday 11/3 and Friday 11/4 - **\$82.00/night** (Expires **Oct 3rd**)

Rate DOES NOT include breakfast.

Group Rate Name: **"Geography Conference"**

D. Hampton Inn Altoona

180 Charlotte Drive

Altoona, Pennsylvania 16601

Phone: (814) 941-3500

Toll Free: (800) 426-7866

[Hotel Website](#)

When using a GPS navigation system, please use the following address:

594 West Plank Road • Altoona, PA 16601

Conference Rates: Thursday 11/3 and Friday 11/4 - **\$134.00/night** (Rate Expires **Oct 13th**)

Rates includes Free Breakfast!!

Group Rate Name: "Geography Meeting" (includes PGS and MSAAG attendees)

Online Reservations: [Book the Hampton Inn Group Rate for PGS and MSAAG](#)

E. Clarion Inn & Suites

3306 Pleasant Valley Blvd

Altoona, PA 16602

Phone: 1-800-230-4134

[Hotel Website](#)

Conference Rates: Thursday 11/3 and Friday 11/4 – **129.95/night** (Rate Expires **Oct 13th**)

Rate includes Free Breakfast!!

Group Rate Name: **"Geography Conference"**

F. Econo Lodge

2906 Pleasant Valley Blvd

Altoona, PA 16602

Phone:(814) 944-3555

[Hotel Website](#)

Free Continental Breakfast. No Wi-Fi.

G. Super 8 Altoona

3535 Fairway Dr, US Rt 220/I-99 Exit 32

Altoona, PA 16602-4479

Phone: 1-814-942-5350

[Hotel Website](#)

H. Motel 6

1500 Sterling St

Altoona, PA 16602

Phone: 814-946-7601

[Hotel Website](#)

I. Comfort Suites - Altoona

140 Stroeham Drive

Altoona, PA 16601

Altoona, PA, 16601

Phone: (814) 942-2600

[Hotel Website](#)

Conference Rates: Thursday 11/3 and Friday 11/4 - **\$119.00/night** (Expires **Oct 13th**)

Rate DOES NOT include breakfast.

Group Rate Name: "PGS & MSAAG MEETING"



